community through conversation

SPECTRUM

"Angel of Everything" | Mixed media collage | *Sharon Fujimoto-Johnson*

HEALING AMBIENCE

Eschatology and Manners in Seventh-day Adventism | *The Discipline of Heaven*

"Shrinking to Grow": Newbold College Refocuses on its Original Purpose

The Sacred and the Sublime: Composer James Lee Describes His Musical Journey

VOLUME 49 ISSUE 3 ■ 2021

community through conversation

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ABOUT THE ART
"Angel of Everything" | Mixed media collage
I was struck, in particular, by one aspect of Malcolm Bull's illuminating article on the decorous structure of heavenly society and the hierarchy of angels as depicted by Ellen White: that is, angels as emotional beings capable of being offended or embarrassed by a lack of decorum in the lives of human beings, who themselves are to be preparing to fill vacancies in the heavenly court. This concept sparked the creation of this "Angel of Everything" whom I imagined to be weeping over our planet. Why weeping? Because everything human suffering in a global pandemic, a climate crisis, political corruption, fractures in technological, financial, and physical infrastructures, and wars over borders, bodies, power, and truth. Because perhaps like us, the angels have wept over everything. The spectrum of colors in this angel's wings alludes both to the range of gloriously human-like emotions in this heavenly being and to the celestial rainbow of diversity in humanity. I created this "Angel of Everything" using deconstructed, watercolor-washed pages of Malcolm Bull's article, *Vogue* magazine, *The New York Times*, mail catalogs, and back issues of *Spectrum*—a diverse array of printed information representing the complex world of information in which we humans are called, according to Ellen White's heavenly model, to develop our character with qualities befitting the heavenly court.

ABOUT THE COVER ARTIST
Sharon Fujimoto-Johnson is an artist and writer in Northern California. A graduate of Pacific Union College, she has contributed to *Spectrum* over the past 20+ years through a variety of roles, including designer, layout editor, associate editor, writer, and web columnist.

ABOUT SPECTRUM

SPECTRUM is a journal established to encourage Seventh-day Adventist participation in the discussion of contemporary issues from a Christian viewpoint, to look without prejudice at all sides of a subject, to evaluate the merits of diverse views, and to foster Christian intellectual and cultural growth. Although effort is made to ensure accurate scholarship and discriminating judgment, the statements of fact are the responsibility of contributors, and the views individual authors express are not necessarily those of the editorial staff as a whole or as individuals.

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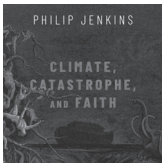

EDITORIALS

THE BIBLE *and the Backstory*

BY BONNIE DWYER

The *Sabbath School Adult Bible Study Guide* Lesson Four for the Third Quarter was my assignment to teach. The story of David and Bathsheba. Oh, boy, I thought. Discussing lust with a small group of recently new members in our congregation could be tricky. Thank goodness for Psalms 51, David's lament when Nathan the prophet came to him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba. Perhaps we should just spend our time there.

Looking up a timeline of David's life helped me get started with my preparations. When David was ten, the prophet Samuel came to the family residence, and after meeting with all seven of his older brothers, chose him, the youngest, as the future King of Israel. David is special from that day forward. He defeats Goliath, becomes a musician in the King's court, is given the King's daughter for a wife. He conquers Jerusalem, is named king. More wives follow. In fact, he already has seven wives when he sees Bathsheba bathing—by this time, no one denies David anything. He kills Uriah to get his way. David is a warrior; this is not the first time he has stood by while people were caught up in a battle. The whole situation made the prophet Nathan sick. And that is where I find my new window into the story. In the prophet's assignment to call David on his sin.

The Secret Cord, by Geraldine Brooks is a fictionalized account of King David's life, told in first person from the point of view of Nathan. As a member of David's court, Nathan watched David's machinations with Uriah, and knew that Uriah's death had not been necessary. "It was a

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Nathan's task would be twofold: "to stand up to him, and to stand by him. To awaken his conscience, and to salve the pain this would cause him. To help him to endure through the hard days and years that lay ahead of him."

Geraldine Brooks

In the life of the community, we all, at one time or another, are asked to stand up and to stand by the people, the places that we love. Nathan provides us with a role model of how to do that well.

simple abuse of power," Brooks writes. Perseverating over the situation for days, Nathan finally knew what he needed to do. David would be "scalded by the consequences of his choices." Nathan's task would be twofold: "to stand up to him, and to stand by him. To awaken his conscience, and to salve the pain this would cause him. To help him to endure through the hard days and years that lay ahead of him."

To stand up to those in power and to stand by them—and even more so their victims. That is the challenge in these days of #metoo. And so, that is what we discussed at Sabbath School, before we read Psalms 51.

Later, at work, the words "Stand Up and Stand By" came back to me, as I worked through the stories for this issue and thought about the conversations regarding the changes that are being made at Newbold. Faculty who feel betrayed. Administrators who feel justified in their actions. How can the story be fully told? Friends were asking me when *Spectrum* would be reporting on the situation. Several writers declined the assignment. Bless Reinder Bruinsma. He was willing to give it a go. He came back with good reporting on the administrative decision that had been made. But I knew we also needed to hear from faculty, students, etc. That side of the story continued to be elusive, with people unwilling to talk, afraid of retributions. We decided to run Bruinsma's story on the website and encourage people to respond there. From their comments, we knew more needed to be said. Reinder agreed to try again. Helen Pearson, also. In this issue, we bring together all of those things. Of course, there is always more to the story. In the future, we hope that more people at Newbold will share their thoughts and experiences. It is an important story. Not so unlike the stories of other Adventist colleges, so many of which have had their days of drama and dissent. I think of the Seminary in the 60s; Southern Adventist University in the 70s; Pacific Union College in the days of Des Ford; Walla Walla in the 90s; La Sierra University in the last ten years.

Being a place for their stories to be told has been *Spectrum*'s contribution to the conversation. However, the stories also need the people at the institutions themselves to be willing to share the details of what is taking place.

In the life of the community, we all, at one time or another, are asked to stand up and to stand by the people, the places that we love. Nathan provides us with a role model of how to do that well.

Studying the Bible together with other people always brings new insights. That was the other lesson for me from the Sabbath School lesson.

BONNIE DWYER is editor of *Spectrum*.

Healing Ambience

BY CARMEN LAU

Ambience is defined as the character or atmosphere of a place. Here is an example: When I joined the effort to provide mass vaccinations to folks in Alabama, the ambience in the makeshift drive-through clinic felt a bit like Disney World. There was an anticipation for a long-awaited event, excitement to participate as the chosen, and a willingness to experience inconvenience for the greater good of others.

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What will be the ambience in heaven? Gratitude? Humility? A readiness to learn? I often think of the reference, in Revelation 22, which states that the Tree of Life has leaves for the healing of the nations. Does this allow for the concept that folks will not arrive in heaven fully formed and totally renewed? To me, a tree with healing leaves implies that life in heaven will be dynamic. People and groups will heal in ways known best only by the Great Healer.

I believe that upon arrival to God's heavenly kingdom, pilgrims will embrace an inestimable capacity to begin to grasp the grandeur of God in all of its beauty and complexity. This will lead to the vibe of constant welcome and love and will inaugurate a journey of healing in a kingdom infused with abundance, not scarcity. Civility now can be thin and self-serving, and I relish the chance to cultivate heart-felt, love-based, community building.

We are to pray: *Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven.* For Jesus Followers, prayerful contemplation can access the deep ground of God to experience some heaven on earth. Many fruitful, varied, and life-giving practices can help one be nourished by the Sacred Presence. Can a person access the attributes symbolized by the Tree of Life, now? Can a person get a sense of heaven, now? At the vaccination clinic, folks may have gotten a slice of heaven when they came to receive something that would allow them to live abundantly in community. They came for healing.

Heaven will be no Disney World or vaccination clinic, but when I arrive, I imagine a sense of delight to be in a community that shares a common goal. I expect all God's children will humbly relish a vibe that features learning and healing. I believe we can partake of that now because of Emmanuel—God with us. Maranatha.

CARMEN LAU is board chair of Adventist Forum.

I believe that upon arrival to God's heavenly kingdom, pilgrims will embrace an inestimable capacity to begin to grasp the grandeur of God in all of its beauty and complexity.

NOTEWORTHY

KEYWORDS: science, Creation, fossils, young-earth/old-earth, Sydney Adventist Forum

All Photos Credit: Nathan Brown

Conference organizer Dr. Lynden Rogers (facing the camera with microphone) fronting a panel discussion with other conference presenters

"AGE OF LIFE ON EARTH"

Conference Report

BY NATHAN BROWN

Acknowledging Tensions, Seeking Dialogue

In addressing questions around its topic, Sydney Adventist Forum's "Age of Life on Earth" conference acknowledged the tensions between key theological assertions and apparent scientific conclusions. "But we have to live with these tensions," reflected conference convenor Dr. Lynden Rogers, "rather than resolve them cheaply."

As such, the various papers presented at the conference addressed the three key questions of how best to read the biblical accounts of the creation of life on earth, how best to understand current scientific understandings that might support or challenge these readings, and how to hold these two streams of knowledge.

"We are honestly trying to be fair to data and give every case the best possible utterance," explained Rogers, a recently retired lecturer in physics and president of Sydney Adventist Forum. "Not everyone will agree, but Forum puts up ideas and if people don't like them that is okay."

Hosted at The Church in the Trees in Morisset, in the Lake Macquarie region north of Sydney, on June 11 and 12, the conference attracted about ninety participants onsite, with a further fifty registered to participate from

around the world via the livestream of the sessions. Because of COVID-19 restrictions and limited venue availability, the conference was condensed from its original three-day format into two days, with three major presentations and papers made available to participants in the week leading up to the conference.

"We were desperately trying to host an event that would be inclusive and foster dialogue," said Rogers. "And many of the participants have responded positively to us in the conference's immediate aftermath."

The papers from the "Age of Life on Earth" conference—with extended treatments of the presentation topics—are planned for publication in book form within an anticipated 12-month time frame. "The book will allow us to shape some rough edges and to improve the presentation of some of the topics from the conference," Rogers added.

This report offers a summary of the key presentations.

Pre-Conference Papers

"Arguments in Favor of a Recent Age for Life on Earth" by Dr. Lynden Rogers

Rogers invited a number of academic defenders of more traditional Adventist approaches to contribute papers or presentations to the conference, without positive response. Wanting to represent these perspectives in the collective thinking of the conference, he prepared and circulated an overview paper that presented the theological assumptions, geological arguments that might support a young earth and thus a recent age of life, and biological objections to an older age of life. "Individually and in combination," Rogers's paper concluded, "these considerations suggest to many Seventh-day Adventists, among other evangelical Christians, that life on Earth is young by conventional scientific timescales and is likely to be less than 20,000 years." Having prepared these arguments, he again sought and received some input from key scholars—and repeated his invitation for these thought leaders to participate in the conference, even if only by attendance.

"The Creation Narrative Part 1" by Dr. Rudy Van Moere

The conference's keynote speaker recorded his presentations, being unable to attend in person because of COVID-19 travel restrictions. Professor Rudy Van Moere is emeritus professor of Old Testament and Biblical Hebrew of the Faculty of Protestant Theology at Brussels University, and emeritus pastor of the Adventist churches in the Netherlands and Belgium–Luxembourg.

After sharing his pre-recorded presentation, Dr. Rudy Van Moere briefly connected with conference participants from Antwerp on June 12.

He focused on the creation narrative of Genesis 1:1–2:4a, pointing out that the authors were not historians or journalists but storytellers, pastors, and educators. "It is necessary and indispensable to read biblical narratives accurately, defining their genre and the context in which they were written," he urged, before proceeding to do this in remarkable detail. His first presentation highlighted repetition in Genesis's narrative text but also the key instances that break the cycles of repetition. He pointed out the many patterns of sevens in the narrative and also in the literary structure of these texts. This emphasizes the centrality of the Sabbath motif and the centrality of the creation of humanity in the image of God.

Van Moere summarized the agenda of the creation narrative as three dimensional: to glorify God as creator, instruct humanity as to their identity as created in the image of God, and to assign man and woman their roles to procreate and take care of nature. He also drew attention to the "remarkable" literary parallels between the Creation narrative and the Abram narrative later in Genesis. He concluded the first part of his presentation by describing the Creation narrative as a "begetting" narrative that echoed the claims of the Hebrew people being a special work of God, a blueprint for understanding Israel's origins and existence.

"The Creation Narrative Part 2"
by Dr. Rudy Van Moere

Van Moere began his second presentation by seeking to place the Hebrew creation narrative among the literature of the ancient Near Eastern world, referencing and comparing Egyptian and Mesopotamian creation narratives, which he argued would have been known by the notional writer of the Genesis narrative. Such a comparison "teaches the readers how completely different Israel's God is from the gods of the Egyptians and the Babylonians." It is not defensive or apologetic in nature but encourages Hebrew readers in their belief in the God of Israel, strengthening them in their identity and urging them to trust in their God. This offers "a completely different view of the world, God and humanity."

Turning then to the larger literary structure of the Hebrew scriptures, Van Moere's analysis identified the "Enneateuch," which includes the five books of the Pentateuch plus the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings, in a larger literary narrative of Israel's history that might have been composed by either one author or a group of scholars or editors. If we accept this larger structure, the books would have been composed or compiled after the fall of Jerusalem in 586 BCE, which fits at the end of this large narrative. This gives an insight into the context and concerns of the authors and audience of these narratives. It was an experience of great national loss and faith trauma, giving rise to urgent questions about the God they claimed and the future of their people. As such, these nine scrolls provide answers, comfort, and hope in re-telling these narratives.

Reading these texts with an understanding of this context and hearing it in the voice of a pastor and educator, the narratives affirm the power and trustworthiness of their God and their special role as God's people. Van Moere urged that reading the Creation narrative in isolation from this larger literary context can lead to "an inadequate and even contrary interpretation of the first Creation narrative."

Van Moere concluded that the Creation account of Genesis 1:1–2:4a should not be read literally or as a religious myth; instead, it is narrative theology. It should be understood as an affirmation of faith in God, without detailed or scientific information of the how and when of Creation. It also assigns specific roles to human beings in this created world. Van Moere argued that approaching this text with scientific questions several thousand years later is inappropriate, and that using this text as a basis for debate between proponents of young-earth creationism and older-earth creationism—or even a debate between creation and evolution—is pointless.

Conference Papers

When the "Age of Life on Earth" conference hosted by Sydney Adventist Forum convened in person and by livestream on June 12, participants quickly realized they were encountering serious science. They had been eased into it by more accessible presentations on Friday evening, June 11, beginning with an affirmation of the common faith of conference participants coming from two of the theologians in the room, in the form of the welcome by Dr. Ray Roennfeldt and prayer by Dr. Norm Young. But after that the program was almost entirely handed over to the scientists.

As one participant commented, this conference gave some of us not used to this world the opportunity to hear and observe "serious scientists going about their business of finding out about our world." As would be expected from a group of committed research scientists drawing on their respective areas of research and expertise, many of the presentations had a unique focus on aspects of Australia's landscapes and natural history, which brought freshness to some of the usual "creation science" themes. The converging evidence and collective weight of the presentations seemed to build a strong case for an older age of life on earth, but with little attention from most of the presenters as to the faith implications of their conclusions.

But the afternoon program was punctuated by a panel discussion involving all the conference presenters, including Dr. Rudy van Moere, online from Antwerp for a 15-minute cameo that largely recapped his pre-recorded presentations. Turning to the conference presenters in the room, discussion chair Dr. Graham Stacey added up the 400 years of denominational service among the presenters. And it was in this context that there was perhaps the most direct response to the central tension of the conference—how faith can be sustained in the face of the accumulated evidence for an old age of life on earth—to which a number of presenters expressed their personal

experiences of faith amid the challenges that have come with their own research.

In a recent article in the *Adventist Review*, Ben Clausen of the Seventh-day Adventist Church's Geoscience Research Institute wrote about the opportunities to build relationships with scientists who approach science in different ways and reach different conclusions. He set out a workable formula for faithful scientists of whatever persuasion: "learn from history, know the issue, do good science, study large-scale geology, recognize human limitations, and always love others."

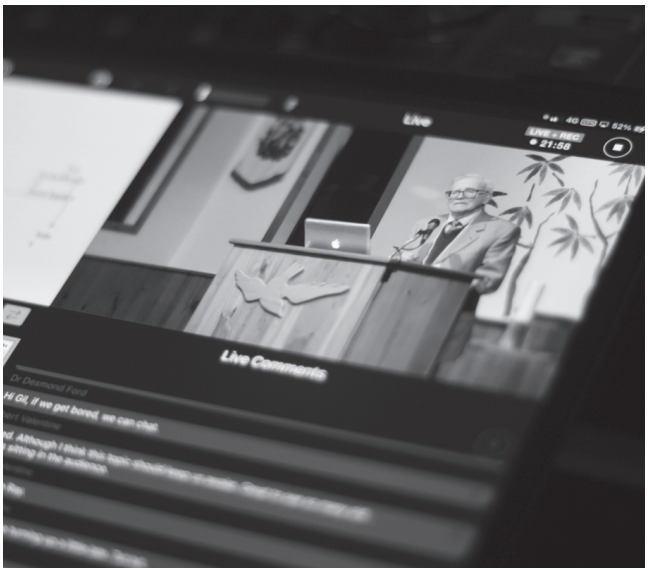
Most of the presenters at the "Age of Life on Earth" conference would fit this description, although a couple of the presenters used language that might be perceived as mocking other scientists who have reached different conclusions. Labeling "creationist's crackpot ideas" as such is not helpful, even if such labels might sometimes feel appropriate to describe the more dogmatic and jumbled arguments used to "defend" creationism.

While the weight of evidence presented at this conference built strongly across the presentations, the lack of diversity among presenters and viewpoints was obvious. Ironically, perhaps the heavy scientific focus of the event belied its more pastoral intent of including these scientists in a "safe" church environment and making the case for their place in this community of belonging.

As conference convenor Dr. Lynden Rogers explained, this might have been less by design than a result of invitations that were not accepted by other potential contributors. This ongoing conversation would be stronger with broader input, not only from more divergent scientific views but also from theologians and philosophers, pastors and educators, who would do more of the necessary work regarding the implications and understandings for how we can better believe and worship together a God who, in a core of Adventist Christian faith, is unequivocally defined as Creator (see Hebrews 11:3). The science is important; the theology is essential.

"God's Footprints" by Dr. Kevin de Berg and Dr. Ewan Ward

Avondale University College Associate Professor Kevin de Berg (retired lecturer in chemistry) presented a paper that included contributions from Dr. Ewan Ward (retired lecturer in biochemistry and microbiology), beginning



Dr. Kevin de Berg as seen on the livestream from the "Age of Life on Earth" conference on Friday evening, June 11

with an overview of the scientific arguments for design, including the more recent renewal of these arguments in recognition of the "fine-tuned universe" cosmology. The presentation gave an overview of the commonly understood cosmological timescale across the believed 13.7 billion years since the big bang, and introduced Christian apologists such as Francis Collins and Alister McGrath, who have adapted their scientific and theological understandings to this timescale because of the science that supports it. De Berg went on to present a number of specific examples of fine-tuned chemical processes that were necessary for life. "This is design extraordinaire," he commented, and identified a number of processes that are simply not understood. However, he gave examples of how these processes are not always perfect and lead to sometimes macabre outcomes. Acknowledging the tensions created between deep-time and common Adventist chronologies, de Berg quoted an author of one of his textbooks from when he was an undergraduate student: "We should look for God's footprints in what we know, rather than what we don't know." What we do know, he reflected, is sufficient to ground our faith in the essentials—and what we don't know should humble us. He suggested that there might be a free creative process designed into the universe from its beginnings. This might not be comfortable in its process and some of its results, he concluded, "but we would have to marvel at the creative expression observed and the free will that is granted in the process."

Associate Professor Brian Timms presented two papers to Sydney Adventist Forum's "Age of Life on Earth" conference on June 11 and 12.

"Dating Quaternary Life"
by Dr. Brian Timms

Compared to much of the complicated mathematics underlying various of the scientific presentations, Associate Professor Brian Timms (adjunct professor, Centre for Ecosystem Science, University of New South Wales) offered the much simpler mathematics of counting—counting tree rings and soil layers, measuring river deltas, and exploring the sedimentary layers and speciation in lakes around the world, but particularly in the apparently ancient landscapes of Australia that have been the focus of his many years of study. As a specialist in the study of lakes, from the deep to the dry, Timms cited examples of different lakes around the world, but much of his research has focused on seasonal and dry lakes in Australia, samples of which he presented with fascinating details and obvious passion. Because lakes are isolated, the variety of species will be greater in correlation with the age of the lake, and this presentation compared different levels of speciation in some of these older lakes (many of which having species discovered by Timms himself). In conclusion, his simple mathematics led him to using trees to date life back to at least 15,000 years, patterns in lakes that date beyond 74,000 years, soil—which requires biological life for its formation—dated as old as 200,000 years, and some river deltas that stretch into the tens and even hundreds of millions of years. The dating added up to Timms' conclusion: "Creation is older than we thought."

Sabbath Morning – Colin Waters, Geoff Madigan, and Howard Fisher

Professor Colin Waters began the first presentation on Sabbath morning of the conference with the assertion that "dating the past is a complicated and technical business." For many participants, the ensuing detailed explanations, formulae, diagrams, and charts would create more of an impressionist case than an understanding.

After Waters presented the theory of carbon-14 dating, Dr. Geoff Madigan shared the practical process by which samples are collected, analyzed, and dated. But this brought another sheaf of equations, statistical analyses, abbreviations, and metrology—the science of measurement. However, the explanations of how to analyze specimens brought some insight into the painstaking process by which the dating is undertaken and how this varies for different substances such as wood, bone, or cellulose. The presentation acknowledged the risk of inconsistency in such dating and potential variations in results, both by contamination or processes and calibrations, but that with increasing laboratory rigor with proper selection and handling of specimens, this can be a useful method of dating specimens as old as 50,000 years.

Dr. Howard Fisher began with a definition of biogeography as the study of the distribution of living organisms, the search for patterns of such distribution, and seeking to understand the reasons for this distribution. He then turned to the taxonomy of marsupials, both living and in the fossil record, commenting that "paleontologists have almost as many arguments as theologians." And then the presentation turned to plate tectonics and geological understanding of the often mischaracterized "continental drift," demonstrating the believed corridor linking the marsupials of Australasia and South America across the Antarctic continent. Fisher traced the fossil-recorded migration of marsupials from the Northern Hemisphere to the Southern Hemisphere with changing climates over the epochs. He also reinforced the biogeographical links between eucalyptus and other plants in the Gondwanan distribution between Australasia and South America. The presentation concluded that plate tectonic theory is the best explanation of this evidence and is a characteristic feature of this planet, which necessarily implies a great age for the continents and the fossils embedded in them. "The geography of marsupials is difficult to explain by other means," according to Fisher.

"Theological Problems for an Old Age of Life"
by Dr. David Thiele

Filling the "divine hour" of the traditional Adventist worship service, the late-morning session began with singing before the introduction of Dr. David Thiele—a long-serving theology lecturer at Pacific Adventist

A pastoral response: Dr. David Thiele addressed some of the faith questions and challenges on Sabbath morning, June 12.

University—as the "preacher of the hour." As the title suggests, his presentation canvassed reasons that are often urged as theological imperatives for maintaining belief in young-earth Creationism, including the questions regarding the inspiration and authority of Scripture, moral and ethical grounding found in the story of Creation, the Fall and the story of redemption, the Bible's later references to the historical figure of Adam, the possibility of death before the Fall and what that means for the character of God, and the particularly Adventist concern of the foundation of Sabbath. The presentation offered brief counterarguments to some of these objections but seemed to assume that this was largely a question of how the Creation narrative is read. One intriguing rhetorical question he offered: "What did Genesis 1 mean before Darwin came on the scene, before it was an answer to evolution?" More briefly, Thiele surveyed the arguments that old-earth proponents sometimes offer—and summarily dismissed most of them as unsupported in the Bible itself or as a logical understanding of scientific reading of the Creation narrative. "All the arguments have loose ends, things that won't tie off neatly," he reflected. "There are more questions than answers." If he seemed to have let off the old-earth scientists too easily from the theological problems, he made his pastoral concern clear when participating in the panel discussion later in the day, urging that he wants to make and hold space for sincere scientists in their community of faith. Thiele concluded his presentation with a list of affirmations that must be maintained for Christian faith, whether adopting a short or long view of the age of life on earth, including that God is creator but our experience is now of a fallen world in which God has intervened and His salvation will be achieved—of which Sabbath remains an important and universal symbol and foreshadowing.

Dr. Terry Annable on Ice Core Dating

Dr. Terry Annable's academic qualifications are in the field of human biology, but he has a strong interest in broader natural history. Among his scientific interest is Australia's ongoing research in the Antarctic, with a current budget of A$2.65 billion devoted to studying ice cores, particularly focused on what they might teach about changing climates. He explained the construction of ice formations, with layers added but then compressed by later layers, holding traces of dust, bacteria, gases, and more. The study of ice cores is a painstaking process and is done under careful conditions. The deepest ice core studied is 3.7 kilometers (more than 2 miles), with differences in the ice observable as the depth increases. Annable also shared fascinating glimpses of lakes under the Antarctic ice that have been cut off from the outside world for long periods of time. He pointed to bacterial and fungal spores in ice cores dated between 500 and 157,000 years old. The presentation highlighted recent ice cores that include fossilized vegetation from what appears to be a temperate rainforest that have been dated to 90 million years ago, before quickly skipping over the chemical analysis of these ice cores. His conclusions included that "the earth is unequivocally very ancient," with ice dated to 2.9 million years and older ice expected to be found. The ice cores provide evidence of flowering plants and fungi around 1.5 million years ago. He argued that Noah's flood did not reach the polar regions, but that there is evidence of recurring ice ages and variations in carbon dioxide, global temperatures, and sea levels—as he sounded the alarm about the recent and largely unprecedented upswing in all of these.

While Timms acknowledged that some of the "dinosaur people" exercise enthusiastic imagination at times and was critical of some aspects of dinosaur science, he also criticized some defenders of creation for their "creative" ways of trying to explain dinosaurs.

"Dinosaur Mysteries" by Dr. Brian Timms

This presentation began with an overview of the family tree of dinosaurs and their distinctive characteristics, with about 800 species currently identified. Timms explained how scientists can reconstruct a dinosaur from just a few bones and gave an overview of how Christian creationists have responded to dinosaurs: beginning with denying their existence, which is now untenable; explaining dinosaurs as not created by God but arising from amalgamations of species (described by Timms as a uniquely Adventist perspective, drawn only from the writings of Ellen White, but he pointed out that she seemed to move away from this idea in later writings); or created by God but destroyed by the flood, which would mean that dinosaurs and humans co-existed at some time. But he described the most common understanding that dinosaurs lived long before humans (dating dinosaurs from about 250 million years to 65 million years ago) and might or might not have been created by God. He pointed out that dinosaur fossils and footprints have never been found with contemporaneous evidence of human beings. While Timms acknowledged that some of the "dinosaur people" exercise enthusiastic imagination at times and was critical of some aspects of dinosaur science, he also criticized some defenders of creation for their "creative" ways of trying to explain dinosaurs. After considering the theory for the ultimate extinction of dinosaurs about 65 million years ago, Timms expressed his reluctance to believe that God created monster-like dinosaurs. "As a Christian and as a scientist of 50+ years' experience, it is easiest for me to believe that dinosaurs were created in a past age," he reflected, suggesting that there might have been a series of creations in the different geological ages.

"Mary Schweitzer and Dinosaur Soft Tissues" by Dr. Paul Cameron

While most of what we know about dinosaurs comes from bones, the availability of soft tissue to be preserved in fossils would allow analysis of proteins and DNA, which in turn would allow greater understanding of the relationships between species. Cameron (medical doctor and associate professor, University of Melbourne) talked about the nature and formation of fossils, before introducing conference participants to Mary Schweitzer, a Christian and a scientist who has studied fossilized dinosaur bones

Dr. Geoffrey Madigan presented aspects of radiometric dating on June 12.

at the University of Montana since the 1990s. Her work has been able to identify soft tissues in Tyrannosaurus Rex bones, but this has created controversy among scientists, and Cameron reflected that this is still a developing field of scientific research. The outcomes of Schweitzer's work were not expected by scientists and have been used by some young-earth creationists to argue against the older age of dinosaur fossils. Cameron highlighted the process of the science with a quote from Schweitzer: "I have a lot of respect for people who wouldn't just immediately accept our results." Changes in scientific thinking require data that is accurate, reproducible, and published, and Cameron concluded with the challenge to produce stronger evidence to refute the current understanding of dinosaurs.

NATHAN BROWN is an author and journalist, as well as a book editor at Signs Publishing Company, based in Melbourne, Victoria. He attended the "Age of Life on Earth" Conference as a guest of Sydney Adventist Forum, although via livestream because of COVID-19 travel restrictions, and reports on the event in the capacity of an independent journalist.

HEAVEN AND ELLEN WHITE

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KEYWORDS: Malcolm Bull, *Seeking a Sanctuary*, "Eschatology and Manners," the interior décor of Adventism

Malcolm Bull:

"WHEN ONE THIS GOOD COMES ALONG"

BY JONATHAN BUTLER

We are fortunate to have lived in the generation of Seventh-day Adventists who could read *Seeking a Sanctuary: Seventh-day Adventism and the American Dream* by Malcolm Bull and Keith Lockhart (first edition, Harper & Row, 1989; second edition, expanded and revised, Indiana University Press, 2007). The book may represent, to some degree, both a cause and an effect of the Church's coming of age. At the very least, reading it is now an invaluable way of learning about ourselves, and with every rereading of it we learn something more.

Of course, most Adventists have never heard of the book, much less read it. When two unknown writers approached a publisher with a book idea on Seventh-day Adventism, whose millions of adherents would be, presumably, interested in reading about themselves, it sounded like the makings of a bestseller. But when no more than a fraction of Adventists got around to reading the book, it was bound to disappoint in the way of book sales. Harper & Row, in fact, was disappointed twice, with the dismal sales of both Ronald Numbers's *Prophetess and Health* in 1976 and *Seeking a Sanctuary* in 1989. The underwhelming sales of their book caused Bull and Lockhart to believe they were talking only to each other, in an echo chamber, and no one else was listening. It is the bane of most writers who work alone, in the immaculate isolation and silence of their home offices, never to hear the "aha" or "wow" from a grateful reader. Even a negative response would be welcome rather than being ignored. A cranky John Adams, for example, wrote "Fool!" in the margin of one writer. It may be worth saying here, however, that the value of a book cannot necessarily be measured by reactions to it or sales of it. It is hardly an exact science to calibrate the importance of a book. But there is something to say for weighing this book—not in pounds but in gravitas. How it expanded or enriched or changed minds in college classes, Sabbath schools, or reading groups. Not just how many read it but who read it. And more importantly, who reread it. But writing an analytical study of Adventists, unlikely to receive the imprimatur of the General Conference or a showcasing at the local ABC, is no way to flood the

Seventh-day Adventist market with a book.

If book reviews count for anything—and they do—*Seeking a Sanctuary* met with sensational reviews both outside and inside the Adventist church. Martin E. Marty, one of the great American church historians of his generation, commented, "We do not often pause to point out a denominational history, but when one this good comes along, we pause." Harold Bloom, the renowned American literary critic, referred to the book as "the most informed study of Adventism" he had seen. Ronald Numbers, who knows something about Adventism from inside and out, called it "A masterpiece," and added, "It is by far the best book on Adventism that has ever appeared."

Adventists, with the most to gain or lose by its contents, gave the book its most careful scrutiny. They lauded it with the highest praise, and they registered the more trenchant criticisms. But any thoughtful critique is a kind of compliment; it means the book has been taken seriously. For there was no mistaking the fact that many Adventists had found it of monumental importance. Reading it would be a watershed, dividing their lives between "before" they had pored over its profound and insightful take on the church and "after." Gregory Schneider, in the *Church History* journal, said it was "the most comprehensive review and insightful analysis in print of the sociology, history, and culture of the Seventh-day Adventist church." He also saw "a distortion at the center" of the book's vision, too sharply contrasting American individualism and Adventist collectivism. Doug Morgan, in *Spectrum*, praised the book as "nothing short of a spectacular achievement," but fundamentally faulted it for characterizing Adventism as socially and politically passive, and understating the church's transformative involvement in the wider culture. I also reviewed it in *Spectrum* and declared of Bull and Lockhart: "In alternating between Adventism's past and its present as both historians and sociologists of religion, the authors have combined an astonishing command of their sources with a penetrating, interpretive vision." But I quarreled with their "casting Adventism as a hierarchy over against American democracy." And I wondered aloud whether Adventism was less "an alternative to the American way of life" than "an intensification of Americanism."

What surprised me the most, however, was not that liberal academics praised the book, along with taking issue with it in places; I did not expect conservatives (at least those who read the book with any care) to find in Bull and Lockhart, to no small degree, kindred spirits. Herbert Douglass, far to the right theologically on the Adventist spectrum, gave the book the most unequivocally positive endorsement. Nothing says more on the merits of *Seeking a Sanctuary* than that both left and right spoke highly of it.

All that said, over thirty years after I had read *Seeking a Sanctuary* for the first time, I was reading an excellent historical theology by Rolf Pöhler entitled *Dynamic Truth*. The footnotes saturate nearly half of every page, and Malcolm Bull's article on "eschatology and manners" in a French journal peeked out from the fine print. I knew I had to read it, even if it meant relearning French. (It turned out only the abstract was in French.) Though a short article, it kept me occupied all afternoon, as I mulled over its contents, scribbled copious notes in its margins, forwarded it to friends, in a high fever about what I had just read. I felt as if I had been struck by lightning. I was dazed, disoriented. So much of its primary documents—Ellen White's first vision, her *Adventist Home*—were deeply

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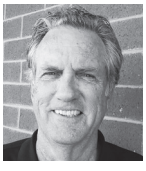
familiar to me. Yet I felt as if I were reading them for the first time. Bull saw things I had never seen.

As I pondered the article, I came to realize how White's first vision was, in embryonic form, so much of the life and thought she went on to embody throughout her life. I saw, too, that Bull's article foreshadowed so much of what would come later in *Seeking a Sanctuary*. It went without saying that the frail little New England girl, who had been lifted toward heaven in trance, nevertheless had her feet firmly planted in a particular geography, ethnicity, nationality, and culture. The other world that she saw in vision looked a whole lot like her Victorian world. What is so imaginative and innovative about Bull's article is the way in which it links earth to heaven in Ellen Harmon's and the later Ellen White's mind. There seems to have been an almost seamless connection between her world and the next. In her first vision, "the path the Advent people were traveling to the city" of her eschatology found its living counterpart in the social mobility toward the Victorian manners on this earth. To become worthy of Victorian society was to be prepared for the society of angels in heaven.

The fact that this life and the afterlife were for White in such close proximity prompts a fresh and interesting way of thinking about Seventh-day Adventism, as to its belief and practice. The hallmark of Adventist eschatology—premillennialism—takes on a very different meaning, if it is not completely recast. And the manners, the ethics, the practice of Adventism assumes, perhaps, far greater importance than its theology. For White, it seems, Adventism was less an ideology than an ethos, less a "system" than a "key," in the language of Russian Orthodox theologian Georges Florovsky. White was an artist whose vision for Adventism transformed our way of understanding and seeing the church. She was not a theologian introducing a school of thought or a set of doctrines but an artist at the origins of an art movement. She created the interior décor of Adventism (as, say, impressionism once did for the world), and it was far more pervasive and penetrating than any "statement of beliefs" could possibly have been. At least this was my take on Bull's article, and it took my breath away.



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KEYWORDS: Malcolm Bull, "Eschatology and Manners," Bryan Wilson, All Souls College, the heavenly court and angelic gaze

HOW "ESCHATOLOGY AND MANNERS" *Came to Be Written*

BY MALCOLM BULL

In 1985, Keith Lockhart and I had recently got a contract from Harper & Row to write the book that became *Seeking a Sanctuary*. We were both extremely young and had no track record whatsoever, so we were very lucky to sell the idea. The commissioning editor was Clayton Carlson, who had been involved in Ron Numbers's *The Prophetess of Health*, and must have hoped that our book would have a similar impact, which it didn't.

On the strength of our small advance, we spent the summer of 1985 traveling around the United States doing interviews and gathering materials wherever we went, but at the time we had written nothing save for the three hastily concocted sample chapters for the publisher (all subsequently discarded). We needed time to reflect on what we were doing, and an invitation from the Oxford sociologist Bryan Wilson provided the opportunity. He ran a weekly seminar in the sociology of religion at All Souls College, at which visiting academics and Oxford doctoral students presented their research in progress. I had participated in the seminar as an undergraduate and, although I had no ongoing affiliation with the university, Wilson continued to allow me to attend and suggested that we might like to give a presentation based on our research. Early in 1986, I wrote and presented the paper and in the discussion that followed both Keith and I fielded questions about the project as a whole.

Wilson had himself once planned to write a book on Seventh-day Adventism, but was said to have abandoned

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the idea after his notes were destroyed in a flood. It was maybe on this account that he took an interest in what we were doing, acting as an informal mentor to our project throughout. Wilson had written extensively on millenarianism and on charisma, and "Eschatology and Manners" reflects those preoccupations. But it was perhaps Wilson's personality that shaped the text more profoundly. He considered good manners to be the essence of social interaction and he was always notably formal. There was nothing pretentious about this, and it probably owed more to his upper-working-class upbringing in Leeds where, as he later recalled, "We were a better class working-class family than the pump boys—they were rough; we weren't rough," than to the elaborate refinements of All Souls, at the time one of the most traditional of the Oxford colleges.

I suspected that a paper on manners might appeal to Wilson, but there were also ideas I could draw on from within recent historical scholarship. I had been reading Norbert Elias's *The Civilizing Process* on the role of court etiquette in the development of self-restraint in early modern Europe at the same time as Michel Foucault's work on the gaze in *The Birth of the Clinic* and *Discipline and Punish*. This conjunction led me to think about the function of the gaze in promoting self-awareness and self-discipline. Although *Spectrum* had yet to publish the transcript of the trial of Israel Dammon, Ron Graybill's PhD thesis of 1983 had already revealed that early Adventist worship had a raucous, unrestrained quality quite alien to later practice. I began to wonder whether Adventism, once quite rough around the edges, had undergone its own civilizing process, inspired by the heavenly court of Ellen White's visions, and mediated by the angelic gaze.

In that form, the argument might have been accommodated within traditional accounts of the routinization of charisma developed by Weber and indeed Wilson himself. But that did not seem to do justice to the evidence we were gathering. Adventism just did not fit existing sociological categories all that comfortably. Rather than being a religious community that had once undergone the civilizing process, perhaps Adventism *was* a civilizing process, repeatedly civilizing new generations of converts and new outsider communities as it spread throughout the world. And it was this idea, first adumbrated in "Eschatology and Manners," that was later developed in *Seeking a Sanctuary*.

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Although Wilson considered the paper "not quite in the genre of the sociology of religion," he thought it might be publishable, and suggested I send it to the journal where he had published his first article, the *Archives de sciences sociales des religions*, edited in Paris by Jean Séguy. Although the article now seems to me to be itself a little rough around the edges, it was published more or less as it stood. Sadly, almost no one appears to have read it from that day to this. But at the time, that was less discouraging than it might have been because Keith and I were in constant dialogue with a remarkable group of scholars at Newbold College, which was where Keith was teaching part-time, and where we did most of our research: Michael Pearson (who had himself been Wilson's DPhil student at Oxford), Harry Leonard, and of our own generation, Julian Lethbridge and Kenneth Newport (later the author of the definitive study of the Branch Davidians). Sustained by their support, and often chastened by their skepticism, Keith and I went on with the project.

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KEYWORDS: the Heavenly Court, restraint and decorum, hierarchical social order, Adventist ethic

ESCHATOLOGY AND MANNERS *in Seventh-day Adventism*

BY MALCOLM BULL

Malcolm Bull, "Eschatology and Manners in Seventh-day Adventism," *Archives de sciences sociales des religions* 33e Annëe, No. 65.1 (Jan-Mar, 1988): 145–159. Republished with permission.

I. Introduction

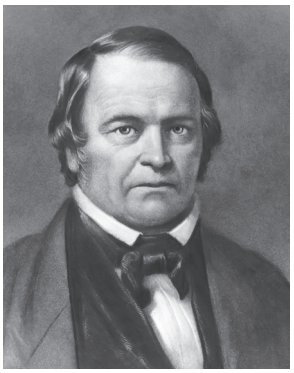
The Seventh-day Adventist Church is a worldwide organization with about five million adherents. Eighty-five percent of the membership is now found in the Third World, notably in Black Africa, Latin America, and the Pacific. Despite such wide geographical dispersion there is little diversity in belief or practice. Adventists are united on the central core of their faith: the expectation of Christ's imminent second coming, the observance of the seventh day of the week as a Sabbath, and a commitment to health marked by total abstinence from tobacco, alcohol, drugs, and various types of meat. Other doctrines and attitudes are held in common with many conservative Protestants from whom, however, Adventists are both ideologically distinct and culturally distanced.

Despite its size, the Seventh-day Adventist church remains peculiarly obscure. Unlike the Mormons or the Witnesses, Adventists play no part in the popular mythology of the western world. Diffident in evangelism, and preferring to avoid conflict with secular authority, Adventists have never achieved notoriety and, perhaps as a consequence, have not enjoyed familiarity either. On an academic level too, Adventism has excited relatively little interest; no major study has yet been published. Existing work has attempted to place Adventism within established sociological categories. Wilson first described the group as a revolutionist sect, but later published a more nuanced discussion in the context of denominationalization.[1] Schwartz discovered a "version of the Protestant ethic";[2] most recently, Theobald has concentrated on modernization.[3] Valuable as this work has been, it has done little to delineate the distinctive character of the sect. Adventism is a complex phenomenon, which fits uneasily with any one designation.[4] Similarities with other millenarian movements and Protestant groups are sometimes superficial. Basic questions have still to be answered. For example, what is the significance of the pre-occupation with the Second Advent? How is the social orientation of the sect most accurately described? And how is the genesis of the movement to be interpreted?

Obviously, I do not hope to give full answers to all, or any, of these questions in the course of this paper. But I want to hint at tentative answers to some of them by looking at the formative years of the movement, and in particular at the teaching of the Adventist prophet Ellen White.

II. Historical Background

The denomination has its origins in the Millerite Movement of the 1830s and 40s. William Miller, a New England farmer, had concluded that the end of the world would take place in 1843. When this did not happen, his followers revised his intricate calculations in order to show that the Bible predicted the second Advent for October 22, 1844. The 50,000 people who waited in vain on this second occasion came to refer to it as the Great Disappointment. Afterwards, most drifted back to the churches from which they had been drawn by Miller's preaching and publications.[5] But a small minority, probably about 2,000, refused to accept that Miller's chronology had been in error. They argued that the date had been correct but the nature of the event mistaken. Some considered that Christ had come to earth in spirit, others that he had moved from one part of heaven to another.



William Miller

Those of the latter persuasion were known as Shut Door Adventists because they thought the door of mercy had been closed on October 22. Salvation, they believed, was now possible only for those who had been Millerites and assured only for those who passed certain tests. The future leaders of Seventh-day Adventism considered it necessary to observe a seventh-day Sabbath, and an associated group deemed it vital to practice sacramental foot-washing and kissing. The worship of both groups was ecstatic. They praised God by shouting aloud until overcome by the power of the Spirit. They would then fall to the floor, sometimes still shouting, groaning, and singing, but more often stricken as though dead.[6]

It would be wrong to presume from this that the early Adventists were drawn from the lowest stratum of society. On the contrary, most were relatively affluent and respectable. A study of the accounts of the Adventist periodical, the *Review and Herald*, shows that in 1860, 78% of the subscribers in Michigan were farmers or farm operators, compared with 38% of the state's population as a whole. By contrast, only 5% were unskilled laborers, compared to 31% of the general population. Unsurprisingly, 58% of subscribers were found to be more affluent than the local average. As the sect had no real organization at this stage, the list of subscribers probably gives the best available indication of the movement's constituency.[7]

In the 1840s too, most believers appeared to have a respectable background, even if their faith brought them occasional hardship. It was within this setting that a teenage girl, Ellen White, rose to prominence. She fell into trances in which all normal body functions appeared to cease, and during which she claimed to receive visions. In the 1840s, about one hundred Sabbath-keeping Adventists accepted her as God's messenger. In 1851, they abandoned belief in the Shut Door and began evangelistic work. In 1863, the Seventh-day Adventist church was formally organized. James White, Ellen's husband, played a leading role in the newly formed denomination, and he was also responsible for publishing her writings, which were distributed to the rapidly increasing membership. Understood to be direct communications from God, Ellen White's counsel guided the church until her death in 1915. Even today, all converts are expected to acknowledge the significance of her prophetic ministry.[8]

Although she was never elevated to a status comparable to that of Joseph Smith in Mormonism, her role bears comparison to that of Mary Baker Eddy in Christian Science, and her writings have done much to define the

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character of the sect. More than the statements of faith, which the church periodically publishes, the thought of Ellen White provides an ideological framework for the church's mission, binding together an eclectic array of doctrines into a coherent world view. I will thus examine the relationship between White's cosmology, eschatology, and ethics, in an effort to define the character of the Adventist ideology.

III. The Heavenly Court

In her first vision, in December 1844, Ellen White saw the Second Advent and traveled with the saved to the heavenly city. The journey—by cloud—took seven days. On arrival, Jesus distributed crowns, golden harps, palms of victory, and long white mantles. The saints, 144,000 in number, stood in a perfect square on the sea of glass from where they marched to the gate of the city. Then, in White's words, "Jesus raised His mighty, glorious arm, laid hold of the pearly gate, swung it back on its glittering hinges, and said to us, 'You have washed your robes in My blood, stood stiffly for My truth, enter in.'"[9]

This moment, the arrival of the saved within the citadel of God, represented the final realization of the Adventist hope, but it did not mark the limit of the Adventist imagination. White gives a detailed account of heaven itself. In outline, this picture differs little from that of other millenarians. There is a shared emphasis upon the opulence of the New Jerusalem, and a common use of traditional Christian symbols. But even in this, her first vision, White's description has the hallmarks of what became a characteristically Adventist understanding of the divine realm.

There is a marked, almost military concentration upon order. The 144,000 stand in formation; they march rather than walk. Jesus welcomes those who have "stood stiffly," like soldiers, for truth. The saints are differentiated by their uniforms—martyrs wear red as border on their garments[10]—and by their insignia of achievement: "Some of them had very bright crowns, others not so bright. Some crowns appeared heavy with stars, while others had but a few."[11]

In the New Jerusalem nothing has been left to chance. Every home is provided with a golden shelf upon which the saints can rest their crowns, and all the crowns are labeled with their owners' names.[12] Heaven is not, then, a place of unrestrained luxury; there is no scope for self-indulgence. All are satisfied with their allotted status; order and decorum prevail.

This conception of heaven is brought into sharper relief in White's account of the fall of Satan. Here the origin of sin is explained as a dispute over the question of precedence in the heavenly hierarchy. "Satan in heaven, before his rebellion, was a high and exalted angel, next in honor to God's dear son."[13] He had been content with his position, until:

> The great Creator assembled the heavenly host, that he might in the presence of all the angels confer special honor upon his Son. The Son was seated on the throne with the Father, and the heavenly throng of holy angels was gathered around them. The Father then made known that it was ordained by himself that Christ, his Son, should be equal with himself; so that wherever was the presence of his Son, it was as his own presence.[14]

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Very rare, illustrated antique engraving of the almighty power flaming from the eternal sky. Victorian Engraving, 1885

In White's account, Satan's crime was specific. His revolt against the law had been occasioned by an unwillingness to accept an hierarchical social order. He argued for the rights of the individual over and against the duties imposed by heavenly society and protested against a divine government which took action without consultation.

The scene White describes is reminiscent of a royal court. God, the King, confirms that Christ, the Crown Prince, is to be his co-ruler. The court is assembled to witness the proclamation, and the angels, as good courtiers, bow to Jesus "to acknowledge his supremacy, and high authority and rightful rule."[15]

In contrast to the stately ceremony of the heavenly court, Satan is presented as a populist, a demagogue. Jealous of the status given to Jesus, he assembled the angels and addressed them.

> He told them that henceforth all the sweet liberty the angels had enjoyed was at an end. For had not a ruler been appointed over them, to whom they from henceforth must yield servile honor? He stated to them that he had called them together to assure them that he no longer would submit to this invasion of his rights and theirs.[16]

Satan advocated reform. "He claimed that angels needed no law, but should be left free to follow their own will, which would ever guide them right. He promised them a new and better government than they then had, in which all would be freedom."[17] Eventually he proposed open rebellion, telling the angels that "they must assert their liberty and gain by force the position and authority which was not willingly accorded them."[18]

In the ensuing battle between angels loyal to God and Satan's followers, Satan was defeated and expelled from heaven. In White's account, Satan's crime was specific. His revolt against the law had been occasioned by an unwillingness to accept an hierarchical social order. He argued for the rights of the individual over and against the duties imposed by heavenly society and protested against a divine government which took action without consultation.

Heaven was, in the thought of Ellen White, not only a literal place, but an actual society: its structure that of a court. God the Father is, as king, given a multitude of royal appellations. His Son shares these but is also referred to as "a prince in the royal courts of heaven." His role in government is more active than that of the Father. He is frequently described as the commander of the angels, the "mighty commander of the hosts of heaven."[19] It is in this capacity that Christ is identified, contrary to Christian tradition, with Michael the archangel, who leads the heavenly army in the battle against the devil.[20]

With the departure of Satan, the angel Gabriel now stands "next in honor to the Son of God."[21] He is responsible for conveying messages of particular importance to mankind. Information coming in the other direction is processed by another rank in the heavenly bureaucracy. According to White:

> The very highest angels in the heavenly courts are appointed to work out the prayers which ascend to God for the advancement of the cause of God. Each angel has his particular post of duty which he is not permitted to leave for any other place.[22]

Angels are not only involved in communication. Some sing in the heavenly choir, others record the deeds

of mankind in books, and the cherubim and seraphim minister in the heavenly sanctuary. But when not actively engaged in such work, the angels simply observe events on earth. White describes how when Jesus was arrested in Gethsemane, "Many companies of holy angels, each with a tall commanding angel at their head were sent to witness the scene."[23]

Playing no part in the work of heaven, and enjoying only observer status, are the inhabitants of unfallen worlds. White believed that God had created and populated other planets whose inhabitants had, unlike Adam and Eve, not succumbed to temptation. These beings, whom White described as "of all sizes . . . noble, majestic and lovely,"[24] act as a kind of chorus, watching and being edified by the dramatic struggle between good and evil that is taking place on earth.

The divine realm thus appears as a highly developed society. There is unity of purpose but division of labor, a centralized administration but a dispersed population. Despite this complexity, Ellen White does not describe heaven as self-contained. It is neither discrete from, nor complete without, the inhabitants of earth.

On this planet the angels are God's representatives. White described how each person has a guardian angel, who keeps him from harm and promotes godliness in his heart. Angels also participate in direct evangelistic work, drive devils away from religious meetings, and attend every aspect of human life.[25]

But this is not the only connection between heaven and earth. At the Second Coming the saved are destined to fill the vacancies created in the heavenly court by the fall of Satan and his angels.[26] Interaction between heaven and earth is thus conceived as taking place in two ways. Prior to the Second Advent, angels play an important but largely invisible part in human society. After the Second Advent, the saved will take up new roles in angelic society.

IV. The Cultivation of Manners

This expectation was frequently invoked in White's ethical teaching. The moral and personal qualities she valued were those which would best equip the redeemed to move easily in heavenly society. Believing that "the happiness of heaven will consist in the pure communion of holy beings, the harmonious social life with the blessed angels," White advocated, "the proper cultivation of the social elements of our nature."[27] "There should," she wrote, "be a continual effort to imitate the society we expect soon to join; namely angels of God who have never fallen from sin."[28]

As befitted her understanding of the nature of heavenly society, White singled out restraint and decorum as the defining characteristics of social interaction in the divine realm. Even Satan, she noted, "has not forgotten his manners in the heavenly courts."[29] As for members of the Adventist group, they, as followers of Jesus should, she said, "be constantly improving in manners."[30]

Not all Adventists found it easy to follow her advice. White addressed the problem with characteristic vigor. In 1862 she wrote:

> There is an evil among some of the poor which will certainly prove their ruin unless they overcome it. They have embraced the truth with their coarse, rough uncultivated habits. . . . They look upon others who are more orderly and refined as being proud, and you may hear them say: "The truth brings us down upon a level." But it is an entire mistake to think that the truth brings the receiver down. It brings him up, refines his taste, sanctifies his judgment, and, if lived out, is continually fitting him for the society of holy angels in the City of God.[31]

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It was not only the impoverished who lacked self-control and social finesse. Children too were prone to be unrestrained. If they did not receive proper discipline at home, White recommended that "they should be removed from their injudicious parents and placed under as severe regulations and drilling as soldiers in an army." Drastic measures but necessary, for

> Those who have had no respect for order or discipline in this life would have no respect for the order which is observed in heaven. They can never be admitted into heaven, for all worthy of an entrance there will love order and respect discipline.[32]

The heavenly court was, however, not the only place where men could expect to rub shoulders with angels. White did not advocate a simple policy of restraint for which later rewards would compensate. Angels were already present on earth and were likely to be offended by any departure from decorous behavior. As White commented, "If the Lord abides with us . . . we shall realize that angels are watching us and our manners will be gentle and forbearing."[33]

The process of socializing the saints thus began on earth. Angels could be attracted by good manners, repelled by bad. As guests in the home, angels imparted "peace and a fragrant influence." Accordingly White wrote that parents were to "work most earnestly to have an orderly, correct household, that the heavenly angels may be attracted to it."[34]

Any uncontrolled display of emotion would, however, cause the angels acute embarrassment. Writing to a family in mourning, White described their feelings as "little less than rebellion against God." For she continued, "I saw you all dwelling upon your bereavement, and giving way to your excitable feelings, until your noisy demonstrations of grief caused angels to hide their faces and withdraw from the scene."[35]

In similar vein, White wrote of some Adventist preachers who made angels in the audience ashamed through "common cheap talk, grotesque attitudes and workings of the features."[36] Ministers, Ellen White believed, "should not feel that they can make no improvement in voice or manners," for "much can be done."[37] "No man," she argued, "can properly fill a position in connection with the work of God who is controlled by feelings and moves from impulse."[38]

The refinement which White considered the prerequisite of acceptance in angelic society could, she believed, be acquired on earth. Indeed, there was no option: "The heavenly character must be acquired on earth, or it can never be acquired at all."[39] White thought that "The work of educating the mind and manners may be carried forward to perfection."[40] Her prescription was simple. "The character should be holy, the manners comely, the words without guile, and thus should we follow on step by step until we are fitted for translation."[41] "The world," White wrote, "is God's workshop, where he fashions us for the courts of heaven. He uses the planing knife upon our quivering hearts until the roughness and irregularities are removed, and we are fitted for our proper places in the heavenly building."[42]

The interpenetration of White's cosmology, eschatology, and ethics is thus made clear. Heaven is a monarchy; its organization is like that of any royal court. With the fall of Satan and the departure of angels of libertarian inclination, vacancies have arisen in the heavenly bureaucracy. These will be filled by those members of the human race who demonstrate loyalty to the divine government. Angels thus encourage and reprove men until some have developed enough refinement and self-restraint to participate in a divine economy based on hierarchy and ceremonial.

V. The Development of Organization

The connection between this system of beliefs and the practices of those who upheld it is interesting. White's ideas developed from her visions, which usually occurred during the enthusiastic worship of her fellow believers, who would sing and shout while the prophetess fell into trance. Their activities were far from restrained. (On one occasion a visiting doctor, unnerved by the rumpus audible outside, refused to enter an Adventist home.[43]) But this was the setting in which White learnt of the structure of heaven, its hierarchy, and customs. What she saw was quite obviously not a projection of her own religious environment. The early Adventists spurned all forms of organization prior to 1863, and, even then, looked upon it as a necessary evil. Thus in 1860, when White

began publicly to advocate the emulation of the heavenly court, Adventists lacked any formal structure, and had no apparent inclination to create one. They still practiced enthusiastic worship. In a letter to his wife, James White describes how, in 1860, he and two friends, while in prayer, had been thrown, groaning, to the floor.[44]

But in time, the organization of heaven came to be used as an example for organization in the church. Rather than resisting church order, ministers "should," White wrote, "discipline the church of God and teach them to work harmoniously like a well-drilled company of soldiers."[45] Similarly, those who persisted in ecstatic worship were branded as fanatics. White castigated one such group for bringing the name Seventh-day Adventist into disrepute by their "coarse and uncultivated" behavior, their "boisterous manners," and their failure to "discriminate and render honor to whom honor is due."[46] By the beginning of the twentieth century, enthusiasm had been so long absent from the church's worship, that its attempted re-introduction in Indiana was widely regarded as Satanic.[47] At around the same time, the increasingly bureaucratic system of church government took on the centralized character that it has since retained.

What may be observed in nineteenth-century Seventh-day Adventism is an example of the much-discussed pattern of rationalization in which a movement is institutionalized.[48] The interesting aspect of the Adventist experience is that it highlights the interrelationship between a prophet, an ideology, and a set of practices in effecting this familiar transformation. The 1840s were a period of general enthusiasm from which a charismatic leader arose. The authority accorded to her enshrined her revelations as normative even though their content was implicitly at odds with the practices of the group. In time, the prophet worked the material from her visions into a coherent system of beliefs with which the group's existing practices were inconsistent. The prophet then used her authority to iron out these discrepancies, and thus obliterated the very practices which had fostered her own emergence. The charismatic leader thus appears as the agent of rationalization, invoking ideology to change patterns of behavior.[49]

This process is of particular significance, for it suggests one reason why the Adventists have acknowledged none of White's would-be successors. With the suppression of ecstatic worship, White's prophetic status became the only justification for her visionary experiences—the very experiences which had originally legitimated her prophetic claims. Having drawn up the ladder of charisma behind her, but having accepted no official position in the church's hierarchy, White made it difficult for her authority to be transmitted. She held no office to which others might succeed, and those who claimed similar psychic powers disqualified themselves, not only from recognition, but probably from church membership as well.[50]

VI. The Adventist Ethic

The cultivation of manners was just one of many aspects of life upon which White advised the early Adventist community. Her thought ranged across a host of topics. The development of restraint, with which, in White's mind, the possession of good manners was synonymous, does, as a general principle, provide a key to the understanding of the Adventist ethical position as a whole. More than specific injunctions or taboos, the call for restraint provided guidance in the innumerable areas of life in which propriety can only be a matter of degree. As such, it constitutes the core of what might loosely be termed the Adventist ethic.

The precise nature of this ethic is worth close scrutiny. It is possible to observe in the Adventist approach to social interaction attitudes typical of a certain class. Being respectable and prosperous, Adventists naturally wished to differentiate themselves from the spontaneity and vulgarity of lower classes. On the other hand, they had no time for what White termed "worldly etiquette." The Adventist ethic required the control of affectation as well as the control of the affects. In this indifference to artificiality, it is easy to see the sturdy independence of a rural elite, unwilling to concede the advantages of urban polish.[51]

What is more unusual is the ideological context in which these attitudes find expression. The Adventist ethic is part of, and historically a development from, a complex of ideas about cosmology and eschatology. This in itself is unsurprising; one looks automatically for some connection between the ethics and the eschatology of a chiliastic group. But the Adventist ethic is not provisional upon the imminent end of the world. It is not an interim ethic that functions as a guide to morality for some brief

Having drawn up the ladder of charisma behind her, but having accepted no official position in the church's hierarchy, White made it difficult for her authority to be transmitted. She held no office to which others might succeed, and those who claimed similar psychic powers disqualified themselves, not only from recognition, but probably from church membership as well.

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and exceptional period prior to the final cataclysm. The call for restraint is not contingent upon the end of this world, but upon the nature of the next. Indeed, it is, at times, implied that the end of the world is contingent upon the perfect realization of the ethic. In other words, time and more especially the end of time, although important in Adventist thought, is neither the source nor the focus of White's call for restraint. In this, Adventism appears atypical amongst millenarian groups, about which it is often asserted that, "the most important thing . . . is [their] *attitude towards time*."[52] If, as appears to be the case, Adventist morality quickly became independent of specifically temporal considerations, time can hardly be said to constitute the dominant element in Adventist ideology.

The timing of the transition from earth to heaven may not be of importance, but what of the juxtaposition of the New Earth and the Old? Does the Adventist system offer rewards in heaven as a compensation for restraint on earth?[53] Superficially there is some evidence to support this; in her first vision, White dwells lovingly upon the profusion of gold which the saints will encounter. But her true emphasis lies elsewhere; hers is not a consumer paradise in which the individual is offered limitless gratification. According to White, the saints will enter a highly developed society not in order to be freed from responsibility but in order to take it up. They cannot, as according to Burridge millenarians usually do, look forward to redemption as "a complete release from obligation."[54] The saints have not deposited their merits in some spiritual bank; they cannot expect to spend the accumulated capital on their arrival in heaven. The restraint enjoined on earth is compulsory in heaven. There is no radical dislocation between earth and heaven; the former is simply a training ground for the latter. The discipline advocated by White does not presuppose compensation.

Here again, Adventism fails to fit the millenarian stereotype in which "the transition from the present in the final future is not a gradual process of progressive approximations to the final goal . . . but a sudden and revolutionary leap onto a totally different level of existence."[55] On the contrary, the Second Advent will take place when the saints have perfected their social roles, and for them at least there will be no "revolutionary leap." The angels who have been their invisible companions will, at last, become visible as, in typically post-millennial fashion, the Second Advent makes manifest that which was previously hidden.

This of course applies only to the saints. For the damned there is no millennium. Adventists believe that the imperfect will be annihilated at the Second Coming, only to be revived one thousand years later, in order to learn the verdict of the Last Judgment. Thus, it could be argued that Adventist eschatology is not premillennialist as has long been assumed, but at least partially post-millennialist,[56] for the saved experience no reversal of their position and the damned experience nothing at all.[57]

What then is the nature of the Adventist ethic if it does not hinge either upon the imminence of the *eschaton* or upon the polarization of values between the new earth

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Engraving from 1882 showing rioters attacking the Royal Palace during the French Revolution. "Adventists were horrified by the French Revolution, and although they valued the American Revolution as having guaranteed religious liberty, they feared the radicalism associated with it."

and the old? How is it related to the rest of the Adventist belief system? The value of the restraint is, in the thought of Ellen White, not related to the structural changes in the history of the universe, but to its social formation. Adventists were exhorted to restrain the affects because of the precise social constitution of the heavenly court. The Adventist ethic is one of preparation in a very literal sense. The practice of restraint is designed to result in both its perfection and internalization. A process which in turn effects the socialization of the saints into the company of angels. Restraint is thus its own reward in the form of upward social mobility in the spiritual sphere.

The latent functions of this belief seem clear. Self-discipline and a little social polish are also conducive to material improvement, and the socio-economic benefits of an ordered life are as evident in Adventism as they are in other Protestant sects.[58] There are, however, two significant ways in which the Adventist ethic differs from the Weberian Protestant ethic.[59] The first is that unlike Weber's Calvinists, Adventists sought not to prove, but to perfect their spiritual status. For the Calvinist, the unlimited accumulation of wealth could only augment the certainty of divine election, whereas for the Adventist, a rise in socio-economic status might threaten rather than enhance his spiritual position. The reason for this apparent paradox is that while the Adventist ethic could provide an incentive to social refinement, it could also function as a disincentive to assertive social or economic behavior. The acquisition of good manners was necessary for acceptance in angelic society, but the exercise of independent judgment was not. Quite the opposite, it was the desire to advance beyond his allotted position that had precipitated Satan's fall. The saints are thus being trained to serve, and not to rule.[60] Accordingly, it is possible to see how the Adventist ethic, which so strongly promotes upward mobility, also sets a ceiling upon it. For at some point, perhaps when a shift is likely from self-government to the government of others, there emerges a tension between the believer's social and spiritual obligations.

This ideological peculiarity may suggest one explanation for Adventism's unchanging socio-economic constituency. Just as a century ago, Adventists are today marginally better off than the rest of the population. The rapid upward mobility of individuals has not effected a corresponding change in the composition of the group. External factors are obviously important in this, the social prestige of American denominations is quite clearly defined, and a rise in an individual's status is often accompanied by a corresponding change in religious affiliation or behavior.[61] However, the nature of the Adventist ethic also points to internal pressures, which may both discourage certain types of social advancement and prompt the apostasy of those who wish to play a significant role in wider society.

The second way in which the Adventist ethic diverges from the Protestant ethic is related to the first. In Adventism, membership of a spiritual elite is the object rather than the presupposition of action. Consequently,

while the Protestant ethic enshrines competition and individualism, the Adventist ethic, like the Catholic, emphasizes cooperation, collectivism, and specifically social values;[62] good manners cannot, by definition, be acquired or practiced in social isolation.

The early Adventists were separated from one another by geography, and from their neighbors by religion. Camp meetings were the first means of bringing believers together, but, by the 1870s, medical and educational institutions provided a more permanent focus for social interaction.[63] In the development of denominational institutions and agencies, it is thus possible to discern not only an aversion to contact with the world, but a belief in the positive spiritual benefit of contact with other church members. The Adventist ethic required social interaction, but the seventh-day Sabbath and other taboos reduced the possibility of socializing with non-believers. There was thus a strong ideological element in the creation of an Adventist sub-culture, which minimized contact with outsiders while at the same time maximizing social interaction between believers.[64]

The Adventist ethic of restraint does not then slot neatly into the standard categories used either for Protestant or millenarian ethics. Ironically, what the Adventist ethic most closely resembles is the practice of restraint adopted in the court societies of seventeenth-century Europe. There, as Norbert Elias has argued, the control of the affects was the prerequisite of social acceptance.[65] In Adventist thought, it was the absolute monarchy of God rather than of the Ancien Regime which was the context and justification for a code of self-control. In one case, the royal court was an actual habitation of the aristocracy; in the other, it was a supraempirical reality described for the Adventists by their prophet. But in both cases the function of the hierarchical social formation is the same; it constitutes the basis and the end of an ethic of restraint.

VII. Adventism in Social and Political Context

This similarity may not be entirely fortuitous. Although it is hazardous to interpret millenarian ideologies in the light of contemporary political and economic events, it may be possible to do so in the Adventist case without being too reductive. Christian eschatology has long been preoccupied with the Kingdom of God. In the American revolution, the repudiation of the King of England was accompanied by the millennial expectation of the inauguration of the Kingdom of God in the New World.[66] For at least some American Christians, however, the overthrow of the French monarchy cast suspicion onto the principles of the American revolution and the practice of republicanism. Amongst those with apocalyptic interests, the French Revolution served as an urgent reminder of the burgeoning powers of evil and the imminence of the final conflict. Prominent in this respect were the progenitors of the Seventh-day Adventists, the Millerites, who mistrusted the millennial optimism fostered by the populism of the Jacksonian era, and anxiously awaited the coming of their divine king. Adventists were equally horrified by the French Revolution,[67] and although they valued the American Revolution as having guaranteed religious liberty, they feared the radicalism associated with it. The writings of Thomas Paine had, White confidently asserted, been dictated by Satan himself.[68]

The inverse of this supposed literary collaboration can perhaps be seen in White's description of Satan's speeches to the heavenly court. The source of her account appears to have been Book V of *Paradise Lost*,[69] for she follows Milton's narrative in several places, including her description of Satan's speech. But White goes beyond Milton in emphasizing the political basis of the dispute. In terms which recall the rhetoric of the American Revolution, she writes of an "invasion of rights," of Satan's plans for "new and better government." She also introduces the

There was thus a strong ideological element in the creation of an Adventist sub-culture, which minimized contact with outsiders while at the same time maximizing social interaction between believers.

idea that one of Satan's grievances was the lack of proper consultation prior to God's actions.[70] Thus, Satan makes what it is tempting to read as a diabolical "Declaration of Independence."

It would be wrong to overstate the similarities. But it is evident that while the early Adventists associated social disorder with republican France and experienced it in republican America, they anticipated its removal by the monarchical government of heaven. Surely it is then unsurprising to find in White's account of the heavenly kingdom a society which is the antithesis of radical individualism. In affirming the need for divine order in a world of chaos, Adventists may also be seen as reaffirming the values of colonial America against those of the republic: the certain ethic of a hierarchical social order against the ambiguous morality of egalitarianism.

On a theoretical level, this picture of Adventist eschatology as reflecting political sentiments of a reactionary nature accords well with Burridge's analysis of millenarian activities.[71] Arguing that millenarianism arises where two conflicting prestige systems are juxtaposed, Burridge suggests that millenarian activities involve an attempt by the denizens of one prestige system to become the beneficiaries of the alternative system without becoming part of it. Accordingly, cargo cults are viewed as striving to acquire the material benefits of European civilization without undergoing the normally prerequisite social transformation.[72] Using this model, Adventism could be understood with reference to two alternative prestige systems: the monarchical, hierarchical formation of Europe, and the republican, egalitarian formation of post-revolutionary America. Adventist eschatology could then be understood as an attempt to describe how the social benefits of a more highly developed and ordered society might accrue to the self-reliant citizens of an immature nation.

Without further historical research, such a formulation can only be speculative. That said, the disorientation of mid-nineteenth-century America does suggest a plausible context for the Adventist concern with social order, just as the existence of contemporary monarchies in Europe, combined with the memories of a colonial past, provides an appropriate source for the vision of an hierarchical society.

VIII. Conclusion

Whatever the value of such analysis, an examination of the precise relationship of White's eschatology and ethics does, on a purely descriptive level, help to clarify the character of early Adventism. It emerges as a movement whose eschatology was postmillennialist rather than premillennialist, reactionary rather than revolutionary, and whose call for restraint is better understood as a social ethic than as a work ethic.

Such tentative attempts at classification may perhaps be of some use in defining the nature of nineteenth-century Adventism both as a millenarian movement and as a Protestant sect.

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KEYWORDS: Malcolm Bull, "Eschatology and Manners," Ellen White, refined manners, post-millennial?

THE DISCIPLINE *of Heaven*

BY RONALD GRAYBILL

I have studied Ellen White's first vision for years. I even traced the exact wording changes in a dozen different reprintings over a century. I have seen how the Pentecostal "Hallelujahs" of first printing were muted into the liturgical "Allelujahs" of geriatric Episcopalians in the final version. Then Malcolm Bull finds a whole new level of meaning in the manners of the heavenly court depicted in the first vision. Somehow, in the midst of the post-Disappointment chaos and confusion, this skinny, sickly teenager, Ellen Harmon, glimpsed the stately order and discipline of heaven.

Bull uses the term "manners" to refer to Ellen White's insistence that to be fitted for heaven, the *manner* of one's speech and deportment must be elevated and refined, not "rude, harsh" or "course and uncouth."[1] Satan's departure created vacancies in the heavenly ranks, which Ellen White said would be filled by those who could acquire the necessary good manners. Very frequently, when Ellen White mentions the need for refined manners,

Courtesy of the Ellen G. White Estate, Inc.

White Family, ca. 1864

Very frequently, when Ellen White mentions the need for refined manners, it is because angels are watching or because good manners are necessary if saints are to take their places among angels.

Yes, those who hope to be companions of angels must develop refined manners. There will be "a kind thoughtfulness for others, for this was characteristic of Christ."

it is because angels are watching or because good manners are necessary if saints are to take their places among angels. Bull even posited Adventists are some sort of post-millennialists because they achieve millennial perfection before stepping seamlessly into heaven.

For Ellen White, especially did one's speech, both public and private, reflect the desired manners. Uncouth speech should be avoided; common, cheap expressions should be replaced by sound and pure words. No wrong intonations or incorrect accents or emphasis were allowed. Even pronunciation was important. A nasal tone and thick, unclear speech was to be eschewed. On the other hand, Ellen White said that even excellent penmanship had nothing to do with preparation for heaven. This was contrary to the Victorian belief that good penmanship was a sure indication of self-discipline and a good character. After all, Ellen White's own handwriting was far from an example of elevated manners.[2]

One's clothing must also reflect elevated manners. Women should be simple and unpretending in dress. Men's dress should be neat, but not foppish. Even baptismal robes should be "well-shaped garments, and made of suitable material."[3]

When it comes to children and youth, Ellen White turned to Harvey Newcomb's 1853 book *How to Be a Man*, and held up his exhaustive example of "the neat, orderly and careful boy" in a letter to her sons, then published it in *Appeal to the Youth*. In this boy's room one found everything in order. "When he undresses, every article of his clothing is folded and laid together in the order. . . . He never considers himself dressed, till he has washed his hands and face, cleaned his teeth, and combed his hair; and he never thinks of setting down to the table with dirty hands. But the sloven boy exposes himself to sour looks and chiding, by his dirty habits."

Yes, those who hope to be companions of angels must develop refined manners. There will be "a kind thoughtfulness for others, for this was characteristic of Christ." "The work of educating the mind and manners may be carried forward to perfection." One begins to suspect that perfectly reproducing the character of Christ—which must be achieved by "his people" before he returns—entails refined manners as well as ethical perfection.[4]

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KEYWORDS: Malcolm Bull, “Eschatology and Manners,” post- vs. pre-millennial, Ellen White, the good order of heaven

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A FRESH PAIR *of Spectacles*

BY GILBERT VALENTINE

Malcolm Bull’s insightful but overlooked sociological analysis of Adventism offers a fresh pair of spectacles with which to see ourselves. He asks us, for example, to re-think the ideas implied in the construction of society evident in Ellen White’s earliest portrayal of heaven—the illuminating result of giving her first vision a careful close reading. The description she gives of heaven is in terms of an absolute monarchy reflecting the royal courts of seventeenth-century Europe rather than a robust, free-wheeling, individualistic republic with a democratic “we the people” as its foundation stone. The strict order of heaven, in Ellen White’s first vision, has tight constraints on behavior, duties, and its rigid work assignments, all set in a hierarchy where commands are to be followed and no one questions their place. This structure, she asserts, is to be reflected in the pattern of life for saints on earth in preparation for that heavenly society. Bull sees an intriguing conundrum here when he

Ellen White's charisma was actually part and parcel of the charismatic community in which it first appeared. It would otherwise have been most unlikely to have received validation.

highlights not the timing of the descent of Christ from heaven (before or after the millennium), but rather the status and experience of the saints before or after the millennium. The perfected pattern of a constrained, well-mannered life is to be achieved before the Advent. That which post-millennialists look for at the end of the millennium, Adventists see as having to be achieved before the millennium. In this sense, Bull suggests halfway through his essay that Adventist eschatology should be seen as not pre-millennial but at least "partially post-millennialist." By the end of his argument, he is even more sure. Adventist eschatology is simply "postmillennialist rather than premillennialist." Twentieth-century "last-generation theology," which does not just look for a perfected generation before the advent but makes the time of the advent contingent upon such a status, would seem to support Bull's observation even more strongly. An intriguing irony for Adventist theology.

Bull offers another insightful explanation of why Adventist experience has been limited to just one charismatic prophetic voice in its midst. Adventists have for a long time made the case that Ellen White's counsel helped the emerging Sabbatarian movement, during the 1840s, avoid the entanglements of fanaticism and to distance themselves from it. Malcolm Bull provides a more nuanced and sophisticated analysis that supports this thesis but extends it. Ellen White's charisma was actually part and parcel of the charismatic community in which it first appeared. It would otherwise have been most unlikely to have received validation. Without the presence of a charismatically conditioned community, he argues, the charisma of Ellen White would have been rejected. But Ellen White's earliest visionary experience of heaven emphasized order and dignity—the very things her worship surroundings lacked. The didactic product of her visions emphasized that the good order of heaven should be reflected in the church. There should be good manners and the avoidance of uncontrolled charismatic outbreaks. Thus, there could be no prophet after her. Having exited up into the loft of institutionalism and having encouraged formal, routinized organization, she pulled up the ladder of her charisma and no one could follow her. It has been difficult ever since even just for women ministers to receive proper validation in the movement.

Adventist cosmology, eschatology, and ethics are linked in paradoxical ways. We may be not who we think we are. A view through a sociological frame of reference can be profoundly helpful with so many fresh insights.

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ADVENTIST HIGHER EDUCATION

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KEYWORDS: education, mission, enrollment, students of other faiths, Adventist campus culture

"Only Connect": ADVENTIST HIGHER EDUCATION OUTSIDE NORTH AMERICA

BY NANCY LECOURT

In 1961–62, my father had a year-long sabbatical to study and travel in Europe, and the whole family came along. My brother and I attended the Adventist school at Stanborough Park, near London, in the fall, and then the four of us traveled around Europe—from the arctic circle to Tangiers—in a VW camper. When possible, we visited Adventist institutions, including a memorable lunch at a small cafeteria in Oslo, where we ordered the cherry soup—quite a culinary adventure for a 10-year-old. Imagine our dismay when we discovered that the cherries were whole—pits and all! We ended up making a game of seeing who had the most, adorning the sides of our soup plates.

These days when I travel, it doesn't really occur to me to search for the local Adventist hospital, church, or school when I am abroad. My interests have changed, it seems. What has happened to my curiosity about the world Church? Am I the exception here, or are many North American Adventists, like me, only dimly aware of what is happening in Adventism outside the US and Canada?

While I have spent my life in Adventist higher education in the NAD, I am remarkably ill-informed about what is happening on campuses in the other world divisions. One occasionally hears tales or reads an article about huge enrollments in Brazil or Korea, of new medical and dental schools, and even law schools—but somehow, they don't register. I suspect that many are like me: mostly ignorant of the breadth and depth of Adventist education outside North America. The Adventist Church operates 118 colleges and universities, educating 167,739 students worldwide, including seven medical schools, five dental schools, and two law schools—part of the largest protestant educational system in the world.[1] Who knew? Not I.

Ginger Ketting-Weller, president of Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies (AIIAS) in the Philippines, provides an interesting perspective. While she grew up in Thailand, Malaysia, and Singapore as the daughter of Adventist missionaries, she has spent her professional adult life in the United States, including Pacific Union College, Walla Walla University (where she served as academic vice president), and La Sierra University, where she was the dean of the School of Education. She went from La Sierra to AIIAS in 2019, and the contrasts between the two campuses may help to

We in the NAD need to be informed and interested in the successes, the challenges, and the issues that are engaging Adventists outside North America if we want them to feel a connection to us and our issues.

illuminate ways North Americans can learn to look more clearly at Adventist campuses outside our often-narrow field of vision.

Ketting-Weller makes the case that we in the NAD need to be informed and interested in the successes, the challenges, and the issues that are engaging Adventists outside North America if we want them to feel a connection to us and our issues. "We need to be humble, enthusiastic, active participants in the life of the world Church. If the West is uninterested in or critical of the cultures and worldview of the rest of the world Church, then the West will not be able to influence it." If we want them to care about us and our issues (such as women's ordination, perhaps), we must care about them and their concerns.

Herewith, then, is an effort to connect, by looking at some of the successes, challenges, and issues that engage Adventist educators and students out there, in the wide, wide world.

A Passionate, Community Commitment to Service and Mission

One persistent theme that emerges is the strong commitment to service and mission that is deeply and authentically embedded in the institutional culture of many of these campuses—wedded to a strong sense of community. The desire to serve, to find effective means to communicate the gospel to others, seems to unify and sustain the community life, while strong social bonds provide energy for service and mission.

A striking example of a commitment to spontaneous, loving service occurred after the explosion in Beirut in August 2020. Middle East University (MEU) is 6 miles (10 kilometers) from the port, where the massive explosion left nearly 200 dead and more 300,000 homeless. John Wesley Taylor V, the associate director of the Adventist Accrediting Association (AAA), who works with MEU, reports that "shattered glass was literally everywhere one turned. . . . MEU students, faculty and staff . . . spent weeks on-site sweeping up glass." The MEU community delivered food and offered support to the wounded and sorrowing. Taylor shared a report from Dr. Larry Lichtenwalter, president of MEU:

> As MEU students paired up and went from building to building, most of them very damaged, they exclaimed that it has never been so easy for them to enter homes. Every person they talked to was kind and receptive. Some asked them to return so they could pray with them again. Other volunteers directed MEU students to an apartment to help the residents emotionally. . . . Residents would show their home, tell their story. Students would then point them to a world where there is no more pain and destruction, and ask if we could pray with them and share a small booklet of encouragement. As one student commented "We could open the Bible to people and give them hope. We could pray with them and point them to a sustainer who never fails."

River Plate Adventist University (UAP) in Argentina provides another example of the way spirituality and service are at the heart of the campus culture. "Service is cool at UAP," says Martin Pita, who graduated in 2010 with a degree in theology. "Those were the best years of my life: spending time with friends, dressing up for Friday evening vespers, doing service with small missionary groups, but also playing football, board games, and tennis—as well as sitting on the curb sipping mate and chatting." On the UAP campus, the relatively high percentage of Adventist

https://uap.edu.ar/galleryl/la-uap-en-fotos/

River Plate Adventist University (UAP) in Argentina provides another example of the way spirituality and service are at the heart of the campus culture.

students (77%) means that the social life and the spiritual life feel like the same thing, with friends studying, praying, and helping others together.

Pita's description of the town of Libertador San Matin reminded me a little of Loma Linda in the 1960s: a rural small town, with an Adventist hospital, medical and dental schools, market, university, elementary, and high schools, where the majority of the population is Adventist, and the Adventist Church is central to town life. Because Argentina is a Catholic country, the Adventist community is even more strongly bonded by their sense of being "different."

In 2010, two UAP medical students began to imagine large numbers of young people becoming gospel missionaries and started a program called "I Will Go." They began with a congress at UAP in 2011, and over the years it grew to include campuses in Brazil and Peru, with over 8,000 young people training to become missionaries. Eventually the enthusiasm of two medical students in Argentina became the seed for the latest General Conference strategic plan, "I Will Go 2020."[2]

This passion for mission struck Ketting-Weller early on at AIIAS, one of four General Conference institutions worldwide (the others are Andrews University, Loma Linda University, and Adventist University of Africa). Most of the 714 students at AIIAS, which offers only graduate programs, are sponsored by their home divisions, and all are training to become leaders in the Adventist Church somewhere in the world. The diversity is stunning, and students cite it as AIIAS's biggest strength. Fijians, Ukrainians, and Peruvians study, work, eat, play, worship, and argue together as they pursue programs in theology, business, education, and public health, all in the English language.

The education in empathy and community that these students receive from each other as they discuss their varied beliefs and experiences within the context of so many different cultures is powerful, a strong basis for leadership in a global church. And where we in the NAD may be discussing Ellen White's psychobiography or the age of the earth over our haystacks, these students prefer to gather socially and explore ways to reach Muslims or urbanites in their home countries or mission fields. Yet there are similarities. Adventists both here and abroad are more and more motivated to also offer tangible support to their needy neighbors. At AIIAS, students started an organic vegetable garden to provide food to those who were hungry because of the pandemic, and the Chinese community delivered truckloads of rice bags to nearby families in poverty because of lost jobs—the kinds of projects North Americans warm to more and more these days. And it seems students everywhere have issues with the food in the cafeteria. Taylor reports that students in the campuses he visits request more fruits, vegetables, "and pizza!"

A similar centrality of mission to the culture of campus life is present at Adventus University Cernica, the small Adventist college in Bucharest, Romania, where 176

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(73% Adventist) students take coursework toward degrees in theology, social work, education, and nursing. The sense of community is strong, with frequent gatherings around traditional Romanian food and music, including some from the faculty and students who are Romani—the country's second-largest minority. The campus takes pride in its academic standards and is working toward adding a master's degree and doctoral degree in theology.

Academic Achievement

While academics vary widely around the world, based on a variety of factors, some campuses are justifiably proud of their high academic standards and achievements. On a visit prior to moving to AIIAS, Ketting-Weller was impressed by the presentations by graduate students at an international scholarly conference hosted by the graduate school. "These students could give our grad students at La Sierra a run for their money!" she recalls thinking.

Because of its academic strengths, Adventist education in some countries attracts many students of other faiths. In Brazil, for example, the three campuses of Brazil Adventist University (UNASP) enrolled 6,972 students in 2019, of whom 54% (and 74% of faculty) were Adventist. According to Julian Melgosa, an associate director of the General Conference Education department and liaison for the South American Division, Adventist education at all levels in Brazil has strong branding and a good reputation. It is well known to the average Brazilian, and many wish their children to attend Adventist schools. This respect for the quality of Adventist education carries on into the universities. Similar academic strengths can be seen at UAP, which is officially recognized by Argentina's National Ministry of Culture and Education, and in Peru, at Peruvian Union University in Lima, where the legacy of Ana and Fernando Stahl still creates trust in Adventist education. The university enrolled over 10,000 students in 2019; 65% of students and 80% of faculty are Adventist.

The most striking example may be the new Adventist medical school in Rwanda. The 1994 genocide and its aftermath destroyed the former campus of the Adventist University of Central Africa (AUCA) at Mudende, in waves of looting and occupation by refugees, described quite graphically on their website. After much difficulty and negotiation with the government, a new campus was opened in February 2006 in Kigali, the capital. In 2019, AUCA enrolled 3,092 students, of whom 34% are Adventist, as are 69% of the faculty.

Meanwhile, Rwanda itself has had a stunning transformation. According to the website of the World Bank, "Rwanda was in the middle of an economic boom prior to the . . . pandemic. Economic growth exceeded 10% in 2019." The *New Yorker* has described Rwanda as "one of the safest and the most orderly countries in Africa," often called the "Rwandan miracle," the Switzerland or Singapore of Africa, because of its economic growth and its focus on cleanliness and order. In Kigali, "whisk-broom-wielding women in frocks and gloves sweep the streets at dawn" and plastic bags are illegal.

The reputation for strong academics at AUCA led the government of Paul Kagame to ask the university to start a medical school as part of the government's ambitious plans to reach middle-income country (MIC) status by 2035. The sparkling new facilities are featured in a December 2019 video, where GC President Ted Wilson and President Kagame (whom the *New Yorker* describes as "so thin that in official photographs with visiting dignitaries it often looks as if his guests had been posed with a cardboard cutout of him") at the opening ceremonies.[3]

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Access for Adventist Students

The new medical school in Rwanda is poised and ready to provide instruction and medical care to the people of Rwanda. But will Adventist students be able to afford to attend? Especially women, who are undervalued in the culture?

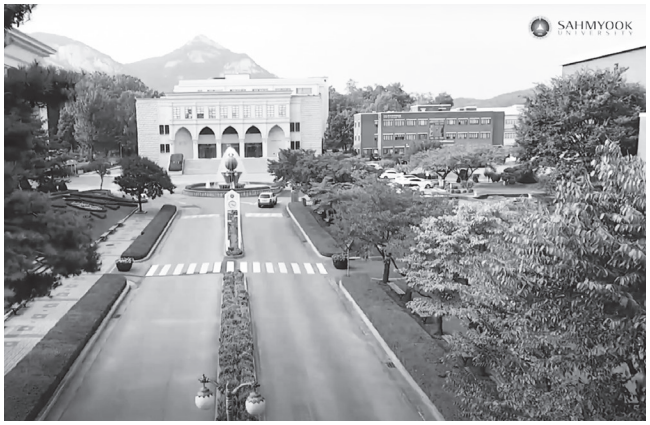
Lisa Beardsley-Hardy, director of the General Conference Education department and board chair for AAA, is very concerned about access to Adventist education, especially for women. She sent me a passionate email after our Zoom interview:

> After we spoke, I had a meeting with the East-Central Africa Division (ECD) education director, Dr. Andrew Mutero. We both are disappointed that to date, only three SDA females are enrolled in the new medical school in Rwanda. He explained that there are two main reasons: cost and lack of STEM preparedness. He indicated that there were some females who qualified (in terms of the national medical school entrance requirements in sciences) but whose family could not afford the $14,000 USD/year tuition. Culturally, boys are favored over girls and a family with limited resources will invest in the boys first.

The lack of access to funds for education is an important reason why Adventist enrollments tend to be low, especially in Africa and South America. Brazil, for example, has a challenging economic environment, and many Adventist young people can't afford to attend the university, according to Melgosa. While the union is very supportive and some scholarships are provided, very few countries provide anything like the federal aid we have in the US. The situation is similar in Argentina and Peru. Taylor lists "providing access to Seventh-day Adventist higher education for Adventist young people with scarce economic means" as the top challenge facing campuses.

Maintaining Adventist Culture While Welcoming Students of Other Faiths

In South Korea, Adventist enrollments are even lower, but for a different reason. At Sahmyook University (SYU), in Seoul, only 16% of the nearly 5,500 students



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At Sahmyook University (SYU), in Seoul, only 16% of the nearly 5,500 students were Adventist in 2019.

were Adventist in 2019. This great enrollment success comes from the hard work and impeccable reputation created by the campus leadership, according to Melgosa, as well as from the extremely competitive public education system in South Korea. Students who do not gain access to government universities have to find a private alternative, and Sahmyook University is an attractive option. The other institution in Seoul, Sahmyook Health University (SHU), is not affiliated with SYU, but with the large Adventist hospital in Seoul, and is a health sciences institution. SYU serves 1,300 students (31% Adventist), and both institutions are highly rated in terms of academic quality by the rigorous standards of the corresponding government entities. And, according to Taylor, both institutions are intentional in conveying the gospel to students, of which a significant proportion are not Christian.

The contrasting cases of Rwanda and South Korea illustrate the two sides of this double-edged sword. While low Adventist enrollments due to lack of family resources can be tragic, it is hard not to rejoice when those of other faiths value what we have to offer. This conundrum feels a lot like the one facing campuses in the NAD. We welcome the opportunity to share Adventist education with others—while also welcoming the resources that come with increased enrollments—yet concerns are inevitably raised: why aren't more Adventists attending our campuses? Is tuition too high? And how can Adventist culture be maintained as percentages of Adventists on campuses drop?

Is there a tipping point where the Adventist culture on a campus—Sabbath observance, healthful lifestyles,

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a Biblical worldview—starts to dissipate? Ketting-Weller, whose time at La Sierra University means she has first-hand knowledge of these struggles and debates, agrees that there probably is such a "critical mass" for maintaining "the flavor of Adventism" on a campus, but doesn't know what it is. La Sierra's student body was 40% Adventist in 2019. They welcome all qualified applicants, while working hard to remain fully Adventist, providing religion coursework that communicates Adventism in an appealing way and speaks to all their students, no matter what their faith tradition. Adventist faculty are also an important factor. While SYU has low numbers of Adventist students, it reported 100% Adventist faculty in 2019. In the NAD, 56% of faculty are Adventist, though it is higher—72%—on the ten traditional baccalaureate campuses.

The need for committed Adventist faculty is acute in many places around the globe. Ketting-Weller sounded almost desperate as she asked if anyone in Choir "Zoom" Sabbath School knew a doctorally prepared professor in Education who would be willing to teach her graduate students at AIIAS. Taylor cites "sourcing qualified Seventh-day Adventist faculty for specific academic programs offered or that the institution would like to offer, frequently in STEM fields" as one of the biggest current challenges for the institutions he works with.

Yet Adventist faculty and staff are key to Adventist mission, according to Taylor:

> Seventh-day Adventist education is missional—for all students, whether these come from Adventist backgrounds or otherwise. Its overarching purpose is that students might know God, understand His plan for life and learning, and develop a positive relationship with the Seventh-day Adventist Church. While there are matters of critical mass and tipping point to consider, the key ingredient is intentionality for the faith development and spiritual nurture of each student. And for this to take place, Seventh-day Adventist faculty and support staff are key, as these serve as mentors and role models for students.

Only Connect

In November 2014, I was part of an AAA accrediting team visiting the Adventist University of Haiti (UAH) in Port-au-Prince. It was really my first visit to a developing country. As I waited inside the air-conditioned airport (under strict instructions not to exit the building by myself under any circumstances), I looked out on a sea of humans, held back by uniformed officers and metal barriers. After a few minutes I was greeted by a smiling young man from UAH who drove me to campus through the horrific traffic, again air-conditioned and sealed off from the realities of life in Haiti, nearly five years after the January 2010 earthquake. I was never allowed to go anywhere other than the campus and a luxury hotel in the hills overlooking the harbor. (Apparently, kidnappings were a problem.)

The campus buildings were simple and several still showed earthquake damage—except for the ones that had been completely flattened. The areas around the buildings were parklike, with wide lawns, palm trees, and carefully clipped shrubs. Ironically, it was this abundance of open space that caused one of the biggest lingering aftereffects of the earthquake: about 3,000 families, their homes reduced to rubble and aftershocks turning buildings

into death traps, poured into the campus and took up residence there. There they found water, rest rooms, grass, and shade—and these homeless survivors settled in while waiting for the government to rebuild their homes. Five years later, the campus had only very recently succeeded in regaining control of the property and restarting classes.

What were the issues the students at UAH wanted to discuss? The age of the earth, women's ordination, how to evangelize city-dwellers? Of course not. They were worried about their transcripts. Had they all been lost in the earthquake, or the more recent floods? Was a digital copy truly being kept somewhere? Basic academic survival.

Our team did its best to provide encouragement and support as faculty and administration were working to return to "normal," a condition that was already precarious in the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. While we were there to inquire into UAH's situation regarding Adventist accrediting standards, our real mission, I think, was to listen, and to embody the solidarity of the world Church's higher education community with this struggling sister campus.

Today, UAH's website shows a campus dealing with COVID, but focused on serving students, with some innovative industries in support of the mission: a *boulangerie*, a moving company, and a print shop. Programs include degrees in computer science and accounting; licenses in nursing and business; and three master's degrees. Total enrollment is now 568, closing in on its pre-earthquake enrollment of 651. Given that enrollments are down in most places because of the pandemic, this is encouraging. However, as Taylor reports, many of the challenges at UNAH remain or have become more acute. Some buildings still cannot be utilized due to the earthquake, and political turmoil has resulted in the suspension of classes for extended periods. Through it all, the committed faculty and staff have developed incredible resilience.

I still think about the people I met there and wonder how they are doing. We prayed together, ate the appetizing food in their cafeteria, discussed their problems, listened carefully to their thoughts and plans, and laughed together as our driver claimed to enjoy navigating the amazing traffic. In other words, *we connected*.

It seems like a good place to start.

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KEYWORDS: Adventist education, demographic shifts, downward enrollment, changing the trajectory, new business models

Adventist Education IN NORTH AMERICA

BY RICHARD HART

There are few things more prized by this church than our health and educational systems. While our theology is a unique blessing that we value internally, it is our health professionals, hospitals, and schools that interface with the world and make us known, both in this country and globally. They are both steeped in more than a century of culture and practice, giving rise to generations of committed Adventists.

With so many decades of success, it is difficult to accept the need for change; yet internationally many of our hospitals are now struggling, while here in the US, many of our schools are closing. The comparison is ironic, Adventist hospitals are flourishing in the US, but struggling abroad; while most schools are flourishing abroad, they are struggling in this country. Our global educational system now has 8,000 schools, 118 colleges and universities, and 1.8 million students attending each day. We now have seven schools of medicine, five dental schools and nearly 100 schools of nursing in the world, with more coming. But our experience here in the US is quite the opposite.

The comparison is ironic, Adventist hospitals are flourishing in the US, but struggling abroad; while most schools are flourishing abroad, they are struggling in this country.

Changing the trajectory of our educational system in the US will be tough, particularly with our decentralized system of governance in the church. Our elementary and secondary schools are dying, church by church, conference by conference, and there seems to be little the collective body can do. And even our prized colleges and universities in this country, now down to thirteen, are fraying at the edges and competing for students while they deal with shrinking budgets each year.

Times like these require some tough questions. Are schools critical to our church's growth, or even its survival? Is there a biblical mandate for an educational system, or is this primarily a recognition of the value of separateness and protecting our youth? Is the current tendency of

Total Enrollment										
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	8 yr % Δ
AHU	2671	2293	2090	1984	1912	1809	1705	1688	1802	-32.5%
AU	3551	3516	3418	3366	3349	3348	3407	3412	3171	-10.7%
BU	576	543	479	479	456	453	454	466	408	-29.2%
KC	981	880	761	732	759	825	839	814	763	-22.2%
LLU	4652	4729	4629	4512	4444	4451	4482	4462	4514	-3.0%
LSU	2393	2478	2510	2476	2372	2418	2356	2200	1976	-17.4%
OU	2019	1903	1924	1749	1797	1711	1636	1533	1414	-30.0%
PUC	1616	1678	1674	1587	1455	1235	1063	925	966	-40.2%
SAU	3319	3255	3335	3289	3146	3184	3102	3029	2730	-17.7%
SWAU	807	807	800	790	802	819	741	687	772	-4.3%
UC	881	911	886	903	893	868	832	813	764	-13.3%
WAU	1402	1185	1057	1044	1090	1069	1131	1078	968	-31.0%
WWU	1940	1920	1887	1840	1894	1825	1856	1864	1737	-10.5%
TOTAL	26808	26098	25450	24751	24369	24015	23604	22971	21985	-18.0%
YOY % Δ	NA	-2.6%	-2.5%	-2.7%	-1.5%	-1.5%	-1.7%	-2.7%	-4.3%	

transitioning our schools and their student recruitment to be "Christian" schools, rather than specifically Adventist, the best path to survival? Through this method, are we sharing our message with a broader audience, or is it abandoning basic principles that God cannot bless? If the choice is closing vs. adapting, what is the best option? How would our church's mission best be accomplished?

For those of us who watch these trends, the last decade has been ominous. While some of this is the result of the demographic bubble this country is experiencing, there are additional factors in our church beyond that. Despite valiant efforts to find Adventist students from everywhere possible, including public high schools, the downward enrollment in our colleges continues, with few exceptions. Some institutions have moved more aggressively into the Christian market and adult education, but most follow this slide, year after year.

The chart above shows these changes over the past eight years. The second chart graphs these changes even more clearly. Over the past decade we have dropped collectively in our colleges and universities from over 27,000 students in North America to around 22,000 this year. This is not sustainable. If broken out by undergraduate and graduate degrees, the biggest loss has been in the undergraduate programs, with a 10.9% drop in the freshman class this past year alone. Not shown on this chart are the over 250 primary and secondary schools in North America that have permanently closed in the Adventist church over the past ten years. They were a critical pipeline for our colleges and are certainly part of this resulting decline.

Most of you will recognize the time-honored abbreviations. A few new ones: AHU is now AdventHealth University in Orlando, and BU is Burman University in Canada, or what used to be Canadian Union College. WAU is Washington Adventist University in Takoma Park.

If it is any consolation, these numbers are similar to many higher education institutions across the country, both public and private. There are dire national predictions about how many colleges will close in the next ten years. For many of these, closing is a business calculation, but for most churches, these changes strike at the heart of who we are and what we do. That is certainly true in the Adventist church.

Our college and university presidents formed the Association of Adventist Colleges and Universities some fifteen years ago, and we struggle with these numbers

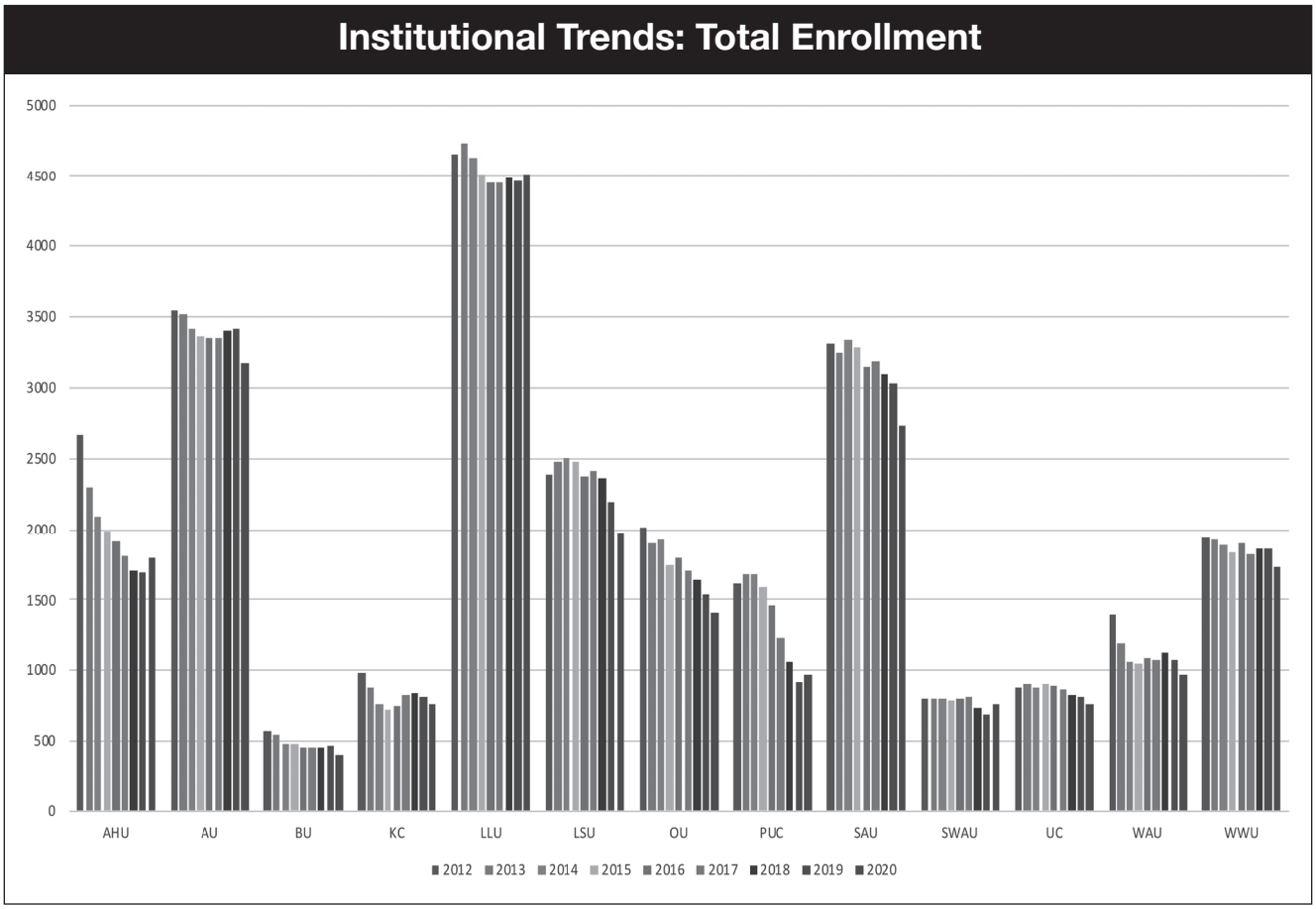
regularly. Gordon Bietz, in retirement, assisted by the North American Division education leaders Larry Blackmer, and now Arne Nielsen, coordinate our brainstorming and initiatives. We have spent money on marketing, used consultants, prayed a lot, and considered various options. These efforts continue, as each institution seeks its own path to survival while also looking for collaborative techniques that are acceptable and offer the promise of success.

Understanding the Trends

While the causes of the declines certainly vary by place and time, there are a few constants that have been identified. Cost is usually the primary reason given why more Adventist families do not avail themselves of our educational system, at all levels. That is certainly important, though this church has a long legacy of sacrifice for the common good, finding options for all students to make it through. Some of that is clearly lost in today's world. Cutting costs is not really an option, as our teachers at elementary, secondary, and even college levels are already some of the lowest paid employees in the denomination. I find it a great travesty that we pay the least to those to whom we entrust our most valued assets— our own children. Something is wrong with that equation!

There are other variables that are equally important. Our church is one of the most diverse in the country. That is a good thing. We have grown most rapidly among new immigrants to this country, but it usually takes several generations for a newly arrived family to establish themselves enough financially to consider private education. Despite our educational emphasis, and proportionally large numbers of health professionals, a recent Pew report now shows Adventist members in this country are in the lower third of educational attainment when compared to other churches.

Another issue cited seems to be the lack of emphasis on Adventist education by our pastors. The majority of those entering the pastorate today are first generation Adventists, meaning they did not grow up through our educational system themselves. They became Adventists



as adults, so may have less proclivity to understand and promote Adventist education. While efforts are being made to change this, it is tough to create a deep commitment to something you are inheriting but have not experienced yourself. An additional burden they have is raising the expected subsidy from their church members to support their local school. It is also true that many times their own personal income does not allow them to send their own children to the local Adventist school.

A final consideration is the growing cultural acceptance by Adventist families to be comfortable sending their children to any quality institution, public or private, religious or not. Some can afford high-end institutions, while others utilize public options. The old fear of our young people "losing their way," or finding the "wrong" marriage partner, seems to be of less concern today.

Possible Options For Change

So are there solutions, or at least hope? Can we reverse these major trends that continue to close more schools every year? Let me suggest a few options I see emerging across the country.

The "Christian" Option

One trend gaining momentum is the increasing proportion of students of other faith traditions in our schools. This varies widely by institution, but the average among our colleges and universities in North America is now 40% of our students who are not Adventists. Some schools are higher and some lower, but all our schools are accepting more and more students from other faiths, including non-Christians, to meet their enrollment goals. The traditional view of this trend is one of unfortunate slippage away from an Adventist "haven" for our students. But in other parts of the world, we have welcomed students from all backgrounds to our schools for years. We call them "mission" schools and are quite pleased with the results. Many national leaders had their beginning education in one of our schools and remain friendly throughout life to the church. Is it time to make our colleges in this country into "mission" schools and what does that mean?

If we buy into that reasoning, then we need to make sure our campus programming is prepared for this level of religious diversity. At Loma Linda, we have consciously said we need to recognize this, and plan spiritual activities that are winsome for all, including non-Christians. We require chapel attendance and advanced religion courses for all students, including in our doctoral programs. While a few will be baptized into our faith, we trust that all will have an opportunity to understand our values and beliefs and recommit to a higher level of spiritual life within their own cultures and traditions.

Operating and Scholarship Endowments

Another option that is being pursued by a few schools is to establish major endowment funds to support student scholarships and operations. My own *alma mater*, Upper Columbia Academy, near Spokane, Washington, is one of these. A group of loyal alumni established FoundationOne a decade ago and have succeeded in raising sufficient funds to now provide major scholarship support to needy students. They are now working closely with the school and conference to further this goal. It is probably too late for many of our secondary schools to do this, but I am reminded that the best time to plant a tree is twenty years ago, while the second-best time is today! I wish more of our alumni groups, at both the secondary and college level, would consider this long-term option for permanent

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protection of our schools' financial integrity and a way to keep our doors open for all desiring families.

Adventist Education "Systemness"

Another question that comes up is the "slippage" that occurs after graduations—from primary school to academy, from academy to entering college, and even after college to graduate programs. Can we have a better awareness and encouragement to continue within the Adventist system? It seems some parents calculate their limited resources and are forced to answer the agonizing question of whether to send their child to an Adventist elementary school or academy or college, when they know they can't afford to do it all.

At Loma Linda we have sought to address this "linkage" a bit with our EXSEED program, initially funded by Tom and Vi Zapara. We have been bringing Adventist primary and secondary science teachers to our campus for a week during the summer to upgrade their teaching and science knowledge and skills. Over the past decade, this has benefited over 1,000 teachers, and we are now shifting it to a virtual platform to share even more broadly, including our international schools. We consider it both a way to strengthen our science education at all levels, as well as demonstrate the institutional options available as students progress.

Would it help to encourage young Adventist families at the beginning of their educational journey to see this whole educational pathway? This raises the question of how much should we market our Adventist educational system *collectively*, demonstrating our "pipeline" of quality education at all levels. Some of our other colleges have also developed programs for academy teachers to help maintain this pipeline. Should we all do more to market our collective system?

Work/Study Programs Once Again?

Another strategy that I personally wish we could recreate is the work/study programs of the past. Many of us learned the value and responsibility of working while in schools that offered real labor, even at bargain wages, for each student. Most of our schools have drifted away from industries on campus, and have less opportunity to employ students. Can this be reversed? It seems that many times the school administration was not adept at running the business side of various enterprises, and they failed financially until they had to be closed. Is there a better way to manage these opportunities so they can be financially stable while also providing student labor?

Adventist Health System Linkages

A final idea that has been explored is to develop more linkages with our Adventist health systems. Most of our hospitals in this country are thriving, so is there value in connecting the two systems—health care and education—in a way that can strengthen both. After all, our hospitals are always looking for quality Adventist employees, and our colleges continue to produce them. Some of our larger hospitals have developed management residency programs that recruit and train new graduates in health care, and this has been very successful. There has also been some support for schools within the sphere of influence of larger hospitals, but no grand plan has emerged. So far, these linkages have not been enough to save many of our schools who need more direct investment into operations.

Is It Worth It?

Let me, then, circle back to the beginning. Is there a real reason for offering an Adventist "brand" of education? What are the value-adds that we believe we bring to the table? What is necessary to maintain these

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unique perspectives and character-building opportunities for our young people. I would like to suggest there are several incredibly valuable aspects of Adventist education that are hard to duplicate in other settings.

One of these is certainly the "protection" from secular influences that are hard to control otherwise. A few years of maturity usually equips a young mind with more perspective and balance to handle these exposures. While we certainly don't need to "batten the hatches" quite like we did in the past, we can provide understanding and balance to protect during the most vulnerable years. There is no fence high enough that can keep out the internet and other influences, but we can certainly program counterbalances that can help. Surrounding our students with peers of like faith and mentors who model these behaviors can give our children stability in a world that otherwise immerses them in secular values.

Another is the work ethic and emphasis on practical skills that are so necessary today. As we move into suburban life and "call-in" services, a practical set of skills is still invaluable. Some of these must come from genes, and home, but some can be taught and experienced while in school.

A third value is an exposure to the lessons of nature. We have excelled in this in the past and I have found it invaluable in providing personal peace and tranquility throughout life. It is increasingly difficult to even find exposure to nature, to the point where scientists now talk about Nature Deficit Disorder, a lack of connectedness with the smells, tastes, sounds, and sights of natural things. These can be a regular part of our educational system.

And finally, I would like to put in a plug for multi-grade classrooms. While this is a necessity in smaller schools, it can also be a huge advantage. I am forever grateful for my own education at a little church school in Troy, Idaho, with never more than twenty-five students in two rooms, learning to help each other read, do math, and generally work together. Elissa Kido in her pioneering work at La Sierra has shown that these small multi-grade schools, often with limited budgets and materials, do as great a job of preparing students for the future as large single classrooms with all the goodies!

Our colleges, through AACU, are also considering new business models of collaboration. Are there back-office functions that can be shared digitally among multiple campuses, such as managing finances and investments, or academic records, to make all of us more cost effective? Or can we provide specialized courses that only a few have but could be shared digitally with students from other campuses. Online or digital education is everywhere now, and we should be able to share our best teachers from one campus with students from all our campuses. But old boundaries and pride die hard, and these discussions move forward slowly. Consolidating course work usually means some teachers lose their jobs, and are we ready for that?

As we all come out of this pandemic year, college applications appear to be trending back up. This will give hope to some, though we have been here before. I believe it is time for some major changes—for our institutional leaders, under their individual unions and with their respective alumni groups, to recognize that we need to find a better way. And we can do this better together!

DR. RICHARD HART currently serves as president of Loma Linda University Health—the umbrella corporation that includes the enterprise's academic, healthcare, and research organizations. He earned his Doctor of Medicine degree from LLU School of Medicine in 1970, followed by a Doctor of Public Health in International Health at Johns Hopkins University in 1977, also becoming Board certified in Preventive Medicine.

KEYWORDS: Adventist higher education, Newbold College, Trans-European Division, Centre for Ministry and Mission, pastoral and leadership training

"Shrinking to Grow": NEWBOLD COLLEGE REFOCUSES ON ITS ORIGINAL PURPOSE—EDUCATING CHURCH WORKERS

BY REINDER BRUINSMA

Newbold College Facebook Page

Newbold College of Higher Education—the official name since 2013—is very dear to me. In the early 1960s I spent two years at Newbold before I graduated with my bachelor's degree in theology. Through the years I have come back numerous times to the beautiful campus near the village of Binfield, some thirty miles from London in the hilly county of Berkshire, to attend meetings and training courses and to participate in conferences. From 1995 to 2007 I served as a member of the Board of Governors of the college, and from time to time I taught an "intensive" in the theology department. I have kept myself informed about developments at Newbold, by consulting the regular channels, and by getting the juicier bits of news from friends among the Newbold staff.

However, in spite of having stayed close to Newbold, I was totally surprised—and, yes, shocked—by the sudden news of the radical changes at the college that had been voted by the college board in the autumn of last year, and that will go into effect as early as possible in the course of the current year. After reading some of the news bulletins

Over time, the college had a much wider influence than its limited size would have suggested. Several of the denomination's top theologians in the past began their career at Newbold, and at least three of the college's principals became prominent leaders elsewhere.

I could not help but wonder: Is this the beginning of the end for Newbold College, after it has served the church in large parts of northern and western Europe for 120 years?

The college has played an important role in the history of the Trans-European Division and the repeatedly shifting group of organizational entities (unions, conferences, and "attached fields") that function under the division umbrella. Over time, the college had a much wider influence than its limited size would have suggested. Several of the denomination's top theologians in the past began their career at Newbold, and at least three of the college's principals became prominent leaders elsewhere. I am thinking of V. Norskov Olsen, who was Newbold's principal (as the president of Newbold has traditionally been called) in my student days. He became the president of Loma Linda University (1974–1984). Andrews University's current president—Andrea Luxton—served as Newbold's principal from 1997 to 2001. Jan Paulsen, Newbold's principal from 1976 to 1980, went on to become the division president, and then, eventually, the president of the Adventist world church (1999–2010). Was the illustrious history of my first *alma mater* now coming to an end?

Reluctantly I accepted the request from the *Spectrum* editor to write an article about the changes that are taking place at Newbold. Why was this new direction deemed necessary, and where would it lead? In the past few weeks, I have read relevant documents and held Zoom-interviews with over a dozen persons who could, each from their unique perspective, fill me in on numerous details. Then I sat down to write the 3,000-word piece that was requested. I wanted it to be positive (because of my pro-Newbold bias), but also intended to be fair to all persons and parties involved and, above everything else, to be objective and correct.

What Brought This About?

I began my series of interviews with a long session with Dr. John Baildam, the current principal, who has worked at Newbold for almost forty years. He was appointed to his present role in 2014 and is now the second-longest serving principal, only surpassed by W. G. C. Murdoch (1930–1937 and 1938–1946). The detailed account that he provided of the main factors that led to current changes at Newbold gave me valuable background information. The COVID-19 crisis may have been the catalyst for the current overhaul of Newbold's educational program, but the elements behind it, Baildam explained, were long in the making. Studies and reports from the past sounded alarms at regular intervals, warning that the college was facing a stormy future.

Newbold is expected to serve the fourteen fields of the Trans-European Division. With its 90,000 members, this division (TED) is the smallest of the world divisions, which limits the potential for recruiting large numbers of students. Until quite recently a major percentage of the students (in particular in the English Language Centre and in the theology department) came from outside the division. Constantly rising fees have made study in Britain less attractive, and this has adversely affected the intake of American students. Several other reasons, beyond the college's influence, have had a negative effect on recruitment. Visa restrictions made it extremely difficult for most African students to enroll, and the growing number of good-quality Adventist universities in Africa were becoming a good alternative to study in Europe. The recent Brexit impacts negatively on the college's ability to recruit students from some of the European countries that in the past sent a good number of students. When COVID-19 struck, the English Language Centre lost its ability to attract students almost overnight

The COVID-19 crisis may have been the catalyst for the current overhaul of Newbold's educational program, but the elements behind it, Baildam explained, were long in the making. Studies and reports from the past sounded alarms at regular intervals, warning that the college was facing a stormy future.

While maintaining past levels of student enrollment became increasingly problematic, the costs of operating the college continued to rise. About 50% of the annual operating budget of just over £4 million (ca. US$5.5 million) had to be subsidized by the division, with the eleven unions and three attached fields chipping in 1% (and in some cases even a bit more) of their tithe income. This level of subsidizing became untenable, the more so since, with lower enrollment, the subsidy-per-student rose further and further (in some cases amounting to more than $25,000 per year)! Moreover, the arrangement of the 1% subsidy from the individual fields was far from popular and was due for review.

Undeniably, the reorientation of Newbold has much to do with finances. And yet, when I asked Dr. John Baildam whether the changes were driven by ideology or by financial concerns, he was adamant that the answer was: "yes and yes." In fact, the ball began rolling in conversations between the presidents of the TED fields and the division president Raafat Kamal, who has been leading the division since 2014. He was anxious, he said, to hear from them what they actually thought about the college and its services to the church. Does it deliver what they expect from their college and to which they heavily contribute financially? Do they have ideas and wishes that are not, or not sufficiently, being heard in the full board meetings? Concerned about this, Kamal proposed that perhaps they should meet as a "closed" group in which they could, with less inhibition, speak their mind. And so it happened.


Newbold College Website

Dr. John Baildam

In this conversation, the field presidents made it clear they were far from happy with the "product" that Newbold's theology department delivers. The graduates from Newbold tend to have developed into academics rather than into the kind of cutting-edge, frontline pastors who are needed in the churches throughout the division. In fact, many of the eleven union presidents indicated that, for this reason, they preferred to hire new pastors from elsewhere. Some also expressed concern about the fact that in the process of learning to think critically (one of the key goals in the teaching of the college faculty) some students completely lost their faith, and that the traditional Adventist identity has not always been sufficiently emphasized in the lecture room. There was a clear consensus among the group that the curriculum of Newbold's ministerial training should have a greater focus on practical matters than was currently the case.

In his interview with me, President Kamal outlined the process that he had followed from that pivotal point onwards. He had summarized in writing the outcome of this meeting with the field presidents, sent it around to them with the request to confirm that this was an accurate representation of what had been discussed. This became the basis for a "ten-point" statement of "Core Commitments and Recommendations," which was voted with overwhelming support during an extraordinary meeting of the Board of Governors on September 30, 2020.

The Ten-Point Plan

While the COVID-19 crisis, with its reduction of most activities on campus, and the financial catastrophe that resulted from this, was the catalyst, and presented an opportune moment for making drastic changes, the ultimate factor that drove the reorientation of the college was the wake-up call from the fields that urged the owners of the college (the various entities of the division) to reassess the priorities for the future operation of Newbold.

The ten-point statement starts with emphasizing (1) the continuous significance of the college for the TED fields and (2) the need for adaptation and restructuring to meet the expectations of the fourteen organizational entities that comprise the TED. The following item (3) points to the future direction: "Newbold exists first and foremost to meet the pastoral and leadership training needs of the TED." In order to do so (4), the current department of theological studies will be replaced with a new Centre for Ministry and Mission (CMM), which will begin implementing a new program at the start of the academic year 2021–2022. (5) All plans, financial and otherwise, "should initially be built on a margin of 80–100 students, who (6) will be offered a mix of on-campus programs and online classes. In addition, (7) ministerial training programs will be restarted in some regions of the division (Baltics and Balkans). All this will (8) require a re-visiting of degree accreditation issues and of staffing priorities. Furthermore, (9) a masterplan will be developed for the use of the land and the buildings that will no longer be needed for college activities, so that investment returns can be maximized, and subsidy levels can be reduced to a more sustainable level. Finally (10), The "Newbold culture" is to be improved "in terms of students' experience and administrative services."

It is felt that in this new approach Newbold will be able to better respond to the actual situation of many current and future theology students. Gone are the days when most students, after finishing their secondary schooling, arrive in Binfield around their eighteenth or nineteenth birthday, to embark on their theological education. Today, an increasing number of theology students are older, have a job and often also a family, and then opt for ministry as a second career. For most people in that category, moving to the United Kingdom for a number of years is simply not feasible. Offering all courses online will facilitate this growing student segment. Dr. Laszlo Gallusz, one of the most recent additions to the group of theology teachers, emphasized in my Zoom conversation with him that Newbold must indeed become more flexible. He feels the college would do well to introduce a modular system and serve its clients in a new (mostly digital) way.

At the same extraordinary board meeting where the "ten points" were approved, six working groups were established to work out the details of the plan, of which the Curriculum Panel was perhaps the most important one. How could the element of practical theology be strengthened, within the criteria established by the accrediting organizations (among them the AAA—the Accrediting Association of Seventh-day Adventist Schools, Colleges, and Universities) and by the universities with which Newbold has important academic ties (in particular the University of Wales Trinity Saint David)? And how could the content of various courses be refocused to reflect the orientation of the newly established Centre for Ministry and Mission? Dr. Daniel Duda, the educational director of the division has, on a temporary basis, been appointed as the transitional head of the new Centre for Ministry and Mission.

It would be an understatement to say that the theology professors at Newbold are somewhat critical of various aspects of the changeover from the Department of Theological Studies to the Centre of Ministry and Mission.

Newbold College Facebook Page

Consequences and Concerns

The decision to concentrate—at least for the foreseeable future—exclusively on theology meant closing the English Language Centre and the departments of Business and Humanities. This happened, to a large extent, as the COVID-19 pandemic exerted its toll. Because of some "voluntary" redundancies and retirements, this process did not cause significant staffing problems. Since the outbreak of the pandemic, the staff of Newbold has been reduced by some twenty FTE's—which is, considering the size of the institution, quite significant. Careful arrangements have been made to ensure that the students currently enrolled in these departments would not suffer academically and financially and could complete their program at sister institutions.

As the students left the campus because of the pandemic, the cafeteria and residential facilities were all closed. When the new programs take effect in the coming months, the cafeteria will not be re-opened, and only one of the residential halls will be used by the college. Classroom activities, and the offices for administration and teaching staff will move to Salisbury Hall, built in 1957 as the central building for the college. The library will continue to function, but all other buildings will receive another function. The TED will assume the responsibility for the exploitation of the grounds and the buildings. An expert group is developing a master plan how to best use the facilities that will no longer be needed as the Centre for Ministry and Mission is being realized. Talks are being held with interested parties about the possibility of using Moor Close, a mansion that dates from 1864/65 and has served the college as residential hall and for various other purposes, as a health facility. The recently fully re-furbished sports hall-auditorium could perhaps be part of such a venture.

As could be expected, a transition such as is now in process will meet with some obstacles. It would be an understatement to say that the theology professors at Newbold are somewhat critical of various aspects of the changeover from the Department of Theological Studies to the Centre of Ministry and Mission. President Kamal talked to me quite openly, and at length, about this. He said he was very aware of the fact that the theology teachers felt they were not, or at least insufficiently, consulted. However, in his opinion, he followed the correct procedures. In the past, in his opinion, the theological department functioned perhaps at times too autonomously, and tended to set and follow its own course. The teaching staff, Kamal emphasized, implements the direction that the owners/stakeholders of the college (the Board of Governors) have decided. He feels that in working out the details of the decision that the board took in September the expertise of the staff has been called upon. He denies allegations that he failed to listen to the persons and parties involved before initiating the changes. In total he spoke with forty-nine persons, including some of the theology teachers, as he sought broad input about the changes that were being considered.

Things began to become awkward when, in his second meeting with the theology professors, Kamal introduced the possibility that there might have to be changes in the staffing of the CMM, which might result in some of the current staff becoming redundant. This created a sense of uncertainty as jobs might be on the line. It was explained that, for the time being, budgetary constraints would not allow for the hiring of two specialists in pastoral/practical theology, and that this might mean that two existing budgets might have to be re-assigned. How to cut or re-assign budgets in an organization is, of course, governed

When I asked Baildam whether he looks at the future of Newbold with confidence, he stated: We are "shrinking for future growth."

by national employment laws, which in Britain are rather complicated.

It seems to me, after my interviews with staff members and with the division president and other leaders, that the turmoil that could be expected to arise from possible staff reductions was underestimated. Kamal realizes, he said, that people are hurting, but denies that there was any witch hunt or strategy to get rid of particular people. He insisted that he will do whatever possible to avoid involuntary redundancies, and to cause the least possible harm. "This new approach that is now being implemented is rather a result of the division administration and the board not having acted earlier, when all the signals pointed to an unavoidable crisis if no drastic changes were made."

Looking With Confidence Towards the Future?

How likely is the Centre for Ministry and Mission to succeed? In order for that to happen, potential students must see the revamped ministerial training as an attractive option. And the new approach must win the confidence and support of the leaders in the various fields.

Challenges abound. The competition in the Adventist market for theology students is considerable. Several educational institutions of unions in Central Europe that belong to the TED offer master's degrees in theology. In addition, Friedensau Adventist University in Germany is now also providing a master's degree in theology in the English language.

It is of vital importance that the issues that cause unrest among the staff of Newbold, in particular about the future composition of the corps of theology professors, can be solved amicably, and that the teachers will be fully motivated to give the new setup their very best. After all, they are, in the words of Raafat Kamal the "vessels" through which the product of the CMM must be delivered.

The leaders in the TED are convinced that the denomination, in the part of Europe for which they are responsible, needs a first-class training center that can provide the church with pastors and other church workers who can relate to the members who are called to live their faith in a postmodern, secular world. And these church representatives must be able to present the Adventist message in ways that are relevant for the European public. The new CMM must use and further develop delivery models that fit with the world of the twenty-first century.

It must succeed, for continuing with the old-style Newbold is a dead-end street. *And it can succeed*, I am assured by Dr. Daniel Duda, who leads out in the transition, and by Dr. John Baildam, on whose watch this change is taking place. An enormous amount of work has gone into designing significant adjustments of the curricula. Preparations are underway to ensure that the new mix of classroom and online teaching will "work." A group of specialists has begun the challenging task of maximizing the financial benefits that will come from the exploitation of parts of the grounds and of several buildings that must get another function. As to the goal of 80–100 students—it remains to be seen whether this number is immediately achievable. So far, there are some hurdles, but most elements are on track.

When I asked Baildam whether he looks at the future of Newbold with confidence, he stated: We are "shrinking for future growth." Raafat Kamal used these very same words. They do not exclude the possibility that in the future new disciplines might once again be added to the program, and more staffing will be needed. But first, a new model must be tried and must prove its success and give the flagship educational institution of the Trans-European Division a new, sustainable basis that will deliver the kind of "product" the church needs in its passionate endeavors to build God's kingdom and provide the right kind of spiritual care for the Adventist community in Europe.

REINDER BRUINSMA is a native of the Netherlands who retired in 2007 after a long career in pastoral, editorial, teaching, and church leadership assignments in Europe, the United States, and West Africa. After receiving a BA from Newbold College and an MA from Andrews University, he earned a BDiv with honors and a doctorate in church history from the University of London. He recently interrupted his retirement to serve as the president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Belgium and Luxemburg. He has authored more than twenty books, in Dutch and English, and a large number of articles. He has also translated various theological books from Dutch into English.

KEYWORDS: Newbold College, memories, alumni, Adventist education, commentary

Editor's Note: The following comments were posted by readers on the spectrummagazine.org website following the publishing of Reinder Bruinsma's article "Shrinking in Order to Grow."

Larry Geraty

From all I know, Reinder Bruinsma has done a very credible, accurate, and fair job with his article. I must say that given the changes, however, few Americans will be attracted to that type of institution unless they are preparing for ministry. As it was, it was life-changing and prepared me for my life-long ministry—and I'm talking spiritually as well as academically. When I think of the professors who did the best job, such as Woodfield in English literature, Porter and Dorland in history, Schuil in biblical languages, Keough in Bible and theology, and Scarr in music—I presume none of them would now be hired at the new Newbold envisioned. I can't help but mourn the passing.

Barry Casey

I read Reinder Bruinsma's report on the future of Newbold with interest and with sadness. Like so many others, my year at Newbold was absolutely life-changing spiritually, culturally, and educationally. I appreciated the sheer pedagogical talent of Dr. Woodfield, Dr. Schuil, Dr. Leonard, and Bob Zamora. I made life-long friends, contributed to The Gate ministry, both at Coventry and Bracknell, reveled in the cultural life of London, and spent hours in Foyle's and the Penguin Bookshop. So, to learn that Newbold is cutting back its Humanities and Business curriculum and transforming into a ministerial-only emphasis was disheartening.

This seems like a shift right-ward, instigated from the top down and at the behest of TED administrators who are unhappy with the "product" of ministerial graduates from Newbold. Despite the protestations of TED administrators, the faculty and staff concerns do not seem to have been fully addressed. This looks like another heavy-handed move by administrators at the division level to interfere with the educational process

without fully realizing the consequences. The scope and breadth of the education offered at Newbold provided all students, theology students included, ways to understand and address the postmodern world. I fear that will be lost or at least drastically cut back. The opportunity to rub shoulders with fellow students from many nations, backgrounds, and interests was part of that education, a facet of Newbold that many of us remember as life changing. Moreover, the student community aspect of Newbold, something so dear to those who have attended there, will be greatly diminished.

There is no question that Newbold faced real challenges before COVID, and the loss of students on campus was a tough blow. Principal John Baildam and his administration are to be commended for working their way through those challenges with courage and faith. Now it remains to be seen if these losses of curricular robustness, community spirit, and openness to the challenges of twenty-first-century life, will be offset by the "shrinking for future growth." I hope and pray it will be so. Newbold and its legacy in the lives of thousands deserves it.

Tom de Bruin

As someone close to these changes, let me just say that Reinder has done an astounding job of giving those in charge the benefit of the doubt. (In reply to comment below: This is not a criticism of Reinder! Just my attempt to contextualize this report.)

Michael Pearson

Reinder Bruinsma's article on Newbold restructuring may provide a skeleton of an administrative account but it offers no flesh. The article gives little or no voice to the pain of those made redundant. No voice to those excluded from the top-down consultation processes. It says nothing of the possible conflicts of interest of some of the Board members between college and union conference. Nothing of hidden administrative agendas. Nothing of possible personal hostilities. Nothing about a lack of ability to imagine an alternative and more inclusive future for the college. These are difficult things to talk about and it seems that the leaders lacked either the will or the skill to do so.

I wonder whether a fuller picture will ever emerge. Clearly there was a need for change. But one might have hoped that it would be achieved with greater transparency, fuller compassion, a greater concern for community, and leadership that was more visionary than bureaucratic.

It pains me to say this, but this crucial process is deeply flawed. It reflects badly on the Church in the Trans-European Division.

Kate

The recent development at Newbold is another attempt to Americanize European Adventism. This is another suspicion against science. This shows another gap between Christian claims and actual behavior. You don't treat your own people like that, nor your enemies, nor any person.

Do we really want to be afraid to research and think, ponder and weigh, connect and include? Do we really want to work and study and live in a climate of suspicion?

If this way continues and even reaches other colleges in the division, then this basically means the end of academic freedom in TED and as such per definition the end of academia in TED.

Just a word to Tom and Mike: You know Reinder. He probably only wanted to protect the colleagues remaining with this kind of diplomatic article. Please give him the benefit of a doubt.

Andreas Bochmann

Thank you, Reinder Bruinsma, for tackling the gigantic task of trying to give a fair and polite report of what is one of the most devastating stories of Adventism in the UK: the reduction of a fine, well-established (120 years) and respected academic institution into a "car-sales-men-training-centre" (the cars being the 28 fundamentals, I guess). Too much critical thinking??? Revert that sentence into the opposite . . . so that's how we want to be prepared for the twenty-first century!? Mike Pearson is right that some flesh is missing in this bare bone article—like a long-serving staff member writing in describing the process as they have experienced it: "Insulting, insidious, patronizing—disrespectful is too mild."

Arnoud van den Broek

As a theology student freshly graduated at Newbold, I must say that I recognize many of the arguments presented for the changes that are set in progress. Indeed, the

curriculum very much focused on achieving the required academic level. I prefer more of the practical "hands-on" courses that contribute to the highly necessary skills pastors nowadays need.

Nevertheless, the importance of "critical thinking" that Newbold is (positively or negatively) known for must not be underestimated. And I am thankful for what many of the lecturers have taught me. The postmodern society that pastors have to work in does not accept a stiff-necked proclamation of biblical truth, the Christian faith, and the Adventist message. Instead, it requires well-thought-out arguments based on biblical truth, the Christian faith, and the Adventist message against the enormous variety of ideas about God, religion, faith, and truth: arguments that will speak to the hearts of those that have not seen their questions answered by the church in the past. This does not mean in any way that critical thinking is a synonym for following the changes in society. Instead, it is a necessary strategy to bridge the ever-moving gap between Christian truth and modern society.

Regarding the process that has been followed to effectuate the transition of Newbold so far and some of the critical notes that are made by some who are immediately affected by these changes, I think we must realize that changes often (if not always) hurt. Therefore, pain itself is not an argument against these changes. Moreover, the reality is that change is an inseparable part of the birth of the Kingdom of Heaven. Newbold must always understand its mission in the light of this Event.

HerMjstsTaxCollector

I don't know much about the methods used to implement this transition, nor am I a TED fan. In fact, I am generally suspicious towards church administrators. But I have to be straight with you. I have studied theology at Newbold in recent years and am grateful for the experience and the education received. However, I have seen first-hand what is hailed as "critical thinking" there. In reality, it is often just uncritical acceptance of everything liberal or "progressive," and uncritical rejection of everything "traditionally" Adventist or deemed conservative, even if the larger society views it as progressive or subversive, e.g., veganism or Sabbath-keeping. And worse, this uncritically liberal approach is commonly accompanied by the sneering and mocking of those who do not conform to that uniformity of "liberal" thinking. They are left feeling like some backward Neanderthals. Happened time and time again, even in the class, even perpetrated by the teachers—even towards their few colleagues who respectfully disagree with them. Is that academic freedom?

The reaction had to come. Newbold had it coming. Now we can only hope and pray that the pendulum does not swing too far in the other direction. Much more humility (intellectual and general) before fellow believers, and especially before God and the beauties and instructions from His Word is needed in order for Newbold to prosper. "Keep them and do them, for that will be your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples" (Deut. 4:6). Praying for you all, especially for the staff and teachers bearing the double burden of reforming Newbold and facing accusations of "betrayal" for it. The Lord is your strength and wisdom.

Niels-Erik Andreasen

The recent report on changes to the operations of Newbold College is of concern to former students whose lives and careers were shaped in important ways by that college. The report appears to indicate that the immediate cause of the difficulties is financial, but there may be other factors even more complex than the financial.

It is hard to understand the college finances with the limited information provided in the report. But, on the face of it, it seems as though the college could meet only 50% of its operating costs with tuition revenue, placing an annual financial burden on the TED of £2 million, or 1% of tithe receipts throughout the division (I grant that may be a simplistic reading of the numbers). It is not unusual for colleges to need revenue above tuition to meet expenses. That extra funding is made available to keep the college open and protect our church members from ignorance about many things, including our faith.

Everything else being equal, 1% of revenue does not seem a huge cost to the TED in return for having a university-like institution of higher education that brings students from high school to undergraduate and graduate programs of study, while providing the TED with its work force. It actually sounds like a good deal. However, that assumes the proprietors of the college (division, unions, conferences, and fields) scattered across Europe are

satisfied, benefited, and blessed by the work of the college and proud of its product. If these expectations of the TED, its members, and families are not met, any cost of education quickly becomes too high, and educators will hear about it and must respond.

The Adventist church is an education church. That explains why "Newbold" was founded over a century ago. And we have 2,000 years of Christian history to remind us that without education Christianity falters and goes astray. The test of the new plan for Newbold is whether or not it can light the candle of higher education once again in the TED for all its members to see.

Julian Kastrati

Friends, what Newbold needs the most at this time is our unsolicited, generous support and solidarity. The college has shaped our lives in so many more ways than our academic accomplishments. Could I kindly suggest that we don't succumb to cynicism and negativity with our comments and/or feedback? Everyone, whether individuals, churches, or institutions, goes through mountaintop- and valley-moments in life. C'est la vie. There may be uncertainty and uneasiness in the valley, but there's also resilience and resolve. Let's focus on what is positive and yes, old-fashioned as it may seem, let us pray for all decision-makers as well as current staff and students!

Linda Nottingham

Quite honestly, I probably should not be surprised by the many comments from the scholarly community and the people who attended Newbold with all their precious memories. I went to La Sierra, but could not afford a year abroad, like so many of the folks making the comments above.

But I am surprised. I wonder if any of the above respondents ever ran a business. The school is a business. And apparently, it was economically infeasible to continue to operate the school in the way they had previously done. How many of you teary-eyed alumni have made significant, sacrificial annual contributions to the institution, given the remarkable value it brought to your lives?

In further support of Dr. Bruinsma's report, I am almost ebullient over the description of a "process" that was employed to establish the current plan. Process is so often sidestepped or ignored completely in the church and its educational institutions.

As an example of another education institution which faced a crisis of relevance, I remember going out to teach at Holbrook SDA Indian Mission in the late 1960s. The curriculum was college prep and almost totally irrelevant . . . and it had been that way since the school was established in 1946. Most students did not finish school and went back to the Reservation to care for the sheep herds. And they never left. I am still friends with a woman who was one of my students there. She lives on the Reservation to this day.

Recognizing the disconnect, and through the implementation of a process, the faculty was supported by the governing church administrators to bring in practical courses, in addition to the accredited curriculum, such as nursing, animal husbandry, welding, agriculture, etc.

The school still goes strong today, and students are graduating from the twelfth grade. And they are prepared to take whatever road they chart for themselves in the future. Particularly if they choose to go back to the Reservation.

I salute the folks at Newbold and wish them the best.

KEYWORDS: Newbold College, Trans-European Division, pastoral training, safeguarding doctrinal heritage, practical vs. academic

"DRINKING TEA AND KEEPING THINGS TOGETHER": Putting the Newbold Events in a Larger Context

BY REINDER BRUINSMA

When Job Cohen, the mayor of Amsterdam from 2001 to 2010, was asked about the essential activities of a leader, he told the journalist: "Drinking tea with the people." And he further defined his mayoral task as "Trying to keep things together." These words brought him a lot of criticism. Leadership, it was said, was surely more than drinking cups of tea with the public and just keeping things together. It is about having a vision, about developing strategies, and leading an organization into the future. But I have always had a high regard for the leadership qualities of Mr. Cohen, and I agree with him that the ability to "drink cups of tea" and to "keep people together" is perhaps the most important characteristic of a true leader.

It is with this thought in mind that I write this second article about events at Newbold College. The first article, entitled "Shrinking to Grow" first appeared on the *Spectrum* website on June 23 and is found in this issue of *Spectrum*'s print edition. It would be quite an overstatement to say that all readers were happy with the content of my piece. In fact, many were not, and I was especially criticized for not having shown enough empathy with the Newbold College staff. I realize that I could have said more about the way in which the decisions regarding the "reorientation" of Newbold came about and were communicated. Perhaps at heart I still think too much as an administer to fully shed my administrative bias. As I mentioned, for quite some time I was a member of the board of governors of Newbold College, and I must admit that in those days I often thought that Newbold's future was far from secure. I do apologize to the members of the Newbold staff if they have felt that I left an important part of the story unwritten. It is good to see that the reporting in this print issue of *Spectrum* is more complete.

The Complexity of European Adventism

I mentioned in the first article that I reluctantly accepted the request of the *Spectrum* editor to write about recent developments at Newbold College. And it is with at least as much reluctance that I promised her to follow-up with this second article. The events at Newbold—dramatic as they certainly are—are not taking place in a vacuum and it seems important to explain how they are connected with various recent developments and current trends in European Adventism. In this age of ever more

polarization and increasing complexity, "keeping things together" is the constant challenge for secular as well as spiritual leaders in our society. There must at least be a fair degree of coherence in a group of people—be it a secular organization or a church—and of pursuing common goals, if anything positive is going to happen. Perhaps the biggest challenge for today's church leaders at any level of our denominational organization is, indeed, "keeping things together." And "drinking more tea with the people" seems to be a fitting metaphor for the need to remain in close touch with all segments of the church.

Looking at a globe or a map of the earth, one realizes that Europe, even when including the European section of the former Soviet-Union, is a relatively small part of the world. With its four million square miles (just over ten million square kilometers) Europe accounts for less than 7% of the total land area of the planet. But Europe's smallness belies its complexity. There are fifty-one independent nations in Europe, in which some 200 different languages are spoken. The European Union operates its huge organization with documents in twenty-four different official languages. Parts of Europe have, in addition to their enormous linguistic and cultural diversity, very different political backgrounds, while there is also a great disparity in religions and all the tensions that tend flow from this.

The Adventist Church in Europe is quite small. If Russia and the neighboring former Soviet states east of the Ural Mountains are included, the membership amounts to about 380,000 members. The church is administered by three divisions, the Trans-European Division (TED), the Inter-European Division (EUD), and the Euro-Asia Division (ESD). Our focus will be on the TED, with headquarters in St. Albans (United Kingdom) and the EUD, with its headquarters office in Berne, Switzerland. Looking at the maps of these divisions, one may wonder at the logic of how the countries were allocated. Some countries in Central and Eastern Europe are part of the TED (Poland, Hungary, the Baltics, and the Balkans), while next-door neighbors (Romania, Bulgaria, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic) belong to the EUD. The Netherlands and Scandinavia belong, together with Great Britain to the TED, but Belgium and Germany (which has borders with the Netherlands) are part of the EUD. Historical reasons mostly explain this situation.

The TED and EUD have 90,000 and 180,000 members, respectively. This means that these divisions have fewer members than many unions or even some conferences have elsewhere in the world. Each of these divisions has eleven unions and a few "attached" fields. National, cultural and language barriers are responsible for having so many small organizational entities. The complexity, however, does not stop here, but also characterizes many of the unions and conferences. Take the Belgian-Luxemburg Conference, with around 3,000 members, as an example. Until a few decades ago, the membership in Belgium could be divided into French-speaking and Flemish (Dutch)-speaking members. Today there are also Romanian, Spanish, and Portuguese churches, and congregations where the worship is in Twi (Ghanaian) or Kinyarwanda (Rwandese), and there are churches that use English and congregations with Russian-speaking groups. The two congregations in Luxembourg have members who speak Luxembourgish, German, French, Portuguese, and about ten other languages.

The linguistic complexity is closely linked to extensive migration. Some unions in Europe have seen significant membership growth in past decades, while elsewhere

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membership has remained static or has even declined. The main difference has been migration. Both Britain and France have seen large numbers of immigrants from former colonies coming into their countries—among them significant numbers of Adventists. This has totally changed the composition of many local churches—in particular in the large cities. Moreover, there have been substantial other shifts in membership. Significant numbers of German Russians have been allowed to move to Germany. Among them were sizable groups of Adventists, whose arrival has had a major impact on many congregations in the two German unions. And then there is the migration of Romanian Adventists to other parts of Europe. As a result, there are today more Romanian-speaking Adventists in Spain than there are members who have Spanish as their first language.

Some Major Challenges

I believe it is helpful to be aware of some of the complexities that I just sketched, if one wants to see how things concerning Newbold College fit into a larger picture. After all, it is in this changing environment that the college must seek to fulfil its mission. The context in which Newbold and other educational institutions in Europe must provide training for our pastors differs dramatically from that of a few decades ago, and it continues to change.

One important factor, in addition to those mentioned above, is that today far fewer pastors are employed by the church than in the not-too-distant past. When I started my ministry in the Netherlands, the church had less than 4,000 members. Yet, it was able to recruit, employ, and pay for almost fifty pastors. Today, in a much more complex linguistic and cultural landscape, the church has 6,000-plus members, but has great difficulty in finding even twenty pastors (and paying for more if they could be found). This has reduced the number of Dutch theology students at Newbold, and the same can be said for students from a number of other fields in the TED.

Church income in most countries in Europe may over time have risen in absolute figures, but if inflation is taken into account, per capita giving in tithe has seriously declined. This naturally has greatly affected the church's employment possibilities.

At the same time, the ministry has become a much less attractive career option. There are a number of

Newbold College Website

reasons why this is so. Pastors do not have the status and prestige they once enjoyed. And although pastors' salaries in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in most European countries are comparable (and sometimes even a little higher) than what their colleagues in other denominations earn, being a minister does not translate into financial abundance. Moreover, in the small administrative entities in Europe, with all the cultural and language barriers, career possibilities are quite limited.

It may well be, however, that the most important reason why fewer people feel a calling to prepare for the ministry is a sense of frustration and despondency. Is the church in Europe going anywhere? Does it have a future, or are we steadily getting nearer to the moment when the last pastor will switch off the lights? I do not know under what circumstances some theological students at Newbold allegedly "lose their faith." It is something that may need serious attention. But I venture to say that in many cases the opposite has also been true and the faith of many has been strengthened and matured by their Newbold experience. In addition, I do know for certain that there are also pastors who graduated with enthusiasm from Newbold but who, after having worked for some time in the ministry, lost their zeal and passion for their work, and decided they could not be happy and feel satisfied in the kind of suffocating spiritual climate they experienced in their work

The Roles of Administrators and Academics

Apart from the (in my opinion) quite convincing arguments why a restructuring of Newbold College became inevitable, the question whether Newbold delivers the kind of ministers that the church needs is quite legitimate. In many places the church has become so

diverse, and the needs of congregations are so dissimilar, that church leaders must ask whether the profile of future pastors must perhaps be adjusted, or whether different kinds of ministers may be needed for different places and assignments. There is nothing wrong with suggesting that Newbold—or for that matter any other educational institution—must from time to time take a critical look at its program. Is there a need for change, for pursuing other priorities? Can we still assume that "one size fits all," or is there a need for different types of ministers? Should the curriculum make provision for this? And if so, how?

This is where we touch on a fundamental issue, and it seems that at this point the process of transforming the Department of Theological Studies into the Centre for Ministry and Mission has been seriously flawed. For, who are the most suitable persons to find the answers to these and similar questions? Should we look for these answers first and foremost from the administrative leaders of the church, or rather from those who have theological expertise. [And let's not muddy the waters by suggesting that many of the church's theologians do not have much practical experience as pastors, since in actual fact, many of today's church administrators themselves have never worked as a local pastor.] The members of the college staff have felt they were largely left out of the discussion about the college's future. Having spoken to several of the staff members, I cannot escape this conclusion. But this unfortunate fact also demands to be put in a larger perspective.

There is a growing tendency among key leaders in the denominational hierarchy to think that they must safeguard the church's doctrinal heritage and must ensure that the membership gets the kind of spiritual diet that will produce "revival and reformation," and is equipped to witness in contemporary terms of their faith. There is often on the part of church administrators a definite mistrust towards at least some of the theologians who are employed in our educational institutions, and a greater confidence in the orthodoxy of a number of independent ministries and their leaders. There is a fear that the traditional doctrinal package is not safe in the hands of the theological faculties of some of our colleges and universities, and that the administrators therefore have the duty to steer, and, where needed, to correct the theological conversations. It would seem that at least some administrators at the union and conference level (and perhaps also in the division administration) in the TED share in a fair degree of mistrust toward the now defunct Department of Theological Studies at Newbold. One might well ask what basis there was for such mistrust. Was it founded on facts or mostly on rumor? Do all these leaders themselves have the background to come to a balanced assessment? And/or do they feel the pressure from (ultra-)conservative segments of their constituency, and possibly also from "on high"?

Understandably, one of the key concerns of leadership at all levels is to avoid controversies that endanger the peace in the Church and may cause rifts, either in the left or in the right segments. Church leaders want to keep the Church together. They tend to strive for unity on the basis of a strong measure of uniformity, both in doctrinal expressions and in lifestyle matters. In the process, we often notice an alarming mix of theology and politics. The goal of resisting alleged theological heresies is at time pursued by dubious political tactics. To give one recent example: When less than a decade ago the top leadership of the church was eager to revise and reword some of the Fundamental Beliefs, only a handful of trusted

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theologians was involved. Top administrators played a key role in ensuring that the changes they wanted to see were adopted. Unfortunately, in the recent events at Newbold College, administrators called the tune in the discussions about the kind of ministry the Church in Europe will need in the years to come, without "drinking enough tea" with all the parties concerned.

Keeping the church together is a lofty ideal but more needs to be said. The question is whether this can be done in a superficial way, with an eye on *the near future*—at least securing the peace during the watch of the current administrations—or whether conditions can be created that will keep the church together *also in the longer term*. Another question is how the term "together" is defined. Does it allow for space and openness for different viewpoints, or is it on the basis of enforced uniformity? At present it may seem as if the church's administration succeeds to a reasonable extent in keeping the church together, but is the cost of this short term "success" not too high? Has it not been one of the reasons for the dramatic exodus of many church members—often including our best and brightest young people? Has it not silenced too many of the creative voices of those who were eager to reconsider our theological and cultural heritage in ways that would keep our "truths" relevant in our secular and postmodern times? Have not too many of the challenging discussions gone underground? And has all of this not created an atmosphere in which many of our theologians and other thought leaders feel unsafe, and will often remain silent for fear of losing their employment or their ability to function in the church? Do the church's leaders sufficiently take this into consideration in their long-term planning?

We must be careful not to pitch administrators against theologians as two distinct categories of people who work from totally different perspectives. There are theologians with good administrative insights, and the church has often been blessed by theologically astute administrators.

Together

We must be careful not to pitch administrators against theologians as two distinct categories of people who work from totally different perspectives. There are theologians with good administrative insights, and the church has often been blessed by theologically astute administrators.

On the one hand, administrators must always recognize that the church is more than a social organization that must be managed on the basis of solid business principles. Organizational strength and unity are extremely important aspects but cannot be secured at any cost. In their strenuous attempts to hold things together, leaders must not just keep an eye on those who have remained but must also be painfully aware of all those who have left. Success must not be primarily defined in terms of defending our doctrinal traditions, but first of all in terms of how this doctrinal framework can become relevant in the lives of twenty-first century people.

On the other hand, educators—in particular those who have a role in the preparation of our ministers—must act responsibly in the theological guidance they offer to the church. They are expected to take a critical look at traditional viewpoints, and to offer fresh ideas and new expressions, but they must do so in a responsible manner and in loyalty to the organization that employs them. And, at the same time, they must never lose sight of the practical side of things. Organizations like Newbold College must, after all, be able to pay their bills, and there are limits to the amount the parent organizations can subsidize. Educational institutions that pride themselves on being "progressive" in their theological and spiritual approach must keep in mind that the subsidies that enable them to operate are to a large extent available because of the loyal financial support of the "conservative" segment of the Church's membership.

The Way Forward

Adventist education in the western world faces enormous hurdles, and this applies in particular to Adventist higher education in Europe. The question will

continue to be asked how much advanced education the church in Europe can afford to provide. A more centralized approach inevitably raises the issue of major language barriers. Moreover, Adventist education is expensive—for many European Adventists, far too expensive—while in most European countries, public advanced education is free or relatively cheap.

But what about theological education in Europe? Presently, too many Adventist institutions seem to be competing for a diminishing number of theological students. Could one university—perhaps with more than one campus—cater for this? This frequently asked question will not go away and, at some point, sooner rather than later, it may become even more pressing than it already is today. And the related question of whether some of the unions can (and should) in the long term continue to operate colleges which offer a masters' degree in theology, cannot be ignored.

Questions about the "product" of the theological training can be legitimate. How can we best serve the diverse membership in our European fields? Is putting more emphasis on practical theology in the curriculum the solution? And if so, who has the expertise to determine what this practical element in the pastoral training should consist of? How does this relate to the recent and current developments at Newbold?

The questions that have arisen, and many other issues that need consideration, are not solely in the domain of administrators of the TED administration and of the fields that constitute the TED. And neither are they exclusively in the domain of the board of governors of the college, the theology professors, and other specialists in education at Newbold. Both groups have responsibilities and insights that the other group does not have, but that need to be taken into account. Working at new models is a shared task. It demands "drinking lots of tea: together." This, I think, has not sufficiently happened, but it is not too late to reach out to each other, make concerted efforts to rebuild trust and come to solutions that are not just workable, but that may enthuse and inspire the board of governors, the Newbold staff, and present and future students.

Looking beyond Newbold, I believe the church more than ever needs inspiring and innovative leaders at the local, regional, national, and supranational levels: competent and spiritual women and men who can indeed hold things together. We need leaders who can think beyond national borders, and even beyond the separations between divisions, and can create an atmosphere of openness, tolerance, and respect in which varieties of Adventism can flourish, convinced that, in spite of all our diversity, we have enough in common in order to stay united. We need leaders who will focus on keeping the church together amid the challenges of an ever-changing society, and who will do so by "drinking tea" with all segments of the church, and by listening to the entire chorus of different voices. We need leaders who are experienced managers, but who, at the same time, never forget that the church is more than a human association. The essence of the church is first of all about theology—about who God is and what He does for us. It is about constantly finding new words and fresh metaphors. Our theologians must help the leaders as well as the "ordinary" church members to do so, as together we seek a deeper understanding of what God has revealed, and as we try to equip people to effectively witness of their faith, and struggle to formulate twenty-first answers to twenty-first century questions.

This type of leadership requires openness to change. There may be times of "shrinking" in order to be able to move forward. I fervently hope that Newbold College will not only survive, but that its "shrinking" and "going forward" can become an inspiring example of how a crisis can be overcome and how it, though a process of listening to each other and respecting each other's expertise, can lead to creative solutions and "keeping things together" as the church moves into the future.

REINDER BRUINSMA is a native of the Netherlands who retired in 2007 after a long career in pastoral, editorial, teaching, and church leadership assignments in Europe, the United States, and West Africa. After receiving a BA from Newbold College and an MA from Andrews University, he earned a BDiv with honors and a doctorate in church history from the University of London. He recently interrupted his retirement to serve as the president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Belgium and Luxemburg. He has authored more than twenty books, in Dutch and English, and a large number of articles. He has also translated various theological books from Dutch into English.

KEYWORDS: Newbold College, Trans-European Division, "heroic" Western model of leadership, *ubuntu*

Clerical Error: CLERICALISM, LEADERSHIP, AND PASTORAL CARE

BY HELEN PEARSON

For fifty years, I have lived, worked, and socialized in the Newbold community—both in a paid and a voluntary capacity—as salaried teacher and PR Director, as contracted consultant, counselor, and in the church with various leadership roles. My husband, Michael, was, for fourteen years vice-principal of the college and, for over twenty years before that, member and then Head of the Theology Department (as it was called). Michael retired in 2013. We continue to live and worship in the community and together run the Newbold Diversity Lectures.

When Bonnie Dwyer invited me to reflect on Reinder Bruinsma's Spectrum account of the conflict between the TED (Trans-European Division) and the college, I eventually decided that my reflections centered around three subjects: clericalism, theology, and healing.

Clericalism

Officially, the TED-Newbold dispute concerns the training of "front-line pastors." Both in content and direction, I believe the process manifests a kind clericalism—a policy of maintaining or upholding the power of a religious hierarchy at the expense, in this case, of academics, and professional lay people in general.

When the pandemic came and organizational and financial constraints threatened more than ever before, the leaders in the TED resorted to a "clerical" model of the church's needs, privileging "front-line pastors." When the organizational cake needed to be cut (and the need for it to be smaller has been mooted for years), leaders have eliminated Newbold's work for the development of the lay church. Newbold in all departments has always trained loyal, thoughtful Adventist lay people with a passion for making a difference in the world. Newbold alumni work as valued scholars, teachers, accountants, business managers, musicians, principals, aid workers. Many of them are lay leaders. They support and enrich the churches to whom the "front-line pastors" bring new converts.

By all accounts, the process of reorganization has, in the name of "front-line mission," similarly discounted the insights of Newbold professionals. As I understand it, the frustration among various staff members is rooted in their own experience of proposing changes pre-October 2020 and finding their proposals left unconsidered, and they themselves being ignored or characterized as disgruntled obstacles to TED ideas for progress. Such attitudes breed

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discouragement. They also suggest an elite, clericalist thinking among the TED leadership, of which there were hints in Bruinsma's article.

My understanding is that this conflict has some of its deep roots in top-down approaches to change. Reports from many Newbold sources have painted a picture of an uncommunicative culture, superficial bonhomie covering an unwillingness to consult, exclusive meetings in closed groups, side-lining of anyone who questioned the process or asked, "what's next?" and little personnel support, alongside over-reliance on legal processes. Accounts of the process echo a recent legal judgment in an employment tribunal in one of the TED's territories, which described the approach of the church to its employees as "focused on confidentiality at the expense of transparency."[1] We heard little or no evidence of the sort of behavior we all long to find in followers of the One who said "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. It will not be so among you."[2]

And that was all before Reinder Bruinsma's *Spectrum* article was published. When Bonnie Dwyer sent an invitation to friends of Newbold to contribute to the conversation on the *Spectrum* website, I was intrigued. I forwarded Bonnie's invitation to those of my Facebook friends for whom I had emails. Some of them contributed to the *Spectrum* conversation. A significant number of others expressed an unwillingness to do so.

I was surprised at how many staff, students, and recent alumni wrote back citing their experience of the unwillingness of people in power at the TED and the college to listen to dissent or questions. They harbored fears for their own or others' employment prospects if they were to comment on the article. A current student whose permission I have for an anonymous quote said,

> I wish I would know that this church institution supports us enough to have and voice an opinion different from what the authority dictates, but what is happening at Newbold is the biggest proof of the opposite. Hence, regardless of the great pain, without strong support I don't think I can fight this battle.

For many people involved, the Newbold changes were being carried out in the same spirit as the administrators now wish their pastors to be trained—with unquestioning loyalty. Somehow, it seems, those who work for the TED and the college feel they are simply required to "do as they are told."

Theology

The TED rationale for the change seems to derive from its role as "the owners" of the college—a corporate conception of organizations derived from a secular profit-making model. In a community-based model, a consultation between all the stakeholders and all those who invest and participate in an organization is called for—or at the very least, with the teaching faculty and staff! As the New Testament puts it, "The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you,' nor again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you.'"[3] To have worked out this principle at Newbold, and to imagine *together* ways of continuing the college's long tradition of training leaders of *all* kinds, might have built community rather than dividing it.

Other models from the Bible are important in reflecting on this decision. What kind of God is modeled in the interaction between the two groups? It is an oft-forgotten biblical truth that we become like what we worship.[4] What kind of God does the TED process model? Many preferred Adventist pictures of God are of dominant power relationships. Thinking of God as king, ruler, judge, father can be a source of strength and courage, but such a model can also encourage, or at least act as a rationale for, resorting to power-based relationships between pastors and congregations—and between the TED and Newbold.

Many Adventists are asking, "Is the Old Testament God really an authoritarian patriarchal ruler who requires unquestioning obedience?" The late chief Rabbi in the UK, Jonathan Sacks, didn't seem to think so! In his book on Genesis,[5] he observed that, while there are 613 commands to "obey" in the Torah, the Hebrew has no word for "obey." Sacks suggests that what God asks of people is, "a greater virtue than obedience." What God seeks to develop in us is commitment and responsibility. To worship and follow God involves first paying attention and developing understanding. Discipleship involves a two-way learning relationship where we respond like Abraham and Jacob, by dialoguing with God.

Such a model has implications—both for leaders and followers. Adventists have tended to follow an "heroic" Western model of leadership, where a leader "solves" a problem and leads a co-dependent group of individuals who have minimal personal vision or ability to master the process of change. Newbold's theologians may have many faults, but lack of vision or ability are not among them.

An alternative non-European, and more biblical, model derives from the Zulu word, *ubuntu*—defined as "I am because you are." Administrators and theologians need each other, front-line pastors will fail without their insights and those of trained lay members—able-bodied and disabled, black and white, female and male, old and young, etc. etc. The TED claims its process has been consultative. But the breadth of the spectrum of those consulted, the transparency of the process and most importantly, the numbers of people involved in those consultations and in the resolving of any disagreements, are undisclosed.

Nobody pretends that church leadership in the twenty-first century is a walk in the park. But the extent to which leadership is relational, collaborative, and negotiated depends very much on the depth of leaders' commitment to community, together with the imaginative, spiritual, and facilitative gifts and skills of both leader and led. Guiding the discernment of the "mind of God" is not the same as guarding traditional understandings or telling people what "the truth" is. Post-heroic leadership has been described by some as "building the bridge while you walk over it"—for that, much community work is vital. Many Adventist leaders seem to believe that heroic nineteenth-century theological bridges are the only ones to support them in today's global pandemic.

Healing

So, what can be done to heal this situation of family breakdown between these two groups of committed people who seem to share so many common values and goals—and among whom we count some personal friends?

I suggest that there are two healing strategies available; one strategy may include the other. Adventists are not the only Christians in conflict. That may be why La Sierra University has set up its own Center for Conflict Resolution. The roots of all conflict are complex but the idea of mediation and facilitation *between* Christians is biblical,[6] as the Mennonite "Bridge-builders" and the

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From my observation, the biggest irony in this conflict over pastoral training is that many TED workers and Newbold theologians lack pastoral care themselves. Individually, many of them recognize that.

Anglican LLLF (Living in Love and Faith process)[7] both recognize. These two religious groups are heavily invested in their own challenging community-building processes.

They recognize that facilitation is a useful organizational strategy. As a neutral process, where participants are enabled to look at their values and preconceptions, skilled facilitation helps to identify the roots of conflict. At the very least, it can slowly rebuild trust between individuals and groups. Understanding and forgiveness may follow.

The second strategy— maybe part of the facilitation— is to discuss the issue at the heart of the conflict—the integration of "front-line pastoring" and ongoing pastoral care throughout the church. Questions like, what different kinds of care do different types of twenty-first-century people need?—and, perhaps most of all, how can we as a church create organizations where there is a balance between proclamation and pastoral care? How can we nurture each other and contemporary people with what is truly needed for spiritual growth rather than what we think people ought to need?

From my observation, the biggest irony in this conflict over pastoral training is that many TED workers and Newbold theologians lack pastoral care themselves. Individually, many of them recognize that. I know them all as committed and passionate and hard-working. They are also stressed and stretched with scant opportunity to receive as well as give.

So, who pastors the theologians and the Newbold staff in general? The budget for college chaplaincy has been repeatedly pared. Formal pastoral care on campus has been in shorter and shorter supply throughout our time at the college.

The pastoral deficit equally applies to TED personnel and union leaders. The TED is a multi-national, multi-cultural division with 90,000 members in fourteen fields and twenty-two countries. Much that is demanded of personnel in any multi-national corporation is required of the seventeen people who work in this huge territory, *plus* they need time to develop themselves spiritually and professionally. Pre-pandemic traveling for many was about 130 days a year. What sort of ongoing pastoral care is available to these traveling souls of whom super-human resilience is required?

In both groups, the culture of the church at all levels tends to favor action rather than reflective prayer, and "toughing it out" over "bearing and sharing one another's burdens." All needs tend to be side-lined in the pressure to "save the world."

The two strategies I describe will not overcome the challenge the Church faces as it shares the faith of the Second Advent described as "soon" now for 177 years. But led by the Spirit, they will certainly help to develop a group characterized by something that transcends hierarchy and clericalism. A group described in the words, "How these Christians love one another." One former staff member commented with the words, "Only beloved people can pass on belovedness." It's the heart of the matter!

Endnotes

1. https://www.gov.uk/employment-tribunal-decisions?keywords=Adventist&fbclid=IwAR20O3Ho-3gpEjhPv1org1GS2YUqK62mX8WJ4Qkmh6vjH34GIyHXxA1tL5Q

2. Matthew 20:25–26.

3. 1 Corinthians 12:21.

4. Psalm 15.

5. Jonathan Sacks, *Genesis: The Book of Beginnings* (Oxford: OUP, 2010).

6. Matthew 18.

7. https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/living-love-and-faith/living-love-and-faith-learning-hub

HELEN PEARSON is a former PR consultant and a retired counselor and psychotherapist from Wokingham, England and was a longtime elder of Newbold Church. She and her husband, Michael, run the website Pearsons' Perspectives.

EXCELLENCE

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KEYWORDS: Adventist education, Newbold College, Aristotle, travelers and settlers, creativity

A REFLECTION ON EXCELLENCE: *Charles Elliott Weniger Award for Excellence 2021*

BY MICHAEL PEARSON

Michael and Helen Pearson, Edwin Henry Krick and Edna Mae Loveless received the Charles E. Weniger Awards for Excellence on February 20, 2021. Michael Pearson presented the Clinton Emmerson Memorial Lecture at the Awards Ceremony. It is published here with permission from the Charles E. Weniger Society for Excellence.

Michael and Helen Pearson

Gratitude

I would like to add my own thanks to the Weniger committee for formally recognizing my contribution to the work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church over a good many years. It is heart-warming to have our work noticed and honored. Along with my fellow recipients I am grateful to receive this award and be mentioned in the same sentence as Charles Elliott Weniger who, as professor of English and Dean of the seminary, was himself known for his own excellent contribution to Adventist education. I am certain he would agree, nevertheless, that the greatest reward has come from the people, the students, and colleagues, who have walked beside us over the years. Thanks too go to Clinton Emmerson, for whom

this lecture is named, for keeping the legacy of Charles Weniger alive.

Others

Grateful and honored though we are to be recognized, we would be foolish not to acknowledge that there's something arbitrary about such awards. I can think of many of our Newbold colleagues over the years whose work has been a deeply valuable investment in the lives of generations of students. They were excellent in the classroom, in the personal support they offered to students, in the communities they helped to nurture. We are deeply indebted to them.

So too, all those teachers and students throughout the Adventist schools and colleges in Europe with whom Helen and I have worked over many years—many excellent in their own way. They may go uncelebrated today, but their efforts still help sustain the Church, nurture the poor, and leaven the whole in the public space.

Excellence

Excellence seems like a simple thing—just being outstandingly good at something. But it is not so simple. Especially in a Christian context. Our English word "excellence" comes from Latin roots meaning to "stand out in height or be a culmination." It seems that if one stands out from others, they in turn must form a mass of averageness for the sake of comparison. Jesus made clear his distaste for such human comparisons. In the Bible "excellence" / "excellent" is usually a descriptor of God, not of human beings.

The Greek philosopher, Aristotle, had much to say about excellence as a virtue. So, I want to walk for a moment in the company of Aristotle and Jesus, to eavesdrop on an exchange between them on this theme.

Excellence and Comparison

When, in 2012, *Time* magazine named Stanley Hauerwas as the "best theologian in America," he responded by saying that "best is not a theological category." It's true—there are surprisingly few uses of the word "best" in the Bible and they mostly refer to things like wine, food, and land. So, if "excellent" has a notion of "best-ness" within it, then we as a Christian community should perhaps be wary of employing it. I have always been nervous and suspicious of references to an "A student" or a "C student." While the label may offer a useful shorthand, it is not without its dangers. All teachers have taught "C students" who put every effort into their academic achievements, who later made important contributions, and were wonderful human beings. By the same token, we will have taught "A students" whose work came easily to them and who could become complacent or even arrogant.

In Christian education, excellence can never be simply about a superior position on a bell curve. It is also about endeavor, surmounting obstacles, being curious and challenging your own previous best efforts rather than those of others. Jesus said that secular ways of measuring should not predominate among his followers: "It will not be so among you . . . whoever wishes to be first among you must be your slave" (Matt. 20:26–27 NRSV). Aristotle by contrast cared little for slaves and considered that only members of the Athenian elite were capable of excellence.

Excellence and Moderation

An important part of Aristotle's notions of virtue was moderation. For example, courage was a virtue in his judgment. But it was important to distinguish it from recklessness. There was no virtue in seeking martyrdom. His idea is in the same family as temperance, a Christian

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fruit of the Spirit. Paul, in his first Corinthian letter, teaches us that we should be "temperate in all things" and that we should avoid "jealousies," "selfish ambitions," "envies." We do our work as well as we can, but not at the expense of other human values, nor so that we can beat others into second place, but rather so that we can serve others. We do not sacrifice everything just to be top dog. So, excellence and moderation live slightly uncomfortably with each other. Aristotle and Jesus may well agree on that.

Excellence and Habit

Aristotle believed excellence is not primarily about achievement but about habit. Excellence is a habit. It is about working tirelessly on the formation of virtuous habits so that they become second nature. Thanks partly to the legacy of Ellen White's teaching, we as Adventists have placed strong emphasis on the formation of good habits in both home and school. This formation of good habits is, like sanctification, "the work of a lifetime." Excellence is more a habit, less an achievement. "We are what we repeatedly do." Excellence is the work of a lifetime.

Excellence and Freshness

The English poet and priest, Gerard Manley Hopkins says in his poem "God's Grandeur":

> The world is charged with the grandeur of God.
> It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;
> And for all this, nature is never spent;
> There lives the dearest freshness deep
> down things; . . .

While the development of habits of thinking is important, good teaching depends also on freshness, on creativity. This is a willingness to revisit the old formulae, the tired conventions, and an eagerness to make new connections. It is a readiness to submit the sharply contoured certainties of morning to the nuances of afternoon light and the shadows of evening. I found that students came most eagerly to class when they did so with the expectation that something fresh was going to happen, that something might take them by surprise, that old things would be said in new ways, and that maybe that the world would never look quite the same again. Freshness and habit can live together but they live in tension. The teachings of Jesus demonstrate this amply: "You have heard it said but I say unto you . . ." Excellence involves living in tension.

Excellence and Blossoming

Aristotle's notion of virtue involved the idea of flourishing, of blossoming, of becoming fully "vir," virile, a true man or, in our more open society, a true human being.

Aristotle's idea of excellence as part of virtue is not a million miles away from a biblical notion of flourishing as found in Psalm 1:3 (NRSV).

> The "blessed," the virtuous
> They are like trees
> planted by streams of water,
> that yield their fruit in its season,
> and their leaf does not wither.
> In all that they do, they prosper.

Jesus says that we find blessedness, we prosper, in unexpected places. In adversity. In the company of those different from ourselves. In serving others. And in so doing those others slowly return to us the gift of our true selves. What greater gift could we desire? What further excellence could be sought?

Excellence and Community

Aristotle says that virtue is to be found within a community; you cannot become virtuous alone; you cannot become excellent alone. But of course, Aristotle spoke from within a certain type of privileged community, an elite. Jesus is far more radical: "blessed are the poor in spirit . . . blessed are those that mourn . . . blessed are the peacemakers . . ." and so on. Blessedness is to be found in the company of those unlike you, the disadvantaged. In losing yourself you mysteriously find yourself; in serving you find fulfillment, you blossom, you find your true self, you excel, you stand out from your previous self.

Excellence is to be found then in community. It means being willing to subordinate your own interests to others'. It means being subject to others on occasion without becoming a cipher. Aristotle saw it as one of the

Blessedness is to be found in the company of those unlike you, the disadvantaged. In losing yourself you mysteriously find yourself; in serving you find fulfillment, you blossom, you find your true self, you excel, you stand out from your previous self.

supreme virtues by which the virtuous person should live. He taught in ancient Athens, a society unlike ours. He was part of the ruling class. He would not expect the lower order to aspire so high. Nor would he have imagined that blessedness was to be found in the company of the outsider, the downtrodden, the leper, the impure. Jesus expanded our idea of community. Rather, Jesus simply exploded it.

Excellence and Contentment

From a Christian perspective there is one piece of the picture still missing. Our striving after excellence could become relentless and leave us restless and forever discontent. In the pursuit of excellence there is room for satisfaction and contentment. We can pause and see that our work is "very good." There is a moment when we can be still, and rest satisfied with our efforts. The true gift that the Weniger committee has given us is the assurance that our work has shown good quality, that our efforts have yielded good fruit. And not only us. It is true of so many with whom we four have each worked over so many years and in so many places.

Let us all then hear that affirmation: let us rest content with it for a while.

Then we hear the voice of the apostle Paul when he says to the believers in Corinth: "I will show you a still more excellent way" (I Cor. 12:31 NRSV). Excellence always involves moving on.

We owe Aristotle a debt of gratitude for his profound insights into human nature and behavior, and into the world in which we live, into everyday things. Our indebtedness to him is probably greater than we recognize.

But the "more excellent way" announced in chapter 12 of the first Corinthian letter blossoms in chapter 13 into the invitation to surrender to agape love. And with this, excellence moves on to a different plane altogether. It goes beyond the "clanging cymbals" and "noisy gongs" of achievement, even the achievement of "all knowledge." In Christian education, the achievement of results without the accomplishments of love has a hollow ring to it.

Gandhi said that people divide into two groups: travelers and settlers. Some Weniger recipients have been travelers. Helen and I have been settlers. Gandhi added that if you choose to settle, you must dig your wells deep. For us, that has meant digging deep into the roots of a community and digging deep into the overwhelming love of God. Without these we would have been quite exhausted of any resource.

The call to excellence is still to be heard. Charles Elliott Weniger echoed it. Perhaps Jesus had something of this in mind when he talked about giving all to acquire the pearl of great price. "Giving all" is a risk in any field of human endeavor. It is a risk, a risk of trust that we four have found worth taking. We plan to continue but can only continue in the company of people such as yourselves who also have a deep thirst for the "more excellent way."

And so let us continue our journey—together.

MICHAEL PEARSON is retired in Berkshire in the UK after a lifetime of teaching at Newbold College. His particular interest in the overlaps between philosophy, ethics, and spirituality have led him to wider audiences all over Europe and sometimes beyond. He likes to write a little every day and has some of his efforts published in various forums. His guiding concern is to make connections between his Adventist background, his interior voice, and the wider world of ideas. Helen, his wife of fifty years, his daughter and son-in-law, his son and daughter-in-law, and his three grandchildren make a determined effort to block access to his ivory tower. See their weekly blog at pearsonsperspectives.com.

KEYWORDS: *Amer'ican*, Adventist composers, orchestral music, Native American and African American musical elements

THE SACRED AND THE SUBLIME:

Composer James Lee Describes His Musical Journey

BY ALITA BYRD

The music of Adventist composer James Lee III has been played by top orchestras and conducted by well-known maestros across the United States. With more than eighty works written and fourteen new works due to be premiered, including a piece to be performed by the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra for Juneteenth, Lee is busy. But recently he took some time to talk to *Spectrum* about the composers that inspire him, the definition of sacred music, how he keeps the Sabbath hours holy, how he incorporates elements of African American music into his work, and the concertos and oratorios in his head that are yet unwritten.

> How did you come to hear of me and my work? Because I am not used to Adventists taking an interest in what I am doing.

You are a prolific composer, and you have written a wide variety of music for a wide variety of instrumentations. I believe the Detroit Symphony Orchestra will soon be playing a piece of yours called *Amer'ican*. Can you describe that music for us?

Well, *Amer'ican* is actually a work that was influenced by some paintings that I saw that are emblems of America. The composer Antonín Dvořák composed the *New World Symphony*, and he always advocated for American concert music to incorporate music from Negro Americans and from Native Americans. So, this particular work was inspired by some emblems from 1798 of Negro Indigenous Indians here in America. And with those paintings, I was inspired by various aspects of that history, so I quoted a little of the *New World Symphony* in my particular work.

So, part of that work is a nod to Dvořák?

Sure, so when I spoke to the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, I encouraged them to program the *New World Symphony* along with my piece because I thought that would be a good pairing, in terms of the programmatic aspects of the concert, and it would also encourage other orchestras in the future, when they are programming Dvořák's *New World Symphony* to consider programming

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my new work, *Amer'ican* along with that.

How did you come to hear of me and my work? Because I am not used to Adventists taking an interest in what I am doing.

Yes, I only found a few little mentions of you in Adventist publications, and I was surprised by that, because your work is amazing, and Adventists should be proud of your work and be talking about it.

Well, that's nice. Yeah, I was surprised.

I don't know if you know about GYC? It was called General Youth Conference and now I think it's called Generation of Youth for Christ. I was the music director of that for about four years. I have always been in the church. I am an elder in my church now.

But it's funny, it didn't seem like that side of my music interested anyone. I talked to the *Adventist Review* about what I was doing one time at the Kennedy Center, and they weren't really interested, so I said yeah, that's okay, I will just keep doing my work. It doesn't matter.

I am surprised, and kind of appalled, that more Adventists aren't aware of you and your work. But I guess that would kind of explain why I hadn't heard about you earlier!

It seems that a lot of your work has been inspired by your faith, at least according to the secular press that has talked to you. Maybe we can talk a little bit about that. How would you describe your faith as influencing your work?

When I was a student at the University of Michigan, I listened to a piece by a French Catholic composer called Olivier Messiaen. He composed this work called *Quartet for the End of Time*, and I remember being so taken by that work. He was such a towering figure in twentieth-century classical music, that I was thinking in my doctoral programs that why can't I, as a Seventh-day Adventist, also incorporate various doctrines that we have, or even some of the Bible studies that I had been doing on Daniel and Revelation, and that wonderful imagery, and incorporate that into music?

So, from my student days I decided that would be part of my compositional output. And my dissertation, *Beyond Rivers of Vision*, was actually premiered by the National Symphony Orchestra at the Kennedy Center in 2006. So, one year after I graduated, that work was performed. And that work is based on the River of Life in Revelation, and of course one of the visions of the river from Genesis, from the Garden of Eden, and then the same river, the Tigris, or in Hebrew the Ḥiddeqel, from Daniel chapter 10. So that work actually started my career.

What was the reaction to your piece when it was performed at the Kennedy Center?

The press—the *Baltimore Sun* and the *Washington Post*—were very favorable in their reviews. And the orchestra members were also quite enthusiastic in their performance. And the conductor at the time, Leonard Slatkin, was—and still is—a proponent of young American composers. And he actually told me after the Saturday night performance that he wanted to keep tabs on me so he could keep track

of what I was doing, and then consider programming more works of mine.

So that is what he did. He programmed a new piece about my grandfather in World War II with the Detroit Symphony as his first concerts with the Detroit Symphony in December of 2008. And it was such great exposure because all the concerts were sold out. They were also programming with it this large work, *Carmina Burana*, for soloist, chorus, and orchestra. And that sold out every night. So, I had a tremendous amount of exposure from that concert.

That is an amazing conductor to have in your corner!

I know the books of Daniel and Revelation have inspired many artists, and the late Virginia-Gene Rittenhouse wrote her oratorio, *The Vision of the Apocalypse*, which was performed in Carnegie Hall. I find it interesting that you also find these books of the Bible some of your biggest biblical inspiration. Are there other biblical themes you have explored or are interested in?

I have a premiere next week, a song cycle. The 92nd Street Y commissioned me to write a work for soprano, clarinet, and piano. And they wanted that particular instrumentation because there is also a work by Franz Schubert in the same concert using those same instruments.

I did some research, and I found these poems about women in the Bible who did not have a voice. I wrote music for the imaginary responses from these women whose real words were never recorded. So, for example, there is Absalom's wife. That is one of the poems. And Abishag, the young woman who was taken to be near King David during the late years of his life. The woman who was bent over, who Jesus healed. And also Matthew the tax collector's wife. They all have their expressions about what life was like for them being near their husbands or men. So, these are some of the poems that I found. And the poet is actually delighted that I found her poems. And they are going to be premiered next week.

So, the soprano in this piece will be singing the words of these women, who up until now, have not had a voice.

Yes. It starts with a prologue, and the first song is called "After Eve, Then What?" And then the four songs explore these experiences of these women if their stories had been told.

I hope you get a great reception to that work. But I can imagine that audiences have been greatly impacted and premieres and concerts have been greatly affected over the last year and a bit because of COVID. How has COVID impacted your work?

I have never stopped during this whole COVID time. I have been working on pieces that were scheduled to be premiered this year and next year. I never stopped at all. I have actually received more commissions than ever before in my whole life. And then there are also performances of my music online.

This past Tuesday a clarinet quintet of mine was played in Ohio, with a live audience. But it was premiered in March online. So, I have had quite a few performances online during the pandemic, and a lot of music that I have been writing for future premieres. I have never really stopped at all.

Maybe you have had more quiet time to compose, since you haven't had to be running around as much as in your normal life!

Sure, I haven't been on a plane as much. But I just got back from Tulsa, Oklahoma, on Sunday. That was the first time I needed to travel in over a year for a premiere of

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I was thinking in my doctoral programs that why can't I, as a Seventh-day Adventist, also incorporate various doctrines that we have, or even some of the Bible studies that I had been doing on Daniel and Revelation, and that wonderful imagery, and incorporate that into music?

My father signed me up for lessons without my knowledge. He just told me one day: "I signed you up for lessons." Years later, I thanked him for doing that because like any other young boy, I was mainly interested in sport.

a new piece. I have mostly been on Zoom interviews and listening to online concerts.

Do you generally travel to attend a premiere of your work?

Yes, I usually travel for all premieres. They usually really desire my presence there, as usually a composer is at the world premiere. Maybe not the subsequent performances, but typically for the world premiere, the composer is present.

And going back to instrumentation—what type of ensemble or orchestra do you prefer to compose for? What instrumentation do you like the best?

Oh, by far the orchestra. That has been my favorite. It seems that it offers more opportunities. You might think that composing for a choir might be easier, but for me and my experience, having an orchestra play my music or commission a new work has always been easier than having a choral piece commissioned.

There are so many voices to be thinking about when writing for an orchestra!

Yes, but the colors you can achieve, and the things you can do with an orchestra—that really attracts me to it.

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Have you played orchestral instruments yourself? I believe you were a pianist first.

I have only studied the piano—and I still play the piano. Although in high school at Andrews Academy I played the timpani one semester.

How many pieces have you composed?

I never know exactly how many pieces I have composed. I just write and send them to my publisher. The listing my publisher has may be over eighty works, but I am not sure. I know that once concerts start to be rescheduled, I know I am expecting fourteen world premieres pretty soon. So, I know I have to plan my schedule accordingly for when I can travel again, and my teaching schedule.

Do you have so much music in your head just waiting to come out? To me, the work of composition is just unfathomable. How do you actually write the music? Do you ever take a commission and then sit down and have whatever the composer's version of writer's block is? How do you keep having new ideas?

I usually pray before I compose anything. And yes, sometimes when I listen to my music, I think, "Wow, did I really write that?" I don't even know how I did it. But I know I pray, and I use the skills I learned when I studied at the University of Michigan. And then I work out some ideas and harmonic structures or what I want to appear rhythmically or melodically in the music.

Sometimes I do experience writer's block. For example, I have a new piece that was commissioned by the Baltimore Symphony for narration and orchestra that is being premiered next month. It was a new piece that they just added—and they just told me about it in late February. I had one day where I worked all day, and I just could not get a breakthrough until almost midnight. Finally, I just changed the direction of where I was going

with one particular passage, and then it just solved the problem.

Going back, can you tell me how old you were when you started playing the piano?

Quite late—I was 12 years old. My father signed me up for lessons without my knowledge. He just told me one day: "I signed you up for lessons." Years later, I thanked him for doing that because like any other young boy, I was mainly interested in sport. (I still am, but I don't play sports the way I did when I was younger.) But yeah, I used to pass the method books for piano, one every week. I was so interested in and in love with music.

Have you asked your father what inspired him to sign you up for piano lessons?

Probably because they bought me a toy piano when I was a little boy and they saw my interest in playing around with that little piano.

They tried to sign me up for guitar lessons later, but I didn't really want to learn the guitar. And I really thought piano was more of an instrument for girls. But then when my father just made the decision for me and registered me for lessons, I just fell in love and have loved the piano ever since.

What experience did you have with music before you were 12?

Really mainly music in church. And some popular music. I remember liking popular music until I started piano lessons. And since then, I have never really listened to it, unless it is being played in my hearing somewhere.

I was in the children's choir and the youth choir.

Was that a formative experience for you?

I used to have fun with my friends there until I really started to understand more about music and then the youth choir wasn't as interesting to me anymore. Then I felt like what I was learning and what they were doing were too different—it just wasn't as appealing to me. I wanted to be really serious with my music, but the choir rehearsals felt like just a social gathering.

Do you remember when you first became interested in composing?

In elementary school a teacher saw me writing notes and she told me: "You know, there is such a thing as manuscript paper?" I didn't know that. Later, at Andrews Academy, I started to write more, and I wrote something for piano that ended up winning The People's Choice Award in a talent show.

Can you give us a synopsis of your musical education after that?

I thought I would be this wonderful pianist. I went to Andrews University for two years. I really wanted to work on my solo piano repertoire, but I ended up mostly accompanying—singers and violinists.

For my third year, I applied and was accepted at the University of Michigan to study at the school of music there. I finished my bachelor's degree in piano performance at the University of Michigan. Then I was going to go to the Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore, or I was also accepted at the University of Maryland for piano performance, but then I changed my mind about piano performance altogether. I applied to the composition program at Michigan, which was at the time ranked in the top four or five in the country. So, I ended up staying at Michigan for the master's and the doctorate in composition.

You probably met a number of other musicians and composers in your time at the University of Michigan. Have you worked with some of them since?

Oh yes. There is a married couple—both musicians—who were students at the University of Michigan when I was, and they have started an organization called The Sphinx Organization.

That organization really helps young Black and Latinx string players. They have a competition every year that gives students the opportunity to play with orchestras. They also have an orchestral composition consortium commission. They nominated me for this commission in 2010. I won that, and to this day, the piece that I wrote, called *Sukkot Through Orion's Nebula*, has been played more than twenty times. That has been a huge blessing. So that is one example.

Another example is a pianist who studied at the University of Michigan. She recorded my piano compositions back in 2014 on the Albany label.

So, I have been collaborating on and off with colleagues of mine that studied at Michigan.

How about Adventist musicians? Are there Adventist musicians you have collaborated with or Adventist music groups who have played your work?

Actually, I have been the most successful in South America with Adventist musicians. I had an oratorio

performed at the Adventist University of São Paulo in Brazil, UNASP. And then I was the composer-in-residence in January 2020 for the festival they have at the university there. I would have been there again this year, but of course the pandemic has changed everything.

Besides that, I wrote a concerto for violin and orchestra that Carla Trynchuk at Andrews University would have premiered last March. But they rescheduled it to spring 2022. She was actually one of my music theory teachers at Andrews University before I transferred. I am looking forward to going back to Andrews and hearing her premiere the violin concerto.

I would imagine that Adventist universities and music groups might not have a budget to commission works the way that bigger organizations do, and that would have some impact on who plays them.

Yes, certainly. Well, at Andrews, I gave them the "Adventist discount!"

And what about the New England Youth Ensemble? Have they played any of your pieces?

They haven't yet. I wrote a piano concerto for Daniel Lau, and that would have been premiered at Washington Adventist University in August of last year. But I haven't yet heard when they plan to reschedule that concert. But that is another that I am really enthusiastic about hearing.

How would you describe the style of music that you compose, for someone listening who is not a musician?

There are certain elements of contemporary classical music, and harmonies, that I incorporate. But I always try to provide elements of accessibility. So, for someone who doesn't normally listen to music, there is always a balance of what one can really grasp and understand as a lay listener. And also appreciate some of the more modern techniques of rhythm and meter—and dissonance that is eventually resolved.

I remember at one concert, some of the elderly attendees told me that my music kept them on edge—they were really engaged with it, whereas they went to sleep during Brahms!

Historically we have had this definition of sacred music versus "profane." We have sacred music that we play during worship service or the Sabbath hours

www.jamesleeiiimusic.com

James Lee III with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra

When I am thinking about what happens musically and want to convey the idea of what a text is saying, not everything will line up in a metric order that is always even. That is not the way some of these Biblical texts and stories are written. You can't convey the Beast from Daniel 7 in a way that is predictable—you just can't do it! When you talk about those four winds. . .

versus music that is classical, but that has no religious history or connotation. Would you differentiate between these types of music? How would you define sacred music?

Certainly I think about that, especially because of the Sabbath. A lot of my music has biblical subject matter, or refers to Bible prophecy, and one reason is because a lot of the time, my music is programmed first in a concert. So many times, if it is programmed on the Sabbath, and I am actually there listening to it, I will usually leave right after it, so that I am not drawing any undue attention to myself during the Sabbath hours. And I don't want to have conversations about some things on the Sabbath.

When I am thinking about sacred music, of course I am thinking about what can bring honor and glory to God and his handiwork, in a way that is tasteful—telling a story and being genuine about what the word of God says. There are some who may think about syncopation and these aspects of music that might have negative connotations, but music doesn't have to be negative just because it might have some sort of stress on the offbeat. When I am thinking about what happens musically and want to convey the idea of what a text is saying, not everything will line up in a metric order that is always even. That is not the way some of these Biblical texts and stories are written. You can't convey the Beast from Daniel 7 in a way that is predictable—you just can't do it! When you talk about those four winds. . .

I have a piece called *Night Visions of Kippur* where I explore that, especially in the first and last movements.

I had a piece of mine that was played on the radio with the Chicago Symphony, it is this *Sukkot Through Orion's Nebula*, which is describing the Feast of Tabernacles and the Second coming of Jesus from Revelation 14, after the Three Angels' Messages are mentioned. And in the same concert, they played *Night on Bald Mountain*, which is about witches and darkness. So, I have been programmed as a music of light, in contrast with the music of darkness.

So, in the profane aspect, that music is drawing one more to what is worldly and human, and worshiping the human artist instead of the Creator God—that is how I make that distinction in thinking about the sacred and the profane. Who are you going to worship? At the end, that is the question. Who will you worship? Who will your allegiance be to?

I used to play with Virginia-Gene Rittenhouse, and at every concert she told the story of how JS Bach believed that all music should be "to the glory of God and the refreshment of the spirit" and if it met those criteria, it was sacred music.

Bach, of course, and Mendelssohn always both highlighted God in their works, in terms of him being the Creator and him being the one whom we should honor and glory.

Just because it's classical music, sometimes people think that means it is sacred. But some of these works really don't have any business being played or heard on the Sabbath.

I know the history of many of these composers and their work, and just because something might seem neutral—well, I don't really think all those works are as neutral as one might think.

What contemporary composers, and what historic composers, inspire you?

Well, I like some of my teachers of course. All of my teachers! But I will name just a few. William Bolcom was one of my teachers, and Bright Sheng, and Michael Daugherty. And then there is John Adams, whose music I really appreciate and learn from. There is a composer from Australia whose music I have really come to know. His name is Nigel Westlake. He has this wonderful work called *Compassion*, which mixes the Hebrew language and Arabic, and it is just wonderful what he did in that work.

Some of the older composers I like include Tōru Takemitsu, a Japanese composer, and of course Shostakovich. I love his pacing and balance in his symphonies. And, of course, Beethoven, Ravel, and Debussy with the colors. Oh, and [Argentinian composer] Alberto Ginastera—his driving rhythms are very fascinating.

At the beginning of our conversation you mentioned elements of Native American and African American music. Are there elements of African American music that you try to incorporate into your work?

Yes, I have. In this piece *Amer'ican* I used a Negro spiritual, "Just One," in a passage played by the flute. Interestingly, Dvořák said that when he listened to music of Negro Americans and Native Americans, he couldn't really distinguish between the two. So, if you play the music of a spiritual on the flute, you will actually think it's Indigenous American, or Native American.

A lot of times, African Americans are called African Americans, but historically many of us have a lot of Native or Indigenous blood in us. That is a whole other story. But when you hear the music of the spirituals, it has the same sort of scale or construction of minor modes and minor pentatonic scales that you will find in Native American music as well. So that is something I have been very interested in. Because historically, many African Americans have been reclassified from being so-called Indians to being so-called Africans.

Do you know any other Adventist composers?

I do. Joel Thompson gets a lot of different performances of his work. I know he has music being premiered by the Seattle Symphony this season. He has been played by the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. He is Atlanta-based but at the Yale School of Music right now. If you are talking about composers writing orchestra music, he is the only one I can think of. I know we have other Adventist composers at our institutions, but I don't know anyone else doing similar work to what I am doing.

What are the works you are the most proud of, or best show the range of what you have done?

The temptation is to say *Sukkot Through Orion's Nebula* because that is the piece that has been played the most. And I am almost a little embarrassed—not embarrassed by the piece but sometimes I think people might say, "Oh that is the only piece he has written that's good." But that is definitely one to listen to for sure, because that one has been a blessing to me ever since I wrote it.

Maybe my second violin sonata. That one worked out very well. That is a good one to listen to. It is also on my web page.

There is a piano trio called *Temple Visions*. That might be one that people would be interested in.

It just depends on whether someone wants to hear instrumental music.

I have a work called *Hallelu Yah!* for chorus that is also on my website. That is for acapella choir. In that one I use the name of God in Hebrew, and the various names of God are intertwined with alleluia throughout the choral piece.

You live in Baltimore currently, right? Would you say the Baltimore Symphony is your local orchestra?

Definitely, they are. I have been blessed to be commissioned by them in this year twice.

Are you able to go and hear them play again now?

They are planning for that this fall. They commissioned this piece that I wrote called *Destined Words*. That is to commemorate Music Director Marin Alsop's tenure with the orchestra. That will be her last concert with the Baltimore Symphony. And it's also Juneteenth and they wanted to write something for Juneteenth as well. Their Artistic Partner, who is actually a rapper named Wordsmith (Anthony Parker), wrote the text. It is for narration and orchestra. So, they will be premiering it on June 19, that Saturday night. And it will also be viewed via Maryland Public Television.

I am really looking forward to it. This is the piece I was saying I had a breakthrough at midnight.

Do you have other big projects in the works?

I am at this moment, today, working on a piano trio.

Chamber Music America commissioned me to write a piano trio that will be premiered at Tanglewood in November this year. So, I have to finish that this month. Because I have a new piece for the Baltimore Symphony, the Boston Symphony, and the Rochester Philharmonic. That premiere is in January next year, but it has to be delivered in November. And I haven't started!

Then I have a band piece that I am writing for a consortium of university symphonic bands. That will be premiered next spring.

But what I have also wanted to write is a cello concerto. And an oratorio based on the Second Coming of Jesus, or the Great Controversy theme. That has been something I have always wanted to do. But at least with secular orchestras and organizations, that would probably be too long for their programming.

You are so prolific, and you have so many things coming up, I don't know how you have any extra time left over. But are there other things you do to relax or give your mind a reset so you can come back to the creative process?

I am studying Hebrew. I love foreign languages. My wife is Brazilian, and she taught me Portuguese, so every time I am in Brazil, I can communicate in Portuguese. I am fluent.

I also studied German at Andrews, French at University of Michigan; I learned Portuguese with my wife, and now I am studying Hebrew. I am really serious about Biblical Hebrew and modern Hebrew. I have been to Israel twice.

I also like watching LaLiga soccer games, or European leagues.

Well, maybe that is one time where you let your brain rest! Studying foreign languages—you don't give yourself too much of a break!

My wife—she is a middle school teacher—and I sometimes relax together and talk, or we might watch a movie. But usually if I am watching something, it's a game.

Composer James Lee III has written works for orchestra, string quartet, chorus and other varied musical ensembles that have been commissioned and premiered by the National Symphony Orchestra, the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, the Boston Symphony Chorus, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, and many other orchestras across the United States. His music has been played at Tanglewood and championed by famed conductor Leonard Slatkin.

Lee attended Andrews Academy and Andrews University before he went to the University of Michigan, where he earned his first degree in piano performance and then his masters and doctorate in composition. The piece Lee wrote for his dissertation for the University of Michigan was based on the River of Life in Revelation—he called it Beyond Rivers of Vision*, and it was premiered by the National Symphony Orchestra at the Kennedy Center in 2006.*

ALITA BYRD is interviews editor for the *Spectrum* website, and has been writing for *Spectrum* since 1995. She holds a degree in English and journalism from Washington Adventist University and an MA in history from the London School of Economics. She recently moved with her husband and four children to Santiago, Chile, where they will live for the next several years.

BOOK REVIEW

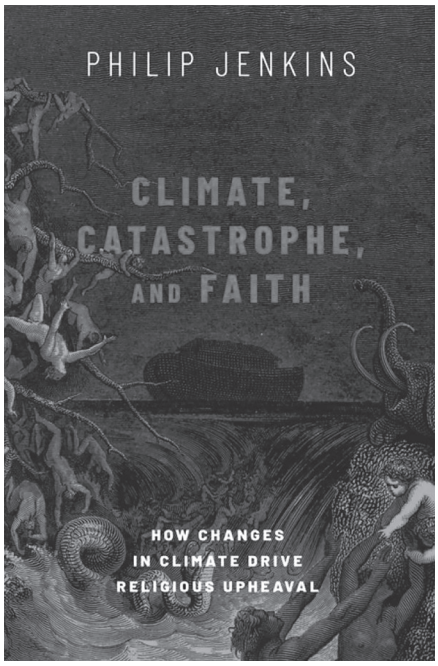
KEYWORDS: book review, climate change, witch hunts, migration, political violence

The Weather AND THE APOCALYPSE

BY MICHAEL CAMPBELL

Philip Jenkins.* Climate, Catastrophe, and Faith: How Changes in Climate Drive Religious Upheaval. *New York: Oxford University Press, 2021. 201 pp. + 41 pp. notes + 13 pp. index. Hardcover, $29.95.

What do the 530s, 1790s, and 1840s all have in common? For Adventists who affirm the historicist approach to Bible prophecy, they will readily recognize these decades as connected to important prophetic dates (i.e., 538, 1798, 1844). In fact, William Miller makes a cameo appearance in this monograph (167–168). Historian Philip Jenkins observes how these were also times of significant climate disruption. The 530s contributed to the fall of the Roman Empire, and the 1790s and 1840s were both periods of time toward the end of the Little Ice Age that lasted from roughly the late thirteenth century up through the mid-nineteenth century (61).



Jenkins further argues: "Throughout history, climate and climate change have been key drivers of religious development" (3). Any historical account that does not take into account climate change will fall woefully short. As a consequence, Jenkins seeks to better "understand why people in particular eras felt such stress, fear, and anxiety, which is expressed in religious forms" (5). Such an essential context helps to better understand why societies

What do the 530s, 1790s, and 1840s all have in common? For Adventists who affirm the historicist approach to Bible prophecy, they will readily recognize these decades as connected to important prophetic dates (i.e., 538, 1798, 1844).

sometimes collapse, while others continue, as a topic of lively scholarly debate.

Adventist readers will find the reference to the legendary Dark Day of May 1780, caused by a combination of fog and distant forest fires that blackened the skies. "People openly talked of Judgment Day. The event stirred apocalyptic sentiment, launching regional religious revivals, and sparking enthusiastic sects" (16). As such events happened, people sought meaning, citing Bible texts to interpret those signs around them. Such an apocalyptic framework assumed that God would shortly intervene, thereby instituting a radically new and different order of things. Intriguingly, "as the end approaches, the righteous form a remnant" (17). Adventists often identify as the "remnant"—an idea the author associates in terms of climate change with separating or excluding oneself from the world, most often as a response to worldly scourges.

Jenkins features four specific periods of time as case studies: between 1310 and 1325; the 1560s through the 1590s; from 1675 to 1700; and finally, the 1730s and 1740s. He furthermore notes a combination of factors that contribute to climate change: solar activity, volcanic eruptions, cycles of El Niño, and how each of these interrelate in ways that we as humans do not fully understand (32). Over time, there was a progression as society responded to catastrophe. The earliest period, aptly called the "Dark Ages," was one of violence and hostility. The next was characterized by social paranoia, which resulted in pogroms. By the seventeenth century, new technology made "fleeing and flight" much more feasible. New concepts of religious liberty emerged with spiritual experimentation (25).

Witchcraft and heresy hunting are significant themes found in this book. Humans seek meaning from disasters, seeking to place the blame somewhere—upon Jews (72–74), Muslims (78–81), and especially, witchcraft (71). People invented "a whole new religion, the religion of diabolic witchcraft" (71). Women were disproportionately accused of this sin (72, 96). Such efforts resulted in perfectionism (to placate God and escape the sins of a failed world) and suppression of heresy—averred in apocalyptic terms (75). Witch trials reached stunning proportions during the 1680s and 1690s. The Salem trials of 1692, in which nineteen were executed, paled in comparison to Continental Europe, where seventy-one died in a single day in Sweden, Lichtenstein executed a hundred, and Salzburg claimed the lives of 140 more (120). By the 1740s, a remarkable decline occurred in attributing supernatural or religious themes as a part of scapegoating. Enlightenment thinkers looked to the barometer (invented in 1643) and mercury-based thermometer (invented in 1714), which in turn contributed to a thirst for scientific insight (147). Such a decline illustrated "a general transformation of social attitudes," thereby ending "witch persecutions" (149).

Readers will be interested to see Jenkins, who is well-

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Such perils "will unquestionably be a time of widespread hunger, acute water shortages, and dramatic environmental changes" (26).

Once again, as in times past, a recurring theme for Christians is the book of Revelation, which serves as a "sourcebook for Western anxiety about the end of the world."

known for his work on global Christianity, reflects on how climate change will increasingly impact the global South. Calamities not unlike the 1320s or 1680s are likely to occur again. Such perils "will unquestionably be a time of widespread hunger, acute water shortages, and dramatic environmental changes" (26). "Yet the better we understand the very diverse forces driving climate changes through the centuries," observes the author, "the harder it is to relate those former times of feast and famine to the conditions that affect the world today and in the near future. We are dealing with quite different worlds" (41). What is indisputable is that the constant rise of emissions promises a substantial and ever-growing transformation to the planet. Such possible futures most likely will include significant water stress and the loss of fertile lands (179). All of these are "*possible* futures" with "very high" stakes (179). Once again, as in times past, a recurring theme for Christians is the book of Revelation, which serves as a "sourcebook for Western anxiety about the end of the world" (to quote David Wallace-Wells, 180).

On a more optimistic note: "Human beings are good at dealing with disasters" (180). Adaptation is essential. Over the next few decades 1 to 3 billion people will find themselves in conditions too warm for survival. Ironically, those countries who have contributed the least to carbon emissions are the most likely to face existential danger (181). Research continues to point toward an "intimate connection between long-term climate change and political violence" (184). If history teaches us anything, scapegoating and conspiracy mongering will continue to cause persecutions, pogroms, and local civil wars (185). Mass migration is therefore inevitable. "In recent decades, Christian churches and congregations have deployed these scriptural resources to fame and comprehend migrations and to shape practical responses to serving migrating communities. Those efforts will become ever more central in a near future world in chaotic motion" (198). Just what that looks like defies any definite prediction. Yet if history is any indication, it helps us "to understand our possible futures" (201).

Adventist readers will recognize just how much the weather has impacted religious outlooks, particularly apocalyptic thinking. Readers will find this a stimulating guide to reflect both about the past along with the necessity to consider how such climate change will inevitably impact the world until Jesus does come. At that point, John the Revelator promises, "there is no longer any sea" (21:1), perhaps offering to God's "remnant" people, immediately before the eschaton, in the light of global warming and the consequent rising seas, a promise of hope that God will ultimately set all things right.

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The Wrath of a Loving God

BY DON WILLIAMS

I struggle with the wrath of God,
especially if I think of it like human anger
burbling forth from a bruised heart
or battered pride,
teetering between rolling resentment and
roiling rage.

But what does God's wrath look like
through the trifocals of his love,
his justice and his plans for eternity?

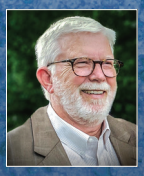
For God, it seems to me, there can be
no justice without love,
love without freedom,
freedom without choice,
choice without knowledge,
knowledge without agency,
agency without action,
action without consequences,
consequences without justice,
no justice without love.

For God, it also seems to me, there can be
no love without justice,
justice without discipline,
discipline without judgment,
judgment without love,
no love without justice.

Is it the wrath of a loving God, then,
that allows humans to ignore him,
and then gives them freedom to experience
the consequences of that choice.

Is it the wrath of a just God, then,
that allows his own son to be sin for us
that we might be given his righteousness,
enabling him to be just and
the justifier of those who trust him.

This, then, is the just love of God –
putting an end to sin and all that clings to it.
It is when all get, not what they deserve, but
what they truly desire –
either embracing this life without him,
or flourishing forever, nourished by the
sunshine of his love.



Don Williams has spent the majority of his career in education, teaching from academy to postgraduate. For the last eighteen years he was in senior administration, first as Chief Academic Officer and then as assistant to the President for Mission at AdventHealth University. Don has a bachelor's degree in psychology and a Master of Divinity degree from Andrews University, and a PhD in counseling from Purdue University. In 2019, he and his wife, Merrie Lyn, retired to Kettering Ohio to be near family.