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Al Waad Channel Launched

2 February 2011 St Albans, United Kingdom [Miroslav Pujic, tedNEWS] The staff of Al Waad Media Center in Beirut, Lebanon watched intently as they stood together to witness the event that they had been looking forward to for over two years. The first of February 2011 was the day that marked the launching of Al Waad Channel (Hope Channel in Arabic).

For the Seventh-day Adventist Church this is a dream come true. "We have seen the fruit of our labor finally being broadcast to over 350 million Arabic speaking people around the world", says Amir Ghali, Al Waad Media Center Director. "Needless to say, the staff joined together in offering a prayer of thanks and gratitude to God, who made it possible for Al Waad Channel to be on the air; this is nothing less than a true miracle," Ghali concludes.

A portfolio with a variety of programmes is presented on Al Waad Channel. The programmes deal with all aspects of life: spiritual, family, health, youth, music, children, cooking, and more. These programmes go in harmony with the Adventist teachings, which are concerned with the well being of humankind.

Al Waad Media Center, which produces programmes for Al Waad Channel, is located on the beautiful campus of Middle East University in Beirut, Lebanon. The center adopts a philosophy of respect and understanding toward those who belong to the majority religion of Islam.

"It is our intention to build bridges of trust and understanding with our Muslim neighbours," comments Basma Muneer, Content Manager at Al Waad Media Center. "By God’s grace, we aim to be the trusted Arabic Christian TV channel in the Middle East."

"It is my sincere prayer that Al Waad Channel will be a blessing to millions of people around the world, and that through this ministry many people will accept Jesus as their personal Saviour," concludes Ghali.

Al Waad Channel is part of the Hope Channel global broadcast network. [tedNEWS]

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Bibles for the Sudanese

2 February 2011 St Albans, United Kingdom [Miroslav Pujic, tedNEWS] Last week, the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Northern Sudan purchased some 6,000 Bibles from the Bible Society in Khartoum in different languages such as Arabic, English, Nuer and Dinka for the local people. The purchases of the Holy Bibles have encouraged efforts to share what wholesome attributes for cheerful living lie in its pages. This ancient book in the hands of the Sudanese people will bring wisdom and values that they could practice in their daily lives and make a positive impact within their families and community.

"It is something unprecedented in the history of the church in Sudan that such a large number of Bibles were purchased at once. This effort will enormously support the work of the church in sharing the love of God with the people of Sudan," says Dr Miroslav Didara, President of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Sudan. [tedNEWS]

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Jesus Shared in Kosovo

2 February 2011 Pristina, Kosovo [Nikola Aslimovski, tedNEWS]

Pastor John Velimir Bogdanovic Stevens, Sr. held a series of daily lectures at the Grand Hotel in downtown Pristina, Kosovo. The lectures were translated into Albanian and accompanied by wonderful video presentations. All lectures were recorded for the local TV channels, including the two cable providers IPKO and KJUTESA that insured coverage throughout all of Kosovo. The lectures aired daily at a very desirable time slot of 21:00 local time and were replayed every following day at 16:00.

The series of lectures were advertised through several media channels - on the radio (RTK), in the daily newspaper Koha Ditore (Daily Times), on billboards and through distributed flyers featuring the lecture titles. Many complimentary copies of Pastor Stevens' book Amazing Prophecies of Hope were given away. Free copies of Ellen G. White were also given out. Both books were translated into Albanian.

The series of lectures were concluded with the baptism of a young married couple that attended every lecture. These two newly baptised believers were Roma Gypsies, an ethnic group in Kosovo. About twenty others that attended the lectures expressed interest in studying fundamental biblical principles, and another six were later baptised.

The baptism of these local people in Kosovo, where Islam is now 98% dominant, shows very clearly the presence of the Holy Spirit and its influence in these evangelistic programmes. In another story later revealed, a refugee couple from the Middle East was being housed at the government-appointed Adventist Church refugee shelter (where the official ADRA headquarters in Kosovo are also located) for some time that overlapped the lecture series. Refugees M. and S. attended the first lecture which dealt with the subject of the last ruler of Babylon and was entitled “Mene, Mene Tekel Upharsin”. When Pastor Stevens asked the young man if he understood the lecture, he said that he did; furthermore, he revealed that he was one of the world’s few experts in Ancient Semitic languages and was in fact a Jew descending from the tribe of Benjamin.

The couple later shared that the fact their long journey led them to being housed in an Adventist church in Pristina at the same time the lecture series was taking place was enough proof of God’s leading role in their lives. Their experience from these events convinced them that God was continuously revealing His perfect plan for them.

Not long after the couple directly felt God’s leading through their past experience, a friend from their home country joined them in Pristina. After studying the basic Biblical principles, the young businessman also asked to be baptised and that day, instead of a business suit, he wore a bright grin that showed his joy and excitement at his baptism.

In total, eight people have been baptised since the series; the cable TV broadcast of the series has yielded 63 addresses of interested families that could potentially be a link to even 250 believers!

One of the viewers that contacted the church wrote the words, “I am yours!” The doors are open for evangelism in Kosovo. Jesus’ words of “The harvest is full, but the workers are few” are being fulfilled. [tedNEWS]

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Adventists Safe in Egypt

31 January 2011 St Albans, United Kingdom [Miroslav Pujic, tedNEWS] The Egypt standoff intensifies as the unrest goes into the seventh day of anti-government protests. The Seventh-day Adventist Church has a number of denominational schools and congregations there. Pastor Llewellyn R. Edwards, President of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Egypt, shared with us what the situation is regarding members, church properties and the work of the church: “The members are courageous and services were conducted in the churches last Sabbath in spite of the turmoil in the country. The Nile Union Academy, the boarding high school operated by the church, has been closed temporarily. Most of the students have gone home but some, that have nowhere else to go. They will remain at the academy. Although there has been gunfire nearby, they feel safe and also feel that they have support of the local community.”

According to a local source, although there is a risk from random looters, foreign workers are safe and do not need to leave. Travelling to the airport is difficult with checkpoints manned by local militias every 50 meters.

“We have talked with local militias and they told us that they are here to protect the community”, says Pastor Edwards, and continues, “you are part of the community and you have nothing to fear; we will protect you.”

As the unrest situation in Egypt continues, two Seventh-day Adventist run schools are suspending classes. The properties have not been affected by the riots, although several apartments nearby were looted, according to a local source.

“We have evacuated AVS volunteers as a precaution,” says Audrey Andersson, Executive Secretary of the Trans-European Division, and continues, “we need to remember our members, pastors, people of this beautiful country and the government in our prayers.”

Unfortunately, clashes are reported to have left over 150 people dead since rallies began, with thousands more injured.

[tedNEWS]

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European Financial Woes Reflected in Adventist Church Operations

28 January 2011 Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, United States [Arin Gencer, ANN] With unemployed members and decreased tithes, the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Europe has been struggling to contend with the global financial crisis.

Particularly in Greece, Spain and Portugal -- countries whose unemployment rates are among Europe's highest and where the financial crisis has been particularly dire -- the global Protestant denomination has been forced to make adjustments, striving to do the same work with less.

"With faith in our Lord Jesus Christ we are doing the best we can," said Apostolos Maglis, president of the Adventist Church in Greece, which has already seen the adverse effects of the country's debt crisis on the church body. He anticipates these will spill over into 2011.

Since receiving a bailout last year from the European Union and the International Monetary Fund, Greece has introduced a number of austerity measures to significantly reduce its public deficit, spurring several protests and strikes from unions.

The Adventist Church's Greek Mission, which consists of 10 churches, has seen the turmoil impact the church in various ways. These include a decrease in tithes -- down 20 percent at the end of 2010 relative to the previous year, for the first time in a decade, Maglis said in an e-mail.

The mission expects that number to further drop to 35 percent lower in 2011, he added. The economic challenges represent yet another hurdle to the Adventist Church in this part of the world, where evangelism already faces considerable obstacles, including the dominance of the Orthodox Church and the inability to conduct public religious programs, Maglis said.

"Many members lost their work and are unemployed," Maglis said, preventing them from paying rent and buying basic necessities. Several churches are collecting and distributing food to individuals in need, he added, "but this is not enough."

He described two recently launched evangelistic programs -- one training people to be missionaries at work; the other, showing members "how they can bring a friend to Jesus." He said both have led to a record 56 baptisms in the past year and brought membership to about 570. The Greek Mission's baptism goals set for this year now must contend with reduced funds.

Officials in the Spanish and Portuguese unions say they are experiencing similar problems, which are not limited to the Adventist Church or even Europe. The church's North American Division has reported slight but consecutive drops in tithe in 2008 and 2009, a decline attributed to U.S. economic woes.

The "delicate" economic situation in Spain -- where the unemployment rate is the second-highest in Europe, with 3 million people out of work -- has put the Adventist Spanish Union of Churches in a difficult position since 2008, said Juan Andres Prieto, the union's treasurer.

"The same thing that is happening in society is happening in the church," Prieto said, citing, as an example, a congregation of about 60 or 70 members, all of whom are jobless.

The union is operating on a savings policy: Whatever they don't bring in, they don't spend. And although they continue trying to serve the church in the same way with fewer resources, certain things have been affected, Prieto said.

Since November 2008, the union has suspended its practice of giving financial assistance to new groups just starting to rent meeting space, he said, and has even reduced occasional aid to established congregations. Union salaries have been frozen since that time as well.

In an attempt to meet the challenges of the day, the union has proposed a voluntary program that would take 2 percent of pastors' salaries to create a reserve fund for supporting church members in need.

Similarly, Portuguese church leaders are finding it difficult to perform certain activities, such as launching new congregations or establishing communities in certain areas, said Rui Filipe Dias, treasurer for the denomination's Portuguese Union of Churches.

Unemployment in that country is at about 10 percent, he said.

"The biggest difficulty I've seen is supporting all the needs of our members," Dias said, adding that the union typically sees offerings decline in the midst of a financial crisis. "Their needs are much greater than in a normal situation."

"We are depending on the goodness of God to guide us," Dias added. [Ted Advenstist]
we are depending on the goodness of you to guide us, Dias added.
It's the Thought That Counts

27 January 2011 Southampton, United Kingdom [Rosemary Lethbridge, BUC News] "How can we help you?" is usually what our church says to the community. This question has led The Watering Hole church plant in Southampton to participate in a whole variety of community programmes and events. As a result we have discovered that our community has a more positive view of our church and some are now even exploring our faith. However, the tables were turned on us last week when the Chair of the local Community Association approached plant leader, Rosemary Lethbridge and said, "we would like to help you." Each year the Association chooses a charity to fund raise for. She added, "We have decided and voted that The Watering Hole will receive any money we raise in 2011."

Rosemary states, "Delighted as we are to benefit from extra funding it is the thought behind it that really encourages us. It is the knowledge that our community values the part we play in making a difference in the community and is willing to use of their time and talents to raise both our profile and financially assist the work."

In addition to the regular house church services, Bible studies and small group meetings The Watering Hole plan to continue relationship seminars and the debt and benefit advice centre throughout 2011. With a beaming smile Rosemary adds, "We are also part of the BIG wedding celebrations at the end of April." The Watering Hole is a place for the community. They will once again chair and lead events for National Parenting Week and coordinate local volunteers for National Volunteer Day. "This is just natural for us," Rosemary adds, "Both these events are great ways for any church to be part of their community." [tedNEWS]
Mayor Praises Watford Adventist Churches

When you are the Mayor it is fine to be inquisitive. So when Dorothy Thornhill, the Mayor of Watford mentioned to a Seventh-day Adventist church member that she was intrigued by the new headquarters office on Stanborough Park, an invitation was instantaneous. Pastor Don McFarlane, President of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the British Isles welcomed the Mayor on Tuesday, 25 January and gave her a guided tour of the office which will be officially opened by Adventist World Church President, Pastor Ted Wilson on Sunday, 13 March 2011.

Mayor Thornhill was impressed by the openness of the planning stating that the architect should be congratulated on a positive design that makes the building stand out for the public and also gives greater access for areas like the book shop. "I shall be telling my colleagues to come and shop here," she quipped looking at the shelves of books and health food products, adding, "I never knew there was a shop here. This is a great service for the public."

A committed Christian herself, the Mayor stated that when she came to office she heard demoralising stories about the decline of Christianity in the Watford area. She therefore made a conscious choice to try and visit all the churches in Watford. As a result she says, "I have been wonderfully surprised by the size of the active Christian community here." A regular attendee at events like the Stanborough Park church toy service and the ADRA shoe box appeal she was very positive about the work of the Adventist Church both in the Watford community and beyond.

Staff equally enjoyed her personal visit as she interacted with them and discovered more about the church. Thelma Hodges, ADC Office Manager found her to be "very friendly and approachable," adding that "she appeared genuinely interested in what the staff were doing." Bert Smit, CEO of ADRA-UK said that "the brief visit of the Mayor to the new ADRA offices at the BUC was a nice surprise." She has been a friend of ADRA for a number of years, in particular in helping to promote the annual shoe box appeal locally. Bert noted that, "our work needed no introduction and she was very interested to see the map of the various countries where the agency is currently working."

While she unfortunately cannot be at the official opening herself she expressed delight that such a wonderful building has arisen out of the ashes of the fire that devastated the BUC office in November 2008.

During the tour Pastor McFarlane was able to answer many of her questions about church structure and services provided by both the headquarters office and the two Adventist churches in her town. He shared with her that the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the UK is a vibrant Christian community well beyond her 'patch' in Watford and that the new church headquarters is not merely a place where the staff work but is a gathering place for members of the church and the local community. Understanding this, the Mayor equally complemented Pastor McFarlane on the openness of the visual access from St Albans Road. The high fence has been replaced by a low wall that allows members of the public to see part of the beauty of the park and by so doing come to understand that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is an open and welcoming organisation.

A photo gallery from the visit is available in the BUC Picture gallery.
Restructuring Newbold College

Newbold College is currently in the process of restructuring in order to make its operation simpler, more efficient and cost-effective. At the request of the College Board and under the direction of Interim Principal, Dr Svein Myklebust, the Senior Management team in consultation with the staff have undertaken a detailed inspection of the College's operation. This is being done in the light of the perceived needs of the Church and the wider society, and of enrolment levels for some of the College's courses.

All of Newbold's courses in Theology and Ministry are thriving and will continue to be offered. At the same time, some creative new packages are to be offered to meet the needs of different lay groups, both on campus and elsewhere, and at various times in the calendar.

Newbold's School of English is expected to continue to prosper. Its vitality is rooted in the growing numbers in the summer school over the last few years alongside regular classes and the development of specialist courses for pastors, business people, ESL teachers and others. School of English teachers periodically offer their services in various parts of the world. Several of them have just returned from Brazil where they have been offering customised courses during the vacation.

The Board has affirmed its commitment to both the teaching of Business Management and the exploration of a professional qualification in Accounting through ACCA. Newbold has always attracted enthusiastic students from the United States and is anticipating membership of ACA (Adventist Colleges Abroad) very soon. The College is confident that it can attract more students from the USA via this programme with an improved recruitment strategy.

The general restructuring together with the closure of the degree course in Media Arts and some under-subscribed shorter certificate courses means that a number of positions have been made redundant, others reconfigured within a reshaping of some departments. Dr Myklebust, aided by his Senior Management colleagues, has spent the last few weeks ensuring that all changes are properly considered, within the law, and carried out in a way which is consistent with a Christian ethical approach. The overriding concern of all involved is that Newbold College should continue to offer quality educational opportunities to all its students, and that level of personal attention which is its trademark. "This is not an easy time for Newbold but I have been impressed by the commitment of the staff and management at all levels and believe that, with the blessings of God which Newbold has always enjoyed, this spirit will continue to take the College where it needs to go," says Dr Myklebust.

Dr Myklebust is expected to stay at Newbold until the appointment of the new principal. This is likely to be during the summer of 2011. Chairman of the Board, Dr Bertil Wiklander says: "We have full confidence in the restructuring process. The Trans-European Division is fully committed to supporting Newbold College, not just for pastoral education but as an Adventist academic community where everyone can grow in their Adventist Christian faith and build their skills for bearing a thoughtful Christian witness."

The students have now returned and so another semester at Newbold begins. For more on Newbold visit <www.newbold.ac.uk>.

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Reflections on Seventh-day Adventist Leadership

There is a growing awareness in the Seventh-day Adventist Church that Leadership Development is very important and that, not only are pastors leaders, but they are the most important leaders in the Church – I use “pastors” in a broad sense here, including all believers who in some way “lead the flock”.

What is required of a Seventh-day Adventist church leader today? What should a leader be like? What should a leader do and how? How does a leader grow and develop his/her gifts for leadership, which Paul makes reference to in Romans 12:8?

Today, leadership is difficult, demanding and exhausting. Leaders face new challenges and more decisions at a faster pace. We are expected to make quick choices, prioritize what is most important, delegate that which we don’t have time to do, and maintain checks and balances by working effectively in teams.

The matters we were trained to deal with are no longer there. The rapid cultural change has led to a crisis in leadership. One Christian author says that “the major challenge for leaders is not only the acquisition of new insights and skills, but also unlearning what they already know. Today’s leaders need the courage and ability to risk their false sense of confidence and to surrender their predetermined, “wired” responses, and outdated and inaccurate mental maps.”

We are being challenged to change, learn, and grow as an on-going commitment in life. How do we do that?

It helps to begin with a general definition of “leadership”. There is much talk of various “leadership styles” these days. But more important than style is substance. We need to know what leadership actually is before we can know the best style in which to do it.

The definition I propose has been proposed by Edwin Locke and captures the essence: “Leadership is the process of inducing others to take action toward a common goal”. With this starting-point, leadership includes four parts:

1. Leadership is about relations: Leaders must know how to inspire and relate to their followers. If you have no followers, you are not a leader.

2. Leadership is a process: Leaders must act and set events in motion. Just holding a position of authority does not make you a leader.

3. Leadership is persuasion: Leaders induce or persuade followers to take action. Leaders influence followers by inspiring their trust, acting consistently, and motivating them by words and deeds. Examples of the tools of leadership are: legitimate authority, setting an example, setting goals, team-building, and communicating a vision.

4. Leadership is purpose-driven: Leaders act in order that the organisation achieves its mission.

According to this model, church leadership may be defined as “the process of activating church workers (members, volunteers, employees) for the mission of the Church”.

This leadership has a fundamental spiritual dimension. Every area includes cooperation with God and following God. Leaders count on God to change people in order to achieve God’s purpose. This happens by the leader’s and his followers’ faith and by the power of the Holy Spirit working in them. Because of that, we say that our work as leaders is “God’s work”.

This spiritual dimension comes across very strongly in J. Robert Clinton’s definition of leadership: “A Christian leader is a person with a God-given capacity and the God-given responsibility to influence a specific group of God’s people toward God’s purpose for the group.”

Spiritual leadership must impact visible reality. If it is not happening through the leader’s actions of persuasion and an active response to them by his followers, it becomes a “spiritualised” leadership which remains in the leader’s heart, takes place in his office, and is seen at best in his spiritual attitude. There is such leadership in the church. I am not impressed by it. This is leadership that abdicates from its responsibility with the excuse of “leaving all things to God”.

As a ministerial secretary, I once visited a pastor. I asked him to show me his plan for his work. He said: “I intentionally do not have a plan, because I feel I need to leave space for the Holy Spirit to do his work.” This man’s ministry was highly unproductive, although he prayed day and night. His problem was that he was self-centred and therefore irresponsible. He prayed to God about himself, not his responsibility or the people he was to lead. And nobody else in his team, or in the conference, knew what he was doing and why. Others could not relate to his work. He remained a lonely leader with no followers, although he was very “spiritual” in one sense. He longed for God. But He was not a spiritual leader, because he misunderstood true spirituality. He did not see that true spirituality is always action-oriented. It impacts the real world. It impacts God’s people and those who seek him.

Another time, an elected president was invited to sit with the nominating committee and give advice on the candidates to be nominated to form his team. He declared: “I can work with anybody, because I am open-minded and it is God’s work, so he will do it. You may choose whoever you like.” Of course, everybody in the committee thought highly of this man’s tolerance and great faith, while incapable and totally unsuitable persons were nominated to make up his team! Five years later, after conflicts, lack of quality work, and no good team spirit, he was not re-elected because, although being considered a spiritual man, his leadership lacked efficiency. He failed to take responsibility for carefully selecting his team. Why? Maybe he feared personal conflicts, the danger of exposing his personal preferences for or against people, and the
politics in his church, and resorted to a *spiritualising attitude* which always means failure in taking responsibility for the real world.

Of course, there are specific situations when we can do nothing but asking God to intervene, when we are desperate and there are no options. But we must be careful not to abdicate from our responsibility too soon. God has chosen to work through us, and we must do our work well, so that he can add his blessing to what we do.

In *Leadership for Dummies* (1999), it is underlined as the first and fundamental characteristic of a leader that there is a willingness to *assume responsibility or ownership*. Spiritualised leadership is not good enough. Why? It abdicates from its responsibility and authentic faith in God. Such leadership was the repeated temptation Jesus resisted from the Devil, namely, testing God by abusing his leadership role. Jesus said: “Don’t put God to the test by abusing your position”, which implies that we must not abdicate from our responsibility and say that God will fix it. Such behaviour means, in fact, that we bury our God-given talent in the ground. It is not leadership for the real world. We know that God performs miracles and that he has all the power in the universe. But we also know that we have been asked to use our brains and abilities and gifts to serve him faithfully and that, if we do that, God will add his blessing to it. And this is particularly important in light of Seventh-day Adventist leadership values.

In Adventism, based on instruction from Ellen White, the *biblical view of man* and the *biblical view of work* are of central importance. We say that man is not merely a spiritual being but a being in whom harmonious growth depends on an interaction between spiritual, mental (intellectual and emotional), physical and social dimensions. And, as far as work is concerned, it is God’s way of forming our character, developing it and refining it, in order to bring glory to the Creator. Something happens to us when God’s power, God’s gifts, and God’s will are allowed to pour out through us to the world.

We change. We become like the Creator. We learn to create new things, and new things do not occur without change and growth. Spiritualised leadership fails to allow us to grow, which is God’s plan for us.

It is therefore an essential Adventist value that the *spiritual dimension does not function in isolation from the human effort and its impact in the real world*. Our ideal of spiritual leadership, therefore, is being so close to God in our faith that we hear his voice, act according to his will, and seek to achieve his purpose, so that God is performing his acts through us. This will only work if we are humble and see ourselves as God’s servants. “Servant leadership” is therefore a better term than “spiritual leadership”, because it draws attention to both our attitude and actions as leaders.

Before I proceed, let me prevent a misunderstanding. Just as there are leaders who spiritualise their work, putting all responsibility on God and doing little or nothing themselves, there are of course those who fall by the opposite extreme, i.e. by seeking to do everything themselves and not relying on God at all. God does not enter into their strategies, job descriptions, committees, decisions, conversations and speeches. While working in the church, they see God and his mission as a decoration, a romantic atmosphere which is put on at times, but when that is over the “real work” begins, and that is the human effort.

This is so obviously mistaken for us that I don’t need to spend time here on the obvious dangers of such a view. Emphasising the human effort and forgetting that we are doing God’s work is to fail as leader. Failing in this way is the great temptation for the gifted, well-educated, and hard working leader. There is only one remedy for it, and that is the gift of Christ’s humility (see Philippians 2:3-11).

Another factor leading to this kind of failure in leadership is where the leadership culture is governed by the *concept of dictatorship*, i.e. the strong and absolutist leader who concentrates all power and initiative to himself. Ultimately, this leadership is based on fear and an enormous misunderstanding of who you are – you think you are better and more perfect than you really are. Jesus taught us in clear words to shun such leadership:

“Jesus called them together and said, ‘You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave - just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.’ ” (Matthew 20:25-28)

The system of leadership in the Seventh-day Adventist Church is therefore not the presidential system but the *committee system* (see TED Working Policy D 05).

“The fruitage of [the Seventh-day Adventist concept of church] is a representative and constituency-based system. Its authority is rooted in God and distributed to the whole people of God. It recognises the committee system. It provides for shared administration (president, secretary, treasurer) rather than a presidential system. It recognises a linkage of entities (church, conference, union, General Conference) that binds the believers together in a universal fellowship. It assures essential unity of purpose and mission. While the integrity of each entity is recognised (church, conference, union), each is seen to be a part of a sisterhood which cannot act without reference to the whole.”

Adventist leaders, therefore, are team leaders and lead so that the whole church is recognised and benefits from their leadership.

Another reason for team leadership is that the leader does not have all knowledge and wisdom. A leader must humbly see his/her own limitations. What the leader lacks can be compensated for by his/her team.

In order to work in a team, the leader needs to have a sound self-esteem and dare to be open. Prestige and position in the system becomes irrelevant in the midst of team work, although, of course, in the end some people have a formal responsibility for what takes place.

A decision will be better founded and have greater success if we have taken the time to involve the team around us, before we go to action. That is why consensus is a virtue in church leadership. It is based on Philippians 2:1-5 which puts
the model of Jesus Christ as the greatest value for us.

Philippians 2:1-5

“If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus…”

In order for leadership to work, therefore we must be deeply connected with the spirit of Jesus Christ. Our devotional life is the key to such leadership. So, care for and cultivate your faith!

In conclusion, applying our model of church leadership helps us see that, by our faith and through the power of the Holy Spirit, we perform leadership in four ways in the church:

1. Church leadership is about relations:
Leaders achieve the mission of the church by inspiring, elevating and leading the people in their organisation, so that they do their assigned work exceptionally well and with joy. This requires an organisation, where it is clear to everybody what their role is – an organisation which is dynamic, flexible and effective enough to accomplish the mission. It also requires a culture, where Seventh-day Adventist values and particularly the value of mission set the tone. Adventist leaders, therefore, need to be effective organisers, peacemakers, and builders of Adventist church culture.

2. Church leadership is a process:
Leaders take action and something happens. They change people and the organisation through their actions. Leadership is not static but dynamic. It strives for excellence and constantly asks if there is a better way to do what we do, in order to achieve the mission. God is active in this process. It is therefore an Adventist tenet that “we must walk in the increasing light”. This requires that we see ourselves as leaders functioning as agents of change, God’s change.

3. Church leadership is persuasion:
Leaders persuade or induce their followers to act, by various means, for example, by their legitimate authority, by how they manage relationships and conflicts, by the example they set, by goal-setting, encouragement and evaluation, re-organisation, team-building, and by communicating a vision. In all of these activities, the leader draws on his personal faith and draws on his biblical values. This requires skills in transparent communication, ability to inspire others, and being a team leader.

4. Church leadership aims at the mission of the Church:
Leaders need to define what this mission is and what it means to themselves and the organisation they lead.

The way God has defined the church’s mission is essential. We find that He has allowed variety in the wording of our mission. Various biblical authors at various times say it in various ways. Jesus taught his disciples a mission to the world which we have in at least four versions, in Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 16:15-18, Luke 24:45-49/Acts 1:8, and John 14-17. Luke then describes the fellowship of the first church in Acts 2:42-47. The mission of the church comes out in numerous instructions on church order in Paul’s writings. And it has a special significance for Adventists in John’s apocalyptic vision in Revelation 14:6-13, where we have found our eschatological mission defined.

But even today, we say it in different ways. The General Conference says it in one way. The Trans-European Division says it in another way. Unions, conferences, churches and institutions say it in yet other ways.

So, obviously, a mission statement can be worded in different ways, although the mission remains the same. The choice of statement reflects what the leader and his team feel should have priority at a specific point in time. For us as Adventist leaders, however, I have found no better wording than the one written by Ellen White in The Acts of the Apostles (p. 9):

“The church is God’s appointed agency for the salvation of men. It was organized for service, and its mission is to carry the gospel to the world. From the beginning it has been God’s plan that through his church shall be reflected to the world his fullness and his sufficiency. The members of the church...are to show forth his glory. The church is the repository of the riches of the grace of Christ; and through the church will eventually be manifest ... the final and full display of the love of God.”

If we believe this, a Garfield cartoon becomes pertinent (see adjacent box).
improve? This will be of great importance as we implement our new strategic plan *Tell the World!*

The TED Tell the World Strategic Plan 2010-2015 is a serious commitment to

- Reach Up by renewing my own faith
- Reach Out by communicating the hope of Jesus Christ within my sphere of influence
- Reach across to embrace and protect the quality and health of my family of faith

If you would like to get hold of the TED Strategic Plan 2010-2015, please contact your union president (in the TED) or write an e/m to: epujic@ted-adventist.org

The leader needs to have God's mission for the world in his/her heart, apply it to his/her work, and communicate it to the followers. This requires a rich personal devotional life, including prayer, Bible reading, fellowship, and witnessing. It requires the skills of a visionary, a strategist, a goal setter, a decision maker, one who is able to show the direction and keep the organisation focused on God's mission. If you don’t have these skills, build a team of people who have them, pray together and listen to each other. And God will speak through His spirit and lead you all the way!

*By Dr. Bertil Wiklander, the President of the Trans-European Division*
Bibles for the Sudanese

2 February 2011 St Albans, United Kingdom [Miroslav Pujic, tedNEWS] Last week, the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Northern Sudan purchased some 6,000 Bibles from the Bible Society in Khartoum in different languages such as Arabic, English, Nuer and Dinka for the local people. The purchases of the Holy Bibles have encouraged efforts to share what wholesome attributes for cheerful living lie in its pages. This ancient book in the hands of the Sudanese people will bring wisdom and values that they could practice in their daily lives and make a positive impact within their families and community.

"It is something unprecedented in the history of the church in Sudan that such a large number of Bibles were purchased at once. This effort will enormously support the work of the church in sharing the love of God with the people of Sudan," says Dr Miroslav Didara, President of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Sudan. [tedNEWS]

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Individualism Shines Through Americans' 2011 New Year's Resolutions

As the calendar shifts from holiday celebrations to January, a new survey from the Barna Group explores what Americans describe as their New Year's resolutions. The nationwide survey of 1,022 adults provides a snapshot of people's personal growth priorities for 2011, when they make such commitments.

The Role of Resolutions?
Making New Year's resolutions is a common experience, but Americans report achieving mixed results. Nearly two-thirds of the nation's population (61%) has made New Year's resolutions at some point in their lives. More than 90 million adults (41%) say they will make such personal pledges in 2011, representing roughly two-fifths of the nation's population.

Yet, only one out of every five (19%) is "definitely" planning to make resolutions, which may be a reflection of either the half-hearted effort many put forth or a recognition of their past failure to follow through on such goals. When asked to describe their experience with resolutions during 2010, only one out of four Americans (23%) who had made resolutions found those commitments resulted in "significant, long-term change" to their behaviors or attitudes. More commonly, Americans described their 2010 resolutions as resulting in "minor change" (29%) or "no change" (49%).

Another reason people may struggle with keeping their resolutions: they try to achieve personal change on their own. Among those who are making New Year's resolutions, most said they were not planning on having "accountability or a support system in place" to help them stick with those commitments.

What (or Who) Gets Attention?
When it comes to the types of resolutions people make, Americans not surprisingly focus on self-oriented changes. Among those planning to make resolutions, the top pledges for 2011 relate to weight, diet and health (30%); money, debt and finances (15%); personal improvement (13%); addiction (12%); job and career (5%); spiritual or church-related (5%); and educational (4%). Personal improvement responses included being a better person; giving more; having more personal or leisure time; organizing their life or home; and having a better life in general.

While people concentrate on themselves when making priorities for the New Year, it is telling that so few Americans say they want to improve relationships with others. There were virtually no mentions of volunteering or serving others; only a handful of comments about marriage or parenting; almost no responses focusing on being a better friend; and only a small fraction of people mentioned improving their connection with God.

David Kinnaman, president of the Barna Group, explained these findings: "Only 9 out of more than 1,000 survey respondents – that's not quite one percent – mentioned that one of their objectives for next year was getting closer to God in some way. Even in the rare instance when people mention spiritual goals, it is often about activity undertaken for God, rather than a personal pursuit of God or an experience with God."

As further proof of Americans' self-oriented concerns, Kinnaman pointed out that "virtually none of the survey respondents mentioned anything about becoming more green. Despite the significant attention environmental issues receive, virtually no one connects their New Year's resolutions with personal responsibility in this area."

Perspectives on Resolutions
Kinnaman put the findings in context: "Americans maintain a love-hate relationship with New Year's resolutions: millions of people make them, but they rarely report success as a result. This research underscores that most humans want to experience some sort of personal change in their lives, but achieving such objectives is both difficult and uncommon.

"Maybe most problematic, Americans hinge their efforts at personal change by focusing almost exclusively on themselves, rather than realizing that lasting change often comes by serving and sacrificing for others. Churches and faith communities have a significant opportunity to help people identify what makes for transformational change and how to best achieve those objectives – especially by relying on goals and resources beyond their individualism."
Facts about Resolutions

Younger adults are far more likely than older adults to make resolutions. Perhaps less affected by past failed resolutions, younger adults emerged as far more likely than older adults to make personal commitments for the New Year. Among Mosaics, 44% plan to make at least one resolution for 2011, which was second only to the 51% among Busters (ages 27 to 45). Boomers (ages 46 to 64) and Elders (ages 65-plus) were comparatively unlikely to expect to make any resolutions (39% and 26%, respectively).

Disengaged adults do not bother with resolutions. Those who have never made New Year’s resolutions exhibit a disconnected profile in other areas of life as well: they are likely to be non-voters, unchurched adults, atheists and agnostics, and those never married.

About the Research

This report is based upon telephone interviews conducted in the OmniPoll℠ (part of the Barna Poll) from the Barna Group. This study consisted of a random sample of 1,022 adults selected from across the continental United States, age 18 and older, December 11 through December 19, 2010. The interviews included 200 among people using cell phones. The maximum margin of sampling error associated with the aggregate sample is ±3.2 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. Minimal statistical weighting was used to calibrate the aggregate sample to known population percentages in relation to several key demographic variables.

Elders are those born before 1946; Boomers are the generation born from 1946 to 1964; Busters are individuals born between 1965 and 1983; and Mosaics are adults born 1984 or since.

“Downscale” individuals are those whose annual household income is less than $20,000 and who have not attended college. "Upscale" people are those whose annual household income is $75,000 or more and have graduated from a four-year college.

Barna Group (which includes its research division, the Barna Research Group) is a private, non-partisan, for-profit organization that conducts primary research, produces media resources pertaining to spiritual development, and facilitates the healthy spiritual growth of leaders, children, families and Christian ministries. Located in Ventura, California, Barna has been conducting and analyzing primary research to understand cultural trends related to values, beliefs, attitudes and behaviors since 1984.

If you would like to receive free e-mail notification of the release of each new, bi-monthly update on the latest research findings from the Barna Group, you may subscribe to this free service at the Barna website (). Additional research-based resources are also available through this website.

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