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27 April 2011 St Albans, United Kingdom [Jemina Da Silva Macedo, tedNEWS] As of this moment, tedMEDIA Productions, media unit of the Trans-European Division's Communication Department has gone live. Complete with all their productions to date, the website also allows you to get to know the team, gives updates on current projects, behind the scenes photo... [Read more]

**I-CHANGE, U-CHANGE, WII WERE CHANGED**

27 April 2011, Telford, United Kingdom [Victor Hulbert with Catherine Boldeau and Peter Jeynes, BUC NEWS] The crescendo of the Michael W Smith song filled the hall at Telford International Centre: "Crucified, laid behind a stone. You lived to die, Rejected and alone..." It reflected the emotional intensity in the air as 500+ young adults found themselves challenged. [Read more]

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**Reflections on Seventh-day Adventist Leadership**

**King James Bible's 400-year reign**

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Tragic Accident Involving Nile Academy Students

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The group of students were returning back from their Easter holiday break travelling from Zewek, a village in Upper Egypt, when the driver of the mini bus fell asleep and lost the control over the vehicle. The bus rolled over several times on the road until it finally stopped. One young man, a senior student, died as a result of injuries caused by the accident and yet, another is in a critical condition needing an expensive operation. The rest of the group, including the driver of the bus, has suffered serious injuries and broken bones.

Unfortunately, the Nile Union Academy has been experiencing serious problems in the past few months. Due to the revolution that broke out in Egypt about three months ago, the school had to close for three weeks. The expatriate staff had to leave the country and there was fear for the welfare of the local staff that remained on the school compound. ‘By God’s grace, everything settled down peacefully, the staff returned to Egypt, and things started up again as normally as possible,’ says Gladys Decker, a teacher at the Nile Union Academy.

But couple of months later, one of their senior students, went home for the weekend and never woke up from her afternoon nap. A well-loved Sudanese girl, who easily broke down the radical boundaries between Egyptians and Sudanese, died so unexpectedly.

The seriousness of these tragic events has naturally shaken the staff as well as the students at the Academy that are now trying to cope with the consequences. However, Mrs. Decker finds encouragement in the words of Apostle Paul: ‘We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed,’ 2 Corinthians 4:8,9 (NIV) and she continues: ‘we do not lose heart... though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.’ 2 Corinthians 4:16

The Nile Union Academy is the premier Seventh-day Adventist boarding academy in the Middle East and North Africa that has been operating for the last 56 years boarding Egyptian and Sudanese students. For more information on the Academy, please visit their website Nile Union Academy. [leoNEWS]

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Gentle Voices Has Won the Finals

28 April 2011, Rotterdam, The Netherlands [Madelon Comvalius, tedNEWS]

The Dutch gospel vocal group "Gentle Voices" from the Adventist churches Rotterdam North and Rotterdam South wins the finals of The Sing Off programme on SBS6 on Saturday 16 April 2011.

In the past weeks, SBS6 has been broadcasting the music programme, The Sing-Off. The participating groups in their unique format not only sang, but all instrumental sounds and beats were created by their voices.

After a thrilling finals show, by which a great deal of singing was performed without musical arrangement, the six men of the vocal group 'Gentle Voices' at the end ousted the vocal group 'Sharp'. By winning the acappella contest, they also won a record deal with Sony Music and they were invited to perform with the popular Dutch group 'De Toppers'.

The Rotterdam based gospel group 'Gentle Voices' came to existence in 1999. It started out as a quartet, founded by two cousins Earl and Lionel and later on it grew to a sextet: 6 cousins who, surrounded by music in their homes, were taught music at a very early age.

The adventist churches in The Netherlands have had a lot of vocal groups in the past years; however, 'Gentle Voices' makes an enormous break-through with this artistic victory. Wim Attink, the President of the Adventist Church in the Netherlands recognises their success: "This award is also a recognition for the diverse talented vocal groups within the Adventist church in the Netherlands. 'Gentle Voices' has now experienced a breakthrough and is able to perform in a wider arena. We feel proud about this special opportunity which 'Gentle Voices' has to witness of our good Lord."

'Gentle Voices' is a congenial group of young men with a message. Not only do they want to reach a large group of people with their gift of singing, but their motivation is to reach people with creativity and harmony. "We thank our Lord for the talents in which He bestowed us," says Earl, the creator this group. And he continues: "In the future, we would like to stay as one vocal group and be a witness for Him."

To watch Gentle Voices please click here. [tedNEWS]

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news quickfinder

Statement on Violence Against Homosexuals
18 May 2011 Utrecht, the Netherlands [Wim Altink, tedNEWS] The Executive Committee of the Netherlands Union of Seventh-day Adventists, on 17 May 2011 unanimously pronounced itself against violence towards homosexuals, which goes in harmony with the Statement on Human Relations by General Conference...
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The 2011 Wellness Summit
The British Union Conference Health Ministries Department is organising Wellness Summit from 21 - 25 June, 2011 at De Vere Venues Staverton Park Hotel in Staverton, Northamptonshire. The varieties of courses covering the topics such as: 'Addictions - Breaking Free from Harmful Habits', 'Domestic Vi. ...
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New Principal Appointed at Newbold College
08 May 2011 St Albans, UK [Milosav Pujic, tedNEWS] In its meeting on Sunday, the 8th of May, 2011, the Newbold College Board appointed Dr Philip R Brown from Australia to serve as the new principal at Newbold College. Brown is currently a vice-president at Avondale College in Australia, with partic...
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Royal Wedding Endorsement by Jamaica's Governor General
05 May 2011, London United Kingdom [Derek Morrison, BUC NEWS] Pomp, pageantry and praise – not just at last Friday's Royal Wedding at Westminster Abbey, but continued the next day at a special Day of Fellowship at Hampstead Adventist church with Sir Patrick Allen, Governor General of Jama...
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Nine Young People Baptised in Iceland
03 May 2011 Reykjavik, Iceland [Eric Gudmundsson, tedNEWS] Baptisms are not really about numbers and they should be used only carefully as a measurement of church growth. We all know that baptism as such is only one of many contributing factors to a thriving, let alone a blooming church. Recently, I...
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Angélique Hornis Receives a Royal Decoration
03 May 2011 Emmen, The Netherlands [Wim Altink, tedNEWS] On Friday 29 April 2011 Mrs. Angélique Hornis van der Horst received a Royal Decoration and thus became a member of the Order of Orange Nassau. She received a ribbon which was pinned up at the Grote Kerk in Emmen. Angélique is a...
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I-CHANGE, U-CHANGE, WII-WERE-CHANGED

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27 April 2011, Telford, United Kingdom [Victor Huibert with Catherine Boldoe and Peter Jeynes, BUC News]

The crescendo of the Michael W Smith song filled the hall at Telford International Centre. "Crucified, laid behind a stone. You lived to die, Rejected and alone..." It reflected the emotional intensity in the air as 500+ young adults found themselves challenged and inspired by the power of the resurrected Christ, at the BUC Youth Congress, organised by Des Boldoe, BUC Youth director.

Throughout five days over the Easter weekend they listened to five specialists in Youth Ministry – all from diverse backgrounds – who led them on a journey designed to help them think of change, not just in themselves, but in their communities.

James Black, Director of Youth Ministries for the North American Division was the Thursday night keynote speaker. "Yours is an awesome theme," he stated, a serious theme for this day and age: 'I-Change, U-Change, Wii-Change.' After noting how God had needed to humble him early, coming as he did from the gang violence of the streets of Atlanta, Georgia, he then entertained and inspired the youth with the story of the transfiguration of Jesus in Matthew 17, noting how the three disciples on the hill top needed humbling: "If you want to be the change you've got to recognise the voice of God," he noted. At the same time, the nine disciples in the valley did not realise that they were to be an agent of change for the young boy who needed healing. They needed to learn that "when you are picked to be the change you need to let Jesus do the changing." He also noted that to be the change for others you have to be the 'go-to person' noting the beautiful words of Jesus, "Bring the boy to me."

There were a lot of 'go-to persons' at the weekend. On Friday and Sunday afternoons they could be found singing in Nursing Homes and in a nearby park, or knocking on doors sharing their faith via surveys and gaining contacts and Bible study interests to be followed up by members of the Telford Adventist church. The choir singing in the park was so enthusiastic that on both days a number of youth who had come to sunbathe joined in with the singing, some of them asking deep questions and sharing their hurts and struggles.

A Passion Play, especially commissioned for the event, was performed in the hall on Sabbath afternoon, then taken out to the park on Easter Sunday, where again people were able to ask questions about the true meaning of Easter.

The Easter theme of the preaching was particularly emphasised by two of the guest speakers. On Good Friday, Tim Gillespie made no apologies for his strong Easter message. As Young Adult pastor of the Loma Linda University church, he used both humour and pathos to convey the seriousness of what Jesus did on the cross for us. "The worst day ever was the most important day ever," he stated, then both in his Friday and Sunday evening sermons rejoicing that Jesus "exploded a tomb".

Resurrection day he called "a day of celebration", stating that "today God started His rebellion on the planet... the world has changed. Death has been overcome." Looking at Romans 5:1 he then challenged those who feel unsure of their salvation that the words, "While we were still sinners, Christ died for us," give us a wellspring of joy from which we can live our lives.

That 'wellspring of joy' had already been demonstrated in the storytelling skills of Dick Duersken from Maranatha Volunteers International. On Friday night and Sunday morning you could hear a pin drop in the hall as he enraptured his audience with tales of God's grace in Malakula, in Peru, in Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon – and in the story of our own lives. On Sunday morning he presented a one man monologue of the story of Peter, showing how this brash disciple thought he would teach Jesus, but how Jesus had, in reality, taught him. Peter learnt, "it's not about me, it's about Him!"

In a double presentation, David Ascherick, the co-founder of ARISE, a ministry training centre in California, focused on the dilemma of Paul in Romans 7, "O wretched man that I am, who will deliver me from this body of death," and the solution that is found in Jesus Christ. In the dichotomy of desire and action in chapter 7, and groaning and struggle still to be found in chapter 8, David demonstrated that Paul is "not minimising suffering, but is maximising glory". He added that "while we exist in this groaning position between what could be and what is", that we can rejoice in that while "I'm not what I want to be – I'm not what I used to be". In a third presentation he focused on Acts 15 seeking to demonstrate what is essential and core in our belief system.

Sabbath morning gave opportunity for two sermons. James Black returned to the pulpit to focus on "How do I become the change?" "how do we deal with the issue of glorifying God when modern life aims at success?" he asked. His response was that "we have to aim to be significant, not successful." Using many illustrations, including from his own life he stated, "My degrees mean nothing unless I effect change."

Despite suffering from jet lag and a very sore throat, Adventist World Church Youth director, Gilbert Cangy, also shared a powerful Sabbath morning message, sharing that, despite being raised by missionary parents, at one time in his life he, "went against every value that he stood for". Having left his church and his family, he had an emptiness in his heart. He prayed, "if you are real then you can do something for me." God answered. Gilbert said, "I thought I had to change before Jesus could accept me," but having learnt an important lesson he then used Jesus' family tree in Matthew 1 to show that "there is nothing you can do to make Him close the door."

Talking of Rahab the prostitute he said, "We don't hang around that kind of person – but Jesus does." He did the same with Matthew, the young tax inspector. "Who is the real Jesus – He is the one who transforms people... like us" he stated, concluding, "We can't talk about the gospel – we have to live the gospel."

While having five guest speakers for a five day event, the diversity of thought and content was well appreciated, and the
preaching was well balanced by two praise teams from the South England Conference and the Welsh Mission, a stunning variety of quality music from across the British Isles, including what came to be a well-loved theme song written by 21-year-old Yvonne Bawens of the Crieff church, "Chance to Change". There was also a choice of 19 workshops, a time to question and discuss with leaders – and of course, the all important social time, networking and making new friends.

Tears, prayers and a powerful testimony ended the Congress. Tim Gillespie narrated the story of a friend who opened up a thrift store that impacted on the local community after he allowed God to change his life. "I've never experienced anything like this before,” said Samantha, a guest at one of the local hotels who was invited to the closing ceremony by Pastor Nathan Stockland. She commented on the relevance of the message for her life and on the dynamic music.

BUC Youth director, Des Boldeau, received a standing ovation when Paul Tompkins, TED Youth director, presented him with a special certificate for his years of service along with a special gift, given by on behalf of the Youth directors from around the Union. Tears, appreciation, and a shout out to the youth was the surprise response from Des Boldeau. "I have been privileged to work with several generations of young people, and I thank God for what He has allowed me to do over the past 11 years," he said wiping away the tears. In thanking the guest speakers Des stated, "This Congress has set a precedent for change. This change must continue – and continue in our lives." That in itself was clearly seen in response to times of prayer and dedication. i-Change, u-Change, wii-All-Changed.

A selection of photos and videos from i-Change are all linked from the BUC Youth Congress website. In-depth interviews with each of the guest speakers can be seen on the News and Features section of the Hope TV UK website. [tedNEWS]

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Wilson Opens Spring Meeting Sermon With Call to Christ's Righteousness

"Our only hope' at history's close, Adventist world church leader says

12 April 2011, Huntsville, Alabama, United States [Mark A. Kellner, Adventist Review]

Capping a morning of joyous singing, scripture contemplation and heartfelt prayer, Pastor Ted N. C. Wilson, president of the Seventh-day Adventist world church, delivered a call to seek Christ's "all-encompassing righteousness" at the Oakwood University Seventh-day Adventist Church in Huntsville, Alabama, United States today.

The message came during Sabbath worship at the start of the Adventist world church's spring leadership meetings, being held at the Oakwood campus this year, instead of its usual location at the church's Silver Spring, Maryland, headquarters.

"Christ's all-encompassing righteousness is our only hope as we rapidly come to the close of earth's history," Wilson said to an onsite congregation of approximately 2,100 as well as a live global television and Internet audience. "Seventh-day Adventists have been called to proclaim the truth as it is in Jesus. He and He alone is our salvation," he added.

Wilson said Christ "calls us to accept His righteousness and to be empowered by the Holy Spirit to accomplish the last great work of proclaiming Christ, His righteousness, and His soon coming. This is the message that has been entrusted to the Seventh-day Adventist Church as His last-day remnant people."

He added, "At this critical moment in earth's history, with the world collapsing around us, let us humble ourselves before the Lord realizing that our only hope is in Christ and His righteousness."

Wilson quoted Ellen G. White, a pioneering co-founder of the Seventh-day Adventist movement and the founding influence behind the establishment of what is now Oakwood University, who wrote, "A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. To seek this should be our first work." (Selected Messages, Book 1, page 121)

Referring to the Church's current theme, Wilson said, "This call for revival and reformation is not some legalistic, 'pull-yourself-up-by-your-bootstraps' kind of religion. It is centered in Christ and Him alone."

He added, "The voices of Seventh-day Adventists should be the foremost in proclaiming that salvation is through Christ and Christ alone! The two great provisions of salvation -- justification and sanctification -- cannot be separated for they constitute the fullness of Christ's all-encompassing righteousness."

The message followed a service that highlighted the musical talents of many Oakwood University students and staff, particularly its orchestra and the Aeolians, the school's renowned choral group. Following a scripture reading in English and Koine Greek, the latter by a student, the Aeolians presented a praise number, "It Pays to Serve Jesus," which brought many in the congregation to their feet praising God at its conclusion.

"We've already had the sermon," Wilson said as he took to the podium following the rousing musical appeal, offering affirmation to the University and its constituency: "Here at Oakwood University, you are a vital part of God's worldwide family."

That "worldwide family" was also a key target of Wilson's message, with the leader telling his hearers the conversion process "is only something that God can produce."

When conversion happens, Wilson added, that is why drunkards become sober. That's why loose-living people become moral. That's why mean-spirited individuals become peacemakers. That's why liars become honest. That is why filthy-minded people become pure. That is why evolutionists become creationists. That is why selfish, self-centered people become selfless, generous benefactors. That is why the unconverted become converted. "[I]t is all due to the power of God."

Again quoting Ellen White, this time from her book Steps to Christ, Wilson read, "Each morning consecrate yourself to God for that day. Surrender all your plans to Him, to be carried out or given up as He providence shall indicate. Thus day by day you may be giving your life into the hands of God, and thus your life will be molded more and more after the life of Christ." (Steps to Christ, page 70)

The church leader cautioned his hearers against any sense of spiritual superiority apart from God's grace: "Let no one in the Seventh-day Adventist Church think of themselves as better than anyone else. Let no one accuse others of not being holy or perfect. We are all sinners at the foot of the cross in need of a Savior who provides for us His all-encompassing righteousness in justification and sanctification. We owe everything to Jesus and our relationship with Him."

He added, "The character of Christ is perfectly reproduced in our lives when we lean completely on Christ alone. It is not in ourselves to accomplish this."
not in ourselves to accomplish this.

Asking how Adventists are to understand the plan of salvation, Wilson supplied several possibilities.

“Cheap grace will not do it. It denies the power of the Holy Spirit to change the life day by day to become more and more like Christ,” he said. “Legalism will not do it. It blocks the only way to salvation — total dependence on Jesus Christ, our only way to salvation. An intellectual, higher critical approach will not. It destroys the very miracle of conversion and sanctification and strips God’s salvation of its power to change lives.”

The answer, Wilson declared, “is [that] only Christ’s all-encompassing righteousness of justification and sanctification ... will save you, change you, and nurture you into a true disciple of Christ. It is something that Jesus does both for you and in you.”

Click here to read the full text of Wilson’s sermon. [teoNEWS]

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Evangelism Reports Begin Spring Meeting Business Sessions

Council on Evangelism and Witness highlights regional outreach; Great Controversy book distribution preview

12 April 2011, Huntsville, Alabama, United States [Ansel Oliver, ANN] Top regional leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist world church shared reports on evangelism efforts in their territories during the Council on Evangelism and Witness, which lasted throughout the first morning of business at Spring Meeting on April 10.

Presidents of many of the denomination’s 13 world divisions highlighted how coordinated outreach approaches are leading people to join the church, while others supported an initiative to widely distribute versions of the book The Great Controversy, written by church co-founder Ellen G. White.

One president shared the results of a public perception survey in his region. “That’s risky if you’re not secure,” said Mark Finley, assistant to the president for evangelism.

Finley led the presentations at McKee auditorium at Oakwood University in Huntsville, Alabama, United States, where some 130 members of the world church’s Executive Committee met for two days of business meetings.

Israel Leito, president of the church’s Inter-American Division, shared how a recent division-wide program lead to 15,000 baptisms in one day last month. More than 60,000 people have joined the Adventist Church in the division so far this year, he said.

Finley said slower-growth areas are also seeing renewed support for evangelism.

Dan Jackson, president of the North American Division, said a recent initiative comprising 130 small groups in the city of Houston in Texas led to 400 baptisms there in February. A similar meeting series will launch in New York soon and will include some 400 small groups leading up to a September decision invitation meeting.

“We’re hoping to generate a huge blessing, a huge reaping for God,” Jackson said.

He added that having more lay members supporting pastors in evangelism yields greater success.

Because of that, the Sabbath School/Personal Ministries department announced the launch of “Go 7 Million,” a name reminiscent of the discontinued initiative “Go One Million.” The initiative encourages the denomination to identify 7 million lay members to get involved in local outreach programs.

Leaders of the Miami-based Inter-American Division hope to reach a target of 1 million people for Go 7 Million. The division’s Sabbath School/Personal Ministries associate director Samuel Telemaque even led the committee in chanting “Go seven million for Christ,” the third time telling the group, “shout it so loud they can hear you in Papua New Guinea in the South Pacific Division.”

Telemaque said the division has set a target of 1 million new members by 2014 through Go 7 Million.

“It was undetermined how many other divisions will join in the initiative.

Committee delegates also received reports on outreach in large cities, where most initiatives are conducted through media.

“This is almost impossible to do without communication,” said Erton Kohler, president of the South American Division.

Church officials in South America are conducting outreach in Sao Paulo, Brazil — at 20 million people, the world’s 3rd largest city.

There, the denomination has set up a media center in a rented facility on Paulista Avenue, one of the wealthiest commercial areas of the city, similar to New York’s Times Square. A small congregation has also been established. Still, about U.S. $40 million is still needed to purchase the property, Kohler said.

The church in Brazil has some 400 broadcast television channels in cities throughout the country, as well as channels on a major cable delivery system. The Adventist Church will soon launch a television channel in Buenos Aires, Argentina, Kohler said.

Finley said the church has grown through deliberate planning in Chennai, India, the world’s 4th largest city. There are now 23,000 members worshipping in 166 churches there, up from 750 members in 12 churches 10 years ago, he said.

Tithe in that region has also increased, nearly U.S. $30,000 a month, up from $1,000 a month.
A media center in Chennai is producing programming, mainly sermons, which match programming commonly found on network television, said Kandus Thorpe, a vice president for Hope Channel. The Adventist Church has taken this approach because of the abundance of television in homes. The government distributes small televisions in the region, Thorpe said.

Hope Channel is also expanding its operations in Asia, with increased programming in local languages.

In Australia and New Zealand, a public survey of perceptions of the Adventist Church revealed how traditional methods of outreach may need further re-adjustment.

The survey, coordinated by the South Pacific Division Communication department, reported that Adventists were seen as the “go-to people for health and well-being” and those who promoted Sabbath rest. The majority of survey respondents, however, had no perception of the church. Division President Barry Oliver said leaders are expected to follow up with plans based on the survey later this year.

Committee delegates also received a report on the church’s Great Controversy Project, designed to distribute copies of the book beginning in 2012.

Versions of The Great Controversy will be printed for less than one U.S. dollar, and leaders hope that some members will sponsor distribution in certain world regions.

"The world is desperate for answers now. … Years from now these books will do the work we cannot do," said Delbert Baker, a world church general vice president.

Baker said project leaders were "sensitive" to concerns in some regions; two cover options will be available -- one cover features a portrayal of the Second Coming of Christ, while another is designed for those less familiar with religion.

The South American Division is already running with the project. Already, 30 million copies of the book have been committed and 1 million copies were distributed in Sao Paulo the previous day, Kohler said.

One local conference has ordered 1.7 million copies and has begun fundraising for the initiative, with pastors showing their support by each donating a month’s salary.

"This is a special opportunity to do something special for God," Kohler said.

Many church leaders were featured in a video presentation about how the book had personally influenced their lives, as well as people who converted to the Adventist Church after reading the book.

Clinton Wahlen, a member of the denomination’s Biblical Research Institute said he was an atheist before he read The Great Controversy to learn about Christianity.

Paul Ratsara, president of the church's Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division, said he believed The Great Controversy Project was a “God-sent initiative.”

Ratsara said an influential Johannesburg, South Africa, businesswoman of another Christian denomination was given a copy of the book and chose to join the church through baptism in October.

“We’re passionate about this in [our division],” he said.

The book will be released in several versions, including the original, an abbreviated version, one for kids, and an additional version that includes excerpts from another of the author’s books, Steps to Christ. Parts of the initiative will also be promoted on social media, Baker said.

Two project websites are expected to launch as distribution plans progress, leaders said.

--The morning devotional was presented by Ron Clouzet, director of the North American Division Evangelism Institute and professor of Christian Ministry and Pastoral Theology at Andrews University. To read his devotional, click here.

--To listen to Clouzet's devotional, click here [tedNEWS]

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Adventist Leaders Stress Follow-up in Unresolved Audit Findings, Transparency in Administration

Discussion begins to be continued in October 2010 title tops $2 billion
12 April 2011, Huntsville, Alabama, United States [Mark A. Kelner, Adventist Review] World leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist world church stressed a continuing need for transparency and accountability in financial reporting during an April 10 business session of the denomination's Spring Meeting.

"We need to be united and set the right tone as officers ... we must work together as a team, all the way through the system," said Adventist world church President Ted N.C. Wilson, responding to a report presented by world church Treasurer Robert E. Lemon and General Conference Auditing Services (GCAS) director Paul H. Douglas.

The 12-page document on transparency — the product of a task force composed of Lemon, Douglas, North American Division Treasurer Tom Evans and GCAS associate director Robyn W. Kajiura — stressed concerns raised by the GCAS Board and its chairman, Jack L. Krogstad. Krogstad, a layman who holds the Union Pacific Endowed Chair in Accountancy at Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska, was recently an Academic Fellow in the Office of the Chief Accountant at the United States Securities and Exchange Commission. Those concerns followed a GCAS report "which included the frequency of certain audit findings and the recurring unresolved nature of those findings," as stated in the document.

The GCAS document, "Transparency and Accountability in Financial Reporting," suggested a need to improve church leadership culture at all organizational levels, that better controls result from a better culture, that "communication is at the core of effective governance," and that the result would be greater confidence from all church stakeholders, or constituents.

"It's not an auditing issue: it's a character issue," said Juan Prestol, Adventist world church undertreasurer, during discussion of the matter. "An audit is too late," he explained to Adventist Review after his remarks, since audits only discover issues after the fact.

What is needed, he added, are "changes in the DNA of Adventist leadership."

Wilson said board members should be unafraid to question items presented to them. "On committees, ask questions. Don't assume somebody else is going to take care of it," he said.

Added North American Division President Dan Jackson, "There ought not to be friends in boardrooms ... if I sit on that board and respond to issues on that board because I'm a friend, I really have no business being on that board. You need to challenge me and do it with a smile."

Ella Simmons, a world church general vice president, stressed the need for an even higher approach. "I would challenge us to total commitment to holistic stewardship. Of course we focus on financial operations; but how can we operate [with] integrity and [in] ethical ways if we do not value ethical behavior in every area of our work, of our being, our relationships, our quality in performance. It must be holistic," she said.

Wilson promised further discussions on the subject at the 2011 Annual Council, to be held in October in Silver Spring, Maryland.

In an earlier address, Lemon said the church's finances showed improvement in 2010.

"Worldwide tithe passed the US$2 billion mark in 2010," Lemon said. "In spite of the recession and slow recovery of the economy in the U.S., the economies of most of the countries of the world have continued to be strong," he said.

That strength is reflected in tithe and offering figures, he added. Worldwide tithe rose 8.2 percent, totaling U.S. $2.002 billion. Tithe in the North American Division increased 1.1 percent over 2009, totaling U.S. $887 million in 2010 compared to U.S. $877 million the previous year. Tithe from divisions outside of North America rose 14.6 percent and totaled U.S. $1.114 billion compared to U.S. $972 million.

The exchange rate to the U.S. dollar explains some of the increase, but "much of it was from increases in local currencies," Lemon said.

"It is inspiring to see the faithfulness of God's children in returning their tithe and giving offerings for the support of His work even in tough times," Lemon added.

Lemon also noted that costs to the world headquarters for the 2010 General Conference Session in Atlanta, George, though budgeted at US$6.2 million came in under budget at US$5.5 million.

Independent auditors for the General Conference, as well as the various pension plan funds associated with the world
headquarters and the North American Division, gave all accounts unqualified positive opinions that generally accepted accounting principles were met across the board.

Under treasurer Prestol added that the General Conference’s balance sheet, for the first three months of 2011, “is $2.6 million to the good,” which he said means the organization is “doing very well” so far.

Click here to read the full treasurer’s report. [tedNEWS]

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Mission Focus Highlight’s Spring Meeting Opening

Business session to address finances, including transparency in accounting
09 April 2011, Huntsville, Alabama, United States [Ansel Oliver, ANN]

Seventh-day Adventist leaders highlighted church mission, both within and outside its own walls, at the Friday night opening of Spring Meeting, one of the denomination’s two major annual business meetings.

Delegates also approved the meeting agenda as Sabbath began, before holding a spiritual service at McKee Auditorium at Oakwood University in Huntsville, Alabama, United States.

Executive Secretary G. T. Ng called for mission efforts to not neglect people who are already members. Without many choosing to leave the church, world membership would now likely be 24 million instead of the nearly 17-million at present, Ng said.

“Nurture is part of our mission. We just read that in our mission statement, unless I need new glasses,” Ng said.

Other leaders also challenged the church to include a variety of people in mission. Ministry magazine Editor Derek Morris and called for the church to increasingly include specialized professionals in assisting pastors with ministry. He read from the sixth chapter of Acts, in which a growing church called for other Spirit-filled people to assist with the work, allowing pastors to focus solely on ministering.

Friday night’s service opened the weekend meeting of the denomination’s Executive Committee. Business sessions will be held Sunday and Monday.

The committee is meeting this week at Oakwood University, an institution directly affiliated with the denomination’s world headquarters.

The Friday evening service also featured testimonies and music from students of the University, a historically Black institution.

The service was broadcast on Hope Channel, the denomination’s television network.

Business sessions are periodically held at sites away from the church’s world headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland.

Beginning Sunday, delegates are expected to address agenda items that include:

- Transparency and accountability measures in financial reporting.

- A review of compensation.

- Confirming upcoming international Bible Conferences.

- An update on a Middle East and Mediterranean Survey commission, which is studying a possible realignment of church administrative structure in the region.

- Electing an associate director of the Stewardship department at the world headquarters.

Spring Meeting is one of two major annual meetings of the Executive Committee and addresses budget and finances. Top leaders from each of the church’s 13 world divisions are present. The other, Annual Council, held each October, typically addresses a wider range of items, including policy, and also includes presidents of each of the church’s Union administrative units.

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Recommitment to Freedom of Belief Urged at Annual Religious Liberty Event in Washington

Recent assassination of religious freedom advocate Bhatti a reminder for renewed support
07 April 2011, Washington, D.C. [Bettilia Krause/IRLA, ANN] Last month’s assassination of Pakistani cabinet minister and religious freedom advocate Shahbaz Bhatti added a somber note to the April 5 Religious Liberty Dinner in Washington, D.C.

More than 200 government officials, ambassadors, religious leaders and religious liberty advocates stood for a minute of silence to honor Bhatti and the many others around the world who over the past year have suffered persecution, imprisonment, or death for their faith.


Bhatti, the only Christian in Pakistan’s cabinet, was gunned down on March 2 by members of Pakistan’s Taliban, who objected to his outspoken criticism of the country’s discriminatory blasphemy laws.

In an emotional address, Knox Thares, a friend and colleague of Shabaz Bhatti, and director of policy and research at the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, told the audience they could best remember this man of integrity by "making his death matter" and continuing his work.

Dr. Suzan Johnson Cook, U.S. President Barack Obama’s nominee for the position of Religious Freedom Ambassador-at-Large, was the evening’s keynote speaker. She praised the work of the IRLA and called on all those present to recommit themselves to the effort of protecting and preserving freedom of conscience worldwide.

Quoting Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Cook said the path to living in peace with others involves learning to "listen to and learn from those who think differently from ourselves."

Ted N. C. Wilson, president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, opened the evening, saying that religious liberty is part of the “DNA of the Adventist Church.” He reaffirmed the church’s longstanding commitment to promote such freedom for all people, no matter their faith tradition.

Three advocates of religious freedom were also honored at the dinner:

- Norway’s former Bishop of Oslo Gunnar Stålsett received the Religious Liberty International Award for his lifetime efforts in promoting peace and reconciliation between people of different faith traditions.
- Norway’s former Bishop of Oslo, Gunnar Stålsett, was honored for his lifetime work of promoting peace across faith communities.
- Kil Bigelow, former external affairs director for the National Spiritual Assembly of Bahá’ís, for her 25 years of human rights advocacy, both at the United Nations and in Washington.

- Edwards Woods III, volunteer director of the Lake Region Chapter of the North American Religious Liberty Association, received this year’s A.T. Jones medal for his grassroots activism in building up religious liberty support across Michigan, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Indiana. [tedNEWS]

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The Trend Toward Integration of Spirituality and Leadership

My first visit to the annual International Leadership Association Conference was in October of last year in Boston, Massachusetts, USA (the next is in October in London, England). What I discovered was a trend much further advanced than I would ever have imagined. Religion and spirituality was fully integrated into this traditionally secular conference which is dedicated to a “deeper understanding of leadership knowledge and practices for the greater good of individuals and communities worldwide.” Leadership specialists are embracing the reality that leadership is a process that invites, nurtures and leads the spirit of man. The spiritual nature of leadership, both religious and non-religious, is being embraced as a necessary component and has gained a place among the disciplines that have traditionally comprised formal leadership studies. The conference featured one formal presentation on an emerging model referred to as Transcendent Leadership which assumes a natural merging of the spiritual and the scientific in effective leadership in the 21st century.

So what does this trend in leadership studies have to say to those of us called to serve as spiritual leaders in the context of the church? Is it possible that biblical spirituality may be the most significant aspect of leadership effectiveness for the Christian pastor or teacher? The Word has much to say regarding the spiritual component of living but does it specifically address the issue of leadership? What qualifies a person with the title of pastor or Christian teacher as a spiritual leader?

Robert Frying explains the title of his recent book, The Leadership Ellipse: Shaping How We Lead by Who We Are, by urging that we live our professional or vocational lives around two points—spirituality and leadership rather than one (spirituality) and another (leadership) as though they are separate realms; in doing so our life pattern becomes an ellipse rather than two circles that may or may not intersect. Spirituality is integral to Christian leadership.

The Holy Spirit is the equiper of the church and the source of authentic Christian spirituality. In Romans 12:8 the apostle mentions “rule” or “lead” as one of the unique competencies given by the Holy Spirit to certain ones in the church but does that indicate that only those with the specific gift of leading or ruling are able to contribute to the process of leadership? Actually leading is presented as only one of many competencies granted to the Church. The gifts in each of the three passages dedicated to spiritual competencies are embedded in a discussion of unity and oneness. The metaphor of the Body would suggest an interdependent organism of parts and systems that function in a coordinated and sympathetic manner toward the end of healthy and productive behaviour. As such, leadership names the integrated process of all competencies rather than just the output of a few that have the gift or gifts necessary to positional leading.

As such, spiritual leadership is something that every member contributes to though some do so in a highly visible manner while others contribute with little or no visibility. The Holy Spirit is the source of our individual and collective competence in pursuing the mission of the church.

But the necessary components of leadership, whether spiritual or not, reach beyond competence and embrace attitude and character as well. All three passages that address the spiritual nature of gifts (competencies) embed the topic in a context of Christ-like behaviour. The prime characteristics of the Fruit of the Spirit recorded in Galatians 5:22 are addressed in Romans 12 where Paul mingles character related behaviours with the spiritual competencies and concludes the chapter from verse 9 onward with counsel regarding behaviour that gives evidence of the Fruit of the Spirit. 1 Corinthians 12:12-31 and all of chapter 13 provide a spiritual character context for the practice of these competencies. Finally Ephesians 4:1-6 provides a similar preface to the presentation of the spiritual competencies and follows them with a pointed discussion of the need for spiritual behaviour as we practice them.

The two essential elements of spiritual leadership are both provided by the grace of the Spirit of God—Gifts for competency and Fruit for Christ-like character. Added to these two components is the active presence of spiritual authority. The Gospel Commission offers spiritual authority to every believer as the necessary empowerment that enables all to lead in the context of their unique spiritual giftedness. These three elements are available as part of the providence of God for every believer who chooses to walk in the Spirit.

All who lead in the name of Jesus need to capitalize on the availability of all three of these spiritual elements. Our own spiritual growth must be nurtured and refined if we are to emerge as effective leaders. This requires discipline and commitment to the value we place on the centrality of God’s Spirit in our lives and leadership ministry. The spiritual nature revealed in our character provides the vehicle of credibility that carries our competencies into operational ministry. Spiritual behaviour provides a relationally healthy and inviting context that when present maximizes the impact of all ministry efforts. If character fails then the competencies will stand as useless regardless of the education and training that have honed and developed them. Finally, we need the influence of generative authority that comes not from a self-serving heart but from a Spirit-filled desire to leave all people better than we found them. Without these essential spiritual elements we are left with an impotent presence that lacks effectiveness. Holistic biblical spirituality is being sought by many outside of our community of faith and is our only qualification as spiritual leaders.

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1 http://www.ila-net.org/  
- Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4:6-15.  
- Matthew 28:18-20  

http://www.ted-adventist.org/features-and-analysis/the-trend-toward-inte...
Finding Meaning, Significance, Community, Direction and Excitement

In the first part of Leadership as Relationship, we compared what followers' want and leaders do. We discovered that there are many points on which followers and leaders agree. The common ground falls into five interesting categories—meaning, significance, community, direction and excitement. Remembering that leadership is relationship, it makes sense to begin our work in these areas of agreement.

The question now is how do we go about creating an environment in which this becomes a reality. Where do we start? Most organisations, from congregations to multinational organisations, make some formal attempts to create meaning, significance, community, direction and excitement. What do we already have in place? Although there are far more, let’s examine a cluster of four opportunities: mission, vision and values, strategic planning, hiring and evaluations, and social gatherings. This is not new; there are no headlines in this list. In fact, they are the standard list used by administrators and managers everywhere. They may be a tired and worn-out quartet but what would they look like if re-energized?

The secret to rejuvenation is in reframing the task. By looking at the task in a new way, by giving it a new purpose or by turning it upside down, leaders see new relationships and opportunities. How can we take the administrative tasks and routine touchpoints inherent in our leadership positions and create exciting and imaginative ways to respond to the very things followers want? How can we reframe these tasks so that we can create meaning, significance, and purpose?

Mission, vision, values. Although their power may have in the past disappointed us, the very purpose of this trio is to create shared meaning. How can they be rejuvenated? What if the goal was to create a sense of mission rather than write a formal mission statement? What would happen if the emphasis shifted from preparing ‘statements’ to engaging everyone in creating an active on-going narrative? What if we shifted the focus to collecting stories instead of printing a paragraph? Stories would keep the mission current with retelling, “Our organisation is like...” Everyone could add new stories to the developing narrative.

Likewise, vision statements, rather than statements of goals evaluated once a year, would be replaced by a set of questions that guide decision-making throughout the year. The operational question becomes, how will we want to do this tomorrow? Each task becomes an opportunity to practice the future now. Strategic planning. The purpose of planning, and particularly strategic planning, is to set direction. When done imaginatively it can also give individuals a good sense of how their efforts contribute to the whole, or in other words, create significance and excitement. As with many processes, strategic planning has suffered not from visions of grandeur but from the tyranny of details and minutiae. The challenge is to find something that replaces traditional strategic planning. What would happen if a set of questions replaced the traditional targets and goals? A sense of direction would emerge, and, rather than focusing on a solution designed in the past with the data then available, at each decision point we would be guided by strategic questions. The decisions would then be made in ‘real-time’.

Hiring and evaluations. If we think of leadership as relationship, then the points of contact at hiring and evaluation become central to creating a sense of significance. We may have overlooked these moments as important relationship building opportunities. In what ways can we restructure our conversations at these critical moments so they result in active coaching and helpful individual feedback? How can we move from ‘telling’ (typical orientation and evaluation responses) to ‘experience’ (an on-going activity)? Of course, this takes more time and effort. But relationship requires active on-going involvement. For meaning to emerge, engagement must be mutual, stories shared, and feedback frequent.

Social gatherings. Bringing people together promotes connection and builds a sense of belonging. As community, it also provides opportunities to create overall meaning and significance and to affirm individual and group efforts. But meeting without purpose can be counterproductive. How can we make every meeting or gathering count? How can our public and private gatherings build bridges between diverse groups and individuals? How can we change the way we gather in committee meetings and move away from simply conducting business to the imperative of creating the future?

The short list is an easy one. Share stories. Ask questions. Give affirmation. Stories connect persons with history, place and aspirations. Questions such as what do you bring to the organisation and what will you add to the project provide opportunities for the individuals to give something back to the organisation. Affirmations create connections and give added meaning.

Leadership as relationship is best served by shifting the emphasis from ‘telling’ to ‘sharing’, from a focusing on a fixed ‘strategic point’ to developing a ‘sense of direction’, and from simply ‘conducting business’ to ‘creating the future’. The relationship develops by creating a ‘sense of mission’ rather than a ‘mission statement’, a ‘guiding vision’ rather than a ‘vision statement’, and collecting stories rather than lists of words. It remains dynamic and alive with guiding questions rather than remaining static with historically definitive statements. In other words, leadership as relationship can create a dynamic environment for those in the organisation to find meaning, significance, community, direction and excitement.

By David S Penner, PhD, Director of the doctoral leadership program, Loma Linda University
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. 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 fail 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 fruitleague 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 sistemhood 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 sets the model of Jesus Christ as the greatest public figure.
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).

If we have no goals in our work, how will we know when we have failed? How do we know when and where we need to
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 eim to: apublic@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
King James Bible's 400-year reign

05 January 2011 Washington DC, USA [Mark A. Kellner - The Washington Times] Its cadence is found in the speeches of Abraham Lincoln and the lyrics of Paul Simon. Renowned narrator Alexander Scourby and country music legend Johnny Cash have recorded spoken versions of the text. It's estimated that 1 billion copies have been printed since the first volume rolled off the press in 1611.

The King James Version of the Bible, also known as the "Authorized Version," marks its 400th anniversary in 2011, and by any measure, it has had a lasting impact on the world and on the language into which it was sent. The "authorized" moniker comes from a title-page declaration that this Bible was "authorized to be read in churches."

"The sheer poetry of the King James Version, not to mention its almost half-millennium of absolute authority, militates against its slipping into obscurity any time soon," declared Phyllis Tickle, longtime religion editor at Publishers Weekly magazine.

Even noted atheist Richard Dawkins has praise for the volume: "You can't appreciate English literature unless you are to some extent steeped in the King James Bible. There are phrases that come from it — people don't realize they come from it — proverbial phrases, phrases that make echoes in people's minds," he said in a video released by the King James Bible Trust, the British organization that is one promoter of the 400th-anniversary celebrations due next year.

"Not to know the King James Bible is to be, in some small way, barbarian," Mr. Dawkins added.

Indeed, many of its phrases have entered everyday use, among them: "my brother's keeper," "salt of the earth," "give up the ghost," "scapegoats," "an eye for an eye," "casting your pearls before swine," "scarlet woman," "writing on the wall" and "the blind leading the blind."

"A house divided against itself," Lincoln's signature sentiment, was translated that way 250 years before Lincoln was elected president.

Geof Morin, communications director for the American Bible Society, whose New York headquarters will host a King James Bible exhibit next year, called the King James "still relevant" in the age of Twitter and Facebook.

"It was the Bible staring Thomas Jefferson in the face," Mr. Morin said. "Its words, he added, were "in the speeches of Abraham Lincoln. It's the language we still use today. It's part of the American psyche, of how we see ourselves as a nation."

But before the KJV — as the version is known by many readers and scholars — came into America's consciousness, it had to arrive on the scene at all. That happened following a contentious 1604 meeting at Hampton Court palace, when a young James VI of Scotland, newly crowned as James I of England, was trying to iron out differences between the Church of England and a dissenting sect known as the Puritans.

Putting the Scriptures into English could be a dangerous practice: 16th-century translator William Tyndale was executed. After Henry VIII broke with the Roman Catholic Church, and established the Church of England under the monarch, there were some efforts to approve a complete English-language Bible.

Henry authorized production of what came to be known as the "Great Bible," while the 1583 "Bishop's Bible" followed during the reign of Elizabeth I. In Geneva, English-speaking exiles who opposed Mary I's moves to reconcile with Rome produced the "Geneva Bible," whose translation and margin notes took a decidedly anti-monarchist and anti-clerical stance.

The Hampton Court Conference was drifting into sectarian arguments, historians note, when Puritan leader John Rainolds (also spelled Reynolds), took the bold step of addressing James and asking for a new translation of the Bible, since the previous Bibles "were corrupt and not answerable to the truth of the original."

By almost all accounts, James was delighted: He didn't like the Geneva Bible, and the earlier versions weren't fully up to his standards of scholarship. As a boy, James had immersed himself in Greek and Latin, among other intellectual pursuits. He hardly had known his parents and was installed on the Scottish throne while just a year old with a regent in charge.

It took seven years to create the volume known as the KJV. And while the title page stated it was "newly translated out of the original tongues, and with the former translations diligently compared and revised," the actual work drew more on an earlier English version, said Larry Stone, a former vice president at Thomas Nelson Publishers and author of "The Story of the Bible," a new history of the Scriptures published to coincide with the anniversary.

The translators "were told to follow the 'Great Bible,'" Mr. Stone said in a telephone interview, and "they would compare the translation of the 'Great Bible' with the Greek and the Hebrew. If they wanted to change the wording, it would change for several reasons; either the 'Great Bible' translation was not accurate, or they could say the words better."

And because the 'Great Bible' drew on Tyndale's translations, the 16th-century "thou" and "thee" entered into the King James Version, even though they were long departed from common usage.

Would James I, the only English monarch to ascend the throne as a published author, be happy his eponymous Bible has survived this long?

"I actually think he would be somewhat pleased, because of its longevity," said David Teems, author of "Majestio: The
King Behind the King James Bible," a 2010 biography of the monarch and his most famous book.

A strong believer in the "divine right of kings," Mr. Toems explained, James was determined "his Bible would reflect his reign, unite realms of Scotland and England. His desire was to unify, and to unify all of Christendom."

While that didn't happen, the impact of the KJV is without question: It quickly displaced the Geneva Bible as the Protestant standard in the English-speaking world, and was often the primary "reader" for generations.

Evangelists from Charles Finney to Billy Graham preached from it; Paul Simon derived the phrase "workman's wages" in his song "The Boxer," from reading I Timothy, he once told Rolling Stone magazine.

Author Joe Kovacs, whose 2009 "Shocked by the Bible" explored the lesser-known stories and facts of the Bible text, said he chose the King James to quote in his book because "it's the most well-known and frequently quoted translation."

Beginning in November, Thomas Nelson Publishers, which sold 329,000 printed copies of the King James Bible between July 2009 and July 2010, has mounted a major campaign to promote the text, with a website, www.kjv400celebration.com, and national marketing campaigns.

The firm also is working with the History Channel to promote the anniversary.

"To me, the 400th anniversary, is not just about KJV, but about the Bible. The fact that it is a historic milestone gives us the opportunity to go beyond and look at the impact of Scripture. It's not a translation story; it really is a Bible story," said Carla Baillirini, Nelson's bible group marketing vice president.

Despite the language changes and continued research of the past four centuries, the King James Version retains a great deal of authority, said Alister McGrath, head of the Center for Theology, Mission and Culture at King's College in London.

"The KJV is a surprisingly reliable translation, even though some minor translation changes are necessary on account of advances in our understanding of the manuscript tradition over the last 400 years," said Mr. McGrath, whose 2001 "In the Beginning" was a history of the KJV's development.

However, "the day of a single dominant biblical translation is past," he added. "In many ways, the KJV held a monopoly in English from about 1700 to 1950, as no other translation was seen as being significant over that period. Nowadays, there are multiple English language translations."

That may be the case, but there may be life in the older text yet: Compare its "Give us this day our daily bread," found in Matthew 6:11, to the rendering in "The Message," a popular modern version: "Keep us alive with three square meals." [tedNEWS]

This book cover is from a commemorative reprint of the 1611 King James Version of the Holy Bible. The King James Bible will celebrate its 400th anniversary in 2011.

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The Story of the King James Bible - Audio

The Commission
The Translation
The Legacy

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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 96 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%); education (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.”

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<th>Americans’ Experiences with Resolutions</th>
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<tr>
<td>% of all Americans</td>
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<td>61% of Americans have made New Year resolutions in the past</td>
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<tr>
<td>41% of Americans plan to make some type of resolution in 2011</td>
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<td>19% definitely plan to in 2011</td>
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<td>% who made resolutions in 2010</td>
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<td>23% experienced significant, long-term change from resolutions made last year</td>
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<td>29% had minor change from resolutions last year</td>
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<td>49% saw no change</td>
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<tr>
<th>Resolution Reasoning</th>
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<tr>
<td>Who is most likely to make these resolutions?</td>
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<tr>
<td>weight, diet and health</td>
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<tr>
<td>women, upscale adults, churchgoers, Catholics, Boomers</td>
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<td>money, debt and finances</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mosaics &amp; Busters, divorced adults, downscale individuals, Democrats</td>
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<td>personal improvement</td>
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<td>single adults, parents, students, older Americans</td>
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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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The Vision and Direction of Trans-European Division

My mental picture of the desired future of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Trans-European Division is quite simple:
I see an active church at the end of time with strong spiritual motivation to extending itself into the world while breaking down barriers. This is not happening in the backyard, but the world sees and feels it.
The Church in my vision functions by simultaneous acts of "reaching" in a threefold relationship: church members connect with God, the world, and each other. They reach up to God through spiritual formation (nurture). They reach out to the world by faithfulness to God's mission, bringing the gospel to the world, providing works of service, and revealing God's love in their life (mission). They reach across by building each other up in love and respecting each other's differences (community).
I see the Church as a worldwide group of individuals belonging to different peoples, nations, and tribes, and with different languages, standing close together and 'teaching' with their hands:
Lifting up their hands to God, they break down the barriers of human solitude, blindness, and selfishness, accepting God's sovereignty and following the will of the Creator and Father of all. Lifting up their hands to God, they accept Jesus Christ as the Saviour who removes sin, evil, and death. Lifting up their hands to God, they receive daily power, wisdom, faith, hope, and love from the Holy Spirit.
Extending their hands to known and unknown people in the world, they break down barriers of faith, race, and social conventions, as they connect with the rich and the poor, the young and the old, men and women, people near and afar, friends and enemies. Humbly and yet obstinately and generously, they make God known and present him through their lives so that people are attracted and drawn into relationship with God and his believers. They meet people's needs and offer friendship to all. Their lives find meaning in 'imitating God' (Ephesians 5:1), being doors to communion with God. Embracing with their hands all their family members in God's family, knowing they are children of God, they break down human barriers and fulfill the Christian vision of spiritual unity and caring love (Philippians 2:1-6).
The sign that the Church is fulfilling its calling is the members' joy and thanksgiving. When they are gathered for worship, the service explodes in hymns of praise and joyful celebration of the day fast approaching when God will be acknowledged by all as the One he already is: 'one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all' (Ephesians 4:8).
I pray and work to let God accomplish this vision through me and the people I have been given to work with. I am confident and full of enthusiasm. Greetings with Romans 15:13: 'May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit'.

Dr. Bertil Wiklander, the President of the Trans-European Division
Revival and Reformation

TED Response

to 'God’s Promised Gift' and 'Initiatives of the GC R&R Committee':

Spiritual Growth in Life and Godliness

TED Initiatives 2010 – 2015
Proposal to the TED Executive Committee 14th November, 2010

The apostle Peter, one of Christ's disciples, said in his second letter:

'Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness ... For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.' (2 Peter 1:2-3, 5-8)

In the following section in verses 10-15 Peter underlines how extremely important the Christian disciplines are for the Christian life. This is not a way to earn salvation or God’s acceptance – those gifts are by faith and God’s grace – but, rather, it is a matter of strengthening our faith and growing in life and godliness, in order to live close to God and change into more and more Christ-like personalities.

As a special Messenger to the Seventh-day Adventist community of believers, Ellen White said that 'A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. To seek this should be our first work. She also defines revival and reformation in the church as a work by the Holy Spirit:

'A revival and a reformation must take place under the ministration of the Holy Spirit. Revival and reformation are two different things. Revival signifies a renewal of spiritual life, a quickening of the powers of mind and heart, a resurrection from the spiritual death. Reformation signifies a reorganisation, a change in ideas and theories, habits and practices. Reformation will not bring forth the good fruit of righteousness unless it is connected with the revival of the Spirit. Revival and reformation are to do their appointed work, and in doing this work they must blend.'

In the light of (a) the teachings of the Bible, (b) the counsel of Ellen White, (c) stimulated by the initiatives of the General Conference documents on 'God’s Promised Gift' and the 'Initiatives of the GC Revival and Reformation Committee', (d) the concept of 'Stewardship in a Changing World', and (e) as we enter a new five-year plan for mission, Tell the World, we commit ourselves and encourage all leaders, committees, pastors, members, youth and children to make spiritual revival and reformation our first work through the power of Christ – in his cross, resurrection, heavenly mediation and soon return.

May the Holy Spirit fill our lives and energise us all to take every opportunity to help, heal and save that which has been lost.

We commit ourselves to support and promote the following initiatives to encourage our churches and organisations to make spiritual growth in life and godliness our first work:

1. Making prayer a fundamental part of our daily life (1 Tim. 2:1)
   - Praying alone
   - Praying in groups of two and three (Matthew 18:20)
   - Praying in our families
   - Praying in church fellowships
   - Praying in chains via the Internet
   - Participating in the worldwide Adventist days of prayer and fasting

2. Making Bible reading a fundamental part of our daily life (Ps 119:105)
   - Following a Bible reading plan
   - Using a pocket Bible during the day
   - Apply the book as a whole principle to the reading of verses
   - Use Bible Study Guides and other study tools to enhance the reading
   - Engage in a Bible study group either for nurture or outreach
   - Learning how to give Bible studies to seekers

3. Study and apply the biblical disciplines for spiritual growth
   - Understanding the biblical disciplines by a handbook to be produced by the TED
   - Practising a multitude of spiritual disciplines
   - Apply biblical disciplines as a means of strengthen coping skills (peace of mind, stress management, etc.)
   - Apply biblical disciplines as a means to enhance relationships

4. Being available and engaged in at least one outreach or mission project where I lead one person to Christ
   - Small group
   - Sabbath School Class
5. Participating in spiritual worship, celebration and fellowship

- Home congregation
- Via TV, Internet or Radio
- Small group or Branch Sabbath School
- Church Plant

*Review and Herald, March 22, 1887.*

*Review and Herald, Feb. 25, 1902.*