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The conference was opened by Laszlo Gallusz, Adventist Mission and Education Director at the SEEUC, who challenged the 200 believers gathered to use the opportunities they have at this moment in the best possible way. The guest speaker was Janos Kovacs-Biro, Evangelism Director at the Trans-European Division (TED). In his messages and the afternoon training seminar, he inspired the participants to prioritise their outreach approaches and adopt an oikos (house, family) evangelism approach because no programme can or should replace the outreach in the personal circle of influence. For this reason, he argued, small groups need to have a special place in Adventist outreach strategy in the postmodern world, for they provide the best unthreatening context for fostering the values of discipleship, community, service and outreach.

Kovacs-Biro comments: “The regional Mission Conferences in the SEEUC provide church members an easier access to motivational training for witnessing. 75% of all Adventists in Montenegro were present in Podgorica, and received training on House Churches and Small Groups. The majority of the members decided to be engaged in this personal witnessing approach, making themselves available to God, and in the long term being committed to serve as Jesus served, and make God known in their own circle of influence.”

The event was crowned with the baptism of Balsa Ivanovic, a young man from Cetinje, a city with rich Montenegrin tradition but with almost no Adventist presence.

Montenegro is a small country in South-East Europe with a population of about 650,000 and an Adventist presence of 250. [tedNEWS]
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Clair Sanches-Shutte, the Trans-European Division (TED) Family Ministries Director, and John Sanches, TED Special Consultant, who is a pastor and psychologist with rich experience and practice, held the seminars starting in Skopje, Macedonia. They began on Friday, 07 September with the topic ‘First Things First’, which emphasised the importance of family unity and the consequences of wrong choices as seen in the life of Samson (Judges 13-16). They reminded both children and parents of how vital it is to have confidence in God’s promises and remain faithful to Him in every moment and aspect of life.

Two interactive workshops were held on Saturday. The first, ‘Faith Begins at Home’ emphasised the importance of the presence of fathers and the positive influence that they can have on the development of their children’s characters and faith; and, secondly, ‘Family Time’ indicating the significance of the quality time spent together within the family. This was clearly demonstrated as all family members present at the workshop participated in a special activity of building symbols of their family unit out of sugar cubes and icing sugar. This short but fun activity showed that the majority of participants craved for such time spent together.

On Sunday, a whole-day seminar was held for married couples who gathered from within the Macedonian Mission territory. A topic always relevant topic, ‘Marriage Conflicts and Management’, which was followed by a survey carried out among the couples present on ‘Her and His Emotional needs’. The survey not only helped the couples to see the strong and weak points of their married life, but it also raised issues that were dealt with during the time of marriage and family counselling in the afternoon.

Throughout the following week, evening presentations on the importance of family unity and mutual understanding; and, most importantly, family dedication to God, were held in local churches in Zrenjanin, Zemun, New Belgrade, Belgrade, the Belgrade Theological Seminary and Novi Sad, where the last seminar was held on 15 September.

All the seminar participants expressed their deep appreciation for the efforts put in to restoring and reforming family life in the SEEUC and promised to become ‘the light and the salt’ in their local churches, promoting family values and bringing family members closer to God and each other. Realising that their families are the greatest treasure entrusted to them by God, they promised not to neglect their duty to keep their family safe and well both for now and for the whole of eternity.

To find out more about the work of the Adventist church in the South-East European region, please click here. [tedNEWS]

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The church in Podgorica, the largest Adventist church in the country, has been actively preparing in the last 15 months for an evangelistic series, which will be held in November and December by Pastor Kovacs-Biro. Although Podgorica church believes that the power of personal witnessing from the pews is impossible to replace with the preaching from the pulpit by the pastor, in major reaping events like this one, we are looking forward to an opportunity for making decisions and impacting more deeply the thinking of the society on spiritual matters.

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Adventist Church Leaders Meet Albania's Prime Minister

Dr. Sali Berisha receiving Adventist Church Leaders

02 October 2012 Tirana, Albania [Julian Kastrati, tedNEWS] A delegation from the Adventic Union Conference headed by its President, Pastor Branko Bistrovic, held a courtesy meeting with Albania's Prime Minister, Prof Dr Sali Berisha. In this visit, Pr. Bistrovic was accompanied by Pr. Sreko Kuburic, AUC Executive Secretary, Dr Dragutin Matak, representing the Religious Liberty Association, Pr. Leo N. España, Albanian Mission (ALM) President, Pr. Julian Kastrati, ALM Executive Secretary, Pr. Sergio N. Borges, ALM Associate Treasurer as well as Dr Beatrice C. Kastrati, ADRA Albania Country Director. In his opening address, Pr. Bistrovic transmitted to Prime Minister Berisha greetings on behalf of Dr Bertil Wiklander, Trans-European Division (TED) President, who visited Albania earlier this year to mark 20 years of officially organised Church presence in the former communist country. Pr Bistrovic then proceeded to give a brief presentation regarding the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist Church, its structure, mission and vision. Pr Bistrovic stressed that "the Church does not exist to serve itself, but rather to serve and address the needs of the local community," thus reassuring Dr Berisha of the on-going commitment of the Church and ADRA towards the Albanian people, offering universal values through a holistic approach that has given Adventism a very positive image worldwide.

On behalf of the Religious Liberty Association, Dr Dragutin Matak commended the Prime Minister and the Albanian Government for the outstanding and exemplary level of religious liberty and the peaceful coexistence among religions in Albania. As he expressed his gratitude to the Adventist Church for its contribution towards religious liberty, on his part, Dr Berisha pointed out that "respect towards others' religion is one of the most fundamental values of the Albanian civilisation." Furthermore, Dr Berisha emphasised that "religious tolerance and co-existence has been passed on from one generation to the next, despite various attempts from occupiers to use Albania's religious diversity as a tool of discordance, or from the former communist regime which tried to wipe religious faith from the national consciousness."

After briefing the Prime Minister on the 20th Church Establishment Anniversary celebration, Pastor Leo España, President of the Church in Albania, highlighted the fact that Adventism has much older roots in Albanian soil, reaching as far as 100 years ago. Pr. España then shared briefly the touching story of Albania's Adventist martyr of faith, Daniel Lewis, a pharmacist from Boston who returned to his native Albania in the 1930s to share the Advent message in the Land of Eagles. Following World War II and the instalment of a repressive communist regime, Daniel Lewis was later imprisoned, tortured and died in prison because of his Scripture-based religious beliefs, including keeping the Sabbath day holy.

Pr. España also briefly shared the story of one of Lewis' Bible students, Meropi Gjika, who waited for over 4 decades to get baptised and return her tithes and offerings to the Lord. Evoking on Meropi's last wish to have a church near central Tirana, Pr. España presented a letter of request to the Prime Minister, kindly appealing for the latter's assistance on securing a special permission to build a multi-purpose community and evangelistic centre that would simultaneously house the Central Tirana Adventist congregation.

To the delight of everyone in the audience, the Prime Minister pledged his full support for this project and affirmed that such a church that caters for the spiritual, social and health needs of the community would be most welcome. In a wider context, Dr Berisha also expressed the support of the Albanian government on initiatives of the Adventist
Church and ADRA in areas such as inter-faith dialogue, culture and social solidarity.

As tokens of appreciation, the AUC, ALM and ADRA Albania leaders at the close of the meeting presented the Prime Minister with a small gift from the TED President, a recently-published Thomson Bible in Albanian, as well as a plaque in recognition of Dr Berisha's long-term, unique contribution to religious liberty and promotion of humanitarian and faith-based values for the Albanian people.

For more information about the church in Albania and ADRA Albania, please visit [www.adventist.al](http://www.adventist.al) and [www.adralbania.blogspot.com](http://www.adralbania.blogspot.com).
New Kid on the Block

06 October 2012 St. Albans, United Kingdom [Heather Haworth] ‘Reflecting Jesus’, a 32-lesson interactive Bible study series for teens and their parents, was launched at the TED Kids in Discipleship Refresher Weekend, 28 - 30 September. KID leaders from Croatia, Norway, Hungary, Poland, Netherlands, Scotland and England met at the Trans-European Division Headquarters of the Adventist Church in St Albans, to evaluate the KID ministry and be resourced with the latest materials.

Leading out were Mrs Clair Sanches-Shutte, Trans-European Division of the Seventh-day Adventist (TED) Children’s, Family and Women’s Ministries Director, and her husband Dr John Sanches, the TED Family Ministries Consultant. His Sabbath sermon motivated his listeners to be more vocal in helping parents and church leaders recognise the eternal value of ministering to families.

During the weekend programme, everyone's learning styles were catered for by using quieter Biblical reflective activities, discussions, the sermon, seminars and even a lively debate that centred on the effectiveness, or not, of the KID ministry.

Pastor Leslie Ackie, now the South England Conference (SEC) Family Ministries director, was the first British Union Conference (BUC) Kids in Discipleship (KID) trained pastor to experience the effectiveness of running KID in the local church. At the end of the weekend, he decided to find out the facts about the impact of KID in the other churches of his Conference. He commented, “We have heard anecdotal evidence but have not done an in-depth survey.”

Judith Martin, a longstanding KID trainer and coach, shared her observation on how KID, even musically, positively impacted the Glasgow church as now the children also take part in that aspect of the service. It is not surprising that Glasgow’s church plant, Paisley, also decided to run KID.

Michelle Sanchon, of the Reading church, spent an inspiring twenty minutes talking about the way families in her KID group bonded more closely with one another. Even after a couple of years it is still positively spiritually impacting the parents and children. A majority of the children involved have desired to be baptised. It was for churches such as this that the KID Teen lessons were created as families want to continue Bible studies with their teens after completing the original KID lessons.

Thanks were expressed to Mrs Valerie Fidelia for her presentation on how to use the Teen lessons and for the editorial work she did on Karen Hollord’s excellent rewriting of Dr Gavin Anthony’s Teen lessons. She also explained how they were written in such a way that those who have not done the original KID 7 to 13-year-olds lesson can, after attending the KID ministry training, go straight into the teen set.

The title ‘Reflecting Jesus’ was chosen because the series is a scriptural guide for families living in the twenty-first century who want to follow Jesus and share their faith in Him. There are 32 lessons but they can also be enjoyed as four blocks of eight lessons. As parents are equally involved in the Bible studies, they become more familiar with the challenges to modern teenage Christians and learn how to support them. A typical KID small group meeting includes fun learning activities such as the word search, family discussion cards, a Bible exploration time, prayer activities and take home family and private worship ideas called ‘Jesus and Me’.

The weekend ended with each Union putting together ideas for guiding the future of their KID ministry. While listening to the Union representatives sharing their plans, Heather Haworth, BUC Children’s and Family Ministries director, was pleased that the local church ‘KID taster’ idea she shared was going to be useful to others too.

Zofia, from the Polish Union, who this year organised the training of 30 churches to implement KID, expressed a sentiment felt by the rest of the attendees: "This weekend has been inspirational and also practical. My team and I are leaving better equipped to help parents and children have a closer walk with God." [tedNEWS]
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In the opening ceremony, Dr Beatrice C. Kastrati, ADRA Albania Country Director, welcomed distinguished officials including His Excellency, Mr Florian Raunig, Ambassador of Austria, Mr Erik Tintrup, Vice Ambassador of Germany, Ms Filloreta Kodra, Vice Minister of Labour, Mr Ardian Came, Vice Minister of Education, as well as Ms Wein and Mr Qosja from ADA.

Dr Kastrati also welcomed other important stakeholders of the project such as UNDP, Amarodrom, Terre des Hommes, Save the Children. In a strong show of support for ADRA Albania, a delegation from the Adriatic Union Conference (AUC) of the Seventh-day Adventist Church as well as the Albanian Mission (ALM), headed by Pastor Branko Bistrovic, AUC President, was also present in the opening ceremony.

In her welcoming address Dr Kastrati expressed her deep appreciation for the Austrian Embassy and ADA for their generous support on behalf of Roma women, men and youth who desperately need literacy and social integration into the wider Albanian society. Dr Kastrati then shared a touching story, as she described the birth of the project idea back in 2009 when an elderly Roma woman asked ADRA to teach her reading and writing so she could sign a contract.

In his address, Ambassador Raunig, expressed words of appreciation for ADRA Albania. In a wider context, the Ambassador stressed that EU Integration commences inside the country from the bottom up, building peace within the community before integrating into society, and then society integrating into the world.

Vice Minister Came pointed out in his address that the integration of Roma children into the public school is an excellent example for the whole country, a goal the Albanian government has been working towards for many years. He emphasised the key role of women, especially mothers in child rearing in the development of society. He assured ADRA of continuing support and cooperation in part of the Ministry of Education.

"ADRA Albania is well-known to the Ministry of Labour through many years of service to the vulnerable communities and we look forward to many years of cooperation in the future," said Ms. Kodra, Vice Minister of Labour. She commended ADRA's efforts to prepare Roma adults for vocational training courses offered by the government and promised cooperation in the creation of needs assessments of the Roma communities.

Ms. Erinda Toska, in charge of implementation, proceeded to introduce the project specifically, listing all problems the Roma people face in their everyday life, such as poverty, disease, confinement of women, unemployment and presented the results of the pilot project and the action steps towards the new project.

On behalf of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and ADRA's Board of Directors, Pastor Bistrovic expressed the Church's appreciation and continuous support for such fine and humane initiatives. "Our mission is to serve others in the community, especially catering to those who are underprivileged and discriminated," said Pastor Bistrovic.

The meeting was concluded with a visit of the Austrian Ambassador, ADA and other officials to the project centre. In this centre, Roma women, men, youth and teenagers will have the opportunity to receive training as well as participate in group discussions on sensitive topics such as healthy
Later that day, Dr Kastrati, along with AUC and ALM administrators, met with Albania's Prime Minister, Prof Dr Sali Berisha, who expressed his deep appreciation for what ADRA Albania has done on behalf of the Albanian people. ADRA was the first non-for-profit organisation that entered post-communist Albania. Its leader at the time, Pastor John Arthur, OBE, was decorated in 1994 with the country's highest medal, "The Mother Teresa Order".

More information about this project can be found at http://reflectadraalbania.blogspot.com

For more information about ADRA Albania please visit adraalbania.blogspot.com [tedNEWS]
In Togo, Cape Verdiande Adventist Pastor Imprisoned on Dubious Charges

27 September 2012 Silver Spring, Maryland, United States [Elizabeth Lechleitner/ANN] Seventh-day Adventist lawyers and human rights advocates are calling for the immediate release of an Adventist pastor imprisoned in Togo on what they say are spurious charges.

Antonio dos Anjos Monteiro was detained in March for conspiracy to commit murder after a Togolese man implicated him and two other Christians, one an Adventist, as conspirators in an alleged blood trafficking network.

The accuser had earlier confessed to the murder of some 20 young girls, claiming he worked for a criminal ring that trafficked human blood. The man had met Monteiro when the pastor previously ministered to him.

Monteiro, a native of Cape Verde, has served as the church's Sabbath School and Personal Ministries director for the Sahel Union Mission, headquartered in Lome, Togo, since 2009.

Even though a police search of Monteiro’s home and local church headquarters failed to turn up evidence, local newspapers earlier this year published inflammatory photos depicting containers of blood alongside stories detailing the allegations against Monteiro.

“To say that Monteiro is innocent I think almost goes without saying,” said Todd McFarland, an associate general counsel in the Office of General Counsel at Adventist world church headquarters.

“While the suggestion that an Adventist pastor would hire someone to murder young girls and then traffic their blood is bizarre, fanciful and false,” he said.

Public pressure to solve last year's string of murders, however, continues to thwart his release and exoneration, McFarland said. Prior to Monteiro’s arrest, human rights groups had accused Togolese police of not doing enough to solve the crimes.

In mid-September, church leaders met with government officials in Togo to expedite the case. The group included Gilbert Wari, president of the church’s West-Central Africa Division, which oversees Togo; John Graz, Public Affairs and Religious Liberty director for the Adventist world church; McFarland; and a lawyer from the church’s Sahel Union Mission.

“The lawyer] is very hopeful. She said our visit created a strong impact on the government,” Wari said.

“At first we could see that the government thought they were just dealing with a small church in the corner, but now with this level of support and mobilization, they see that the Adventist Church is a worldwide church,” he said.

The Adventist Church's top international liaison is currently working with the ambassador of Togo to help secure Monteiro's release.
level officials from the president’s cabinet to facilitate the release of Pastor Monteiro,” said Ganoune Diop, the church’s representative to the United Nations. Diop, who met with the ambassador in July, has since requested a follow-up meeting.

Graz said he wants governments to know that an innocent Seventh-day Adventist facing arbitrary detention is not alone.

“He has millions of brothers and sisters around the world ready to rally in support. We will do everything in our power to help get Monteiro released, and we are confident that justice will prevail.”

There are more than 5,300 Adventist church members in Togo, and close to 880,000 in the church’s West-Central Africa Division.

Monteiro, who was initially held in solitary confinement in jail for 14 days, has since been transferred to the Civil Prison of Lome, where pre-trial detainees such as himself are held together with convicted felons.

Despite deplorable prison conditions, Graz said Monteiro remains “optimistic and in good health.”

“We strongly believe that Monteiro is a modern-day Joseph,” Wari said, referencing a Biblical story in which an Old Testament figure is falsely imprisoned. “Everything seemed desperate and hopeless, but God was working and he was able to glorify his holy name through the crisis.”

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A Call for Media Muscle behind the Adventist Message

28 September 2012 Silver Spring, Maryland, United States [Tor Tjeransen, tedNEWS] Seventh-day Adventist media experts from around the world recommend greater cooperation between media professionals to maximise effectiveness in communicating the gospel.

A group of eighty Adventist media professionals from all regions of the world were called together at the Seventh-day Adventist Church’s world headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland, USA last week for a Global Media Communication Summit. The five-day meeting took place after an initiative by pastor Ted N. C. Wilson to gather a cross-section of creativity and experience in communication to explore ways to maximise the effectiveness of the Seventh-day Adventist communication to the world. In his keynote address, president Wilson expressed his desire for the meeting to "be a catalyst for the church and the world to wake up to the soon coming of Christ."

The Seventh-day Adventist Church operates a huge communication network using every possible technology, but there is a tendency for communication offices to work independently. Vice President at the World Church headquarters, pastor Ben Schoun, was responsible for the organisation of the meetings. Pastor Schoun stressed that the purpose of the meetings was to "learn how to work together so that we can accomplish things that we can not do individually."

At the outset of the meetings Mrs Joanne Davies, a lay-member with many years of experience from the advertising industry in New Zealand, gave a passionate plea for greater co-operation between media professionals within the church. "The Seventh-day Adventist brand has been dwarfed, and no-one oversees the strategic resource allocation," Mrs Davies asserted and formulated her dream for greater impact in this way: "Let us put media muscle behind our message."

Participants listened to presentations on a wide range of issues relating to communicating Adventist beliefs and values as a background to group work on ideas for greater co-operation and effectiveness. Pastor Claude Richli, Associate Publisher of the Adventist Review, gave a presentation on overt and covert branding. Richli reminded participants that the Seventh-day Adventist Church has one of the strongest brands in the world. "There are more Seventh-day Adventist church buildings in the world branded with our logo than McDonald’s and Subway have combined," he said.

In addition to this overt branding Adventist values and doctrines are being communicated by church members in ways that are not clearly marked as Seventh-day Adventist. Richli pointed out that both types of communication are necessary and said the covert branding is the only way to get our message across in many areas of the world.

A measure of the scale of Adventist communication is the fact that Adventist World Radio have 20 million downloads of their various pod-casts each month. Even with this kind of statistical Adventist communicators want to do better.

Miroslav Pujic, Communication and Media Ministries Director of the Trans-European Division, said there is a "need to harness technology in a way that is even more effective for the communication of the Gospel to the world."

In addition to pastor Pujic, Frederick Duval, tedMEDIA Productions filmmaker, and Tor Tjeransen, Media Director of the Norwegian Union,
Recommendations from the Global Media Communication Summit will be brought to the annual meeting of the Executive Committee of the global Seventh-day Adventist Church, which will take place in mid-October."
Adventist Church Launches Committee to Study Theology of Ordination

19 September 2012 Silver Spring, Maryland, United States [Ansel Oliver, Mark A. Kellner, and Elizabeth Lechleitner/ANN] Seventh-day Adventist Church leaders yesterday voted to establish a Theology of Ordination Study Committee, with a goal of delivering a report to the 2014 Annual Council, a yearly meeting of world church administrators.

Four committee sessions, each meeting for up to three days, will precede the October 2014 report, leaders said.

“We want an open process,” Pastor Ted N.C. Wilson, president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, told the group’s Administrative Committee, or ADCOM, before the vote was taken. “We want to hear what God and the Holy Spirit want to tell us, through Bible study, study of the Spirit of Prophecy, and prayer.”

Yesterday’s move comes a year after the 2011 unveiling of a roadmap for the study process. Church officials meeting in ADCOM yesterday affirmed that outline and provided terms of reference for the study committee.

The committee is a direct response to a request during the 2010 General Conference Session for a church-conducted understanding of ordination.

The denomination’s Executive Committee at the 2014 Annual Council may decide to recommend action to the 2015 General Conference Session in San Antonio, Texas.

The committee will be comprised of a wide perspective of individuals to include “women, men, younger and, older members, theologians, Bible students, those who have written or spoken on the subject and some others.” The Committee will have no world church officers on it other than chairman, vice-chairman and secretary, though the three executive officers will be ex officio members.

Wilson added, “There is no one who wants to do anything other than God’s will.”

The committee launch comes on the heels of independent actions taken by three of the Seventh-day Adventist Church’s union conferences. The unions – North German, Columbia and Pacific – voted to ordain pastoral candidates without respect to gender. World church leaders had asked the unions to refrain, pending the committee’s formation and conclusions.

“When the process starts there are two issues that will be really studied,” said Artur A. Stele, head of the world church’s Biblical Research Institute and chairman of the new committee. “Number one, the theology of ordination, what ordination is or isn’t. Then, the second one, ‘What are the implications for Church practices with a special emphasis on women’s ordination?’”

Suggested names for the committee’s membership were requested from ADCOM members as part of the selection process. Names of the committee members have not yet been released, but it is expected that at least 24 members of the 102-person group will be women. ADCOM members of varying viewpoints expressed appreciation for a balanced listing of potential committee members.

Members are expected to represent a wide perspective of thought on ordination, and it is hoped they will also interact in a highly respectful and spiritual discussion setting. The committee will also include two delegates from each of the 13 world church divisions, which will work with regional Biblical Research Committees in the study.
An official statement voted by ADCOM emphasized that, unlike many church committees where actions are voted up and down, the panel’s terms of reference include “an aim of reaching consensus on as many points as possible.” Where differences are evident, they will be carefully noted for the final report to the 2014 Annual Council.

According to the statement, “Through strong prayer sessions, study of the Bible, study of the Spirit of Prophecy and the resulting careful discussion, the Theology of Ordination Study Committee should focus on solutions that would support the message, mission and unity of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.” [tedNEWS]

TedNEWS is an information bulletin issued by the communication department of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Trans-European Division.

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Re-Opening of Keough House at Newbold College

12 September 2012 Bracknell, United Kingdom [Newbold College] On Sunday afternoon 2 September Dr Bertil Wiklander (Chairman, Newbold College Board of Governors) and Dr Philip Brown (Principal, Newbold College) unveiled a plaque to celebrate the much anticipated official re-opening of Keough House (Men's Hall of Residence) on the Newbold College campus. Following this unveiling, a prayer of dedication was offered by Pastor Paul Goltz (College Chaplain).

At almost 50 years on, Keough House has been showing its age and no longer offered the kind of accommodation that contributed to a positive student experience at Newbold College. From the outset of commencing as Principal in September last year, Dr Brown committed to rectifying this situation and so worked collaboratively with the Newbold College Board and the Trans-European Division in order to ensure that a refurbished and upgraded Keough House could be ready for new and returning students from the beginning of the new 2012-13 academic year.

In summary, the renovation of Keough House over the past six months has included the conversion of bedrooms into single and double units with ensuite facilities and the removal of existing showers and laundry rooms to make way for kitchen and dining areas. All rooms have been completely redecorated, including upgraded electrical services such as multiple double sockets and data points as well as new light fittings. There has been an upgrading of plumbing, including new basins and taps. There is also new flooring and furniture throughout, with lighting now improved in all common areas.

Dr John Baildam (Deputy Principal) welcomed invited guests and attendees to the re-opening ceremony. During the ceremony Pastor Henrik Jørgensen (Dean of Men 1991-97) and Dr Brown shared the Keough House story from the period prior to its construction in the early 1960s up until the present day. The men's hall of residence was originally opened and dedicated in early 1963 and is named in honour of George D. Keough, a pioneer missionary to the Middle East, and for many years a Theology teacher on campus.

"The College desires that the young men who call Keough House their home for a season will continue to dedicate their lives to follow in the footsteps of those alumni who have gone forth to lives of dedicated service in an ever-changing world," said Dr Brown during the ceremony.

"We thank everyone present as well as those unable to be present who have contributed their time and funds to the refurbishment of Keough House. We also wish to thank those who have worked in the background to make the re-opening possible prior to the start of the 2012-13 academic year," Dr Brown added.

"The refurbished Keough House is a delightful development at Newbold College and it was long overdue. Students are the most valuable part of the College and the new Keough House gives evidence of this value. We are grateful to all who helped us do this and we want to see a continuation in other parts of the College campus," said Dr Wiklander during the ceremony.

"In view of so many financial challenges today, the fact that we have been able to re-dedicate Keough House witnesses to the fact that God is leading and blessing our College. We also wish to thank those who have worked in the background to make the re-opening possible prior to the start of the 2012-13 academic year," Dr Brown added.

"New and returning students are very happy with their accommodation. The level of cleanliness and comfort is vastly improved. A big thank you to the contractors and to everyone for their work over recent
months,” said Derek Simon, a returning student and Keough House resident.

Following the re-opening ceremony, guests enjoyed an afternoon tea in the lower lounge of Keough House. This was followed by small group tours of the new rooms and facilities by the Dean of Men, Pastor Andrew Layland, and current student Resident Assistants, Derek Simon and Rene Bidstrup.

Keough House is built in the shape of a cross, with the original lounge, kitchenette and prayer room between the arms. Another feature of Keough House is the octagonal lounge over the multipurpose room of the same shape. Six sides are windows, overlooking the rolling green pastures of Berkshire. To coincide with the re-opening of Keough House, these two rooms have now become known as the Lingmoor Lounges – named after a lovely home on the edge of Bournemouth, with a view over pine woods to the beauties of Studland Bay and beyond.

This home was owned by Ettrick and Ida Whiting, whose daughter Jean spent many happy times there with her husband Denys and their two sons John and Andrew Baildam – all four of whom chose for at least part of their education to study at Newbold College.

When Ettrick died in 1986 he bequeathed his home to the Seventh-day Adventist Church for a variety of purposes and it is therefore the wish of Jean and John Baildam that these two refurbished rooms in Keough House be named the Lingmoor Lounges – Upper and Lower – in memory of Ettrick’s support of the Church and as a representation of what Newbold College has meant over very many years to the Baildam family, who reflect warmly on times past.

A final phase of the Keough House refurbishment is yet to be completed and this will include improvements to the reception/lobby, visitor bathroom, disabled room access and the dean’s office. This work is planned for completion in January 2013.

If you would like to donate towards the completion of this final phase of the Keough House project and have not yet done so, then this can still be done online via the College website, by cheque or by contacting the College directly.

Thank you for your ongoing prayers and support. [tedNEWS]
16 July 2012 The Netherlands [Wim Altink] Are we managing time or is time managing us? Are we in command of our schedule of activities or are the duties pushing and commanding us?

In this short essay I will share five practical insights on how we as pastors and leaders can avoid being slaves of our diary and the expectations of others.

1. **Determine our personal tax**

   This sounds too good to be true. It is government which determines our taxes! In setting our own tax, I refer to the amount of work we can handle considering our own physical, mental and spiritual strength. Some of us can work 80-90 hours a week for a considerably long time without wearing out. Others know that their workload capacity lies at a maximum of 50 hours a week. A pastor in the Netherlands, who takes care of 4 churches in a large district, has set for himself the limit of 50 hours. He is faithful in not going over his own tax. He is able to continue through muddy waters and difficult times in some of the churches, because of this. Before that (crossing the 50 hours tax frequently) he had severe health problems.

2. **Determine our personal schedule**

   Make sure that every week you have scheduled a day off. This is ‘holy’ time, do not squander it. Defend it with all your might and if there is any reason to work on that day, make sure you have created another day off. When it comes to daily appointments it is essential not to overbook your own diary. Open space in our schedules is like wind on a sunny Spring morning. We need to avoid only sitting in meetings, dialogues and conferences. It is healthy to – now and then – have only one appointment a day. The rest of the day you will enjoy time to walk around in the office and talk with the cashier, and the Bible correspondence coordinator. You will have time to handle that unexpected phone call. You will have time to read that article which has been staring you in the face for some time.

3. **Determine our professional priorities**

   Working in a team (as leaders in an office), or as pastors within the setting of church board members, it is essential to set your specific task and share this with the rest of your team. As leaders we like to do many things at the same time and tend to forget that we are part of team in which we find colleagues willing to do what we cannot do. I try to focus on three priorities in my work. I did this as a local pastor, and now also as a president. At the moment these are for me: (1) fostering a healthy climate concerning unity within diversity; (2) developing a strong stewardship concept; (3) stimulate leadership development.

4. **Determine the quality of our working time**

   Our responsibilities tend to be far reaching and ‘heavy.’ The Dutch tradition of the ‘sacred’ mid-morning break, is not just to have time to drink but also to socialize. Many issues are beginning to be resolved in a relaxed atmosphere.
Seeking humour in our work will make things lighter and more pleasant. Meeting with fellow workers around a dining table makes good progress and if you enjoy meeting people in their work setting, why not go there and visit them, instead of having them coming to you? When we go out and meet fellow believers where they are, it gives an important signal to those we meet and maybe, we can enjoy managing by walking around.

5. Determine a sense of working-time satisfaction

Our work is never finished and by the time we think we can quit, we realise that this e-mail needs to be written today, and that article I promised to hand in is due to a deadline to ignore. With our own lap-tops we always take the office with us wherever we go. This is very handy and practical but we never close the door of the office, so to say.

Managing time means that we plan our writing and speaking appointments in such a way that we avoid too much time pressure and when we have finished a certain project, we should be able to close the door behind us. I have promised myself, after finishing writing this essay, to sit in the sun for 10 minutes. The weather is just gorgeous.

Managing time is not a goal in itself, it is an instrument to create a balance in our lives. Managing time will help us to be in command of our lives and not to be governed by meetings and the expectations of others. Travelling around my two most essential working instruments are the Bible and my diary. To which a fellow pastor said: “And in fact my diary is most important. I can always buy a new Bible, if I lose it, but I can never replace my diary.” Well, that is true, isn’t it? When we have determined our do’s and don’ts and when we have put that in our diaries, let us be faithful to our own plan. As the old saying has it: “If we fail to plan, we plan to fail.”

At the end of the day, when we, falling more often than we like to admit, are managing our time, we are doing more than just that. Because we have reached a reasonable level of balance between work and private life, we are showing to others that we have found our fulfillment in doing our different tasks. We feel content being ministers, nurses, doctors, teachers and in enjoying our calling, we are planting seeds for young people to hear the same calling. They are attracted by people who feel satisfied because there is a kind of harmony between our workload and our working strength. I hope that we can be such people. Managing time will surely help us in that direction.

By Wim Altink, MDiv, President, Netherlands Union Conference

Used with permission from Leadership Development Newsletter – March 2009
Abide with Me

01 August 2012 Washington State, USA [Wayne Blakely/Record] In addressing the United Nations prayer breakfast, Ravi Zacharias, the Christian apologist, asked the question: “How do you reach a generation that listens with its eyes and thinks with its feelings?” It’s a profound question that should not simply be addressed to leaders outside the Church, but to each of us in the Church. As earth’s history is rapidly approaching its conclusion, many of us have come to accept “feelings” as our guide to “truth”. And in no area is this more true than in the field of human sexuality.

Since the sexual revolution broke out in the West, society has been pressured over and over again to abandon sexual standards based on Christian ideals. First we were told that sex outside of marriage was not only morally acceptable, but a healthy part of human development. Then we were told that the idea of a lifetime commitment in marriage was an oppressive anachronism. It was a short line from there to adopt the posture that human life so inconveniently created outside of stable relationships was expendable. And then came the gay rights movement with the message that homosexual sex is not only natural, but morally good.

I, like many gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people, believed the new message of sexual liberation. After almost 40 years living an active gay lifestyle, however, I have come to a very different conclusion. I’ve seen friends die, I’ve heard the heart cries of people caught in complete hopelessness that comes with a cold permissiveness, and I’ve heard over and over again the love of my Father calling me back to a life of obedience. Today I know that the opposite of "homosexuality" is not heterosexuality as many are inclined to believe—rather it is holiness. It is the holy and wholly encompassing love of God that can fill the gaping chasm in our lives and give us the healing we all so desperately need from the sin that plagues all of us.

The narrative formed by gay rights activists, however, is finding an echo among those in the Church who believe by ignoring or excusing sinful behaviour, they are extending love. They are not. It is true that God loves us just the way we are, regardless of our sin, and every person—homosexual, heterosexual or asexual—can be deeply thankful for that. But it is not true that God leaves us desperately mired in behaviour that destroys us physically, emotionally and spiritually. Jesus desires something more from all who have been born with a sinful nature. He wants us to develop an intimate relationship with Him and invite the Holy Spirit to bring about change in our lives. But the change He promises us is not about making a gay person straight, any more than it is about making heterosexuals who struggle with lust into asexual beings who have no desire at all. No, it is more complex than that, but no less remarkable.

When I immersed myself in getting to know Christ and submitted my will to Him, many amazing changes began to take place. He took over and revealed His perfect plan—a plan completely consistent with His revealed word, not a plan based on subjective feelings and emotive appeals that is at jarring odds with His revelation. He promises that as we trust and abide in Him, we become more like Him. The more we love Him, the more we are drawn to His holiness.

For decades many same-sex attracted people have experienced silence on the topic of homosexuality by the Church. In that silence, many have left the Church without knowing what God desires of them. Some have come to question whether or not God even loves them, accepts them, whether they are so broken they cannot be saved. Some have been treated like lepers—shunned, scorned and neglected as if their sexual temptations are somehow more sinful than everyone else’s. Others believe that God loves them, but begin to wrap God around self and live according to subjective truths rather than responding to God’s love with a desire to obey Him.

But praise God, there are those who have been reached through divine intervention and are claiming His victory and healing today. I am such an individual, “as were some of you”. Today, God has a ministry through me. He preserved me, and precious others, for such a time as this.

Often, it is not until we are cornered in the dark, that we are able to hear that still small voice. Humility, while frequently painful, can reveal light that seems to have been hidden by deception. When I was finally humbled before God, I recognised the voice of the Holy Spirit. My heart broke before God and I fell to my knees weeping and seeking His forgiveness. Where much is forgiven, there is much love, and today I love my Lord with my entire heart, soul and strength.

The clarity of what God revealed became awe-inspiring. Not just regarding homosexual behaviour, but with regard to all...
sin and His request of us to lay it at His feet, seek and live in His righteousness. It’s a lot more difficult than it sounds. But it is rewarding beyond any earthly pleasure. Temptation remains my reminder of how much I need Jesus and how I immediately must call upon Him to be in charge of my mind and my decision-making. But temptation is not sin—sin occurs when we give in to temptation rather than trusting in our all-powerful Saviour.

We are living in a world in which evil often appears to triumph and in which accepting God’s standards often makes us a laughing stock, or worse, actively hated. I know that by writing this piece, I will be mocked, my character will be attacked, and I will receive yet another wave of hate mail. It is the least I can do for a Saviour who suffered much more on my account.

Today, gay rights supporters often label anyone standing for a life of obedience to God a “bigot” or “homophobe”. They are the kinds of pejorative labels designed to marginalise and silence God’s call for obedience. I don’t believe that homophobia is the support of biblical sexual principles, but rather it is the refusal to reach out and share the love and gospel with the LGBT community. What kind of cold indifference would result in people who know God’s truth, who know His last day call to a loving, holy relationship, remaining silent as millions of people reject God and continue in sin? That isn’t love; that is a fear of homosexuality that is so strong, you prefer to see men and women lose their souls for eternity rather than have the strength of character to give an honest witness of grace, love, repentance and salvation.

More than ever before, leaders, pastors and teachers need to be educated by those who have experienced and chosen to live a redeemed life in Jesus. As He directs our hearts under His influence, we can all become the “new creation” as described in 2 Corinthians 5:17. By recognising His glory and authority we can choose to be called out of darkness and live in His marvellous light (1 Peter 2:9).

The Church cannot afford to be afraid of LGBT people—we are, after all, just people. You can’t afford to be indifferent—we need the love and healing of the gospel as much as anyone. You can’t afford to be so prudish you fail to discuss openly the issue of sexual behaviour. Everyone, everywhere is talking about it, and when the Church is silent, when you are silent, it isn’t neutrality or prudence, it’s cowardice and indifference.

That said, this issue does require thought and care. Calling LGBT people horrible names or expecting people to somehow magically transpose their sexual orientation is not the right approach. Shunning or shaming is also very damaging. Accepting, loving, caring, while always honestly representing God’s call to an obedient life for all of us—that is the way Christ treated all sinners, and it is the path we must follow. God is on the move. He is holding back the four winds. He is revealing His truth. He is calling His beloved sinners to come home. I frequently teach in my presentations that we cannot share what we do not have. By engaging in an intimate relationship with Jesus, amazing changes occur. When we are living in a continual walk with Him, those we encounter will see Jesus in us and have a desire for the life He offers all.

Let those who you come in contact with see Jesus in your eyes and through your demonstration of His love. Live the love that draws the sin-sick soul into a relationship with Jesus. Christianity is not about “listening with our eyes, and thinking with our feelings”. But it is also not simply a prayer in the morning, evening and studying the Sabbath School lesson either. Victory and healing of all sin is in the continual, constant abiding in Him that results in a lifetime promise of true freedom, true acceptance and true love.

By Wayne Blakely

Wayne Blakely lives in Washington State, USA, where he works as an account executive. He has written for the Adventist Review and presented in a number of venues on the Christian approach to sexuality. He operates the <www.knowhislove.com> website.

This piece was originally published in the South Pacific Division Record, www.record.net.au
Practical insights regarding reclaiming inactive youth

Stop your crying and wipe away your tears. All that you have done for your children will not go unrewarded; they will return from the enemies land. There is hope for your future; your children will come home. I, the Lord, have spoken. 
Jeremiah 31: 16-17 (Good News)

The loss of young people through the back door is a real issue for the church today. It is imperative that we take steps to make sure that as many as possible of those growing up in the church will remain to become active members. I also believe there is an overwhelming need to reach out to those who may, for whatever reason, have already become inactive over the years and reclaim them for the church.

In undertaking a doctoral level dissertation I undertook a pilot project at a local church. Although the numbers were limited, the findings were significant. The headline news is that over 90% of inactive youth responding to an initial contact, together with a short questionnaire, clearly still saw themselves as being Christian, and fifty per cent felt that they would one day return to the church of their youth.

So how do we help make this a reality? I think we would all resonate with the following assertion that the effective care of young people today must be seen as a) an immediate priority, b) a strategic priority, and c) a critical issue for all Christian leaders. I believe that the church – our church – has a limited window of opportunity which demands that the time for action is now.

Summary of Research Findings

A summary of the survey findings, that I personally conducted, revealed a number of interesting practical insights that can be summarized in the following ten points.

1. It is imperative that those who are inactive are followed up and not left to drift away unnoticed. From my limited sample, females seemed more responsive than males to cold contact, but males will respond once a real and warm link can be established.
2. In their early years, friends remain the top reason why young people enjoy attending church.
3. The early, mid and late teenage years are the focal point when youth make decisions for or against continuing church fellowship. The peak age bracket for becoming inactive, in this study, was between ages fifteen and twenty.
4. There exists a continuing contact system through the family. This usually remains intact even when a young person has left church fellowship.
5. The church is not seen as warm and caring and youth often see church members as being critical and narrow minded. The attitude of older members was expressed as the top area of dislike felt about the church.
6. There exists a disconnect between dedicating young children and baptism. Only a third of the group were baptized. We are clearly not discipling enough of our own young people while they are actively with us in the church.
7. Some young people may be very sporadic in their church attendance but do not consider that they have cut all ties with the church. Church attendance does not seem to be a major priority for some during their early twenties or period of tertiary education.
8. Virtually half of the group felt they would return to church one day. This provides hope in so many cases that all is certainly not lost.
9. Overwhelmingly the young people surveyed showed that they still felt that Christianity was relevant in their lives.
10. Each young person is unique and has their own story to tell. We must never treat them as merely statistics.²

Key Points

There are a number of key points that can be seen from this and other studies. Here I will highlight just three.

The church needs a clear and effective discipling process for young people. This is as referenced in point 6 above. This year, being the Year of Discipleship, gives a window of opportunity to address this need for the Ambassador age group (16-21) through some pilot programmes in the TED territory. Additionally we will hold the first Youth Matters Symposium with the title “Discipleship that Lasts”, aiming towards establishing good discipleship models for Student-age Ministry.

The Church Warmth and Thinking Climates are very important. This is as referenced in point 5 above and is powerfully backed up by the European Valuegenesis Survey. (see graph)
It is quite clear that both on the Thinking Climate and the Church Warmth measures decrease with age and that we are currently not meeting the needs of our older youth.
The “thinking climate” measures to what extent a church stimulates its members to think, learn and ask questions. The “church warmth” measures how much a church is felt to be friendly, caring and an accepting environment. Both areas are of crucial importance in determining young peoples’ commitment to the church.

These areas can, and must, be readily addressed through a concerted relational ministry for young adults at the local church level.

Most definitely there are inactive members (please don’t use the term backsliders!) who will look to return at some point. Point 8 highlights this and the reasons, I believe, are centered in a number of issues involving the positive legacy of past church teaching, warm memories and a search for past identity. As one of the respondents to the pilot survey stated “I still carry and remember a lot of what I was taught every day.” Another reflected about a return one day and stated, “My departure from the church was a gradual one, if there is going to be a return, it’ll also be a gradual one.”

This was also found to be true in another study of returning Adventists who definitely expressed that they still had warm memories from their childhood. “Eight out of ten persons interviewed expressed memories of early Adventism that reminded them of happy times in the church.”³

Roots and identity are a very powerful combination. The search for identity is not static and just as it is part of finding one’s own identity that pushes young people to challenge their value systems, and sometimes push them away, so too the reverse search for identity may well bring them back one day to their roots. Many young people who question their parents, values and beliefs ultimately accept them as their own.

Conclusion

The desired outcome is that returning “prodigals” will have a chance to return to a church that is ready and waiting to meet them. Such churches may vary in appearance from country to country but it is clear that any church that wishes to effectively nurture returning young people must make this a priority. In so doing they will need to have a well thought-out disciplship process in place, a warm climate that encourages spiritual growth and also an understanding of the need of many young adults to re-connect with their spiritual roots.

The good news is that no matter how long someone has been away returning always remains an option. Never give up, there is hope for the future.

Research carried out as part of DMin dissertation “Bringing Home Our Adventist Prodigals: A Strategic Plan To Reclaim Youth In The Trans-European Division.” (Andrews University 2009)


The TED Church of Refuge (CORe) initiative is dedicated to helping our churches to retain and reclaim young adults.

For further information see www.churchofrefuge.eu

By Paul Tompkins, Youth Ministry Director, Trans-European Division of Seventh-day Adventists

Leadership Development Journal - May 2012
**Emotional Intelligence: The Most Important Leadership Quality?**

Arriving in a new district or taking up a new position in an organisation is always fraught with anticipation, uncertainty and worry. This was particularly true when my husband took a pastoral position in an area with which he was not familiar. Shortly upon arrival, one well-meaning church member offered him very insightful advice. He said: ‘You cannot tell the people from our region what to do; you can only invite them to follow you’. What are the leaders’ characteristics that will inspire others to follow?

There is no shortage of literature identifying the most pertinent qualities that every good leader ought to have. We are told that amongst other traits leaders should possess cognitive strength, analytical reasoning, technical skills, inspirational motivation, vision, integrity, fairness, confidence and emotional intelligence. It is to be expected that a highly intelligent pastor or head of a department who oozes with confidence will generate respect from his congregation or his team. However, there are some indicators to suggest that it is in fact emotional intelligence, or as some termed it emotional literacy, that separates ordinary leaders from those capable of great things. What is more, it has been suggested that an ‘emotionally illiterate life’ that is often accompanied with emotional numbness and inability to respond to the emotional needs of others, is a significant shortcoming of those called to lead others.

Emotional intelligence, a concept that emerged in the 80s, has gradually entered into the vocabulary of psychologists, counsellors, life coaches and other professionals and it seems to be here to stay. However, what is emotional intelligence or emotional literacy? One of many available definitions suggests emotional intelligence to be ‘effective self-awareness, control and management of our own emotions and awareness and understanding of other people’. This human quality has captured the imagination of researchers resulting in what appears to be a convincing argument for the benefits of emotional sensitivity whilst pointing to the shortcomings in the case of its absence.

The far-reaching consequence of limited, or even non-existent emotional awareness is documented by an evaluation of the leadership qualities of past American presidents. Following the analysis of public communication, organisational capacity, political skill, vision, cognitive style and emotional intelligence of eleven presidents the authors acknowledge that ‘in the world of imagination it is possible to envisage a cognitively and emotionally intelligent chief executive, who happens also to be an inspiring public communicator, a capable White House organiser, and the possessor of exceptional political skill and vision. In the real world, human imperfection is inevitable, but some imperfections are more disabling than others.’ Having identified several presidents who despite some noteworthy historical achievements are neither overly critical nor unrealistically hopeful. Rather, they are honest with themselves and others.’ This strong statement is not surprising given that an absence of emotional insight appears to have a profound effect not only on the leaders’ ability to understand his or her co-workers, but it is also responsible for the inaccurate appraisal of self. Daniel Goleman identified self-awareness as the first quality possessed by emotionally literate leaders. This includes ‘having a deep understanding of one’s emotions, strengths, weaknesses, needs and drives.’ What is it that is making me happy, fulfilled and content? What, when and who brings the worst out in me? These are just some of the questions that need answering in an attempt to become an emotionally aware individual. Those people, the author continues ‘are neither overly critical nor unrealistically hopeful. Rather, they are honest with themselves and others.’

A good starting point in becoming in tune with self and others is a systematic appraisal of one’s own strengths and weaknesses. This soul-searching exercise is not about naming what I should or ought to be good at; instead, it seeks to identify the areas in which I do particularly well, the skills I accomplish with ease, and the tasks that capture my imagination. It is about the input that generates positive feedbacks from those I know are honest with me. Having identified all of my strengths, my limitations need careful and sincere consideration. Which aspects of my job make me very anxious or do not result in a positive response from others? What would those closest to me identify as my weakest point as a leader? Do I need help with any aspect of my life? Conducting an accurate evaluation of one’s weaknesses has the potential to contribute to a realistic approach to the challenges that any job brings. This is expected to include utilising strengths appropriately whilst being careful when engaging in the areas recognised as weaknesses. Furthermore, identifying appropriate strategies that will address the weaker aspects of my own performance is also an important aspect of this self-discovery.
An additional benefit of being aware of one’s own strengths and weaknesses might result in increased confidence as well as in the readiness to acknowledge one’s own limitations. I have recently been asked to teach and work closely with a young, sharp and very intelligent scholar who is leading some ‘cutting edge’ work in his area of expertise. It would be dishonest of me to omit the fact that I was concerned about being intimidated by him, but quite the opposite happened. In addition to his enthusiasm and his superior handling of knowledge, his readiness to freely identify areas which he apparently ‘knew little about’, and his modesty about his expertise made him not only approachable but also stimulated learning. This is not surprising because genuine humbleness, not unlike empathy, to be discussed next, is a quality that has enabling properties.

Empathy has been acknowledged as an important dimension of emotional intelligence that, whilst most easily recognisable, is frequently absent from the repertoire of essential leadership skills. And yet, an empathetic leader might be able to prevent the team and individuals from becoming overwhelmed, disillusioned, and even depressed in the course of duty. He or she will not remain silent about the professional challenges or personal hardships his co-workers are going through. Showing genuine interest in his or her workforce will be an integral aspect of the leadership style employed by an emotionally literate leader. Empathy discussed here however is not an ‘un-businesslike’ sentimental style of leadership, but a leadership capable of taking notice of employees circumstances, feelings and ability ‘in the process of making intelligent decisions’. These leaders are in tune with ‘the messages beneath the words being spoken’. This will also include unequivocal respect for others as well as commitment to understanding the way culture impacts upon human interactions.

As a social work academic I am frequently involved in attempting to teach students to be both aware of their own feelings as well as being sensitive to the needs of those they will be working with. Positive regard for every individual alongside a related set of traditional values that, amongst others, includes acceptance, a non-judgmental attitude and a respect for people are deeply embedded in the knowledge base and skills passed on to social work students. Despite the noble intentions and genuine motivation of most students, this approach to training often feels as though one is trying to teach budding social workers to create a beautiful master-piece by ‘painting by numbers’. As a Christian who teaches at a State University I often question whether it is indeed possible to develop those qualities through education and training alone? Could it be that identified leadership techniques, including the emotional intelligence, might remain just a mechanical exercise without drawing on the power available to those who have a meaningful spiritual life?

There is no doubt that many Adventist leaders are known for their excellent leadership that includes the vast repertoire of skills expected of an effective Christian leader. Equally, as most leaders know, in the ‘hustle and bustle’ of pursuing the common goal, it is very easy to overlook one’s own emotional needs alongside the needs of co-workers. I have attempted to argue that a leadership that is committed to developing the emotional intelligence that includes keen knowledge of self and dedication to the understanding of others has the potential to overcome this omission. I would like to conclude by acknowledging that emotional intelligence that draws from Christ’s example and uses his power in achieving this goal will give real meaning to this important leadership skill. After all, He was the ultimate leader who only

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Improving and Growing Yourself to Improve, Grow and Serve Your Church Organisation

28 June 2012 Bracknell, UK [Philip R Brown] In The Twelve Absolutes of Leadership Gary Burnison recounts the story of a farmer whose donkey fell into a well. The farmer frantically thought about what he could do as the stricken animal cried out to be rescued. With no obvious solution, the farmer regretfully concluded that because the donkey was old and the well needed to be filled in anyway, he should give up the idea of rescuing the beast. Instead, he should simply fill in the well and hope the poor animal would not suffer too much.

The farmer asked his neighbours for help and they all began to shovel earth into the well. When the donkey realised what was happening, he brayed and struggled. Then, the noise stopped.

The farmer looked down into the well and was astonished at what he saw. The donkey was still alive and was progressing towards the top of the well. By shaking off the dirt instead of letting it cover him, he could step on the accumulating soil as the level rose. When the donkey reached the top, he stepped over the edge and gave the farmer one last look. "Now who's the jackass?" the donkey remarked, and trotted happily away.

This story offers a key insight for those seeking to be effective Church leaders, who must have and demonstrate learning agility. The latter can be defined as the ability to learn from experience and to apply that learning to new situations. Learning agility is not the same thing as having a high IQ or EQ (emotional intelligence). Rather, a Church leader with learning agility can excel at absorbing information from his or her experiences and applying it to the present – thereby creating an agile Church organisation that also learns, grows and adapts.

Yes, learning as a Church leader is often about adapting, being open-minded, and being willing to find solutions that are not always obvious. As a Church leader you cannot expect to learn from things you are NOT doing! Consequently, there can be times when you should expect to fail. Such situations demand that you choose not to blame yourself but rather to learn. In fact, it has been said that the only real failure is failing to fail. A Church leader who fails to fail from time to time could either be unaware of what is going on or simply be acting too cautiously.

So how do you improve and grow yourself in order to improve and grow your Church organisation? One key requirement is your own preparedness to maintain an open and curious mind. In their book Great Leaders Grow Ken Blanchard and Mark Miller suggest that for a leader growing is like oxygen to a deep-sea diver - without it you die. Unlike the diver, you may not physically die – but if you stop growing, your influence may well erode, and over time, you may even lose the opportunity to lead at all.¹

The failure to grow has sabotaged the career of more Church leaders than just about anything else. Hence, your capacity to grow is crucial in determining your capacity to lead. If you wish to improve or grow your Church organisation, then you too must continue to improve and grow. Blanchard and Miller have utilised the acronym GROW to remind leaders of the key ingredients for fostering their personal and professional growth:
G = Gaining Knowledge – this ingredient includes knowing one’s own strengths and weaknesses; knowing the people one leads on a deep level (personally and professionally); knowing one’s industry extremely well; having a high level of mastery of the principles and practices of leadership; and having a detailed, written personal development plan.

R = Reaching Out to Others – this ingredient includes always looking for ways to invest in the growth of others; having ongoing mentoring relationships with emerging leaders; frequently seeing and seizing teachable moments; frequently sharing with others what one has learned; and developing a high level of mastery in communicating one’s point of view on leadership.

O = Opening Your World – this ingredient includes constantly looking for opportunities to grow at work; seeking new experiences outside the workplace; having a mentor(s) who helps you grow; always looking for additional opportunities to lead; and seeing every day as an opportunity to learn and grow.

W = Walking toward Wisdom – this ingredient includes consistently telling oneself the truth regarding one’s leadership; actively seeking feedback from those you know to be truth tellers; having a group of people you trust to give you counsel on important issues; having mastered the art and discipline of asking profound questions; and being fully committed to a lifelong pursuit of wisdom.

Blanchard and Miller maintain that a leader’s capacity to GROW determines their capacity to lead! Further, improving yourself as a leader is crucial in seeking to improve and serve your organisation. Interestingly, it appears that in most organisations the best leaders choose to serve others. Servant leaders are normally those whose goals are focused on the greater good. In The Secret: What Great Leaders Know and Do, Blanchard and Miller offer a helpful description of the ways in which a leader can SERVE. They utilise the acronym SERVE to highlight key leader behaviours:

S = Seeing the Future – Servant leaders envision and communicate a compelling picture of the future. Leading always begins with a picture of a preferred future.

E = Engaging and Developing Others – Servant leaders recruit and select the right people for the right job while creating an environment where people wholeheartedly invest themselves in achieving the vision.

R = Reinventing Continuously – Servant leaders possess a never-ending focus on improvement. Progress is impossible without change.

V = Valuing Results and Relationships – Servant leaders generate positive, measurable results, and cultivate great relationships with those they lead. Ultimate success always includes people and performance.

E = Embodying the Values – Servant leaders live in a fashion consistent with their stated values. People learn more from what a leader does than from what a leader says.

Your willingness to keep learning as a Church leader can make a powerful statement to your entire Church organisation. A Church leader learns more lessons when mistakes are made than when successes come easily. Consequently, as a Church leader you should have a heightened realisation that you are not invincible or irreplaceable. The reality is that one day you will leave your current Church organisation. When you do, will your Church organisation be in a substantially better place than it was before you inherited it?

To improve, grow and serve your Church organisation you need to continue improving and growing yourself. An improving, growing and serving Church leader chooses to empower and inspire people to align with a greater purpose in order to improve and grow their Church organisation. Remember the story of the donkey – the day you (or your Church organisation) stops learning becomes the day you (or your Church organisation) may start dying!


3 Great Leaders Grow, p. 119.
The Art of Leadership – Some Reflections

28 June 2012 St Albans, UK [Bertil Wiklander] A colleague recently reminded me of Peter Drucker’s distinction between management and leadership:

‘Management is doing things right – Leadership is doing the right things.’

It made me think again of the real nature of leadership. What helps us know how to do the right things? See here the fruit of some of my reflections:

Art and Wisdom

Leadership is the practice of an art. It is not an exact science and it is not accomplished simply by implementing rules. Leadership is based on wisdom acquired by making mistakes and learning the right lessons from them.

Character

Leadership is best learnt and exercised by persons with certain personality traits. Leadership comes from feeling good about yourself – avoiding self-destruction and not being over-sensitive to criticism, being humble and yet fearless and bold. Leadership requires being energetic, persistent and self-disciplined and yet constantly encouraging others.

Abilities

Leadership comes from being able to listen to, having empathy with, and reading the minds of other people. Leadership comes from being able to see the big picture while understanding how its elements relate to the whole. Leadership is not lost in the detail of things and never micromanages. Leadership comes from being able to focus on the essence in every given situation – a leader knows the difference between what is important and what is trivial. Leadership comes from being able to bring a group together that acts toward a common goal. Leadership comes from being able to communicate well – articulating your thoughts clearly while adapting to different kinds of situations and audiences.

Attitude to My Leadership Role

Leaders understand their central role in the process of inducing others to act toward a common goal – and know how to master this role. Leadership is about relating so well to others that you are being followed. Leaders lead by their actions, not their positions. Leaders influence others by inspiring their trust, acting consistently, and motivating them by words and deeds. Leaders lead by legitimate authority, setting an example, setting goals, rewarding success and dealing with failure, organisational restructuring, team-building, and communicating a vision. Leaders act so that the organisation achieves its mission while all feel they were part of it.

By Dr Bertil Wiklander, President of the Trans-European Division
'Knowing God through the Prodigal Son' - EPC Drama I

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