

FOURTEENTH BUSINESS MEETING  
Fifty-seventh General Conference Session  
Toronto, Ontario, Canada  
July 7, 2000, 9:30 a.m.

00GCS to MAB

APPRECIATION TO EMPLOYEES NOT REELECTED

VOTED, To express profound gratitude and appreciation to all those church employees who were not reelected, as well as to their families, for their many years of dedicated service to the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

00GCS to MV

DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE - *CHURCH MANUAL*  
AMENDMENT—RESCIND PREVIOUS ACTION

VOTED, To rescind the previous action of the 2000 General Conference Session which reads as follows:

“To refer back to the Church Manual Committee, the recommendations for amendment to Chapter 15 of the *Church Manual*, Divorce and Remarriage, pages 181-184, for further study with the understanding that recommendations from that committee will be shared with the divisions for study and input.”

SPD/ChMan/ChMan/ChMan/ADCOM/GCDO99AC/99AC/ChMan/ADCOM/99AC/219-99G/  
00GCS/00GCS to MV

202-00G DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE - *CHURCH MANUAL*  
AMENDMENT

VOTED, To amend the *Church Manual*, Chapter 15, Divorce and Remarriage, pages 181-184, to read as follows:

## CHAPTER 15

### Divorce and Remarriage Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage

#### Biblical Teachings on Marriage

The Origin of Marriage—Marriage is a divine institution established by God Himself before the fall when everything, including marriage, was “very good.” (Gen. 1:31). “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh” (Gen. 2:24). “God celebrated the first marriage. Thus the institution has for its originator the Creator of the universe. ‘Marriage is honourable’; it was one of the first gifts of God to man, and it is one of the two institutions that, after the fall, Adam brought with him beyond the gates of Paradise.”—*The Adventist Home*, pp. 25, 26.

The Oneness of Marriage—God intended the marriage of Adam and Eve to be the pattern for all future marriages, and Christ endorsed this original concept saying: “Have ye not read that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder” (Matt. 19:4-6).

The Permanence of Marriage—Marriage is a lifelong commitment of husband and wife to each other and between the couple and God (Mark 10:2-9; Rom. 7:2). Paul indicates that the commitment which Christ has for the church is a model of the relationship between husband and wife (Eph. 5:31, 32). God intended the marriage relationship to be as permanent as Christ’s relationship with the church.

Sexual Intimacy in Marriage—Sexual intimacy within marriage is a sacred gift from God to the human family. It is an integral part of marriage, reserved for marriage only (Gen. 2:24; Prov. 5:5-20). Such intimacy, designed to be shared exclusively between husband and wife, promotes ever-increasing closeness, happiness, and security, and provides for the perpetuation of the human race. In addition to being monogamous, marriage, as instituted by God, is a heterosexual relationship (Matt. 19:4, 5).

Partnership in Marriage—Unity in marriage is achieved by mutual respect and love. No one is superior (Eph. 5:21-28). “Marriage, a union for life, is a symbol of the union between Christ and His church. The spirit that Christ manifests toward the church is the spirit that husband and wife are to manifest toward each other.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 7, p. 46. God’s Word condemns violence in personal relationships (Gen. 6:11, 13; Ps. 11:5; Isa. 58:4, 5; Rom. 13:10;

Gal. 5:19-21). It is the spirit of Christ to love and accept, to seek to affirm and build others up, rather than to abuse or demean them (Rom. 12:10; 14:19; Eph. 4:26; 5:28, 29; Col. 3:8-14; 1 Thess. 5:11). There is no room among Christ's followers for tyrannical control and the abuse of power (Matt. 20:25-28; Eph. 6:4). Violence in the setting of marriage and family is abhorrent (see *Adventist Home*, p. 343).

"Neither husband nor wife is to make a plea for rulership. The Lord has laid down the principle that is to guide in this matter. The husband is to cherish his wife as Christ cherishes the church. And the wife is to respect and love her husband. Both are to cultivate the spirit of kindness, being determined never to grieve or injure the other."—*Testimonies*, vol. 7, p. 47.

The Effects of the Fall on Marriage—The entrance of sin adversely affected marriage. When Adam and Eve sinned, they lost the oneness which they had known with God and with one another (Gen. 3:6-24). Their relationship became marked with guilt, shame, blame, and pain. Wherever sin reigns, its sad effects on marriage include alienation, desertion, unfaithfulness, neglect, abuse, violence, separation, divorce, domination of one partner by the other, and sexual perversion. Marriages involving more than one spouse are also an expression of the effects of sin on the institution of marriage. Such marriages, although practiced in Old Testament times, are not in harmony with the divine design. God's plan for marriage requires His people to transcend the mores of popular culture which are in conflict with the biblical view.

Restoration and Healing—1. Divine Ideal to be Restored in Christ—In redeeming the world from sin and its consequences, God also seeks to restore marriage to its original ideal. This is envisioned for the lives of those who have been born again into the kingdom of Christ, those whose hearts are being sanctified by the Holy Spirit and who have as their primary purpose in life the exaltation of the Lord Jesus Christ. (See also 1 Peter 3:7; *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 64.)

2. Oneness and Equality to be Restored in Christ—The gospel emphasizes the love and submission of husband and wife to one another (1 Cor. 7:3, 4; Eph. 5:21). The model for the husband's leadership is the self-sacrificial love and service that Christ gives to the church (Eph. 5:24, 25). Both Peter and Paul speak about the need for respect in the marriage relationship (1 Peter 3:7; Eph. 5:22, 23).

3. Grace Available for All—God seeks to restore to wholeness and reconcile to Himself all who have failed to attain the divine standard (2 Cor. 5:19). This includes those who have experienced broken marriage relationships.

4. The Role of the Church—Moses in the Old Testament and Paul in the New Testament dealt with the problems caused by broken marriages (Deut. 24:1-5; 1 Cor. 7:11).

Both, while upholding and affirming the ideal, worked constructively and redemptively with those who had fallen short of the divine standard. Similarly, the church today is called to uphold and affirm God's ideal for marriage and, at the same time, to be a reconciling, forgiving, healing community, showing understanding and compassion when brokenness occurs.

### Biblical Teachings on Divorce

God's Original Purpose—Divorce is contrary to God's original purpose in creating marriage (Matt. 19:3-8; Mark 10:2-9), but the Bible is not silent about it. Because divorce occurred as part of the fallen human experience, biblical legislation was given to limit the damage it caused (Deut. 24:1-4). The Bible consistently seeks to elevate marriage and to discourage divorce by describing the joys of married love and faithfulness (Prov. 5:18-20; Song of Sol. 2:16; 4:9-5:1), by referring to the marriage-like relationship of God with His people (Isa. 54:5; Jer. 3:1), by focusing on the possibilities of forgiveness and marital renewal (Hosea 3:1-3), and by indicating God's abhorrence of divorce and the misery it causes (Mal. 2:15, 16). Jesus restored the creation view of marriage as a lifelong commitment between a man and a woman and between the couple and God (Matt. 19:4-6; Mark 10:6-9). Much biblical instruction affirms marriage and seeks to correct problems which tend to weaken or destroy the foundation of marriage (Eph. 5:21-33; Heb. 13:4; 1 Peter 3:7).

Marriages Can Be Destroyed—Marriage rests on principles of love, loyalty, exclusiveness, trust, and support upheld by both partners in obedience to God (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:6; 1 Cor. 13; Eph. 5:21-29; 1 Thess. 4:1-7). When these principles are violated, the marriage is endangered. Scripture acknowledges that tragic circumstances can destroy marriage.

Divine Grace—Divine grace is the only remedy for the brokenness of divorce. When marriage fails, former partners should be encouraged to examine their experience and to seek God's will for their lives. God provides comfort to those who have been wounded. God also accepts the repentance of individuals who commit the most destructive sins, even those that carry with them irreparable consequences (2 Sam. 11; 12; Ps. 34:18; 86:5; Joel 2:12, 13; John 8:2-11; 1 John 1:9).

Grounds for Divorce—Scripture recognizes adultery and/or fornication (Matt. 5:32) as well as abandonment by an unbelieving partner (1 Cor. 7:10-15) as grounds for divorce.

### Biblical Teachings on Remarriage

There is no direct teaching in Scripture regarding remarriage after divorce. However, there is a strong implication in Jesus' words in Matthew 19:9 that would allow the remarriage of one who has remained faithful, but whose spouse has been unfaithful to the marriage vow.

### The Church's Position on Divorce and Remarriage

Acknowledging the teachings of the Bible on marriage, the church is aware that marriage relationships are less than ideal in many cases. The problem of divorce and remarriage can be seen in its true light only as it is viewed from Heaven's viewpoint and against the background of the Garden of Eden. Central to God's holy plan for our world was the creation of beings made in His image who would multiply and replenish the ~~earth~~, earth and live together in purity, harmony, and happiness. ~~For the accomplishment of this most important part of His whole creative activity, He performed a miracle, brought forth Eve from the side of Adam, Adam and gave her to Adam as his wife. Thus was marriage instituted—God the author of the institution, God the officiator at the first marriage. After the Lord had revealed to Adam the nature of the miracle performed upon him, that Eve was verily bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, there could never arise a doubt in his mind that they twain were one flesh. Nor could ever a doubt arise in the mind of either of the holy pair that God intended that their home should endure forever.~~

~~To this view of marriage and the home the~~ The church adheres to this view of marriage and home without reservation, believing that any lowering of this high view is to that extent a lowering of the heavenly ideal. The belief that marriage is a divine institution rests upon the Holy Scriptures. Accordingly, all thinking and reasoning in the perplexing field of divorce and remarriage must constantly be harmonized with that holy ideal revealed in Eden. ~~Only thus can the church escape from error and from unscriptural laxness of standards.~~

~~Those who speak for the Advent Movement are not commissioned of God to frame resolutions that accord with the desire of the human heart, but only those that harmonize with the heavenly standards. The question of divorce and remarriage is one that has always troubled the church, and no easy solutions are possible to the fearful problems that men and women often create for themselves and the church by their departure from God's ideal. But spiritual problems that grow out of violated standards are never solved by lowering those standards.~~

The church believes in the law of God; it also believes in the forgiving mercy of God. It believes that victory and salvation can as surely be found by those who have transgressed in the matter of divorce and remarriage as by those who have failed in any other of God's holy standards. Nothing presented here is intended to minimize the mercy of God or the forgiveness of God. In the fear of the Lord, the church here sets forth the principles and rules practices that should apply in this matter of marriage, divorce, and remarriage.

### Our Position

Though marriage was first performed by God alone, it is recognized that people now live under civil ~~government governments~~ on this earth. ~~The first fact, earth;~~ therefore, ~~that should be kept clearly in mind is that~~ marriage has both a divine and a civil aspect. The divine aspect is governed by the laws of God, the civil by the laws of the state.

In harmony with these ~~principles, teachings,~~ the following ~~statement sets~~ statements set forth the position of the Seventh-day Adventist Church on the subject of divorce and remarriage: Church:

1. When Jesus said, "Let not man put asunder," He established a rule of conduct for the church under the dispensation of grace which must transcend all civil enactments which would go beyond His interpretation of the divine law governing the marriage relation. Here He gives a rule to His followers who should adhere to it whether or not the state or prevailing custom allows larger liberty. "In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus declared plainly that there could be no dissolution of the marriage tie, except for unfaithfulness to the marriage vow."—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 63. (Matt. 5:32; 19:9.)

~~When Jesus said, "Let not man put asunder," He established a rule of conduct for the church under the dispensation of grace which must transcend forever all civil enactments which would go beyond His interpretation of the divine law governing the marriage relation. He here gives a rule to His followers, who should adhere to it whether or not the state or prevailing custom allows larger liberty.~~

2. Unfaithfulness to the marriage vow has generally been seen to mean adultery and/or fornication. However, the New Testament word for fornication includes certain other sexual irregularities. (1 Cor. 6:9; 1 Tim. 1:9, 10; Rom. 1:24-27.) Therefore, sexual perversions, including incest, child sexual abuse, and homosexual practices, are also recognized as a misuse of sexual powers and a violation of the divine intention in marriage. As such they are just cause for separation or divorce.

Even though the Scriptures allow divorce for the reasons mentioned above, as well as for abandonment by an unbelieving spouse (1 Cor. 7:10-15), earnest endeavors should be made by the church and those concerned to effect a reconciliation reconciliation, urging the innocent spouse to forgive the guilty one and the latter to amend his or her conduct, so that the marriage union may be maintained: spouses to manifest toward each other a Christ-like spirit of forgiveness and restoration. The church is urged to relate lovingly and redemptively toward the guilty party: couple in order to assist in the reconciliation process.

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3. In the event that reconciliation is not effected, the ~~innocent~~ spouse who has remained faithful to the spouse who violated the marriage vow has the biblical right to secure a ~~divorce~~; divorce and also to remarry.

4. A spouse ~~found guilty of unfaithfulness to~~ who has violated the marriage vow (see sections ~~1 and 2~~ 1. and 2. above) ~~by the church~~ shall be subject to ~~church discipline~~; discipline by the local church. (See Chapter 13, Church Discipline, pp. 167-174.) ~~Even though he or she may be~~ If genuinely repentant, the ~~transgressor shall~~ spouse may be placed under censure ~~by the church~~ for a stated period of time ~~as an expression of the church's abhorrence of such evil; rather than removed from church membership~~. The transgressor ~~who~~ A spouse who gives no evidence of full and sincere ~~repentance~~ repentance, shall be ~~disfellowshipped; removed from church membership~~. In case the violation has ~~been so flagrant as to bring brought~~ public reproach on the cause of God, the church, in order to maintain its high standards and good name, ~~shall may~~ disfellowship ~~remove~~ the individual from church membership even though there is evidence of repentance.

Any of these forms of discipline shall be applied by the local church in a manner that would seek to attain the two objectives of church discipline—to correct and redeem. In the gospel of Christ, the redemptive side of discipline is always tied to an authentic transformation of the sinner into a new creature in Jesus Christ.

5. A ~~guilty spouse~~; spouse who has violated the marriage vow and who is ~~divorced; has not divorced~~ does not have the moral right to marry another while the ~~innocent spouse who has been faithful to the marriage vow~~ still lives and remains unmarried and chaste. ~~Should he or she do so, he or she, if a member,~~ The person who does so shall be ~~disfellowshipped; removed from church membership~~. The person whom he/she marries, if a member, shall also be ~~disfellowshipped; removed from church membership~~.

6. It is recognized that sometimes marriage relations deteriorate to the point where it is better for a husband and wife to separate. "To the married I give charge, not I but the Lord, that the wife should not separate from her husband (but if she does, let her remain single or else be reconciled to her husband)—and that the husband should not divorce his wife" (1 Cor. 7:10, 11, RSV). In many such cases the custody of the children, the adjustment of property rights, or even personal protection may make necessary a change in marriage marital status. In such cases it may be permissible to secure what is known in some countries as a legal separation. However, in some civil jurisdictions such a separation can be secured only by divorce.

A separation or divorce which results from factors such as physical violence or divorce; in which "unfaithfulness to the marriage vow" (see sections ~~1 and 2~~ 1. and 2. above) is not involved, does not give either one the scriptural right to remarry, unless in the meantime the

other party has remarried; committed adultery or fornication; or died. Should a member who has been thus divorced remarry without these biblical grounds, he/she shall be ~~disfellowshipped~~, removed from church membership; and the one whom he/she marries, if a member, shall also be ~~disfellowshipped from the church~~, removed from church membership. (See pp. 168-170.)

7. A guilty spouse who has violated his or her ~~the~~ marriage vow and has been divorced and ~~disfellowshipped~~ removed from church membership and who has remarried, or a person who has been divorced on other than the grounds set forth in sections ~~1 and 2~~ 1. and 2. above and has remarried, and who has been ~~disfellowshipped from the church~~, removed from church membership, shall be considered as standing under the disapproval of the church and thus ineligible for membership except as hereinafter provided.

8. The marriage contract is not only ~~more~~ sacred but also infinitely more complex than ordinary contracts in its possible involvements; for example, in the factor of the children ~~who may be born~~, with children. Hence, in a case where any endeavor by a genuinely repentant offender to bring his marital status into line with the divine ideal presents apparently insuperable problems, his or her plea for readmittance shall, before final action is taken, in a request for readmittance to church membership, the options available to the repentant may be severely limited. Before final action is taken by the local church, the request for readmittance shall be brought by the church through the pastor or district leader to the conference conference/mission/field committee for counsel and recommendation as to any possible steps that the repentant one, or ones, may take to secure such readmittance.

9. Readmittance to membership of those who have been ~~disfellowshipped~~ removed from church membership for reasons given in the foregoing sections; sections shall normally be on the basis of rebaptism. (See p. 173.)

10. When a person who has been involved in divorce proceedings removed from membership is ~~finally~~ readmitted to church membership, as provided in section 8, every care should be exercised to safeguard the unity and harmony of the church by not giving such a person responsibility as a leader; especially in an office which requires the rite of ordination, unless by very careful ~~counsel~~, counsel with the conference/mission/field administration.

11. No Seventh-day Adventist minister has the right to officiate at the remarriage of any person who, under the stipulation of the preceding paragraphs, has no scriptural right to remarry.



Local Church Ministry for Families

The church as a redemptive agency of Christ is to minister to its members in all of their needs and to nurture every one so that all may grow into a mature Christian experience. This is particularly true when members face lifelong decisions such as marriage and distressful experiences such as divorce. When a couple's marriage is in danger of breaking down, every effort should be made by the partners and those in the church or family who minister to them to bring about their reconciliation in harmony with divine principles for restoring wounded relationships (Hosea 3:1-3; 1 Cor. 7:10, 11; 13:4-7; Gal. 6:1).

Resources are available through the local church or other church organizations which can be of assistance to members in the development of a strong Christian home. These resources include: (1) programs of orientation for couples engaged to be married, (2) programs of instruction for married couples with their families, and (3) programs of support for broken families and divorced individuals.

Pastoral support is vital in the area of instruction and orientation in the case of marriage, and healing and restoration in the case of divorce. The pastoral function in the latter case is both disciplinary and supportive. That function includes the sharing of information relevant to the case; however, the disclosure of sensitive information should be done with great discretion. This ethical concern alone should not be the grounds for avoiding disciplinary actions established in sections I. to II. above.

Church members are called to forgive and accept those who have failed as God has forgiven them (Isa. 54:5-8; Matt. 6:14, 15; Eph. 4:32). The Bible urges patience, compassion, and forgiveness in the Christian care of those who have erred (Matt. 18:10-20; Gal. 6:1, 2). During the time when individuals are under discipline, either by censure or by being removed from membership, the church, as an instrument of God's mission, shall make every effort to maintain caring and spiritually nurturing contact with them.

00GCS to JP

CHURCH MANUAL REVISIONS—RETAIN CHAIRMAN UNTIL  
ITEM HAS BEEN DEALT WITH

VOTED, To request the General Conference administration to retain the assigned chairman in the chair until the item which he introduced has been discussed and voted on, even if it means continuing his chairmanship into the following meeting.

00-1108

July 7, 2000, a.m.

General Conference Session

PRE/ChMan/ADCOM/ChMan/GCDO98AC/98AC/255-98G/ChMan/ChMan/ChMan/ADCOM/  
ChMan/ChMan/ChMan/ADCOM/GCDO99AC/99AC/162-99Ga/00GCS to MV

203-00Ga *CHURCH MANUAL*—PROPOSED FORMAT CHANGE

The Church Manual Committee held several meetings in which it studied the proposed format change of the *Church Manual*. Upon recommendation of the Church Manual Committee, it was

VOTED, 1. To continue to produce one *Church Manual* book.

2. To divide the content of some chapters into two types of material: (a) the main content; and (b) notes containing explanatory material which will appear at the end of the chapter.

3. To continue the practice of making changes in the main content of the *Church Manual* only at a General Conference Session. Changes to Notes at the end of chapters in the *Church Manual* may be assembled for approval by the General Conference Executive Committee at the final Annual Council meeting of the quinquennium, when the final recommendations for amendments to the main content of the *Church Manual* are approved. However, the General Conference Executive Committee may address changes to the Notes at any Annual Council.

PRE/ChMan/ADCOM/ChMan/GCDO98AC/98AC/255-98G/ChMan/ChMan/ChMan/ADCOM/  
ChMan/ChMan/ChMan/ADCOM/ChMan/ADCOM/GCDO99AC/99AC/162-99Gb/00GCS to MV

203-00Gb *CHURCH MANUAL*—PROPOSED FORMAT CHANGE -  
CHAPTER 6

VOTED, To approve the proposed format change of the *Church Manual*, Chapter 6, Church Officers and Their Duties. The chapter will be divided into two sections: the main content, and notes containing explanatory material which will appear at the end of the chapter. Chapter 6 will read as follows:

## CHAPTER 6

### CHURCH OFFICERS AND THEIR DUTIES

Choosing officers for the church or conference/mission/field is an important matter. The prosperity of the work depends largely upon its leadership. The greatest care should be exercised in calling men and women into positions of sacred responsibility. The following qualifications should be earnestly sought in those who are nominated for church office.

#### Their Qualifications

Moral Fitness—"Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens" (Ex. 18:21).

"Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business" (Acts 6:3).

"Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil" (1 Tim. 3:7).

"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2:2).

Religious Fitness—"This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop [elder] then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (for if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. Let the deacons be husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 3:1-13).

00-1110

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“Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. . . . Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee” (1 Tim. 4:12-16).

“For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: if any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; but a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre’s sake” (Titus 1:5-11).

“But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine. . . . In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you” (Titus 2:1, 7, 8).

The Church Must Be Guarded and Fed—The apostle Paul in his administrative work called together “the elders of the church” (Acts 20:17). He then counseled them: “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears” (Acts 20:28-31).

“The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock” (1 Peter 5:1-3).

Respect and Deference Due to Ministers and Officers of the Church—“And, we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake. And be at peace among yourselves” (1 Thess. 5:12, 13).

“Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine” (1 Tim. 5:17).

“Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.” “Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you” (Heb. 13:7, 17).

“The Thessalonian believers were greatly annoyed by men coming among them with fanatical ideas and doctrines. Some were ‘disorderly, working not at all, but . . . busybodies.’ The church had been properly organized, and officers had been appointed to act as ministers and deacons. But there were some, self-willed and impetuous, who refused to be subordinate to those who held positions of authority in the church. They claimed not only the right of private judgment, but that of publicly urging their views upon the church. In view of this, Paul called the attention of the Thessalonians to the respect and deference due to those who had been chosen to occupy positions of authority in the church.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 261, 262.

“Many do not realize the sacredness of church relationship and are loath to submit to restraint and discipline. Their course of action shows that they exalt their own judgment above that of the united church, and they are not careful to guard themselves lest they encourage a spirit of opposition to its voice. Those who hold responsible positions in the church may have faults in common with other people and may err in their decisions; but notwithstanding this, the church of Christ on earth has given to them an authority that cannot be lightly esteemed.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 17.

Not to Be Hurried Into Office—“In many places we meet men who have been hurried into responsible positions as elders of the church when they are not qualified for such a position. They have not proper government over themselves. Their influence is not good. The church is in trouble continually in consequence of the defective character of the leader. Hands have been laid too suddenly upon these men.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, pp. 406, 407.

“The apostle Paul writes to Titus: ‘Set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: if any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot, or unruly. For a bishop [elder] must be blameless, as the steward of God.’ It would be well for all our ministers to give heed to these words and not to hurry men into office without due consideration and much prayer that God would designate by His Holy Spirit whom He will accept.

00-1112

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“Said the inspired apostle: ‘Lay hands suddenly on no man.’ In some of our churches the work of organizing and of ordaining elders has been premature; the Bible rule has been disregarded, and consequently grievous trouble has been brought upon the church. There should not be so great haste in electing leaders as to ordain men who are in no way fitted for responsible work . . . .”—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 617.

Those Opposed to Unity Not Suitable for Office—“There have of late arisen among us men who profess to be the servants of Christ, but whose work is opposed to that unity which our Lord established in the church. They have original plans and methods of labor. They desire to introduce changes into the church to suit their ideas of progress and imagine that grand results are thus to be secured. These men need to be learners rather than teachers in the school of Christ. They are ever restless, aspiring to accomplish some great work, to do something that will bring honor to themselves. They need to learn that most profitable of all lessons, humility and faith in Jesus. . . .

“Teachers of the truth, missionaries, officers in the church, can do a good work for the Master if they will but purify their own souls by obeying the truth. . . . As members of the body of Christ all believers are animated by the same spirit and the same hope. Divisions in the church dishonor the religion of Christ before the world and give occasion to the enemies of truth to justify their course. Paul’s instructions were not written alone for the church in his day. God designed that they should be sent down to us.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 238, 239.

Unsafe to Choose Those Who Refuse to Cooperate With Others—“God has placed in the church, as His appointed helpers, men of varied talents, that through the combined wisdom of many the mind of the Spirit may be met. Men who move in accordance with their own strong traits of character, refusing to yoke up with others who have had a long experience in the work of God, will become blinded by self-confidence, unable to discern between the false and the true. It is not safe for such ones to be chosen as leaders in the church; for they would follow their own judgment and plans, regardless of the judgment of their brethren. It is easy for the enemy to work through those who, themselves needing counsel at every step, undertake the guardianship of souls in their own strength, without having learned the lowliness of Christ.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 279. (See p. 49.)

### Membership Required for Election

Seventh-day Adventist church members in regular standing are eligible for election to leadership positions in the local church where they hold membership. (See pp. 128, 130.) Exceptions may be made for the following:

1. Students who are members in regular standing but who, for purposes of education, live away from their normal home and regularly attend a church in the area of their temporary residence.

2. A conference/mission/field employee assigned by the conference/mission/field as pastor/leader for two or more congregations. (See p. 121.)

3. A local elder who, when necessary and with the recommendation of the conference/mission/field committee, may be elected to serve in more than one church. (See p. 47.)

Other exceptions may be considered by the conference/mission/field committee.

#### Term of Office

The term of office for officers of the church and auxiliary organizations shall be one year, except where the local church in a business meeting votes to have elections every two years in order to facilitate continuity and development of spiritual gifts and eliminate the work involved in having yearly elections. While it is not advisable for one person to serve indefinitely in a particular position, officers may be reelected.

#### The Church Elder

**The Office an Important One**—In the work and organization of the church, if a pastor has not been provided by the conference/mission/field, the office of elder ranks as the highest and most important. In the preceding paragraphs the moral and religious fitness of elders as well as other church officers has been set forth.

**A Religious Leader of the Church**—The local elder must be one recognized by the church as a strong religious and spiritual leader, and must have a good reputation “with them that are without.” In the absence of a pastor, the elder is the religious leader of the church and by precept and example must continually seek to lead the church into a deeper and fuller Christian experience.

**Capable of Ministering the Word**—The elder should be capable of conducting services of the church. It is not always possible for the conference/mission/field to supply ministerial help for all the churches; consequently the elder must be prepared to minister in word and doctrine. However, the elder should not be chosen primarily because of social position, or because of speaking ability, but rather because of a consecrated life and leadership ability. This should be

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taken into consideration by the nominating committee in preparing its report at the time of the church election.

**Term of Office**—Like all other church officers, the elder is elected for a one or two year term as determined by the local church. (See p. 45.) It is not advisable for one person to serve indefinitely, but the elder may be reelected. The church is under no obligation, however, to reelect, but may choose another for eldership whenever a change seems advisable. Upon the election of a new elder, the former elder no longer functions as elder, but may be elected to any other church office.

**Ordination of Local Elder**—Election to the office of elder does not in itself qualify one as an elder. Ordination is required before an elder has authority to function in that office. During the interim between election and ordination, the elected elder may function as church leader but not administer the ordinances of the church.

The ordination service is only performed by an ordained minister with credentials from the local conference/mission/field. It may be a courtesy to invite a visiting ordained minister to assist in the ordination. However, only on the specific request of the local conference/mission/field officers would a visiting ordained minister or a retired ordained minister conduct the ordination.

The sacred rite of ordination should be simply performed in the presence of the church and may include a brief outline of the office of elder, the qualities required, and the principal duties the elder will be authorized to perform for the church. After the exhortation, the minister, assisted by other ordained ministers and/or local ordained elders who are participating in the service, will ordain the elder by prayer and the laying on of hands. (See p. 176.) Having once been ordained as a church elder, ordination is not required again upon reelection to office as an elder, or upon election as elder of another church, provided that regular standing in the church has been maintained. One who has been ordained as elder is thereby qualified to serve subsequently in the deaconate office.

**Training and Equipping of Local Elders**—The Ministerial Association, in cooperation with the departments, promotes the training and equipping of local church elders. However, the pastor has the primary responsibility for training the local elder. (See Notes, #1, p. 67.)

**Work of Church Elder Is Local**—The authority and work of an ordained local elder are confined to the church in which the election has been made. It is not permissible for a conference/mission/field committee by vote to confer on a local church elder the status which is granted to an ordained minister to serve other churches as elder. If there exists the need for such service, the conference/mission/field committee may recommend to the church or churches



requiring the services of the elder of another church that they elect and invite the elder of the nearby church to serve them also. Thus by election one individual may, when necessary, serve more than one church at a time. When such an arrangement is made it should be in counsel with the conference/mission/field committee. However, this authority is inherent in the church and not in the conference/mission/field committee. The only way one may be qualified for serving the church at large is by ordination to the gospel ministry. (See p. 47 below.)

To Foster All Lines of Church Work—Under the pastor and in the absence of a pastor, the local elder is a spiritual leader of the church and is responsible for fostering all departments and activities of the work. The elder should maintain a mutually helpful relationship with all other church officers.

Relationship to the Ordained Minister—In a case where the conference/mission/field committee assigns an ordained minister to labor as a pastor of a church, he should be considered as the ranking officer, and the local elder as his assistant. Their work is closely related; they should therefore work together harmoniously. The minister should not gather to himself all lines of responsibility, but should share these with the local elder and other officers. The minister serving the church regularly as pastor acts as the chairman of the church board. (See pp. 80, 121.) There may be circumstances, however, when it would be advisable for the elder to act in this capacity. The pastoral work of the church should be shared by both. The elder should, in counsel with the minister, assist in the pastoral responsibility, which includes visiting the church members, ministering to the sick, arranging or leading out in anointing services and child dedications, and encouraging those who are disheartened. Too much emphasis cannot be placed on this part of an elder's work, who as an undershepherd should exercise a constant vigilance over the flock. If the appointed pastor is a licensed minister, the local church or churches that he serves should elect him as an elder. (See p. 121.)

Because the pastor is appointed to the position in the local church by the conference/mission/field, he serves the church as a conference/mission/field worker, and is responsible to the conference/mission/field committee, yet he maintains a sympathetic and cooperative relation to and works in harmony with all the plans and policies of the local church. The elder having been elected by the local church is naturally responsible to that body, and also to its board. (See p. 47.)

Conduct of Church Services—Under the pastor, or in the absence of a pastor, the elder is responsible for the services of the church and must either conduct them or arrange for someone to do so. The communion services must always be conducted by an ordained minister or by the elder. Only ordained ministers or ordained elders holding office are qualified to do this.

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The pastor usually serves as chairman of the business meeting, and in his absence the elder shall officiate as chairperson.

The Baptismal Service—In the absence of an ordained pastor, the elder shall request the president of the conference/mission/field to arrange for the administration of the rite of baptism to those desiring to unite with the church. (See pp. 30, 31.) A local church elder should not officiate in the baptismal service without first obtaining permission from the conference/mission/field president.

The Marriage Ceremony—In the marriage ceremony the charge, vows, and declaration of marriage are given only by an ordained minister except in those areas where division committees have taken action to approve that selected licensed or commissioned ministers who have been ordained as local elders may perform the marriage ceremony. (See pp. 121, 122.) Either an ordained minister, licensed or commissioned minister, or a local elder may officiate in delivering the sermonette, offering the prayer, or in giving the blessing. (See Notes, #2, p. 67.)

To Cooperate With the Conference/Mission/Field—The pastor, elder(s), and all church officers should cooperate with the conference/mission/field officers and departmental directors in carrying out local, union, division, and General Conference plans. They should inform the church of all regular and special offerings, and should promote all the programs and activities of the church.

The elder should work very closely with the church treasurer and see that all conference/mission/field funds are remitted promptly to the conference/mission/field treasurer at the time established by the conference/mission/field. The elder should give personal attention to seeing that the church clerk's report is sent promptly to the conference/mission/field secretary at the close of each quarter.

The elder should regard all correspondence from the conference/mission/field office as important. Letters calling for announcements to the church should be presented at the proper time.

The first elder, in the absence of and in cooperation with the pastor, should see that delegates to conference/mission/field sessions are elected and that the names of such delegates are sent to the conference/mission/field office by the clerk.

The elder should give counsel and help to officers in the church to measure up to their responsibilities in cooperating with the conference/mission/field in carrying out plans and policies, and in seeing that reports are accurately and promptly forwarded.

**To Foster Worldwide Work**—Another important feature of the elder's work is to foster world mission work. This should be done by making a careful study of the worldwide work and presenting its needs to the church. The elder should encourage members to take a personal part in both supporting and working for the cause of missions. A kindly, tactful attitude on the part of the elder will do much to encourage liberality on the part of the church members both in the regular church services and in the Sabbath School.

**To Foster Tithing**—As one who faithfully returns tithe, the elder can do much to encourage the church members to return a faithful tithe. (See pp. 136-138, 191.) Anyone who fails to set an example in this important matter should not be elected to the position of elder or to any other church office. Tithing can be fostered by public presentation of the scriptural privilege and responsibility of stewardship and by personal labor with the members. Such labor should be carried on in a tactful and helpful manner. The elder should regard all financial matters pertaining to church members as confidential and should not place such information in the hands of unauthorized persons.

**To Distribute Responsibility**—In the distribution of duties pertaining to church activities, care should be taken not to lay too much responsibility upon willing workers, while others with perhaps lesser talents are passed by. The election of one individual to several offices is to be discouraged unless circumstances make it necessary. The elder especially should be left free from other burdens to perform effectually the many duties of this sacred office. It may be advisable in some cases to ask the elder to lead the outreach (missionary) work of the church, but even this should be avoided if other talent is available.

**First Elder**—In churches with a large membership it is advisable to choose more than one elder. The burdens of office may be too great for one person, and should be shared by as many as are required to do the work. In such event one of them should be designated as "first elder." The work should be divided among the elders in harmony with their experience and ability.

**Elder Not a Delegate Ex Officio**—In order to serve as a delegate to the conference/mission session, the elder must be elected as a delegate by the church. An elder is not a delegate ex officio.

**Limitation of Authority**—An elder does not have the authority to receive or dismiss church members. This is done only by vote of the church. The elder and the church board may recommend that the church vote to receive or dismiss members. (See pp. 31, 35.)

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## Church Leaders

Occasionally in newly organized churches, and sometimes in older ones, there is no one possessing the necessary experience and qualifications to serve as elder. Under such circumstances the church should elect a person to be known as “leader.” In the absence of a minister the leader is responsible for the services of the church, including the business meetings. The leader must either conduct these or arrange for someone else to do so. A church leader may not preside at any of the church ordinances, administer baptism, conduct the Lord’s Supper, perform the marriage ceremony, or preside at business meetings when members are disciplined. A request should be made to the conference/mission/field president for an ordained minister to preside at such meetings.

## The Deacon

The office of deacon is described in the New Testament (1 Tim. 3:8-13) where the Greek word *diakonos* is used from which the English “deacon” is derived. The Greek word is variously interpreted as “servant, minister, writer, attendant” and in Christian circles acquired the specialized meaning now attached to “deacon.” Scripture clearly endorses the office in the New Testament church: “They that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus” (1 Tim. 3:13). On this authority, the church elects some of its members to serve in eminently practical ways, caring for several aspects of church services, as well as for church property.

The deacon is elected to office, serving for a term of one or two years as determined by the local church. (See p. 45.)

Importance of the Office—In the account of the choosing of the men who came to be known as the seven deacons of the apostolic church, as recorded in Acts 6:1-8, we are told that they were chosen and ordained to attend to the “business” of the church.

But the call to the office of deacon included more than caring for the business of the fast-growing Christian community. The deacons were engaged in an important part of the Lord’s work, demanding qualifications but slightly less exacting than those of an elder. (See 1 Tim. 3:8-13.) “The fact that these brethren had been ordained for the special work of looking after the needs of the poor, did not exclude them from teaching the faith. On the contrary, they were fully qualified to instruct others in the truth, and they engaged in the work with great earnestness and success.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 90. Stephen, the first Christian martyr, and Philip, afterward called “the evangelist,” were among the first seven deacons chosen in the Christian church (Acts 6:5, 6; 8:5-26; 21:8).

This inspired arrangement resulted in great progress in the building up of the work of the early church. "The appointment of the seven to take the oversight of special lines of work, proved a great blessing to the church. These officers gave careful consideration to individual needs as well as to the general financial interests of the church, and by their prudent management and their godly example they were an important aid to their fellow officers in binding together the various interests of the church into a united whole."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 89.

The appointment of deacons in the present-day church through election by the church brings similar blessings in church administration by relieving pastors, elders, and other officers of duties that may well be performed by deacons. "The time and strength of those who in the providence of God have been placed in leading positions of responsibility in the church, should be spent in dealing with the weightier matters demanding special wisdom and largeness of heart. It is not in the order of God that such men should be appealed to for the adjustment of minor matters that others are well qualified to handle."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 93.

**Board of Deacons**—Where a church has a sufficient number of deacons to warrant the formation of a board of deacons it is well to organize such a board, with the head deacon as chairman with another deacon serving as secretary. Such a body affords a well-ordered means of distributing responsibility and coordinates deacon contributions to the well-being of the church. It also provides a training ground where younger men, rightly recruited as deacons, may be instructed in their duties. The head deacon is a member of the church board.

**Deacons Must Be Ordained**—A newly elected deacon cannot fill his office until he has been set apart by an ordained minister who holds current credentials from the conference/mission/field.

The sacred rite of ordination should be simply performed in the presence of the church by an ordained minister, and may consist of a brief reference to the office of deacon, the qualities required of such a servant of the church, and the principal duties he will be authorized to perform for the church. After a short exhortation to faithfulness in service, the minister, assisted by an elder where appropriate, ordains the deacon by prayer and the laying on of hands. (See p. 176.) If he has been once ordained as deacon, and has maintained his membership, it is not necessary for him to be ordained again even though he has transferred to another church. When the term for which he was elected expires, he must be reelected if he is to continue to serve as deacon. Should one who has been ordained as elder be elected as deacon of a church, it is not necessary for him to be ordained as deacon; his ordination as elder covers this office.

**Deacons Not Authorized to Preside**—The deacon is not authorized to preside at any of the ordinances of the church, nor can he perform the marriage ceremony. He may not preside at any of the business meetings of the church, neither may he officiate at the reception or transfer of

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members. Where a church has no one authorized to perform such duties, the church shall contact the conference/mission/field for assistance.

The Duties of Deacons—The work of the deacons involves a wide range of practical services for the church including:

1. Assistance at Services and Meetings—At church services, the deacons are usually responsible for welcoming members and visitors as they enter the church, and for assisting them, where necessary, to find seats. They also stand ready to cooperate with pastor and elders for the smooth functioning of the meetings conducted in the church.

2. Visitation of Members—An important duty belonging to deacons is that of visiting church members in their homes. (See p. 55.) In many churches this is arranged by a distribution of membership by districts, assigning a deacon to each district, with the expectation that he will visit each home at least once a quarter.

3. Preparation for Baptismal Services—The deacons should do their part in making the necessary preparations for this service; there should be no confusion or delay. (See p. 32.) (See Notes, #3, p. 67.)

4. Assistance at the Communion Service—At the celebration of the ordinance of foot-washing, the deacons or deaconesses provide everything that is needed for the service, such as: towels, basins, water (at a comfortable temperature as the occasion may require), buckets, et cetera. After the service they should see that the vessels and linen used are washed and returned to their proper place.

Following the Lord's Supper, great care should be exercised in disposing of any bread or wine left over after all have partaken of these emblems. Any wine remaining that was blessed, is to be poured out. Any of the bread remaining which was blessed should be burned.

5. The Care of the Sick and the Poor—Another important responsibility of deacons is the care of the sick, relieving the poor, and aiding the unfortunate. Money should be provided for this work from the church fund for the needy. The treasurer, on recommendation from the church board, will pass over to the deacons or deaconesses whatever may be needed for use in needy cases. This work is the particular charge of the deacons and the deaconesses, but the church is to be kept fully acquainted with the needs, in order to enlist the membership's support.

6. Care and Maintenance of Church Property—In some churches, where the responsibility for the care and maintenance of the church property is not assigned to a building committee, the deacons have this responsibility. (See Notes, #4, p. 68.)

## The Deaconess

Deaconesses were included in the official staff of the early Christian churches. “I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deaconess of the church at Cenchreae, that you may receive her in the Lord as befits the saints, and help her in whatever she may require from you, for she has been a helper of many and of myself as well” (Rom. 16:1, 2, RSV).

The deaconess is elected to office, serving for a term of one or two years as determined by the local church. (See p. 45.) It does not follow that the wife of a man chosen as deacon thereby becomes a deaconess, nor is it incumbent upon a church to choose the wife of a deacon as deaconess because her husband is a deacon. The deaconess is to be chosen from the standpoint of consecration and other qualifications that fit her to discharge the duties of the office. The church may arrange for a suitable service of induction for the deaconess by an ordained minister holding current credentials.

The Duties of Deaconesses—Deaconesses serve the church in a wide variety of important activities including:

1. Assistance at Baptisms—Deaconesses assist at the baptismal services, ensuring that female candidates are cared for both before and after the ceremony. They also give such counsel and help as may be necessary regarding suitable garments for baptism. Robes of suitable material should be provided. Where robes are used, the deaconesses should see that they are laundered and carefully set aside for future use. (See p. 32.)

2. Arrangements for the Communion Service—The deaconesses assist in the ordinance of foot-washing, giving special aid to women visitors or those who have newly joined the church. It is the duty of the deaconesses to arrange everything needed for this service, such as seeing that the table linen, towels, et cetera, used in the celebration of ordinances, are laundered and carefully stored. (See p. 70.)

The deaconesses make arrangements for the communion table including: preparing the bread and wine, arranging the ordinance table, pouring the wine, placing the plates of unleavened bread, and covering the table with the linen provided for that purpose. All these matters should be cared for before the service begins.

3. The Care of the Sick and the Poor—Deaconesses are to do their part in caring for the sick, the needy, and the unfortunate, cooperating with the deacons in this work. (See p. 54.)

Board of Deaconesses—Where several deaconesses have been elected, a board of deaconesses should be formed, with the head deaconess serving as chairperson and another as

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secretary. This board is authorized to assign duties to individual deaconesses, and cooperates closely with the board of deacons especially in welcoming members and visitors, and in home visitation. (See pp. 52, 53.)

### The Church Clerk

**An Important Office**—The clerk of the church has one of the important church offices, upon the proper administration of which much of the efficient functioning of the church depends. Like all other church officers, the church clerk is elected for a one or two year term as determined by the local church (see p. 45); but because of the important and specialized functions of this office, it is wise to choose one who can be reelected to repeated terms to provide continuity in record keeping and reporting. In large churches assistant clerks may be elected as needed. The clerk serves as the secretary of all the business meetings of the church and should keep a correct record of all such meetings. If for any reason the clerk must be absent from any meeting, arrangements should be made for the assistant to be present to take the minutes of the proceedings. (See Notes, #5, p. 68.)

**No Names Added or Dropped Without Vote of the Church**—There must always be a vote of the church to add or drop a name from the church membership roll, except in the case of the death of a member. No name is to be added or dropped on the action of the church board alone. The clerk has no authority to add or drop names from the church list without a vote of the church. When a member dies the clerk should, at an early date, record the date of the death opposite the name in the membership book. (See p. 38.)

**Transferring Members**—The church clerk handles the correspondence between individual members and churches in the transferring of church membership. (See pp. 32-35.)

**Corresponding With Members**—The clerk should endeavor to keep in touch with absent members by correspondence. (See Notes, #6, p. 68.)

**Delegates' Credentials for Conference/Mission Session**—The clerk, on authorization of the church board, issues credentials for all delegates elected to represent the church at any session of the local conference/mission and sends them promptly to the conference/mission secretary. All blanks for records, reports, credentials, church letters, et cetera, are provided by the conference/mission office. (See pp. 132, 133.)

**Reports to be Furnished Promptly**—It is the duty of the church clerk to furnish promptly certain reports. Some of these are annual, while others are quarterly. It is essential that they be sent to the conference/mission/field secretary within the time specified as these reports are important for the accuracy of reports prepared by other organizations of the world church. The



information required for these reports is to be secured from the treasurer, the Personal Ministries secretary, the deacon, the Sabbath School secretary, the Adventist Youth Society secretary, the church school teacher, and from the clerk's own records. (See Notes, #7, p. 68.)

**Church Records**—The church clerk is the keeper of the church records. These should be carefully preserved. All records and account books of the various church officers are the property of the church; they are to be surrendered to the newly elected clerk at the expiration of the term of office, or to the church at any time during the term on request of the pastor or elder.

### The Church Treasurer

**A Sacred Work**—The treasurer is called to an important task and is elected as are other officers for a one or two year term as determined by the local church. (See p. 45.) In large churches it may be deemed advisable to elect assistant treasurers as needed.

The treasurer can greatly encourage faithfulness in the returning of tithe and deepen the spirit of liberality on the part of the church members. A word of counsel given in the spirit of the Master will help the brother or sister to render faithfully to God His own in tithes and offerings, even in a time of financial stringency.

**Church Treasurer the Custodian of All Church Funds**—The church treasurer is the custodian of all church funds. These funds are (1) conference/mission/field funds, (2) local church funds, and (3) funds belonging to the auxiliary organizations of the local church.

All funds (conference/mission/field, local church, and local church auxiliary) are deposited by the treasurer in a bank or financial institution account in the name of the church, unless the local conference/mission/field authorizes another system. This is a separate bank account which is not to be combined with any personal account. Surplus church funds may be deposited in savings accounts upon authorization of the church board. Where large balances are carried for building or special projects, the church board may authorize separate bank accounts. Such accounts, however, shall be operated by the treasurer

**Conference/Mission/Field Funds**—Conference/Mission/Field funds, which include tithe, all regular mission funds, and all funds for special conference/mission/field projects and institutions, are trust funds. At the close of each month, or more often if requested by the conference/mission/field, the church treasurer shall send to the conference/mission/field treasurer the entire amount of conference/mission/field funds received during that period of time. The church may not borrow, use, or withhold such conference/mission/field funds for any purpose.

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**Sabbath School Funds**—All Sabbath School offerings for missions are to be passed over to the church treasurer by the Sabbath School secretary-treasurer weekly, the church treasurer keeping a careful record of all such offerings. These mission funds are transmitted to the conference/mission/field office as outlined on pages 57-61 of this *Church Manual*. Sabbath School expense funds are to be passed over to the church treasurer weekly, to be held in trust, subject to the orders of the Sabbath School Council (see p. 92), to meet the routine expenses of the Sabbath School.

**Adventist Youth Society Funds**—Adventist Youth Society (AYS) funds have to do with both the Adventist Youth (AY) and the Adventist Junior Youth (AJY) Societies, and the funds of each society shall be kept separately on the church treasurer's books. Society offerings to missions and general church work or to conference/mission/field enterprises shall be handed to the church treasurer as soon as possible after they are received, to be forwarded to the conference/mission/field treasurer. All funds contributed to society expense shall be given promptly to the church treasurer, to be held in trust for the society.

The expense funds of the AY Society shall be disbursed by the church treasurer on the order of the Adventist Youth Society Committee. (See p. 99.) Expense funds of the AJY Society shall be disbursed on the order of the AJY Society leader.

**Local Church Funds**—Local church funds include such funds as church expense, church building and repair funds, and the church fund for the poor and needy. These funds belong to the local church and are disbursed by the treasurer only by authorization of the church board or church business meetings. However, the church treasurer shall pay from the church expense funds all bills for local church expense authorized by the church board, such as rentals, janitor, water, light, fuel, insurance, paving assessments, et cetera. The treasurer should be careful to secure receipts for all bills paid.

**Funds of Auxiliary Organizations**—Auxiliary organization funds include such funds as church outreach programs, welfare, family life, Adventist Youth Society, Dorcas Society, Sabbath School expense, and that portion of the health ministries funds belonging to the church, and may include church school funds. All money received by and for these organizations is turned over promptly to the church treasurer by the secretary of the organization, or by the deacons. These funds belong to the auxiliary organizations of the church. They may be disbursed only by order of the auxiliary organization to which they belong.

The treasurer shall give receipts for all funds received including those deposited by any of the subsidiary organizations of the church. On receiving money from the church treasurer, the secretary of such organization shall give a proper receipt to the treasurer.

**Safeguarding the Purpose of Funds**—When an offering is taken for worldwide missions or for any general or local enterprise, all money placed in the offering plate (unless otherwise indicated by the donor) shall be counted as part of that particular offering. It is of the utmost importance that all offerings and gifts contributed by individuals to the church for a specific fund or purpose be used for that purpose. Neither the church treasurer nor the church board has the authority to divert any funds from the objective for which they were given.

The funds of auxiliary organizations, a considerable proportion of which often represents donations given for specific purposes, are raised for that special part of the church's work for which the auxiliary organization is established. Such funds are held in trust by the church treasurer and they too may not be borrowed or in any way diverted by the treasurer or the church board from the objective for which they were raised.

When an auxiliary organization is discontinued, the church in regular business session may take action indicating the disposition of any remaining balance of funds in the account of such auxiliary organization.

**Money for Personal Literature Orders**—Money for personal orders of literature, books, pamphlets, magazines, and subscriptions for periodicals are cared for by the church treasurer in areas where a local Adventist Book Center does not exist. (See Notes, #8, p. 69.)

**Proper Method for Payment of Money by Members**—The treasurer should urge that all money paid in by church members other than the regular church collection be placed in the tithe and offering envelopes, instructing each member to list the various items and amounts on the envelope as indicated, and to make sure that the money enclosed equals the total shown. Members should sign their name and give their address, and place the envelope on the offering plate or hand it to the treasurer, who should preserve such envelopes to serve as vouchers until all accounts are checked by the conference/mission/field auditor.

The members who return their tithes and offerings by check or postal notes should, wherever legally possible, make such checks or notes payable to the church, rather than to any individual.

**Receipts to Church Members**—Receipts should be issued promptly for all money received, no matter how small the amount, and a strict account of all receipts and payments should be kept by the church treasurer. All general offerings not in the envelopes should be counted by the treasurer in the presence of another church officer, preferably a deacon, and a receipt given to such officer.

**Proper Method of Remitting Funds to the Conference/Mission/Field**—In sending remittances to the conference/mission/field treasurer, all checks, bank drafts, or money orders

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should be made payable to the organization wherever legally possible and not to any individual. The duplicate sheet from the church treasurer's book should be enclosed with the remittance. Remittance blanks are furnished by the conference/mission/field. (See pp. 142, 143.)

**Preservation of Financial Documents**—Financial documents, vouchers, or receipted bills should be secured for all funds received and disbursed in accordance with the system authorized by the local conference/mission/field.

**Books Should Be Audited**—The conference/mission/field treasurer, or some other individual appointed by the conference/mission/field committee, audits the church financial records, usually each year. The church treasurer's books and other financial records relating to the work of the church treasurer, the church school treasurer, and the treasurer of any other organization, may be called for and inspected at any time by the conference/mission/field auditor or by the pastor, district leader, leading church elder, or by any others authorized by the church board, but should not be made available to unauthorized persons. (See p. 143.)

Reports of all funds received and disbursed should be presented at the regular business meetings of the church. A copy of these reports should be given to the leading church officers.

When the number of individuals returning tithe in the church is reported, the wife and minor children who are non-wage earners but are members of the church should be counted in this group, in addition to the head of the family when the individual is known to be faithful in this respect.

**Relations With Members Confidential**—The treasurer should always remember that relations with individual members are strictly confidential. The treasurer should be careful never to comment on the tithe returned by any member or of the income or anything concerning it, except to those who share the responsibility of the work. Great harm may be caused by failure to observe this rule.

#### Interest Coordinator

It is important that the many interests developed through the church's (missionary) outreach be cared for promptly. To this end, an interest coordinator, who may be an elder, should be elected at the time of the election of church officers. (See p. 45.) This person is a member of the church board and the Personal Ministries Council and works directly with the pastor and chairperson of that council. The duties involved in this office include:

1. To keep an organized list of all interests received by the church from every source such as Community Services, Ingathering, public evangelism, Bible studies, lay preaching and witnessing contacts, outreach (missionary) magazines, Sabbath School evangelism, literature

evangelism, temperance and health evangelism, radio-TV, and church outreach (missionary) literature.

2. To assist the pastor and chairperson of the Personal Ministries Council in the enlistment and recruitment of qualified laity for follow-up service.
3. To render to the church board a monthly report on the number of interests received and the number followed up. When an interest is sufficiently developed, it should be shared with the pastor.

#### A Church Officer Removed from Church Membership

When a church officer is removed from membership in the church and is subsequently readmitted to church membership, this action does not reinstate the individual to the former office.

#### Induction Service

All newly elected officers of the local church may be included in a service of induction conducted by a minister holding a current license or credential. (See p. 118.) If no minister is available, an ordained elder of the local church may conduct the induction service.

#### Notes

*These notes contain explanatory material regarding how a local church may proceed in a particular matter. A local church may adopt alternate ways of handling such items. Such alternative methods should be in harmony with generally accepted principles of Seventh-day Adventist Church organization and operation.*

1. Training and Equipping of Local Elders—(See p. 47.)—While the pastor has the primary responsibility for training local elders, conferences/missions/fields are encouraged to schedule periodic meetings designed for training them. In order to support a pastor-elder team relationship it is recommended that pastors also attend these meetings. Leaders of companies who function in the place of local elders should also be invited to attend.
2. The Marriage Ceremony—(See p. 49.)—In some countries or states a minister must be legally appointed and registered in order to conduct the marriage service. In many lands the minister may perform the ceremony in the church, but the marriage contract is legally signed by the district registrar, who usually sits in the vestry and listens to the approved form of

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marriage declaration. In still other lands, the minister cannot perform the ceremony at all, for it is recognized as a state responsibility and is looked upon as a civil contract. In such cases our members usually retire to the home or place of worship, where a special service is conducted by a minister, to seek the blessing of the Lord upon the couple. (See pp. 156, 157, 181-184.)

3. Preparation for Baptismal Services—(See p. 55.)—The deacons should assist at baptismal services, ensuring that the baptism site is prepared, and that male candidates are cared for both before and after the ceremony.

4. Care and Maintenance of Church Property—(See p. 56.)—It is the deacons' duty to see that the building is kept clean and in repair, and that the grounds upon which the church stands are kept clean and made attractive. This also includes ensuring that the janitorial work is done. In large churches it is often necessary to employ a janitor. The deacons should recommend a suitable person to the church board, which takes action by vote to employ such help, or the church board may authorize the deacons to employ a janitor. Church board authorization should be obtained for all major repair expenses. All bills for repairs, as well as for water, light, fuel, et cetera, are referred to the church treasurer for payment.

5. An Important Office—(See p. 58.)—These minutes should be recorded in the Church Record book, or in another appropriate record system adopted by the church, giving the time and date of meeting, number attending, and a report of all actions taken. The clerk should also make a list of any committees appointed at such meetings, giving to the chairperson a list of the members of each committee, together with its terms of reference and an outline of work it is asked to do. The Church Record book may be secured from the Adventist Book Center or, in some countries, from the publishing house.

This Church Record book contains a place for recording the church membership, giving the columns necessary to show how and when members are received or removed. This record must be kept chronologically, and supporting data for each entry should also be recorded in the section where minutes of membership actions are kept. The church membership record must be accurately and currently maintained in order to show the official standing of the membership.

6. Corresponding With Members—(See p. 59.)—The church clerk should correspond with absent members and should pass on to them interesting items of church progress, encouraging them, in turn, to report their own Christian activities each quarter. It is desirable for the clerk to write to them frequently.

7. Reports to Be Furnished Promptly—(See p. 59.)—Every item of information called for in the blanks should be supplied. Special attention should be given to the transfer of members, and members received or removed for various causes, as indicated by the blank. The conference/mission/field secretary must report quarterly to the union conference/mission

secretary, and the union conference/mission secretary must report to the division, and the division secretary to the General Conference office, relative to these important items; any omission or delay in the report seriously affects the work all along the way. Faithful attention to the details specified in the report blanks greatly assists in keeping accurate records of the worldwide work of the church.

8. Money for Personal Literature Orders—(See p. 63.)—In areas where a local Adventist Book Center does not exist, church members may place their money for personal orders of literature, books, pamphlets, magazines, and subscriptions for periodicals in an envelope, with the order form properly filled out, and hand it to the Personal Ministries secretary. The treasurer then remits both order and payment for all such literature to the conference/mission/field Adventist Book Center, or to the publishing house according to the system adopted by the conference/mission/field. At the close of each quarter the Personal Ministries secretary will make a report to the church, at its quarterly business meeting, of the standing of its account with the Adventist Book Center and/or publishing house and shall provide a copy for the church treasurer. (See pp. 88, 89.)

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## 203-00Gc CHURCH MANUAL—PROPOSED FORMAT CHANGE - CHAPTER 7

VOTED, To approve the proposed format change of the *Church Manual*, Chapter 7, The Services and Meetings of the Church. The chapter will be divided into two sections: the main content, and notes containing explanatory material which will appear at the end of the chapter. Chapter 7 will read as follows:

### CHAPTER 7

#### THE SERVICES AND MEETINGS OF THE CHURCH

Spiritual Worship—"Although God dwells not in temples made with hands, yet He honors with His presence the assemblies of His people. He has promised that when they come together to seek Him, to acknowledge their sins, and to pray for one another, He will meet with them by His Spirit. But those who assemble to worship Him should put away every evil thing. Unless they worship Him in spirit and truth and in the beauty of holiness, their coming together will be of no avail. Of such the Lord declares, 'This people draweth nigh unto Me with their

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mouth, and honoreth Me with their lips; but their heart is far from Me.' Matthew 15:8, 9. Those who worship God must worship Him 'in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him.' John 4:23."—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 50.

The Purpose of the Services and Meetings of the Church—The experience of a Christian is one of spiritual rebirth, joyful reconciliation, faithful mission, and humble obedience to God (2 Cor. 5:17; Phil. 2:5-8). Whatever a Christian does, or participates in, including the services and meetings of the church, is a testimony of this new life in Christ and a sharing of its fruits in the Spirit. The purpose of the services and meetings of the church is to worship God for His creative work and for all the benefits of His salvation; to understand His Word, His teachings, and His purposes; to fellowship with one another in faith and love; to witness about one's personal faith in Christ's atoning sacrifice at the cross; and to learn how to fulfill the gospel commission of making disciples in all the world (Matt. 28:19, 20).

Reverence for the House of Worship—"To the humble, believing soul, the house of God on earth is the gate of heaven. The song of praise, the prayer, the words spoken by Christ's representatives, are God's appointed agencies to prepare a people for the church above, for that loftier worship into which there can enter nothing that defileth.

"From the sacredness which was attached to the earthly sanctuary, Christians may learn how they should regard the place where the Lord meets with His people. . . . God Himself gave the order of His service, exalting it high above everything of a temporal nature.

"The house is the sanctuary for the family, and the closet or the grove the most retired place for individual worship; but the church is the sanctuary for the congregation. There should be rules in regard to the time, the place, and the manner of worshiping. Nothing that is sacred, nothing that pertains to the worship of God, should be treated with carelessness or indifference. In order that men may do their best work in showing forth the praises of God, their associations must be such as will keep the sacred distinct from the common, in their minds. Those who have broad ideas, noble thoughts and aspirations, are those who have associations that strengthen all thoughts of divine things. Happy are those who have a sanctuary, be it high or low, in the city or among the rugged mountain caves, in the lowly cabin or in the wilderness. If it is the best they can secure for the Master, He will hallow the place with His presence, and it will be holy unto the Lord of hosts."—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 491, 492.

Children to Be Taught Reverence—"Parents, elevate the standard of Christianity in the minds of your children; help them to weave Jesus into their experience; teach them to have the highest reverence for the house of God and to understand that when they enter the Lord's house it should be with hearts that are softened and subdued by such thoughts as these: 'God is here; this is His house. I must have pure thoughts and the holiest motives. I must have no pride, envy,



jealousy, evil surmising, hatred, or deception in my heart, for I am coming into the presence of the holy God. This is the place where God meets with and blesses His people. The high and holy One who inhabiteth eternity looks upon me, searches my heart, and reads the most secret thoughts and acts of my life.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 494.

**Decorum and Quietness in the Place of Worship**—“When the worshipers enter the place of meeting, they should do so with decorum, passing quietly to their seats. . . . Common talking, whispering, and laughing should not be permitted in the house of worship, either before or after the service. Ardent, active piety should characterize the worshipers.

“If some have to wait a few minutes before the meeting begins, let them maintain a true spirit of devotion by silent meditation, keeping the heart uplifted to God in prayer that the service may be of special benefit to their own hearts and lead to the conviction and conversion of other souls. They should remember that heavenly messengers are in the house. We all lose much sweet communion with God by our restlessness, by not encouraging moments of reflection and prayer. The spiritual condition needs to be often reviewed and the mind and heart drawn toward the Sun of Righteousness. If when the people come into the house of worship, they have genuine reverence for the Lord and bear in mind that they are in His presence, there will be a sweet eloquence in silence. The whispering and laughing and talking which might be without sin in a common business place should find no sanction in the house where God is worshiped. The mind should be prepared to hear the word of God, that it may have due weight and suitably impress the heart.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 492.

**Arrangements for Church Meetings**—Each church should arrange its services and meetings as seems necessary. Those most essential to the worship, study, and activity of the church are the Sabbath worship service, the communion service, the prayer meeting, the Sabbath School, the young people’s meeting, and the church outreach (missionary) meeting. Sessions for proper attention to the business affairs of the church are also essential.

**Hospitality**—A spirit of hospitality should be cultivated in every church. Nothing is so deadening to the spiritual life of a church as a cold, formal atmosphere that drives out hospitality and Christian fellowship. Members should cultivate this essential element of Christian life and experience. Especially should this be so in connection with the worship of God. Every visitor who worships with us should be cordially received and made to feel welcome. It is the duty of the church officers to arrange for someone to give special attention to welcoming the visitors who attend the services of the church. “Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares” (Heb. 13:2).

**Unauthorized Speakers in Our Churches**—Under no circumstances should a minister, elder, or other church officer invite strangers or any unauthorized persons to conduct services in

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our churches. Individuals who have been dropped from the ministry, or who have been dismissed from church fellowship in other places, or designing persons who have no authority from the church, should not be permitted with plausible words to gain admittance to our pulpits. Great care should be exercised to prevent this. Each one worthy of the confidence of our churches will be able to identify himself or herself by producing proper credentials. There may be times when it is proper for our congregations to be addressed by government officials or by civic leaders. All others should be excluded from the pulpit unless permission be granted from the conference/mission/field office. It is the duty of every elder, minister, and conference/mission/field president to see that this rule is carried out. (See pp. 121, 124, 185-187.)

### Place of Music in Worship

Place of Music in Worship—"Music can be a great power for good, yet we do not make the most of this branch of worship. The singing is generally done from impulse or to meet special cases, and at other times those who sing are left to blunder along, and the music loses its proper effect upon the minds of those present. Music should have beauty, pathos, and power. Let the voices be lifted in songs of praise and devotion. Call to your aid, if practicable, instrumental music, and let the glorious harmony ascend to God, an acceptable offering."—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 71.

Sing With the Spirit and the Understanding—"In their efforts to reach the people, the Lord's messengers are not to follow the ways of the world. In the meetings that are held, they are not to depend on worldly singers and theatrical display to awaken an interest. How can those who have no interest in the word of God, who have never read His word with a sincere desire to understand its truths, be expected to sing with the spirit and the understanding? How can their hearts be in harmony with the words of sacred song? How can the heavenly choir join in music that is only a form? . . .

"In the meetings held let a number be chosen to take part in the song service. And let the singing be accompanied with musical instruments skillfully handled. We are not to oppose the use of instrumental music in our work. This part of the service is to be carefully conducted, for it is the praise of God in song.

"The singing is not always to be done by a few. As often as possible, let the entire congregation join."—*Testimonies*, vol. 9, pp. 143, 144.

Selecting Choir Leaders—Great care should be used in selecting the choir leaders or those who have charge of the music in the services of the church. Only those who are known to be thoroughly consecrated should be chosen for this part of the church work. Untold harm may be done by selecting unconsecrated leaders. Those lacking in judgment as to the selection of

proper and appropriate music for divine worship should not be chosen. Secular music or that of a doubtful or questionable nature should never be introduced into our services.

Choir leaders should work in close collaboration with the minister or church elder in order that the special musical selections harmonize with the theme of the sermon. The choir leader is under the direction of the pastor or elders of the church and does not work independently of them. The choir leader should counsel with them, not only as to the music to be rendered, but also concerning the selection of singers and musicians. The choir leader is not an ex officio member of the church board.

Membership of Church Choirs—Sacred music is an important part of public worship. The church needs to exercise care in the selecting of choir members who will rightly represent the principles of the church. Choir members occupy a conspicuous place in the services of the church. Their singing ability is only one of the qualifications they should have. They should be members of the church, or the Sabbath School, or the Adventist Youth Society who, in their personal appearance and manner of dress, conform to the standards of the church, setting an example in modesty and decorum. People of uncertain consecration or questionable character, or those not appropriately dressed, should not be permitted to participate in the musical features of the services. Any plan concerning the wearing of choir robes is optional on the part of the church.

The organization of children's choirs is to be encouraged as an effective means of spiritual nurture, bonding to the church family, and outreach.

### Sabbath Services

The Sabbath School—The Sabbath School has rightly been called the church at study. It is one of the most important services held in connection with our church work. Sabbath by Sabbath the greater part of our membership and thousands of interested friends meet in Sabbath School to study God's Word systematically. All members of the church should be encouraged to attend Sabbath School and also to bring visitors. Each Sabbath School should endeavor to provide appropriate age-level programs for everyone. Materials and resources have been developed to assist in this important task and are available from the field/mission/conference/union/division. The usual length of time for holding this service is one hour and ten minutes. This, however, does not prevent any local field from adopting a longer or shorter period if it is so desired. In arranging the program, care should be taken to provide at least thirty minutes for the study of the lesson.

The Worship Service—The Sabbath worship service is the most important of all the meetings of the church. Here the members gather week by week to unite in worshipping God in a

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spirit of praise and thanksgiving, to hear the Word of God, to gather strength and grace to fight the battles of life, and to learn God's will for them in soul-winning service. Reverence, simplicity, and promptness should characterize the whole service.

**Sacredness of the Sabbath Worship Hour**—The worship of God is the highest, holiest experience possible to humans, and the greatest care should be exercised in planning for this service.

"Is it not your duty to put some skill and study and planning into the matter of conducting religious meetings—how they shall be conducted so as to do the greatest amount of good, and leave the very best impression upon all who attend?"—E. G. White in *Review and Herald*, April 14, 1885, p. 225.

"Our God is a tender, merciful Father. His service should not be looked upon as a heart-saddening, distressing exercise. It should be a pleasure to worship the Lord and to take part in His work. . . . Christ and Him crucified should be the theme of contemplation, of conversation, and of our most joyful emotion. . . . as we express our gratitude we are approximating to the worship of the heavenly hosts. 'Whoso offereth praise glorifieth' God. Psalm 50:23. Let us with reverent joy come before our Creator, with 'thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.' Isaiah 51:3."—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 103, 104.

**The Form of Service**—The Sabbath morning service has two main divisions: the congregational response in praise and adoration, expressed in song, prayer, and gifts, and the message from the Word of God. (See Notes #1, p. 95)

We do not prescribe a set form or order for public worship. A short order of service is usually better suited to the real spirit of worship. Long preliminaries should be avoided. The opening exercises should not, under any circumstances, consume time required for worship and for the preaching of the Word of God. For suggested forms of service, see Notes, #2, p. 96.

**Announcements**—Thoughtful consideration should be given to the length and character of the announcements during the Sabbath service. If they deal with matters not specifically related to Sabbath worship or the work of the church, ministers and church officers should be careful to exclude them, maintaining even in this respect a proper spirit of worship and Sabbath observance. Many of our larger churches issue printed bulletins giving the order of service and also the announcements for the week. Where this is done, there is little or no need for oral announcements. Where no such printed provision is made, many churches find it desirable to make the announcements before the actual service begins. (See Notes, #2, p. 96.)

Proper consideration must also be given to the various departments of the church for the promotion of the interests for which they are responsible, but great care should be exercised when making appointments for their presentations, to safeguard the time needed for preaching the message from the Word of God.

Public Prayer—"Christ impressed upon His disciples the idea that their prayers should be short, expressing just what they wanted, and no more. . . . One or two minutes is long enough for any ordinary prayer."—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 581.

"When you pray, be brief, come right to the point. Do not preach the Lord a sermon in your long prayers."—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 201.

"Let those who pray and those who speak pronounce their words properly and speak in clear, distinct, even tones. Prayer, if properly offered, is a power for good. It is one of the means used by the Lord to communicate to the people the precious treasures of truth. But prayer is not what it should be, because of the defective voices of those who utter it. Satan rejoices when the prayers offered to God are almost inaudible. Let God's people learn how to speak and pray in a way that will properly represent the great truths they possess. Let the testimonies borne and the prayers offered be clear and distinct. Thus God will be glorified."—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 382.

### The Communion Service

In the Seventh-day Adventist Church the communion service customarily is celebrated once per quarter. The service includes the ordinance of foot-washing and the Lord's Supper. It should be a most sacred and joyous occasion to the congregation, as well as to the minister or elder. Conducting the communion service is undoubtedly one of the most sacred duties that a minister or elder is called upon to perform. Jesus, the great Redeemer of this world, is holy. The angels declare: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." Therefore, since Jesus is holy, the symbols that represent His body and His blood are also holy. Since the Lord Himself selected the deeply meaningful symbols of the unleavened bread and unfermented fruit of the vine and used the simplest of means for washing the disciples' feet, there should be great reluctance to introduce alternative symbols and means (except under truly emergency conditions) lest the original significance of the service be lost. Likewise in the order of service and the traditional roles played by the ministers, elders, deacons, and deaconesses in the communion service, there should be caution lest substitution and innovation contribute to a tendency to make common that which is sacred. Individualism and independence of action and practice could become an expression of unconcern for church unity and fellowship on this most blessed and sacred occasion. Desire for change could neutralize the element of remembrance in this service instituted by our Lord Himself as He entered upon His passion.

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The service of the Lord's Supper is just as holy today as it was when instituted by Jesus Christ. Jesus is still present when this sacred ordinance is celebrated. We read, "It is at these, His own appointments, that Christ meets His people, and energizes them by His presence."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 656.

Ordinance of Foot-Washing—"Now, having washed the disciples' feet, He said, 'I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.' In these words Christ was not merely enjoining the practice of hospitality. More was meant than the washing of the feet of guests to remove the dust of travel. Christ was here instituting a religious service. By the act of our Lord this . . . ceremony was made a consecrated ordinance. It was to be observed by the disciples, that they might ever keep in mind His lessons of humility and service.

"This ordinance is Christ's appointed preparation for the sacramental service. While pride, variance, and strife for supremacy are cherished, the heart cannot enter into fellowship with Christ. We are not prepared to receive the communion of His body and His blood. Therefore it was that Jesus appointed the memorial of His humiliation to be first observed."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 650.

In the act of washing the disciples' feet, Christ performed a deeper cleansing, that of washing from the heart the stain of sin. The communicant senses an unworthiness to accept the sacred emblems before experiencing the cleansing that makes one "clean every whit" (John 13:10). Jesus desired to wash away "alienation, jealousy, and pride from their hearts. . . . Pride and self-seeking create dissension and hatred, but all this Jesus washed away. . . . Looking upon them, Jesus could say, 'Ye are clean.'"—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 646.

The spiritual experience that lies at the heart of foot-washing lifts it from being a common custom to being a sacred ordinance. It conveys a message of forgiveness, acceptance, assurance, and solidarity, primarily from Christ to the believer, but also between the believers themselves. This message is expressed in an atmosphere of humility.

Unleavened Bread and Unfermented Wine—"Christ is still at the table on which the paschal supper has been spread. The unleavened cakes used at the Passover season are before Him. The Passover wine, untouched by fermentation, is on the table. These emblems Christ employs to represent His own unblemished sacrifice. Nothing corrupted by fermentation, the symbol of sin and death, could represent the 'Lamb without blemish and without spot.' 1 Peter 1:19."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 653.

Neither the wine nor the bread contained elements of fermentation as on the evening of the first day of the Hebrew Passover all leaven, or fermentation, had been removed from their dwellings (Ex. 12:15, 19; 13:7). Therefore, only unfermented grape juice and unleavened bread

are appropriate for use in the communion service; so great care must be exercised in providing these elements. In those more isolated areas of the world where grape or raisin juice or concentrate is not available, the conference/mission/field office will provide advice or assistance.

A Memorial of the Crucifixion—"By partaking of the Lord's Supper, the broken bread and the fruit of the vine, we show forth the Lord's death until He comes. The scenes of His sufferings and death are thus brought fresh to our minds."—*Early Writings*, p. 217.

"As we receive the bread and wine symbolizing Christ's broken body and spilled blood, we in imagination join in the scene of Communion in the upper chamber. We seem to be passing through the garden consecrated by the agony of Him who bore the sins of the world. We witness the struggle by which our reconciliation with God was obtained. Christ is set forth crucified among us."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 661.

A Proclamation of the Second Coming—"The Communion service points to Christ's second coming. It was designed to keep this hope vivid in the minds of the disciples. Whenever they met together to commemorate His death, they recounted how 'He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is My blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom.' In their tribulation they found comfort in the hope of their Lord's return. Unspeakably precious to them was the thought, 'As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come.' 1 Cor. 11:26."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 659.

Announcing the Communion Service—The communion service may appropriately be included as part of any Christian worship service. However, to give proper emphasis and make communion available to the greatest possible number of members, usually it is part of the Sabbath worship service, preferably on the next to the last Sabbath of each quarter.

On the preceding Sabbath an announcement should be made of the service calling attention to the importance of the forthcoming communion, so that all members may prepare their hearts and make sure that unresolved differences are put right with one another. When they come to the table of the Lord the following week, the service then can bring the blessing intended. Those who were not present for the announcement should be notified and invited to attend.

Conducting the Communion Service—Length of Service—Time is not the most significant factor in planning the communion service. However, attendance can be improved and the spiritual impact increased by:

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1. Eliminating all extraneous items from the worship service on this high day.
2. Avoiding delays before and after the foot-washing.
3. Having the deaconesses arrange the emblems on the communion table well beforehand.

**Preliminaries**—The introductory portion of the service should include only very brief announcements, hymn, prayer, offering, and a short sermon before separating for the washing of feet and then returning for the Lord's supper which follows. More worshipers will be encouraged to stay for the entire service if the early part of the service has been brief.

**Foot-washing**—Each church should have a plan for meeting the needs of its members for the foot-washing service. (See Notes, #3, p. 97.)

**Bread and Wine**—Following the foot-washing, the congregation comes together once again to partake of the bread and the wine. (See Notes, #4, p. 97.)

**Celebration**—The service may close with a musical feature or congregational singing followed by dismissal. However it closes, it should end on a high note. Communion should always be a solemn experience but never a somber one. Wrongs have been righted, sins have been forgiven, and faith has been reaffirmed; it is a time for celebration. Let the music be bright and joyous.

An offering for the poor is often taken as the congregation leaves. After the service the deacons and deaconesses clear the table, collect glasses, and dispose of any bread or wine left over by burning or burying the bread and pouring the wine on the ground.

**Who May Participate**—The Seventh-day Adventist Church practices open communion. All who have committed their lives to the Saviour may participate. Children learn the significance of the service by observing others participate. After receiving formal instruction in baptismal classes and making their commitment to Jesus in baptism, they are thereby prepared to partake in the service themselves.

“Christ's example forbids exclusiveness at the Lord's Supper. It is true that open sin excludes the guilty. This the Holy Spirit plainly teaches. 1 Cor. 5:11. But beyond this none are to pass judgment. God has not left it with men to say who shall present themselves on these occasions. For who can read the heart? Who can distinguish the tares from the wheat? ‘Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.’ For ‘whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and



blood of the Lord.' 'He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.' 1 Cor. 11:28, 27, 29.

"When believers assemble to celebrate the ordinances, there are present messengers unseen by human eyes. There may be a Judas in the company, and if so, messengers from the prince of darkness are there, for they attend all who refuse to be controlled by the Holy Spirit. Heavenly angels also are present. These unseen visitants are present on every such occasion. There may come into the company persons who are not in heart servants of truth and holiness, but who may wish to take part in the service. They should not be forbidden. There are witnesses present who were present when Jesus washed the feet of the disciples and of Judas. More than human eyes beheld the scene."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 656.

Every Member Should Attend—"None should exclude themselves from the Communion because some who are unworthy may be present. Every disciple is called upon to participate publicly, and thus bear witness that he accepts Christ as a personal Saviour. It is at these, His own appointments, that Christ meets His people, and energizes them by His presence. Hearts and hands that are unworthy may even administer the ordinance, yet Christ is there to minister to His children. All who come with their faith fixed upon Him will be greatly blessed. All who neglect these seasons of divine privilege will suffer loss. Of them it may appropriately be said, 'Ye are not all clean.'"—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 656

Who May Conduct Communion Service—The communion service is to be conducted by an ordained minister or a church elder. Deacons, although ordained, cannot conduct the service, but they can assist by passing the bread and wine to the members.

Communion for the Sick—If any members are ill or cannot for any other reason leave the home to attend the communion service in the house of worship, a special service in the home may be held for them. This service can be conducted only by an ordained minister or a church elder, who may be accompanied and assisted by deacons or deaconesses who assist in the regular service.

### The Prayer Meeting

"The prayer meetings should be the most interesting gatherings that are held, but these are frequently poorly managed. Many attend preaching, but neglect the prayer meeting. Here, again, thought is required. Wisdom should be sought of God, and plans should be laid to conduct the meetings so that they will be interesting and attractive. The people hunger for the bread of life. If they find it at the prayer meeting they will go there to receive it.

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“Long, prosy talks and prayers are out of place anywhere, and especially in the social meeting. Those who are forward and ever ready to speak are allowed to crowd out the testimony of the timid and retiring. Those who are most superficial generally have the most to say. Their prayers are long and mechanical. They weary the angels and the people who listen to them. Our prayers should be short and right to the point. Let the long, tiresome petitions be left for the closet, if any have such to offer. Let the Spirit of God into your hearts, and it will sweep away all dry formality.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, pp. 70, 71.

The weekly prayer meeting is of so great importance that more than ordinary efforts should be made to assure its success. The meetings should begin on time, even though but two or three persons are present. There should be a short Scripture study or presentation from the *Testimonies*. Fifteen or twenty minutes are sufficient. Then give the members time for prayer and testimony. Vary the plan of the service from week to week. Have a season of prayer following the study one time; the next time, follow the study by testimonies, closing with a season of prayer and a song.

If the members are unable to assemble at the usual place for prayer meeting, cottage meetings can be conducted with great benefit to all who attend.

#### Adventist Youth Society\*

The Adventist Youth Society is the action and fellowship organization for senior youth in the local church. Under the leadership of an elected Youth leader, young people are to work together in the development of a strong youth ministry which includes spiritual, mental, and physical development for each individual, Christian social interaction, and an active witnessing program which supports the general soul-winning plans of the local church. It should be the goal of the Adventist Youth Society to involve all young people in meaningful activities which will tie them closer to the church and train them for useful service.

Regular meetings of the youth should be scheduled each week. It is recommended that these meetings be held Friday evening or Sabbath afternoon. Such meetings may be held in homes of responsible church members or as larger public meetings in the church. Since the youth program should not be isolated from the rest of the church, the public Adventist Youth Society meetings should be open to the entire church membership. Ideally, they should be planned and operated, however, by the youth themselves. In smaller churches the youth program of necessity must have a family-involvement approach. (See Notes, #5, p. 98.)

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\*This is an accepted abbreviated name for the full official name “Seventh-day Adventist Youth Society.”

It is important that the youth program in the local church be coordinated with the work of all departments that provide ministry for children and youth. To encourage this cooperation and coordination, the Personal Ministries leader, Health Ministries leader, leader of the youth Sabbath School division, school principal, Pathfinder Club director, Adventurer Club director, and other leaders as needed are members of the Adventist Youth Ministries Committee, which is an umbrella organization in the local church responsible for planning the youth ministry program. (See p. 99.) (See Notes, #6, p. 98.)

While a successful youth ministry program in the local church includes a strong youth Sabbath School, there must be a specific time and place for more interaction, fellowship, recreation, witnessing outreach, and leadership training, which are all a part of the concepts to be fostered in the Adventist Youth Society.

#### Adventist Junior Youth Society

The purpose of the Adventist Junior Youth Society is similar to that of the organization for the Adventist Youth Society for senior youth. Its purpose is to build character, provide social interaction, give leadership training, and involve the junior youth in Christian service. In those countries where there are Adventist church schools, the Adventist Junior Youth Society is usually a part of the school spiritual curriculum. (See Notes, #7, p. 99.)

#### Pathfinder Club

The Pathfinder Club provides a specialized program needed for junior youth and in some areas has replaced the Adventist Junior Youth Society in the local church. Where there are both there must be close coordination and cooperation between the Pathfinder Club and the Adventist Junior Youth Society. Pathfinders will meet according to conference/mission/field departmental policy.

#### Adventurer Club

The Adventurer Club provides a specialized program suited to the rapidly developing primary/early school-age children in the local church. It is designed to strengthen parental involvement in early childhood development. Its meetings and other activities are to be carried out in accordance with local conference/mission/field policies as outlined in the club manuals and in coordination with other youth-related and family-related organizations of the local church.

#### Church Outreach (Missionary) Meetings

The Saviour's commission lays upon the church the task of heralding the gospel to all the world. This also places upon each individual member the responsibility of giving the message of

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salvation to as many others as possible. The Saviour “gave authority to His servants, and to every man his work.” He appointed a meeting with His eleven disciples after His resurrection for the purpose of giving them counsel and encouragement, and at that time He gave the gospel commission to the disciples and to the assembled church, numbering more than five hundred brethren. That was the first outreach (missionary) meeting of the Christian church; it was certainly not to be the last.

As a permanent and definite part of the services of the Christian church, the outreach (missionary) meeting bears the divine endorsement for all time. Through the Spirit of Prophecy we are told: “God has committed to our hands a most sacred work, and *we need to meet together* to receive instruction, that we may be fitted to perform this work.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 32. (Italics supplied.)

Times of Meetings—The first Sabbath of the month is generally recognized as Church Outreach (Missionary) Sabbath. The worship service of this Sabbath is focused on lay evangelism, but other departments besides the Personal Ministries Department may also have opportunity on these special days to present their interests. This will be done, however, by careful counsel with the departments concerned. (See Notes, #8, p. 99.)

Supplying Literature on the Sabbath—It is generally recognized that the Sabbath affords the most opportune time for the Personal Ministries secretary to place literature in the hands of the members. Methods that are objectionable and that would tend to divert the attention of the congregation from true worship and reverence should be avoided on the Sabbath.

### Business Meetings

Church business meetings duly called by the pastor, or the church board in consultation with the pastor, may be held monthly or quarterly according to the needs of the church. Members in regular standing on the roll of the church conducting the business meeting may attend and vote. Votes by proxy or letter shall not be accepted. In order to maintain a spirit of close cooperation between the local church and the conference/mission/field, the church shall secure counsel from the conference/mission/field officers on all major matters. The officers (president, secretary, treasurer) of the conference/mission/field to which the church belongs may attend without vote (unless granted by the church) any church business meeting within the conference/mission/field territory. A duly called business meeting of the church is a meeting that has been called at the regular Sabbath worship service, together with proper announcements as to the time and place of the meeting. At such meetings, at which the pastor will preside (or will arrange for the local elder to preside), full information should be given to the congregation regarding the work of the church. At the close of the year, reports should be rendered covering the activities of the church for the entire year and, based on those reports, the church should

approve a full plan of action for the next year. When possible, reports and the next year's plan of action should be presented in writing. (See Notes, #9, p. 99.)

### The Church Board and Its Meetings

**Definition and Function**—The church board is composed of the principal officers of the church. It has a number of important responsibilities, but its chief concern is the spiritual nurture of the church and the work of planning and fostering evangelism in all of its phases.

The great commission of Jesus makes evangelism, proclaiming the good news of the gospel, the primary function of the church (Matt. 28:18-20). It is therefore also the primary function of the church board to serve as the chief committee of the local church. When the board devotes its first interests and highest energies to every-member evangelism, most church problems are alleviated or prevented. A strong, positive influence is felt in the spiritual life and growth of the membership.

Included in church board responsibilities are:

1. Spiritual nurture
2. Evangelism in all of its phases
3. Maintenance of doctrinal purity
4. Upholding Christian standards
5. Recommending changes in church membership
6. Church finances
7. Protection and care of church properties
8. Coordination of church departments

The board is elected by the church membership at the time of the regular election of church officers. (See p. 45.)

**Membership**—The following church officers should be included in the church board membership:

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Elder(s)  
Head deacon  
Head deaconess  
Treasurer  
Clerk  
Personal Ministries leader  
Personal Ministries secretary  
Community Services and/or Dorcas leader  
Sabbath School superintendent  
Family Ministries leader  
Women's Ministries leader  
Children's Ministries coordinator  
Church Education secretary  
Home and School Association leader  
Adventist Youth Society leader  
Pathfinder Club director  
Adventurer Club director  
Interest coordinator  
Communication Committee chairperson or Communication secretary  
Health Ministries leader  
Stewardship leader  
Religious Liberty leader

In many cases two or more of these offices are carried by one individual. Additional members of the board may be elected by the church if desired. The minister appointed by the local field to serve the church as its pastor is always a member of the church board.

**Officers**—The chairman of the church board is the minister appointed to serve the church as pastor. If the pastor prefers not to act in this capacity or is unable to be present, he may arrange for the church elder to preside as chairman on a pro tem basis. The church clerk serves as secretary of the board and is responsible for preserving the minutes of the meetings.

**Meetings**—Because the work of the church board is vital to the life, health, and growth of the church, it needs to meet at least once each month. In larger churches more frequent meetings may be needed. It is well to fix the monthly meeting time for the same week and the same day each month. (Example: The first Monday of each month.)

The church board meeting is announced at the regular Sabbath worship service. Every effort should be made to have all board members present at each meeting.

Each church should determine at one of its regularly called business meetings the number of church board members who must be present at a church board meeting to constitute a quorum. Votes by proxy or letter shall not be accepted.

Work of the Board—1. Planning evangelism in all of its phases. Since evangelism is the primary work of the church, the first item on the agenda of each church board meeting is to relate directly to the evangelization of the outreach (missionary) territory of the church. In addition, once each quarter of the year the entire church board meeting can well be devoted to plans for evangelism. The board will study local field committee recommendations for evangelistic programs and methods. It will determine how these can best be implemented by the church. The pastor and the church board will initiate and develop plans for public evangelistic campaigns.

2. Coordinating outreach programs of departments. The church board is responsible for coordinating the work of all church departments. This includes the outreach programs of Personal Ministries, Sabbath School, Children's Ministries, Youth, Health Ministries, and Education. Each of these departments develops its plans for outreach within its own sphere. To avoid conflict in timing and competition in securing volunteer helpers, and to achieve maximum beneficial results, coordination is essential. Before completing and announcing plans for any program, each department should submit its plans to the church board for approval. The departments also report to the church board on the progress and results of their outreach programs. The church board may suggest to the departments how their programs can contribute to the preparation, conduct, and follow-up of a public evangelistic campaign.

3. Encouraging and helping the Personal Ministries Department of the church to enlist all church members and children in some form of personal outreach (missionary) service. Training classes should be conducted in various lines of outreach ministry.

4. Cooperating with the Interest coordinator of the church to ensure that every reported interest in the message, aroused through whatever source, is personally and promptly followed up by an assigned layperson.

5. Encouraging each department to report at least quarterly to the church board and to the church membership at business meetings and/or in Sabbath day meetings.

6. The details of church business should be considered by the board, and the treasurer should report the state of church finance on a regular basis. The church roll should be studied, and inquiry should be made into the spiritual standing of all members, and provision made for visiting the sick, discouraged, and any backslidden member. The other officers should report concerning the work for which they are responsible.

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**Committees of the Board**—The church board should permit no other business to interfere with planning for evangelism. Should other business be too time-consuming, the board may appoint committees to care for specific areas of church business such as finance or church building projects. Such committees will then make recommendations to the church board. In this way the resources of the board are conserved for its primary task—evangelism. (See Notes, #10, p. 100.)

### School Board Meetings

In churches which have a church school the work is usually supervised by a church school board. A chairperson is elected who presides over the meetings of this board. A secretary is chosen to keep the records of board meetings and actions. This board should hold its meetings at regular times. Special meetings may be called by the chairperson when the need arises. Some churches prefer to have the church board, or a subcommittee of the church board, serve also as the school board.

### Home and School Association

The Home and School Association is organized by the local church to coordinate the activities of the school, home, and church. It is recommended that meetings be conducted on a monthly basis. Attention should be given to the education of parents, as well as to assisting the school to obtain needed resources such as room parents, books, teaching materials, and equipment.

Materials to assist the Home and School leaders are available through the Department of Education.

### Notes

*These notes contain explanatory material regarding how a local church may proceed in a particular matter. A local church may adopt alternate ways of handling such items. Such alternative methods should be in harmony with generally accepted principles of Seventh-day Adventist Church organization and operation.*

1. **The Form of Service**—(See p. 69.)—As the ministers come to the rostrum and kneel, the congregation should, with bowed heads, implore the presence and blessing of God. A worshipful hush prepares the way for the opening hymn and the exercises which follow.

The two main divisions of the worship service are:



- a. The congregational response in praise and adoration, expressed in song, prayer, and gifts.
- b. The message from the Word of God. The one who brings the message and breaks the bread of life should fully sense the sacredness of this work and should be thoroughly prepared. Then, too, the one leading the worshipers into the presence of God through the medium of the pastoral prayer is performing perhaps the holiest exercise of the whole service and with a sense of awe, should humbly realize its importance. It is customary to kneel, facing the congregation, and the congregation in turn should face the rostrum and, as far as practicable, kneel. The prayer should be brief but should include adoration, thanks, and mention of the personal needs of the worshipers, as well as of the great world field.

Special music or a devotional hymn is appropriate immediately before the sermon. Then comes what should be one of the most important parts of the worship hour—the spiritual feeding of the flock of God. Blessed results to the glory of God always follow when a congregation is truly fed and feels that “God has visited His people.”

The offering is a vital part of the worship hour. While we are counseled to “worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness,” we are also exhorted to “bring an offering, and come into his courts” (Ps. 96:9, 8). So the presentation of our gifts to God quite naturally finds its place as a part of the worship service.

The elder, particularly if he is a licensed minister, collaborates with the regular pastor in planning the order of the service. If the church has no regular pastor, the elder is in charge of the service and should either conduct it or arrange for someone to do so. From time to time a meeting for testimony and praise may be conducted, or the time may be given to certain members to relate their experiences in outreach (missionary) work.

2. The Form of Service—(See p. 69.)—Following are two suggested forms of service:

*Longer Order of Worship*

Organ Prelude  
Announcements  
Choir and Ministers Enter  
Doxology  
Invocation  
Scripture Reading  
Hymn of Praise

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Prayer  
Anthem or Special Music  
Offering  
Hymn of Consecration  
Sermon  
Hymn  
Benediction  
Congregation Standing or Seated for a Few Moments of Silent Prayer  
Organ Postlude

*Shorter Order of Worship*

Announcements  
Hymn  
Prayer  
Offering  
Hymn or Special Music  
Sermon  
Hymn  
Benediction  
Congregation Standing or Seated for Silent Prayer

3. Foot-washing—(See p. 75.)—Men and women should be provided separate areas for the foot-washing. Where stairs or distance is a problem, special arrangements should be made for the disabled. In places where it is socially acceptable and where clothing is such that there would be no immodesty, separate arrangements may be made for husband and wife or parents and baptized children to share with each other in the foot-washing ceremony. To encourage shy or sensitive people who may view the selecting of a foot-washing partner as an embarrassing experience, church leaders should be designated whose responsibility during the foot-washing is to help such persons find partners.

4. Bread and Wine—(See p. 76.)—A hymn may be sung during the reassembly of the congregation as the officiating ministers or elders take their places at the table on which the bread and wine have been placed, and the deacons and deaconesses take their places. The covering over the bread is removed. A suitable passage of Scripture may be read such as 1 Corinthians 11:23, 24; Matthew 26:26; Mark 14:22; or Luke 22:19, or a brief sermon may be given at this point in the service rather than earlier. This can be especially effective if the sermon emphasizes the meaning of the bread and wine so its message is still fresh in the minds of participants as the emblems are being distributed. Those officiating normally kneel while the blessing is asked on the bread. The congregation may kneel or remain seated. Most of the bread

to be served is usually broken ahead of time, with a small portion left on each plate for the elders or pastors to break. The minister and elders hand the plates containing the bread to the deacons, then the deacons serve the congregation. During this time there may be a choice of special music, testimonies, a summary of the sermon, selected readings, congregational singing, or meditative organ or piano music.

Each person should retain his/her portion of the bread until the officiating minister or elder has been served. When everyone has been seated, the leader invites all to partake of the bread together. Silent prayers are offered as the bread is eaten.

The minister then reads a suitable passage such as 1 Corinthians 11:25, 26; Matthew 26:27-29; Mark 14:23-25; or Luke 22:20. Leaders kneel as the prayer is given over the wine. Again, deacons serve the congregation. Activities such as those suggested during the passing of the bread may be continued at this time. After the officiating ministers or elders have been served, all worshipers partake of the wine together.

An optional method is for the bread to be blessed and broken; then the bread and wine are placed on the same tray and passed to the congregation. The worshiper takes both from the tray at the same time. The bread is eaten, followed by silent prayer. Then after prayer over the wine, it is taken, followed by silent prayer. Where pews or seats are equipped with racks to hold the wine glasses, the collection of glasses is unnecessary until after the service.

5. Adventist Youth Society—(See p. 82.)—Resource materials to help the local church Adventist Youth Society leadership are available from the division, union, and local conference/mission/field Youth departments. Included in these resource materials is *Youth Ministry Accent*, a quarterly journal published by the General Conference Youth Department. There are also many leaflets available covering a broad spectrum of topics to help in youth ministry. These may be secured from the conference/mission/field Youth departments and Adventist Book Centers.

6. Adventist Youth Society—(See p. 82.)—The Adventist Youth Society plan of organization is briefly outlined in Chapter 8, "Auxiliary Organizations." Detailed information is available from the conference/mission/field Youth director. It is essential that each church study its own youth and family profile, resources, personnel, facilities, and school relationships, developing the best youth ministry in keeping with these factors. In some places another term for "society," such as "fellowship" or "action," may be selected, but the name "Adventist Youth" should always be used to clearly identify the organization.

7. Adventist Junior Youth Society—(See p. 83.)—Each classroom is considered a separate society, with the teacher as the leader and students elected as society officers. Where

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there is no church school, the junior youth membership should be integrated into the overall youth program with a family-involvement approach.

8. Times of Meetings—(See p. 84.)—In order to strengthen and develop the outreach (missionary) spirit among our members, auxiliary Personal Ministries meetings might be conducted in one or more of the following ways:

a. The ten-minute weekly Personal Ministries meeting held each Sabbath, usually following the close of the Sabbath School and just preceding the preaching service.

b. A midweek meeting combined with the weekly prayer meeting. On this occasion, the first part of the service may be given to a devotional message, followed by a season of prayer, remembering that worship is vital in spiritual growth and preparation for service. The remainder of the meeting time may then be devoted to a training period for lay evangelistic service. Instruction in soul-winning methods is presented and the members are given opportunity to present for general discussion problems they have met in lay evangelism.

c. Church Personal Ministries meetings at various times, as best suited to local conditions. The Personal Ministries Council should carefully plan to make the Personal Ministries services of the church occasions for spiritual revival and practical training, and see that they are conducted with the same regularity and continuity as other meetings of the church.

9. Business Meetings—(See p. 86.)—Reports may comprise the following activities:

a. A report from the clerk showing the present membership of the church and the number of members received and those transferred to other churches. Note also should be made, giving the number but not necessarily the names, of those who may have had to be removed from fellowship during the year, as well as those who have died. A brief statement of the decisions of the church board in its meetings would naturally be of interest to all members of the church.

b. A report from the Personal Ministries leader, giving a statement of outreach (missionary) activities, including Community Services activities, together with any plans for future work. This should be followed by a report from the Personal Ministries secretary.

c. A report from the treasurer, showing the amount of tithe received and sent to the conference/mission/field treasurer; also a full statement of mission offerings received and forwarded; and a statement showing local church funds received and disbursed.

- d. A report from the deacons and deaconesses concerning visits to the members, their activities in behalf of the poor, and any other features that come under their supervision.
  - e. A report from the secretary of the young people's society outlining the activities in outreach (missionary) and other lines by the youth of the church.
  - f. A report from the Sabbath School secretary, giving the membership and other matters pertaining to the Sabbath School.
  - g. A report from the treasurer as to the financial status of the church school, with details as to its need in equipment and other matters.
  - h. A report from the principal or teacher of the church school, covering such matters as enrollment, the educational progress of the school, baptisms among the school children, and the results of the children's efforts in denominational endeavors.
  - i. A report from the Home and School Association leader, covering the activities and needs of that organization.
  - j. A report from the Communication secretary covering press, radio, television, and other related activities involving church and community.
10. Committees of the Board—(See p. 89.)—In very large churches, a committee for evangelistic planning may be appointed by the board. This will be composed of the heads of the church outreach departments with an elder as chairman. This committee will report to the church board and will also assume the task of department coordination of outreach programs.

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203-00Gd *CHURCH MANUAL*—PROPOSED FORMAT CHANGE -  
CHAPTER 8

VOTED, To approve the proposed format change of the *Church Manual*, Chapter 8, Auxiliary Organizations of the Church. The chapter will be divided into two sections: the main content, and notes containing explanatory material which will appear at the end of the chapter. Chapter 8 will read as follows:

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## CHAPTER 8

### AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS OF THE CHURCH AND THEIR OFFICERS

The structure of the church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, is vital for the spiritual growth of members and for the fulfillment of the mission of the church. It is the skeleton of the body. And “the whole body, joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love” (Eph. 4:16, RSV). The most important elements of the local church structure and organization are the church officer roles (see chapter 6) and the auxiliary organizations or departments. This chapter is a description of their design, objectives, leadership, functions, and activities. The departments in the local church are expected to cooperate with the corresponding departments of the local field/mission/conference, union, and division.

The work of the departments in the local church is closely tied to the work of the pastor because both are equally engaged in the same program of the church. The pastor serves as a close counselor to the committees of all auxiliary organizations, and the departments assist in correlation with the church in implementing its program. In case of emergency, or where circumstances require such action, the pastor may call a meeting of any committee or organization of the church to conduct necessary business in the interest of the church. Every local church should utilize the services of the departments described in this chapter to nurture its members and accomplish the mission given by Christ to the Christian church, and particularly to the remnant church in the end time (Matt. 28:19; Rev. 10:11; Rev. 14:6).

#### The Personal Ministries Department

The Personal Ministries Department provides resources and trains church members to unite their efforts with the ministry and church officers in the final proclamation of the gospel of salvation in Christ. The aim of the department is to enlist every member in active soul-winning service for God.

**Personal Ministries Council**—The Personal Ministries Council guides the outreach efforts of the local church and works under the direction of the church board. The council should meet at least once each month. This council shall consist of the following: Personal Ministries leader (chairperson), Personal Ministries secretary, pastor, an elder, church treasurer, Dorcas Society leader, Dorcas Society secretary, Adventist Men’s organization leader, Interest coordinator, Health Ministries leader, Communication secretary, Sabbath School superintendent, Youth leader, coordinator for Ministry to People with Disabilities, Children’s Ministries coordinator, Women’s Ministries leader, director of Community Services center or Community Services

leader, and other members as deemed necessary. The Personal Ministries Council may assign subcommittees for specialized tasks as deemed necessary. All subcommittees report to the Personal Ministries Council. (See Notes, #1, p. 133.)

**Personal Ministries Leader**—The Personal Ministries leader is elected by the church to lead in training and directing the church in active outreach (missionary) service and is chairperson of the Personal Ministries Council. It is the leader's duty to present to the church, in the monthly Sabbath Personal Ministries service and in the church business meetings, a report on the total outreach (missionary) activities of the church.

**Personal Ministries Secretary**—The Personal Ministries secretary is elected by the church and serves as the representative of the Adventist Book Center for all departments of the church. The secretary works closely with the Personal Ministries leader in developing the outreach (missionary) programs of the church. (See Notes, #2, p. 134.)

**Community Services/Dorcas Society**—The Community Services/Dorcas Society is an important feature of the outreach (missionary) activities of the church. The leader of this society, the assistant leader (if needed), and the secretary-treasurer, are elected at the regular church election. This society gathers and prepares clothing, food, and other supplies for the poor, needy, and unfortunate. This organization works in close cooperation with the deacons and deaconesses of the church. Community Services/Dorcas ministry, however, includes more than giving material aid; it encompasses also adult education, visiting, homemaking, home nursing, counseling, and other services. The church Personal Ministries Department has primary responsibility for this work.

**Adventist Men**—Adventist Men is another subsidiary group within the Personal Ministries Department. (See Notes, #3, p. 135.)

**Community Services Center**—Where a church operates a Community Services Center, the Personal Ministries Council is the governing committee of the center. The director of the center is appointed by the Personal Ministries Council and is a member of the council. (See Notes, #4, p. 135.)

**Ministry to People with Disabilities**—Through the Ministry to People with Disabilities, a local church Personal Ministries Council should give special attention to members and others with disabilities. It should develop programs for witnessing to people who have disabilities; make recommendations to the church board regarding possible actions which could make the church facilities more accessible for people with disabilities; assist the church in transportation solutions for people with disabilities; and advise departmental and church leadership regarding possible involvement of members who have disabilities.

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The coordinator of Ministry to People with Disabilities serves as a liaison with organizations providing services for people with disabilities such as Christian Record Services and promotes Christian Record Services programs in the local church.

### The Sabbath School Department

The Sabbath School is the primary religious education system of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and has four purposes: study of the Scripture, fellowship, community outreach, and world mission emphasis.

In cooperation with world divisions, the specific mission of the General Conference Sabbath School Department is to distribute the *Sabbath School Bible Study Guide* for all age levels, provide designs for Sabbath School programming within the context of the various world division cultures, provide resources and training systems for Sabbath School teachers, and promote world mission Sabbath School offerings.

“The Sabbath school is an important branch of the missionary work, not only because it gives to young and old a knowledge of God’s word, but because it awakens in them a love for its sacred truths, and a desire to study them for themselves; above all, it teaches them to regulate their lives by its holy teachings.”—*Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, pp. 10, 11.

“The Sabbath school, if rightly conducted, is one of God’s great instrumentalities to bring souls to a knowledge of the truth.”—*Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, p. 115.

The officers, teachers, and entire Sabbath School membership should cooperate with the other departments of the church in all outreach (missionary) work and soul-saving activities, as well as energetically carrying on Sabbath School evangelism by means of the regular Sabbath School classes, and such activities as Decision Days, pastors’ Bible classes, Community Guest Days, Vacation Bible Schools, and branch Sabbath Schools, including Neighborhood Bible Clubs and Story Hours. In churches which have a Children’s Ministries Department, Vacation Bible Schools, children’s branch Sabbath Schools, Neighborhood Bible Clubs, and Story Hours will come under the direction of the Children’s Ministries Department. (See p. 118.) Likewise, all departments of the church should work together with the Sabbath School to make the work of the entire church as effective as possible.

The officers of the Sabbath School should be members of the local church. They are elected for one or two years as determined by the local church. (See p. 45.) The officers who serve as members of the Sabbath School Council are elected in the same manner and at the same time as the officers of the church. The list of Sabbath School officers and their assistants who are to be elected by the church is as follows: superintendent, with one or more assistants;



secretary, with one or more assistants; a leader for each division, including the adult and extension divisions; a Children's Ministries coordinator and/or Vacation Bible School director; and an Investment secretary.

**The Sabbath School Council**—The Sabbath School Council is the administrative body of the Sabbath School. It consists of the following: superintendent (to serve as chairperson), assistant superintendent(s), secretary (to serve as secretary of the council), assistant secretaries, division leaders, Investment secretary, Personal Ministries leader, Children's Ministries coordinator and/or Vacation Bible School director, an elder (appointed by the church board or by the board of elders), and the pastor. As soon as possible after the officers are elected, the superintendent should call a Sabbath School Council meeting to appoint, as needed for the various divisions, other officers who do not serve as members of the Sabbath School Council. These may include assistant division leaders, division secretaries, music directors, pianists and/or organists, and greeters.

In addition to the appointed officers listed in the paragraph above, the Sabbath School Council appoints the teachers for all divisions, who are then approved by the church board. Careful study should be given to the needs of all groups. It is advisable to consult with the division leaders, particularly when selecting teachers for the children's divisions.

Because of the importance of maintaining the integrity of the truths being taught and maintaining a high quality of teaching, great care should be exercised in the choice of Sabbath School teachers. The time allotted for teaching should be at least thirty minutes. All teachers shall be members of the church in regular standing.

The Sabbath School Council is responsible for the successful operation of the entire Sabbath School through the leadership of its chairperson, the superintendent. The council should meet regularly as needed to affect proper coordination of the program for all divisions. The council should ensure that program helps and materials, including the *Sabbath School Bible Study Guide* prepared by the General Conference, are supplied in sufficient quantities and in a timely manner.

**The Superintendent**—The Sabbath School superintendent is the leading officer of the Sabbath School. As soon as the superintendent is elected, he/she should begin planning for the smooth and effective operation of the school. The superintendent should support the plans and emphases of the Sabbath School Department of the conference/mission/field. The superintendent is expected to abide by the decisions of the Sabbath School Council concerning the operation of the Sabbath School. (See Notes, #5, p. 135.)

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The Assistant Superintendent—One or more assistant superintendents may be elected to assist the superintendent as needed. The assistant(s) may be assigned specific responsibilities such as: promoting Sabbath School evangelism and world missions; coordinating the weekly mission emphasis, and planning and promoting offering goals; fostering and coordinating evangelistic outreach plans and activities in the community; and caring for membership by checking Sabbath School rolls with the church membership roll, and then making and implementing plans to increase Sabbath School attendance and membership. Such plans should encourage individual and class outreach to contact non-attending and new members.

The Secretary—Faithfulness, accuracy, and Christian courtesy are especially necessary in the work of the secretary. (See Notes, #6, p. 136.)

Assistant Secretary—In the absence of the secretary, an assistant secretary assumes the responsibilities. The assistant secretary should be present at each Sabbath School service, ready to assist by doing whatever the superintendent or the secretary may require.

If desired, the assistant may act as secretary of the teachers' meeting and report to the secretary any business that should be recorded.

Investment Secretary—The Investment secretary gives promotional leadership to the Investment Plan for mission support. He/She encourages investment activity in all divisions of the Sabbath School, keeping all members informed of progress.

Vacation Bible School Director—The Vacation Bible School director leads in organizing, promoting, and launching community evangelism through the annual Vacation Bible School. (In some churches this responsibility may be given to the Children's Ministries coordinator.)

The Music Director—A music director may be appointed by the Sabbath School Council to lead the music of the school and plan with the division leader for the presentation of this phase of worship each Sabbath.

As an expression of worship, care should be taken to provide music which will glorify God. Singers should be as carefully selected as are the workers for other parts of the Sabbath School service and should be measured by the same standards. (See p. 84.)

The Pianist and/or Organist—The Sabbath School pianists and/or organists are appointed by the Sabbath School Council.

Sabbath School Division Leaders—A leader is elected for each division of the Sabbath School by the church board. Assistants, as needed, may be appointed by the Sabbath School

Council. More information on the age-related divisions, ranging from beginners through adult, is detailed in the *Sabbath School Handbook* which may be obtained from the Adventist Book Center or the conference/mission/field Sabbath School Department.

Duties of division leaders include arranging for the weekly program of the Sabbath School. Every division should follow the suggested schedule for that division as outlined in the *Sabbath School Handbook* and should always include a time for mission emphasis and for lesson study discussion appropriate to the age level of those in that Sabbath School division. Division leaders need to be sure that there are adequate physical facilities and supplies of the *Sabbath School Bible Study Guide* and weekly papers for all members and visitors, as well as goal devices, charts, and other teaching aids as needed.

Extension Division—The extension division cares for those who are unable to attend Sabbath School due to age or infirmity. Special information on the work of the extension division leader may be found in the *Sabbath School Handbook*.

Sabbath School Teachers—All teachers are chosen by the Sabbath School Council and approved by the church board to serve for one year. These individuals should have an aptitude for teaching and be willing to study ways to improve their teaching ability. They should be diligent in their preparation, be regular and punctual in attendance, and set an example to the class in the daily study of the Sabbath School lesson.

Special effort should be made to select teachers for children and youth from among those members who have their special interest at heart and who have the ability to meet their needs.

All teachers should be encouraged to participate in the teacher training courses published by the General Conference and/or division which are available through the conference/mission/field Sabbath School Department.

The Sabbath School Teachers' Meeting—It is recommended that every Sabbath School have a weekly teachers' meeting. The superintendent should have charge, although someone else may be appointed to conduct the survey of the next Sabbath's lesson. The best results are obtained when the teachers' meeting is held prior to the Sabbath, as this provides opportunity for private study both before and after the meeting; it is also likely to be less hurried than if held on Sabbath morning. Sufficient time should be allowed for the teachers' meeting, and at least three things should be accomplished: a profitable survey of the next Sabbath's lesson, a brief consideration of one or more Sabbath School goals, and discussion of any general problem requiring attention.

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**Sabbath School Lessons**—Realizing that “None but those who have fortified the mind with the truths of the Bible will stand through the last great conflict” (*The Great Controversy*, pp. 593, 594), the Sabbath School Department leaders should do all that is possible to encourage regular systematic study of the Word. Sabbath School lesson materials are designed to encourage the habit of daily feasting on the Word. This time-honored practice has done much to maintain Christian unity throughout the world church.

The General Conference publishes Sabbath School lessons for each division of the Sabbath School. Every member should have access to those lessons through the *Sabbath School Bible Study Guide* appropriate to the member’s age level. Helps for leaders and teachers are produced by the General Conference and/or division, and the appropriate helps should be made available to every leader and teacher in each Sabbath School division.

**Sabbath School Offerings**—All Sabbath School offerings are to be carefully recorded by the Sabbath School secretary and handed to the church treasurer at the earliest suitable moment. When the extension division offerings are received, they should be added to the offerings already received from the Sabbath School.

With the exception of the expense fund, all Sabbath School offerings are General Conference offerings and are to be passed on in their entirety by the church treasurer to the conference/mission/field for transfer to the General Conference. These funds include the regular Sabbath School weekly offering, the Thirteenth Sabbath offering, Sabbath School Investment, and Birthday-Thank offering. They are all mission funds, each of which is to be identified as a separate fund in the regular system of records from the local church to the General Conference. This is necessary to enable the General Conference to appropriate the percentages used for special projects according to church policy. No mission funds may be retained by the local church or conference/mission/field.

**Expense Money**—Many Sabbath Schools take offerings at stated periods for Sabbath School expense. (See Notes, #7, p. 136.)

The Sabbath School expense offering and the mission offering shall not be taken as one offering and divided according to an agreed-upon formula or percentage. Sabbath School expense offerings must be kept entirely separate from the mission offerings.

**The Quarterly Report**—The Quarterly Report should be completed immediately after the last Sabbath of the quarter and mailed before the stated deadline to the conference/mission/field Sabbath School and Personal Ministries director(s). It should be presented at the quarterly business meeting of the church. The secretary should send the report on the appropriate form to the conference/mission/field Sabbath School and Personal Ministries director(s), place a copy in

the secretary's permanent file, and provide copies for the Sabbath School superintendent and the pastor.

### Adventist Youth Society

The Adventist Youth Society is a department of the church through which the church works for and through her youth.

"Moses answered, 'We will go with our young and old, with our sons and daughters, and with our flocks and herds, because we are to celebrate a festival to the Lord'" (Ex. 10:9, NIV). "These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the door frames of your houses and on your gates" (Deut. 6:6-8, NIV). "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and purity" (1 Tim. 4:12, NIV).

"We have an army of youth today who can do much if they are properly directed and encouraged. . . . We want them to be blessed of God. We want them to act a part in well-organized plans for helping other youth."—Ellen G. White, in *General Conference Bulletin*, Jan. 29, 30, 1893, p. 24.

The servant of God called for the establishment of a youth organization in each church and told what kind of organization it should be. "Let there be a company formed somewhat after the order of the Christian Endeavor Society. . . ."—*Counsels on Health*, p. 537. "Let there be companies organized in every church to do this work."—Ellen G. White, in *Signs of the Times*, May 29, 1893.

"When the youth give their hearts to God, our responsibility for them does not cease. They must be interested in the Lord's work, and led to see that He expects them to do something to advance His cause. It is not enough to show how much needs to be done, and to urge the youth to act a part. They must be taught how to labor for the Master. They must be trained, disciplined, drilled, in the best methods of winning souls to Christ. Teach them to try in a quiet, unpretending way to help their young companions. Let different branches of missionary effort be systematically laid out, in which they may take part, and let them be given instruction and help. Thus they will learn to work for God."—*Gospel Workers*, p. 210.

"With such an army of workers as our youth, rightly trained, might furnish, how soon the message of a crucified, risen, and soon-coming Saviour might be carried to the whole world!"—*Messages to Young People*, p. 196.

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While there is to be an active Adventist Youth Society in every church, it is important that the youth program not be isolated from the rest of the church. In addition to their participation in the youth organization, the young people should be integrated into responsible leadership and involvement in the entire church program. There should be young elders, young deacons and deaconesses, et cetera, working with experienced church officers. In all lines of church work the youth should be active. "In order that the work may go forward in all its branches, God calls for youthful vigor, zeal, and courage. He has chosen the youth to aid in the advancement of His cause. To plan with clear mind and execute with courageous hand demands fresh, uncrippled energies. Young men and women are invited to give God the strength of their youth, that through the exercise of their powers, through keen thought and vigorous action, they may bring glory to Him and salvation to their fellow-men."—*Gospel Workers*, p. 67.

Mission Statement—The primary focus of youth ministry is the salvation of youth through Jesus Christ. We understand youth ministry to be that work of the church that is conducted for, with, and by young people.<sup>1</sup>

Our task is to:

1. Lead youth to understand their individual worth and to discover and develop their spiritual gifts and abilities.
2. Equip and empower youth for a life of service with God's church and the community.
3. Ensure the integration of youth into all aspects of church life and leadership in order that they might be full participants in the mission of the church. (See Notes, #8, p. 136.)

Objectives—In response to these inspired directives, the Youth Department was organized to give leadership training and to provide resource materials and evangelistic plans for the Adventist Youth Society in the local churches. The Spirit of Prophecy sets forth the objectives of the youth organization as follows: (1) to train the youth to work for other youth, (2) to recruit the youth to help their church and "those who profess to be Sabbathkeepers," and (3) to work "for those who are not of our faith."—*Signs of the Times*, May 29, 1893.

In seeking to reach these objectives the youth are called upon (1) to pray together, (2) to study the Word together, (3) to fellowship together in Christian social interaction, (4) to act together in small groups to carry out well-laid plans for witnessing, (5) to develop tact and skill and talent in the Master's service, and (6) to encourage one another in spiritual growth.

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<sup>1</sup>Adopted by the General Conference and Division Youth Directors, July 1993.

The *Aim* of the Adventist Youth Society is: "The Advent Message to All the World in My Generation."

The *Motto* is: "The Love of Christ Constrains Me."

Membership in the Adventist Youth Society—There are three categories of membership in the Adventist Youth Society. (See Notes, #9, p. 137.)

The Adventist Youth Ministries Committee—The Adventist Youth Ministries Committee is the umbrella organization in the local church responsible for the general planning of the youth ministry program. (See p. 76.) It includes the elected officers of the society plus the Personal Ministries leader, youth Sabbath School division leaders, Health Ministries leader, Pathfinder Club director, Adventurer Club director, principal of the school, if there is such, the sponsor, and the pastor. The Adventist Youth Society leader, who is a member of the local church board, chairs this committee.

The committee should meet as often as necessary to plan and direct a successful youth ministry in the local church. Committee meetings should include time for prayer, a study of ways to help the youth spiritually, and plans for witnessing activities. The committee will also be responsible for seeing that regular meetings are scheduled for the youth and will work with other departments in coordinating the youth program in the local church. There should be short- and long-range goals if youth ministry is to be effective in reaching its objectives.

The Adventist Youth Society Committee—The Adventist Youth Society Committee is responsible for senior youth activities of the local church and works in coordination with the other youth entities through the Adventist Youth Ministries Committee. Where there is no Pathfinder or Adventurer program, the AYS will include these younger members in a Junior Society.

Officers of the Adventist Youth Society—A chief factor in the success of any Adventist Youth Society is its leadership. When the officers are dedicated, active Christians, with initiative and ability to organize and inspire others, the work will go forward, young people will be saved and trained in God's service, and the whole church will be strengthened.

The officers of the Adventist Youth Society which are elected by the local church are: youth leader, associate youth leader, secretary-treasurer, assistant secretary-treasurer, chorister, pianist or organist, and sponsor, who may be one of the local elders. Since music plays such an important role in the formation of the youth character, musicians should be as carefully selected as the rest of the officers of the Adventist Youth Society. (See p. 84.) This group forms the nucleus for the Adventist Youth Society Committee which in counsel with the young people

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appoints other officers such as fellowship or social leader, devotional leader, librarian, publicity leader, and the various action group leaders. In smaller churches one person will of necessity carry several responsibilities. As many youth as possible should be involved in the planning and execution of the youth program.

**Youth Leader and Associate Youth Leader**—The Youth leader as a follower of Jesus must exemplify the graces of a genuine Christian, with a burden for soul-winning and a contagious enthusiasm. In helping motivate the youth to work together and take responsibilities, the leader will be in the background—guiding, counseling, and encouraging the youth, helping them to gain experience and the joys of achievement. It will be necessary to study the youth profile of the church and seek to involve every youth in the society.

The Youth leader will keep in close touch with pastors and sponsors and with the conference/mission/field Youth director, taking advantage of every opportunity for in-service training, leading the society into a cooperative relationship with the church and the conference/mission/field.

The associate Youth leader will assist the Youth leader in this work and in the absence of the Youth leader will chair the Adventist Youth Society Committee and perform the duties of the leader. The associate will also be assigned certain responsibilities as determined by the committee. In smaller churches the committee may assign the assistant to the office of secretary-treasurer.

**Secretary-Treasurer and Assistant**—As in the case of the other officers, the secretary-treasurer's first qualification is spirituality and dedication. One should know the Lord, be able to speak from personal experience, and have a burden for young people. The secretary-treasurer will keep a record of the activities of the society and send in a monthly report on special forms provided to the local conference/mission/field youth director who will also encourage the young people to report their witnessing activities during the ten-minute Personal Ministries period at the close of the Sabbath School class lesson study. (See Notes, #10, p. 138.)

The assistant secretary-treasurer (when needed) assists with the secretary-treasurer's work as may be mutually arranged and acts in the absence of the secretary-treasurer.

**Adventist Youth Society Sponsor**—This may be an elder or other qualified person on the church board who understands thoroughly the objectives of the society and who is sympathetic with the youth and their involvement in the church's ministries. This individual serves as a guide or counselor to the Adventist Youth Society officers and meets with them regularly at the time of the Adventist Youth Society Committee meeting. The sponsor will be one whom the young



people love and look to for counsel, working with the Youth leader in bringing the needs of the society before the church board.

The sponsor should become acquainted with the local conference/mission/field Youth director, keeping him or her informed of any changes in officer personnel and other matters relating to the Adventist Youth Society. Along with the society officers, the sponsor should attend the youth training institutes of the local conference/mission/field to keep pace with what is developing in youth ministry and thus be more effective in giving counsel. It would be well if the sponsor could serve over a several-year period for continuity.

**Adventist Youth Features**—As young people grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ, the Youth Department seeks to provide them with age-related, dynamic, active programming that provides an environment for development of spiritual gifts in preparation for this life and the life to come. These include the following:

1. Devotional and Educational—Morning Watch, Bible reading plans, Encounter series, Adventist Youth Week of Prayer, Youth Bible Conference, Youth Ministry Training Course, Pathfinder Staff Training Course, Adventist Youth Book Club, Guide, Master Guide and related leadership training classes, Adventist Youth Honors, Outdoor Club, and others.
2. Witnessing—Voice of Youth, Friendship Teams, branch Sabbath Schools, Story Hours, Adventist Youth Taskforce, Adventist Youth Service Volunteers, Festival of the Word, Youth Rallies, Sunshine or Singing Band, Community Services, Literature and Correspondence Action Group, Youth Music Witnessing Teams, and AY Honors.
3. Recreation—Social to Save, nature exploration, outdoor clubs, Adventist Youth Camping, specialty camps, Adventist Youth Honors, Silver Award, Gold Award.

### The Adventist Junior Youth Society

The Adventist Junior Youth Society (AJY) has as its objectives the training of junior youth for Christian leadership and service and the development of each individual to the fullest potential. In those churches where there are church schools, the Adventist Junior Youth Society is a part of the school curriculum, with the teacher as the leader of the society. When the Adventist Junior Youth Society is conducted in the church school, each classroom is considered a society, with pupils in the lower elementary designated as preparatory members. Pupils in the upper elementary are regular members of the Adventist Junior Youth Society.

While the teacher is leader or sponsor of the society, the students should lead out in the meetings, which are usually held weekly during the first class period. The student officers—

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which would include student leader, associate leader, secretary, treasurer, song leader, pianist, and any other leadership responsibility the class may decide upon—are selected by the class in counsel with the teacher. Usually the officers serve from one month to one quarter in order to give all the students opportunity for leadership training and responsibility. Where there is no church school the junior youth may be integrated into the youth ministry program of the church, or a separate Adventist Junior Youth Society may be conducted at an appropriate time. The Pathfinder Club has taken the place of the Adventist Junior Youth Society in some churches, since its specialized program incorporates the same objectives plus other opportunities. Where there is a Pathfinder Club and an Adventist Junior Youth Society there must be close coordination and cooperation between the two, with the leader of the Adventist Junior Youth Society being on the Pathfinder Club Staff Council (as per the *Pathfinder Staff Manual*) and vice versa. (See Notes, #11, p. 138.)

Members of the Adventist Junior Youth Society will learn and by the grace of God strive to follow the Adventist Junior Youth Pledge and Law and its ideals:

#### Adventist Junior Youth Pledge

By the grace of God—

I will be pure and kind and true,  
I will keep the Adventist Junior Youth Law,  
I will be a servant of God and a friend to man.

#### Adventist Junior Youth Law

The Adventist Junior Youth Law is for me to—

Keep the Morning Watch,  
Do my honest part,  
Care for my body,  
Keep a level eye,  
Be courteous and obedient,  
Walk softly in the sanctuary,  
Keep a song in my heart,  
Go on God's errands.

The Aim and Motto are the same as for the senior youth.

AY Classes—Six personal development classes are offered the junior youth. These are Friend, Companion, Explorer, Ranger, Voyager, and Guide. An insignia is awarded to those who

qualify in each class. Achievement classes are also offered to children ages 6 through 9: Busy Bee, Sunbeam, Builder, and Helping Hand.

**Adventist Youth Honors**—A wide range of Adventist Youth Honors—in arts and crafts, health and science, household arts, mechanics, outreach (missionary) endeavor, nature, outdoor industries, and recreational pursuits—includes levels of achievement in all of these for both junior youth and senior youth. A Master Award achievement program presents a further challenge to young people.

### Pathfinder Club

The Pathfinder Club is a church-centered program which provides an outlet for the spirit of adventure and exploration that is found in every junior youth. This includes carefully tailored activities in outdoor living, nature exploration, crafts, hobbies, or vocations beyond the possibilities in an average Adventist Junior Youth Society. In this setting spiritual emphasis is well received, and the Pathfinder Club has well demonstrated its soul-winning influence. In many local churches Pathfinder Clubs have replaced the traditional Adventist Junior Youth Society, and where there is a church school the Pathfinder Club should supplement the work of the Adventist Junior Youth Society.

A sampling of activities in the Pathfinder Club includes camporees, fairs, craft study, nature exploration, Bible study, witnessing projects, field trips, bikeathons, and many other interesting adventures.

Youth from ages 10 to 15 are eligible to become members of the Pathfinder Club through a special induction ceremony. The triangular emblem has been adopted internationally even though there is sometimes a change in the name “Pathfinder” through translation and local equivalence. Members wear an approved Pathfinder uniform to all club functions, including the weekly club meeting, Pathfinder fairs, and camporees, and on Sabbath morning to church for Pathfinder Day. In some churches the age groups are divided into the Junior Pathfinder Club and the Teen Pathfinder Club and when older Pathfinders reach the age of 15 they may become staff members through a Teen Leadership Training (TLT) program.

The Pathfinder Club director and deputy director(s) are elected for one or two year terms by the church at the time of the general elections. (See p. 45.) If two deputy directors are elected there should be one of each sex. One of the deputy directors may also serve as club scribe and treasurer. The director is a member of the church board and also of the Adventist Youth Ministries Committee. Additional Pathfinder staff include instructors of craft and nature classes and counselors who are responsible for a unit of six to eight Pathfinders.

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Many resource materials are available from the conference/mission/field Youth director.

#### Adventurer Club

The Adventurer Club is a parent/church-centered program which provides parents with a tool useable with their 6- through 9-year-old children and is designed to stimulate the children's budding curiosity towards the world about them. This program includes age-specific activities that involve both parent and child in recreational activities, simple crafts, appreciation of God's creation, and other activities that are of interest to that age. All is carried out with a spiritual focus setting the stage for participation in the church as a Pathfinder. (See Notes, #12, p. 138.)

The Adventurer Club director and that person's immediate associates are elected for one or two year terms by the church at the time of general elections. Additional staff are selected by the administrative staff of the club. The director is a member of the church board and of the local church Adventist Youth Ministries Committee. The resource materials are available from the conference/mission/field Youth director.

#### Christian Education and the Church School

**Philosophy**—The church operates a school system to ensure that its youth may receive a balanced physical, mental, spiritual, social, and vocational education in harmony with denominational standards and ideals, with God as the source of all moral value and truth. The stated interest of the church is the restoration in man of the image of his Maker, resulting in the optimum development of the whole person for both this life and the life hereafter.

The church conducts its own schools, kindergarten through university, for the purpose of transmitting to its children its own ideals, beliefs, attitudes, values, habits, and customs. Secular schools seek to prepare patriotic and law-abiding citizens, and teach certain values; Adventist schools, in addition, aim at developing loyal, conscientious Seventh-day Adventist Christians. A true knowledge of God, fellowship and companionship with Him in study and service, likeness to Him in character development, are the source, the means, and the aim of Seventh-day Adventist education.

**Objectives**—Schools operated by the church will endeavor to provide for all of their students an education within the framework of the science of salvation. The fundamentals and common branches of knowledge are to be studied to develop proficiency in their use.

Specifically, these schools will endeavor to operate for each student in the upgrading of health and temperance principles, in the command of fundamental learning processes, and in the teaching of worthy home membership, vocational skills, civic education, worthy use of leisure,

and ethical maturity. They will aim to reach objectives of spiritual dedication, self-realization, social adjustment, civic responsibility, world mission and service, and economic sufficiency through high quality, Christ-centered teaching.

Church Education Secretary—Recognizing that a comprehensive understanding and clear vision of Christian education—whose ultimate aims harmonize with those of redemption—can be developed and fostered only where the church is continually reminded of the preeminent mission of such an education, each church shall elect an Education secretary to promote and generate support for Christian education. The Education secretary shall be a member of the Home and School Association executive committee, and will work in cooperation with the Association. (See Notes, #13, p. 139.)

#### Home and School Association

Purpose—The purpose of the association is twofold:

1. To provide parent education.
2. To unite the home, the school, and the church in their endeavors to provide Seventh-day Adventist Christian education for the children.

Objectives—1. To educate parents in cooperation with the church and school in their work of fostering the development of the whole child—"the harmonious development of the physical, the mental, and the spiritual powers."—*Education*, p. 13.

2. To promote cooperation between parents and teachers in the educational process.
3. To give guidance for establishing in the home an atmosphere of love and discipline in which Seventh-day Adventist Christian values can be instilled in children through Bible study, prayer, family worship, and the example of the parents.
4. To provide an opportunity for parents and teachers to develop a positive relationship in their work for the children.
5. To support the church school in its effort to more fully harmonize the principles of Christian education in philosophy, content, and methodology.
6. To strengthen the relationship between home and school by promoting such activities as:

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- a. Providing suggestions to the administration and school board for curriculum improvement.
- b. Encouraging frequent communication between home and school.
- c. Encouraging parents to visit the school.
- d. Encouraging teachers to visit the homes of students.
- e. Providing volunteer services as requested by the school.
- f. Assisting in providing the school with additional equipment and facilities not provided by the church or conference/mission/field.

7. To work toward the goal of enrolling every child of the church in the church school. Earnest endeavor should be made to provide ways for disadvantaged children to attend church school so that no Seventh-day Adventist child will miss the opportunity of a Seventh-day Adventist education.

**Membership**—Members of the church and patrons of the school are members of the association.

**Officers**—All parents of students are encouraged to be active in the Home and School Association. However, the officers of this association shall be members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The officers shall consist of a leader, assistant leader, secretary-treasurer, librarian, and the church educational secretary. (See p. 130.) To give continuity, it is recommended that some of the officers be reelected for a second term.

**Leader**—The leader of the Home and School Association shall be a church member with experience and success in training children and whose mind is open to new ideas, who is apt to teach, and who believes in the importance of Christian education.

**Secretary-Treasurer**—The secretary-treasurer is to keep the records of the association and to report to the director of the Department of Education of the conference/mission/field at the beginning and close of the school year.

Association funds are to be channeled through the church/school treasurer, kept as a separate account, and audited in harmony with denominational policy.

Ex Officio—The school principal shall be an ex officio member of the Home and School Association Committee by virtue of position.

#### The Church School Board

Membership—The administrative body of every elementary school and junior academy operated by a single church shall be a board elected by the church or a school committee appointed by the church board. Hence, this body may be a separate school board, the church board, or a school committee of the church board appointed for this purpose.

Where two or more churches unite to operate a school the administrative body shall be a union school board. (See Notes, #14, p. 139.)

One or more members of the school board may be chosen from among the members of the church board, so that the school board may be closely related to the church board.

The pastor of the church should be a member of the school board. Where the school is operated by more than one church, it is the general practice that the pastors of the churches concerned are members of the school board.

In junior academies and in elementary schools the principal or the head teacher of the school should be a member of the board.

Some members of the board may be parents of children attending the school, so that the board may profit from parental viewpoints and counsel which result from close-up observation and experience.

Officers—The officers shall consist of a chairperson and a secretary. In union school boards serving a school sponsored by two or more churches a treasurer, a vice-chairperson, and an assistant secretary should also be appointed. Where the school is operated by one church, the chairperson should be elected by the church; where the school is operated by two or more churches, the chairperson should be elected by the board from among its own members at the first meeting after its election. In the event that agreement between the churches is not possible, the appointment will be made by the conference/mission/field board of education/conference/mission/field committee. The principal of the school is generally appointed as secretary of the board.

Relation of Union School Boards to the Local Churches—Where two or more churches operate a union school, any action of the board which involves the churches in financial obligations must be submitted to the respective boards of the churches for approval.

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**Term of Office**—Where a separate school board is elected, one of two plans may be followed with reference to the time when its members are elected and the term of office: (1) All the members may be elected at the close of the calendar or fiscal year and function for one year; (2) the members of the first board may be chosen for terms of one, two, and three years, respectively, the new members being chosen each succeeding year for a period of three years. The purpose of this plan is to have a nucleus of experienced members on the board to ensure a continuity of successful educational policy.

Vacancies are filled in the same way as vacancies in any other church office, the one filling the vacancy to officiate for only the remainder of the unexpired term.

**Meetings**—The school board or school committee should meet at a regular time and place at least once each month during the school year.

**Qualifications**—The members of the school board shall be chosen for their consecration, their belief in and loyalty to the principles of Christian education, their good judgment and tact, their experience in school matters, and their financial judgment and ability. They should believe in, and have a willingness to follow, denominational educational policies and recommendations.

Because the elementary school and/or junior academy board is an important organization in the local church, the members of it should be chosen with great care. Persons who do not believe in Christian schools or are unsympathetic with their program should not be chosen as members of the school board. Conviction as to God-given plans, faith, courage, and understanding are essential for success in this as in other enterprises.

**Duties of the Officers**—The chairperson calls meetings, presides, and sees that the actions of the board are carried out. He/She also countersigns all financial orders issued by the secretary.

The chairperson is a member ex officio of the elementary school and junior academy Inspection Committee. This committee has the responsibility of surveying and evaluating the elementary school and junior academy and their work.

The secretary keeps a record of each meeting in a permanent record book, issues orders for money in the payment of accounts or obligations, and carries on the necessary correspondence for the board.

Where a single church operates a school the work of the treasurer is usually carried by the church treasurer or an assistant church treasurer, who receives tuition and other moneys; pays out money on the order of the secretary, countersigned by the chairperson; keeps a careful account of all money passing through his/her hands, making a permanent record of the same in a suitable



record book; and at each monthly meeting renders a detailed report to the board. In a union board, where two or more churches are involved, a treasurer is appointed by the board to do this work.

Functions—(For North American Division see the *North American Division Working Policy*, F 30 35, School Operating Board—Functions.)

### Communication Department

Importance of Effective Communication—Through the years divine instruction has come to the church concerning the importance of using contemporary communication media in spreading the gospel. We have been counseled:

“We must take every justifiable means of bringing the light before the people. Let the press be utilized, and let every advertising agency be employed that will call attention to the work.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 36.

“Means will be devised to reach hearts. Some of the methods used in this work will be different from the methods used in the work in the past . . .”—*Evangelism*, p. 105.

The Organization—The organization of this ministry calls for the enlistment of support from every denominational worker, layperson, and Seventh-day Adventist institution. The Communication Department promotes the use of a sound program of public relations and all contemporary communication techniques, sustainable technologies, and media in the promulgation of the everlasting gospel. It calls for the election of a Communication secretary in every local church and, where needed, a Communication Committee.

The Communication Secretary's Work—The church Communication secretary is responsible for the gathering and dissemination of news. As opportunity presents, the secretary will place on the air persons of interest in interview-type programs, and arrange for news features on such persons. Every effort will be made to maintain a friendly, cooperative relationship with editors and other communications-media personnel. (See Notes, #15, p. 139.)

The Communication secretary will cooperate with the conference/mission/field Communication secretary in carrying out the plans of the conference/mission/field and reporting as requested and will also present periodic reports to the church business meeting.

The Communication Committee—In a large church a Communication Committee may more adequately handle the many facets of the public relations and communication program of the church than can a secretary working alone. This committee, with the Communication

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secretary as chairperson, will be elected at the time of the general election of church officers. Individual members of the committee may be assigned specific communication responsibilities such as working with the press, with media producers and with on-line personnel, and with the internal media of the church. Where there is a church institution in the area a member of its public relations staff should be invited to sit with the committee. (See Notes, #16, p. 140.)

The pastor, who is primarily responsible for the communication program of his church, will work closely in an advisory capacity with the Communication secretary and/or the Communication Committee.

Relation to Other Departments of Church—To serve the church properly the Communication secretary should be alerted regarding plans and scheduled events. Any auxiliary unit of the church organization may appoint an individual to provide the Communication secretary or Communication Committee with news of that particular department's activities.

In Large Adventist Centers—If several churches in a city arrange for a central Communication Committee, each Communication secretary should be a member and should work in harmony with any general plan that will better coordinate the handling of news and other media activities for the several churches. The establishment of this committee would be initiated by the conference/mission/field Communication director. Meetings of such a central committee would be called and presided over by a chairperson selected by the group.

The Communication Departments of the division, union, and local conference/mission/field provide detailed instruction for Communication secretaries and, by their printed materials, correspondence, and other means, give constant help and inspiration.

Qualifications—The Communication secretary should be carefully chosen for (1) the ability rightly to represent the church, (2) sound judgment, (3) organizational ability, (4) ability to put facts down on paper in attractive and persuasive grammatical form, (5) willingness to carry out an assignment, (6) ability to meet people.

#### Health Ministries Department

The church accepts its responsibility to make Christ known to the world and believes this includes a moral obligation to preserve human dignity by obtaining optimal levels of physical, mental, and spiritual health. In addition to ministering to those who are ill, this responsibility extends to the prevention of disease through effective health education and leadership in promoting optimum health, free of tobacco, alcohol, other drugs, and unclean foods. Where possible, members shall be encouraged follow a primarily vegetarian diet.

**Health Ministries Leader**—For an efficient program to be planned and implemented in the church, it is necessary for the church to elect a Health Ministries leader. He/She should be health-oriented and interested in promoting the church's standards in healthful living among the members and in the community through church-operated health ministries programs. The leader should be able to screen programs and information that are representative of the ideals and philosophy of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and to integrate them into an effective spiritual-physical witness. (See Notes, #17, p. 140.)

**Associate Church Health Ministries Leader**—The associate leader's duties shall be to assist in the leader's responsibilities.

**Church Health Ministries Council**—Where practical, a church Health Ministries Council may be appointed. This council is designed to provide dedicated leadership to the church membership and to the community in the field of healthful living, and to assist in cooperative soul-saving activities through a viable program of health and temperance and spiritual emphasis. (See Notes, #18, p. 141.)

The pastor, if not the chairman, should be an ex officio member of the council.

**Health Ministries Activities**—The church Health Ministries Council, in collaboration with the Personal Ministries Council, shall lead out in developing a schedule of health ministries activities that will include programs such as stop-smoking plans, cooking schools, health classes, stress-control programs, and other related endeavors.

**Health Ministries Society**—In some areas Health Ministries or Temperance societies may be established as separate entities as distinct from church organizations. The conference/mission/field director should be involved in establishing such organizations.

**World Health Ministries Sabbath Offering**—The entire offering is sent to the local conference/mission/field to be distributed according to policy among the General Conference, division, union, and conference/mission/field. Upon request to the conference/mission/field, up to 25 percent of the offering received in the local church may revert to the church for health ministries programs.

#### Stewardship Department

The Stewardship Department was organized to help members become effective stewards and to assist in the implementation of God's plan of systematic benevolence throughout the church. Since stewardship responsibility includes the proper management of the entire life,

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stewardship concepts encourage the proper care and use of the body temple, time, abilities, and material possessions. The department gives assistance in the planning and organization of church resources for a completed work. Its spiritual and financial objectives are summarized in the following statement: "When they shall arouse and lay their prayers, their wealth, and all their energies and resources at the feet of Jesus, the cause of truth will triumph."—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 475.

**Church Stewardship Leader**—The Stewardship leader, elected by the church, is chosen for an ability to implement the concepts and objectives outlined by the Stewardship Department and should possess the following qualifications: (1) be a spiritual leader, (2) be one who practices the principles of Christian stewardship, (3) have an understanding of the spiritual and financial program of the church, (4) be willing to dedicate the necessary time to plan, organize, and lead out in designated areas of responsibility in cooperation with the conference/mission/field Stewardship director, the pastor, and the church board.

The Stewardship leader acts in a liaison capacity between the conference/mission/field Stewardship Department and congregation. (See Notes, #19, p. 141.)

#### Department of Family Ministries

The over-arching objective of Family Ministries is to strengthen the family as a discipling center. The family was established by divine creation as the fundamental human institution. It is the primary setting in which values are learned and the capacity for close relationships with God and with other human beings is developed.

Family Ministries is a ministry of grace which acknowledges as normative the biblical teachings relating to the family and holds high God's ideals for family living. At the same time, it brings an understanding of the brokenness experienced by individuals and families in a fallen world. Thus Family Ministries seeks to enable families to stretch toward divine ideals, while at the same time ever extending the good news of God's saving grace and the promise of growth possible through the indwelling Spirit.

Family Ministries focuses on people in relationship. It is concerned with the needs of married couples, parents and children, the family needs of singles and all members of the wider family circle as they pass through life's predictable stages and contend with unexpected changes in their lives.

Family Ministries reinforces and encourages wholesome families. It helps individuals build and maintain strong family relationships because it recognizes that healthy Christian families make strong members for the kingdom of God and present a winsome witness to the

community around them. Family Ministries promotes understanding, acceptance, and love within the family and in the larger family of God and fosters the reconciliation and healing between the generations promised in the Elijah message of Malachi 4:5, 6. It extends hope and support to those who have been injured and hurt by abuse, family dysfunction, and broken relationships. Family Ministries fosters competence in a variety of interpersonal skills needed in relationships. It provides growth opportunities through family life education and enrichment. It encourages individuals, married couples, and families to avail themselves of professional counseling when necessary.

An adequate ministry to families will include: premarital guidance available to all couples before marriage; marriage strengthening opportunities; parent education, with attention given to the special needs of single parents and step-families; instruction in family to family evangelism; and support ministries to help families with special needs.

The Family Ministries Committee—To more effectively meet the needs of families in the church, the church board may establish a Family Ministries Committee, chaired by the Family Ministries leader(s). (See Notes, #20, p. 141.)

Family Ministries Leader(s)—An individual or married couple may be elected to serve as the Family Ministries leader(s). The individual(s) should have a positive attitude about God, self, others, and the church. The leader(s) should model strong and growing family relationships and exhibit a sincere interest in fostering the well-being of all families. In order to be effective, it is necessary for the Family Ministries leader(s) to have an understanding of God's redemptive plan for dealing with the brokenness in relationships which sin has brought. It is also important that the leader(s) be able to maintain confidentiality and know when and how to encourage individuals in critical situations to seek professional counseling. (See Notes, #21, p. 142.)

#### Department of Women's Ministries

The Department of Women's Ministries exists to uphold, encourage, and challenge Seventh-day Adventist women in their daily walk as disciples of Jesus Christ and as members of His world church. The mission of Women's Ministries is, in the larger sense, common to all Christians—that of uplifting Christ in the church and in the world.

Objectives—This ministry seeks to:

1. Foster spiritual growth and renewal among women.
2. Affirm that women are of inestimable worth by virtue of their creation and redemption, and equip them for service in the church.

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3. Minister to the broad spectrum of women's needs across the life span, being sensitive to multicultural and multiethnic perspectives.
4. Liaise and cooperate with other specialized departments of the church to facilitate the *ministry to women and of women*.
5. Build goodwill among women in the world church that encourages bonds of friendship, support for church service, and the creative exchange of ideas and information.
6. Mentor and encourage Seventh-day Adventist women, creating paths for their involvement in the church as they reach for their potential in Christ.
7. Find ways and means to challenge each Seventh-day Adventist woman to use her gifts to complement the talents of others as they work side by side to further the global mission of the church.

**Women's Ministries Leader**—The Women's Ministries leader is elected by the church to develop specific ministries to nurture women and equip them for service to God and to the church. She serves as *chair* of the Women's Ministries Committee, and encourages ideas and plans which maximize women's contributions to the mission of the church. As chair, she is responsible for putting together the agenda, moderating discussion, and developing group cohesion through personal sharing, prayer, and fellowship.

She also serves as a member of the church board, integrating activities and programs for women into the larger church program. It is her responsibility to keep the church informed of the contribution of *Women's Ministries* to church life. The leader's *liaison* for training and resource material is the local conference/mission/field Women's Ministries Director.

**Qualifications of the Women's Ministries Leader**—The Women's Ministries leader should be a woman with a sensitive, caring nature, a burden for women's ministry and concerns, a balance in her perspectives so as to represent a broad spectrum of women, and an ability to encourage other women to cultivate their spiritual gifts. She should be able to work well with women in the church, the pastor, and the church board.

**The Women's Ministries Committee**—The Women's Ministries leader works with the pastor and church board to establish a Women's Ministries Committee to foster a ministry to women in the church. This committee should be composed of persons interested in the broad spectrum of women's needs and services. To form a balanced team, the members should be persons with varied talents and experience. (See Notes, #22, p. 143.)

## Department of Children's Ministries

The Department of Children's Ministries is organized to promote and coordinate ministry to the children of the church, as well as to involve children in service to others. Christ's instruction to feed the lambs provides the impetus for the church to meet the needs of children for nurture, fellowship, worship, stewardship, and outreach.

Children's active minds construct meaning from every experience. "The lessons that the child learns during the first seven years of life have more to do with forming his character than all that it learns in future years."—*Child Guidance*, p. 193. This is the time to begin to educate them "to be thinkers, and not mere reflectors of other men's thought."—*Education*, p. 17.

"When Jesus told the disciples not to forbid the children to come to Him, He was speaking to His followers in all ages,—to officers of the church, to ministers, helpers, and all Christians. Jesus is drawing the children, and He bids us, Suffer them to come; as if He would say, They will come if you do not hinder them."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 517.

"Every child may gain knowledge as Jesus did."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 70.

Ministry to Seventh-day Adventist Children—It is the responsibility of each individual in the church community to exert a positive influence on children. Providing children with the opportunity for participation, interaction, and leadership in a variety of religious education settings gives them a sense of inclusion as valued members of the church family, leads them to Jesus, and teaches them to view life through a Seventh-day Adventist perspective. (See Notes, #23, p. 143.)

Ministry to Children Outside the Church—The Bible makes it clear that God has a special burden for children who are not enfolded in the church family. Outreach to children within the influence of the church will have far-reaching results, one of which will be winning parents to the Lord. The Department of Children's Ministries carries responsibility for the traditional outreach programs such as: Vacation Bible Schools, children's branch Sabbath Schools, Neighborhood Bible Clubs, and Story Hours. (See Notes, #24 p. 144).

In churches which do not have a Department of Children's Ministries, Vacation Bible Schools, children's branch Sabbath Schools, Neighborhood Bible Clubs, and Story Hours will come under the direction of the Sabbath School Department. (See p. 91.)

Involving Seventh-day Adventist Children in Service to Others—Participation not only increases capabilities and assures children that they are a necessary part of the church family but, more importantly, involvement in service to others is a major part of their growth in grace.

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Creative efforts to involve children will help them establish a pattern of outreach to others that may well continue through life. (See Notes, #25 p. 144.)

**Safeguarding Children**—In Matthew 18:6 Christ spoke strongly about those who would intentionally hurt children: “But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.” The local church should take reasonable steps to safeguard children engaged in church-sponsored activities by choosing individuals with high spiritual and moral backgrounds as leaders and participants in programs for children.

**Children’s Ministries Committee**—The Children’s Ministries Committee works under the direction of the church board or Personal Ministries Council. Members will be chosen on the strength of their interest and expertise in working with children. The number of members will vary according to the needs of each church. (See Notes, #26, p. 144.)

**Children’s Ministries Coordinator**—The Children’s Ministries coordinator is elected by the church and should be an individual of moral and ethical excellence who demonstrates love and commitment to God, church, and children, and who has ability and experience in working with children. (See Notes, #27, p. 145.)

### Department of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty

The Department of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty (PARL) promotes and maintains religious liberty, with particular emphasis upon liberty of conscience. Religious liberty includes the human right to have or adopt the religion of one’s choice; to change religious belief according to conscience; to manifest one’s religion individually or in community with fellow believers, in worship, observance, practice, witness, and teaching, subject to respect for the equivalent rights of others.

Since religious liberty includes the right to observe days of rest and worship in accordance with the precepts of one’s religion, the department actively supports the right of Seventh-day Adventists to keep the Sabbath in accordance with the fourth commandment of God’s Word. The department also monitors and interprets current events that may reflect prophetic scenario.

To safeguard religious liberty, the Department of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty encourages, where possible, the separation of church and state, as commended by our Lord when He said, “Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s; and unto God the things that are God’s” (Matt. 22:21). “The union of the church with the state, be the degree never so



slight, while it may appear to bring the world nearer to the church, does in reality but bring the church nearer to the world.”—*The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan*, p. 297.

The state should never invade the distinct realm of the church to affect in any way the complete freedom of conscience or the right to profess, practice, and promulgate religious beliefs; and the church should never invade the distinctive realm of the state except, where appropriate, to bring moral principle to bear on public policy.

The department seeks to guard against intrusions upon religious liberty, especially in view of the persecutions prophesied in Revelation 13. “It is our duty to do all in our power to avert the threatened danger.”—*Testimonies*, vol 5, p. 452.

Religious Liberty Associations—The Department of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty carries on many of its functions through the International Religious Liberty Association, and its affiliated associations throughout the world.

Religious Liberty Association in the Local Church—Each church is considered an informal Religious Liberty Association, and every church member is a member of the association. The pastor or the local elder is the chairperson of the association in each local church.

Religious Liberty Leader of the Local Church—The Religious Liberty leader of the local church shall be elected and shall work in close cooperation with the pastor or district leader in all phases of religious liberty and cooperate with the conference/mission/field or union department. Such a person should be of positive spiritual influence, able to meet the general public, interested in public affairs, proficient as a correspondent, and concerned with the preservation of the liberty of the people of God to do the Master’s service. (See Notes, #28, p. 145.)

#### Induction Service

If an induction service (see p. 62) is being held for the newly elected officers of the local church, the officers of the auxiliary organizations should be included.

#### Notes

*These notes contain explanatory material regarding how a local church may proceed in a particular matter. A local church may adopt alternate ways of handling such items. Such alternative methods should be in harmony with generally accepted principles of Seventh-day Adventist Church organization and operation.*

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1. Personal Ministries Council—(See p. 88.)—The duties of this council shall be the following:

a. To arrange for the outreach (missionary) meetings of the church, to study its field of outreach (missionary) activity, and to enlist every church member in definite lines of service.

b. To enlist the members' involvement in outreach (missionary) activities sponsored by the Personal Ministries Department, such as:

1) Literature distribution and circulation of outreach (missionary) periodicals, including subscription magazines.

2) Bible course enrollments.

3) Community Services and/or Dorcas Society activities.

4) Entry events such as stop-smoking clinics, cooking schools, stress management seminars, etc.

5) Outreach (missionary) activities such as Bible studies and follow up of contacts, public evangelistic meetings, seminar evangelism, and other outreach plans and projects.

c. To be responsible for the planning and implementation of the annual Ingathering campaign where conducted.

d. To train and lead members in Christian witnessing, such as:

1) Conducting or arranging for classes in how to give Bible studies, methods of personal witnessing, the operation of Community Services programs, and provision of disaster relief services.

2) Giving practical demonstrations in how to do this work.

e. To encourage reporting through the Personal Ministries secretary.

f. To supervise the Community Services activities of the church and serve as the governing committee of the church's Community Services center.

- g. To cooperate with the Personal Ministries Department of the local conference/mission/field in carrying out its program.
- h. To authorize disbursement of local church Personal Ministries funds.
- i. To plan for and conduct the weekly and monthly Personal Ministries meetings as called for in the church calendar.

2. Personal Ministries Secretary—(See p. 89.)—The duties of the Personal Ministries secretary are:

- a. To serve as secretary of the Personal Ministries Council, recording the minutes of Personal Ministries' meetings and taking an active part in implementing departmental plans. The secretary should record reports of outreach (missionary) work done by church members and complete and send all required reports and other information about such activities to the conference/mission/field Personal Ministries Department promptly each quarter.
- b. To give a report of Personal Ministries activities to the church during the monthly Sabbath Personal Ministries service and during church business meetings.
- c. To be responsible for all local church transactions with the Adventist Book Center or other suppliers. The secretary will maintain careful accounts with the suppliers, using a duplicate order at all times and, in cooperation with the church treasurer, will see that accounts are settled speedily, with clearance of outstanding items on a monthly basis.
- d. To call the attention of the church to resources that are available for use.
- e. To plan periodic offerings to provide Personal Ministries supplies for the members when such are not provided for through the church budget or the conference/mission/field approved offering schedule. A church Personal Ministries offering for this purpose may be received on the first Sabbath of the month. If this offering does not provide sufficient funds, offerings may be taken at the weekly Personal Ministries meeting. The disposition of such Personal Ministries funds shall be made by action of the Personal Ministries Council.
- f. To record details of services and reports of work done by church members, and to be prompt in sending a summary to the Personal Ministries director of the conference/mission/field at the appointed time.

3. Adventist Men—(See p. 91.)—The chief outreach (missionary) programs carried on by this group are lay preaching efforts, prison ministry, and Community Services.

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4. Community Services Center—(See p. 92.)—Where a number of churches within a single district operate a Community Services Center jointly, a governing committee for the center should be appointed by the supporting churches of the district, with representatives from each church, the district pastor serving as the chairman.

Where a center is operated by two or more districts of churches, the center governing committee should be composed of representatives of the supporting churches, with additional representatives appointed by the conference/mission/field committee. The committee elects its own chairperson, but sometimes is chaired by the conference/mission/field Personal Ministries or Community Services director.

5. The Superintendent—(See p. 95.)—The superintendent is to:

a. Serve the church as administrator of all divisions of the Sabbath School. He/She is not the leader of the adult division by virtue of being general superintendent, although he/she may also be elected as leader of the adult or another division.

b. Study and follow the counsel and guidelines found in *Counsels on Sabbath School Work* by Ellen G. White, and the *Sabbath School Handbook* published by the General Conference Sabbath School Department. The superintendent should encourage the church to make these books available to leaders and teachers in all divisions of the Sabbath School.

c. Become conversant with the promotion plans of the mission program of the world church and lead the Sabbath School in such sacrificial giving as will enlist their wholehearted support of world missions.

d. Call and chair the Sabbath School Council meetings to care for immediate needs, including recommendations dealing with officer or teacher vacancies.

e. Receive from division leaders all agenda items pertaining to the operation and finances of the Sabbath School and present them to the Sabbath School Council.

f. Implement the decisions of the Sabbath School Council.

g. Be in general charge of the teachers' meeting. While others may have duties in particular lines, such as the lesson study, the superintendent should take the lead and seek to make the teachers' meeting a vital part of the Sabbath School work and through it endeavor to build up a strong, spiritual teaching force.

6. The Secretary—(See p. 96.)—The secretary's duties are as follows:

- a. To keep all records called for on the official report form supplied by the conference/mission/field, to compile a complete and accurate quarterly Sabbath School report, and to promptly forward the report form to the appropriate individuals. The secretary should also bring before the Sabbath School appropriate reports of Sabbath School work.
- b. To distribute supplies to the teachers and gather class records and offerings from each division.
- c. To ensure that the various Sabbath School divisions are supplied with materials as needed.
- d. To keep a record of the weekly Sabbath School offerings—Thirteenth Sabbath special projects offerings, Birthday-Thank offerings, Investment funds, and Sabbath School expense money, if the latter is not included in the church budget, and to give all offerings to the church treasurer. The financial records kept by the secretary should agree with those of the church treasurer.
- e. To order through the Personal Ministries secretary the Sabbath School supplies, materials, and resources agreed upon by the Sabbath School Council.
- f. To keep the minutes of meetings of the Sabbath School Council.

7. Expense Money—(See p. 100.)—All such money should be recorded by the secretary, passed on to the local church treasurer, and used only for paying Sabbath School expense as authorized by the Sabbath School Council. In many churches, Sabbath School expenses are included in the church budget and expended as authorized by the Sabbath School Council.

8. Mission Statement—(See p. 102.)—To accomplish our task:

- a. We will achieve a balanced ministry by incorporating the biblical dynamics of fellowship, nurture, worship, and mission.
- b. We will be committed to maintaining relevance and effectiveness in ministry by relating all ministry to the needs of the youth. It is imperative that we listen to and are informed by their perceptions, concerns, and suggestions. Effective ministry becomes possible in an atmosphere of love, acceptance, and forgiveness. We will conduct ongoing

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research to discover areas that need attention. We are committed to experimentation and innovation in our programs because we recognize the ever changing nature of today's youth.

c. We will find inspiration in God's Word and our history, and have faith in God for the future. Our philosophy will find expression in a wide variety of God-ordained ministry styles and programs.

d. We will provide regular evaluation to ensure that our primary focus is achieved.

9. Membership in the Adventist Youth Society—(See p. 104.)—There are three categories of membership in the Adventist Youth Society:

a. Regular Members—Young people 16 to 30 years of age who are members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in regular standing and who, subscribing to the objectives of the society, desire to engage in active service for Christ may enroll as regular members.

b. Associate Members—Young people who are not members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, but who have Christian ideals and desire to be associated with the young people of the church in missionary work should be accepted as associate members. Associate members may not hold office, but they should be cordially received into all the society work and into its bands, and encouraged to become regular members as soon as possible.

c. Honorary members—Adult members of the church who support the youth may enroll as honorary members. Many persons who have passed the age of 30 would like to continue attending Adventist Youth Society meetings and participate in whatever way possible. Whenever it may seem advisable, they should receive an honorary membership card. Their membership is not included in the secretary's report, and they report their outreach (missionary) work in the regular way through the church.

Upon joining the Adventist Youth Society, new members take the following membership pledge:

"Loving the Lord Jesus, I promise to take an active part in the work of the Adventist Youth Society, doing what I can to help others and to finish the work of the gospel in all the world."

10. Secretary-Treasurer and Assistant—(See p. 106.)—Another important responsibility of the secretary-treasurer is to keep an accurate record of the receipts and disbursements of all funds of the Adventist Youth Society. Society funds are deposited with the

church treasurer and held in trust until such times as their disbursement is ordered by the Adventist Youth Society Committee. This committee shall also review the financial records of the society each quarter and have them audited once each year by the church treasurer. Many churches include the youth organization in their budget.

11. The Adventist Junior Youth Society—(See p. 108.)—The activities of the Adventist Junior Youth Society include good reading, Bible study and Bible quizzes, music, and programs developed by the youth from resources available from the teacher and the local conference/mission/field Youth department. Since music is a very important element in the youth program, care should be taken to provide music which will glorify God. (See p. 84.) Student leaders should be encouraged to develop original program ideas that will involve participation by the class. Witnessing activities should be planned, and a special mission project may be adopted each year toward which a portion of the society offerings can be applied. Social activities may also be encouraged. Some of the Adventist Junior Youth Society meetings should be devoted to the study of the AY classes in preparation for Investiture near the close of the school year.

12. Adventurer Club—(See p. 111.)—A sampling of activities as presented in the *Adventurer Manual* includes special day trips, study and application of Bible stories, talent shows, nature activities, crafts, social skills development, and many others. The club has its own flag, uniform, emblems, award patches, and pins and scarves which are different from Pathfinders and must not be mixed or confused with the Pathfinder items. An entire component of the club activities involves parental training in child development, and understanding how to be the model Christian parents all wish to become.

13. Church Education Secretary—(See p. 113.)—The secretary's duties shall be:

- a. To be responsible for the regular promotion of Christian education and to plan, in cooperation with the pastor and Home and School Association leader, periodic programs or services that emphasize the values of Christian education.
- b. To contact all Seventh-day Adventist homes where there are school-age children or young people, to encourage attendance at the local church school or at a Seventh-day Adventist secondary school, college, or university, and to suggest possible solutions to problems.
- c. To make every reasonable effort, where church schools are not available, to encourage the church to provide Seventh-day Adventist education in the area.
- d. To maintain contact with students from the church who are in attendance at Seventh-day Adventist or other schools away from the home church.

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e. To contact members who have no school-age children, encouraging them to provide financial aid for needy Seventh-day Adventist students.

f. To maintain an up-to-date census of all the children and youth of the church.

14. **Membership**—(See p. 115)—Wherever a separate school board is desired it shall consist of from five to seven members where a single church operates the school, and seven or more members where two or more churches unite to operate the school.

Where two or more churches unite to operate a school a meeting of these churches should be arranged in counsel with the local conference/mission/field president. At this meeting a plan should be adopted for the appointment of the union school board, including the number of members and the apportionment of the members among the several churches operating the school. The apportionment should be determined on the basis of the memberships of the sponsoring churches, the financial obligations to the school, and the number of pupils attending from each church.

15. **The Communication Secretary's Work**—(See p. 119.)—The Communication secretary will assist in organizing support for the denomination's media programs. This may include the placement of announcements and advertisements for broadcast and Bible correspondence school courses, the promotion of the media ministry offerings, and participation in events for the distribution of radio, television, and Bible correspondence school materials.

16. **The Communication Committee**—(See p. 119.)—Other communication activities that fall within the sphere of interest of this committee include planning for special church events and ceremonies, the preparation of church exhibits and parade floats, placement of church advertising, and providing public libraries and other information centers with information on the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The division of responsibilities will depend largely on the abilities of those comprising the committee. All activities of the committee will be coordinated by the chairperson.

17. **Health Ministries Leader**—(See p. 121.)—The Health Ministries leader's duties should include the following:

a. To outline, plan, and budget, in consultation with the pastor, church Health Ministries Council, and the church board, programs for the year that will emphasize total health and temperance for the church and the community.



- b. To promote an ongoing witness in the community concerning the destructive effects of tobacco, alcohol, and other health-destroying drugs and substances.
- c. To foster good relationships with community health and temperance organizations.
- d. To encourage the study of the biblical principles and the Spirit of Prophecy counsels on health and temperance.
- e. To encourage the application of the principles of healthful living among church members.
- f. To arrange for and promote the holding of health and temperance education programs for the church and the community it serves, in close cooperation with the conference/mission/field Health Ministries director.
- h. To serve as secretary of the church Health Ministries Council, except when asked to serve as chairperson.

18. Church Health Ministries Council—(See p. 122.)—Members should be appointed by the church, and might include:

- a. The pastor or local elder as chairman of the council.
- b. The church Health Ministries leader.
- c. The Community Services director.
- d. The Adventist Youth leader or two representatives from the youth group.
- e. Three representatives from among the following: physician, dentist, dietitian, nurse, health educator, Stewardship leader, or others interested in health and temperance activities.
- f. The director of the Health Ministries Society when an active society exists.
- g. A representative of the local SDA health-care institution.

19. Church Stewardship Leader—(See p. 123.)—The leader will implement the general educational program of the Stewardship Department as it is presented and expanded

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periodically to meet a continuing need. This responsibility includes assisting the pastor in World Stewardship Day emphasis, conducting stewardship classes, tithe and offering education, and teaching the basic stewardship concepts during Sabbath services or on other occasions.

The leader's organizational responsibilities will include being (1) a member of the church board, involved in and conversant with the spiritual and financial program of the church, (2) a member of the Stewardship and Finance Committees, and (3) an active assistant to the pastor in the annual Stewardship Guidance Program and in the follow-up throughout the year as outlined in the *Stewardship Manual*.

20. The Family Ministries Committee—(See p. 125.)—Although this committee should not be too large in order to remain effective, appropriate church leaders should be included as well as persons who understand the varied needs of families within the church. Persons who have faced traumatic life and family experiences and have grown spiritually through them may make valuable contributions as members of the committee. The committee should include both men and women, and where possible, at least one single person, at least one married couple, one or more parents, and a representative cross-section of the various age groups in the church. The duties of the committee shall be the following:

a. To assist church leadership in compiling family demographic data both within the church and in the surrounding community to clarify target groups for a ministry to families.

b. To assist church leadership in assessing the needs of church members for family life education, enrichment, and counseling; and in developing a plan for utilizing community and church resources to address these needs.

c. To encourage sensitivity to the impact of church programs on family life in terms of the expenditure of time, energy, money, and other family resources required.

d. To participate with the conference/mission/field Family Ministries Department in implementing family emphasis programs promoted by the department.

e. To cooperate with church leadership to design, plan, and implement additional family life features and programs as needed, both for family nurture within the membership and evangelistic outreach to the community.

f. To foster a climate of warmth and fellowship, engendering a sense of "familiness" in the congregation and a redemptive spirit toward families in need of support and encouragement.

21. Family Ministries Leaders(s)—(See p. 126.)—The duties of the Family Ministries leader(s) are:

- a. To chair the Family Ministries Committee.
- b. To represent the needs and interests of families through membership on the church board, and to coordinate Family Ministries plans with the overall church program.
- c. To inform the pastor and church board of Family Ministries concerns and achievements, and to encourage funding and support for ministry to families.
- d. To identify church and community resources which foster relational growth and provide help to meet critical needs, and to heighten awareness of these resources among church leadership and families.

22. The Women's Ministries Committee—(See p. 127.)—The major responsibilities of the Women's Ministries Committee shall be as follows:

- a. To assess the needs of women in the local church and community, by utilizing surveys and interviews, and in counsel with the pastor and church leaders;
- b. To brainstorm, develop strategies, and cooperate with other specialized departments of the church to foster programs and activities which minister to women;
- c. To plan and implement these and other initiatives which relate to women's specific and varied needs, in cooperation with the pastor, departmental specialists, and other church leaders;
- d. To facilitate local church participation in annual programs and activities initiated by the field/mission/conference/union/division/General Conference such as the International Women's Day of Prayer, Women's Ministries Day, and small group ministries to support women and encourage them in service. Information regarding these programs is available through the conference/mission/field Department of Women's Ministries.

23. Ministry to Seventh-day Adventist Children—(See p. 128.)—Ways to strengthen the spiritual life of Seventh-day Adventist children could include:

- a. Sabbath School (under the responsibility of the Sabbath School Department).

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- b. Pathfinder and Adventurer Clubs (under the responsibility of the Youth Department).
- c. Children's prayer meeting at the same time and place as the adult midweek prayer meeting.
- d. An on-going baptismal class for children who express a desire to be baptized, but are considered too young.
- e. Children's Bible club on Sabbath afternoon that would involve them in meaningful and appropriate Sabbath observance.
- f. Weekly religious instruction for Seventh-day Adventist children not attending church school.
- g. Children's small groups ministry bringing children each week for discussion, Bible study, and fellowship.
- h. Children's choir.
- i. Children's congress (city or district or field/mission/conference wide) to provide opportunities for children and their parents to experience leadership training, inspiration, and fellowship.

24. Ministry to Children Outside the Church—(See p. 128)—In addition, the church can extend ministry to children by the following kinds of programs:

- a. Seventh-day Adventist day care.
- b. Radio and television programs.
- c. Children's choirs.
- d. Evangelistic meetings for children.
- e. Correspondence Bible courses.
- f. Other creative outreach, e.g. children's gymnastics clubs.

25. Involving Seventh-day Adventist Children in Service to Others—(See p. 129.)—Here are some suggestions for tapping the unlimited potential of children:

- a. Participation in divine services.
- b. Participation in church outreach.
- c. Visitation to shut-ins.
- d. Musical performances.
- e. Community service.
- f. Leadership opportunities in evangelism, Bible study, and prophecy seminars.

26. Children's Ministries Committee—(See p. 129.)—The committee's responsibilities could include:

- a. Providing cooperation and balance among the religious education activities planned for children.
- b. Working together to coordinate all activities in order to avoid overlaps or gaps in the plans for children, and preparing a yearly activities calendar that incorporates all children's programs.
- c. Keeping up-to-date records of church members' children and community children who have participated in church activities.
- d. Conducting a needs assessment of children in the congregation and/or community.

27. Children's Ministries Coordinator—(See p. 129.)—The role of the Children's Ministries coordinator may include responsibilities such as:

- a. Scheduling and chairing the Children's Ministries Committee, encouraging a spirit of teamwork among those working for and with children, and being the team leader in creating a ministry for children that draws them to Christ and provides for their participation in all church activities.

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b. Serving as an advocate of the interests of children to:

1) The Church Board—by keeping the board members informed of concerns and successes, by reporting the results of the children's needs assessment, and by encouraging funding for children's programs.

2) The pastor—by working together to make the various aspects of church life meaningful to children.

3) The Personal Ministries Council—by participating in the council's planning for the church, suggesting ways to involve children.

4) The leaders of children's activities—by supporting and encouraging them.

c. Taking reasonable steps to maintain a high moral and ethical quality of leadership for the children.

d. Maintaining communication with parents and leaders of children's activities, informing them about workshops, conventions, camp meetings, and other resources, and encouraging their growth in understanding children.

e. Seeking opportunities to spend time with children in order to stay in touch with their thinking and their needs.

28. Religious Liberty Leader of the Local Church—(See p. 131.)—The Religious Liberty leader's duties are:

a. To interact with the Public Affairs and Religious Liberty director of the conference/mission/field, or union where appropriate, and deal with the suggestions that come through proper channels.

b. To advise concerning matters affecting religious liberty.

c. To promote the circulation of religious liberty magazines and other materials approved by the division or the General Conference.

d. To organize or facilitate religious liberty meetings, seminars, programs, and activities as circumstances indicate.

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## 133-00G PREFACE AND NOTES - *CHURCH MANUAL* REVISION

VOTED, To revise the *Church Manual* pages xvii-xx, Preface and Notes, to read as follows:

### INTRODUCTION

Historical Development of the Seventh-day Adventist Church—In fulfillment of the divine plan, the Advent Movement began its prophetic journey toward the kingdom in the year 1844. Few in number, often with unhappy memories of having been cast out of their churches because they had accepted the Advent doctrine, the Movement's pioneers walked uncertainly at first. They were sure of the doctrines they held, but unsure as to the form of organization, if any, that they should adopt. Indeed, most of them so sharply remembered how strong, well-organized church bodies had used that strength to oppose the Advent truth, that they instinctively feared any centralized order and government. Nevertheless, certain pioneer leaders saw with increasing clarity that some kind of government was imperative if good order was to prevail and the Movement grow strong. Their conviction was greatly strengthened by messages coming from the pen of Ellen G. White.

The result was that in 1860 a church name, Seventh-day Adventist, was chosen and a legal body created to hold church property. This was followed, in 1861, by the organization of our first conference, Michigan. This involved the organizing of local churches, with the members signing a church covenant, and the organizing of the various churches into one united body to constitute what is now called a local conference. Action was also taken to give identifying papers to the ministers, thus protecting the churches against impostors who might seek to prey upon them.

In 1863 the General Conference was organized, thus gathering into one organization a number of local conferences which had been created by that time. This set the Advent Movement on a coordinated, organized course.

Historical Development of the *Church Manual*—As the General Conference met year by year, in session, actions were taken on various matters of church order in an endeavor to spell out the proper rules for different situations in church life. The 1882 General Conference Session voted to have prepared "instructions to church officers, to be printed in the *Review and Herald* or in tract form."—*Review and Herald*, Dec. 26, 1882. This action revealed the growing realization that church order was imperative if church organization was to function effectively, and that

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uniformity in such order required its guiding principles to be put into printed form. Accordingly the articles were published. But at the 1883 General Conference Session, when it was proposed that these articles be placed in permanent form as a church manual, the idea was rejected. The brethren feared that it would possibly formalize the church and take from its ministers their freedom to deal with matters of church order as they might individually desire.

But this fear—doubtless reflecting the opposition that had existed twenty years before to any kind of church organization—evidently soon departed. The annual General Conference sessions continued to take actions on matters of church order. In other words, they slowly but surely were producing material for a church manual. At times certain prominent brethren sought to gather together in book or booklet form the generally accepted rules for church life. Perhaps the most impressive of such endeavors was a 184-page book by none other than the pioneer J. N. Loughborough, entitled, *The Church, Its Organization, Order and Discipline*, which was published in 1907. Elder Loughborough's book, though in a sense a personal undertaking, dealt with many of the topics now covered by the *Church Manual* and long held an honored place in the Movement.

Meanwhile the Movement continued to grow rapidly both at home and abroad. It was therefore in the best interests of the very order and proper uniformity that had long been our goal, that the General Conference Committee took action in 1931 to publish a church manual. J. L. McElhany, then vice-president of the General Conference for North America, and later president of the General Conference for fourteen years, was asked to prepare the manuscript. This manuscript was carefully examined by the General Conference Committee and then published in 1932. The opening sentence of the preface of that first edition observes that "it has become increasingly evident that a manual on church government is needed to set forth and preserve our denominational practices and polity." Note the word *preserve*. Here was no attempt at a late date to suddenly create a whole pattern of church government. Rather it was an endeavor first to *preserve* all the good actions taken through the years, and then to add such regulations as the church's increasing growth and complexity might require

See Chapter I, Authority of the Church and the *Church Manual*, with respect to the role of the *Church Manual* in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Content of the *Church Manual*—The 2000 General Conference Session authorized the reclassification of some existing *Church Manual* material and approved the process for making modifications to such. The content of this *Church Manual*, as it is presented in chapters and sections within the chapters, is divided into two types of material. The main content of each chapter is of worldwide value and applicable to every church. Recognizing the need for some variations, additional material which is explanatory in nature appears as Notes at the end of some



chapters and is given as guidance. The Notes have subheadings which correspond to chapter subheadings and correlate to specific page numbers.

Procedure for Changes in the *Church Manual*—Realizing increasingly how important it is that everything “be done decently and in order” in our worldwide work, and that actions on church government should not only express the mind but have the full authority of the church, the 1946 General Conference Session adopted the following procedure:

“All changes or revisions of policy that are to be made in the *Manual* shall be authorized by the General Conference session.”—*General Conference Report*, No. 8, p. 197 (June 14, 1946).

However, local conditions in different parts of the world sometimes call for special actions. Accordingly, the 1948 Autumn Council, which had taken action to submit suggested revisions of the *Church Manual* to the 1950 General Conference Session, also voted:

“That each division, including the North American Division of the world field, prepare a ‘Supplement’ to the new *Church Manual* not in any way modifying it but containing such additional matter as is applicable to the conditions and circumstances prevailing in the division; the manuscripts for these Supplements to be submitted to the General Conference Committee for endorsement before being printed.”—*Autumn Council Actions*, 1948, p. 19.

Changes in or revisions of the *Church Manual*, the Notes excepted (see below), can be made only by action of a General Conference session in which delegates of the world body of believers are assembled and have a voice in making revisions. If revisions in the *Church Manual* are considered necessary by any of the constituent levels (see p. 24), such revisions should be submitted to the next constituent level for wider counsel and study. If approved, the suggested revisions are then submitted to the next constituent level for further evaluation. Any proposed revisions shall then be sent to the General Conference Church Manual Committee. This committee will consider all recommended amendments or revisions and, if approved, prepare them for presentation at an Annual Council and/or General Conference session.

If revisions to the Notes at the end of some chapters of the *Church Manual* are considered necessary by any of the constituent levels (see p. 24), such revisions should be submitted to the next constituent level for consideration. If approved, the suggested revisions should continue on through the next constituent levels for further evaluation until they are received by the Church Manual Committee. The Church Manual Committee will process the request and, if approved, the revisions will be acted upon by the General Conference Executive Committee at the final Annual Council of the quinquennium to coordinate them with the changes of the main content that the General Conference Executive Committee will recommend to the next General

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Conference session. However, the General Conference Executive Committee may address changes to the Notes at any Annual Council.

A new edition of the *Church Manual* is published after every General Conference session. It is recommended that leaders at all levels of the Church should always work with the most recent edition of the *Church Manual*.

Clarification of Meaning—Churches should look to the local conference for advice pertaining to the operating of the church or on questions arising from the *Church Manual*. If mutual understanding or agreement is not reached, the matter should be referred to the union for clarification.

Use of the Term Conference, etc—Each organized Seventh-day Adventist church is a member of the sisterhood of churches known as a conference, which is a united organized body of churches in a state, country, or territory. Until full conference status is achieved (see General Conference *Working Policy*), other terminology such as mission, section, association, delegation, or field may be used to describe the collective organization of local churches. In the *Church Manual* the term *conference* or *union conference* may also apply to a mission or a union mission.

The Present Edition—This present edition incorporates all revisions and additions accepted up to and including the 2000 General Conference Session.

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134-00Ga AUTHORITY OF THE CHURCH AND THE *CHURCH*  
*MANUAL - CHURCH MANUAL ADDITION*  
(*Church Manual Authority - Church Manual Addition*)

VOTED, To add a new Chapter 1, Authority of the Church and the *Church Manual*, to the *Church Manual*, on a new page 1, before the chapter, The Church of the Living God, to read as follows:

## Chapter 1

### Authority of the Church and the *Church Manual*

Church Authority in the Early Church—As Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer, Lord and King of all creation, God alone is the source and ground of authority for the church. He delegated authority to His prophets and apostles (2 Cor. 10:8). They, therefore, occupied a crucial and unique position in the transmission of the Word of God and the edification of the church (Eph. 2:20).

In the early church, the elders and bishops held great authority. One of their main functions was general pastoral care and oversight (Acts 20:17-28; Heb. 13:17; 1 Peter 5:1-3), with special tasks such as giving instruction in sound doctrine and refuting those who contradicted it (1 Tim. 3:1, 2; Titus 1:5, 9). Those who ruled well were to be “considered worthy of double honour” more particularly so if they labored in “preaching and teaching” (1 Tim. 5:17).

The church bore responsibility for purity in doctrine and practice. It was to “test the spirits to see whether they are of God” (1 John 4:1) or, in Paul’s terms, to “test everything” and “to hold fast what is good” (1 Thess. 5:21). The same was true regarding the exercise of church discipline (Matt. 18:15-17). The exercise of discipline ranged all the way from private and caring admonition (cf. Matt. 18:16; Gal. 6:1) to removal from church membership (Matt. 18:18; 1 Cor. 5:11, 13; 2 Cor. 2:5-11). The church had authority to settle the conditions of membership and the rules governing the church.

Church Authority in the Seventh-day Adventist Church—The 1946 General Conference Session action that all “changes or revisions of policy” in the *Church Manual* shall be “authorized by the General Conference session,” reflects a conception of the authoritative status of General Conference sessions that has long been held. In the 1877 session this action was taken:

“*Resolved*, that the highest authority under God among Seventh-day Adventists is found in the will of the body of that people, as expressed in the decisions of the General Conference when acting within its proper jurisdiction; and that such decisions should be submitted to by all without exception, unless they can be shown to conflict with the word of God and the rights of individual conscience.”—*Review and Herald*, vol. 50, No. 14, p. 106.

Ellen G. White wrote in 1909: “But, when, in a General Conference, the judgment of the brethren assembled from all parts of the field is exercised, private independence and private judgment must not be stubbornly maintained, but surrendered. Never should a laborer regard as

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a virtue the persistent maintenance of his position of independence, contrary to the decision of the general body.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 260.

Long before this—in 1875—Ellen G. White had written in the same vein: “The church of Christ is in constant peril. Satan is seeking to destroy the people of God, and one man’s mind, one man’s judgment, is not sufficient to be trusted. Christ would have His followers brought together in church capacity, observing order, having rules and discipline, and all subject one to another, esteeming others better than themselves.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 445

In these inspired words, in the 1877 General Conference action, and in the need for well-defined rules that are requisite to good order, is found a basis for this *Church Manual* and its rightful claim upon us all, both ministry and laity.

The content of the *Church Manual* is the expression of the Seventh-day Adventist Church’s understanding of Christian life and church governance and discipline based on biblical principles. It expresses the authority of a duly assembled General Conference session. “God has ordained that the representatives of His church from all parts of the earth, when assembled in a General Conference, shall have authority.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 261.

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143-00G CHURCH OFFICERS AND THEIR DUTIES, MEMBERSHIP  
REQUIRED FOR ELECTION - *CHURCH MANUAL* ADDITION

VOTED, To add a new section, Membership Required for Election, to the *Church Manual*, Chapter 6, Church Officers and Their Duties, page 45 before the section, Term of Office, to read as follows:

Membership Required for Election

Seventh-day Adventist church members in regular standing are eligible for election to leadership positions in the local church where they hold membership. (See pp. 128, 130.) Exceptions may be made for the following:

1. Students who are members in regular standing but who, for purposes of education, live away from their normal home and regularly attend a church in the area of their temporary residence.

2. A conference/mission/field employee assigned by the conference/mission/field as pastor/leader for two or more congregations. (See p. 121.)

3. A local elder who, when necessary and with the recommendation of the conference/mission/field committee, may be elected to serve in more than one church. (See p. 47.)

Other exceptions may be considered by the conference/mission/field committee.

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157-00G ADVENTIST YOUTH SOCIETY (THE SERVICES AND  
MEETINGS OF THE CHURCH) - *CHURCH MANUAL*  
AMENDMENT

VOTED, To amend the *Church Manual*, Chapter 7, The Services and Meetings of the Church, pages 75 and 76, Adventist Youth Society, to read as follows:

Adventist Youth Society<sup>2</sup>

The Adventist Youth Society (~~formerly Missionary Volunteer Society~~) is the action and fellowship organization for senior youth in the local church. Under the leadership of an elected Youth leader, young people are to work together in the development of a strong youth ministry which includes spiritual, mental, and physical development for each individual, Christian social interaction, and an active witnessing program which supports the general soul-winning plans of the local church. It should be the goal of the Adventist Youth Society to involve all young people in meaningful activities which will tie them closer to the church and train them for useful service.

Regular meetings of the youth should be scheduled each week. ~~In larger churches these meetings are usually public gatherings either on Friday evening or Sabbath afternoon. In smaller churches the young people often meet as a small group in the home of an older church couple who act as hosts for the evening. It is recommended that these meetings be held Friday evening or Sabbath afternoon. Such meetings may be held in homes of responsible church members or as larger public meetings in the church.~~ Since the youth program should not be isolated from the

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<sup>2</sup>This is an accepted abbreviated name for the full official name "Seventh-day Adventist Youth Society."

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rest of the church, the public Adventist Youth Society meetings should be open to the entire church membership. They Ideally, they should be planned and operated, however, by the youth themselves. In smaller churches the youth program of necessity must have a family-involvement approach.

Resource materials to help the local church Adventist Youth Society leadership are available from the division, union, and local ~~conference/mission~~ conference/mission/field Youth departments. Included in these resource materials is *Youth Ministry Accent*, a quarterly journal published by the General Conference Youth ~~Council~~ Department. There are also many leaflets available covering a broad spectrum of topics to help in youth ministry. These may be secured from the ~~conference~~ conference/mission/field Youth departments and Adventist Book Centers.

It is important that the youth program in the local church be coordinated with the work of all departments that provide ministry for children and youth. To encourage this cooperation and coordination, the ~~Lay Activities~~ Personal Ministries leader, Temperance Health Ministries leader, leader of the youth Sabbath School division, ~~junior academy school~~ Pathfinder Club director, Adventurer Club director, and other leaders as needed are members of the Adventist Youth Society ~~Council (formerly MV Executive Committee)~~ Ministries Committee, which is an umbrella organization in the local church responsible for planning the youth ministry program. (See p. 99.) The Adventist Youth Society plan of organization is briefly outlined in Chapter 8, "Auxiliary Organizations." Detailed information is available from the ~~conference/mission~~ conference/mission/field Youth director. It is essential that each church study its own youth and family profile, resources, personnel, facilities, and school relationships, developing the best youth ministry in keeping with these factors. In some places another term for "society," such as "fellowship" or "action," may be selected, but the name "Adventist Youth" should always be used to clearly identify the organization.

While a successful youth ministry program in the local church includes a strong youth Sabbath School, there must be a specific time and place for more interaction, fellowship, recreation, witnessing outreach, and leadership training, which are all a part of the concepts to be fostered in the Adventist Youth Society.

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158-00G ADVENTIST JUNIOR YOUTH SOCIETY AND PATHFINDER  
CLUB - *CHURCH MANUAL* AMENDMENT

VOTED, To amend the *Church Manual*, Chapter 7, The Services and Meetings of the Church, page 77, Adventist Junior Youth Society and Pathfinder Club, to read as follows:

~~Adventist Junior Youth Society and Pathfinder Club~~  
Adventist Junior Youth Society

The purpose of the Adventist Junior Youth Society (~~formerly Junior Missionary Volunteer Society~~) is similar to that of the organization for the Adventist Youth Society for senior youth. Its purpose is to build character, provide social interaction, give leadership training, and involve the junior youth in Christian service. In those countries where there are Adventist church schools, the Adventist Junior Youth Society is usually a part of the school spiritual curriculum. Each classroom is considered a separate society, with the teacher as the leader and students elected as society officers. Where there is no church school, ~~there is usually a small~~ the junior youth membership ~~who are often~~ should be integrated into the overall youth program with a family-involvement approach.

~~The Pathfinder Club also provides the type of program needed for junior youth and in some areas has replaced the Adventist Junior Youth Society in the local church. Where there are both there must be close coordination and cooperation between the Pathfinder Club and the Adventist Junior Youth Society. The Adventist Junior Youth Society meetings in the church school are held at the beginning of the first class period either on Wednesday or Friday mornings, and are usually about one-half hour in length.~~

YOU/ChMan/ADCOM/GCDO98AC/136-98G/99AC/140-99G/00GCS to MV

159-00G THE SERVICES AND MEETINGS OF THE CHURCH,  
PATHFINDER CLUB - *CHURCH MANUAL* ADDITION

VOTED, To add a new section, Pathfinder Club, to the *Church Manual*, Chapter 7, The Services and Meetings of the Church, following Adventist Junior Youth Society, on page 77, to read as follows:

Pathfinder Club

The Pathfinder Club provides a specialized program needed for junior youth and in some areas has replaced the Adventist Junior Youth Society in the local church. Where there are both there must be close coordination and cooperation between the Pathfinder Club and the Adventist Junior Youth Society. Pathfinders will meet according to conference/mission/field departmental policy.

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160-00G THE SERVICES AND MEETINGS OF THE CHURCH,  
ADVENTURER CLUB - *CHURCH MANUAL* ADDITION

VOTED, To add a new section, Adventurer Club, to the *Church Manual*, Chapter 7, The Services and Meetings of the Church, before Church Missionary Meetings on page 77, to read as follows:

Adventurer Club

The Adventurer Club provides a specialized program suited to the rapidly developing primary/early school-age children in the local church. It is designed to strengthen parental involvement in early childhood development. Its meetings and other activities are to be carried out in accordance with local conference/mission/field policies as outlined in the club manuals and in coordination with other youth-related and family-related organizations of the local church.

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161-00G CHURCH MISSIONARY MEETINGS - *CHURCH MANUAL*  
AMENDMENT

VOTED, To amend the *Church Manual*, Chapter 7, The Services and Meetings of the Church, pages 77 and 78, Church Missionary Meetings, to read as follows:

Church Missionary Meetings  
Church Outreach (Missionary) Meetings

The Saviour's commission lays upon the church the task of heralding the gospel to all the world. This also places upon each individual member the responsibility of giving the message of salvation to as many others as possible. The Saviour "gave authority to His servants, and to every man his work." He appointed a meeting with His eleven disciples after His resurrection for the purpose of giving them counsel and encouragement, and at that time He gave the gospel commission to the disciples and to the assembled church, numbering more than five hundred brethren. That was the first missionary outreach (missionary) meeting of the Christian church; it was certainly not to be the last.

As a permanent and definite part of the services of the Christian church, the missionary outreach (missionary) meeting bears the divine endorsement for all time. Through the Spirit of



Prophecy we are told: "God has committed to our hands a most sacred work, and *we need to meet together* to receive instruction, that we may be fitted to perform this work."—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 32. (Italics supplied.)

Times of Meetings—The first Sabbath of the month is generally recognized as Church Missionary Outreach (Missionary) Sabbath. The worship service of this Sabbath is focused on lay evangelism, but other departments besides the Lay Activities Personal Ministries Department may also have opportunity on these special days to present their interests. This will be done, however, by careful counsel with the departments concerned.

In order to strengthen and develop the missionary outreach (missionary) spirit among our members, auxiliary missionary Personal Ministries meetings might be conducted in one or more of the following ways:

1. The ten-minute weekly missionary Personal Ministries meeting held each ~~Sabbath immediately Sabbath, usually~~ following the close of the Sabbath School and just preceding the preaching service.
2. A midweek meeting combined with the weekly prayer meeting. On this occasion, the first part of the service may be given to a devotional message, followed by a season of prayer, remembering that worship is vital in spiritual growth and preparation for service. The remainder of the meeting time may then be devoted to a training period for lay evangelistic service. Instruction in soul-winning methods is presented and the members are given opportunity to present for general discussion problems they have met in lay evangelism.
3. Church missionary Personal Ministries meetings at various times, as best suited to local conditions. The Lay Activities Personal Ministries Council should carefully plan to make the missionary Personal Ministries services of the church occasions for spiritual revival and practical training, and see that they are conducted with the same regularity and continuity as other meetings of the church.

Supplying Literature on the Sabbath—It is generally recognized that the Sabbath affords the most opportune time for the Lay Activities Personal Ministries secretary to place literature in the hands of the members. Methods that are objectionable and that would tend to divert the attention of the congregation from true worship and reverence should be avoided on the Sabbath. ~~This phase of the Lay Activities secretary's work can be helped by the use of the "Order Envelope" plan. Envelopes are provided on which the members can designate the literature they wish to obtain, the quantity, the language, binding, et cetera. The amount covering the cost of such literature can be put into the envelope during the week and placed in the offering plate when the regular offering is received on Sabbath. At the close of the service the envelopes are passed~~

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~~to the Lay Activities secretary, who in turn gives the orders prompt attention when the Sabbath is past. (See pp. 59, 88-90.)~~

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162-00Ga BUSINESS MEETINGS - *CHURCH MANUAL* DELETION

VOTED, To delete a section from the *Church Manual*, Chapter 7, The Services and Meetings of the Church, pages 82-84, Business Meetings, which reads as follows:

#### Business Meetings

Church business meetings duly called by the pastor or the church board in consultation with the pastor may be held monthly or quarterly, according to the needs of the church. Members in regular standing on the roll of the church conducting the business meeting may attend and vote. Votes by proxy or letter shall not be accepted. In order to maintain a spirit of close cooperation between the local church and the conference/mission, the church shall secure counsel from the conference/mission officers on all major matters. The officers (president, secretary, treasurer) of the conference to which the church belongs may attend without vote (unless granted by the church) any church business meeting within the conference territory. A duly called business meeting of the church is a meeting that has been called at the regular Sabbath worship service, together with proper announcements as to the time and place of the meeting. At such meetings, at which the pastor will preside (or will arrange for the local elder to preside), full information should be given to the congregation regarding the work of the church; and at the close of the year, reports should be rendered covering the activities of the church for the entire year. When possible, reports should be presented in writing and should comprise the following activities:

1. A report from the clerk showing the present membership of the church and the number of members received and those transferred to other churches. Note also should be made, giving the number but not necessarily the names, of those who may have had to be dropped from fellowship during the year, as well as those who have died. A brief statement of the decisions of the church board in its meetings would naturally be of interest to all members of the church.
2. A report from the Lay Activities leader, giving a statement of missionary activities, including Community Services activities, together with any plans for future work. This should be followed by a report from the Lay Activities secretary, who should also present a statement of the church's account with the Adventist Book Center.

3. A report from the treasurer, showing the amount of tithe received and sent to the conference treasurer; also a full statement of mission offerings received and forwarded; and a statement showing local church funds received and disbursed.
4. A report from the deacons and deaconesses concerning visits to the members, their activities in behalf of the poor, and any other features that come under their supervision.
5. A report from the secretary of the young people's society outlining the activities in missionary and other lines by the youth of the church.
6. A report from the Sabbath School secretary, giving the membership and other matters pertaining to the Sabbath School.
7. A report from the treasurer as to the financial status of the church school, with details as to its need in equipment and other matters.
8. A report from the principal or teacher of the church school, covering such matters as enrollment, the educational progress of the school, baptisms among the school children, and the results of the children's efforts in denominational endeavors.
9. A report from the Home and School Association leader, covering the activities and needs of that organization.
10. A report from the Communication secretary covering press, radio, television, and other related activities involving church and community.

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162-00Gb BUSINESS MEETINGS - *CHURCH MANUAL* ADDITION

VOTED, To add a new section, Business Meetings, to the *Church Manual*, Chapter 7, The Services and Meetings of the Church, to the top of page 79, following Church Missionary Meetings, Supplying Literature on the Sabbath, to read as follows:

#### Business Meetings

Church business meetings duly called by the pastor, or the church board in consultation with the pastor, may be held monthly or quarterly according to the needs of the church. Members in regular standing on the roll of the church conducting the business meeting may attend and

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vote. Votes by proxy or letter shall not be accepted. In order to maintain a spirit of close cooperation between the local church and the conference/mission/field, the church shall secure counsel from the conference/mission/field officers on all major matters. The officers (president, secretary, treasurer) of the conference/mission/field to which the church belongs may attend without vote (unless granted by the church) any church business meeting within the conference/mission/field territory. A duly called business meeting of the church is a meeting that has been called at the regular Sabbath worship service, together with proper announcements as to the time and place of the meeting. At such meetings, at which the pastor will preside (or will arrange for the local elder to preside), full information should be given to the congregation regarding the work of the church. At the close of the year, reports should be rendered covering the activities of the church for the entire year and, based on those reports, the church should approve a full plan of action for the next year. When possible, reports and the next year's plan of action should be presented in writing. Reports should comprise the following activities:

1. A report from the clerk showing the present membership of the church and the number of members received and those transferred to other churches. Note also should be made, giving the number but not necessarily the names, of those who may have had to be ~~dropped from fellowship~~ removed from membership during the year, as well as those who have died. A brief statement of the decisions of the church board in its meetings would naturally be of interest to all members of the church.
2. A report from the Personal Ministries leader, giving a statement of outreach (missionary) activities, including Community Services activities, together with any plans for future work. This should be followed by a report from the Personal Ministries secretary.
3. A report from the treasurer, showing the amount of tithe received and sent to the conference/mission/field treasurer; also a full statement of mission offerings received and forwarded; and a statement showing local church funds received and disbursed.
4. A report from the deacons and deaconesses concerning visits to the members, their activities in behalf of the poor, and any other features that come under their supervision.
5. A report from the secretary of the young people's society outlining the activities in outreach (missionary) and other lines by the youth of the church.
6. A report from the Sabbath School secretary, giving the membership and other matters pertaining to the Sabbath School.
7. A report from the treasurer as to the financial status of the church school, with details as to its need in equipment and other matters.

8. A report from the principal or teacher of the church school, covering such matters as enrollment, the educational progress of the school, baptisms among the school children, and the results of the children's efforts in denominational endeavors.

9. A report from the Home and School Association leader, covering the activities and needs of that organization.

10. A report from the Communication secretary covering press, radio, television, and other related activities involving church and community.

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163-00G THE CHURCH BOARD AND ITS MEETINGS,  
MEMBERSHIP - *CHURCH MANUAL* AMENDMENT

VOTED, To amend the *Church Manual*, Chapter 7, The Services and Meetings of the Church, pages 79 and 80, The Church Board and Its Meetings, Membership, to read as follows:

Membership—The following church officers should be included in the church board membership:

~~Elder or elders~~ Elder(s)  
Head deacon  
Head deaconess  
Treasurer  
Clerk  
~~Lay Activities~~ Personal Ministries leader  
~~Lay Activities~~ Personal Ministries secretary  
Community Services ~~or~~ and/or Dorcas leader  
Sabbath School superintendent  
Family Ministries leader  
Women's Ministries leader  
Children's Ministries coordinator  
Church Education secretary  
Home and School Association leader  
Adventist Youth Society leader  
Pathfinder Club director  
Adventurer Club director

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Interest coordinator

Communication Committee chairperson or Communication secretary

Health ~~secretary~~ Ministries leader

~~Temperance leader~~

Stewardship leader

Religious Liberty leader

In many cases two or more of these offices are carried by one individual. Additional members of the board may be elected by the church if desired. The minister appointed by the local field to serve the church as its pastor is always a member of the church board.

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164-00G THE CHURCH BOARD AND ITS MEETINGS, WORK OF  
THE BOARD - *CHURCH MANUAL* AMENDMENT

VOTED, To amend the *Church Manual*, Chapter 7, The Services and Meetings of the Church, pages 80 and 81, The Church Board and Its Meetings, Work of the Board, to read as follows:

Work of the Board—1. Planning evangelism in all of its phases. Since evangelism is the primary work of the church, the first item on the agenda of each church board meeting is to relate directly to the evangelization of the missionary outreach (missionary) territory of the church. In addition, once each quarter of the year the entire church board meeting can well be devoted to plans for evangelism. The board will study local field committee recommendations for evangelistic programs and methods. It will determine how these can best be implemented by the church. The pastor and the church board will initiate and develop plans for public evangelistic campaigns.

2. Coordinating outreach programs of departments. The church board is responsible for coordinating the work of all church departments. This includes the outreach programs of ~~Lay Activities, Personal Ministries, Sabbath School, Children's Ministries, Youth, Health, Education, and Temperance; Health Ministries, and Education.~~ Each of these departments develops its plans for outreach within its own sphere. To avoid conflict in timing and competition in securing volunteer helpers, and to achieve maximum beneficial results, coordination is essential. Before completing and announcing plans for any program, each department should submit its plans to the church board for approval. The departments also report to the church board on the progress and results of their outreach programs. The church board may suggest to the departments how

their programs can contribute to the preparation, conduct, and follow-up of a public evangelistic campaign.

~~3. Dividing and assigning missionary territory. As far as possible, each family and member should be encouraged to accept an assignment of territory. Every home in the church territory will thus be assigned to a church member. The member will be encouraged to pray daily for those living in every home in his or her territory and to begin making missionary contacts in every home of one section of that territory.~~

4. ~~3.~~ Encouraging and helping the ~~outreach departments~~ Personal Ministries Department of the church to enlist all church members and children in some form of personal missionary outreach (missionary) service. Training classes should be conducted in various lines of outreach ministry.

5. ~~4.~~ Cooperating with the Interest coordinator of the church to ensure that every reported interest in the message, aroused through whatever source, is personally and promptly followed up by an assigned lay person.

6. ~~5.~~ Encouraging each department to report at least quarterly to the church board and to the church membership at business meetings and/or in Sabbath day meetings.

7. ~~6.~~ The details of church business should be considered by the board, and the treasurer should report the state of church finance on a regular basis. The church roll should be studied, and inquiry should be made into the spiritual standing of all members, and provision made for visiting the sick, discouraged, and any backslidden member. The other officers should report concerning the work for which they are responsible.

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165-00G THE CHURCH BOARD AND ITS MEETINGS,  
SUBCOMMITTEES - CHURCH MANUAL AMENDMENT

VOTED, To amend the *Church Manual*, Chapter 7, The Services and Meetings of the Church, pages 81 and 82, The Church Board and Its Meetings, Subcommittees, to read as follows:

~~Subcommittees—The Committees of the Board—~~The church board should permit no other business to interfere with planning for evangelism. Should other business be too

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time-consuming, the board may appoint ~~subcommittees~~ committees to care for specific areas of church business such as finance or church building projects. Such ~~subcommittees~~ committees will then make recommendations to the church board. In this way the resources of the board are conserved for its primary task—evangelism.

In very large churches, a ~~subcommittee~~ committee for evangelistic planning may be appointed by the board. This will be composed of the heads of the church outreach departments with an elder as chairman. This ~~subcommittee~~ committee will report to the church board and will also assume the task of department coordination of outreach programs.

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166-00G AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS OF THE CHURCH AND  
THEIR OFFICERS - *CHURCH MANUAL* AMENDMENT

VOTED, To amend the *Church Manual*, Chapter 8, Auxiliary Organizations of the Church and Their Officers, page 87, with a new introduction to the chapter, to read as follows:

CHAPTER 8

Auxiliary Organizations of the  
Church and Their Officers

~~The overall responsibilities of the pastor or district leader in the church program require that he take an active and personal interest in the various activities carried on by the church, serving as a close counselor to the committees of all auxiliary organizations. In case of emergency, or where circumstances require such action, the pastor may call a meeting of any committee or organization of the church to conduct necessary business in the interest of the church.~~

The structure of the church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, is vital for the spiritual growth of members and for the fulfillment of the mission of the church. It is the skeleton of the body. And "the whole body, joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love" (Eph. 4:16, RSV). The most important elements of the local church structure and organization are the church officer roles (see chapter 6) and the auxiliary organizations or departments. This chapter is a description of their design, objectives, leadership, functions, and activities. The departments in the local church are expected to cooperate with the corresponding departments of the local field/mission/conference, union, and division.



The work of the departments in the local church is closely tied to the work of the pastor because both are equally engaged in the same program of the church. The pastor serves as a close counselor to the committees of all auxiliary organizations, and the departments assist in correlation with the church in implementing its program. In case of emergency, or where circumstances require such action, the pastor may call a meeting of any committee or organization of the church to conduct necessary business in the interest of the church. Every local church should utilize the services of the departments described in this chapter to nurture its members and accomplish the mission given by Christ to the Christian church, and particularly to the remnant church in the end time (Matt. 28:19; Rev. 10:11; Rev. 14:6).

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167-00G THE DEPARTMENT OF LAY ACTIVITIES - *CHURCH*  
*MANUAL* AMENDMENT

VOTED, To amend the *Church Manual*, Chapter 8, Auxiliary Organizations of the Church and Their Officers, pages 87-91, The Department of Lay Activities, to read as follows:

The Department of Lay Activities  
The Personal Ministries Department

The Personal Ministries Department of Lay Activities ~~was organized to direct and train the laity~~ provides resources and trains church members to unite their efforts with the ministry and church officers in the final proclamation of the gospel of salvation in Christ. The aim of the department is to enlist every member in active soul-winning service for God.

~~Lay Activities Council~~ The Personal Ministries Council ~~The Personal Ministries Council~~ guides the outreach efforts of the local church and works under the direction of the church board. The council should meet at least once each month. This council shall consist of the following: the Lay Activities Personal Ministries leader (chairperson), Personal Ministries secretary, the pastor, an elder, Lay Activities secretary, church treasurer, Dorcas Society leader, Dorcas Society secretary, Adventist Men's organization leader, Interest coordinator, ~~Temperance~~ leader, Health secretary, Ministries leader, Communication secretary, Sabbath School superintendent, Youth director, leader, coordinator for Ministry to People with Disabilities, Children's Ministries coordinator, Women's Ministries leader, and director of Community Services center or Community Services leader, leader, and other members as deemed necessary. The Personal Ministries Council may assign subcommittees for specialized tasks as deemed necessary. All subcommittees report to the Personal Ministries Council. In churches which elect

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~~a Community Services leader as an assistant to the Lay Activities leader, that officer shall also be a member of the Lay Activities Council. The church may wish to add other members to this council. The Lay Activities secretary is the secretary of this council. The council should meet at least once each month.~~

The duties of this council shall be the following:

1. To arrange for the missionary outreach (missionary) meetings of the church, to study its field of missionary outreach (missionary) activity, ~~to counsel with the church board concerning the missionary program of the church,~~ and to enlist every church member in definite lines of service.
2. To ~~direct~~ enlist the laity members' ~~in, though not limited to, the following specific areas of missionary service involvement in outreach (missionary) activities~~ sponsored by the Lay Activities Department: Personal Ministries Department, such as:
  - a. Literature distribution and circulation of missionary periodicals outreach (missionary) periodicals, including subscription magazines.
  - b. Bible course enrollments.
  - c. Community Services ~~(welfare and medical-missionary work):~~ and/or Dorcas Society activities.
  - d. ~~Plans and provision for any needed disaster-relief operations.~~ Entry events such as stop-smoking clinics, cooking schools, stress management seminars, etc.
  - e. ~~Bible evangelism, including Bible evangelism crusades (Bible studies, cottage meetings, community Bible schools, lay preaching, street or plaza meetings).~~ Outreach (missionary) activities such as Bible studies and follow up of contacts, public evangelistic meetings, seminar evangelism, and other outreach plans and projects.
  - f. Ingathering.
3. ~~To aid the church board in arranging territorial assignments. To be responsible for the planning and implementation of the annual Ingathering campaign where conducted.~~
4. To train and lead members in Christian witnessing: witnessing, such as:

a. Conducting or arranging for classes in how to give Bible studies, methods of personal missionary work, witnessing, the operation of and in Community Services programs, and provision of disaster relief service: services.

b. Giving practical demonstrations in how to do this work.

c. ~~Leading the members in active missionary service.~~

5. To encourage reporting through the ~~Lay Activities secretary and band leaders.~~  
Personal Ministries secretary.

6. To supervise the Community Services activities of the church and serve as the governing committee of the church's Community Services center.

7. To cooperate with the Personal Ministries Department of Lay Activities of the local ~~conference~~ conference/mission/field in carrying out its program.

8. To ~~disburse the~~ authorize disbursement of local church ~~missionary~~ Personal Ministries funds.

9. To plan for and conduct the weekly and monthly ~~missionary~~ Personal Ministries meetings as called for in the church calendar.

~~Lay Activities~~ Personal Ministries Leader—The ~~Lay Activities~~ Personal Ministries leader is elected by the church to lead in training and directing the church in active missionary outreach (missionary) service and is chairperson of the ~~Lay Activities~~ Personal Ministries Council, which meets each month: Council. It is ~~his or her~~ the leader's duty to present to the church, in the monthly Sabbath missionary Personal Ministries service and in the church business meetings, a report on the total missionary outreach (missionary) activities of the church.

~~Lay Activities~~ Personal Ministries Secretary—The ~~Lay Activities~~ Personal Ministries secretary is elected by the church and serves as the representative of the Adventist Book Center for all departments of the church. The secretary works closely with the ~~Lay Activities~~ Personal Ministries leader in developing the missionary outreach (missionary) programs of the church. The duties of the ~~Lay Activities~~ Personal Ministries secretary are:

1. ~~To assist in the direction of the missionary activities of the church. To serve as secretary of the Personal Ministries Council, recording the minutes of Personal Ministries' meetings and taking an active part in implementing departmental plans. The secretary should record reports of outreach (missionary) work done by church members and complete and send all~~

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required reports and other information about such activities to the conference/mission/field Personal Ministries Department promptly each quarter.

2. ~~To be present at all missionary meetings, keeping the minutes and endeavoring in every way to cooperate with the Lay Activities leader in fostering missionary activity. To give a report of Personal Ministries activities to the church during the monthly Sabbath Personal Ministries service and during church business meetings.~~

3. ~~To conduct the transactions of the church in all relations with the Adventist Book Center, such as ordering supplies, keeping accounts, making collections, and to ensure that the receipts from all sources are sufficient to pay for that which is ordered. To be responsible for all local church transactions with the Adventist Book Center or other suppliers. The secretary will maintain careful accounts with the suppliers, using a duplicate order at all times and, in cooperation with the church treasurer, will see that accounts are settled speedily, with clearance of outstanding items on a monthly basis.~~

4. ~~To secure a duplicate order book for use in reconciling the Adventist Book Center invoices. Orders should never be written in letters, since they are likely to be overlooked. Care should be taken to write the orders clearly, with correct names and addresses, stating how the supplies are to be sent and giving other necessary instruction. To call the attention of the church to resources that are available for use.~~

5. ~~To order at the proper time from the Adventist Book Center all supplies such as missionary tracts, Sabbath School lesson pamphlets, Christian Home Calendars, Morning Watch Calendars/Books, et cetera.~~

6. ~~5. To see that plan periodic offerings are taken at suitable times to provide tracts and other missionary Personal Ministries supplies for the members: members when such are not provided for through the church budget or the conference/mission/field approved offering schedule. A church missionary Personal Ministries offering for this purpose is may be received on the first Sabbath of the month. If this offering does not provide sufficient funds, collections offerings may be taken at the weekly missionary Personal Ministries meeting. In the case of a church on the Personal Giving Plan, provision is already made for the funding of missionary supplies. The disposition of such church missionary Personal Ministries funds shall be made by action of the Lay Activities Personal Ministries Council.~~

6. ~~To record details of services and reports of work done by church members, and to be prompt in sending a summary to the Personal Ministries director of the conference/mission/field at the appointed time.~~

7: To ensure that the receipts from all sources are sufficient to pay for that which is ordered, and to make certain that the account with the Adventist Book Center is settled each month.

8: To serve as secretary of the Lay Activities Council, keeping the minutes of this council and taking an active part in carrying into effect the plans developed by the council.

9: To keep record of the reports of work done by church members, to keep proper records of all services, and to be prompt in sending a summary to the Lay Activities director of the conference or field at the appointed time.

10: To call the attention of the church to literature which is available for use.

11: To maintain close touch with the conference/mission Lay Activities director and to keep him or her informed with regard to the progress of the work. The Lay Activities secretary may do this by writing on the reverse side of the quarterly report blank information such as the following:

- a: A report of the condition and progress of the missionary organization.
- b: Any outstanding experiences the members may have had during the month.
- c: Interesting statistics concerning any missionary activities the church may be conducting, such as Ingathering, et cetera.

12: To present a statement of the church account with the Adventist Book Center at church business meetings.

13: To give a report of lay activities to the church on occasions such as the monthly missionary meeting and business meetings.

Dorcas Society—The Dorcas Community Services/Dorcas Society—The Community Services/Dorcas Society is an important feature of the lay activities outreach (missionary) activities of the church. The leader of this society, and the assistant leader (if needed), if needed, together with and the secretary-treasurer, are elected at the regular church election. This society is usually composed of the women of the church who, banded together in this way, devote time and talents to the gathering and preparing of gathers and prepares clothing, food, and other supplies for the poor, needy, and unfortunate. This organization works in close cooperation with the deacons and deaconesses of the church. Dorcas Community Services/Dorcas ministry,

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however, includes more than the giving of material aid; it encompasses also adult education, visiting, homemaking, home nursing, counseling, and other services. The church Personal Ministries Department of Lay Activities and the Dorcas Society have has primary responsibility for this work, also for Community Services. Referring to the work of Dorcas and other noble characters of the Bible, we read: "Such patient, prayerful, and persevering fidelity as was possessed by these saints of God is rare; yet the church cannot prosper without it."—Testimonies, vol. 5, p. 304.

Adventist Men—Adventist Men is another subsidiary group within the Personal Ministries Department. Department of Lay Activities. The chief missionary outreach (missionary) programs carried on by this group are lay preaching efforts, prison ministry, and Community Services. Community Services for men usually focuses on furniture service, repair of homes for the aged, invalids, and widows, and disaster relief services such as rescue, transport of relief supplies, counseling, cleanup, and rehabilitation.

Community Services Center—Where a church operates a Community Services center, Center, the Lay Activities Personal Ministries Council is the governing committee of the center. The director of the center is appointed by the Lay Activities Personal Ministries Council and is a member of the council.

Where a number of churches within a single district operate a Community Services center Center jointly, a governing committee for the center should be appointed by the supporting churches of the district, with representatives from each church, the district leader pastor serving as the chairman.

Where a center is operated by two or more districts of churches within a conference, churches, the center governing committee should be composed of representatives of the supporting churches, with additional representatives appointed by the conference conference/mission/field committee. The committee elects its own chairperson: chairperson, but sometimes is chaired by the conference/mission/field Personal Ministries or Community Services director.

Ministry to People with Disabilities—Through the Ministry to People with Disabilities, a local church Personal Ministries Council should give special attention to members and others with disabilities. It should develop programs for witnessing to people who have disabilities; make recommendations to the church board regarding possible actions which could make the church facilities more accessible for people with disabilities; assist the church in transportation solutions for people with disabilities; and advise departmental and church leadership regarding possible involvement of members who have disabilities.

The coordinator of Ministry to People with Disabilities serves as a liaison with organizations providing services for people with disabilities such as Christian Record Services and promotes Christian Record Services programs in the local church.

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168-00G THE SABBATH SCHOOL - *CHURCH MANUAL* AMENDMENT

VOTED, To amend the *Church Manual*, Chapter 8, Auxiliary Organizations of the Church and Their Officers, pages 91-96, The Sabbath School, to read as follows:

~~The Sabbath School~~  
The Sabbath School Department

~~"The Sabbath school work is important, and all who are interested in the truth should endeavor to make it prosperous."~~—*Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, p. 9.

The Sabbath School is the primary religious education system of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and has four purposes: study of the Scripture, fellowship, community outreach, and world mission emphasis.

In cooperation with world divisions, the specific mission of the General Conference Sabbath School Department is to distribute the *Sabbath School Bible Study Guide* for all age levels, provide designs for Sabbath School programming within the context of the various world division cultures, provide resources and training systems for Sabbath School teachers, and promote world mission Sabbath School offerings.

"The Sabbath school is an important branch of the missionary work, not only because it gives to young and old a knowledge of God's word, but because it awakens in them a love for its sacred truths, and a desire to study them for themselves; above all, it teaches them to regulate their lives by its holy teachings."—*Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, pp. 10, 11.

"The Sabbath school, if rightly conducted, is one of God's great instrumentalities to bring souls to a knowledge of the truth."—*Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, p. 115.

The officers, teachers, and entire Sabbath School membership should cooperate with the other departments of the church in all missionary outreach (missionary) work and soul-saving activities, as well as energetically carrying on Sabbath School evangelism by means of the

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regular Sabbath School classes, and such activities as Decision Days, pastors' Bible classes, Community Guest Days, Vacation Bible Schools, and branch Sabbath Schools, including Neighborhood Bible Clubs and Story Hours. In churches which have a Children's Ministries Department, Vacation Bible Schools, children's branch Sabbath Schools, Neighborhood Bible Clubs, and Story Hours will come under the direction of the Children's Ministries Department. (See p. 118.) Likewise, all departments of the church should work together with the Sabbath School to build up the Sabbath School and make the entire church work of the entire church as effective as possible.

The officers of the Sabbath School should be members of the local church. They are elected for one or two years as determined by the local church. (See p. 45.) The officers who serve as members of the Sabbath School Council are elected in the same manner and at the same time as the officers of the church. The list of Sabbath School officers and their assistants who are to be elected by the church is as follows: superintendents, superintendent, with one or more assistants; secretary, with one or more assistants; a leader for each division, including the adult and extension divisions; a Children's Ministries coordinator and/or Vacation Bible School director; and an Investment secretary.

~~When at least two assistant superintendents are elected, the first assistant shall be assigned the responsibility of promoting Sabbath School evangelism and shall be called the assistant superintendent for evangelism. The second assistant shall be assigned the responsibility of caring for membership and shall be called the assistant superintendent for membership. Where possible, the Interest coordinator should carry this responsibility.~~

The Sabbath School Council—The Sabbath School Council is the administrative body of the Sabbath School. It consists of the following: superintendent (to serve as chairperson), assistant superintendent(s), secretary (to serve as secretary of the council), assistant secretaries, division leaders, Investment secretary, Lay Activities Personal Ministries leader, Children's Ministries coordinator and/or Vacation Bible School director, an elder (appointed by the church board or by the board of elders), and the pastor. As soon as possible after the officers are elected, the superintendent should call a Sabbath School Council meeting to appoint, as needed for the various divisions, other officers who do not serve as members of the Sabbath School Council. These may include assistant division leaders, division secretaries, music directors, pianists and/or organists, and greeters.

In addition to the appointed officers listed in the paragraph above, the Sabbath School Council appoints the teachers for all ~~divisions~~. divisions, who are then approved by the church board. Careful study should be given to the needs of all groups. It is advisable to consult with the division ~~leaders~~ leaders, particularly when selecting teachers for the children's divisions.



~~Teachers are appointed by the Sabbath School Council and approved by the church board.~~

~~The Sabbath School Council is responsible for the successful operation of the entire Sabbath School through the leadership of its chairperson, the superintendent. The council should meet at least once each month.~~

~~Because of the importance of maintaining the integrity of the truths being taught, taught and maintaining a high quality of teaching, great care should be exercised in the choice of Sabbath School teachers. The time allotted for teaching approximates that of the pastor in the pulpit, should be at least thirty minutes. All teachers shall be members of the church in regular standing and serve at the pleasure of the church board. standing.~~

~~The Sabbath School Council is responsible for the successful operation of the entire Sabbath School through the leadership of its chairperson, the superintendent. The council should meet regularly as needed to affect proper coordination of the program for all divisions. The council should ensure that program helps and materials, including the *Sabbath School Bible Study Guide* prepared by the General Conference, are supplied in sufficient quantities and in a timely manner.~~

~~The Superintendent—The Sabbath School superintendent is the leading officer of the Sabbath School. As soon as the superintendent is elected, ~~elected~~ he/she should begin planning for the smooth and effective operation of the school. The superintendent should ~~be acquainted with the~~ support the plans and emphases of the Sabbath School Department of the General Conference of the conference/mission/field. and The superintendent is expected to abide by the decisions of the Sabbath School Council concerning the operation of the Sabbath School.~~

~~The superintendent is the administrator of all divisions of the Sabbath School. This does not automatically include the leadership of the adult division. However, the superintendent may be elected as leader of the adult or another division. All leaders of divisions should submit all suggested major changes in the operation of their division to the superintendent to be presented to the Sabbath School Council.~~

~~Sabbath School teachers are usually appointed for the calendar year but are subject to change at the discretion of the Sabbath School Council. A number of substitute teachers sufficient for each division should be appointed by the Sabbath School Council when the regular teachers are appointed. These may be called upon by the superintendent to fill such vacancies as may occur from time to time in the division for which they are chosen.~~

~~If a vacancy occurs in any appointed office, or if a teacher leaves at any time, it is the superintendent's duty to convene the Sabbath School Council and fill such vacancy.~~

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The superintendent is to:

1. Serve the church as administrator of all divisions of the Sabbath School. He/She is not the leader of the adult division by virtue of being general superintendent, although he/she may also be elected as leader of the adult or another division.
2. Study and follow the counsel and guidelines found in *Counsels on Sabbath School Work* by Ellen G. White, and the *Sabbath School Handbook* published by the General Conference Sabbath School Department. The superintendent should encourage the church to make these books available to leaders and teachers in all divisions of the Sabbath School.
3. Become conversant with the promotion plans of the mission program of the world church and lead the Sabbath School in such sacrificial giving as will enlist their wholehearted support of world missions.
4. Call and chair the Sabbath School Council meetings to care for immediate needs, including recommendations dealing with officer or teacher vacancies.
5. Receive from division leaders all agenda items pertaining to the operation and finances of the Sabbath School and present them to the Sabbath School Council.
6. Implement the decisions of the Sabbath School Council.
7. The superintendent should have Be in general charge of the teachers' meeting. While others may have duties in particular lines, such as the lesson study, the superintendent ~~with the assistant~~, should take the lead and seek to make the teachers' meeting a vital part of the Sabbath School work and through it endeavor to build up a strong, spiritual teaching force.

~~The Sabbath School carries a substantial part of the financial support of the worldwide program of Seventh-day Adventists. The major percentage of the offerings given in some countries for the advancement of the gospel in the world field is given by the Sabbath Schools. It is one of the responsibilities of every Sabbath School superintendent to be conversant with the promotion plans of the mission program and to seek to lead the school in such sacrificial giving as will enlist their wholehearted support of world mission and thus meet the financial goals of the Sabbath School.~~

The Assistant Superintendent—One or more assistant superintendents ~~should~~ may be elected to assist the superintendent. ~~superintendent as needed.~~ The first two assistants are the assistant superintendent for evangelism and the assistant superintendent for membership. Additional assistants may also be elected as required. ~~Other specific duties in the school should~~

~~be assigned to the assistants; caring for visitors, providing for the weekly missions emphasis, seeing that substitute teachers are provided when vacancies occur in classes, and any other responsibilities in which the superintendent needs assistance in carrying out the Sabbath School program promptly and efficiently.~~ The assistant(s) may be assigned specific responsibilities such as: promoting Sabbath School evangelism and world missions; coordinating the weekly mission emphasis, and planning and promoting offering goals; fostering and coordinating evangelistic outreach plans and activities in the community; and caring for membership by checking Sabbath School rolls with the church membership roll, and then making and implementing plans to increase Sabbath School attendance and membership. Such plans should encourage individual and class outreach to contact nonattending and new members.

~~The Secretary—There is perhaps no office in the Sabbath School where faithfulness, The Secretary—Faithfulness, accuracy, and Christian courtesy are more especially necessary than in the work of the secretary. Next to that of the superintendent, no position in the Sabbath School offers a greater variety of opportunities for useful service. The secretary becomes one of the superintendent's chief helpers, and serves also as secretary of the adult division. The faithfulness and careful attention to details by the secretary enables the superintendent to be aware of the pulse of the entire school.~~

The secretary's duties may be summarized are as follows:

1. To keep all records called for on the official report form supplied by the conference/mission/field, to compile a complete and accurate quarterly Sabbath School report, and to promptly forward the report form to the appropriate individuals. The secretary should also bring before the Sabbath School appropriate reports of Sabbath School work.
2. To distribute supplies to the teachers and gather ~~their~~ class records and offerings. offerings from each division.
3. To ~~mark the officers' class record and receive their offerings.~~ ensure that the various Sabbath School divisions are supplied with materials as needed.
4. To keep a record of the weekly Sabbath School offerings, ~~Thirteenth offerings—Thirteenth Sabbath Offerings, special projects offerings, Birthday-Thank Offerings, offerings, Investment funds, and Sabbath School expense money, if the latter is not included in the church budget, budget of church expense; and to give all offerings to the church treasurer. The financial records kept by the secretary should agree with those of the church treasurer.~~
5. To pass on to the church treasurer all Sabbath School moneys for missions, also all expense money received in the Sabbath School: To order through the Personal Ministries

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secretary the Sabbath School supplies, materials, and resources agreed upon by the Sabbath School Council.

6. ~~To order through the Lay Activities secretary the Sabbath School supplies and special helps agreed upon by the Sabbath School Council. To keep the minutes of meetings of the Sabbath School Council.~~

7. ~~To keep the minutes of meetings of the Sabbath School Council.~~

8. ~~To keep all records called for by the Sabbath School secretary's Record Book, making sure that all financial records agree with those of the church treasurer. It is important that the report rendered by the church treasurer to the conference treasurer and the report of the Sabbath School secretary shall agree.~~

~~Assistant Secretaries—In Secretary—~~In the absence of the secretary, an assistant secretary assumes the responsibilities. The assistant ~~secretaries~~ secretary should be present at each Sabbath School service, ready to assist by doing whatever the superintendent or the secretary may require. ~~An assistant secretary should occasionally be requested to prepare and present the report.~~

If desired, the assistant may act as secretary of the teachers' meeting and report to the secretary any business that should be recorded.

Investment Secretary—The Investment secretary gives promotional leadership to the Investment Plan for mission support. He/She encourages investment activity in all divisions of the Sabbath School, keeping all members informed of progress.

Vacation Bible School Director—The Vacation Bible School director leads in organizing, promoting, and launching community evangelism through the annual Vacation Bible School. (In some churches this responsibility may be given to the Children's Ministries coordinator.)

~~The Music Director—In larger Sabbath Schools a Director—~~A music director is usually may be appointed by the Sabbath School Council to lead the music of the school and plan with the division leader for the presentation of this phase of worship each Sabbath. ~~In some of the larger schools an assistant music director is also selected.~~

~~Only such special music should be provided as~~ As an expression of worship, care should be taken to provide music which will glorify God. Singers should be as carefully selected as are the workers for other parts of the Sabbath School service; service and should be measured by the same standards. (See p. 84.)

The Pianist and/or Organist—Great care should be exercised in the selection of the Sabbath School pianist or organist. Musical ability, standards of character, dress, and deportment should be taken into consideration. Organist—The Sabbath School pianists and/or organists are appointed by the Sabbath School Council.

Sabbath School Division Leaders—A leader is elected for each division of the Sabbath School by the church board. Assistants, as needed, may be appointed by the Sabbath School Council. More information on the age-related divisions, ranging from beginners through adult, is detailed in the *Sabbath School Handbook* which may be obtained from the Adventist Book Center or the conference/mission/field Sabbath School Department.

Duties of division leaders include arranging for the weekly program of the Sabbath School. Every division should follow the suggested schedule for that division as outlined in the *Sabbath School Handbook* and should always include a time for mission emphasis and for lesson study discussion appropriate to the age level of those in that Sabbath School division. Division leaders need to be sure that there are adequate physical facilities and supplies of the *Sabbath School Bible Study Guide* and weekly papers for all members and visitors, as well as goal devices, charts, and other teaching aids as needed.

Extension Division—The extension division cares for those who are unable to attend Sabbath School due to age or infirmity. Special information on the work of the extension division leader may be found in the *Sabbath School Handbook*.

Sabbath School Teachers—All teachers are chosen by the Sabbath School Council and approved by the church board to serve for one year. These individuals should have an aptitude for teaching and be willing to study ways to improve their teaching ability. They should be diligent in their preparation, be regular and punctual in attendance, and set an example to the class in the daily study of the Sabbath School lesson.

Special effort should be made to select teachers for children and youth from among those members who have their special interest at heart and who have the ability to meet their needs.

All teachers should be encouraged to participate in the teacher training courses published by the General Conference and/or division which are available through the conference/mission/field Sabbath School Department.

The Sabbath School Teachers' Meeting—It is recommended that every Sabbath School have a weekly teachers' meeting. The superintendent should have charge, although someone else may be appointed to conduct the survey of the next Sabbath's lesson. The best results are obtained when the teachers' meeting is held prior to the Sabbath, as this provides opportunity for

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private study both before and after the meeting; it is also likely to be less hurried than if held on Sabbath morning. Sufficient time should be allowed for the teachers' meeting, and at least three things should be accomplished: a profitable survey of the next Sabbath's lesson, a brief consideration of one or more Sabbath School goals, and discussion of any general problem requiring attention.

Sabbath School Lessons—Realizing that "None but those who have fortified the mind with the truths of the Bible will stand through the last great conflict" (*The Great Controversy*, pp. 593, 594), the Sabbath School Department leaders should do all that is possible to encourage regular systematic study of the Word. Sabbath School lesson materials are designed to encourage the habit of daily feasting on the Word. This time-honored practice has done much to maintain Christian unity throughout the world church.

The General Conference publishes Sabbath School lessons for each division of the Sabbath School. Every member should have access to those lessons through the *Sabbath School Bible Study Guide* appropriate to the member's age level. Helps for leaders and teachers are produced by the General Conference and/or division, and the appropriate helps should be made available to every leader and teacher in each Sabbath School division.

Sabbath School Offerings—All Sabbath School offerings are to be carefully recorded by the Sabbath School secretary and handed to the church treasurer at the earliest suitable moment. This helps prevent accidental loss. When the extension division offerings are received, usually at the end of the quarter, they should be added to the offerings already received from the Sabbath School.

With the exception of the expense fund, all Sabbath School offerings are General Conference offerings and are to be passed on in their entirety by the church treasurer to the ~~conference/mission~~ conference/mission/field for transfer to the General Conference. These funds include the regular Sabbath School weekly offering, the Thirteenth Sabbath ~~Offering~~, offering, Sabbath School Investment, and Birthday-Thank ~~Offering~~, offering. They are all mission funds, each of which is to be identified as a separate fund in the regular system of records from the local church to the General Conference. This is necessary to enable the General Conference to appropriate the percentages used for special projects according to church policy. No mission funds may be retained by the local church or ~~conference/mission~~ conference/mission/field.

Expense Money—Many Sabbath Schools take offerings at stated periods for Sabbath School expense. All such money should be recorded by the secretary, passed on to the local church treasurer, and used only for paying Sabbath School expense as authorized by the Sabbath School Council. In many churches, Sabbath School expenses are included in the church budget and expended as authorized by the Sabbath School Council.

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The Sabbath School expense offering and the mission offering shall not be taken as one offering and divided according to an agreed-upon formula or percentage. Sabbath School expense offerings must be kept entirely separate from the mission offerings.

~~In many churches, Sabbath School expenses are included in the church budget and expended as authorized by the Sabbath School Council.~~

~~The Quarterly Report—This should be made out Report—The Quarterly Report should be completed immediately after the last Sabbath of the quarter and mailed as soon as possible before the stated deadline to the conference conference/mission/field Sabbath School and Personal Ministries director(s). director. It may be read before the school the first Sabbath of the new quarter; it It should be read presented at the quarterly business meeting of the church. The secretary should make this report in quadruplicate—the original for send the report on the appropriate form to the conference conference/mission/field Sabbath School and Personal Ministries director(s). director, and a copy for each of the following: the Sabbath School superintendent, the pastor, and place a copy in the secretary's permanent file. This file should be complete and up to date, ready for comparisons between quarters. file, and provide copies for the Sabbath School superintendent and the pastor.~~

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169-00G ADVENTIST YOUTH SOCIETY (AUXILIARY  
ORGANIZATIONS OF THE CHURCH AND THEIR  
OFFICERS) - *CHURCH MANUAL* AMENDMENT

VOTED, To amend the *Church Manual*, Chapter 8, Auxiliary Organizations of the Church, pages 96-101, Adventist Youth Society, to read as follows:

#### Adventist Youth Society

The Adventist Youth Society (formerly Missionary Volunteer Society) is a department of the church through which the church works for and through her youth.

"Moses answered, 'We will go with our young and old, with our sons and daughters, and with our flocks and herds, because we are to celebrate a festival to the Lord'" (Ex. 10:9, NIV).  
"These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the door frames of your houses and

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on your gates" (Deut. 6:6-8, NIV). "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and purity" (1 Tim. 4:12, NIV).

"We have an army of youth today who can do much if they are properly directed and encouraged. . . . We want them to be blessed of God. We want them to act a part in well-organized plans for helping other youth."—Ellen G. White, in *General Conference Bulletin*, Jan. 29, 30, 1893, p. 24.

The servant of God called for the establishment of a youth organization in each church and told what kind of organization it should be. "Let there be a company formed somewhat after the order of the Christian Endeavor Society. . . ."—*Counsels on Health*, p. 537. "Let there be companies organized in every church to do this work."—Ellen G. White, in *Signs of the Times*, May 29, 1893.

"When the youth give their hearts to God, our responsibility for them does not cease. They must be interested in the Lord's work, and led to see that He expects them to do something to advance His cause. It is not enough to show how much needs to be done, and to urge the youth to act a part. They must be taught how to labor for the Master. They must be trained, disciplined, drilled, in the best methods of winning souls to Christ. Teach them to try in a quiet, unpretending way to help their young companions. Let different branches of missionary effort be systematically laid out, in which they may take part, and let them be given instruction and help. Thus they will learn to work for God."—*Gospel Workers*, p. 210.

"With such an army of workers as our youth, rightly trained, might furnish, how soon the message of a crucified, risen, and soon-coming Saviour might be carried to the whole world!"—*Messages to Young People*, p. 196.

While there is to be an active Adventist Youth Society in every church, it is important that the youth program not be isolated from the rest of the church. In addition to their participation in the youth organization, the young people should be integrated into responsible leadership and involvement in the entire church program. There should be young elders, young deacons and deaconesses, et cetera, working with experienced church officers. In all lines of church work the youth should be active. "In order that the work may go forward in all its branches, God calls for youthful vigor, zeal, and courage. He has chosen the youth to aid in the advancement of His cause. To plan with clear mind and execute with courageous hand demands fresh, uncrippled energies. Young men and women are invited to give God the strength of their youth, that through the exercise of their powers, through keen thought and vigorous action, they may bring glory to Him and salvation to their fellow-men."—*Gospel Workers*, p. 67.



Mission Statement—The primary focus of youth ministry is the salvation of youth through Jesus Christ. We understand youth ministry to be that work of the Church that is conducted for, with, and by young people.<sup>3</sup>

Our task is to:

1. Lead youth to understand their individual worth and to discover and develop their spiritual gifts and abilities.
2. Equip and empower youth for a life of service with God's Church and the community.
3. Ensure the integration of youth into all aspects of church life and leadership in order that they might be full participants in the mission of the Church.

To accomplish our task:

1. We will achieve a balanced ministry by incorporating the biblical dynamics of fellowship, nurture, worship, and mission.
2. We will be committed to maintaining relevance and effectiveness in ministry by relating all ministry to the needs of the youth. It is imperative that we listen to and are informed by their perceptions, concerns, and suggestions. Effective ministry becomes possible in an atmosphere of love, acceptance, and forgiveness. We will conduct ongoing research to discover areas that need attention. We are committed to experimentation and innovation in our programs because we recognize the ever changing nature of today's youth.
3. We will find inspiration in God's Word and our history, and have faith in God for the future. Our philosophy will find expression in a wide variety of God-ordained ministry styles and programs.
4. We will provide regular evaluation to ensure that our primary focus is achieved.

Objectives—In response to these inspired directives, the Youth Department was organized to give leadership ~~training~~, training and to provide resource materials and evangelistic plans for the Adventist Youth Society in the local churches. The Spirit of Prophecy sets forth the objectives of the youth organization as follows: (1) to train the youth to work for other youth, (2)

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<sup>3</sup>Adopted by the General Conference and Division Youth Directors, July 1993.

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to recruit the youth to help their church and “those who profess to be Sabbathkeepers”, and (3) to work “for those who are not of our faith.”—*Signs of the Times*, May 29, 1893.

In seeking to reach these objectives the youth are called upon (1) to pray together, (2) to study the Word together, (3) to fellowship together in Christian social interaction, (4) to act together in small groups to carry out well-laid plans for witnessing, (5) to develop tact and skill and talent in the Master’s service, and (6) to encourage one another in spiritual growth.

The *Aim* of the Adventist Youth Society is: “The Advent Message to All the World in This My Generation.”

The *Motto* is: “The Love of Christ ~~Constraineth Us.~~” Constrains Me.”

~~Membership in the Adventist Youth Society—Requirements for regular membership in the Adventist Youth Society are:~~

- ~~1. Membership in the Seventh-day Adventist Church:~~
- ~~2. Age of 16 years (or ninth grade) up to 30 years, inclusive.<sup>4</sup>~~
- ~~3. Willingness to subscribe to the objectives of the society:~~

~~Since the youth organization has as one of its goals reaching youth who are not members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, provision should be made for taking such young people into the society fellowship as associate members. These youth should also be willing to subscribe to the objectives of the society:~~

~~Associate members should not be elected as officers of the society, but should be actively involved in all of the youth activities and be made to feel an integral part of the organization. Through fellowship with Adventist youth, whose lives are a living witness to God’s love and truth, many will be encouraged to become baptized members of the church:~~

~~For those societies that wish to have a membership induction ceremony, the following Adventist Youth Society Pledge may be used:~~

Membership in the Adventist Youth Society—There are three categories of membership

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<sup>4</sup>~~The youth leader, who may be chosen from those who are older, is considered a regular member regardless of age, as may also other older adults who are involved in leadership responsibilities with the youth.~~

in the Adventist Youth Society:

1. Regular Members—Young people 16 to 30 years of age who are members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in regular standing and who, subscribing to the objectives of the society, desire to engage in active service for Christ may enroll as regular members.

2. Associate Members—Young people who are not members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, but who have Christian ideals and desire to be associated with the young people of the church in missionary work should be accepted as associate members. Associate members may not hold office, but they should be cordially received into all the society work and into its bands, and encouraged to become regular members as soon as possible.

3. Honorary members—Adult members of the church who support the youth may enroll as honorary members. Many persons who have passed the age of 30 would like to continue attending Adventist Youth Society meetings and participate in whatever way possible. Whenever it may seem advisable, they should receive an honorary membership card. Their membership is not included in the secretary's report, and they report their outreach (missionary) work in the regular way through the church.

Upon joining the Adventist Youth Society, new members take the following membership pledge:

“Loving the Lord Jesus, I promise to take an active part in the work of the Adventist Youth Society, doing what I can to help others and to finish the work of the gospel in all the world.”

~~Officers of the Adventist Youth Society—A chief factor in the success of any Adventist Youth Society is its leadership. When the officers are dedicated, active Christians, with initiative and ability to organize and inspire others, the work will go forward, young people will be saved and trained in God's service, and the whole church will be strengthened.~~

~~The officers of the Adventist Youth Society which are elected by the church are: youth leader, associate youth leader, secretary-treasurer, assistant secretary-treasurer, chorister, pianist or organist, and sponsor, who may be one of the local elders. This group forms the nucleus for the Adventist Youth Society Council, which in counsel with the young people appoints other officers such as fellowship or social director, devotional director, librarian, publicity director, and action group leaders. In smaller churches one person will of necessity carry several responsibilities. As many youth as possible should be involved in the planning and execution of the youth program.~~

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~~The Adventist Youth Society Council—The Ministries Committee—The Adventist Youth Society Council (formerly MV Executive Committee) is~~ Ministries Committee is the umbrella organization in the local church responsible for the general planning of the youth program in the local church: ministry program. (See p. 76.) It includes the elected officers of the society plus the ~~Lay Activities~~ Personal Ministries leader, youth Sabbath School division leader, ~~Temperance~~ Health Ministries leader, Pathfinder Club director, Adventurer Club director, principal of the ~~junior academy or day academy school~~, if there is such, the sponsor, and the pastor. The Adventist Youth Society leader, who is a member of the local church board, chairs this ~~council: committee.~~

The ~~council~~ committee should meet as often as necessary to plan and direct a successful youth ministry in the local church. ~~Council~~ Committee meetings should include time for prayer, a study of ways to help the youth spiritually, and plans for witnessing activities. The ~~council~~ committee will also be responsible for seeing that regular meetings are scheduled for the youth and will work with other departments in coordinating the youth program in the local church. There should be short- and long-range goals if the ~~society~~ youth ministry is to be effective in reaching its objectives.

~~The Adventist Youth Society Committee—The Adventist Youth Society Committee is~~ responsible for senior youth activities of the local church and works in coordination with the other youth entities through the Adventist Youth Ministries Committee. Where there is no Pathfinder or Adventurer program, the AYS will include these younger members in a Junior Society.

Officers of the Adventist Youth Society—A chief factor in the success of any Adventist Youth Society is its leadership. When the officers are dedicated, active Christians, with initiative and ability to organize and inspire others, the work will go forward, young people will be saved and trained in God's service, and the whole church will be strengthened.

The officers of the Adventist Youth Society which are elected by the local church are: youth leader, associate youth leader, secretary-treasurer, assistant secretary-treasurer, chorister, pianist or organist, and sponsor, who may be one of the local elders. Since music plays such an important role in the formation of the youth character, musicians should be as carefully selected as the rest of the officers of the Adventist Youth Society. (See p. 84.) This group forms the nucleus for the Adventist Youth Society Committee which in counsel with the young people appoints other officers such as fellowship or social leader, devotional leader, librarian, publicity leader, and the various action group leaders. In smaller churches one person will of necessity carry several responsibilities. As many youth as possible should be involved in the planning and execution of the youth program.

Youth Leader and Associate Youth Leader—The Youth leader as a follower of Jesus must exemplify the graces of a genuine Christian, with a burden for soul-winning and a contagious enthusiasm. In helping motivate the youth to work together and take responsibilities, the leader will be in the background—guiding, counseling, and encouraging the youth, helping them to gain experience and the joys of achievement. It will be necessary to study the youth profile of the church and seek to involve every youth in the society.

The Youth leader will keep in close touch with pastors and sponsors and with the ~~conference~~ conference/mission/field Youth director, taking advantage of every opportunity for in-service ~~training~~, training and leading the society into a cooperative relationship with the church and the ~~conference~~ conference/mission/field.

The associate Youth leader will assist the Youth leader in this work and in the absence of the Youth leader will chair the Adventist Youth Society ~~Council~~ Committee and perform the duties of the leader. The associate will also be assigned certain responsibilities as determined by the ~~council~~ committee. In smaller churches the ~~council~~ committee may assign the assistant to the office of secretary-treasurer.

Secretary-Treasurer and Assistant—As in the case of the other officers, the secretary-treasurer's first qualification is spirituality and dedication. One should know the Lord, be able to speak from personal experience, and have a burden for young people. The secretary-treasurer will keep a record of the activities of the society and send in a monthly report on special forms provided to the local ~~conference/mission~~ conference/mission/field youth director who will also encourage the young people to report their witnessing activities during the ten-minute ~~lay~~ activities personal ministries period at the close of the Sabbath School class lesson study.

Another important responsibility of the secretary-treasurer is to keep an accurate record of the receipts and disbursements of all funds of the Adventist Youth Society. Society funds are deposited with the church treasurer and held in trust until such times as their disbursement is ordered by the Adventist Youth Society ~~Council~~ Committee. This ~~council~~ committee shall also review the financial records of the society each quarter and have them audited once each year by the church treasurer. Many churches include the youth organization in their budget.

The assistant secretary-treasurer (when needed) assists with the secretary-treasurer's work as may be mutually arranged and acts in the absence of the secretary-treasurer.

Adventist Youth Society Sponsor—This may be an elder or other qualified person on the church board who understands thoroughly the objectives of the society and who is sympathetic with the youth and their ~~problems~~ involvement in the church's ministries. This individual serves as a guide or counselor to the Adventist Youth Society officers and meets with them regularly at

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July 7, 2000, a.m.

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the time of the Adventist Youth Society ~~Council~~ Committee meeting. The sponsor will be one whom the young people love and look to for counsel, working with the Youth leader in bringing the needs of the society before the church board. ~~Many churches include the youth organization in their budget.~~

The sponsor should become acquainted with the local ~~conference~~ conference/mission/field Youth director, keeping him or her informed of any changes in officer personnel and other matters relating to the Adventist Youth Society. Along with the society officers, the sponsor should attend the youth training institutes of the local ~~conference/mission~~ conference/mission/field to keep pace with what is developing in youth ministry and thus be more effective in giving counsel. It would be well if the sponsor could serve over a several-year period for continuity.

~~Adventist Youth Features—The Youth Department has developed numerous features to help young people acquire right attitudes, right knowledge, and necessary skills to grow in grace and be effective in their witness for the Lord. These include the following:~~

Adventist Youth Features—As young people grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ, the Youth Department seeks to provide them with age-related, dynamic, active programming that provides an environment for development of spiritual gifts in preparation for this life and the life to come. These include the following:

1. Devotional and Educational—Morning Watch, Bible reading plans, Encounter series, Adventist Youth Week of Prayer, Youth Bible Conference, Youth Ministry Training Course, Pathfinder Staff Training Course, Adventist Youth Book Club, Guide, Master Guide and related leadership training classes, Adventist Youth Honors, Outdoor Club, ~~Perception, and New Beginnings.~~ and others.

2. Witnessing—Voice of Youth, Friendship Teams, branch Sabbath Schools, Story Hours, Adventist Youth Taskforce, Adventist Youth Service Volunteers, Festival of the Word, Youth Rallies, Sunshine or Singing Band, Community Services, Literature and Correspondence Action Group, Youth Music Witnessing ~~Teams.~~ Teams, and AY Honors.

3. Recreation—Social to Save, nature exploration, outdoor clubs, Adventist Youth Camping, music specialty camps, Adventist Youth Honors, Silver Award, Gold Award.