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NAD EDITION ADVENTIST REVIEW

WEEKLY NEWS AND INSPIRATION FOR SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

NOVEMBER 1, 1990



KIDVID

How to Find the Best

Annual Council Report

CELEBRATION-STYLE WORSHIP: AN ASSESSMENT, 12

The Wayward Child

Your words of compassion and encouragement to parents of "wayward" children were much appreciated ("Hurting Parents," Aug. 23). Adventist relatives of children who leave the church need all the help they can get in coping with the resulting feelings of guilt and emotional pain.

When we first became aware that one of our beloved children had decided to abandon the faith of her childhood, our sorrow and sense of guilt knew no bounds. But through much prayer and the study of the Scriptures and the writings of Ellen G. White, we received abundant comfort and encouragement.

Certain Bible promises were especially helpful. "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you" (1 Peter 5:7); "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13); "My grace is sufficient for thee" (2 Cor. 12:9); "As thy days, so shall thy strength be" (Deut. 33:25) were among these. Ellen White gives much encouragement to those heavily burdened with feelings of guilt and remorse in the *Testimonies to Ministers* section entitled "The Victorious Life" (pp. 516-520).

I appeal to those fortunate parents whose children have remained in the church. Rather than allowing "smug pride" to lead you to criticizing and gossiping about our "wayward" children, won't you encourage them and pray for them instead? *Name Withheld*

Focused

Occasionally, an article in the *Review* is so original, focused, and fresh that it instantly becomes a classic. That's how I felt about "Simple Faith" (Aug. 9). The author's difficulty with her church's preoccupation with the "time of trouble" is something we've all faced. I often wonder if some of these people who stock their deep freezers for the time of trouble wouldn't be just as happy at a survivalists' convention. Our well-delineated eschatology must be balanced by the messages of hope and heaven that the children learn about.

*Thomas Seibold
Berrien Springs, Michigan*

Assaulted

I am disturbed by letters printed under "Assault Weapons" (Sept. 20).

The U.S. Constitution's guarantees are not unlimited: free speech does not guarantee slander, freedom of religion does not guarantee human sacrifice, the right to bear arms does not guarantee all weapons. Our country's murder rate is appalling, and it is a sad fact that most of those murders are committed with firearms. I fail to see how regulation of firearms could make the situation any worse. Furthermore, the use of a weapon firing hundreds of rounds of ammunition per minute for hunting is beyond me. Wouldn't most of the meat be ruined?

*Brad Wackerle
Kalamazoo, Michigan*

Ironical

I found it ironic that the full-page ad for the new Bible with Ellen White study aids was in the same issue of the *Review*

with the cover story "Which Version Can We Trust?" (Sept. 14).

*Ken Wilson
Augusta, Georgia*

Mrs. Job

Amen and amen! I too have felt uneasy when sermonizers castigate Mrs. Job ("The Patience of Mrs. Job," Aug. 30). Too many of us have no experience with such loss, yet we pontificate about her great lack of faith. How little we understand God's great patience with us and our bewildered cries of pain and anguish.

I am looking forward to singing with Mrs. Job that great hymn of experience, "Amazing Grace."

*Kay Dorchuck
Leeds, Utah*

Prayer Healing

Re "Spiritual Healing" (Aug. 23).

I find Mr. Ross's example of prayer nearly 2,000 years ago as an alternate treatment a little farfetched. An alternate to what other treatment? The alternates were few 2,000 years ago. I am going to research the suggestion that Christian Science children do not die disproportionately. Maybe more Christian Science parents use modern medicine than we realize. Religious liberty is very precious, but there seems to be a fine line between how we use it to practice our beliefs for ourselves and how we use it to enforce our beliefs on others.

*Hollis G. Scarbrough
Siloam Springs, Arkansas*

Tithe Rebate

As a tithe payer for more than a half century, I have strong feelings on the subject of the tithe rebate. Today, while the Holy Spirit is being poured in a definite way upon our mission around the world, surely this is not the time for us in North America to reduce the support sent through the General Conference to our mission fields. *W. L. Hesselstine
Newbury Park, California*

Letters should not exceed 250 words and should carry the writer's name, address, and telephone number. All will be edited to meet space and literary requirements, but the author's meaning will not be changed. Views expressed in the letters do not necessarily represent those of the editors or denomination.

Coming in the Adventist Review

November 8 — "Bear Bait," by Gordon Bietz

November 15 — "How to Overcome Spiritual Indifference," by W. A. Scharffenberg, Jr., M.D.

November 22 — "Are Guardian Angels Out-of-Date?" by Allen W. Perry, M.D.
— "Thanksgiving, Nevertheless," by Louise Hannah Kohr

Coming in December

"The U.S. Supreme Court: A Giant Step Forward, but Three Steps Back," by Mitchell A. Tyner, J.D.
"The New GC Leaders," Profiles and Duties.

Coming Next Year

"Issues of the Nineties." A careful look at concerns for the church during this decade.
"Senior Scene." Monthly column for senior citizens.

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"A Fresh Look at an Ancient Fruit"

The humble olive gains new respect.

Cover by Joel D. Springer

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Perhaps we try too hard to tell the world that God is love without giving enough attention to people's own experience of that love. *by Siroj Sorajjakool*

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Time to Press Together

It's time to press together in the North American Division. It's time for us to put aside our carping and criticism, our pettiness and crankiness, and join hands in a common message and a common mission.

The message God has entrusted to us in this generation is the everlasting gospel in a judgment-hour setting: "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters" (Rev. 14:6, 7).

This good news focuses on Jesus, the God-man, and our Saviour and Lord. It exalts His saving death—the world's only hope for deliverance from the bonds of sin—and His soon return.

Our mission springs from the message: God wants us to join forces with Him to share the good news about Jesus with every person on earth. We do this, not as a program or a campaign, but to help make men and women whole; not to bring glory to ourselves or to build up a human organization, but to bind up the wounds of the broken, as we bring love and hope in the spirit of Jesus.

We Seventh-day Adventists have no creed but the Bible. We seek always to have a conscience captive to the Word of God, and a heart open to the promptings of the Divine Spirit.

Our understanding of the Scriptures and, we believe, the leading of the Spirit (manifested especially through the counsels of Ellen G. White) have brought organization. We are a body, a family; we must have "ground rules" for functioning. The 27 fundamental beliefs, voted by the General Conference in session in

1980, set out those ground rules for our common message and common mission.

Now, some Adventists seem to want to change the rules. Some want to ignore or delete part of the 27 fundamentals; some want to add to them. Some insist vehemently that unless we adhere to a particular interpretation of prophecy or doctrine—a detail not specified by the 27 fundamentals—we have departed from the historic Adventist faith.

The 27 fundamental beliefs aren't set in stone. The preamble to them recognizes the possibility of change as it states in part: "Revision of these statements may be expected at a General Conference session when the church is led by the Holy Spirit to a fuller understanding of Bible truth or finds better language in which to express the teachings of God's Holy Word."

The Church Decides

But the point is this: *no individual or group within the church has authority to define what Adventists believe.* The church *as a whole* decides through its duly constituted delegates from around the world, who provide balances. We need each other!

As an example, take the human nature of Jesus. Our fundamental beliefs make clear that Jesus, God's eternal Son, became fully human, was tempted in all points, but remained sinless. But they do not attempt to spell out His nature beyond this.

Some Adventists try to do so, however. And not only this, but to insist that everyone else line up with their thinking.

They are right in studying for themselves. They are wrong in wanting to impose a doctrinal test beyond the fundamental beliefs.

It's time to press together in North America. It's time to preach our fundamental beliefs—which center in Jesus

and His soon coming—and quit arguing about other points of doctrine.

It's time to get out and *do* something for the Lord. Do you find Sabbath school and church boring? Get involved. Come down from the critic's stool and volunteer to teach a children's class or visit the shut-ins. The task is great: a world is going down into ruin while we sit around debating and arguing.

For nearly 10 years I have been burdened and troubled by the fragmentation of the church in North America. I have been saddened by the spirit of criticism, the attacks on leadership and church programs, the false accusations and near-slander found in certain independent publications. I have been astounded by the wild rumors that circulate—and worse, by the readiness of our people to believe them. For instance, fallacies like:

- Jesuits among the General Conference leaders.
- Conference presidents instructing pastors not to preach on the Second Coming.
- A conspiracy at the highest levels to turn the church toward Pentecostalism.

I have thought and prayed much about the *Adventist Review's* role at this time. We have taken the "high road," not attacking other publications or ministries, seeking to give a positive message rather than chasing rabbits.

We intend to continue on this course. While we may need to inform our readers more directly when rumors circulate, we have a loftier purpose to pursue than name-calling.

It's time to press together in North America. "Let the believers heed the voice of the angel who has said to the church, 'Press together.' In unity is your strength" (*Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 69).

WILLIAM G. JOHNSON



Our Worst Enemy

Julius Caesar is so much larger than we are, lamented Brutus. Who made us dwarfs? "The fault, dear Brutus," responded Cassius, "is not in our stars, but in ourselves . . ." ¹

These lines from Shakespeare put the finger on a universal human attitude: the tendency to pass the blame. "The woman made me do it," said Adam in the wake of his temptation and fall—"the woman *You* gave to be with me." And the woman, for her part, had her own defense: "The serpent deceived me. The devil made me do it." ²

And we've been using that alibi ever since. The younger generation blames the older for its hang-ups and its problems. "Conservatives" blame "liberals" for society's woes, and "liberals" return the favor. The media holds our politicians to account, the politicians blame the media for their troubles, and everybody blames everybody else for everything.

A Powerful Blinder

This alibi syndrome blinds us to our greatest enemy, *self*—the enemy that stands at the very root of all sin, beginning with the first. Said the haughty angel: "I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will make myself like the Most High" ³

Preachers and other Christians without number have called attention to the evident self-centeredness of Lucifer's ambition here. But this awareness does not insulate us from succumbing to the same insidious urge. As Jesus spoke of His impending arrest, Peter and the others armed themselves to face an enemy from without. ⁴ But events later that evening showed the real enemy much closer. It was *within*!

Getting to the Heart

Self lies at the heart of the most important problems facing our church today. It affects the way we deal with one another and with issues, the way we relate and interact. Self takes the glory that accompanies success—when we preach well, when we administer well, when we sing well, when we write well, when we earn well. Self becomes jealous and irritable when others succeed, when a colleague does it better. Self feels chafed when the limelight falls on others. Self struggles for the highest place and takes umbrage when another receives the nod.



Self attacks the message of the church for the sake of notoriety or publicity. And self pays lip service to the doctrines, to curry favor with the "brethren" for promotion and advancement.

When we mount soapboxes to hurl stinging criticism against our brothers and sisters in the church, do we do it in an attitude of spiritual superiority or in one of humility? Do we seek to build, or to tear down? Is ours the tear-filled voice of Jesus, or does it drip with the venom and poison of the enemy? Deep down within us, deeper than human eye can see, is our motive flawed by self? Is that subtle tyrant on the throne?

The danger for me, the writer, and for you, the reader, is that we each have a tendency to apply these things to other peo-

ple and not to ourselves. I caught myself doing this very thing even as I wrote this editorial. But unless we somehow apply the lesson to our own individual lives, we will remain hopelessly enslaved by this subtle but most vicious enemy.

Self. It constitutes the greatest impediment to the advancement of the gospel. For we have it from an inspired source that "if we would humble ourselves before God, and be kind and courteous and tenderhearted and pitiful, there would be one hundred conversions to the truth where now there is only one." ⁵ "But

though professing to be converted," says Ellen White in the succeeding line we often omit, "we carry around with us a bundle of self that we regard as altogether too precious to be given up." ⁶

Self—subtle, insidious, deceitful. We are no match for it in our own strength. It's the "strongest foe" we have to face. ⁷ The cartoon character Pogo spoke a world of truth when he said, "We has met the enemy, and it is us."

¹ Julius Caesar, Act I, scene 2, lines 140, 141.

² Gen. 3:12, 13, paraphrase.

³ Isaiah 14:13, 14, RSV.

⁴ See Luke 22:38.

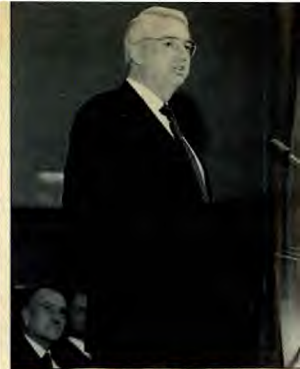
⁵ Testimonies, vol. 9, p. 189.

⁶ Ibid. (Italics supplied).

⁷ Messages to Young People, p. 134.

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ROY ADAMS



NEWSBREAK

Far left: A video crew taped the opening services, and the video was distributed to the Three Angels Broadcasting Network. Middle left: Duane McBride presents findings of the Role and Function Survey. Middle right: Israel Leito, GC church ministries, gives input from the floor. Far right: Robert S. Folkenberg

Annual Council Sets Stage for a New Beginning

From the keynote address to the final amen, the 1990 Annual Council truly reflected the spirit of its theme, "All Things New."

More than 250 church leaders converged on the General Conference (GC) headquarters complex in Silver Spring, Maryland, October 2-9, to attend the first Annual Council session of the 1990s. The seven-day business session also marked the first Annual Council of the church's new quinquennium period, and the first Annual Council session under the direction of the new General Conference president, Robert S. Folkenberg.

In his keynote address, entitled "New Loyalties," Folkenberg told world leaders that the church needs to capture a new vision of Christ in order to work through its challenges. *[His address will be printed in next week's Review, November 8.]*

"Like Paul on his way to Damascus, we are also on a road. It is a road to the New Jerusalem. Like Paul, we also must have a new vision to give us new priorities and a new vision of Jesus."

Folkenberg, the youngest General Conference president elected since A. G. Daniels 89 years ago, highlighted major challenges that the church needs to address.

Referring to the Valuegenesis study on North American youth, he said, "This study found that 70 percent of our young people do not understand the good news of the gospel. They feel little peace and assurance, for they believe their salvation is provided by their conduct."

Folkenberg warned, "If we succeed in providing them the highest quality basic education, yet [our homes, churches, and schools] fail to teach them the beauty of assurance in Jesus, we have failed miserably."

"There is a mounting fear that the bond of young people to Adventism may be lessening," he said. "It is time that the church capture the imagination of the young by passing on the dream of Adventism, by giving them a piece of the pie."

Folkenberg also identified other challenging issues: strains between the organized church and independent ministries, and financial concerns.

Commenting on independent ministries, Folkenberg said, "I believe we should be on the same team. We have some wonderful, effective soul-winning *supporting ministries*. Unfortunately, not all are positive, mission-driven organizations. These give a bad name to the term *self-supporting ministry*."

"There are some [church members] who fear the drain of

money to these ministries," he explained. "We will never *increase* the flow of funds to the church by seeking to shut off funds to others."

In commenting on the church's financial concerns, Folkenberg said, "There is no pot of gold at the end of the General Conference rainbow. Cutting budgets may increase credibility, but it isn't the panacea for resolving financial woes. Money isn't the problem."

"The Christ-centered message of our relationship to God as His stewards is the only prescription to cure our souls from the cancer of selfishness."

He urged church leaders to restore stewardship education to its vital lifesaving role. "We will never administrate our way into the kingdom," he said. "No human leader is wise enough to lead a church through these shoals unscathed. Ultimate triumph will come only as we recognize that Christ alone will lead us through."

Folkenberg's message set the stage for an Annual Council session that many committee members believe was the most crucial in recent years.

Revised Tithe Distribution Policy

The theme "All Things New" marked the business session as local and world leaders united their efforts to tackle the tough issue of tithe distribution.

Months of careful, intense dialog, late-night committees, and endless numbers-crunching negotiations culminated October 9 when Annual Council attendees voted the North American Division Tithe Percentages Adjustment Proposal. The new policy will bring \$1 million of unrestricted money to local conferences in 1991, and a total of \$10 million over the next four years, from 1992 to 1995.

Under the measure the General Conference and North American Division will:

- Cap their respective operating expenses at a percentage of gross North American Division tithe (estimated at more than \$400 million for 1991) and world church tithe. The percentage will be set at the 1991 Spring Meeting and confirmed at the 1991 Annual Council.

Automatic spending cuts would occur, if needed, to keep GC and NAD operating expenses in line with the agreed percentage cap.

- Reduce operating expenses for 1991 by approximately 10 percent (\$2.5 million), through personnel reductions.

- Return to the North American Division's local conferences, through the unions, an additional 1 percent of the gross tithe re-

By Carlos Medley, Adventist Review news editor.

ceived by NAD local conferences.

The 1 percent tithe will be returned to local conferences over a four-year phase-in period beginning January 1, 1992, and increasing annually by .25 percent (an estimated \$1 million) per year through 1995. The new policy will increase the percentage of tithe returned to the local conferences from 4.1 percent in 1991 to 5.1 percent in 1995. By 1995 it is anticipated that local conferences will have gained approximately \$10 million of additional funds.

The amount to be returned to local conferences will be calculated on NAD's gross tithe.

Beginning in 1991, the NAD Local Church Growth Fund, approximately \$1 million, will be returned to the local conferences (through the unions) in unrestricted appropriations.

The NAD Local Church Growth Fund was started, with the 1989 budget, to foster church growth projects in local congregations. In 1991 the amount of the fund will change from \$1 million to .25 percent of gross tithes remitted to the GC.

Local conferences will also get additional tithe from their unions from the 10 percent of gross tithe that each local conference remits to their union. The amount of the tithe returned will be determined by each union committee.

With many local conferences downsizing their staffs, the tithe policy adjustment is seen as badly needed help. However, many committee members reiterated the fact that greater focus on stewardship is needed for the plan to work. "The ball is in our court," said Cyril Miller, Southwestern Union president. "There needs to be a reeducation of our people on the returning of tithe and the responsibility of supporting the Lord's work.

"We all need to give attention to this," Miller noted. "We may need to employ more stewardship directors. We may need to do more in audiovisual education. It's incumbent upon conferences to develop their stewardship strategy in parallel with their soul-winning strategy."

Potomac Conference president Ralph Martin pointed out that every conference president will have to be the stewardship director. "We may have people assist us, but the church needs leadership right now. I want to be a part of the team that says 'We must bring credibility to this Seventh-day Adventist Church from top to bottom. If you put your money here it will be wisely distributed.'"

Although many committee members and invitees saw the General Conference staff reductions and the new tithe adjustment as a way to foster credibility for the church, Don E. Robinson, GC undertreasurer, believes that credibility must be established in many other ways, too.

"We want to establish accountability," Robinson said. "We want to bring monthly reports [of savings achieved] to the General Conference Committee. We want to start an incentive program for employees, encouraging suggestions as to how they can help us. We're establishing a central purchasing function for the General Conference.

"Credibility is established in the way in which we live and move," Robinson said. "Our church members are watching us. I believe we have no business flying business class, and we must utilize lower-priced motels.

"I hope everyone that leaves this meeting carries the message

that the General Conference is serious. We want to make the necessary changes."

Service Reductions

The theme "All Things New" also dominated discussions of General Conference services and products.

Annual Council attendees spent approximately three hours officially evaluating, adjusting, prioritizing, and in some cases eliminating services and products offered at the world church headquarters.

The evaluation came as a result of the the Role and Function Survey conducted by Duane McBride, a sociology professor and director of research for the Institute of Alcoholism and Drug Dependency at Andrews University. The study was first voted by the General Conference Executive Committee on February 2, 1989.

The findings showed that more than 200 services and products offered by the GC were flagged with negative ratings by 20 percent or more of the respondents.

McBride, who addressed the Annual Council session, told church leaders that "services perceived to be self-aggrandizing or consumed by a limited professional group were consistently marked for elimination.

"Products that did not appear to directly contribute to the core, or mission-driven, purpose of the department were pinpointed as unnecessary," he said. "The respondents clearly supported core evangelistic and ministry purposes."

The survey also revealed possible racial and cultural tensions in the church. "Human relations and multilingual ministries did not get positive evaluations," he said. "Respondents appreciated the preparation and translation of materials, by the two departments, supporting the core mission of the church, but did not support the perceived advocacy [power-sharing] aspects of these departments."

Line by line, item by item, committee members voted to delete, retain, or refer the services to division departments for their study. GC officials hoped that the voting process would put closure on the study. However, some committee members raised serious questions on the future implications of the changes.

"We are deleting many services and referring them to the divisions," said Gottfried Oosterwal, director of the Institute of World Mission at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University.

Annual Council OnLine

A nine-minute video featuring Robert S. Folkenberg and Alfred McClure will be available for showing in churches in North America on November 17. The video discusses church finances, tithe sharing, and changes voted by the 1990 Annual Council. This *OnLine* edition is being produced by the *Adventist Review* and General Conference Media Services.



Fred Thomas, GC undertreasurer

"My question is Who will pay for them once they are no longer run by the General Conference on behalf of some of the developing divisions? I'm afraid that just referring them to the divisions is not the solution.

"We have discussed what should be deleted, retained, or referred, but one powerful issue remains," Oosterwal said. "What should be added? The challenges of today demand new services and new structures. Given the ethnic challenges and cultural tensions, we should give greater emphasis to fellowship as a part of mission. All the research indicates that the main factor in apostasies is the lack of fellowship."

"It's the mission of the church that should determine what services we add and retain," he said. "In this respect we should not limit the concept of mission to proclamation, soul winning, and church planting, but we should expand it to worship, fellowship, and membership retention."

Illinois Conference president Bjarne Christensen noted, "Throughout our discussion many services that were flagged had the response 'We do this when asked by the division.' But this [response] does not address the question of whether a service has value."

"At some point the GC departments may have to say 'The GC cannot provide that service anymore,'" Christensen explained. "There should be some study of the value of these services."

Folkenberg sees the reduction of GC expenses and the voted adjustment of tithe as a way to redirect the church's limited resources to those core activities that are important to the church's



The GC choir provided music during opening services.

mission. He also believes that they will act as building blocks to establish new relationships between the North American Division and the General Conference—a relationship built on credibility and accountability.

Other Actions

In other business, the committee:

■ Heard a report of the Global Mission Committee. Eleven division presidents unveiled plans for the Adventist Church's 10-year evangelistic thrust, which will continue to the year 2000 and beyond.

Robert J. Kloosterhuis, General Conference vice president and Global Mission Committee chairman, said the campaign will have a major emphasis on reaching the 1,800 people groups around the world that have not heard the Adventist message, and give a full evangelism thrust in areas already reached. Michael L. Ryan, associate education director for the Far Eastern Division, was appointed executive secretary of the Global Mission Committee. A further report on Global Mission will appear in next week's Newsbreak.

■ Approved a budget of \$162 million for the General Conference's operations and disbursements for 1991. This represents a 1.3 percent increase over the 1990 budget.

GC undertreasurer Don E. Robinson expressed concern over the GC working capital, which totaled \$52.7 million as of September 30. This working capital provides for only approximately four months of operation. Total expenditures exceeded total income by \$14 million over the past five years. The Harris Pine Mills bankruptcy and other financial emergencies were part of the expenditures.

■ Established the Office of Women's Ministries at the General Conference, to foster ministries by and to women in the world church. The committee appointed Rose Otis, deputy director of the GC Office of Soviet Affairs, as director of the newly created office.

In introducing the proposal for the new office, General Conference president Robert S. Folkenberg said the time has come for the Adventist Church to recognize the needs and spiritual gifts of women and affirm their ministry in a meaningful way.

■ Elected Stoy Proctor as an associate General Conference health and temperance director. He was serving as North American Division health and temperance director. Proctor will work to revise the church's Breathe-Free smoking cessation plan.

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Deeds, Not Words



*Communicating
the gospel
across cultural
boundaries.*

In an effort to emphasize the openness of the Review to the entire world field, we sent special invitations to many of our overseas religion teachers to write for us. Here is another article from the first batch we received. Writers were encouraged to speak, where desirable, from the perspective of their own field or setting.*

Editors.

Confucius once said: "Without the knowledge in the force of word it is impossible to understand man."

The first evening I took my little boy home, he cried endlessly. We changed his diaper, fed him milk, cradled him in our arms, and pleaded with him, "Please don't cry." He gave us an assertive look and then responded, "Waaaaah . . . !" In moments like that, I imagine every parent wishes the little child would communicate in terms they understand—namely, with words.

Confucius was right, I suppose. How could we live without words? How frustrating for one illiterate in the Thai language to try to order a meal using the words "Kai yeaw ma pad bai kra pao kroab." ¹ No wonder parents spend a major part of their time teaching the little child how to speak.

Modern parents are even more particular. They expose their children to high-tech words like "computer," "keyboard," "diskette," "space shuttle," and "laser."

Reacting Differently

A wise man once said, "He who cannot speak cannot talk." The importance of words has often been taken for granted. According to the Bible, the problem of language originated at the Tower of Babel. Confusion and chaos developed as soon as different words were employed to describe the same idea or thing.

This is still true today. Consider these various expressions of disappointment. A *farahng* (Thai word to describe white-skinned foreigners) might exclaim, "Oh, no!" A Thai might invoke the help of his god, "*Khun pra chuay!*" A Malay might respond with "*Alamak!*" and a Chinese with "*Alya, see liaw!*" In India the expression "*Aray baba!*" can also convey disappointment.

Another complicating factor is that the same word could mean different things to different people. For example, when a Thai person tastes "hot" curry prepared by a *farahng*, he is forced to redefine the word "hot." And when a *farahng*

**BY SIROJ
SORAJJAKOOL**

samples hot curry prepared by a Thai, he is absolutely certain that his esophagus and stomach have suffered first-degree burns. A Thai learns from youth that for hot curry to be "hot," it must contain no fewer than 10 fiery chilies. But a *farahng* who tries to eat hot curry soon learns that anything more than two chilies does not make for an encouraging start.

Similarly, a Malaysian defines durian (a Southeast Asian fruit) as having a distinctly offensive smell and, at best, a bittersweet taste. To many Westerners, its smell is as obnoxious as unwashed socks. But to a Thai, a durian is a fruit that is mild and sweet in taste and that smells not in the least bit obnoxious. Based on their individual experience, each group of people has its own definition of a durian.

Clearly, then, the same word or concept can mean different things to different people. Even the emotions associated with a word depend on the individual experience, and that is exactly where the problem of communicating God's love comes in.

Interpreting God's Love?

Naturally, differences in word perception are important for communicating the gospel. First John 4:8 reads "God is love." Again, in John 3:16 we learn that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Armed with this beautiful truth, we venture out to proclaim to the world that God is love and that He wants us to love Him in response.

Imagine the following conversation as we confront the new convert with the question of Christian stewardship:

"Mrs. Kannikar, do you love God?"

"Yes," she replies.

"And why don't you pay tithe?"

"You mean that because I love God, therefore I must pay tithe? I love my husband, but each time I attempt to contribute money toward the household expenses he says, 'Keep it and spend it on yourself. I can take care of the expenses of the family.' I'm sorry. I thought that God loves me the way my husband loves me." We are using the same word, to be sure, but with a different connotation.

One of my Hmong students once said to me, "Teacher, it is so difficult to teach

the Hmong that Christ is the Shepherd and we are the sheep, because the Hmong have never seen, touched, or studied about sheep. Their immediate experience is with pigs. Would it be all right for us to say 'All we like pigs have gone astray'?"

Experience the Key

Our perception of a word is limited by our experiences, and we often do not transcend our own experiential world. Hence, when we teach others about the love of God, and leave them to define these words through their own experiences, our witnessing will only affect

*Perhaps we try too hard to
tell the world that God is
love without giving enough
attention to people's own
experience of that love.*

their vocabulary and not necessarily their lives. The essence of it all does not lie in the words "God," "Christ," "Christian," or "love," but in the experiences linked to these words.

In his biography *A Jew Without Knowing It*, Jewish philosopher Mike Gold described his childhood experiences in New York City. He was prohibited by his mother to wander beyond a certain limited area. One day, prompted by his own curiosity, he walked beyond this boundary and was confronted by a group of boys.

They asked him, "Are you a kike?"

"I don't know," he replied.

"Are you a Christ killer?"

"I don't know," he repeated.

Mike Gold had never heard the word "Christ" before. When he told them where he lived, they said, "So you are a kike. You are a Christ killer. Well, you're in Christian territory, and we are Christians. We're going to teach you to

stay where you belong!" And they beat him up.

Seeing blood and bruises on his face, Mike's worried mother questioned him:

"What happened, Mike?"

"I don't know," he replied.

"Who did this to you?"

"I don't know," he repeated.

After his mother had washed the blood off his face and given him fresh clothing, Mike asked: "Mama, who is Christ?"²

Mike Gold's perception of Christ never transcended that of his first experience with the word "Christ."

In this painful world man cries out to God for help, but the answer he receives often comes in an abstract mixture of words, sounds, and theory.

Robert Frost wrote:

"I turned to speak to God

About the world's despair;

But to make matters worse

I found God wasn't there."³

As Christians, we know that God is there and that He is love. But why is it that the world doesn't seem to realize that God is love? Perhaps we try too hard to tell the world that God is love without giving enough attention to people's own experience of that love. What really matters is not the word itself but the experience that lies behind it.

In communicating the love of God, our task as Christians is to change the experiential knowledge of our neighbors. Our task is to give them a new experience with the love of God.

When God communicated His most important message to us, He didn't use mere words. No, His Word became flesh and lived among men. It is not the articulation of words but the experience behind those words that makes the difference.

*For our rationale and for other featured articles, see Oct. 11, pp. 4, 10; Oct. 18, p. 16.

¹ A Thai dish of eggs fried with crispy basil leaves.

² John Powell, in *Why Am I Afraid to Love?* (Niles, Ill.: Argus Communication, 1972), pp. 113-117.

³ Robert Frost, "Not All There," in Mark Link, *Take Off Your Shoes* (Niles, Ill.: Argus Communication, 1972), p. 9.

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Adventist Worship— Celebration-Style

Strengths of and concerns about the newest innovation in Adventist ministry

BY MYRON WIDMER

Rarely has the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America been challenged to rethink its historical patterns of worship as much as it has been in recent months.

With the birth and rapid growth of several large "celebration-style" Adventist churches in Oregon and California, and with hundreds of congregations adding celebrative elements to their worship services, the church has been, and is being, forced to restudy the entire concept of worship and to see how much innovation it will allow.

While the "celebration churches" now number less than a dozen of the nearly 4,500 Adventist churches in North America, they have captured the national attention of the church because of their lively, participatory worship services, and because they have been highly successful in attracting large numbers of people—particularly former and inactive members—to Sabbath morning worship services.

A few years ago, hardly anyone knew what a "celebration church" was. Today, that picture has changed. Mention the word "celebration" among a group of Adventists, and one is almost guaranteed of generating an enthusiastic discussion.

Such a reaction is a bit surprising since most members have never set foot inside a celebration church. But they have formed strong opinions—for and against—simply from the wealth of circulating rumors, newsletters, magazines, and audio- and videocassettes that viciously attack or staunchly defend this latest innovation in Adventist ministry among Anglo congregations.

Some critics charge that the celebration churches have simply adopted traditional Pentecostalism (in the *negative* sense, of course), where emotions run high and solid biblical content and truth is lacking. Others suggest that these churches, in their desire to attract young people and former members, have turned their worship services into entertainment (where it's all "fun, fun, fun") and have forsaken traditional Adventist standards.

On the other hand, supporters commend the new celebration churches for making Christianity personal, vibrant, and inviting. They enthusiastically praise the celebrative worship services—which have become the *hallmark* of celebration churches—that are alive with music and expressions of one's happiness in the Lord.

When I visited the Celebration Center of Seventh-day Adventists in Colton, California, a new member exclaimed to me, "This is just



Balloons add to the air of joyfulness at Colton.

what I have been looking for all my life." Others added: "I love all the praise singing." "I am so happy to associate with people who are excited about God."

Now comes the question: Who is right? the critics? or the supporters? Or is it even a right/wrong question?

Many would say it isn't a matter of right or wrong, but rather a matter of *personal preference* in expressing their adoration of God. In support they would point to the varied worship styles in biblical times and to the highly diverse expressions of worship now prevalent in North America, especially among the Black, Hispanic, and other ethnic Adventist congregations.

If there is a "correct" answer, finding it won't be easy, for the diversity and depth of opinions on this subject already have created one of the most sensitive issues for the Adventist Church in North America in recent years.

So far, most church leaders have neither condemned nor advocated the celebration church concept. Instead, they seem to have adopted what could be called a supportive, "wait and see" posture, where conference leaders are defending the right of celebration churches to exist and supporting them at least through their infancy until the fruit of their ministry becomes evident.

But with the polarity of opinion, and with more and more pastors and congregations incorporating celebration-style elements into their corporate worship services—or exploring the idea of doing so—the church is called to seek solid answers to the questions that naturally arise whenever the historic patterns of our church are challenged.

We must ask about the new celebration churches:

I. What are their features? Their origin? Why do they appear to be so successful in attracting people, particularly young adults and inactive and former members?

II. What are their strengths? What concerns have arisen?

III. How should we respond to them?

To answer these questions adequately would require at least a book or more, so we will just touch the surface in our attempt to understand the basics of the celebration church concept and why it is growing.

I. WHAT IS A CELEBRATION CHURCH?

Defining what an Adventist celebration church is all about is a difficult task at best, simply because there is no *one* celebration church, nor *one* pattern. Celebration churches vary from the 180-

member church near Buffalo, New York, to the large Celebration Center in Colton, California. Each is distinctly different, though each has adopted the "celebration" label.

Without a generic celebration church to describe, perhaps the best we can do is to summarize the characteristics common to the two largest and longest-established celebration churches.

The oldest celebration church is the New Life Celebration Church of SDAs, in Milwaukie, Oregon, whose Sabbath morning attendance has risen from about 140 in 1982 to more than 1,200; and the largest is now the Celebration Center of SDAs, in Colton, California, which was spawned in 1989 from the nearby Azure Hills SDA Church and whose attendance now reaches 1,500 on Sabbath mornings.

Again I must say that each celebration church is different. While the Milwaukie and Colton churches have elements in common, the manner in which each implements them is so obviously dissimilar that one might not compare them except that each has accepted the "celebration" name. Milwaukie's worship is more like a dressed-up praise service, and Colton's service is more informal in nature. Nevertheless, without a standard pattern for celebration churches, these two churches help create that pattern, as varied as it is! Yet, each church has these five basic similarities:

1. Pastors With a Vision for Change. The driving force behind each church has been a pastor unwilling to accept the status quo. Each was unwilling to believe that low church attendance, little enthusiasm, and low growth (if any at all) could not be changed.

Both Dave Snyder of Milwaukie and Dan Simpson of Colton dreamed of a different experience for their congregations—of a spiritually healing community, where warm Christian fellowship would permeate every aspect of church life, where members would become excited about worshiping and following God, and where former members could return and feel safe and comfortable.

But the acceptance of their dreams hardly took place overnight, or without conflict among their members. Some members eventually pulled up stakes and transferred their membership to other churches.

Yet, as they were leaving, others were attracted to fill their places by the church's new approach. The Milwaukie church quickly outgrew its facilities and is still renting another church building until their own 2,100-seat church complex is completed to accommodate their present 950 members.

And Colton's parent church, Azure Hills church, just as quickly filled up its three Sabbath morning worship services, going from an average attendance of less than 500 in 1985 to more than 1,100 in 1988. In response, a group of 400-plus members and the senior pastor, Dan Simpson, became the nucleus of a new congregation—the Celebration Center in nearby Colton (about 10 miles from Loma Linda). The original 400-plus has now grown to more than 850, with nearly 1,500 members and visitors attending Sabbath services—also held in rented quarters until their own building is built.

2. Celebrative Worship Service. Undoubtedly this is the most heralded feature—the centerpiece—of the celebration churches. It is a time of praise, of music, of prayer, of preaching, of fellowship. Members come to celebrate their joy in the Lord.

The celebration begins on the parking lot with greeters who wel-

come everyone, and even bring out umbrellas if it is raining! And before people get inside the front door someone else welcomes them.

Colton's worship always begins with lively, joyful singing. On the platform are the lead singers, a small choral group, and a variety of musical instruments, often including electric guitars, synthesizers, flutes, pianos, and drums. Milwaukie's praise singing is usually led by two singers with the group of musicians off to one side. Words for the songs are projected above, prompting the audience to lift up their heads and sing—instead of "singing into their hymnbooks." Colton's singing occupies about a half hour; Milwaukie's, about 15 minutes.

Praise songs predominate, most of which give praise to God and not just about Him, using second-person words and not third-person words. Many of the songs remind me of the type youth sing in Sabbath school, including the accompanying hand motions at the Colton Cel-

ebration Center. Others are very prayerful and meditative in nature, including the use of traditional hymns from the hymnal.

Clapping is not discouraged (Ps. 47:1—"O clap your hands, all ye people"), either along with the singing or whenever the audience wants to signal their appreciation for something that is said or done by the leaders. And the uplifting of the hands in praise or prayer occurs randomly and unobtrusively (Ps. 134:2—"Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the Lord"), though I would say that it is limited to a very small number.

Each church has created what they call the Garden of Prayer or the Altar of Prayer, where the pastor invites people to come forward and

kneel for what would be considered a pastoral prayer. During Colton's Garden of Prayer, lay pastors quietly move from person to person, momentarily laying their hands on the shoulders of those kneeling—simply as a sign of caring for one another.

Sermons are almost always given by the senior pastor without the aid of a formal pulpit. Sermon time in both churches is guarded carefully, lasting the usual half hour or more.

When worship ends, ushers do not march in to dismiss the audience. The rented sanctuaries become abuzz with people gathering up supplies, taking down equipment, visiting, or praying with each other.

Snyder says he plans the Milwaukie worship services to be somewhat unpredictable, adding an air of expectancy to the experience.

And the same expectancy is nurtured at Colton through dramatized readings with participants acting out unrehearsed scenes for the children's story time (Celebration Center employs a half-time drama/stage director), dialogues, and such things as Bring Your Brother Day.

Services at both churches last up to one and a half hours (with no one leaving early!), and everything is planned to the minutest detail.

3. Love, Acceptance, and Forgiveness. Another common characteristic is that their pastors' sermons usually stress the themes of love, acceptance, and forgiveness—the biblical themes upon which these celebration churches seem to center their theology. The Milwaukie church puts these words up front on their bulletin covers.

Members of these churches see themselves as "tools in the hands of God" to restore people to partnership and fellowship with Him. "We do not attach strings," says one pastor. "We do not say, 'We will love you if . . .' We want to accept everyone and tell the people that God's forgiveness is for them."



Dave Snyder joins the lead singers for Milwaukie's praise singing.

A Colton lay pastor mentioned that his church gets many people coming that have been "bruised and battered" spiritually, particularly former members who have gone through a traumatic experience, including divorce. "We operate on the biblical premise that true change—including healing and restoration—occurs only in an atmosphere of acceptance. We accept everybody as they come, and invite them to become part of our fellowship.

We never want to give the impression that sin is unimportant, says Simpson. "We are simply trying to *emphasize* the fact that the sinner is valuable. The *sinner* is to be loved unconditionally."

4. Fellowship Groups. The nontraditional worship experience may be the hallmark of these celebration churches, but it isn't the churches' complete ministry. Growth opportunities abound, and a sense of openness prevails. Whatever the individual problem, the church wants to be of help in finding healing in a restored relationship with God.

Each church nurtures an array of small group ministries, a variety of Sabbath school classes and options (from traditional classes to seminars on various spiritual topics), reformatted "prayer" meetings during the week, singles' ministries, divorce recovery ministry, age-specific groups—youth, "20something," and others—Bible fellowships, and social activities.

5. Focus on Reclaiming Former Members. Each church includes a high priority on reaching out to former and missing Seventh-day Adventists within its ministry area.

So far, the Milwaukie New Life Celebration Church has reclaimed more than 300 former Adventists in the past eight years. And the Colton Celebration Center has attracted hundreds of former and inactive Adventists.

II. STRENGTHS AND CONCERNS

Identifying the *strengths* of the various celebration churches is equally difficult because of their diverse nature. So is the identification of *concerns*. What follows is a *general* analysis of the celebration church concept and ministry—going wider than Colton and Milwaukie.

Let's begin with the major *strengths*.

■ **Articulated Vision.** Celebration churches have clearly articulated mission statements that have become the guiding focus for all aspects of their ministry. They have not been afraid to drop something if it does not contribute directly to their central objectives. And they have been able to motivate people to use their spiritual gifts in the ministries of the church—from parking lot greeters to hospital visitors.

■ **Appeal to Target Groups.** One of their major objectives is to reclaim former and inactive members. They attract hundreds of Adventists who might otherwise never go to church, and they attract lots of non-Adventists every Sabbath—a phenomenon matched by few, if any, traditional (White) Adventist churches.

■ **Meaningful, Participatory Worship Services.** One of the greatest complaints that come from Adventist Church members today is that their worship services are meaningless, lifeless, and boring.

When the Milwaukie church considered changing worship formats, it asked its inactive members why they weren't coming to church. What they found gave great impetus to the movement for change. The inactive members described church as not relevant, too predictable, too judgmental, boring, slow-moving, and not a safe place to bring their friends.

Celebration church services are anything but boring, predictable, or slow-moving. They are warm, friendly, lively, and cheerful.

"We are committed to integrity and pure motives, so that nothing

The celebration church concept brings up the age of old tension between two distinctly different views of the person and presence of God.

One view stresses the highness and holiness of the great creator God who dwells in heaven and from there guides all His activities in the world. The other emphasizes God's presence and oneness with His people in the world.

In the first case, God is called *transcendent* because He transcends, or goes above and beyond, everything natural to this world. In the second, God is considered *immanent* because of His presence, His closeness to us (Ex. 19:16 and Ex. 25:8).

Throughout the history of the Christian church, stress has been placed upon one of these poles—almost always at the expense of the other. In the days of the Reformation, for example, the leaders and members of that movement emphasized the transcendent greatness and majesty of God. This produced a reverential awe (known in the Bible as the fear of God) that even carried

God: Transcendent or Immanent?

BY WILLIAM H. SHEA

over into the architecture of their churches—the grand, high cathedrals that pointed toward heaven and inspired awe and quiet reverence among worshipers. (The Reformation did, however, spark a more lively, joyful worship pattern, with congregational singing.)

But by the nineteenth century, modern religion began stressing the immanence of God. In this approach, triggered by romanticism and humanism, God became the Great Big Friend beside us. This view of God also influenced church architecture and worship. Churches began building smaller, simpler edifices with generous extra space for fellowship and church activities. Church no longer

became a place just for worship, but for fellowship.

While truth exists in both of these approaches, each can be carried to excess, as any number of ancient and modern examples could illustrate.

What then should be the position of Seventh-day Adventists? Should we stress God's *transcendence* or His *immanence*? I believe the answer is both. We must maintain our reverence, respect, and awe of the great God of the universe, yet appreciate the wonderful truth that He has come down to save us and to dwell with us in our spiritual walk with Him.

Thus we are called to hold both views of God in creative tension, allowing both to shape certain aspects of our spiritual life, but not allowing one to dominate at the expense of the other.

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is done for effect or to manipulate," says Simpson. "We seek transformation, not entertainment. The congregation is the choir. We are participants—not spectators."

■ *Attitude of Openness.* With their philosophy of love, acceptance, and forgiveness, celebration churches have become centers of healing and restoration for many who have previously been hurt deeply, by either church members or a traumatic experience.

■ *Musical Praise.* The songs, while new to many people, are a method of helping people sing their praises directly to God, not about Him. They flow from jubilation to awe, supplication to surrender. They help form a continuous flow of worship that "builds toward intimacy with God."

Concerns

In the light of the differences between celebration churches, I will venture a list of the concerns expressed about the different celebration churches across North America. The concerns do not apply to every celebration church.

■ *Trivializing the Sacred.* One concern is what seems to some to be a trivializing of sacred things.

In some celebrative worship services, the handclapping, less formal decorum, casual dress, and nontraditional musical instruments sometimes seem to give a less reverent feeling to the experience.

■ *Music.* The continuous singing of praise songs and the tempo provided by the instrumental group on the platform in some churches has a way of creating for many people an "emotional high" that is not wrong in itself but could end up becoming the end in itself. (See *The Great Controversy*, p. 463, on "appeals to the imagination" and emotion.)

Emotion is not religion, but religion without emotion is worthless. A balance needs to be struck. Maybe more time is needed without music for quiet meditation and reflection. And maybe some celebration churches would do well to consider whether drums—a red flag to celebration church critics—are vital to their praise singing or if they could be done away with.

■ *Emphasis on Love.* The emphasis on love, acceptance, and forgiveness is commendable. It attracts lots of people, including non-Adventists and hundreds of former and inactive Adventists. But whenever an emphasis on love predominates, care needs to be exercised so that individuals sense God's forgiveness and then grow into the obedience of faith. This is not to imply that the celebration churches stop at the forgiveness stage, but simply a caution that goes with this kind of emphasis. (See *GC*, p. 463, on the "increase of real spiritual life.")

Traditional lifestyle standards have become a difficult issue for the Adventist Church. Many believe the celebration churches are handling the difficulty (like many other Adventist churches) by putting greater emphasis upon the renewing of the heart and less emphasis upon the outward appearance—which brings some of them into conflict with historical Adventist lifestyle values.

In addition, some of the deeper, historic truths of the Adventist Church are sometimes left to be dealt with in small classes and not during the main worship services. (This concern, though, could be directed to many other Adventist churches as well.) If the distinctive truths are not proclaimed from the front, for whatever reason, people

may not know they exist or begin to believe they are unimportant.

■ *Pastoral Profile.* The senior pastors usually have a high profile in everything that happens at the churches. He is the leader of the worship experience, preaches nearly 100 percent of the time, and is the one who espouses his vision for the church. This emphasis upon one individual raises concerns both for the churches' and for the pastors' sake.

And as attendance and membership swells, with the sense of success that comes with it all, will the pastor and the church be open to listening to and following the conference leaders and policies, particularly if these differ from the wishes of the local church?

■ *Church Polity.* At least one celebration church has moved away from normal church polity in several areas, including the election of church officers, but the conference officers are now working to have the church come into line with normal church policies.



Using a rented church, Colton's Celebration Center must put up signs each Sabbath.

III. HOW SHOULD WE RESPOND TO THE CELEBRATION CHURCHES?

As we discuss the celebration churches we must keep in mind that each one has received approval from its local conference as a full-fledged Adventist church. Each collects tithes and offerings and remits them to the conference like all other Adventist churches. Each church has pastors hired and paid by the conference. And to become a member means the same process of preparation and instruction as for any other Ad-

ventist church. So how shall we respond?

1. *First, Get the Facts Firsthand.* Don't rely on someone else's version, particularly if you are going to become a critic. What someone once said may be appropriate here: "Whatever someone is not up on, one is down on!" Get the facts first.

2. *Be Open to Change.* The Adventist Church doesn't advocate one style for Sabbath school programs; neither does it have one style for worship. Maybe all of us can learn some good things from those churches that are less traditional. Some innovative changes might even improve all our worship services. In fact, if most Anglo churches in North America don't do something dramatic quite soon to discover how to make their worship services more alive and fulfilling, they will see the continuing loss of their vision and of their members, particularly young people.

3. *Left/Right Brain.* Be open to the possibility that someone else likes a more alive worship service than is normally held. It does not have to be a matter of right or wrong, but can be one of personal taste. Music, which is at the heart of the celebration services, is a highly subjective experience. Musical preferences often cloud the issue. Attend a Black or Hispanic Adventist church and see the joyful celebration that occurs almost every week. Or travel around the world and experience worship services influenced by the local culture.

4. *Wait and See.* As a few more years go along, the full results of the celebration church concept will become apparent, and the church will be able to evaluate the fruit of its innovations.

5. *The Spirit.* If you are a proponent of the celebration concept within a more traditional congregation, remember that it is the will of the local church body that prevails and that the Holy Spirit does not bring disunity to the body of Christ.

6. **Critical Spirit.** We must remember that an openly critical spirit is as much a sin to God as the supposed wrong that someone else is doing.

7. **Prayer.** Most of all, we can pray for the celebration churches. They are essentially an innovative *experiment* in Anglo worship and ministry and need everyone's prayers.

Conclusion

The appropriateness of the celebration church concept is an important issue for the church right now. If the church were to condemn the celebration movement while the effort was still in its infancy, Adventism would stand to lose thousands of people, particularly young people and former members, who have found the celebration churches to be a bit of fresh air in a church of normally formal worship services. And it stands to lose what appears to be its best evangelistic tool for boosting the church's lagging attendance and involvement by Anglos across North America.

But if the church were to adopt all aspects of the celebration churches immediately and wholeheartedly, Adventism would stand to alienate many traditional members who believe the celebration

churches are creeping Pentecostalism and the devil's playground.

The subject is not as clear-cut as some portray it to be. The Bible and Ellen G. White speak to both sides of the issue—to dull, boring services, and to worship that becomes entertainment. Most White churches in the North *need* innovation in their ministries. But in our push for innovation, we need to remember that *new* is not automatically better, nor is *old* always effective.

Whatever the outcome is in the days ahead, the celebration churches have contributed one vital aspect to the Seventh-day Adventist ministry—they have challenged all of us to rethink *why* we gather together each Sabbath morning for corporate worship and *how* we can better express our adoration of God.



Myron Widmer is an associate editor of the Adventist Review.

Whenever the subject of celebration church music arises among a group of Adventists, someone invariably quotes an Ellen G. White statement to substantiate his point. More often than not, critics pull forth Mrs. White's denouncement of the use of musical instruments in the Indiana "holy flesh" experience to condemn the use of certain musical instruments—particularly drums—in worship today.

But is that really what Mrs. White said? I think not, and a look at her statement will show why.

Speaking in 1901 to a group of ministers at the General Conference session, Mrs. White said that just before the close of probation "every uncouth thing will be demonstrated. There will be shouting, with drums, music, and dancing. The senses of rational beings will become so confused that they cannot be trusted to make right decisions. And this is called the moving of the Holy Spirit."¹

Then she added, "Better never have the worship of God blended with music than to use instruments to do the work which last January was represented to me would be brought into our camp meetings. . . . A bedlam of noise shocks the senses and perverts that which if conducted aright might be a blessing."²

Did Mrs. White condemn the *use* of musical instruments? No, for she concluded by saying that musical instruments "if conducted aright might be a blessing." In fact, Mrs. White would hardly have

Ellen White and Musical Instruments

BY J. DAVID NEWMAN

condemned the use of musical instruments in worship since the biblical record is replete with such use.

Then what did she condemn? She condemned the *manner* in which the instruments were used—to make a "bedlam of noise." Her comments were aimed directly against what had happened in Indiana, where music helped work people up to a high pitch of excitement.

An editorial note by the compilers of *Selected Messages*, inserted at the beginning of the section that contains Ellen White's comments on the Indiana incident, says that "in their services the fanatics worked up a high pitch of excitement by use of musical instruments such as organs, flutes, fiddles, tambourines, horns, and even a big bass drum. They sought a physical demonstration and shouted and prayed and sang until someone in the congregation would fall, prostrate and unconscious, from his seat. One or two men, walking up and down the aisle for the purpose, would drag the fallen person up on the rostrum. Then about a dozen individuals would gather around the prostrate body, some singing, some shouting, and some praying, all at the same time."³

S. N. Haskell, one of two leading ministers sent to assess the situation, described the scene to Ellen White in a letter, adding that "when they [the musicians] get on a high key, you cannot hear a word from the congregation in their singing, nor hear anything, unless it be shrieks of those who are half insane."⁴

So the "bedlam of noise" consisted of disorder—singing, shouting, praying all at the same time, singing from the choir so loud that no one in the congregation could be heard, and instruments dominating rather than accompanying. It was this confusion that she clearly condemned, not the musical instruments themselves, for she strongly advocated the benefits of all kinds of instruments in worship.

"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."⁵

¹ *Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 36.

² *Ibid.*

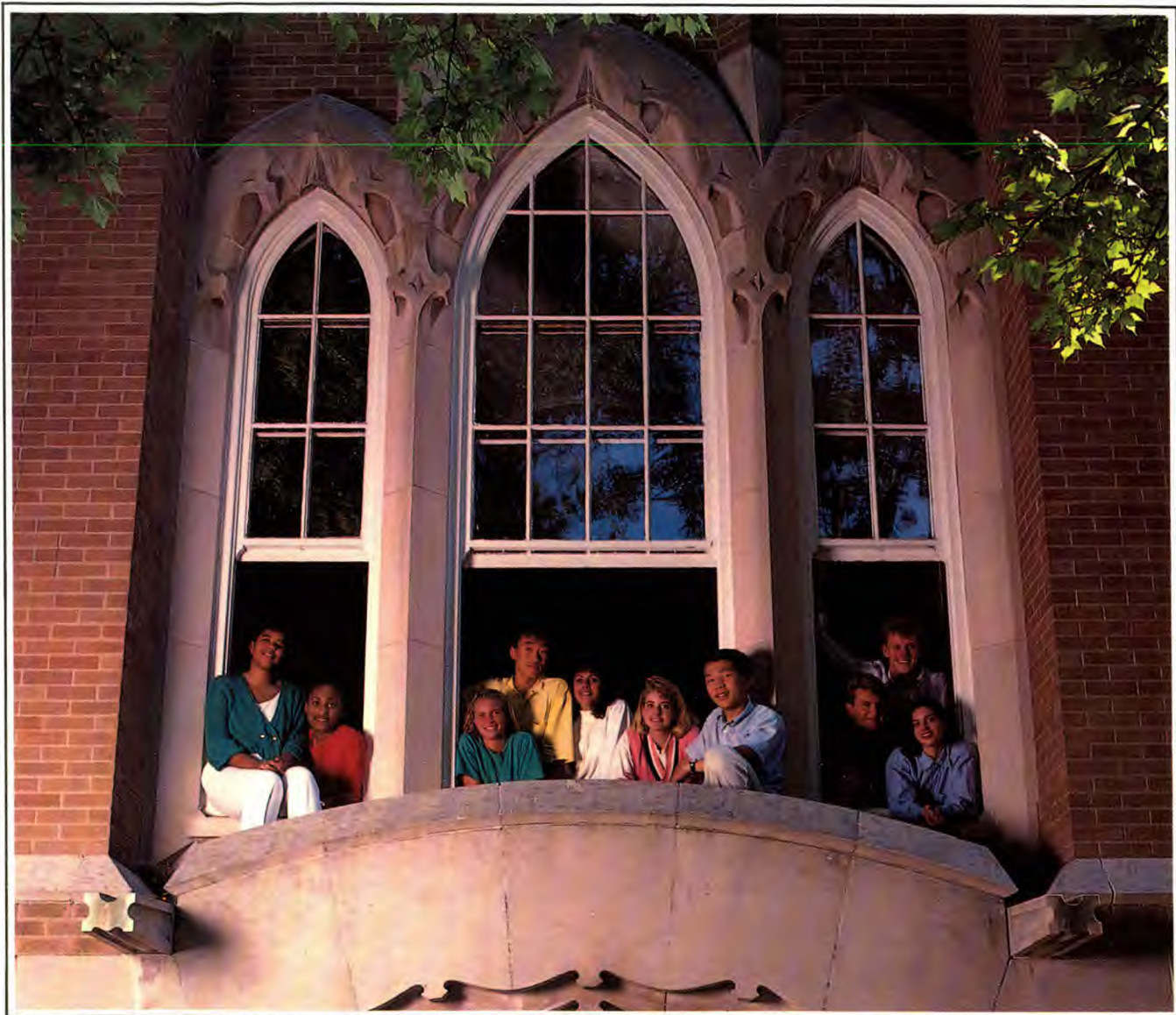
³ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

⁴ Arthur L. White, *Ellen G. White: The Early Elmhaven Years* (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1981), vol. 5, p. 102.

⁵ *Evangelism*, p. 507.

J. David Newman is editor of Ministry magazine and coauthor of a recent Ministry article entitled "Is It Safe to Celebrate?"

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Photos: Students in our cover photograph are, from left, Michelle Coursey, Michigan; Robyn Harris, Michigan; Mary St. Clair, Michigan; Woo Bong Kim, Illinois; Gabriela Curbelo, Ontario, Canada; Karen Crismond, Oklahoma; Julian Nam, Korea; Michael Bekowies, Ohio; Silvia Canale, Argentina; Christopher Dowell, Florida.

Photos on the inside spread: Dr. Ralph Scorpio, professor of chemistry, and Teresa Maier, physical therapy student.

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THE LOMA LINDA REPORT

LUMC surgeons perfect new technique

For more than a year, two physicians at Loma Linda University Medical Center have successfully performed coronary artery bypass surgery in a rather unusual way.

Between June 6, 1989, and August 1, 1990, Carlos A. Schmidt, MD, and Michael N. Wood, MD, assistant professors of surgery at LLU, did bypass surgery on 94 patients without the use of a heart-lung machine, or, as they describe it, "off the pump." The patients ranged in age from 40 to 85, with from one to five bypasses (bypasses) per patient.

"We started doing this surgery on patients that we didn't think would tolerate the machine because they were too sick," says Dr. Schmidt. "We found we could do bypass surgery with the heart beating, which we had thought was impossible."

"We also found that these patients did better postoperatively than patients who had been on a heart-lung machine," Dr. Schmidt states. "They didn't require blood, they were in the operating room less time, they felt better sooner, and they stayed in the hospital less time. The pumpless procedure also prevents the possibility of the patient's having neurological damage, as sometimes happens to patients on the machine."

Doctors Schmidt and Wood got the idea of doing coronary artery bypass surgery without the pump from a physician—Dr. Enrico Benetti—from Buenos Aires, Argentina, who, while in the United States last year, visited Loma Linda.

"Dr. Benetti was concerned about the

information for this section supplied by the Loma Linda University Medical Center of public affairs.



Seymour Ober (left) looks on while his surgeon, Carlos Schmidt, MD, explains the cardiac problems Mr. Ober had that made it necessary for him to have bypass surgery. His surgery was performed at LLUMC without the use of a heart-lung machine.

costs of surgery in Argentina," explains Dr. Schmidt, "so he developed the procedure of doing surgeries without a pump."

Dr. Wood says, "When we heard the information, saw Dr. Benetti's video of his surgery procedure, and learned the number of patients that he had done, we thought the procedure would be a good possibility for high-risk patients."

In 12 years, Dr. Benetti has performed 676 pumpless surgeries.

The first patient done with this procedure at Loma Linda was a woman who was in total renal failure, needed bypass surgery, and had severe peripheral vascular disease. The doctors felt that she would not survive surgery, Dr. Schmidt says, so they would not operate on her. A week after they had seen her, she was in the hospital with severe angina pain, and appeared to be near death. Doctors Schmidt

and Wood performed coronary artery bypass surgery on her without the use of a heart-lung machine. She survived, did well, and went on to have surgery for her peripheral vascular disease.

"We have extended the procedure from just the very sick to everyone that we can technically do it with," says Dr. Schmidt. "We have done arteries in back of the heart as well as arteries in front of the heart."

If he can see an artery, he'll do it, he explains; or, if he can lift the heart to get at an artery, he will do it.

"Of the patients we have done," he states, "we are convinced that a dozen of them would have died, for sure. We know that they wouldn't have survived surgery on a heart-lung machine."

"Even if it is just for less use of blood," he says, "this procedure would be worth it."

Continued on next page

"FULFILLING THE VISION"

"FULFILLING THE VISION"

But we have had patients go home in three or four days."

The average stay for these patients, according to Dr. Wood, is 4.7 days, compared to an average of 7 days ("plus or minus a day or so") for patients done on the machine.

"This is a financial savings to the patient," he points out, "as well as to the hospital. That's one of the benefits of this procedure. Another is that the cost of the procedure itself is less, because we can save on equipment, on lab tests, and on operating-room costs. In addition, the impression we get is that patients, including older patients, appear to recover faster."

One of Dr. Schmidt's patients, Charles Yelsa, MD, 67, a physician who lives in Redlands and is associated with a medical group in Rancho Cucamonga, had bypass surgery (four bypasses) on September 1, 1989. He was in the hospital only three days.

"I got up the day after surgery," he says.

After three days in the hospital, he satisfactorily completed a treadmill test and was discharged.

"I tried to spend that first day at home in bed," Dr. Yelsa says, "but it drove me nuts. So, from the fourth day after surgery, I was never in bed during the day. The fifth day, I started walking outside. In two weeks, I was walking two miles a day, and by the fourth week, I was doing four miles a day."

He also started riding his bicycle during the third week and now squeezes in 60 miles a week.

"Dr. Yelsa was one of our earlier patients," says Dr. Schmidt. "He was sent to us because his heart was in really bad shape. I thought that he would be a very high-risk patient to operate on in the usual way, so we did him off the pump. He did very well."

Dr. Yelsa says that even though he is a physician, he wasn't really any more knowledgeable than a lay person about the heart-lung machine or the benefits of having bypass surgery without it. Before his surgery, Dr. Schmidt explained the possibility of doing the surgery off the pump. Dr. Yelsa is pleased with the outcome.

One of Dr. Wood's patients, Kenneth Young, 70, of Ridgecrest, is another man who feels that he recovered more quickly from bypass surgery because his surgery was done without the heart-lung machine.

Mr. Young was up and walking on the third day after surgery. Within two weeks, he was walking a half mile a day, and after four weeks, he was walking 2½ to 3 miles a day.

"I still do that," he states. "I am a very active person, very independent."

Seymour Ober, 66, a retired air force captain and pilot now living in Riverside, had bypass surgery (five bypasses) this past May. His surgery also was performed off the pump by Dr. Schmidt.

"The doctor was going to discharge me on the fourth day after surgery," Mr. Ober says, "but my wife thought that was too soon, so I stayed another day."

After being discharged, he discovered that he had an infection. This has completely cleared up now, and he is feeling fine and is active. He has started golfing with a group from the Elks Club one morning a week, and he has a new bicycle that he rides. He also swims some, and he is about to embark on an exercise program tailored especially for him by a health spa. He will be involved in that three times a week.

All three men are pleased to have recovered so rapidly after their pumpless surgery, and each spontaneously and enthusiastically described how impressed he



Michael Wood, MD (right), examines Kenneth Young, one of his patients who had bypass surgery without a heart-lung machine last November at the Medical Center.

was with the caring and concern shown by his surgeon.

The pumpless surgery that these men had is something that could be used to the benefit of patients around the world.

"In countries where cost is a major factor," Dr. Wood states, "this pumpless procedure is something that can be developed that would be a real benefit to them."

He recognizes that not all surgeons "are going to jump on the bandwagon with this procedure, because the heart-lung machine procedure has been around for so long. Actually, the procedure we are using is not a new one. The first coronary bypass surgery was done without a heart-lung machine."

Doctors Schmidt and Wood know of only three other medical centers in the United States that are doing the pumpless procedure: Good Samaritan Hospital in Los Angeles, Washington Memorial Hospital in Washington, DC, and a hospital in the Northwest. □



Mothering Mother

By Miriam Wood

I am really embarrassed to write this letter, for I know I will seem like the most unloving and selfish person in the world. But I am in such a bad way emotionally that I must have help. I am in my 50s, I am divorced and childless, and I have a full-time, demanding job.

The problem is my mother. My father died last year, and at first it seemed as though she would be able to stay in her home for an indefinite time. But she became so lonely, depressed, and sad that I knew I must make other arrangements.

I found a very nice retirement facility that serves meals in a pretty dining room, has maid service, and is nicely furnished. She is well able to afford this. I also arranged to have her taken to Sabbath services so that I would not always be responsible for this. She moved into a large room with a private bath.

But Mother is so dissatisfied and unhappy that she phones me a dozen times a day to complain. So I have begun taking her to my apartment on Friday nights and returning her to her place on Sunday evenings. I have given up any social life, since she objects to my having friends over when she is with me.

She insists on telling me how to perform the most simple tasks and criticizes everything about me. She has always told me that she loves my brother much more than she loves me, but she knows she can't be with him because his wife refuses to have her around. (He could insist, if he wanted to, don't you think?)

I feel trapped, embittered, and hopeless. My mother is in her late 70s and in good health. I don't want to neglect her, but am I entitled to any life of my own or any happiness?

Of course, you are entitled to a life of

your own and to the pursuit of happiness. You are not a selfish person. You are a person in an impossible situation.

First, though, let's talk about what getting old means. For nearly a lifetime, a parent is a "care-giver," pouring vast reservoirs of himself or herself into that role. But gradually he or she becomes the "care-receiver," and this can be a more bitter pill than any prescribed by a physician. The one who has controlled a small universe, in a manner of speaking, has totally lost control and, worse yet, is being controlled by the very persons once so dependent upon him or her. The aging person can feel useless, like clutter on the earth, and reactions vary to this feeling.

Why not tell her every day that you love her? On your afternoon break at work, give her a three-minute call for just that purpose. Look in card shops for sweet cards that say, in effect, "You mean so much to me."

Practicalities

But now let's talk practicalities. Even though you think she is in good health, if she has not had a thorough physical examination in more than a year, arrange one for her. You may discover a physical problem that manifests itself in her prickly disposition, which could be helped by proper medication.

Then I would explore every possibility for senior citizens' activities. My area has groups that meet five days a week for about six hours and do all sorts of things, including field trips, crafts, and just enjoying one another's company. Transportation and lunch are provided. Of course, there is a charge for all this, but if your mother's finances permit, this would provide a wonderful way of breaking out of her angry depression. Even if you have to pay the expenses, it would be worth it.

As for your brother, I wouldn't mince words. I would tell him that you need fi-

nancial help from him for these arrangements (if it turns out that you do). Surely he can do no less, since he takes no other responsibility for his mother. Other than that, I would try to forget the family unfairness. It probably won't change.

If your mother doesn't have a good television set, get her one with a remote control. Sit down together with a TV schedule and list the programs for each day that she might enjoy.

The Crucial Part

And now for the most delicate, crucial part of this campaign. Arrange with your boss to have an extra-long lunch hour on a prearranged day and take your mother to lunch at a nice restaurant. After establishing a happy rapport, say, "Mom, we're going to make your life a whole lot better than it now is." Explain all the things you have planned for her, if she's willing, and conclude by announcing that she'll stay with you one weekend each month, during which you will be all hers. Then urge her to make friends with others in the facility where she lives, so that on the three other weekends she will have a social life.

I believe you *can* do right by your mother so you will have no regrets, and still be true to yourself. You will need to insist that the "daily dozen" phone calls cease, because your time belongs to your employer while at work. Always treat her with love, courtesy, and firmness, and you will brighten her day as well as your own. Pray that the Lord will send special angels to comfort her and give her the peace of heart and spirit that she so badly needs.

Miriam Wood, author of 16 books, is a retired English teacher whose lifelong hobby has been "observing human nature in all its complexity."



By Carlene R. Will

Part I

KID VID

How to Find the Best and Avoid the Rest

A Christian
mother
suggests
ways to
evaluate
videos
designed for
children.

Picture the scene. Three children pretending they are archaeologists dig for ancient artifacts. Suddenly they cut through the earth's center and fall into a new, exciting land. Around them they see people building something—something BIG! When the junior archaeologists inquire, they learn that Noah and his sons are building an ark. They pitch in and help. Then they see bad people trying to destroy the ark by rolling a mountain of logs down the hill. But the children ingeniously prevent the logs from crushing the ark.

Where does such a story come from? From Hanna-Barbera's *Greatest Adventure Stories From the Bible*. The creators of the Flintstones, Yogi Bear, and Huckleberry Hound now bring you 1990s children participating in a Bible event—influencing the activity and outcome of the story. One may well wonder who is the true hero—God, or the wonderful children who save the ark from destruction.

This mixture of Bible truth and blatant fantasy is an excerpt from the fastest-selling Christian video for children on the market. A careful analysis of the content of such videos raises many concerns. But what about video entertainment itself?

Do children need their imaginations stimulated in this way? How much time do our children spend alone at home while both parents work or in a child-care setting in which videos provide a major amount of their diversion or entertainment? How shall we relate to the mushrooming options available in “kid-vid” today?

Four Responses

Adventist families seem to divide into four groups in their response to videos.

1. The No-Control Viewing Family.

Both parents and children watch what they feel like whenever they feel like watching. Television and videos serve as a convenient baby-sitter. It is estimated that by the time some children graduate from high school they will have spent 15,000 hours watching TV and 11,000 hours in the classroom.¹

Even at early ages the children who watch the most videos may be impacted. Kate Delacorte, a New York City nursery school director, suggests that such children's play “is less focused. Their imaginations are clogged by what they watch.”²

2. The Minimal-Control Viewing Family.

Parents limit the total time spent watching videos, but exercise little control over the content or type of video.

A variation is “No videos until homework and chores are done.”



One pitfall of banning all TV and videos is that children don't learn how to choose.

This may teach children poor work habits because they tend to rush through their assignments.

While restricting the amount of time spent watching TV and videos is important, the images and content of even a short program can make lasting impressions.

3. The Rigid-Control Viewing Family.

There is absolutely no TV or video viewing for this family. In an effort to control excesses or possible exposure to objectionable material, they ban everything.

One pitfall of such a decision is that children do not learn how to make intelligent decisions. As a consequence they may quickly gravitate to TV and videos when visiting friends or relatives, watching anything and everything without discretion.

4. The Life-Integrated Viewing Family.

Families in this category set guidelines for what their children watch. The rules for video viewing are openly discussed and set. Content and time are both important. Parents know the content of a video before young children view it. Because the family learns how to make choices about videos early on, children have a valuable bank of principles to draw upon for other choices they must make later on.

Clyde and Claudia Bishop have adopted this response. Two years ago Clyde bought a VCR for personal enjoyment, to tape events he would otherwise miss, etc. Soon it also became a regular weekend activity to rent a video. But some of the scenes being depicted increasingly worried them, especially as to how it would affect Beth, 9, and Ben, 13. They didn't want to become comfortable in watching videos that portrayed less-than-ideal values.

After Clyde and Claudia discussed it, they held a family conference. It was a free and easy session in which each was allowed to express thoughts without fear of being put down. First they listed the benefits of watching videos: time spent together, learning, fun. Next they listed disadvantages: less family communication, scenes that trivialized immorality or were laden with foul language.

Together they drew up guidelines for selecting videos in the future. The children fought regarding some of the new restrictions, but gradually the parents prevailed. The whole family benefited by acquiring new viewing habits.

Mail-order catalogs advertise a plethora of videos today, not to mention those featured on TV or in posters at the corner store. What's out there being touted to the kid-vid market?

■ Family entertainment/secular videos.

Many of the videos in this category are simply TV programs and movies transferred to the new medium. It takes a lot of parental determination and research to find the videos that are wholesome and delightful. But there are some. The old Walt Disney film on the Morgan horse is an example. My own boys enjoyed this story of a horse and the man who loved and trained him.

■ Religious videos.

The Moody Bible Adventure series is one example of videos that are excellent for family viewing. But not everything labeled

“religious” is worth seeing, and some are more appropriate for older than younger children.

■ Educational videos.

There's a large selection in this category, including videos that teach numbers and the alphabet. The National Geographic Society has produced a wide range of videos, for example. Our family has one on the history of trains that we have watched repeatedly, enjoying it every time.

Religious videos are not necessarily superior to secular or educational videos, or vice versa. Each has a purpose. If a family permitted the children to read only religious books and to attend only religious functions, their lives would be unbalanced. The Christian life is one of balance. Well-chosen videos from each of these categories are appropriate to helping children form integrated lives.

Five Minutes for Creativity

Videos are convenient, colorful, and easily accessible. To think of other ways your family could spend time together requires creative thinking and planning. Take five minutes to jot down possibilities of how your family could enjoy fun, recreation, and companionship besides watching TV or videos:

How about options for your children? Try making a separate list of creative things they could do on their own that will keep them busy and entertained, other than watching videos.

What About Cartoons?

A variety of mediums are used in producing kid-vid.

One medium is realism. Real actors portray true events in realistic settings. *Mary's Song*, featuring the Nativity, is an example of a Bible story realistically told from a fresh point of view.

Animation or cartoons form another medium. Drawings and animation have been used effectively in *The Best of Guide*, a video that focuses on the original artwork used with stories in *Guide* magazine. In the series entitled *Our Dwelling Place*, Bible stories, rather than make-believe or fairy tales, are animated.

The choice of medium is only one part of the process of choosing videos for the family. Cartoons in and of themselves are not evil. The content is usually what leaves much to be desired.

Adventists do not use fairy tales and myths as literature in our classrooms, and the same concerns that motivate this stance would apply to videos. Ellen White's counsel in *The Ministry of Healing* is that such stories can mislead children, may "impart false views of life," and "foster a desire for the unreal" (pp. 446, 447). She argues that these stories may be so captivating that children find Bible truths unattractive, and this may severely hamper a parent's influence on a child's character development.

Age-Appropriate

As parents, teachers, relatives, and friends of children, we need to understand more about a child's natural development, what things are most appropriate at what age.

Dr. Albert Solnit, Sterling professor of Pediatrics and Psychiatry and director of the Yale Study Center, has said that young children are quite vulnerable to being confused between what is real or unreal. Their "sense of reality, their ability to see logic, their ability to see what we call orderly usual thinking, is not available to them developmentally until they are about 6 or 7." Especially under the age of 4, he says, children have a "very strong built-in capacity for explaining things by magical thinking."³

In a popular video like *E.T.*, for example, a young child can't distinguish fantasy from reality. But even more difficult are the

Hanna-Barbera Bible videos, in which the mixture of fantasy and reality also blurs the line between truth and error.

Why Only Truth?

As a Christian parent I want to teach my children truth for two reasons.

First, I have very little time to teach my children *anything*. Since our time as family is precious, I do not want to waste time on videos that don't build my children's relationship with Jesus or provide a balanced view of life.

Second, I want my children to be so well fortified with truth that by the time they are 7 or 8 they can make decisions about good and evil. I feel the best way to do this is to expose them,

as far as possible, to things that are true and good.

This week I recorded on video a program on children and leukemia. After we viewed it as a family we talked about a little girl my sons know. We discussed how sick she had been, how many tests she had been through, and how her hair was just growing back in. It was a positive time of sharing, and I believe it will affect their feelings and be-

havior toward their sick friend and to others in similar situations.

Rightly used, video can be a powerful way to communicate good things to our children.

Next week we will examine the pros and cons of video viewing, how to evaluate videos in the light of biblical principles, and how to counteract errors that may appear in videos.

¹ Evelyn Kay, *The Family Guide to Children's Television: What to Watch, What to Miss, What to Change, and How to Do It* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1974), p. 7.

² Quoted by Katherine Barrett and Richard Greene in "Video: The Family Fix," *Ladies' Home Journal*, February 1990, p. 165.

³ In Kay, p. 52.



Carlene R. Will, a Christian education specialist and a mother of four young sons, lives in Issaquah, Washington.

■ North American Division

Year-End Meeting Launches NAD Into the 1990s

Division Reveals Compelling Opportunities for North American Church

We are poised on the brink of an opportunity unlike any other in recent years," declared president Alfred C. McClure at the opening of the three-day North American Division (NAD) 1990 year-end meeting, October 9-11.

McClure appealed to all church leaders to plead constantly for the Holy Spirit and to allow the Spirit to guide their actions. "We want every part of the church, including our Caucasian membership, to grow," he said as he listed 19 opportunities for ministry now open to the church.

In his first year-end meeting as NAD president, McClure suggested that an evangelism task force be formed to plan and develop new ideas to bring about an explosion in church membership. "Every year, each church should conduct some form of evangelistic outreach," he declared. Everyone should be committed to outreach. Large cities need our attention. We must develop new ways to reach the nearly unreachable, he said. "Evangelists must be trained to reach the people in the cities."

McClure emphasized the need to give attention to Adventist youth. "We have a great opportunity to involve them in the work of the church." He announced that a Youth Cabinet will be set up, so NAD youth will have a forum to address their needs and provide solutions that will help the church effectively attract and keep more youth.

McClure also pointed to declining enrollment in Adventist schools, saying that "the responsibility to educate our youth belongs to each member. Many of our young people are not receiving a Seventh-day Adventist Christian education. This dilemma will be alleviated if we all support our church's educational program. We must make a change."

By Owen A. Troy, North American Division communication director.

"To improve its educational program, the church has spent considerable time and money on Project Affirmation," commented McClure. "After researching the present state of our educational



Alfred C. McClure

program, we have developed plans to elevate its effectiveness." McClure also spoke of the proliferation of independent ministries. "Some are doing an outstanding job of supporting the church, and we must support these loyal independent ministries. We need to develop a way to communicate to our members where the church stands in relation to various ministries, especially those that have actively opposed the church's leadership and its programs," McClure asserted.

"Stewardship, publishing, world missions, cultural and ethnic harmony, and a concerted effort to bring vibrancy into the church also provide opportunities for the church today," he added. "The North American Division is part of the denomination's reduction program. While we work more efficiently, a cultural mix must be maintained. The proclamation of the message must be given high priority."

Secretary's Report

After the presidential statement, Robert Dale, former division secretary who is now serving as division vice president, pointed out that there was a growth in membership during the past two years, but the increase trails the average growth for the previous 30 years.

While the number of baptisms increased during the past three years, they

are still 74 less than the number baptized during 1985, 32,737 versus 32,663.

Treasurer's Report

George Crumley, NAD treasurer, told the committee members and invitees that tithe increased 4.8 percent in 1989, which had one less Sabbath than the previous year's 53. Unfortunately, Crumley said, this increase was not enough to meet all expenses. It was necessary to dip into the reserves for approximately \$341,000 during the year.

"In 1989 our total giving for world missions was \$163,277 less than the previous year. The decrease in our mission giving only increases the concern we have over this trend and its impact on the amount of nontithe dollars in North America," Crumley stated. This loss affects the world mission program.

"Even though some would distract us from the mission of our church, most of our people are still faithful in providing the necessary resources for that mission," Crumley concluded.

Following the report, delegates spent time discussing payroll problems many local conferences are experiencing. Presidents of conferences in low cost-of-living areas asked that the flat rates for housing and the wage increases be reconsidered. The matter was considered by the finance committee, and its recommendation to add two lower salary categories to relieve the problem was accepted by the body.

Project Affirmation

The centerpiece of the year-end meeting proved to be Project Affirmation, which included the most comprehensive study of youth ever done by any denomination. The project was directed by Dr. Charles T. Smith. Drs. Gordon Madgwick and Gilbert Plubell, and representatives of Search Institute, helped report on the study that gathered information from nearly 16,000 people at the

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grass roots of the church, including 12,000 students, 1,900 parents, 700 pastors, and others.

In his opening statement Merton Strommen, founder of Search Institute, said, "Christians are losing their youth. The number one task for any denomination is to hang on to its young people."

"Denominations are in the midst of a crisis because they are not passing on the fundamental beliefs of their church," he said. "Traditional methods used to hold the youth are not working. Unless we reform our methods of raising the youth, we will lose them."

Valuegenesis, a pioneering study of youth, identified the need to turn conditions around in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. As part of Project Affirmation, the study gives a picture of the SDA family, congregation, and school. It reveals several major challenges the church must address.

Materials have been and are being developed to help encourage necessary growth. A *Vision to Action* planning manual for churches, 1,500 age-related activities to help develop faith values and commitment in our youth, and the books *Perspectives on Values*, *Values in Teaching*, *Hot Topics*, and *Youth Ministry Today* are available or soon will be.

According to Columbia Union president Ron Wisbey, 500 teachers in the

union are trained in the marketing program and Columbia Union College has significantly benefited with increased enrollment. After the eye-opening report was given, discussion centered on the realization that the future of our youth

depends on drastic changes in the family, the church, and the school. To continue as usual will be "life-threatening."

A detailed report of Valuegenesis and Project Affirmation will be included in future issues of the *Adventist Review*.

Other Year End Actions

In other business, the committee:

- Approved a new retirement plan for employees of Adventist hospitals. Under the new plan, employees will be vested within five years instead of the current 10, because of high turnover rate of employees. The plan still must be reviewed by the General Conference Committee and the General Conference Corporation.

According to Mardian Blair, president of Adventist Health System/Sunbelt, the funding level of the hospital retirement plan has risen from \$22 million in 1981 to \$450 million in 1990.

- Approved a budget of \$43,374,800 for 1991. This represents a 4.5 percent increase over the 1990 budget. Urgent appeals were made for additional funding in several important areas. Unfortunately, they must wait for next year.

- Approved a new policy and guide-

lines for prison ministries, under which all ministries working within NAD must be recognized by local conferences within the territory where they want to work.

- Elected Eradio Alonso, Pacific Union Spanish ministries director, as an associate ministerial secretary for the North American Division.

- Elected DeWitt Williams, associate NAD health and temperance director, as director of health and temperance, replacing Stoy Proctor, who has become an associate director of the General Conference Health and Temperance Department.

- Voted a new policy governing the relationship between church members, church institutions, and labor organizations. According to the document, church members are following the historic teaching of the church when they refuse to join or to support labor unions or similar organizations financially.

- Voted a major addition to the division's disaster relief policy. The new policy addition governs services to be provided, organizational structure of disaster relief efforts, youth emergency programs, training systems, guidelines for consultants, and funding and accounting procedures.

- Voted amendments to guidelines for acceptable independent ministries. According to the amended policy, independent ministry personnel who hold a denominational license or credential are subject to the same travel clearance requirements that denominational employees must conform to. Failure to comply with those requirements place the status of those credentials in jeopardy.



NAD officers (at table) field questions and comments.

■ North American Division

Church Ministries Seeks New Vitality for Congregations

Provides coordinating council, teacher-training program.

The vote of confidence given to the Church Ministries Department by the General Conference in session at Indianapolis freed its personnel from the indecision that has hampered reorganization in some areas. The North American Division (NAD) Church Ministries Department is committed to utilize every avenue to support unions and conferences wishing to move ahead with church ministry concepts.

Where church ministries has received the support and backing of administration, encouraging progress can be seen. "We find much value in working with a coordinated approach involving ideas and plans from all our church ministries staff," writes a conference church ministries director. "This ensures that all age levels are properly cared for in a well-rounded program, rather than each person working independently, using a different approach."

Exciting Program

An exciting program is developing in a number of churches in which a local church ministries council has used this principle of coordination. Some churches elect a church ministries coordinator, while in others the pastor takes this responsibility. Membership on the council includes all local church leaders who have a responsibility for programs, activities, or ministries. This group serves as the leadership team for the ministry activities and programs of the church.

At its first meeting of the year, the local church ministry council draws up a master calendar of activities and a supporting budget based on the needs of the

congregation and the community. It submits this information to the church board for approval. The council then meets on a monthly basis. Accountability forms part of the agenda, as reports are given and programs evaluated and adjusted to function at their optimum level.

Upgrading Sabbath School

Research by the Adventist Information Service has highlighted what was already apparent—that Sabbath schools need revitalization. A key to this revitalization is the adult Sabbath school teacher. When this person

Tools for the Future

A number of new tools, already field-tested by local congregations, are available for use by churches. Unfortunately, many churches are not aware of the excellent resources available to them. New resources and tools include the following:

□ **Teen Plus**, a quarterly for junior/earliteen leaders, provides active learning opportunities relevant to the Sabbath school lesson. It also provides lesson readiness activities for young people to do when they first arrive in Sabbath school. Available at Adventist Book Centers.

□ **Children's Tithe Envelopes** help make stewardship the growing-up thing to do. Available in English, French, and Spanish at the NAD Distribution Center, 5040 Prescott, Lincoln, Nebraska 68506.

□ **NAD Cradle Roll Program Helps** provide a coordinated approach for Sabbath school, including poems, songs, finger plays, and illustrations. Available from Adventist Book Centers.

□ **Kids' Stuff**, a pilot project for a new magazine, provides fresh ideas, new plans and concepts, and articles on nurturing children and getting them involved in outreach.

□ **Mission Discovery**, a quarterly that helps develop an interest in outreach activities among junior/earliteen children outside their own environment.

□ **Finding the Right Path**, a book for Pathfinder-age youngsters, contains entertaining stories that show how the Pathfinder pledge and law can make a difference in their lives.

□ **Adventure Club Manual**, being pilot-tested by 500 local churches in the U.S.A., when revised will be used by the General Conference throughout the world field.

□ **Taking the Lead**, a packet, contains everything needed to start a teen/youth ministry program in the local church. It includes videos depicting youth group activities, job descriptions, and *Let Me Be a Window*, a book dealing with relational leadership. A second book containing organization and program ideas is nearing completion.

□ **New book titles** in the Church Ministries Resource Series, written by authors with hands-on experience, are available at all Adventist Book Centers. These books cover such topics as reclaiming inactive members, planning Sabbath school programs, church growth, Community Services, Investment, advertising, and outreach.

By Jean Thomas, administrative assistant, North American Division Church Ministries Department.

shows little initiative so that the lesson becomes merely a recitation of what the class members studied during the week, such members have little incentive to attend Sabbath school. In today's world, in which minds are stimulated by many elements, Sabbath school teachers must use the newest teaching techniques.

Upcoming Convention

NAD Church Ministries offers a Sabbath school teacher certification course designed to upgrade the quality of the Sabbath school class. Its five components include a learning video and teacher's and participant's manuals. The course titles: The Mission of the Sabbath School Class, Group Dynamics, Learning Styles, Instructional Skills, and The Sabbath School Class as a Caring Unit. This material is available from the NAD Distribution Center, 5040 Prescott, Lincoln, Nebraska 68506.

Since the NAD Church Ministries Department and the Ministerial Association have a great deal to do with assisting the pastor and the local church with their program, a combined church ministries/ministerial convention is planned for January 22-26, 1991, in San Diego.

This convention aims to provide inspiration, updated information, networking, and opportunities to enhance departmental staff skills. Seminars will feature top-quality trainers who will demonstrate the latest methods in adult education and cover a full range of church ministries and Ministerial Association concerns. More details will become available in the next few weeks.

Having just attended the NAD/union church ministries planning meeting at the North American Division office, the church ministries directors have returned home enthusiastic about bringing new vitality to local congregations through church ministries.

North American Division (NAD) wants to develop a relational-style approach.

TV Commercials

As a step in this process, the NAD United Marketing Taskforce and the Adventist Media Center have developed television commercials to create in people's minds the idea that Adventists are "the family that's there when you need us." The Adventist Media Center has produced six 30-second commercials that were test-marketed in Spokane, Washington, and in Detroit, Michigan.

The commercials have a common look and feel; they are personal, with close-ups of people talking. In order to avoid the fakery of so many religious television personalities, all the commercials feature real people, not actors, telling about real experiences and feelings. They cover Adventist Community Services, stop-smoking programs, medical work, the Sabbath, Bible study, and community education programs. All six commercials close with the same Adventist Church logo and a similar tagline.

Surveys showed that more than half the people recalled seeing our commercials. But careful analysis in Detroit revealed that only 23 percent knew they were Adventist, and an even higher percentage thought they had seen a Mormon commercial.

Apparently people need a certain number of exposures to recall a commercial, and an even greater number to remember the name of the organization sponsoring it.

Virtually everyone who saw the commercials liked them. At least 20 percent said they were more likely to attend an Adventist church after watching them.

Two Problems

Two things stood out in testing the commercials. First, they seemed to make little impact on people's knowledge about Adventists. Second, we found little evidence of persons attending Adventist churches or other meetings as a result of them.

The commercials were not information-intensive, so perhaps the lack of an increase in knowledge should have been

North American Division

Relational Evangelism Aims for Church Recognition

New method seeks bridge between advertising and attendance.

Handbills featuring beasts, last-day events, and pictures of evangelists have been the standby in evangelistic advertising for more than 50 years. The personal contacts made when members delivered those handbills served as one of the most effective methods evangelists had to produce a sizable audience.

Even today handbills continue as effective audience builders, primarily because of the personal attention they receive. Early handbills were printed with black ink on the cheapest newsprint. Later, colored paper was used, then colored ink was added.

Artists in our publishing houses and other commercial firms were challenged to produce something better. And they did, coming up with exciting handbills so

that larger audiences attended the meetings.

Eventually evangelists found members more reluctant to make the personal contacts required to deliver handbills door-to-door, so they began using direct mail. They found that direct mail made it possible to determine which type of handbill was most effective.

George Powell, Southern Union communication director, has worked closely with evangelists in his union to study ways to build their audiences. By mailing different handbills to alternate addresses, they have been able to determine which handbill is most effective.

But the handbill-only approach to evangelistic advertising misses some types of people. Because of that, the

expected. Even more puzzling was the relationship between people's willingness to attend our services and the lack of increase in actual attendance.

The Spokane churches went all out during the fall to conduct programs for nonmembers—about 275 programs in all. Yet no one who attended a stop-smoking program, a stress seminar, a financial management meeting, or an evangelistic crusade mentioned the commercials.

Information from Detroit is not as complete because of less coordination with local churches, but again, little evidence suggests that people visited Adventist programs because of the commercials. More study and possible development of commercials with direct information concerning specific meetings appear needed.

Continued Testing

The North American Division hopes to continue developing and testing "relational" evangelism as a strategy to supplement "prophetic" evangelism in winning people.

The test-marketing in Spokane and Detroit revealed that many people viewed the Adventist Church as "the family that's there when you need us." Further, they responded positively to this concept.

A key step now is finding methods to translate this attitude into action, a crucial component of any successful evangelism strategy.

The commercials are available through the Adventist Media Center, whose personnel participated in selecting advertisements and placing them on the air. Local churches will have to find ways of turning the positive attitudes engendered by the commercials into people in programs and pews.

By Kermit Netteburg, communication director of the Columbia Union, who directed the NAD United Marketing Taskforce during these projects. The other members were Walter Arties, Jim Cress, Joel Hass, Warren Judd, Cyril Miller, Bob Nixon, Bryce Pascoe, George Powell, Bill Scales, Ed Schwisow, and Owen Troy.

■ California

TV Program Scores High in National Ratings

It Is Written ranks third in number of households covered.

Here's a tough trivia question: Is the *It Is Written* television program ranked (a) tenth, (b) sixth, or (c) third among religious programs in the United States today? The answer is all three. No matter how you calculate the figures, Adventist television scores high in this new decade of broadcasting.

"There are several ways to rate Christian television programs," explains Connie LaJoie, director of Transda, the Adventist Media Center's in-house advertising agency. "And *It Is Written* is a surprise winner in virtually every category."

The most common ranking is total households, measuring the total audience a ministry reaches each Sunday. Obviously, the more markets a ministry can "buy," the larger its audience. Hence, the *Hour of Power*, with Robert Schuller, comes in number one by purchasing airtime on 166 stations nationwide in order to reach 1,308,000 households on any given Sunday.

Down the list, but not very far down, comes the *It Is Written* telecast. Only 42 stations yield a total weekly audience, excluding satellite cable coverage, of some 300,000 households, placing the program tenth in national ranking.

"I call that a miracle!" says Royce Williams, field services director for *It Is Written*. "For an Adventist program to do nearly as well as Jerry Falwell's weekly telecast [131 stations; 335,000 homes] is an amazing achievement for our church."

Sixth Most Popular

The news gets better when the Nielsen Station Index compares rating points—that is, the comparative popularity of a program in markets in which it is seen. "In this head-to-head competition," comments LaJoie, "*It Is Written* is the sixth most popular religious program in the country in a field of 55."

A third statistic that calculates the average number of households per station gives the *It Is Written* program its highest marks. Nationwide it ranks third, ahead of

such established ministries as *The World Tomorrow* and the Oral Roberts, Jimmy Swaggart, and Kenneth Copeland programs.

Even though it has been broadcast continually for 34 years, *It Is Written* maintains a 1990s state-of-the-art quality that brings in new Angel Awards statuettes every February from Hollywood's Re-

ligion in Media. Every season the ministry prepares more than 30 new semi-documentary programs with a balanced Seventh-day Adventist theology.

How does speaker George Vandeman interpret the good news from the ratings agencies? "Even while moving into new television markets overseas, God has continued to abundantly bless our operations here at home. Evidently the quiet, thoughtful presentation of our church's unique truths can and does appeal to a broad audience."

By David B. Smith, director of public relations, It Is Written.



George Vandeman

Hero's Broken Heart

BY EDNA MAY OLSEN

Steven received a collie pup on his second birthday, and in no time they were inseparable. They played together, slept together, and, it must be admitted, sometimes even ate together.

When Steven started school, he tried explaining to Hero why he had to leave him. But the dog could not understand. However, he quickly learned that if he waited by the front gate each afternoon, his master would eventually return and shower him with affection.

Several years passed, and Steven's parents bought a few chickens and put them in an enclosure at the bottom of the garden. Steven's job was to feed them, since he took quite a liking to the silly creatures. Hero, though, suddenly showed a different side to his character and became wildly jealous. Instead of chasing imaginary balls through the garden or napping in the sunshine, he now spent his days glaring through the wire netting and growling at the hated chickens.

One morning Steven realized that two of the chickens were missing and discovered a large hole had been dug under the wire netting. Looking closer, Steven saw a claw sticking up out of the ground. Hero stood nearby, his tail wagging happily. The telltale feathers on Hero's snout told the whole story.

"You bad dog," Steven scolded. "How could you do such a thing? I'm really ashamed of you. Go away; I don't want to see you again."

Poor Hero felt ashamed. He tried letting his master know how sorry he was, but Steven would have nothing to do with him. A few days later when he left for a camping trip in the mountains, instead of petting Hero and telling him to be a good dog while he was away, Steven left without a word.

A few times, though, his conscience bothered him. He wished he hadn't left

his faithful dog without showing him love and forgiveness. He would make it up once he got home, he decided.

He returned home expecting to find Hero waiting by the front gate, but he wasn't there. He called, "Hero, I'm home. Where are you?" But there was no welcoming bark in reply.

Steven's mother met him at the door. "Hero isn't here," she began. "He died last night. As soon as you left, he went to

his bed and refused to leave, even to eat or drink. The vet said there was nothing really wrong with him except he couldn't take the fact that you were angry with him. He simply died of a broken heart."

Poor Steven had to live with what he had done for the rest of his life.

Are we unwilling to forgive someone who has wronged us? If so, let us remember how much God has forgiven us and be willing to forgive others also.

BULLETIN BOARD

To New Posts

Regular Missionary Service

Ralph P. Bailey, returning to serve as secretary, Eastern Africa Division, Harare, Zimbabwe, and Dorothy Elizabeth (Patterson) Bailey left August 5.

Donald Ray Bankhead, returning to serve as vice president, Spicer Memorial College, Poona, India, and Marjorie Jean (Lange) Bankhead left June 20.

Adventist Youth Service

Jeffery David Wright (AU), of Jackson, Michigan, to serve as teacher, Thailand English Language Centers, Bangkok, Thailand, left June 11.

Mark Nathan Yuhl (WWC), of Bremerton, Washington, to serve as English teacher, Korea Seventh-day Adventist Language Institutes, and Thailand English Language Centers, left June 11.

Kenneth U. Zill (SC), of Boynton Beach, Florida, to serve as English teacher, Israel Field, Jerusalem, Israel, left June 17.

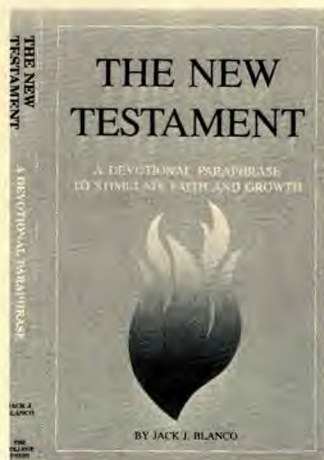
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Danger! High Voltage

In April I saw a television news report about a little church that had been abandoned for 40 years because it happened to sit in a no-man's-land—the wide, heavily armored border strip between East and West Germany.

The news was that for the first time in four decades the people from the two villages on either side of the border met in the church to worship together again. The church had been refurbished with money (mostly from the West German worshippers) and work (mostly from East German neighbors).

I got almost as big an emotional charge out of watching that news clip as I did when I saw the opening of the Berlin Wall last year. This is partially because I have often been troubled by reports of churches being deliberately left empty in what used to be called the Eastern bloc. Or worse, some governments have “converted” these churches into museums, youth clubs, centers for the elderly, and warehouses.

To me, this is a sad way to use the word “converted.” It seems to twist the normal meaning of the word when we are thinking of the gospel.

Quite a Shock

One day my wife and I were strolling through Edinburgh and came to an old village that used to be outside the city limits. High on the crest of the valley wall I saw a “converted” church. That’s right. Not in Albania or the U.S.S.R., but in the city of John Knox. This church had been converted into an electricity switching station. A sign on the arched doors said in white lettering on a red background: “Danger! High Voltage.”

The “shock,” of course, was the realization that this was the only kirk in Edinburgh that could boast such a claim—and the method used to attain this unique status was to take the Christians out and put something more powerful in their place.

Have the churches in which you and I worship been converted?—in either sense of the word?

I know some that have become warehouses of good doctrines and good Adventist traditions. Some have become museums of outdated ideas and notions because they have not really focused



Some churches

have been

“converted”

into museums,

youth clubs,

centers for the

elderly, and

warehouses.

themselves on the *present* truth for the 1990s. They may be successful youth clubs or centers for the senior citizens. But are they really churches anymore? Would you dare put a sign on your church door that reads “Danger! High Voltage”?


Real Christians can cause a strong current for good to surge through their neighborhoods, cities, and nations. That’s what happened at Pentecost. Tongues of fire shot up into the air above the disciples just as if they were giving off huge sparks of electricity. Everyone who witnessed it was shocked: “And they were all amazed” (Acts 2:12).

Not in My Lifetime?

Recently I met a German lady who now lives in Edinburgh. She said, “Just a few weeks ago I told my grandson, ‘The change will come. The Wall will come down. But not in my lifetime.’ And now it has already happened. In just a few weeks!”

This is what happened at Pentecost. Only a few weeks before, the disciples had huddled in a room, hiding because Jesus was dead. Then the greatest shock in the whole history of creation happened. Jesus rose from the dead. Suddenly the Spirit sent the disciples out of their upper room blazing with electrifying power—first in Jerusalem, then in all Judea, and then to the uttermost parts of the earth!

I’m glad to report that the Edinburgh church I mentioned has a new sign posted. It announces that the church is being converted back into a Christian outreach center.

What sign should be on your church door? Have you been in the upper room lately? By all accounts, the experience could be electrifying. 



Phillip Whidden writes from Edinburgh, Scotland.

BY PHILLIP WHIDDEN

Southwestern Adventist College



Nearly 100 years ago in Texas the Seventh-day Adventist Church started a new kind of school. We were originally called Keene Industrial and Missionary Academy, and our motto was "Where Students Learn to Live."

Our purpose was to train **Hearts** for service to the Lord, **Hands** for skilled, self-sustaining labor, and **Heads** for lofty responsibilities.

From the beginning we attracted students from every state, and sent graduates directly to medical school, mission fields, and careers.

Through all the decades of this century we have built a college on a solid heritage, offering well-rounded Adventist higher education to sensible young adults.

Today, Southwestern Adventist College still attracts serious students whose goals are to live abundantly now, and to prepare for the future.

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