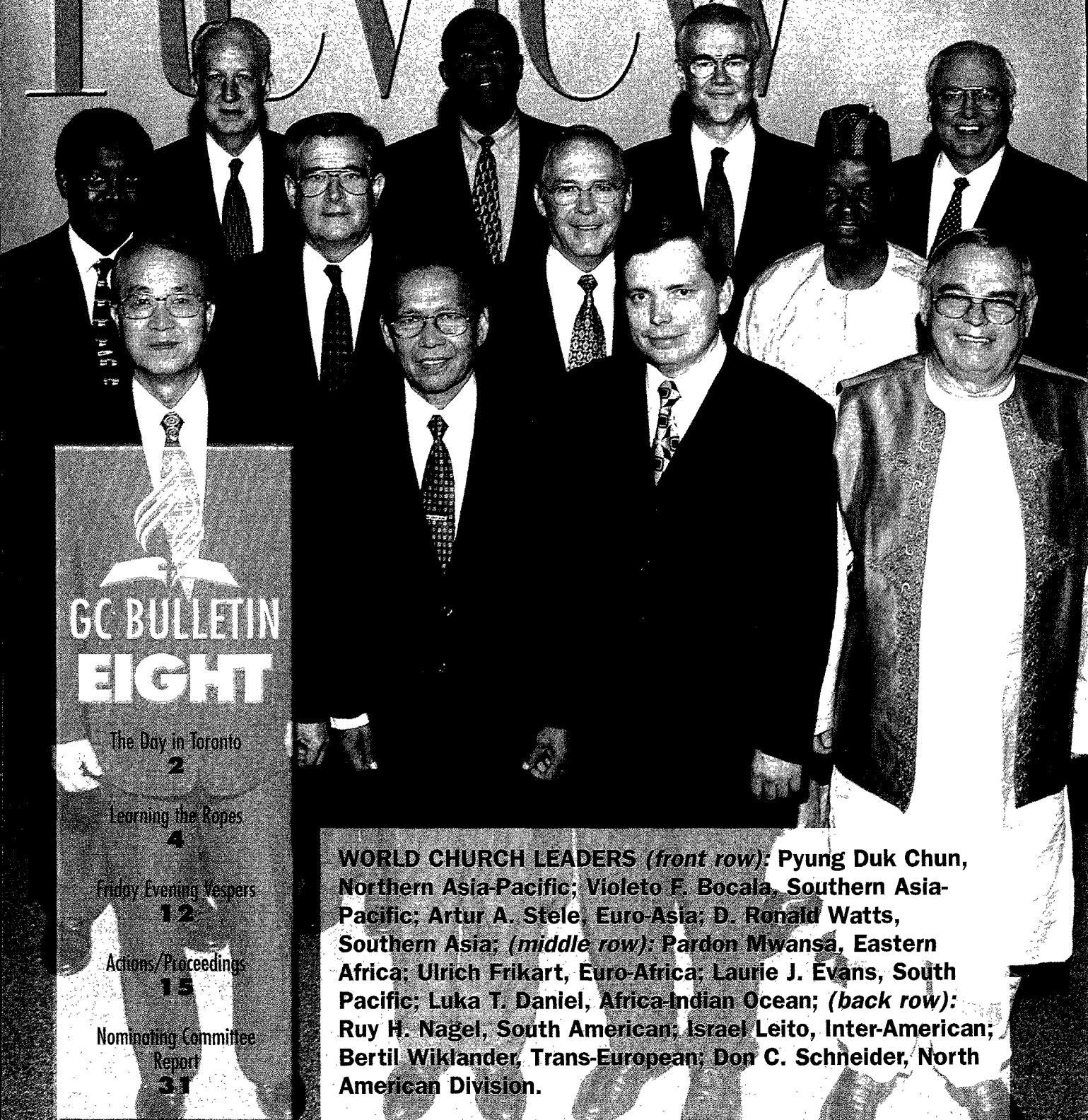


ADVENTIST REVIEW

July 11, 2000



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WORLD CHURCH LEADERS (*front row*): Pyung Duk Chun, Northern Asia-Pacific; Violeto F. Bocala, Southern Asia-Pacific; Artur A. Stele, Euro-Asia; D. Ronald Watts, Southern Asia; (*middle row*): Pardon Mwansa, Eastern Africa; Ulrich Frikart, Euro-Africa; Laurie J. Evans, South Pacific; Luka T. Daniel, Africa-Indian Ocean; (*back row*): Ruy H. Nagel, South American; Israel Leito, Inter-American; Bertil Wiklander, Trans-European; Don C. Schneider, North American Division.



THE DAY IN
TORONTO
 Friday, July 7

Bert B. Beach
 Reporter



COVER PHOTO BY ALDEN J. HO

The General Conference session “Day in Toronto” follows biblical reckoning, rather than the time set by the International Bureau of Weights and Measures outside Paris. It begins at 6:00 p.m. An hour earlier [on July 6] the nominating committee rendered its eleventh and final report, including the General Conference associate departmental directors, who made up the bulk of the last report.

Having watched the nominating committees at work over the past 54 years, I can say that the 174 members of this one finished their work more expeditiously and earlier than previous nominating committees. Maybe the 700 bottles of water they consumed helped the flow of decision regarding the 119 names presented and voted! Now that we know who our leaders are going to be during the period ahead, we can all relax and fully enjoy the remaining two days of the Toronto session.

The evening program began with the song “All Hail the Power of Jesus’ Name”—precisely what all the exciting division reports are doing this week.

Soloist Wintley Phipps, in his imitable way, set the mood by affirming through voice and body language that “It is well with my soul.”

I was thrilled listening to the reports of the South Pacific Division, starting with Brian Enoch and the unique and haunting sounds of the didgeridoo. The theme of the audiovisual and onstage presentation was “Contact.” Indeed, there can be no evangelism, no human or divine relations, without “contact,” and as this word implies in English, it must be “with tact” in order to be successful.

The brief reports from the various South Pacific unions mentioned six personal stories, each having modern-day miraculous aspects, such as condemned murderer Kalisto (of the Kwaio tribe) escaping from his prison by a canoe pushed along by two sharks and then turning his life around and becoming a gospel preacher.

There is good news in the South Pacific on the evangelistic front: in the western Solomon Islands one person in four is a Seventh-day Adventist. The church is “booming” in Papua New Guinea. In 1999 new technology helped add more than 16,000 souls in this country, where just a few generations ago almost Stone Age conditions

ALDEN J. HO



WALL-TO-WALL PEOPLE: Every day crowds packed the exhibition hall to wander among the hundreds of displays.

ALDEN J. HO

prevailed in certain areas. Today there is one Adventist for 86 people of the population of the South Pacific Division—the highest ratio of any division. I liked Matt Byrne's statement: "Put Jesus first and miracles happen."

Wise leadership not only talks of success, but comes to grips with unsolved challenges. In the South Pacific the evangelistic problem is the "urban jungle." A series of perceptive videos have been prepared called "Chasing Utopia." The STORMCO (Service to Others Really Matters) service trips by youth groups are making an impact on various communities. I welcome seriousness about both the present and future tasks.

In between the two division programs, the president and the associate treasurer of the Southern Asia-Pacific Division drove to the front of the SkyDome in a half-size jeepney, a highly decorated Filipino transportation vehicle, and presented it as a gift to the General Conference. They then invited president Jan Paulsen to ride in it—when last seen as it drove away, he was standing on the back bumper!

If the keyword in the South Pacific report was "Contact," that of the Africa-Indian Ocean Division was "Action." The officers of the AID walked on stage to the accompaniment of a Yoruba talking drum, in the style of Nigerian chiefs.

The colorful AID program centered around three miracles: growth, development, and unity. Despite the formidable challenges of war, instability, and economic devaluation, there has been an impressive forging ahead from 330,000 members to 1,400,000. Self-support leading to union conference status of some fields is a good step forward. Unity of purpose has been achieved despite having 32 countries and scores of different languages.

One intriguing story presented was of the convict who became converted to Adventism. While in prison he had befriended a fellow prisoner. This fellow prisoner has now become the

Nigerian head of state, and our brother has been pardoned! In a letter to our church, the country's president wrote: "God does not allow anything to happen outside His purpose and plan."

Another story concerns three Adventists in the Cape Verde Islands being falsely accused of desecrating a Catholic church. Two were imprisoned and subjected to mistreatment. At the trial they were vindicated, and the judge said, "The only crime these people committed, if this is a crime, was to be Seventh-day Adventist!"

During this quinquennium the division's baptismal goal was 500,000. During the coming five-year period the goal has been doubled to one million!

The grand finale of the evening was the AID delegation marching in their colorful attire onto the stage singing "We're Marching to Zion." This gave us a foretaste of the climactic parade of nations we will view tomorrow.

Any GC session has its characteristics, and we can learn from each experience. I have one concern: the very sparse attendance of delegates at the afternoon business sessions, especially during the first hour. Understandably, quite a few delegates including myself are involved in the work of the session backstage—in the nominating committee or elsewhere; nevertheless, it seems strange when more than half of the delegates are absent from their seats. Early Friday afternoon a lovely ceremony took place honoring the General Conference retirees, but the session floor was almost empty. We need to take a look at this absentee problem in planning for the St. Louis session.

In his Friday devotional Kingsley Clarke focused on the great controversy between Christ and Satan, between truth and error. (See the summary on page 5 of this *Bulletin*.) Indeed, our enemy is not Christian brothers and sisters, but the devil himself. In the last days the "serpent" has turned into a "dragon" and enmity has become all-out war. However, we have the assurance that where iniquity abounds,

God's power and grace superabound.

During the Friday morning business session a motion was passed to rescind the motion of the previous day that had referred the *Church Manual* amendment dealing with marriage and divorce back to the *Church Manual* Committee. Following today's vote, these items have now been voted. Otherwise, these issues would have had to wait five years until the next General Conference session, at which time a new set of delegates would have had to deal with the discussion all over again. The delegates also voted to introduce in the *Church Manual* a certain format change. This means that certain parts of the *Church Manual* will become "Notes," which can be changed by any Annual Council.

This has been the "walkingest" GC session in history. The facilities are first class, but the colossal size of the SkyDome and the many floors of the Convention Center required considerable walking back and forth and up and down. Good exercise, for sure, but two blisters on my feet are a reminder of our sedentary life!

This is my thirteenth General Conference session, and what a great session it has been! Many presentations have been outstanding, the division reports superb, and the music almost out of this world. The observers from other churches and from governments have been impressed. I am proud to belong to this church—my church. The church of the remnant is not perfect, but we belong to a mighty God, and when you are on God's side, you are on the winning side.

Very soon we will be "home." As I get older (I have had the privilege and joy of serving this church in active service for 51 years), the beautiful hills of the Promised Land look more and more inviting. God is good and faithful, and His amazing love demands "my soul, my life, my all." This must be our pledge on this General Conference next to the last "day in Toronto."

A Woman's Place

BY STEPHEN CHAVEZ

Throwing a party for 50,000 to 60,000 people—most of whom live outside of North America—calls for a session manager with unusual tact and organizational skills. For this General Conference session that person was Linda de León, session manager and assistant treasurer/meeting planner for the General Conference.

By the time she left the city, De León had been in Toronto for most of a month, working as the church's liaison with Toronto Convention Center, the SkyDome, the Tourism and Visitors Authority, and as many as 30 different hotels. She was the



one who oversaw the 20 subcommittees that coordinated virtually every-

thing that took place in the SkyDome and Convention Center during the 10 days of the session. Despite the 18-hour days, De León could say as the session was drawing to a close, "I enjoy what I'm doing."

During the session De León's days began with a Steering Committee meeting at 6:45 a.m. and ended with meetings with the Session Management Committee at 9:30 each evening. A typical day ended about 11:30 p.m. "You prepare for it physically and mentally," she said (she's a dedicated walker). "That helps a lot."

De León's greatest frustration during the session had to do with immigration. Dozens of delegates weren't able to attend the session because of problems obtaining visas.

Her greatest satisfaction? "Standing in the SkyDome, listening to 50,000 people plus singing 'We Have This Hope'—that gives me goose bumps."

Learning the Ropes in Regent Park

BY KIMBERLY LUSTE MARAN

Paul and Shad Lehmann, a father-and-son team training leaders in recreation ministry at Impact Toronto 2000, have spent this past week at Regent Park coordinating a "low-ropes" challenge for area children. The success of this ministry is apparent as the number of children (and a few adults) has grown each day. According to Lynn Neumann McDowell, IT 2000 director of communications and media relations, "The setup at Regent Park represents another opportunity to point kids and adults in the direction of a healthy thrill that builds confidence and promotes a positive lifestyle."

The Lehmanns have operated challenge courses throughout Canada and parts of the United States. They believe that life should be lived in the "active track," and both have been living actively since Shad donned rock climbing shoes at 5 years of age. Shad, now a 19-year-old student at Canadian University College where his father oversees the Outward Pursuits program, has a youthful perspective on what their events provide. "It gives kids a new alternative, another way to get a rush without negative pressures," says Shad.

Each afternoon during the GC session week the Lehmanns and the recreation ministry team of IT 2000 up the ropes challenge. Even though it takes a lot of effort to secure the ropes, cords, and pulleys, the work is definitely worthwhile. Those who participate master not only an unusual and alternate outdoor activity, but also learn a bit about trust and support as they step across the taut strands to the encouraging cheers of the ministry team.

"This has been fun," says team

member and delegate Delano Son from Ottawa. "I love working with the kids, and I've learned about a [ministry] that I'd want to use back home."



ON THE ROPES: A young Torontonians balances with the help of two IT 2000 delegates as he walks across the last part of the ropes challenge obstacle course in Regent Park.

Almost Home

Devotional message presented Friday morning, July 7, 2000

There is a war going on, and we are all in it. We have no choice but to be a part of it, but we can decide which side we are on. It's a war between good and evil, right and wrong, life and death, truth and error. The great controversy is between Christ and Satan.

When it began on earth God made the official announcement: "I will put enmity between thee [Satan] and the woman [the church], and between thy seed [Satan's followers] and her seed [Christ and His followers]; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Gen. 3:15).

God made a similar announcement toward the end of the controversy: "And the dragon [Satan] was wroth with the woman [the church], and went to make war with the remnant of her seed [the last-days church], which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev. 12:17).

Satan is warring against God's church. He is the adversary, and the church needs to keep this in mind. Paul declares, "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph. 6:12). We must remain focused. Our enemy is not our brothers and sisters. Our enemy is the archdeceiver.

"Woe to the inhabitants of the earth . . . for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time" (Rev. 12:12). Ever since Christ defeated the devil through His life, death, and resurrection, the devil has known that his time is short. Not being able to attack the now-ascended Christ, he concentrates his revengeful attacks on the remnant of Christ's followers. As his time gets shorter, his work becomes more intense, deceptive, and cruel. No wonder the angel pronounced a woe on the inhabitants of the earth. Those who



Kingsley Clarke
Lay member,
Inter-American
Division

are living in the last days cannot take any risk with their salvation. They must at all times be found anchored in Christ, for the devil's intent is to take our lives as soon as we fall into sin.

Let us establish two things before we examine the evidence for the last days.

First, no one knows the year, the day, or the hour of Christ's return. "Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only" (Matt. 24:36). Christ considers this statement so important that He dedicates 29 verses to emphasizing it (Matt. 24:36 to Matt. 25:13). Nobody now knows and nobody in probationary time will ever know it. We must, therefore, refrain from all setting of dates.

The devil plans to have us participate in date setting, for when the time passes we become discouraged and others become unbelievers.

Second, we may not know the date, but we can know when it is near. "So likewise ye, when ye shall see these things, know that it is near, even at the door" (Matt. 24:33). Weather watchers know what signs to look for and what the signs foretell. We have to be spiritual weather watchers, knowing what signs to look for and what they mean.

Are we in the last days? This is a pertinent question, as every generation since Christ believed they were the last generation. Do we have sufficient evidence to show we are in the very last days?

I will concentrate on the signs given in our Lord's prophecy in Matthew 24.

Signs on earth. There shall be wars, rumors of wars, famines, pestilence, earthquakes in different places (verses 5-7). I often wonder about these signs, for Christ says when we shall see them the "end is not yet." So why give these as signs if they do not establish the nearness of the end?

These are not signs to tell how near Christ's coming is,

but to establish that things will not get better. No matter what politicians have promised, no matter how promising technological advances are, things will get progressively worse. It may seem as if humans will end the world, but God says, "No, I will do it before man does." God will destroy those who are destroying the world (Rev. 11:18).

Signs in the natural world. A great earthquake, the darkening of the sun, the moon looking bloody, and the stars of heaven shaken (Matt. 24:29, 30; Rev. 6:12, 13)—these have all been fulfilled. The great Lisbon earthquake came November 1, 1755; the Dark Day (sun darkened, bloody moon) on May 19, 1780; and the meteoric shower on November 13, 1833.

According to the prophecy, the next major event in the natural world is the parting of the heavens, the coming of Christ to take us home. We are living in the last days; we are almost home.

Signs in the political world. Daniel 2 records the history of the world from the time Babylon, under Nebuchadnezzar, ruled the world to the coming of Christ.

"First, the Assyrian kingdom ruled the world, then Medo-Persia's banners were unfurled; and after Greece held universal sway, Rome seized the scepter—Where are we today?"

According to Daniel: "Down in the feet of iron and of clay, weak and divided, soon to pass away; what will the next great, glorious drama be? Christ and His coming, and eternity" (F. E. Belden, "Look for the Waymarks").

We are almost home!

Signs in the religious world. "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" (Matt. 24:14). This is the supreme sign, and it is the only one that we can influence in a positive way.

Now more than ever, with the advance in technology in the area of communication and the crumbling of Communism, we are able to spread this gospel in all the world in a short space of time. This, too, is evidence that we are living in the very last days and that we are almost home.

As the end of all things earthly rapidly approaches, Satan puts forth desperate efforts to ensnare the world (see *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 219). How is he doing it?

1. Increase in sinful activities. The devil is causing iniquity to abound. People are getting so used to sin that it does not look terrible anymore. His best medium is television, which sets forth crime and sexual immorality as a part of acceptable daily life. We are now used to crime. When we hear of a homicide it does not affect us as it used to. We are now used to sin, and it is affecting the church: "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold" (verse 12).

2. Drunkenness with the cares of the world. Jesus warned, "Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares" (Luke 21:34).

It is one of Satan's plans to cause us to be too busy to spend time with Jesus and His Word. The deception is that the cares of the world are not sinful in themselves. These are the things we need to pass by every day, but the devil causes us to become so preoccupied with them that we can find no time for God. We soon become spiritual dwarfs and "easy pickings" for the devil.

3. False prophets working signs and wonders (Matt. 24:24). Paul declared that the ministers of Satan have transformed themselves into ministers of righteousness (2 Cor. 11:15).

John the revelator gives us a little more detail. "And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty" (Rev. 16:13, 14).

The dragon primarily is Satan (Rev. 12:9), but also represents paganism, the system through which he reveals himself openly (Rev. 13:4). The beast represents Roman Catholicism. The

false prophet (beast with lamblike horns) represents false Protestantism.

These seem to cover all religious systems in the world today. The devil's plan in the last days is to work signs and wonders (miracles) and so attract people away from the simple truth of the gospel.

Through paganism he performs signs and wonders in the name of the occult, devil worship, witchcraft, and magic. Through Roman Catholicism and false Protestantism he performs his signs and wonders in the name of Jesus Christ and dead saints.

"As spiritualism more closely imitates the nominal Christianity of the day, it has greater power to deceive and ensnare. Satan himself is converted, after the modern order of things. He will appear in the character of an angel of light. Through the agency of spiritualism, miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and many undeniable wonders will be performed. And as the spirits will profess faith in the Bible, and manifest respect for the institutions of the church, their work will be accepted as a manifestation of divine power" (*The Great Controversy*, p. 588).

Three Spirits, Three Angels

God's three angels of Revelation 14 stand in contrast to the devil's three spirits. God's angels are preaching while the devil's spirits are healing and working miracles. The true system will concentrate on a preaching/teaching ministry. The false system will concentrate on a "signs and wonders" ministry. The devil knows that if his ministry were to depend on the preached word, he would be easily uncovered by the Word. So he concentrates on emotionalism and signs.

Christ says, "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. 7:22, 23).

Let us always remember that prophets must not be tested by their

gifts, eloquence of speech, or the miracles they perform. All must be tested by the Scripture. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isa. 8:20). Note that both the law (what God wrote) and the testimony (what the prophets wrote) are called "this word"—singular. That's because the prophets' testimony is in accordance with the law, and they are one.

4. Satan's impersonation of Christ. "As the crowning act in the great drama of deception, Satan himself will personate Christ. . . . In different parts of the earth, Satan will manifest himself among men as a majestic being of dazzling brightness, resembling the description of the Son of God given by John in the Revelation" (*The Great Controversy*, p. 624).

The Overcomers

There is no doubt that the devil is

powerful and will deceive many. If it were possible, he would deceive the very elect. But it is not possible, for the elect know how to overcome: "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death" (Rev. 12:11).

Christ's death for our sins must be accepted and His blood applied to our hearts daily, so that we can live a sanctified life. The overcomers also use the word of their testimony, which in effect comes from the Word of God. The Scripture is our only safeguard to test doctrines and the only standard to live by. "And they loved not their lives unto the death." Paul puts it another way: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2:20).

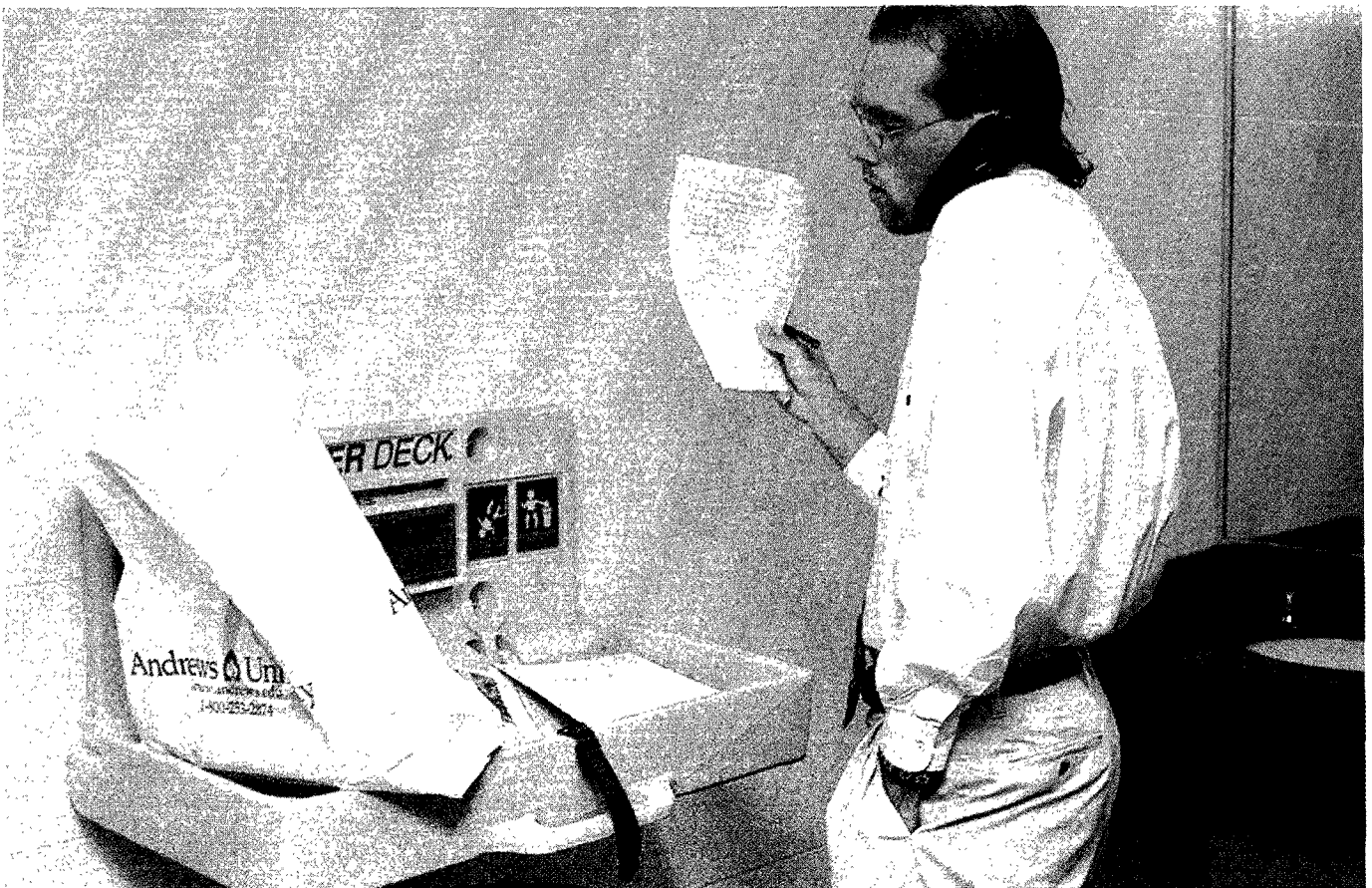
The signs tell us that we are almost

home. Satan's increased activities and deceptiveness tell us we are almost home. But almost home is not home.

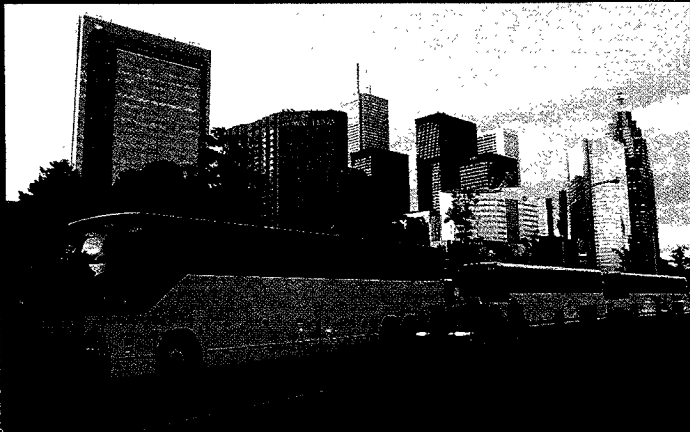
A drunken man left a bar one night heading for home. He traveled a few miles and then reached the familiar spot where he needed only to get in his boat and row 200 feet across the river to be home at last. He got in his boat and rowed and rowed and rowed, but could not reach home. He rowed all night and still did not reach home. When day came he looked around to see where he was and what was the problem. To his surprise, he had not moved. He rowed all night in vain because his boat was still tied to the dock.

"Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares" (Luke 21:34).

Watch therefore and pray always!



CHANGE IS GOOD: Chris Drake, a communication intern for the North American Division, uses a changing table in the men's room as an impromptu desk as he covers the session in Toronto.



JULIE D. SPRINGER

ANY WAY TO GET THERE: Guests arrive at the SkyDome every evening by motor coach, taxi, subway, city buses, rickshaws (really!), and on foot.

Images From Toronto



ALDEN J. HO

TOOTHLESS IN TORONTO: This young visitor from the Inter-American Division captured the SkyDome audience with her colorful costume and childish charm.



ALDEN J. HO

HOME SLEEP HOME: Kingsley Patterson, from Jamaica, succumbs to midday fatigue and catches a few winks in a bamboo hut that is part of ADRA's global village in the Convention Center exhibition hall.



JULIE D. SPRINGER

JOEL D. SPRINGER



YOUNG DELEGATES: These official representatives of the Trans-European Division pose one evening at the IMPACT 2000 Christian Cafe.

ALDEN J. HO



CONTRASTS: Baxton Ri'imana, from the South Pacific Division, whose father was a devil priest, represents two lifestyles and two lifetimes.

ALDEN J. HO



MINICAMPMEETING: The Global Mission stage was a perfect place to relax and enjoy a different venue every 15 minutes.

ALDEN J. HO



NO STANDING STILL: The Ambassadors, from the Africa-Indian Ocean Division, galvanized the huge audience in the Dome.

JOEL D. SPRINGER



MOST POPULAR BOOTH: Dozens waited their turn in the exhibition hall for a massage by experts from Lifestyle Centers.

AT THE CHRISTIAN CAFE: Music, mingling, and a time for testimony followed the nightly evangelistic series sponsored by IMPACT 2000 in the Toronto East Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Sabbath School/Personal Ministries Department

The Sabbath School and Personal Ministries Department was organized at the 1995 General Conference session in the Netherlands. This was the first time that the world church had put these two units together in a single department.

Two Units Working Together

These departments have many features in common. For instance, both teach Bible study skills. Both teach skills on how to teach other people, whether in giving a Bible study, holding a lay evangelistic effort, or some other activity that includes a teaching component. Social skills through Friendship Evangelism seminars are also taught. How to set up hospitality groups and greeting committees at the door of the local church and how to make people feel welcome are seminars offered by the department. Small group technology is a core strategy of both sections of the department and is being used extensively.

Sabbath School

Sabbath School has been part of the Seventh-day Adventist Church since the 1860s. More than 11 million people worldwide currently attend. Now Sabbath school faces the twenty-first century with a new determination to be a continuing vital part of the world ministry of the church.

The Sabbath school is local church religious education that builds faith and practice. Its primary function is to lead people to study the Scriptures and to understand the fundamental

doctrines of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It is designed to help church members, those who visit the church, and new members learn how to transfer biblical principles into their everyday lifestyles. The world Sabbath school does this by focusing on four primary purposes: study of the Word, fellowship, community outreach, and world mission emphasis.



Jim Zackrison
Director

Fellowship is an important part of the Sabbath school. As it was originally contemplated in the minds of the founders of the Adventist Church,

Sabbath school was to be a place where people could feel comfortable, where they could study the Scriptures together, and where they could enjoy Christian companionship. This would lead to furthering their own personal spirituality and also inspire them to tell others about the church and its teachings.

Another major function of Sabbath school is world mission emphasis. Sabbath School was the first entity within the church to focus on raising offerings to further the work of the gospel around the world and has been doing so ever since. It has become a major source of nontithe funding for the world church and has helped in the establishment of hundreds of thousands of Adventist churches globally.

World mission emphasis is conducted through audiovisual programs, the three versions of mission quarterlies that are being used in an expanding number of churches globally, and other ways that focus on the world mission of the church.

Curriculum Development

One of the primary functions of the Sabbath school is the development of the Bible study guides studied each week in churches throughout the world. Their purpose is to guide people in the study of the Scriptures with the hope that they will learn more about the Lord's will for them. They are developed around studies of books of the Bible as well as topical studies.

CQ and Cornerstone Connections

For the young adults of the church the Sabbath School Department develops the *Collegiate Quarterly*. It is produced in print media and placed on the World Wide Web. In discussion-oriented format, including a teacher's guide, it leads to practical applications of the truths of the Bible.

Cornerstone Connections, a series of lessons designed specifically for those of secondary school age, is based on major issues faced by this age group. They learn biblical principles that mold the difference between making decisions from the perspective of the contemporary environment in which a person lives, and those based on what the Scriptures have to say.

GraceLink—The New Children's Curriculum

One of the most exciting developments during the current quinquennium is the new children's Sabbath school curriculum. Developed by a worldwide team of designers and authors, GraceLink is made up of more than 624 lessons based directly on Bible stories. The stories are used to apply biblical principles to everyday life through an interactive learning system. The children participate in all the activities and learn by doing. Each lesson is built around a concept called "total hour

teaching.” The program time and the lesson of the day both deal with the Bible story that is included in the material so it can be learned, illustrated, practiced, and utilized in everyday life.

Many of the new materials are already in the hands of churches around the world. Those still in the process of development will soon be in your church. Junior/teen is in use now. Primary will be ready in January 2001, kindergarten and beginners in January 2002.

Personal Ministries

This unit of the Sabbath School and Personal Ministries Department includes those activities that have to do with outreach. Its statement of purpose is “Motivating, training, and mobilizing members to accomplish the world mission of the church.”

The key to accomplishing this purpose is built around a number of factors. The first is the establishment of a system of lay congresses in world divisions. The idea is that each local field will sponsor a lay congress every year, each union every three years, each division every five years.

Lay congresses during this quinquennium have had an enormous impact on the soul-winning initiatives of the people who have attended. The motivation and enthusiasm attendees have carried back to their home churches have resulted in significant church growth.

For example, the Northern Asia-Pacific Division held an extremely successful lay congress in Korea that involved a number of unions. The Southern Asia-Pacific Division held a major personal ministries and Sabbath school convention that was attended by more than 70,000 people. The Trans-European Division held a lay congress in the Netherlands in 1998 that was highly successful. It particu-

larly motivated a large number of young adults to rebuild the soul-winning systems in their local churches.

The Inter-American Division’s “Festivals of the Laity” have seen thousands upon thousands of people attending in different parts of the division. The same story could be told in South America, the divisions of the continent of Africa, and other parts of the world that have participated in this plan. The North American Division has plans in 2002 for a division-wide lay congress with an

number of other areas in which they will become skilled in order to reach out effectively and bring people into the church.

People trained by the International Institute of Christian Ministries are becoming a major force in the soul-winning activities of the Seventh-day Adventist Church globally.

Bible Correspondence Schools

During the current quinquennium the coordination of Bible correspondence schools around the world was also

assigned to the Sabbath School and Personal Ministries Department, working in coordination with the Voice of Prophecy, Adventist World Radio, It Is Written, ACGN, and other media programs. Bible correspondence schools are a major soul-winning entity within the church. In January 1998 a major meeting was held at the media center facilities of the North American Division in Simi Valley, California, in which all of the world church Bible correspondence school directors came together to lay plans for the future. Since that time a Web page has been devel-

oped. People can now take Bible correspondence courses on the Internet—a growing community of people that offers a new media for winning souls. A new basic course called Discovery, specially written to be easily translated and used on a massive basis in many languages throughout the world, has been developed.

Bible correspondence schools are ready to move into the twenty-first century with new enthusiasm for promulgating the Adventist message worldwide.

Your Sabbath School and Personal Ministries Department is on the move. You may have to run to keep up with it, but don’t lose out. The resources are available. It is up to you to use them for the advancement of the kingdom.



ONE GROUP OF WRITERS: (left to right, back row) Adrianna Femopase, Argentina; Audrey Andersson, Sweden; Evelyn Omana, Venezuela; Denise Ropka-Kasishche, Tennessee; Denise Prereya, California; Janet Rieger, Australia; (front row) Eileen Dahl-Vermeer, Canada; Patricia A. Habada, General Conference; Jackie Bishop, Rocky Mountain Conference, Colorado; Rebecca O’Ffill, Maryland; Kathleen Beagles, General Conference

expected attendance of 15,000 people.

International Institute of Christian Ministries

Key to the training offered by the personal ministries unit is the International Institute of Christian Ministries, which now has thousands of graduates all over the world. This is not the same as a short weekend training session. This is serious training in which those who enroll take 40 hours of core classes, studying the basics of how to win people, how to give Bible studies, how to interpret the Scriptures, and other fundamental skills needed by anyone who does outreach. A student can specialize in personal lay witnessing, lay evangelism, lay preaching, youth evangelism, or a

Home at Last

Devotional message presented Friday evening, July 7, 2000

And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:7-11).

It is the dawn of a new age for the followers of Christ, the transition into a new dispensation. Just completed, in the heroic life and ministry of Jesus of Nazareth, is the age of the Messiah. The Son of God has come and lived and died in exact accordance with Bible prophecy, doing only that which was appointed to Him by the Father.

The Star out of Jacob has fed His flock like a Shepherd, carrying the young lambs in His bosom. He has spent His life binding up the brokenhearted, proclaiming liberty to the captives, and opening the prisons of the bound. He has loosed the bands of wickedness and undone the heavy burdens of the oppressed. Faithful to His calling all the way to Calvary, He was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed. The first Advent has been a smashing success (Num. 24:17; Isa. 40:11; 61:1; 53:5)!

Jesus has accomplished His mission to save the world, and now, with His companions looking on, He returns to



John S. Nixon
Senior Pastor,
Oakwood College
Seventh-day
Adventist Church

the Father who sent Him. He has already spoken His last words with their hearts pounding so loud you can hear them, and now as He raises His hands in final blessing, Jesus slowly mounts the air. They did not see Him rise from the tomb, but the disciples beheld Him now, and an awesome silence prevails as they stretch their necks and stand on their toes, straining to embrace Him to the very last.

The One who changed their lives forever is taken from them in the providence of God. But in His departure a dual promise is given upon which their hopes can stand. It is not a promise for the 11 only, but for all believers in every generation. It is a dual promise: It is the promise of the Holy Spirit and the promise of the second coming of Christ. Jesus is not gone forever; His Spirit abides with us here and now. Jesus is not gone forever; He will come again in power and great glory! Jesus is coming again!

How thrilling it must have been to be a Christian in the first century, to live in the age of the apostles. What an honor to know the original 12, to hear their sermons, read their letters, witness their miracles, and to have beating primarily in your breast the fervent hope of the soon return of the Lord. All Christians were Adventists in the original church. The hope of the Second Coming was the fire that ignited every soul!

There was no dispute, in the beginning, over whether the coming would be literal or figurative. There was no dispensationalist controversy, and no debate over how the world would end, whether by some cosmic catastrophe or some nuclear accident. Still alive in the original church were those who had heard the teachings of Jesus from His own lips, who had eaten miracle bread from His own hands, who had had their eyes opened and their ears unstopped by the

word of His power, who had seen demons tremble and run for cover at the sound of His name!

Still testifying from town to town were those who heard firsthand heaven's promise: "He will come as you have seen Him go."

Notice the careful precision of language in the angel's announcement. It is specific in an intentional way. The two men dressed in white refer to the manner of Christ's return by noting the manner of His departure. Here is why it is important that the disciples saw Him go: the second Advent is based on the Ascension.

If His going was to heaven, then His coming back will be from heaven: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first" (1 Thess. 4:16).

If He was caught up in the clouds, then He must return in the clouds: "Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not" (Matt. 24:26).

If all the disciples saw Him leave, then every eye will see Him return: "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (verse 27).

It will be just as He said. It is the word of God that is at stake, and He cannot lie; Jesus is coming again!

Here is the teaching we have faithfully preached for more than 150 years, the Millerite disappointment notwithstanding. This aspect of the promise has been our occupation and the meaning of our name, Seventh-day Adventist—but it is not all the angels had to say. Together with the statement on the manner of Christ's coming is a statement of identity. The angels said "this same Jesus," and there is meaning in these words as well.

The Same Jesus

All of our focus has been on the event of the Parousia itself and on its ominous signs. But false Christs and false prophets are not the only dangers

of the last days. There is another danger more threatening to the people of God, something worse than beasts and dragons, though we have not watched for it as carefully. When we recall the First Advent we are reminded that the Jewish priests and leaders—the keepers of the oracles of God—did not welcome the newborn King. They knew the prophecy of the First Advent so well that they could explain it to Herod, but they did not go to visit the new King. Bethlehem was only six miles away!

Since it was known that the Messiah would come through Jewish bloodlines, why was there not a great celebration in Jerusalem? "The advent of Christ was the greatest event which had taken place since the creation of the world. The birth of Christ, which gave joy to the angels of Heaven, was not welcome to the kingly powers of the world. Suspicion and envy were aroused in king Herod, and his wicked heart was planning his dark purposes for the future. The Jews manifested a stupid indifference to the story of the wise men" (Ellen G. White, in *Review and Herald*, Dec. 24, 1872). This was the reception Jesus got the first time around, and it was not just from priests and leaders.

We sing about the shepherds in the

field who heard the angel's song, but do we realize that most of Israel did not acknowledge Christ's coming at all? "He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (John 1:11). The first coming of Jesus was a public relations disaster, a huge nonevent. His childhood and youth were passed in obscurity. The citizens of Nazareth had Him for 30 years and did not know their visitation. When He returned home to preach after His baptism, the people He grew up with refused to hear His message and tried to throw Him from a cliff! "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not" (John 1:10).

Except to receive His gifts and blessings, most people had little to do with Jesus. And when they really understood what His kingdom was about, they stopped following Him altogether (see John 6:66). A low-class, uneducated Nazarene of suspicious parentage who socialized with prostitutes and tax collectors was not their idea of a Messiah.

And the message to us is this: the Jesus who is coming back is the same Jesus who was here before. He is today, 2000 years later, just as unconventional, just as common as He always was—He is not impressed with us. He is not coming to fulfill our dream, unless our dream is His dream.



JOEL D. SPRINGER

EVANGELISM BY IMPACT 2000: José Rojas appealed to the young people at the evangelistic series to commit to deepening their prayer life. And they did.

Are we ready to meet this Jesus? It is an urgent question for the last generation of believers—we know that Jesus is coming, but do we know the Jesus who comes? He has not become Westernized since the Adventist Church was raised up in the West. He has not become middle class because we have embraced middle-class values. He has not changed His mind about how salvation happens to harmonize with our denominationalism. He is the same Jesus He always was: the Jesus who taught that the kingdom of God belongs to children and that the

only true greatness is the greatness of humility; the Jesus who crossed social barriers of every description to reach all people for the kingdom of God; the Jesus who defied corrupt church authority and called scribes and Pharisees hypocrites to their faces; the Jesus who would not break the yoke of Roman oppression, but taught His followers instead to love the oppressor and pray for their redemption; the Jesus who was unorthodox, unpredictable, uncontrollable, and unsafe.

Jesus is coming whether we know Him or not, but if we do not know Him, He is not coming for us.

And we must clarify what we mean by “know,” because the Bible rejects the concept of salvation by special knowledge. This was the claim of Gnosticism. There is no esoteric, hidden knowledge by which salvation may be privately gained. Doctrinal superiority is not the key to heaven’s gate. The unpublished writings of Ellen White are not the secret passageway to the kingdom of God. They are all on CD-ROM now anyway.

On the other hand, salvation by

grace does involve knowledge, but what must be known, first and foremost, is not a set of facts—not even Bible facts. The knowledge that saves is personal knowledge, and the Person is Jesus. I do not agree that the empha-

strong to withstand anything. This Rock is Jesus—not facts *about* Jesus, not blessings *from* Jesus, not even just the teachings *of* Jesus, but Jesus Christ Himself.

It is not getting people to doctrine, but getting people to Jesus, that is the priority of our mission, and once they get to Him they will be shocked at what they find. Jesus is both more gracious and more terrifying than people think. He will lift them into heavenly places like no one else, and He will hurt their feelings like no one else!

In the question of Luke 18:8, “When the Son of man cometh, will he find faith on the earth?” Jesus is not asking about faith in the doctrine or faith in the denomination. Jesus is looking for faith in Himself. If we believe only

what He says, we do not truly believe. We must believe in Him. Only then is Christ formed in us, and we come to have His view in everything. There are two elements to readiness—right relationship and the knowledge of where we are; that is, knowing Jesus and knowing the times. So while we are watching the signs and the beast, we’d better not forget to watch the cross. Being ready for Jesus to come means being ready for Jesus.

There is a double blessing in the coming of Christ—it is not only in two stages; it is in two Persons. The Jesus we await is the Jesus we already possess. So the promise of the Parousia is the hope that fuels our joy, while the “when” of the Parousia is a matter of indifference, since we are ready at all times. Jesus Christ Himself is our readiness.



ALDEN J. HO

JOYFUL SOUNDS: The music of the 57th session was out of this world, whether by voice . . .



ALDEN J. HO

. . . or by instrument.

sis on Jesus in the Adventist Church today constitutes a swing of the pendulum too far in the other direction. Jesus is not some extreme on the fringes of faith; He is the very center of all our belief and practice. We can never emphasize too much the need for maintaining an intimate relationship with Jesus, He is everything to us.

I read of a boy living by the sea who loved nothing more than building castles in the sand. Every day after school he would build them of different shapes and sizes, and every day a group of bullies from school would destroy them. Then one day, on a tip from his grandpa, the boy put chunks of concrete and cinder block in the base of the castles. The next time the bullies came to destroy, they stubbed their toes and feet.

Even castles made of sand become impregnable when they are built upon a rock. Believers are vulnerable too—to the attacks of the enemy, to the weaknesses of the flesh. But when their lives are built on the Rock, they are

Seventh Business Meeting

57th General Conference Session, July 3, 2000, 3:00 p.m.

Session Actions

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT #4

Voted, To approve the following partial report of the Nominating Committee:

General Conference

Vice Presidents,

Assigned to Divisions,

Donald C Schneider, North
American Division

Artur Stele, Euro-Asia Division

Undersecretary, Athal H Tolhurst

Associate Secretaries,

Agustin Galicia

Theodore T Jones

Vernon B Parmenter

Donald R Sahly

Undertreasurer, Robert E Lemon

Associate Treasurers,

Gary B DeBoer

Dennis C Keith, Sr

Donald E Robinson

Steven G Rose

MUSIC—CHURCH MANUAL DELETION

Voted, To delete a section from the *Church Manual*, Chapter 7, The Services and Meetings of the Church, pages 84 and 85, Music, which reads as follows:

Music

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

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

choir join in music that is only a form? . . .

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

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

Selecting Choir Leaders—Great care should be used in selecting the choir leaders or those who have charge of the music in the services of the church. Only those who are known to be thoroughly consecrated should be chosen for this part of the church work. Untold harm may be done by selecting unconsecrated leaders. Those lacking in judgment as to the selection of proper and appropriate music for divine worship should not be chosen. Secular music or that of a doubtful or questionable nature should never be introduced into our services.

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

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

PLACE OF MUSIC IN WORSHIP— CHURCH MANUAL ADDITION

Voted, To add a new section, Place of Music in Worship, to the *Church Manual*, Chapter 7, The Services and Meetings of the Church, on page 65 after Unauthorized Speakers in Our Churches, to read as follows:

Place of Music in Worship

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

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

THE COMMUNION SERVICE—CHURCH MANUAL AMENDMENT

Voted, To amend the Church Manual, Chapter 7, The Services and Meetings of the Church, pages 69-74, The Communion Service, to read as follows:

The Communion Service

In the Seventh-day Adventist Church the communion service customarily is celebrated once per quarter. The service includes the ordinance of foot-washing and the Lord's Supper. It should be a most sacred and joyous occasion to the congregation, as well as to the minister or elder. Conducting the communion service is undoubtedly one of the most sacred duties that a minister or elder is called upon to perform. Jesus, the great Redeemer of this world, is holy. The angels declare: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." Therefore, since Jesus is holy, the symbols that represent His body and His blood are also holy. Since the Lord Himself selected the deeply meaningful symbols of the unleavened bread and unfermented fruit of the vine and used the simplest of means for washing the disciples' feet, there should be great reluctance to introduce alternative symbols and means (except under truly

emergency conditions) lest the original significance of the service be lost. Likewise in the order of service and the traditional roles played by the ministers, elders, deacons, and deaconesses in the communion service, there should be caution lest substitution and innovation contribute to a tendency to make common that which is sacred. Individualism and independence of action and practice could become an expression of unconcern for church unity and fellowship on this most blessed and sacred occasion. Desire for change could neutralize the element of remembrance in this service instituted by our Lord Himself as He entered upon His passion.

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

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

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

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

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

Unleavened Bread and Unfermented

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

Neither the wine nor the bread contained elements of fermentation, as on the evening of the first day of the Hebrew Passover all leaven, or fermentation, had been removed from their dwellings (Ex. 12:15, 19; 13:7). Therefore, only unfermented grape juice and unleavened bread are appropriate for use in the communion service; so great care must be exercised in providing these elements. In those more isolated areas of the world where grape or raisin juice or concentrate is not available, the conference/mission/field office will provide advice or assistance.

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

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

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

Announcing the Communion Service—The communion service may appropriately be included as part of any Christian worship service. However, to give proper emphasis and make communion available to the greatest possible number of members, usu-

ally it is part of the Sabbath worship service, preferably on the next to the last Sabbath of each quarter.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Each person should retain his/her portion of the bread until the officiating minister or elder has been served. When everyone

unnecessary until after the service.

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

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

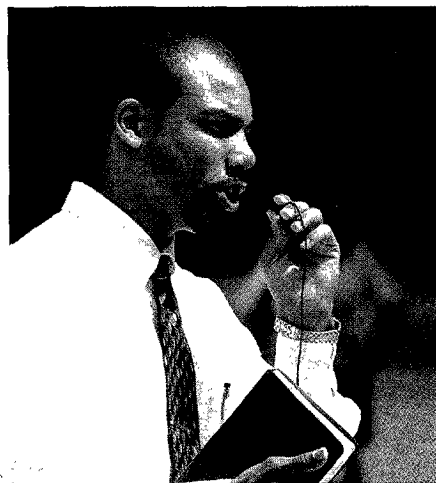
Who May Participate—The Seventh-day Adventist Church practices open communion. All who have committed their lives to the Saviour may participate. Children learn the significance of the service by observing others participate. After receiving formal instruction in baptismal classes and making their commitment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

“Christ’s example forbids exclusiveness at the Lord’s Supper. It is true that open sin excludes the guilty. This the Holy Spirit plainly teaches. 1 Cor. 5:11. But beyond this none are to pass judgment. God has not left it with men to say who shall present themselves on these occasions. For who can read the heart? Who can distinguish the tares from the wheat? ‘Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.’ For ‘whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.’ ‘He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body.’ 1 Cor. 11:28, 27, 29.

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

Every Member Should Attend—“None should exclude themselves from the Communion because some who are unworthy may be present. Every disciple is called upon to participate publicly, and thus bear witness that he accepts Christ as a personal Saviour. It is at these, His own appointments, that Christ meets His people, and

Session Snapshot



JOEL D. SPRINGER

YOUTH IMPACT: Reginald Tull preaches on the streets of Regent Park, the neighborhood he grew up in.

has been seated, the leader invites all to partake of the bread together. Silent prayers are offered as the bread is eaten.

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

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

energizes them by His presence. Hearts and hands that are unworthy may even administer the ordinance, yet Christ is there to minister to His children. All who come with their faith fixed upon Him will be greatly blessed. All who neglect these seasons of divine privilege will suffer loss. Of them it may appropriately be said, "Ye are not all clean."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 656.

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

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

THE SABBATH SCHOOL—CHURCH MANUAL DELETION

Voted, To delete a section from the *Church Manual*, Chapter 7, The Services and Meetings of the Church, page 75, The Sabbath School, which reads as follows:

The Sabbath School

The Sabbath School has rightly been called "the church at study." It is one of the most important services held in connection with our church work. Sabbath by Sabbath the greater part of our membership and thousands of interested friends meet in Sabbath School to study God's Word systematically. The Sabbath School should be attended by every member of the church, young and old, ministers, church officers, and laity. The usual length of time for holding this service is one hour and ten minutes. This, however, does not prevent any local field from adopting a longer or shorter period if it is so desired. In arranging the program, care should be taken to provide at least thirty minutes for the study of the lesson.

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

(This section is being amended and moved elsewhere: first paragraph to another section in Chapter 7; second paragraph to Chapter 8. See 188-99Gb and 194-99G)

THE SABBATH WORSHIP SERVICE—CHURCH MANUAL AMENDMENT

Voted, To amend the *Church Manual*, Chapter 7, The Services and Meetings of the Church, pages 65-68, The Sabbath

Worship Service, to read as follows:

Sabbath Services

The Sabbath School—The Sabbath School has rightly been called the church at study. It is one of the most important services held in connection with our church work. Sabbath by Sabbath the greater part of our membership and thousands of interested friends meet in Sabbath School to study God's Word systematically. All members of



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the church should be encouraged to attend Sabbath School and also to bring visitors. Each Sabbath School should endeavor to provide appropriate age-level programs for everyone. Materials and resources have been developed to assist in this important task and are available from the field/mission/conference/union/division. The usual length of time for holding this service is one hour and ten minutes. This, however, does not prevent any local field from adopting a longer or shorter period if it is so desired. In arranging the program, care should be taken to provide at least thirty minutes for the study of the lesson.

The Worship Service—The Sabbath worship service is the most important of all the meetings of the church. Here the members gather week by week to unite in worshipping God in a spirit of praise and thanksgiving, to hear the Word of God, to gather strength and grace to fight the battles of life, and to learn God's will for them in soul-winning service. Reverence, simplicity, and promptness should characterize the whole service.

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

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

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

The Form of Service—We do not prescribe a set form or order for public worship. A short order of service is usually better suited to the real spirit of worship. Long preliminaries should be avoided. The opening exercises should not, under any circumstances, consume time required for worship and for the preaching of the Word of God.

Following are two suggested forms of service:

Longer Order of Worship

- Organ Prelude
- Announcements
- Choir and Ministers Enter
- Doxology
- Invocation
- Scripture Reading

- Hymn of Praise
 - Prayer
 - Anthem or Special Music
 - Offering
 - Hymn of Consecration
 - Sermon
 - Hymn
 - Benediction
 - Congregation Standing or Seated for a Few Moments of Silent Prayer
 - Organ Postlude
- Shorter Order of Worship*

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

The Sabbath Worship Service—As the ministers come to the rostrum and kneel, the congregation should, with bowed heads, implore the presence and blessing of God. A worshipful hush prepares the way for the opening hymn and the exercises which follow.

There are two main divisions of the worship service:

1. The congregational response in praise and adoration, expressed in song, prayer, and gifts.

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

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

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

The elder, particularly if he is a licensed minister, collaborates with the regular pastor

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

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

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

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

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

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

Adjourned.

Matthew A Bediako, *Chairman*
Donald R Sahly, *Secretary*
Athal H Tolhurst, *Actions Editor*
Rowena J Moore, *Recording Secretary*

Continued on page 22

Family Ministries Department

Family. The comforting feel of your mother's body, the smell of her skin in the hot sun. The anticipation of fun with aunts and uncles and cousins at a family reunion. Posing with the balloon man for a snapshot in the park. A sauna with Dad, mist and vapor clearing passage to the heart as well as the lungs. A sense of belonging and connectedness as stories and traditions and skills of generations past are entrusted to you for safe-keeping. The release of sharing deeply with another, of love risked and returned.

Images like these form connecting bridges between our earliest memory of family and our hopes and dreams. For some these images create a warm, positive collage. For others the memories are tainted with hard experience, trouble, turmoil, and pain. For better or worse, our family images profoundly affect us for life.

Family is God's idea. Human beings are created for relationships, in the image of a relational God. And despite sin's havoc, God hasn't changed His mind about His original design. When Christ redeemed all human experience from the curse of sin, He redeemed marriage and family relationships. He established the church as family because He knows everyone needs love, support, and dialogue in community. Family is still God's chosen setting for people-making. It is the primary place where God intends for children to be nurtured into responsible adulthood.

Family was also in the mind of Christ when He bade His followers, "Go and make disciples." The family is

the primary setting in which Christian values are processed and internalized across generations. Even more foundationally, the nature of our family relationships profoundly affects our very capacities for love and intimacy, both with God and with other human beings. As Ellen White penned succinctly: "Their whole religious experience is affected by their bringing up in childhood" (*Child Guidance*, p. 473).



**Karen and
Ron Flowers**
Codirectors

The Department of Family Ministries celebrates the goodness of God's gift of family. This ministry speaks to families in the midst of joy and laughter and in somber times of worry, pain, and loss. Family Ministries serves Adventist Christian families in very practical ways toward understanding and living out the principles of God's Word in marriage, in parent-child relationships, in the extended family circle, and in the family of God. The ministries supported by Family Ministries in the local church and in the wider professional community provide a safe setting to learn, develop relational skills, work through difficult issues, and heal from painful experiences.

At the General Conference a number of significant advances have been made in the past quinquennium toward developing family ministries leaders professionally and enabling better ministry to families through the Adventist Church.

Resource Development

In response to the mandate of more than 700 delegates who attended the

abuse and family violence breakout discussion at the General Conference session in Utrecht, the department released *Peace and Healing: Making Homes Abuse Free*, a kit including a video, programming resources for the local church, and a *Quick Reference Guide*, which provides pastors, teachers, and others who may be called upon to relate to individuals confronting abuse and family violence the answers to the most basic questions about what to say, what to do, and how to best support victims and relate to abusers. Currently available in English, French, and Spanish and in multiformat—PAL, NTSC, and SECAM—the kit resource has been placed in every union office worldwide. Positive responses have come from the church and the community. The police department for the city of Corona, California, for example, has purchased copies for every police officer in their jurisdiction.

Family Ministries Planbook. The *Family Ministries Planbook* has grown even more popular as a resource to support the celebration of Christian Home and Marriage Week and Family Togetherness Week in the church's annual calendar. Five new titles appeared during the quinquennium—*Family Seasons*, *Families Filled With Joy*, *Peace and Healing*, *Facing Family Crises*, and *New Beginnings*—to join a growing library of family sermons; children's stories; seminar resources for strengthening marriage, enabling parents, and building relationships in the church family; as well as annotated book/video lists and additional family ministries leadership materials.

Denominational position statements. This quinquennium saw the emergence of several major statements on family issues that departmental staff either

prepared or helped to prepare: An Affirmation of Marriage (approved, General Conference Administrative Committee 1996), Birth Control (approved, Christian View of Human Life Committee and Annual Council, 1999), Meeting the Challenges of Sexually Transmitted Diseases (approved, CVHLC/AC, 1999), Child Sexual Abuse (approved, General Conference Spring Meeting, 1997), Family Violence (approved, AC, 1996), Human Sexuality (approved, CVHLC, 2000).

GCFM Web site. GCFM has opened its Web site at familyministries.gc.adventist.org and placed core resources for ministry to families online. The Web site will also give family ministries leaders and administrators worldwide access to departmental news, research, and subject files on family issues.

Curricular Approach to Family Ministries

The GCFM World Advisory, made up of directors from the world divisions, voted in 1996 to adopt a curricular approach to leadership development and family life education in the church. An 11-part Family Ministries Curriculum was developed and leadership development was structured to systematically cover the curriculum in three divisions during the last quinquennium. Both Andrews University and Loma Linda University are currently providing graduate certificates in family life education based on this curriculum. A professional organization, the Association of Adventist Family Life Professionals, has been created, and a certification process for Adventist Family Life Professionals is being put in place in the North American Division, which may provide an option for other divisions to follow.

World Commissions and Task Forces

Abuse and Family Violence Task

Force. Prior to the General Conference session in Utrecht, GCFM had convened an interdepartmental, interdivision task force to address the issues of abuse and family violence. The task force provided the consultant base for the *Peace and Healing* resource and will continue to give guidance to the preparation of ministry resources to break silence and help church leaders take their important place in the network of professionals needed to effectively help families protect the vulnerable, put a stop to violence, and connect with the



FAMILY TIES: A small group in Madagascar discusses implementation strategies at a family ministry leadership conference.

resources available to them.

World Commission on Human Sexuality. In cooperation with General Conference Health Ministries, GCFM convened a commission on human sexuality with world representation. A position statement, An Affirmation of God's Gift of Sexuality, and a detailed curriculum framework, God's Good Gift of Sexuality: A Seventh-day Adventist Curriculum Framework for Sexuality Education, will provide a basis for the development and evaluation of curriculum resources in this content area.

Premarital Guidance Task Force. GCFM also convened an interdivision, interdepartmental task force to review current research and evaluate premarital guidance resources now available. The most recent literature confirms the approach the Seventh-day Adventist Church has taken over the

past 20 years, which involves creating opportunities for couple dialogue on a wide spectrum of marriage issues and relational skill building. In the future the department plans to assist divisions and unions in taking the important next step of developing premarital resources that are contextualized to the cultural setting for pastors and others preparing couples for marriage.

Interfaith and Professional Connections

GCFM maintains professional and interfaith connections through membership and involvement with the United Nations Committee on the Family and the community of nongovernmental organizations (NGO), the Binational Advisory for the Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence, the Association for Couples in Marriage Enrichment, the National Council on Family Relations, and the American Association of Marriage and Family

Therapists.

A Worldwide Ministry for Families

During this quinquennium the departmental structure has been consolidated in every world division, with an ever-increasing number of local churches putting the ministry into place, following the guidelines published in the *Church Manual* in 1995. Departmental staff have made visits to each division providing mentoring, support, and professional in-service presentations to family ministries leaders as well as enrichment programs to strengthen marriage and parenting. Among many highlights were the first bidivision family ministries leadership conference which brought some 500 delegates together from all over Asia in Beijing, China, and a series of marriage enrichment retreats for pastoral and administrative couples in five unions in South America.

Continued from page 19

Eighth Business Meeting

57th General Conference
Session, July 4, 2000,
9:30 a.m.

RONALD E. APPENZELLER: [Opening prayer.]

ROBERT J. KLOOSTERHUIS: I'd like to call the delegates to order and to declare our session open. The first item we have is another partial report from the Nominating Committee. Dr. Andreassen will introduce the item.

NIELS-ERIK ANDREASEN: The report this morning reflects the work the committee did yesterday. This afternoon we will tidy up some loose ends and then turn our attention in earnest to the various departments and services and associations of the General Conference. But for this morning our report again has three parts. First dealing with the presidential area, then with the field secretaries, and third with the divisions. And here to introduce the first part is the Nominating Committee secretary, Dr. Baker.

DELBERT BAKER: Mr. Chairman, the first name we'd like to present to you is for the position of general vice president of the General Conference. I move the name of Eugene Hsu. [Motion was seconded.]

JAN PAULSEN: Thank you. Eugene Hsu has dedicated his life and service primarily to his own ethnic people, the Chinese people. He is presently serving as the president of the Chinese Union Mission, headquartered in Hong Kong. Before that, he served as president of what was known as the East Asia Association, which in reality was a euphemism for our China Union. This is a union with 1.3 billion people, and also a union in which we have a growing church, in spite of difficulties. About a year ago the work for our Chinese people was reorganized in a different structure when the work in mainland China together with that of Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan were brought together into one structure. At that time Dr. Hsu was invited to serve as president of this new union. He has given outstanding leadership. I have known Dr. Hsu and worked with him quite intimately for the past five years because while I was a general vice president, giving attention to our work in China was one of my responsibilities. I want to mention also that for some time we have felt that it was right and proper for the church to bring into the presidential staff someone with personal and professional knowledge

and involvement in the life of our church in the Asia-Pacific region. Dr. Hsu is one who will be able to do that, and he will enrich the leadership of the church to that extent. So, Brother Chairman, I am delighted that we are able to present here the name of Dr. Eugene Hsu. [Motion was voted.]

NIELS-ERIK ANDREASEN: Part two of our Nominating Committee report has to do with the general field secretaries. There are four. One is responsible for the Adventist World Radio, one for ADRA, one for the Biblical Research Institute, and one for Global Mission. The term *field secretary* doesn't really describe the work these people are doing, but it does describe the very close relationship between that work and the General Conference. Since field secretaries are of great importance to the work of the General Conference, their appointment should be considered together as one segment and should be referred to the Annual Council. [Motion was made, seconded, and voted.]

DELBERT BAKER: Mr. Chairman, that completes the seven general vice presidents of the General Conference. We wish now to report on the names for the secretaries and treasurers of 10 divisions. For the position of secretary of the Eastern Africa Division I move the name of Blasious Ruguri. [Motion was seconded and voted.] For the position of treasurer of the Eastern Africa Division I move the name of Jose R. Lizardo. [Motion was seconded and voted.] For the position of secretary of the Inter-American Division I move the name of Juan Perla. [The motion was seconded and voted.] For the position of treasurer of the Inter-American Division I move the name of Pedro Leon Arguelles. [Motion was seconded and voted.] For the position of secretary of the North American Division I move the name of Harold W. Baptiste, who is also an associate secretary of the General Conference. [Motion was seconded and voted.] For the position of treasurer of the North American Division I move the name of Juan R. Prestol, who is also an associate treasurer of the General Conference. [Motion was seconded and voted.] For the position of secretary of the South American Division I move the name of Raul Gomez. [Motion was seconded and voted.] For the position of treasurer for the South American Division I move the name of Marino F. de Oliveira. [Motion was seconded and voted.] For the position of secretary of the Southern Asia Division I move the name of K. J. Moses. [Motion was seconded and voted.] For the position of treasurer of the Southern Asia Division I move the name of P. Daniel Kunjachan. [Motion was seconded and voted.] For the position of secretary of the South Pacific Division I move the name of Barry D. Oliver. [Motion was seconded and voted.] For the position of treasurer of the South Pacific Division I move the name of Rodney G. Brady.

[Motion was seconded and voted.] For the position of secretary of the Southern Asia-Pacific Division I move the name of G. T. Ng. [Motion was seconded and voted.] For the position of treasurer of the Southern Asia-Pacific Division I move the name of Duane C. Rollins. [Motion was seconded and voted.] For the position of secretary of the Trans-European Division I move the name of Reinder Bruinsma. [Motion was seconded and voted.] For the position of treasurer of the Trans-European Division I move the name of William M. Olson. [Motion was seconded and voted.] For the position of secretary of the Africa-Indian Ocean Division I move the name of Paul Ratsara. [Motion was seconded and voted.] For the position of treasurer of the Africa-Indian Ocean Division I move the name of Ceazar Hechanova. [Motion was seconded.]

NILTON AMORIM: Mr. Chairman, I have worked in that division, and I was just wondering why the incumbent treasurer is not being recommended.

ROBERT J. KLOOSTERHUIS: I am wondering if someone from the Nominating Committee could respond to this question.

NIELS-ERIK ANDREASEN: Let me explain how this works. A division's caucus brings to the Nominating Committee suggestions to us as to who should be president, secretary, and treasurer. These suggestions are reviewed there, and when there are no questions in the Nominating Committee, these suggestions are then voted and brought here for your approval. There was no question raised about the incumbent or about the candidate being presented this morning, so I do not have any answer to this question. If you really wish to pursue it, your question should be taken to the caucus of the division in question. These are the only people who will be able to respond to your question. Thank you. [Motion was voted.]

PLINY FONDEVILLA: I feel uneasy holding up my voting card and not being acquainted with the persons being nominated. Is it possible that those who are being nominated could be seen on the screen so that we will be acquainted with those who will be our leaders from different divisions?

ROBERT J. KLOOSTERHUIS: I am sure the Nominating Committee will take that suggestion to heart and will have all of the pictures ready for us the next time.

DELBERT BAKER: For the position of secretary of the Euro-Africa Division I move the name of Carlos Puyol. [Motion was seconded and voted.] And now for the last name this morning. For the position of treasurer of the Euro-Africa Division I move the name of Peter R. Kunze. [Motion was seconded and voted.]

ROBERT J. KLOOSTERHUIS: Now I would like to request Elder Paulsen to bring to us another statement concerning the request made yesterday on the report of the Commission on Divorce and Remarriage.

JAN PAULSEN: Thank you, Brother Chairman. Just a word about this report on the divorce and remarriage issue as it surfaced in regard to the *Church Manual*. At the session five years ago an action was taken by this body, by the session, requesting that a commission be appointed by the General Conference. This commission was to have representation from around the world to reconsider the church's position on divorce and remarriage insofar as that position is expressed in the *Church Manual*, and to make appropriate recommendations to the *Church Manual* Committee. That is the action as it reads. I appreciate that in looking back at the record of comments that were made prior to the actual formulation of the motion, there may have been the intent by the initial mover that the report from the commission was to be brought back to this body. That is not written into the action. Rather, the action simply says to request the General Conference to appoint such a commission, to specify what the mandate of that commission is, to allow the findings of that commission to be filtered into the revision of the chapter that addresses that particular issue, and to have the findings come back to this body as a report in connection with the *Church Manual*. That has in fact happened, and is happening in the report that is now coming back to you here. At the Annual Council a few months ago this report of changes to the *Church Manual* that you are considering was also presented to Annual Council. We also shared with the members in attendance at Annual Council a copy of the report that came from the commission. I want to underline that that is not a secret document. It is already in the public domain. If it is the wish of this body to have copies of that report from the commission distributed to everyone here, you are welcome to have them. We are prepared to make those available to you. But please let us not now go back and do the work for which we five years ago appointed a commission. If we will see the work of the commission as something that we must now begin to open and examine and address as though the issue is coming raw before us at this time, I feel, brothers and sisters, that we are taking on a task that is really quite impossible to handle in this body. We will share with you all the information that we have. There are no secrets in respect to this. It's all in the public domain. At Annual Council your union presidents and division officers and lay members of the General Conference Committee had opportunity to participate fully in the review of these matters, and felt satisfied that the way by which we are processing it in bringing it back to you as part of the *Church Manual* document does in fact satisfy and meet the action taken five years ago.

ROBERT J. KLOOSTERHUIS: Thank you. The chair is ready to receive any suggestion as to what this body would like to do. Would you like to have a distribution of

this paper? Please give us some guidance.

GERALD WINSLOW: As the one who made the motion in Utrecht five years ago to set up that commission, I was pleased that we had the commission appointed and that it did its work as Elder Paulsen said, working many days to produce the commission report. Since that report stands behind and serves to some extent as the basis for the proposed revisions in the *Church Manual*, I think it would be useful for those delegates who want the report to have it available to them. And I think an easy way to do that would be to make it available up front for those who want it. That way, we wouldn't have the extra expense of copying it for all members who are delegates here, some of whom might not want it. So if it is permissi-

Session Snapshot



JOEL D. SPRINGER

ALL DRESSED UP: She sat quietly in the delegate section of the South Pacific Union in the costume of her country.

ble, Brother Chairman, I would move that we make the report available to those delegates who request it at this time. [Motion was seconded and voted.]

ROBERT J. KLOOSTERHUIS: I would like to ask Elder Cooper if he would be kind enough to come forward with Mario Veloso, and then I believe you would like to introduce Elder Bediako, who will make a statement.

LOWELL C. COOPER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think it would be appropriate for us to launch this discussion and dialogue today with a statement from Elder Bediako concerning the work of the commission. And after his statement we can then proceed to the *Church Manual* items.

MATTHEW BEDIAKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is very interesting that today is July 4 and it was just five years ago to the day that this action was taken. The action was to request the General

Conference Executive Committee to establish a study commission with representation from all the world field to reconsider the matter of divorce and remarriage, and to make appropriate recommendations for changes in the *Church Manual*. In harmony with this action taken at the 1995 General Conference session, the General Conference Administrative Committee, on April 1, 1997, took action to request the General Conference Executive Committee to establish a study commission with representation from all of the world fields to reconsider the matter of divorce and remarriage and make appropriate recommendations for changes to the *Church Manual*.

I don't need to go into the membership of this commission, but there was an additional member appointed who has experienced divorce, making a total of 19 members. [Matthew Bediako then outlined the terms of reference for the commission and the way it conducted its meetings.]

LOWELL C. COOPER: I think it appropriate, Mr. Chairman, to observe that we do not have a perfect document, but it does have strong support from the General Conference Committee.

We do not feel that the document necessarily answers every question on every position in an ideal manner. However long it takes to discuss this item, we will still have an imperfect document, but I trust that it will represent a significant step forward so that the church will be able to speak with a collective voice about this very important subject.

I would like to suggest that we read the entire chapter. The reading of the chapter will allow us to become familiar with its scope, with its tone, and with its flow. After the chapter is read to us, Mr. Chairman, I wonder if it would be profitable if we set aside a period of time for questions and answers and comments, rather than for the processing of motions. Then after a period of time, when we've had the input of individuals in this body, we could be prepared to place the document before us formally for discussion and approval. So, Mr. Chairman, I turn to you for a decision as to how to proceed.

ROBERT KLOOSTERHUIS: I would like to call on our secretary to read the document to us. [Harold W. Baptiste read the document "Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage."]

ELLIOTT OSBORNE: I don't think that it serves us well to include the writings of Ellen G. White under the title "Biblical Teachings on Marriage." I am not saying remove them; I am only saying that they should be somewhere else.

TUNDE OJEWOLE: Good morning, dear people of the Word. The Bible says emphatically that we dare not add to or subtract from the Word of God. Abandonment as a basis of divorce seems to be adding to the Word of God, and that would be dangerous.

NILTON AMORIM: I just want to con-

cur that abandonment as a reason for remarriage can be questioned, and I wish that the committee would look into this again.

REINHARD RUPP: On nearly every line of this paper we are referring to teachings in Scripture. But to me it seems that there are two points that are not only not in harmony with Scripture but contradict it. I am referring to the phrase "evidence of repentance." According to my understanding, repentance has always been the evidence of acceptance by God, which we exclude by removing individuals from membership despite such evidence. And I cannot find a theological or biblical basis for rebaptism at all. According to my knowledge, in some parts of our church a person may be rebaptized once or twice or more.

SAMUEL KORANTENG-PIPIM: I am simply requesting how we are to proceed.

ROBERT J. KLOOSTERHUIS: Elder Cooper, would you like to address this?

LOWELL C. COOPER: Mr. Chairman, I would presume that when we come to the formal process by way of motion of this document, we would look at it section by section.

ROBERT J. KLOOSTERHUIS: You may make your comments.

SAMUEL KORANTENG-PIPIM: Mr. Chairman, the action before us, if accepted, raises some major theological questions regarding the nature of marriage. The document introduces a view of marriage that does not recognize that God instituted role distinctions.

ROBERT J. KLOOSTERHUIS: Thank you. At least we will know that there is something coming up in the future. You have given good warning to all the delegates.

PAUL BIRCH PETERSEN: All through the document we refer to the marriage vow, but there is nowhere in the Bible where the marriage vow is mentioned. However, I think most of the marriage vows that we follow say "I promise to live with my spouse for better or for worse."

ROGER ROBERTSEN: There are two things that I find are not in harmony with our principles. The document says, "In case the violation has brought public reproach on the cause of God, the church, in order to maintain its high standards and good name, may remove the individual from church membership even though there is evidence of repentance." This is something that I find completely out of harmony with underlying biblical principles. I think that it not only is lacking a biblical foundation but is in contradiction to clear biblical teachings, and I suggest that we remove it.

DAN JACKSON: I want to start by commending the *Church Manual* Committee for the work that they have done. I also want to commend our General Conference president for his willingness and his openness to share the other document with us, which I think in fact has taken a lot of heat out of the argument. I have a generalized concern over the document: it does not

seem to have a strong enough theological framework. I wish the committee would review that and try to build a stronger theological basis.

I have one final concern. While I do not believe in congregationalism, I do not believe this document gives adequate recognition to the local congregation, who under the guidance of the Spirit are best equipped to deal with certain circumstances related to both removal from and readmittance to church membership.

ARTHUR RODD: I am a pastor and an administrator, and I find my greatest problem with page 237, lines 9 to 15, which deal with reasons for remarriage. I feel that these lines do not show love or understanding to a person who may have been in a godless marriage and then remarries. As I understand the document, that person should be removed from church membership. We may have some grounds here for church censorship, but not for removal from membership. I cannot see a case of love here; it's treating everybody the same.

GERARD W. FRENK: When I look at the document and compare it with the paper that has been provided this morning, there is a distinction in language. In the manual we are legislating in what I perceive to be a pastoral area. The manual does not seem to address the pastor in his church. There may be circumstances in which he has to do something that may not be allowed by the *Church Manual*. Do you want him to be secretive? Also, the question of baptism has been addressed already, but I would like to add some comments to that. Baptism is rooted in the uniqueness of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and Hebrews says that He died once and was resurrected once. I think if we make baptism into a repeated drama, we are hurting the text in Hebrews.

BRUNO RASO: I have two observations. One has to do with a spouse who has violated the marriage vow and who is subject to the discipline of the church. It is presented that if the person is truly repentant they could stay under censorship. The second has to do with the readmittance of those who have been separated from church membership. Is this understood to be a rebaptism after resolving the situation, or is this an open door to baptism independent of having resolved the situation?

PAUL RATSARA: This document is no other than a way of introducing another ground for divorce and remarriage, for it states that "Scripture recognizes adultery and/or fornication (Matt. 5:32) as well as abandonment by an unbelieving partner (1 Cor. 7:10-15) as grounds for divorce." So this document, if adopted, will lower the standards of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

ROBERT J. KLOOSTERHUIS: The chair would like to address all of the delegates at this moment. We have spent an

hour, and I detect a certain duplication beginning to appear. We may have covered all of the pertinent points; there probably are some more, but what is the desire here of the delegation? Do you want to go for another hour, or less, for general discussion, or do you want to begin looking at this document in a formal manner?

JOHN FOWLER: It is a very difficult document to deal with, and with that recognition I would like to speak on two points. Page 237, lines 9 and 10: "A separation or divorce which results from factors such as physical violence or in which 'unfaithfulness to the marriage vow' is not involved."

I was married 38 years ago. I took a vow, and since then I have conducted as a minister some 112 marriages, and I have administered the vows. The vow always includes to love, to cherish, to honor, and this document implies that marriage is a covenant relationship based on a vow such as this. And when that vow is broken by physical abuse, by the battery of a partner to a spouse in a marriage relationship, I believe that that vow is broken and that the covenant relationship is broken. I would like to humbly submit that physical abuse and battery of spouses is a breaking of the vow that has been taken when that partner gets married.

The document says that "Scripture recognizes adultery and/or fornication (Matt. 5:32) as well as abandonment by the unbelieving partner (1 Cor. 7:10-15) as grounds for divorce." Now, we know that this passage in Corinthians is one of the most difficult passages to understand, to exegete, to really know the mind of the apostle Paul. But to use this passage to say that the abandonment by an unbelieving partner is grounds for divorce is carrying the passage too far and reading too much into it.

ROBERT J. KLOOSTERHUIS: Thank you. I think we will then cease our general discussion at this point.

DENNIS CARLSON: [Benediction.]

ROBERT J. KLOOSTERHUIS, *Chair*
HAROLD W. BAPTISTE, *Secretary*
FRED G. THOMAS and BILL BOTHE,
Proceedings Editors

Eighth Business Meeting Actions

*57th General Conference
Session, July 4, 2000,
9:30 a.m.*

**GENERAL FIELD SECRETARIES—
DEFER ELECTION TO 2000 ANNUAL
COUNCIL**

Voted. To defer to the 2000 Annual Council of the General Conference executive committee the election of the four General Field Secretaries.

PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED IN DISCUSSION OF CHURCH MANUAL CHAPTER CONCERNING DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

Following introductory comments by Jan Paulsen and Lowell C. Cooper, the chairman of the *Church Manual* Committee suggested the following procedure, which was then used to introduce and discuss the proposed version to the *Church Manual* chapter concerning divorce and remarriage:

1. The proposed revision to the *Church Manual* chapter concerning divorce and remarriage was read in its entirety by the secretary of the meeting.

2. Opportunity was given for delegates to discuss the chapter while refraining from making any motions for changes.

3. Following numerous comments on the *Church Manual* chapter by delegates, the meeting was adjourned with the understanding that the afternoon meeting would continue the discussion and would be opened up for motions.

Robert J. Kloosterhuis, *Chairman*

Harold W. Baptiste, *Secretary*

Athal H. Tohlhurst, *Actions Editor*

Carol E. Rasmussen, *Recording Secretary*

Ninth Business Meeting

57th General Conference
Session, July 4, 2000,
3:00 p.m.

B. B. BEACH: One of the happy traditions of General Conference sessions in recent decades has been to have honored guests and observers from other churches in our midst. Some of them are here, some have been here, and some have already had to leave. Others will be coming in the next few days, and we will be happy to welcome them into our midst. And we have a few that are with us here today. Right now we would like to welcome, first of all, Pastor Jean-Arnold de Clermont, the president of the French Protestant Federation.

And we also have in our midst Monsignor John A. Radano, an old friend with whom we've been in contact for many years, who attended the session in Utrecht

five years ago, representing the Roman Catholic Church.

And we also are very pleased to have in our midst Dr. Donna Geernaert, who represents the Faith and Order Plenary Commission. She is one of the top theologians in the world.

And then on the platform today we have a representative of the Lutheran Church. You will recall that for a number of years we've been having conversations with the Lutheran World Federation. They have now been gathered together in a book. Unfortunately, it is not available here at the General Conference session, but it will be available to the world field. It's a very well prepared book, and we're happy that we have it in our midst.

Today we have, representing the Lutheran World Federation and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, Telmor Sartison, in our midst, and he will not only give us greetings on behalf of himself and his church, but also on behalf of the Lutheran World Federation and the general secretary.

TELMOR SARTISON: Sisters and brothers in the foolishness of the gospel of Jesus Christ, I stand before you today to bring three greetings.

First, my own personal greeting as a brother in Christ. Second, as presiding bishop, I greet you on behalf of sisters and brothers in Christ in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada. Third, as a member of the counsel of the Lutheran World Federation, I greet you on behalf of General Secretary Ishmael Noco and your sisters and brothers in Christ in that international body, the Lutheran World Federation.

I have in my hands a greeting card, and these are the words that are written on it. It's a card I intended to give to a very dear friend. It reads "A willingness to take risk and trust in God and in each other continues to bring meaning and joy to the journey of our friendship in Christ."

I give you the words today. Why? Because I believe that the Holy Spirit of God is struggling with the whole church, trying to bring us not into some gigantic union, but into understanding and in mission together in the world. You are on your journey. We are on ours. Our willingness to take risks and trust in God and in each other will continue to bring meaning and joy to the journey of friendship and faith in Christ Jesus. May we be one in spirit, even as we are already one in Christ. God bless your celebration and your deliberations, and thank you for the fine hospitality.

B. B. BEACH: Let me just say something that we should have mentioned earlier. I'd like to make it clear that we Seventh-day Adventists also consider ourselves, in many ways, to be children of Luther. Luther is held in very high esteem in our ranks.

ROBERT J. KLOOSTERHUIS: Good afternoon, fellow delegates; we want to call our meeting to order and continue with our deliberations of the item that was before us all morning.

Before we begin, the chair would like to make a suggestion. I'd like to suggest that we limit the speeches to two minutes. I think we need to have some indication from you. Are you willing to make such a motion?

PATRICIA HABADA: I wish to move that speeches from the floor be limited to two minutes so that more delegates may participate in this discussion. [Motion was seconded and voted.]

LOWELL C. COOPER: We serve at the pleasure of the body here. I think that when we adjourned this morning there were several people who still wished to speak. When you are ready for the body to begin formal deliberation by way of a motion and vote on the content of this material, we are prepared to propose a motion to adopt the recommended wording.

MARIO VELOSO: I move the adoption of the document "Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage." [The motion was seconded.]

ROBERT J. KLOOSTERHUIS: Now we have the matter before us. I appreciate that. We'll begin with Elder Cooper.

LOWELL C. COOPER: My suggestion is that we go through the material section by section, and when we are satisfied with a particular section, call question on that section and move to the next. When we get to the end of the entire document, we will deal with it as a whole.

WILLIAM RICHARDSON: The *Church Manual* is, as it was brought this morning, legislation, and it's very difficult and complicated to marry legislation to redemption. In fact, at times as we are working with hurting people and are striving to be redemptive, we simply have had to put the *Church Manual* to one side. The *Church Manual* is an attempt to bring order to what might otherwise be chaos. It is a good attempt. However, people whose lives have taken some very unfortunate turns, who have made some tragic decisions, who have been affected sometimes by other people's decisions, must be dealt with on a personal basis. And every complication cannot have a *Church Manual* rule to fit it. This document may force us back to the present *Church Manual* reading, which we will simply on occasion have to set aside when we are dealing with some tragic circumstances in the lives of people in order to save them and work lovingly with them.

MAX JOSE PIERRE: I was a pastor in New York for 14 years, and I can understand the feelings of many of the speakers. The reason there is confusion on this subject is that for every law there is an exception. The Seventh-day Adventist Church is growing rapidly, and we cannot wait five more years to clarify this issue.

ROGER DUNDER: I would move that on page 231, line 18, we delete the word "still." [The motion was seconded and voted.]

MAVIS MUYUNDA: I want to comment on page 231, line 17. This states that marriage is a divine institution. Also on page 232, line 25, it talks about limiting the number of spouses to one. We must affirm both concepts, for we are dealing with moral issues.

ROGER DUNDER: On page 232 I move that we delete one sentence. Lines 21 and 22 read "As a part of the curse of sin, rulership was given to the husband (Gen. 3:16; see also *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 58, 59)." I would move that this sentence be deleted. [Motion was seconded.]

RONALD M. FLOWERS: I'm troubled by our procedure now, for I fear that as we nickel-and-dime this, we begin to chip away at the document as a whole. On this particular issue it seems to me that it is clear from both Genesis 3:16 and the reference in *Patriarchs and Prophets* that rulership is a part of the curse. Ellen White calls it that, and the Scripture itself uses the word "meshall," which has the meaning of rulership.

JAY GALLIMORE: I support the amendment. I think that Paul very clearly ties this to pre-Creation and not after Creation. I think the amendment is more theologically correct.

KENNETH H. WOOD: You know, a very fat person was once asked, "How did you get so fat?" The answer was "Ounce by ounce." Now, we are dealing with a theological question here, and a church changes its theology "ounce by ounce," not by some big action. The simple truth is that this sentence is a theological interpretation, and I don't believe that the best scholarship will support the fact that this is the result of the curse of sin. This goes back to the Creation, and I think that the document itself will be less controversial and more accurate by leaving it out. I support the amendment. [Amendment was voted.]

SAMUEL KORANTENG-PIPIM: I would like to see inserted a paragraph that makes clear what the church's position is regarding roles in marriage. One of the causes of divorce in the home has to do with roles. Fortunately, the Bible has addressed this issue. And so I am proposing that we include a subsection, a paragraph entitled "Roles Within Marriage," which would read something like this: "Harmony in marriage depends largely upon the way the husband and wife fulfill their God-appointed roles." We must quote Ephesians 5:21-33, because that statement makes it clear that God has instituted roles within marriage.

ROBERT J. KLOOSTERHUIS: Brother Pipim, I would suggest that you prepare that paragraph and submit it directly to Elder Cooper and Elder Veloso, and let it go through the committee and then come back here on the floor.

ALVIN KIBBLE: I am rising to point of

privilege. I'd like for the presenters to identify the sections that we are referencing prior to the call of the question, so that we can be clear what the parameters are for each section of the material that we are voting.

ROBERT J. KLOOSTERHUIS: We will do the best we can.

ANDREJ GODINA: I am concerned about the voting count. How can you define how many votes are taken? The last vote that we took seemed very close.

ROBERT J. KLOOSTERHUIS: That was a judgment call by the chair with the help of the two gentlemen around him. You have a perfect right to require another type of vote.

CARLOS STEGER: I would like to move that on page 232, line 4, we delete the biblical reference to Ephesians 5:22-28. It was pointed out that this text does not seem to support the statement that no one is superior. So I would like to move to delete the biblical reference in this place. [Motion was seconded.]

ROSCOE HOWARD III: I think that the text would be OK if verse 21, which gives the inference of unity and the idea of mutual submission, would be included.

EMMANUEL ABBEY: With regard to Ephesians 5:24, 25, I want to say that Christ's love for the church is to be the model for the love a husband has for his wife.

ALVIN KIBBLE: I am in favor of leaving the scriptural passage that has been referenced (Ephesians 5:22-28) in as part of the document. One of the problems that we are having is that all throughout our society today individuals believe that headship means being in control. Philippians 2 further emphasizes the role of servanthood, which means that if the husband is head, he is thereby the first servant in the family. And unless we understand servanthood in the role of leadership, we are going to misapply this text, which, in my opinion, ensures the quality of the home and of the members of the home as represented by the husband and wife. So I would ask that we would vote against the amendment to remove the scriptural reference and perhaps, if necessary, add an amendment that would help us better understand the role of headship.

STEPHEN V. WALLACE: It seems to me that the problem is an altogether too human tendency to equate submission with inferiority. Submission does not equal inferiority. Jesus Christ manifested full and consistent and complete submission to His Father, and yet He was fully equal with the Father. I think the difficulty with this text being placed here is that it follows immediately the statement "No one is superior," and in this context it doesn't really fit. So I speak in favor of the amendment.

BENJAMIN C. MAXSON: Part of our problem is that typically we begin with verse 22, rather than with verse 21, where the idea of submission begins with "submitting yourselves one to another." This concept is

then applied to the home. This is the context of the passage. So I would be against the amendment, because it removes the biblical support for what I believe is a very true biblical concept that we are equal under God while not exploring the issue of roles.

ROBERT J. KLOOSTERHUIS: Would you like to move an amendment to extend the passage to include verse 21?

BENJAMIN C. MAXSON: Can I make an amendment when there is already an amendment on the floor?

ROBERT J. KLOOSTERHUIS: Yes, an amendment to an amendment. We can go those two steps. Your amendment to include verse 21 may change the vote on the original amendment.

BENJAMIN C. MAXSON: That being the case, I would move that the reference be Ephesians 5:21-28. [An amendment to the amendment was seconded and voted.]

ROBERT J. KLOOSTERHUIS: We can now vote on our original amendment, which now would delete Ephesians 5:21-28. [The motion to delete was lost.] That settles it. Thank you. I am glad we got out of that one. Now, that means that we have the reference as Ephesians 5:21-28.

At this time we are going ahead with the windows on mission program.

CALVIN B. ROCK: Good afternoon, fellow delegates and friends. This is the third in the windows on mission series that we have prepared for you. As you know, these are discussions through which we are endeavoring to stimulate thought about unity, cooperation, and mutual understanding and fellowship in our church, and doing so at a practical level—not just theorizing, but talking about the real issues that we all have to face in our relationships. Today we will hear a brief statement of the biblical view of laity and ministry, followed by certain statements from the group to my right. This group, by the way, happens to be comprised of General Conference Committee members—both pastors and laypersons. Everybody you see seated there is a member of the General Conference Committee; some are pastors and some are lay pastors. They are our representatives on the General Conference from all over the world. And they will have some statements to make, following which we will ask for your participation as well.

What you will now hear will be not only stimulating but very educational and enjoyable. I am happy to bring to you at this time the ministerial secretary of the Northern Asia-Pacific Division, Elder Carlos Martin, who will provide for us the biblical overview that is the basis of the discussion that will follow.

CARLOS MARTIN: A newly baptized spiritual member said, "Pastor, I am so excited. I want to be a preacher like you. I want to learn from you. I want to listen to all of your sermons. I will sit on the first row of the church. Oh, that I can absorb each word of your sermon! I will follow you wher-

ever you go."

To his surprise and disappointment, his pastor said, "No. I don't want you to do that. I have something much better for you. Instead of attending my church services and sitting on the first row, I want you to go to your friends, to your family, and share with them the story of your conversion. Study the Bible with them. Establish a house church and help them to be ready for an evangelistic series in about six months." Instead of resenting his pastor, this new convert cheerfully followed his instructions, even did more than Jesus asked him to do. Instead of limiting his witnessing to just his friends in Gadara, he went all over telling what Jesus had done for him.

Today I am introducing the topic "Training for Maturity and Discipleship," but sharing with you a case study from the New Testament. I chose a story found in Mark 5. You will see how a man changed his attitude from open hostility to full cooperation with Jesus and His ministry. You know the story. This man was possessed by demons. His life had been ruined by sin. He was dangerous; he was homeless. The villagers treated him like an animal. When Jesus and His disciples saw this man approaching, the disciples apparently ran away. At least they were not found in the rest of this story. This man ran to Jesus, apparently with an intention of attacking Him. But Jesus greeted this man with compassion. Jesus saw in this man not what he was, but what he could become through the grace of God. Rather than what the villagers were used to seeing, Jesus saw a powerful witness for His cause, someone who could use his mouth, not to shout blasphemies, but to share with others what Jesus had done for him. Jesus did not run from the dangerous situation. He stood still. He showed interest in this man. He asked his name. He was wounded, naked, dirty, hungry. Jesus touched him. Jesus cast out a legion of demons from this man. Jesus could feel the physical and emotional wounds of this homeless and troubled man. But Jesus was not done. Because God wants more than healthy sinners, more than homeless people with new clothes. Jesus' attention to this man's physical needs were higher purposes, because the goal of Christian ministry is making disciples.

According to Mark 5:15, when the multitude came to see with their own eyes what they had heard from Christ's servants, they noticed with amazement that this man was now sitting clothed and in his right mind. I have to admit that sometimes our evangelistic ministries provide for spiritual needs, but not for physical and social needs. Sometimes it is just the opposite. We feed the homeless or heal the sick, but then dismiss them without giving them opportunity to receive the gospel. Jesus did more than just feed this man, clothe him, and show

compassionate care. I like to think that while this man was eating and sleeping, Jesus began telling him that he must go and tell about the plan of salvation, about forgiveness, about repentance, obedience, sanctification, and eternal life.

The story continues, and in verse 17 the townspeople asked Jesus to depart from the region. Jesus never stays where He is not welcome. We then read in Mark 5:18: "And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him."

This man had several reasons for such a request. First, this was a matter of safety. The swine were floating in the sea. But where were the demons? Can demons drown? He realized that if indeed the demons were to attempt to return, he would be safe as long as Jesus were by his side. Second, nobody had shown love to him before. Jesus had embraced him, healed him, clothed him. "It is so good to be with You, Jesus. Let me follow You. I will follow You for the rest of my life." Third, he wanted to learn more about the gospel. "Jesus, I want to be a preacher. I want to go to a seminary. I want to learn from You. After all, I've spent only a few hours with You. I want to be Your disciple and follow You." Then we read verse 19: "Howbeit, Jesus suffered him not." This sounds inconceivable. How can a pastor say something like that to a new convert? But Jesus had something better for him. Jesus assigned him a specific mission. It seems that Jesus was aware of the fact that the best a pastor can do for the members of his church is not sermonizing, but planning work for them. These are not my words.

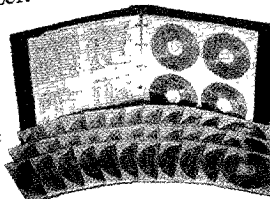
Jesus was teaching him that it was not necessary to go to a seminary in order to become a minister. He gave this new convert a commission that extends to every believer in every corner of the world. We read, "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee." Notice that Jesus offered him a challenging project. He set specific objectives. He asked the new convert to do something within his abilities. Jesus let the man implement the witnessing approach in his own way. He made room for creativity.

Through years of pastoral ministry I learned that a member will respond to serving ministry if there is a warm relationship between the pastor and him. By showing compassion to the troubled man, Jesus earned his confidence, his respect, admiration, and loyalty. Even though he may not have understood the reasons for Jesus' request, he was willing to obey Jesus. This is the first impulse of a converted man. Ellen White says that every true disciple is born into the kingdom of God as a missionary. Jesus told him where to go, what to say, and how to do it. Ellen White says that many would be willing to work if they were taught how to begin. They need to be instructed and encouraged. Every church should be a training school for Christian workers. Pastors forget that they are for the equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry. Some pastors pay only lip service to the biblical doctrine that all believers are ministers. We are told that ministers should teach members how to minister. Ministry is not the pastor's exclusive responsibility. Ministry is the privilege and responsibility of the saints. Ellen

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White says that pastors should not do the work that belongs to the church.

Jesus appointed what some would call a layman in charge of the ministry of spreading the good news in Gadara. This is something that many pastors would never do. This has proved to be a fatal mistake. According to Ellen White, everyone who is added to the ranks by conversion is to be assigned his post of duty. This is exactly what Jesus did. I can see this man knocking on the doors of his friends, proclaiming the good news: "A man named Jesus transformed me. Isn't it wonderful? Jesus is so compassionate. I am His disciple now. He changed me. He fed me. He clothed me. You should be ready to meet Jesus. Jesus is coming very soon, and I want you to be ready to meet Him." According to Luke 8 Jesus returned a short time later to that area. But by that time there were thousands waiting for Him. You can be a powerful witness for Jesus only when you have had a transforming encounter with Him. Jesus is still recruiting witnesses. Jesus is still sending missionaries. Jesus is still commissioning all believers as ministers. Jesus is coming soon! I want to participate with Him in the finishing of His work. If you are also willing to respond to His invitation, say amen.

CALVIN B. ROCK: Thank you, Pastor Martin. You have given us an excellent reminder of Christ's methodology and of Christ's power, and of course we are energized whenever we talk about the biblical model, because everything we do must be based upon Bible principles. You've said some very practical and very stimulating things, and we appreciate that. But now what we'd like to do, brothers and sisters, is turn to these members of the General Conference Committee, who represent us around the world, pastors and laypersons, and see how all of this plays out on the local scene. They're going to mention, each of them, one of the barriers to implementing the beautiful things that Pastor Martin has been talking about and that we read about in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy.

ULRICH UNRUH: I am from British Columbia, Canada. One of the barriers to cooperation that I have seen as a pastor is the tendency to stigmatize or label or identify other members, including the pastor, as being liberal or conservative. This limits the ability of the pastor to minister to the members.

PREMA JOY WILSON: I pastor one of the churches in India. One of the difficulties I sense is the conflict that arises between the young and the old. In my church I have

about 42 Adventist retirees and many laypeople. The old people support the old traditions, and the young people want to change things.

BARBARA BRYANT: I'm a layperson from Indianapolis, Indiana, and many of you probably remember that the General Conference session in 1990 was held in our beautiful city. Recently our church has become very ethnically diverse, and I see this as a big challenge to provide opportunities for all the members to become active participants in helping to fulfill the church's mission.

MARION SHIELDS: I'm a layperson from the South Pacific Division. One of the things that I see happening in some of our churches that concerns me is alienation between the laity and the ministry. And I think it comes about because we're all so busy these days. Sometimes this attitude develops among the laity. "You're the people who are paid to do it, so you go do it. We're the laypeople; we'll supply the money." The gospel will not be hastened and the Lord won't come while we have that mentality.

JAMES W. ZACKRISON: I'm a pastor at the General Conference. My concern as a church growth consultant visiting churches around the world is that all too often in the church there is a group of very faithful

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brethren who have worked there for many years, but are very resistant to any kind of change. They are sometimes called the old guard, sometimes traditionalists, sometimes doorkeepers, sometimes gatekeepers. But very often it is difficult to get anything going in a church because of this resistance to change. As the church gets broader and bigger and we have more things to do, very often our methodology has to change. Our theology does not change, but our methodology needs to change, and this is a real concern that I have.

VALESIUS THOMAS: I am a layperson from the Africa-Indian Ocean Division. My concern is that there is too much politics of the secular type within our churches. There are too many cliques, too many groups. And when the pastor comes into the church, either deliberately or inadvertently he gravitates toward a certain group, and then the rest of the church feels isolated. I believe that if we all can come together, particularly in developing countries, and cooperate and listen to each other, the work will go forward.

JIM BRAUER: I think the problem comes out of the failure to be abandoned in self and Christ. I heard Dwight Nelson in a recent sermon share a great quote from Nellie Maxwell. The church is full of Christian professors, ministers, Sabbath school teachers and workers, evangelists and missionaries, in whom the gifts of the Spirit are very manifest and who bring blessing to the multitudes but who, when seen close up, are found to be full of self. They have forsaken all for Christ and imagined they would be ready like the disciples of old to die for their Master, but deep down they have hidden private lives. There lurks the dark, sinister power of self. Such persons may wonder all the while why they do not have victory over their wounded pride, their touchiness, their greediness, their lovelessness, their failure to express promises of God. The secret is not far away. They secretly and habitually worship at the shrine of self. Inwardly they worship another god and stretch out their hands to serve a petty-headed, pampered, life of self. All of us, whether pastor or laity, need to hold each other accountable to a higher level of self-abandonment in Christ.

ARDIS STENBAKKEN: I think one of the problems in our church is that we don't trust each other. I am a pastor's wife, a pastor and teacher's daughter, and have served as a church elder, and from these perspectives I have discovered that we don't trust those in other levels of administration. The pastors don't trust the parishioners. The parishioners don't trust the conference. I think of stories that I grew up with, of how my father was cheated by the conference treasurer and how my parents were treated as missionaries, and these stories stick and we become distrustful. Sometimes it is earned perceptions, sometimes it is per-

ceived perceptions, but these things stick, and it influences how we give our money and how we choose to be involved.

I think of how some people, even pastors, have left the church after there have been scandals or problems. A lack of trust is manifested in many ways. It has disastrous consequences, and I think we need to face this honestly, to have a transparency and a standard and an expectation of trust.

SABRINA KALLIOKOSKI: I am a pastor from the Trans-European Division. I have in my mind a problem that could provide a superiority complex, and that is a problem in some churches. This is a tendency always to praise oneself and to underestimate others. This can be a problem for either a pastor or layperson. This attitude creates competition and tension, and uses up all the energies that should be used in working together and utilizing the expertise and resources from both sides. I call for mutual respect and an attitude of a servant from both pastors and laypersons.

CALVIN B. ROCK: It seems as though we have a general sense that there are barriers to unity and that they exist everywhere in the world.

JACOB STELIAN: I am a pastor from Romania; I have six churches. Concerning the matter of relations between pastor and lay members, I have two secrets. The first is very, very important: the visiting, and the time of the visiting. My second secret is "Embrace the lambs, and the sheep will follow you."

GRACIELA DI PRINZIO: I am a lay member on the General Conference Executive Committee. First, both pastors and laity need to have a closer connection with the Lord through personal devotions. We are involved in many things, and there is a lot of materialism. Second, the pastor ought to have the opportunity of bringing people together. Third, we need to get pastors and laity together and decide how we can work as a team. There is a great difference between working as a team and just working as a small group.

KHOEN-GHO TAN: I am from the Northern Asia-Pacific Division. Laypeople usually live in the cold real world while many of the pastors live in a more sheltered environment. One example: A church member is struggling to find a job, he has no other friends, his children are hungry, and he talks it over with his pastor because the only jobs available are jobs that mean working on Saturday. The pastor says that Sabbath should not be a problem, that it is actually easier to keep the commandments than not keep them. Another example: An elder in the church is complaining to the pastor that his business is in trouble and that he has been working very hard. The pastor says, "Brother, you can afford to earn a little bit less and work a little bit less." You cannot tell a captain, when he is frantically trying to save his ship from sinking, to take it

easy and simply come to port a little bit later. You see, there is a different understanding between the pastor and the lay members, and we hope this can be bridged.

SELMA CHAIJ MASTRAPA: I am a lay member from the General Conference. I see as a barrier a cognitive rigidity that sometimes gets in the way. By "cognitive rigidity" I mean that when we are fixed on our own way of thinking, we are unable to listen to somebody else's viewpoint. Instead of taking turns to talk, we need to listen to each other. We don't have to agree, but we need to understand one another. So I believe that by being a little more flexible in trying to listen and understand, we can overcome the natural propensity just to think that we are right and everybody else is wrong. Occasionally we might learn something. So I urge that we really try to keep an open mind and listen.

DEBRA BRILL: The challenge in our church today is to accommodate a new generation to fully embrace their call to the priesthood of believers. That means they are not waiting for permission to move forward in mission and ministry. They are young and educated. They have lived most of their lives in a media-saturated environment. They understand how to use new technology. They are not interested in maintaining church programs, completing reports, or following the conference mandate. They are creative thinkers. They understand resources and know how to use them. Our church is second to none in quality resources for leadership, but the problem is access. We don't know how to tell them how to get what they need. So consider the fact that members baptized in the most recent five years are much more likely to use computers. This is time for the church to consider free distribution of leadership resources on the Internet. With the escalation of Web sites for every ministry, is it time to create a resource mall for these eager, talented leaders who will benefit and even demand a greater variety of options? We need pastors who understand their role and who know how to access these tools to benefit this new generation of leaders.

CALVIN B. ROCK: Thank you very much. We have asked that this group identify problems primarily, but wouldn't it be wonderful if we could produce a number of very short but meaningful solutions to these kinds of problems? We are going to invite you, in the time that is left, to comment on this. But first of all I want to turn to your General Conference representatives, these pastors and these members who are seated before us, many of whom have already spoken to you. I want to find out from them: What do you find works? What is happening in your church, in your congregation, that you as a pastor or member can recommend to us as a way of getting around this old versus young, liberal versus conservative, gate-

keeper mentality, selfishness, lack of trust, attitudes of superiority, lack of pastoral communication and visitation? How has it worked where you live?

MOSES MWENYA: When I see that I am facing some opposition from the members, I really go to those that are foremost in opposing me and the ideas that I come with, because when I come into a new district, I know people are kind of suspicious. They sit back. They want to watch me and see how I work. But I need to make them understand that I am there for them, and I am ready to listen to them and work with them. I visit with them in their homes, I pray with them, I want to have suggestions from them as to how we can handle the church and be able to prove that we are there for the healing of all the hurts of the people that come into the church.

DOUGLAS PAULSEN: I have a very positive story I would like to tell you about our pastor and our laypeople. Our pastor came to us with a vision, not an agenda. And he didn't force the vision on us. He basically got to know us personally, and as he got to know us personally, he discovered our spiritual gifts.

GLORIA BROWN: I want to suggest to you that pastors go back to the old-time

plan of house-to-house visitation. By so doing, they grow to know their members more. The members will know that the pastor cares for them.

JOHN TAN: I work as a youth minister in Singapore, and some time ago we started a prayer triad, consisting of the head pastor, the head elder, and me (as the youth minister). Every week we meet for an hour or so and pray for one another. At first it was very superficial. But since then it has become very personal, and right now we are meeting for two to two and a half hours. And while I am here the others are praying for me right now.

CALVIN B. ROCK: Mutual prayer support. Now I see two people on the very back row that I happen to know were once pastor and member. Am I correct? Stand up, gentlemen, both of you, because if I remember correctly, the gentleman to my left was a member and you were the pastor. Let me talk to the member first. He was your pastor, right? [Calvin B. Rock then engaged in an interesting conversation with Ted Ramirez (layman) and Willmore D. Eva (pastor) in which it became clear that they developed an excellent working relationship that provided for accountability, constructive criticism, and fellowship in prayer.]

TED RAMIREZ: Jesus imposes upon all

of us a common accountability for one another. I am as responsible for my pastor's well-being and salvation as he is responsible for mine. And together we share this personal accountability as we share our faith with others in the community.

MART DE GROOT: I'm a pastor in Northern Ireland. I and my wife have two churches. We don't go home after Sabbath services until we have prayed for the difficult people in that church, and it has done a lot of good, for both the members in the church and us. But there is one thing that I would like to suggest, even though it is not something that I have done yet myself.

Most pastors and many members have an Internet connection. I use it a lot. But I began to realize that if I would ask some of my younger members to do some of the Internet work for me, it would bring them, in a creative way, into our ministry and certainly would have a good effect on the congregation. I think this is something we should all try.

CALVIN B. ROCK: Thank you very much. Brothers and sisters, it's 4:55 p.m., and I am tempted, even though we have a Nominating Committee report waiting to come in, simply to turn to you now and ask, Is there any pastor or member in the delega-

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tion who would like to share something special that has occurred in your church, something with which you have been able to bridge the barriers to get around this "us and them" concept? Do we have any other hints toward unity and togetherness from the floor before we have our final word and turn to the Nominating Committee? [Several responded with short statements.]

Would you join me in giving thanks to our General Conference Committee members? We hope that these suggestions will be meaningful to all of us. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your indulgence.

ROBERT J. KLOOSTERHUIS: Thank you, Dr. Rock. Now we're going to have our last item, which is a partial report from the Nominating Committee. Elder Patzer, president of the North Pacific Union and vice president of the Nominating Committee, will bring the report.

JERE D. PATZER: It is our privilege to be able to bring the name of an incumbent since 1992, I believe, who is a respected leader of the Northern Asia-Pacific Division. Dr. Ismael Castillo will bring the name.

ISMAEL CASTILLO: For president of the Northern Asia-Pacific Division I move the name of P. D. Chun. [The motion was

seconded and voted.]

ROBERT J. KLOOSTERHUIS: Thank you. In that case we will consider our session adjourned until tomorrow morning. Let us stand for prayer.

MULAMUTIL AHIMAZ MATTHEW: [Offered the closing prayer in an Indian language.]

ROBERT J. KLOOSTERHUIS, *Chair*
VERNON B. PARMENTER, *Secretary*
BILL BOTHE, LARRY R. COLBURN, and
FRED G. THOMAS, *Proceedings Editors*

Ninth Business Meeting Actions

57th General Conference
Session, July 4, 2000,
3:00 p.m.

LEGAL MEETING

The General Conference Corporation held its legal meeting at 3:00 p.m.

TIME LIMIT FOR SPEECHES

Voted, To limit each speaker to two minutes during discussion of this item to allow more delegates the opportunity to address the item.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT # 6

Voted, To approve the following partial report of the Nominating Committee:

Northern Asia-Pacific Division
President, Pyung Duk Chun
Adjourned.

Robert J Kloosterhuis and Calvin B Rock,
Chairmen
Vernon B Parmenter, *Secretary*
Athal H Tolhurst, *Actions Editor*
Rowena J Moore, *Recording Secretary*

Nominating Committee Report—11

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