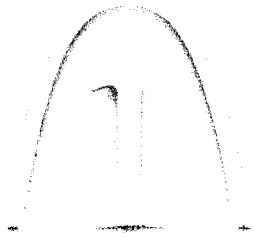


July 2005

ADVENTIST REVIEW



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58TH GC SESSION ST. LOUIS

Welcome to Delegates

I am delighted to welcome you to the fifty-eighth session of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

There are few moments in the life of our church that display more vividly the great diversity of our global family, with its wonderful blend of languages and cultures. And yet, at the same time, there are few occasions that affirm more clearly that we are one people—truly brothers and sisters in Christ.

We have so much for which we can thank our Lord. During the next 10 days we will hear reports of tremendous church growth; breakthroughs in the challenging 10/40 window; a laity energized and focused on outreach; the expanding reach of our evangelism; the growth of our wholistic ministry—through schools and hospitals, welfare programs, and the life-giving work of the Adventist Development and Relief Agency.

We praise God for what He has been able to do through us—and, at times, perhaps even in spite of us!

But lest we grow complacent, let us not forget the challenges we also face: too many brothers and sisters leaving the faith; young people who have not found a home in the



church; many new believers not receiving proper spiritual care; an exploding world population causing us to ask: “Lord, how can we do this? How can we finish the mission You have given us?”

Although we call our meetings a business session, let us remember that our primary business is spiritual. We will take time to worship God, to pray together, to seek divine direction not only for our church as a whole but for ourselves as individuals.

Please join me in praying that the Holy Spirit will move powerfully as we meet over the next few days and after we leave this place. We need God’s leading; we need to be “transformed in Christ.”

Our great hope is our Lord’s return. We long for that day when our mission here on earth is complete and we see our Savior. Until then, I pray that each one of us will “hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful” (Heb. 10:23, NIV).

Jan Paulsen

President, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

Welcome to Mid-America

The warmest welcome is extended to the world family of the Seventh-day Adventist Church on behalf of the 60,000 members in the Mid-America Union Conference. It is our sincere desire that your experience in Mid-America will be a blessing to you.

As is true of the Adventist family in your host union, among the 25 million people who live in the Mid-America Union Conference territory are found people who have emigrated from every inhabited continent on earth. Some have arrived in recent years, others are descendants of the original immigrants who



came to this continent during the past two centuries, so I believe you will feel at home here.

In recognition of our special privilege to welcome the world church, we have coined a special commemorative medallion. It is a gift to the delegates from around the world, and we hope it will serve as a happy reminder of the time that we spend together conducting the business of the remnant church and advancing the mission of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Dennis N. Carlson

President, Mid-America Union

The Adventist Review (ISSN 0161-1119), published since 1849, is the general paper of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It is published by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and is printed 40 times a year each Thursday except the first Thursday of each month plus 9 extra issues during the month of July 2005—total 54 issues, by the Review and Herald Publishing Association. Periodicals postage paid at Hagerstown, MD 21740. Copyright © 2005, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Postmaster: Send address changes to Adventist Review, 55 West Oak Ridge Drive, Hagerstown, MD 21740-7301. Texts credited to NIV are from the Holy Bible, New International Version. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Bible Publishers. Texts credited to NKJV are from the New King James Version. Copyright © 1979, 1980, 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Bible texts credited to RSV are from the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyright © 1946, 1952, 1971, by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Used by permission. Printed in the U.S.A. Vol. 182, No. 27

Welcome to St. Louis

It is my great pleasure to welcome the members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and guests attending the fifty-eighth quinquennial session held from June 29 through July 9, 2005. I am pleased that St. Louis was chosen as the site to hold your conference, and we are proud to be your hosts.

Our city, especially our religious community, is strengthened through experiencing spiritual conferences such as this, one that promotes hope, faith, and positive living. You can take great pride in your years of dedicated service, and I commend and thank each and every one of you for your many contributions.

While you are here, I encourage you to explore our great city. St. Louis has a rich history and has some of the quaint-



est neighborhoods of every ethnic culture, a wide array of shops, galleries, outstanding restaurants, and arts and entertainment. St. Louis is a city of unsurpassed beauty—a city of natural and man-made wonders, where you will find beautiful parks, including nationally renowned Forest Park, the St. Louis Zoo, the Gateway Arch, and many other attractions. No matter what—St. Louis has many exciting places for everyone to enjoy.

The City of St. Louis extends best wishes for a truly successful conference and an enjoyable, thoroughly exciting stay in St. Louis.

Francis G. Slay
Mayor, City of St. Louis

A N A L Y S I S

Given by Missions

BY WILLIAM G. JOHNSON

The Seventh-day Adventist Church today, perhaps more than at any time in its history, is driven by a sense of mission. We believe the Lord has given us a mandate, described in Revelation 14:6, 7—to take the everlasting gospel to every nation, tribe, and people group.

Adventists, unlike many other churches, include only those baptized in our membership lists, and we baptize only believers—we do not baptize infants. Even so, our rolls show nearly 15 million adherents, drawn from more than 200 countries—a veritable United Nations. The session in St. Louis will reflect this amazing diversity in the composition of the 2,000 or so delegates, who are principally selected on a representative basis. The 60,000-70,000 members who will pack the Dome each weekend will also showcase the international character of the church, though to a lesser degree.

We have reached a point in our history when the Pentecostal

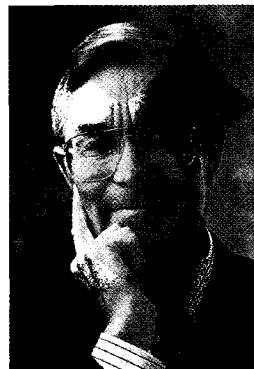


figure of 3,000 accessions in a day has become a reality. And not just now or then: on average every day of the year sees about 3,000 new people join the church. Each year more than 1 million new people swell our numbers; total membership almost doubles every decade.

I have served at the world church headquarters since 1980. During these 25 years—years of great interest and privilege—I have seen many changes in this movement I love. Leaders have come and gone; crises have erupted; the church has faced new and difficult challenges. But of this I am convinced: the Lord has been leading us onward and forward. Not because we deserve His blessing. Not because the work has been flawless—for it has not been—but because of His grace.

And over the course of these 25 years I have seen emphasis on mission rise to a new pitch, be given more and more attention until it has taken precedence over all other items that concern leadership.

At the Annual Councils of the church—the meetings of

the General Conference Executive Committee each October—I used to hear new committee members express disappointment that the agenda was filled with adjustments to policy and other seemingly trivial matters, with no consideration of the big issues facing the world church. No longer: each year's council now convenes on a Friday evening, with a shared Sabbath worship providing a spiritual foundation; then, on Sunday, the first items taken up always focus on our worldwide mission.

The agenda for the St. Louis session likewise shows the driving force of mission. Examples:

A new fundamental belief. The fifty-third GC session, held in Dallas, Texas, in 1980, spent the majority of its time and energy on the fundamental beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists. Out of this important deliberation emerged a new and expanded set of beliefs, numbering 27 in all.

The St. Louis session will consider adding a new fundamental belief on Growing in Christ. The proposed statement has been considered by the world church at various levels and been made available for input by circulation in the

Adventist Review and *Ministry* magazine, and on the Internet.

The impetus for this new statement arose out of mission. As Global Mission Pioneers endeavor to take the good news to unreached people groups, they encounter large numbers who live in daily apprehension of spiritual powers. Millions of others are caught up in religious systems built around transcendental meditation. Our current set of beliefs does not speak to these concerns.

Leadership. The exploding church demands leaders—many, at all levels. On five days of the session all business, including the work of the Nominating Committee, will stop for 90 minutes so that all delegates can focus on principles of leadership.

Beyond specific agenda items such as the above, the entire session in its range of speakers, music, reports, and dynamics will make tangible the miracle of the Adventist mission. From all the world, to all the world, for all the world—this a church driven by mission.

William G. Johnsson is editor of the Adventist Review.

Highlights From Past General Conference Sessions

- 1863** The General Conference (GC) organized in Battle Creek, Michigan, on May 20, with 20 delegates present. Minutes of the first session were published in the *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*. The *Adventist Review Bulletins* reporting the current GC session continue that tradition.
- 1870** Battle Creek. James Erzberger of Switzerland became the first delegate from outside the United States.
- 1876** The GC session was held in Lansing, Michigan, the first time it met outside Battle Creek.
- 1878** Battle Creek. J. N. Andrews attended the session and reported on his missionary activities in Europe, the first such report given by a credentialed Adventist missionary.
- 1882** Delegates gathered in Rome, New York, the first time they had met outside Michigan.
- 1887** Oakland, California. This year saw the first *GC Daily Bulletin* recording session proceedings.
- 1888** Minneapolis, Minnesota. O. A. Olsen became the first GC president not born in the United States.
- 1889** Battle Creek. Delegates numbered 109, the first time more than 100 were present.
- 1901** This was the last GC session to meet in Battle Creek, Michigan.
- 1909** Washington, D.C. The gathering was the first to have delegates from each of the world's major continents. Ellen White attended her last GC session.
- 1918** The GC session met in the San Francisco (California) Municipal Auditorium, the first time the session was not held in an Adventist facility.
- 1922** San Francisco. The meeting welcomed 581 delegates, the first time more than 500 had been present.
- 1926** A public address system was used for the first time at this session, held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.
- 1946** The GC session met in the newly completed Sligo church in Takoma Park, Maryland, the last session to convene in an Adventist church. A recording made of much of this session marked another first.
- 1954** San Francisco. A total of 1,109 delegates gathered, the first time more than 1,000 had been present.
- 1975** Vienna, Austria, hosted the session, the first time it had met outside the United States.
- 1985** New Orleans, Louisiana. The session took up the role of women in ministry. This topic would appear on the agenda of the following two sessions.
- 1990** Indianapolis, Indiana. Global Mission was launched.
- 1995** Utrecht, Netherlands. A motion to permit world divisions to decide the question of women's ordination within their territories was defeated.
- 2000** Toronto, Canada. This session saw extensive revisions of the *Church Manual*, with spirited discussions on the issues of marriage, divorce, and remarriage.

Looking at St. Louis

*A brief look at its place in American history
and that of the Adventist Church*

**BY RYAN TELLER,
EILEEN NELSON, and
DENNIS N. CARLSON**

Up until a few short months before the opening meeting of the 1946 General Conference session, the gathering was scheduled for St. Louis, Missouri. However, according to Lora E. Clement in the June 6 (1946) session report (number 1) in the *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, the session was moved at the last minute because of a lack of housing in the St. Louis area.

“Word had come that rooming facilities available in that great, overcrowded city were entirely unequal to the needs of a General Conference. The hotels regretted that they could not guarantee housing for the close to 900 delegates expected, let alone the thousands of visitors



who were sure to attend. A house-to-house canvass proved that few additional rooms in private homes were obtainable, and that tourist cabins for at least twenty miles beyond the city limits were occupied by permanent residents.”

After much prayer and discussion, church leaders moved the session to Takoma Park, Maryland, in order to take advantage of the many Adventist institutions in the area.

Even today, on the eve of the present session, St. Louis—the heart of Missouri’s largest metropolitan area—has been rapidly building hotels in order to house the more than 70,000 visitors expected at this session.

Now boasting a metro area of more than 3 million people, St. Louis is the namesake of Louis IX of France. This thirteenth-century monarch was widely celebrated for his kindness

to the poor in his country.

Although not established as a city until 1822, St. Louis traces its roots back to a trading post founded in 1763 by Pierre Laclede, for whom the famous downtown riverfront area Laclede's Landing is named.

From its vantage point on the easternmost edge of the Louisiana Territory, a vast tract of land covering the middle third of what is now the United States, the city watched the French control the area, then by the Spanish in 1768. The French regained control of the area in 1800, and promptly sold it to the United States in the Louisiana Purchase of 1803.

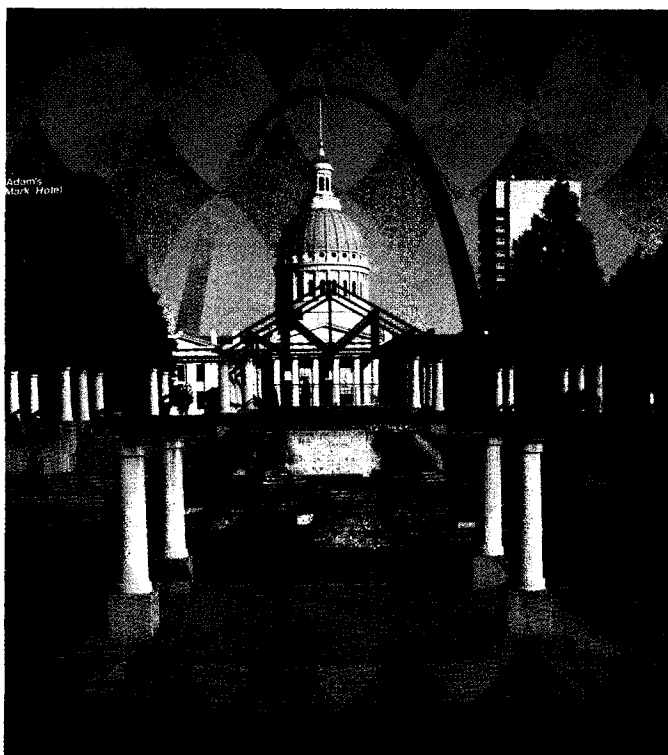
Lewis and Clark

The city also provided the logical starting point for the famed Lewis and Clark expedition. The year 2004 marked 200 years since this group of explorers set forth up the Missouri from St. Charles, now part of the St. Louis metro area.

Meriwether Lewis and William Clark were two young military officers commissioned by Thomas Jefferson, the third president of the United States, to follow the Missouri River to its source, and then the Columbia River to its confluence with the Pacific Ocean. The purpose was to explore the newly acquired Louisiana Territory and to open the way for commerce and settlement. President Jefferson also had the dream of seeing the United States stretch all the way to the Pacific Ocean. It would take nearly all of the nineteenth century to accomplish that dream.

Lewis and Clark led a team of about 35 people across the land, traveling more than 8,000 miles by water, horseback, and on foot to the Pacific Ocean and back to St. Louis over 28 months. Most of the journey was over land unknown to European people. Even the native tribes that inhabited the land did not travel far from their own

areas. But the story includes the help of several tribal representatives who are credited with providing essential assistance on the journey, especially Sacagawea—a young woman carrying a small child—who served as an interpreter for the English-speaking leaders of the expedition.



Kiener Plaza looking east

The Modern Era

St. Louis proved to be of strategic value because of its prime location at the fork of the two rivers slicing the center of the continent—the Mississippi and the Missouri. These two great waterways provided the primary pathways for shipping and travel for much of the United States. By the mid-1850s, St. Louis had established itself as a major American city, possessing the country's second-largest port.

Not a stranger to large crowds, St. Louis hosted the 1904 World's Fair, known as the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, which drew 20 million people. At the height of the fair on St. Louis Day, more than 400,000 people packed the fairgrounds. The fairgrounds also played host to the 1904

Olympic Games, the first to be held on American soil.

St. Louis also holds the record for the largest indoor gathering in the world. Recorded in the America's Center (site of the session), more than 100,000 people packed the downtown convention center for a mass given by the late Pope John Paul II during his 1999 visit to St. Louis.

Points of Interest

The **Jefferson National Expansion Memorial**, made famous by the 630-foot-tall Gateway Arch, stands on the banks of the Mississippi as a monument to President Jefferson's vision for the United States to reach across the continent. Besides overlooking the countryside from atop the arch, visitors can explore a museum and park grounds.

Next to the memorial, **Laclede's Landing** provides a home for many restaurants and shops along the riverfront.

The **Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery**, located in St. Louis County, was also one of the recruitment stations of the Buffalo Soldiers. After the Civil War,

Congress created several regiments of African-American cavalry and infantry that served on the plains and earned the nickname "Buffalo Soldiers" from the Native Americans. Cathy Williams was the only known female Buffalo soldier. She enlisted here on November 15, 1866.

The beautiful and immense **Forest Park** is one of the largest city parks in the United States. Forest Park contains a world-famous zoo, a highly ranked art museum, the Missouri Historical Society Museum (a well-attended Adventist evangelistic meeting was held there just a few years ago), the municipal Open-Air Theater, the Steinberg Skating Rink, the Jewel Box (a beautiful, glass-encased building of live flowers and plants), the sci-



The St. Louis waterfront as seen from the Mississippi after dark

ence museum, the planetarium, a large public golf course, plus countless other public accommodations.

The **Old Courthouse** building sits in downtown St. Louis between Chestnut and Market Streets. The famed Dred Scott slave-freedom trials were held there in the mid 1800s.

Busch Memorial Stadium in downtown St. Louis is the home of the 2004 National League baseball champions, the St. Louis Cardinals. A new stadium is now under construction and will be completed in 2006.

Washington University in St. Louis School of Medicine is located in West St. Louis. Founded in 1853, Washington University Medical Center is world acclaimed as a research center.

Adventism in St. Louis

The St. Louis Central church, which at one time was pastored by former North American Division president Al McClure, is considered to be the mother congregation of all the churches in the area. In 1886 a Mrs.

Rapp and her daughters accepted the Adventist message after being visited by two colporteurs. Before long others began worshipping in the Rapp home. The fledgling congregation of 12 then rented a store building, and Pastor Heycock became the first pastor. Now the congregation boasts more than 400 members and has spawned churches all over the city.

In 1889 Charles Kinney, the first ordained African-American Adventist minister, spent six months working in St. Louis. "No churches were organized, but no doubt many of the converts attended services in the White churches," recounts page 314 of the *SDA Encyclopedia*.

Not until 1904 did the first African-American church organize. Last year the Berean church celebrated its centennial anniversary with the help of former pastors, including another former North American Division president, Charles E. Bradford. Now with a membership close to 600, this congregation also planted churches throughout St. Louis, including the Northside church,

the largest Adventist congregation in the area, with more than 1,300 members.

More recent endeavors have resulted in the planting of four churches in the past seven years. Following a multisite series of evangelistic meetings, the 250 converts formed the New Life company near downtown St. Louis. Adventists also reached out to the non-English-speaking population by planting the St. Louis Spanish and St. Louis Korean companies.

Adventism Today

Today nearly 3,500 Seventh-day Adventists make up the congregations of 13 churches. In addition, two elementary schools, a full-time community service center, and numerous church-based food pantries and clothing services serve St. Louis' residents. Also, a weekly radio program called *Bible Answers Crusade*, operated by lay members from the various churches, has been instrumental in leading many people to Christ for more than 25 years.

Several churches in the area led into the session by hosting two large-scale evangelistic meetings, one by television evangelist Walter Pearson, another by William Pergerson at the St. Louis Art Museum. The goal is for these meetings to lead to another church plant like the New Life company in 1999.

St. Louis area Adventists have planned many events for the region during the session. Please keep alert for announcements during the session.



Ryan Teller is communication director of the Texas Conference; Eileen Nelson is the first elder of the Berean Adventist Church, St. Louis, Missouri; and Dennis N. Carlson is the president of the Mid-America Union, in Lincoln, Nebraska.

The Big Five

General Conference sessions that have changed the direction of the church

BY JULIUS NAM

The General Conference session. So far, there have been 62 of them, though five were “special sessions” that met separately from the regularly scheduled meetings. That’s why we’re calling this session the fifty-eighth and not the sixty-third.

When you have that many sessions, with 142 years separating the fifty-eighth from the first, some of them are bound to stand out as more historic, memorable, and significant than others.

Four immediately come to mind—the 1863, 1888, 1901, and 1980 sessions. Each of the four represented a significant landmark in the course of the denomination’s organizational structure (1863 and 1901) and theological development (1888 and 1980). Let’s take a look at what made these sessions stand out from the rest. Then we will grapple with a possible candidate for the number five slot.

1863 and 1901: The Church Organizes . . . and Organizes Again

The 1863 session gave birth to the General Conference (GC) of Seventh-day Adventists and all future sessions. This session came on the heels of a sustained effort by James and Ellen White to organize the fledgling network of churches.

However, to get to that point, the Whites had to fight strong internal opposition. Many Adventists in the 1850s were opposed to organizing the church beyond the local level. They felt that organization would lead Adventists from focusing on the soon coming of Jesus and toward becoming Babylon. They held that the only organization allowed by Scripture was the local church.

The Whites, however, thought differently. James White pointed out that the church was under the peril of becom-

Delegates and visitors to the 1888 GC session posed for this historic photo outside the Minneapolis church where the session was held.



ing Babylon *because* it was unorganized. Without even a simple mechanism to certify ministers, coordinate their activities, and collect and distribute funds, local Adventist congregations were exposed to fraud and financial losses, leading to instability in ministry.

Ultimately, in 1860, the pro-organization voices won the argument and, as the first step toward organization, the name Seventh-day Adventist was adopted. The next three years saw the creation of six local conferences, culminating in the establishment of the General Conference at the first session held on May 20-23, 1863.

Twenty representatives from local conferences attended this session held in Battle Creek, Michigan. The name General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists was adopted as the name for the central body. This entity was staffed by three individuals—the GC president, the secretary, and the treasurer. These three individuals formed the executive committee, which began coordinating the work of about 30 ministers and about 3,500 members.

As the church grew in size and scope of mission, Adventists in the 1890s felt the need to revisit the organization they created in 1863. No longer was the church a small North American movement that a three-person committee could oversee. By the end of the 1890s, the church had grown into an international organization with numerous publishing, medical, and educational institutions that were often poorly coordinated and managed. The GC president, on one hand, had too much power within the headquarters itself. On the other hand, the GC as the central entity lacked the power and mechanism to oversee adequately the rapidly growing, multifaceted ministries of the church.

The 1901 session, held again in Battle Creek, sought to restructure the GC into a more efficient, streamlined organization. Accepting Ellen White's plea to immediately address the problem of church structure, the delegates

voted on the first day of the session to set aside the planned agenda and focus on the issue of restructuring. As a result, union conferences and ministry departments were added to the existing structure. In addition, the presidency was stripped of its former power and reduced to the role of the chair of the GC committee.

During the following two decades, some adjustments were made to strengthen the 1901 structure. Recognizing that the 1901 session had

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weakened the presidency too much, the 1903 session reinstated the office of the GC president and empowered the GC to directly control all denominational entities. In 1913 the "division conferences" were added as the intermediary level between the union conferences and the GC. Finally, in 1918 the division conferences were reconstituted and renamed "divisions."

Despite these changes and other minor adjustments that have followed since, the reorganized structure instituted at the 1901 session remains essentially the same in 2005. This leads many to wonder, *Is it time for another reorganization to take place?*

1888 and 1980: The Church in Contention . . . and Consensus

The 1888 session in Minneapolis is perhaps the best-known and most-talked-about session in the history of the Adventist Church. At this session, two young ministers from California, E. J. Waggoner and A. T. Jones, presented messages that Ellen White during the session called "precious gems of truth" that all in attendance should embrace. This message was one of "justification by faith and the righteousness of Christ in relation to the law," clearly showing Christ as one who has conquered sin on our behalf and who is offering victory over sin through his righteousness. In short, as Adventist historian George Knight has aptly stated, the 1888 session "baptized Adventism anew in Christianity."

This reorientation of the Adventist message, however, was not received well. In fact, several key leaders of the General Conference were resistant to it, because they felt that the younger ministers were subverting the distinctive beliefs of Adventism.

Unfortunately, the opposition of some of the leaders turned mean-spirited. "The servants whom the Lord sent," White wrote, "were caricatured, ridiculed, and placed in a ridiculous light." Even she herself was treated in a hostile manner. "My testimony was ignored," she wrote later, "and never in my life experience was I treated as at that conference."

In spite of the hostile reception that they received at the 1888 session, White, Waggoner, and Jones pressed on to share their Christ-centered message with the general church membership. Throughout this period White made it clear that the two young ministers were God's chosen messengers to the church.

Though many were initially resistant to the message of 1888, it has had a tremendous impact upon the church, at large. Perhaps the most significant impact has been through the writings of Ellen White. Some of her most beloved books on Christ were published in the years that followed the 1888 session:

Steps to Christ (1892); *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing* (1896); *The Desire of Ages* (1898); and *Christ's Object Lessons* (1900). Written to further the message taught at the 1888 session, these books have since led the church to be in constant pursuit of Christ-centeredness.

Whereas the 1888 session was marked by a contentious debate, the 1980 session represented renewed theological consensus in Adventism. At this session, a statement of fundamental beliefs was officially adopted for the first time in the history of the Adventist Church. The church did have several statements prior to 1980, but none of them had been officially approved by a General Conference in session.

The decision of 1980 came against a background of a historic Adventist resistance to the formation of a creed. Just as many early Adventists believed organizing the movement would lead Adventists to become Babylon, some now believed that establishing a "creed" would lead to dogmatism and apostasy. Thus although several statements in the past describing the main points of Adventist faith were written and published in denominational literature, none was ever formally voted as an official statement.

For almost half a century, the statement that was drafted in 1931 by a four-person subcommittee of the General Conference committee was the de facto official presentation of Adventist beliefs. Though it was never approved by either the GC committee or the GC in session, it was included in the *Church Manual* beginning in 1932.

In the five years leading up to the 1980 session in Dallas, Texas, it was felt by several church leaders that the 22 articles of the 1931 statement needed a broad revision. Thus, the *Church Manual* Committee of the GC, working in concert with the faculty of the seminary at Andrews University, presented a completely revised version to the Annual Council of the GC in October 1979. Once approved by the Annual Council, the statement was published



Ellen G. White addressing the 1901 GC session

in the February 21, 1980, issue of the *Adventist Review* for review by the general membership. After several significant revisions, the document was finally submitted to the delegates in attendance at the GC session in Dallas in April 1980 for official approval.

The new fundamental beliefs statement contained 27 articles, organized in the conventional theological pattern: Scripture, God, Creation, Salvation, Church, Christian life, and end-time. After several days of discussions, the delegates adopted the 27, including the preamble to the statement that was added during the discussions at the session.

Thus the 1980 meetings provided the denomination with a systematic presentation of beliefs that was written and approved, for the first time, by a GC in session. Unlike the previous statements that were written by just a few individuals, the newly revised statement was indeed a collectively produced document that involved representatives of the entire church. Written with precision and theological inclusiveness in mind, the 27 articles continue to serve as a crucial reference point for Adventist theological self-understanding.

Which of the Big Five?

Most readers will agree that the four aforementioned meetings belong to, say, the top five most significant GC sessions. But which is the fifth one?

Some may see the 1990 meeting as belonging to the Big Five. That session, held in Indianapolis, Indiana, introduced the concepts of "global mission" and "people groups" to the Adventist consciousness. At this session, Adventists reaffirmed their commit-

ment to taking the gospel not only to every nation, but also to every tribe, tongue, and people. Global mission was about evangelizing every "people group" (a group identified by language, socioeconomic, and/or cultural location).

Others may want to reach back to the 1869 session convened in Battle Creek, when the General Conference formed its first missionary society to reach countries outside of the United States, as well as distant parts of the country, with the Adventist message. It may come as a surprise to some that Adventists were very reluctant to send overseas missionaries in the 1850s and much of the 1860s. They had not yet arrived at a vision for world mission. In fact, some even felt that evangelism in other countries was not necessary. Thus the formation of the missionary society in 1869 represented a major step toward becoming a truly missionary (world) church, and this development contributed directly to the sending of J. N. Andrews to Switzerland in 1874 as the church's first official overseas missionary.

Or . . . will this year's meetings become one of the Big Five landmark GC sessions of Adventist history? Only time will tell.

What is truly important, though, is the fact that the world church is once again coming together, whether to agree or to disagree, whether to reaffirm our current beliefs or to revise or add to some of them, whether to engage in a contentious debate or to rejoice in unity. Because we're after all a family of God, we come together, now for the fifty-eighth time (or the sixty-third time), to celebrate God's amazing guidance over the past 142 years of history as an organized church—and perhaps even to make history!

Julius Nam (jnam@puc.edu) is assistant professor of religion at Pacific Union College in Angwin, California.



Why GC Sessions? Are They Worth It?

Come think through these questions with me.

BY KIM PECKHAM

Is this GC session worth the trouble? Wouldn't all the delegates rather stay home with a pint of ice cream and watch *The Sound of Music* one more time?

That would certainly take a load off of Sheri Clemmer. As an associate meeting planner at the General Conference, she helped arrange the details that would keep the session from degenerating into a soccer riot of the saints. She has spent the past several months on the phone with attendees who want a hotel room, and business people who want a piece of the action. "We appreciate your offer of discount tickets to the Friday night St. Louis Cardinals game," she said during a recent

call, "but let me explain something to you . . ."

Nothing is too trivial to escape her attention. See those tent cards on the dining tables? I'm referring to the ones that say with as much tact as possible, "Do you have to spend so much time chewing? We've got people waiting for this table." She made those.

Of course, Clemmer wasn't the only person working on the GC session. This event requires the attention of no fewer than 14 committees. People who end up on these committees discover that their duties require the kind of self-sacrifice normally associated with Huss and Jerome.

The platform committee coordinates the arrival and

PHOTO: ALDEN J. HO

departure of hundreds of speakers and musicians. And it must all be timed to the minute.

Security has its own challenges, including the possibility of protesters—though who would have a complaint with Adventists is a mystery to me, unless it's the Pork Producers Association.

The procurement and distribution committee members spent time sitting down on the job. But only because they needed to choose the padded chairs on which the delegates spend the greater part of the day. This was a task they did not take lightly, though it would have been a hoot to

pioneer missionary L. R. Conradi. At the 1926 GC session Conradi told the group that he never had money to ride in train cars with upholstered seats, and he was glad. It toughened him up for the time the czar threw him in prison—where they didn't have upholstery either.

Another group put their heads together to come up with a theme for the meetings. I imagine that job had its frustrations, especially if you came up with an idea that was rejected, such as "Celebrating 150 Years of Fearing the Papacy."

I must mention Gary Patterson, who is coming to town with a mandate to prepare food for the delegates and other visitors. It's a scary situation to face 10,000 hungry Adventists at every meal when your only defense is five and a half tons of textured vegetable protein. But Patterson runs an academy cafeteria, so he doesn't scare easily. "I

have never backed down from a challenge," he says. "This is my way of using the talents God gave me."

Roscoe Howard has also felt the mantle of responsibility come down on his shoulders like the gates of Gaza. He

is in charge of the grand finale of the GC session, the Parade of Nations. "I didn't volunteer for this job, believe me," he says.

He has to figure out how to move 700 people (some of whom are shuffling along in wooden shoes) across the platform in 70 minutes. He has to provide flags to all the marchers.

And he has

to deal with the confusion about American Samoa. Nobody is quite sure if the representatives should march with the North American Division or the South Pacific Division. (The natives are probably thinking *Hey, our tithe dips for one year and suddenly we're orphans!*) Howard must also put a leash on photographers who get so excited at this event that they crash into the parade like the Rams' defensive line and bring the whole procession to a halt.

Why It's Worth It

Can the GC session possibly be worth all this work? And I haven't even mentioned the money. The GC puts aside \$1 million a year so they can pay their part of the tab when the session year comes around. Unless you're trying to buy real estate near the GC headquarters, that's a lot of money—money that can be used for other

things such as evangelism, or feeding the hungry, or adding padded pews to all those churches we've built in India lately.

Evangelism. Food. Upholstery. These are important things. *But so is community.* Getting together with people is never cheap. I drive 20 miles each way to church. Should I call up the church and demand that they stream the sermon over the Internet because I want to save gas money? No way. I want to be there with the people, shaking hands and worrying about which of those hands may be passing on a flu virus. I want to sing with these people and go to potluck with these people and fight with them over the last of the macaroni and cheese.

The GC session is all about community. It has a sense of community that can leave you a little weepy and weak in the knees. You are in the same room with tens of thousands of people who have joined you on a serious mission from God, and you're standing shoulder to shoulder with them singing "We Have This Hope," which has so much emotion that it makes "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" seem as flat as an advertising jingle. That's when it occurs to you, *You know, we're bigger than Wal-Mart, and we're going to change the world.* That's got to be worth something.

And then there are the stories. Leaders take the stage from all over the world, and they can be forgiven for bragging a little about what the Lord has done. At the last GC session, representatives from the Northern Asia-Pacific Division talked about the 1000 Missionary Movement. Two of those missionaries entered a village in a remote mountain area of the Philippines. They found that the tribe had fought with neighboring villages for hundreds of years. Through the missionaries' acts of love, the whole village was converted. Then the villagers began to worry that their former enemies would take advantage of their new peaceful lifestyle. So they asked the missionaries to go to the next village and convert their foes—which they did. Eventually, 11 warlike vil-



lages were converted and entered a new era of peace. (Obviously, these two missionaries should be dispatched immediately to the Middle East.)

If you could listen in on the 1888 GC session, you would hear them read

eaten. You can almost see how the audience leaned forward in awe when Meli held up a war club that had actually been used to bring home the groceries. This former cannibal stood on the stage in his bare feet—he found

their conscience. That's got to be worth something.

With 70,000 Friends

Yes, the GC takes its toll. Especially on people like Sheri Clemmer. But you



PHOTO: JEFF D. SPRINGER

a letter from 60-year-old Abe La Rue, who had headed off to Hong Kong—which was much farther away in those days than it is now. He wrote about paddling around in a sampan, passing out tracts. "I never saw people read our publications better than they do here," he wrote. "They are stirring up things magnificently."

You wish you could tell him how much the work grew in that old British colony since he first steamed into the harbor. It makes you swell up with pride. Not because you're great, but because you are hanging on the shirt-tails of a movement that is great. That's got to be worth something.

Every GC is a kind of trophy ceremony. Only here the trophies are people. In 1926 the best trophy was Ratu Meli, a former cannibal from the Fiji islands. Let me tell you, there's a whole lot more interest in foreign missions when there's a chance someone will be

shoes so uncomfortable that he refused to wear them—and he began to sing a hymn. This man had done things so wicked that they don't even show up on cable television. But the audience was seeing a new man—a living, breathing miracle of grace. That's got to be worth something.

Of course, the GC session is a time to take care of a little business. And it's significant that the most important business decisions can't be made unless everyone is represented. Everyone has to be around the family table, and everyone gets a vote. If everyone votes to move the GC headquarters to Hawaii, then you might as well get ready for workdays that end with a shout of "Surf's up, Paulsen!"

Think about it: This institution is so democratic that administrators can't even change a line in the *Church Manual* without giving Adventists in every corner of the globe a chance to vote

want to know something strange? She claims to enjoy the job. She says she liked calling businesses in St. Louis and saying, "I'm coming to town with 70,000 of my friends."

That's an interesting thought. To think of the world church as friends—friends who are so close that you dare not do anything important without sending them an engraved invitation and putting a nice spread on the table. Think of standing in one of the largest auditoriums in the world and realizing that the enormous crowd pressing around you is made up of friends. No, better than that. Family. Yeah, that's got to be worth something!

Kim Peckham has attended three GC sessions, including what he assumes will be the very last GC to be held in Atlantic City.





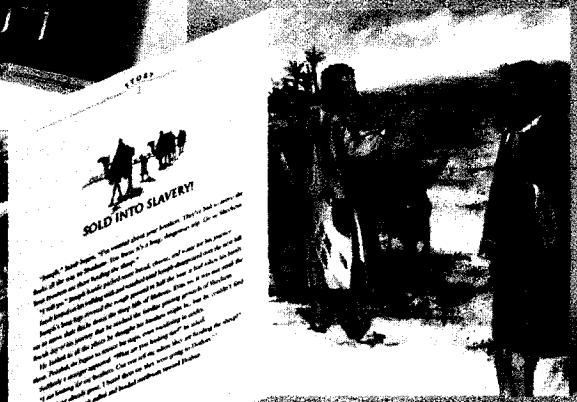
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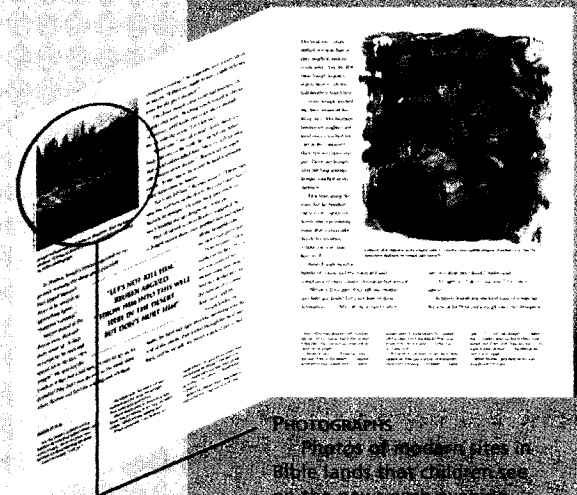
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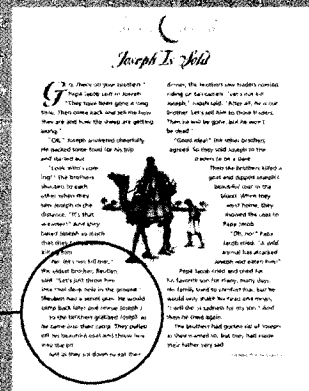
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At and Around the Session: A Bird's-eye View

AT THE DOME

Friday, July 1

8:00-9:15 am Daily Devotional
Glen O Samuels
9:30-12:00 pm Business Session
2:00-4:00 pm Business Session
6:45-7:00 pm Musical Prelude
7:00-7:30 pm Musical Program
7:30-9:00 pm Vesper Service
Richard Davidson

Saturday, July 2

8:30-9:00 am Musical Program
9:00-10:30 am Sabbath School
10:30-12:15 pm Divine Service
Matthew A Bediako
2:30-3:00 pm Musical Program
3:00-3:30 pm Missions—Secretariat
3:30-5:00 pm Global Mission
6:30-7:00 pm Musical Program
7:00-9:00 pm International Festival of Mission
Devotional (*Precille A Metonou*)
Trans-European Division Report
North American Division Report

Sunday, July 3

8:00-9:15 am Devotional
Hiskia I Missah
9:30-10:45 am Business Session
10:45-12:00 pm Profiling Leadership
2:00-5:00 pm Business Session
6:30-7:00 pm Musical Program
7:00-9:00 pm International Festival of Mission
Devotional (*Allan R. Handysides*)
Euro-Asia Division Report
Northern Asia-Pacific Div. Report

Monday, July 4

8:00-9:15 am Devotional
Roberto Badenas
9:30-10:45 am Business Session
10:45-12:00 pm Profiling Leadership
2:00-4:00 pm Business Session
4:00-5:00 pm Adventist Health
6:30-7:00 pm Musical Program
7:00-9:00 pm International Festival of Mission
Devotional (*Anthony Kent*)
South Pacific Division Report
East-Central Africa Div. Report

Tuesday, July 5

8:00-9:15 am Devotional
Gordon Christo
9:30-10:45 am Business Session
10:45-12:00 pm Profiling Leadership
2:00-3:00 pm Business Session
3:00-3:20 pm GC Corporation Meeting
3:20-5:00 pm Business Session
6:30-7:00 pm Musical Program
7:00-9:00 pm International Festival of Mission
Devotional (*Barry C. Black*)
Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Div.
South American Division Report

Wednesday, July 6

8:00-9:15 am Devotional
Galina I Stele
9:30-10:45 am Business Session
10:45-12:00 pm Profiling Leadership
2:00-5:00 pm Free time
6:30-7:00 pm Musical Program
7:00-9:00 pm International Festival of Mission
Devotional (*Joy Gashajja*)
Southern Asia Division Report
Euro-Africa Division Report
West-Central Africa Div. Report

Thursday, July 7

8:00-9:15 am Devotional
Robert Wong
9:30-10:45 am Business Session
10:45-12:00 pm Profiling Leadership
2:00-2:10 pm American Bible Society
2:10-5:00 pm Business Session
6:30-7:00 pm Musical Program
7:00-9:00 pm International Festival of Mission
Devotional (*Philip Samaan*)
Southern Asia-Pacific Div. Report
Inter-American Division Report

Friday, July 8

8:00-9:15 am Daily Devotional
Carlos Steger
9:30-11:45 am Business Session
11:45-12:00 pm Retirees Recognition
2:00-4:00 pm Business Session
6:45-7:00 pm Musical Prelude
7:00-7:30 pm Musical Program
7:30-9:00 pm Vesper Service
Radisa Antic

Saturday, July 9

8:30-9:00 am Musical Program
9:00-10:30 am Sabbath School
10:30-12:15 pm Divine Service
GC President
2:30-3:00 pm Musical Program
3:00-4:00 pm Go One Million
Sow 1 Billion
4:00-5:00 pm Youth on Parade
6:15-6:45 pm Closing remarks,
Mayor of St. Louis
6:45-7:00 pm Appeal and Challenge
GC President
7:00-8:30 pm Parade of Nations

IMPACT ST. LOUIS
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Friday, July 1

8:15-9:00 am Morning Devotion
9:00-12:00 pm General Meeting
1:30-5:00 pm Community Outreach
7:00-8:30 pm Consecration Service

Saturday, July 2

9:00-12:15 pm Junior-Teen SS and
Worship Service, Ferrara
Theater, America's Center,
Spring Valley Academy
Drama group
9:00-12:15 pm Senior Youth/Young Adult
SS and Worship Service,
America's Ballroom, Level
2, #224, Speaker: Shawn
Boonstra
1:00-6:00 pm Fair—St. Louis Outreach
(watch for announcement)

Sunday, July 3

8:30-9:00 am Morning Devotion
9:00-10:00 am Plenary
10:00-12:00 pm Workshop
1:30-5:00 pm Community Outreach
7:00-8:30 pm Evangelistic Meetings

Note:

Sunday's schedule repeats (with the occasional minor variation) Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday.

Thursday, July 7

8:15-9:00 am Morning Devotion
9:00-6:30 pm Community Expo at
Forest Park

Friday, July 8

8:15-9:00 am Morning Devotion
9:00-10:00 am Plenary
10:00-12:00 pm Workshops
7:00-8:30 pm Evangelistic Meetings

Saturday, July 9

9:00-12:15 pm Junior-Teen SS and
Worship Service, Ferrara
Theater, America's Center,
Spring Valley Academy
Drama group
9:00-12:15 pm Senior Youth/Young Adult
SS and Worship Service,
America's Ballroom, Level
2, #224, Speaker:
Veronika Perez
4:00-6:00 pm Youth on Parade/Dome

WOMEN'S MINISTRIES

America's Center
America's Ballroom—Level 2—
Rooms 220-229

Monday, July 4

9:30-10:45 am **Transformed by Grace
for Personal Growth**
Sally Lam-Phoon

Tuesday, July 5

9:30-10:45 am **Transformed by Grace
for Daily Living**
Galina Stele

—continued on page 23

COMPELLED BY MISSION

GENERAL CONFERENCE PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2005 — JAN PAULSEN



*"Then I heard
the voice of the
Lord saying,
'Whom shall I
send? And who
will go for us?'
And I said,
'Here am I.
Send me!' He
said, 'Go and tell
this people...'"*

—Isaiah 6:8, 9*

The first generation of Christians approached mission with a sense of urgency. For the apostles, the command to "go into all the world" was an imperative that could not be denied. They were compelled by their life-transforming experience with Jesus, by three years of friendship and fellowship with their Savior, and by all they had witnessed personally. The early church was energized by its certainty of the Lord's soon return, "the blessed hope—the glorious appearing" (Titus 2:13).

For the Seventh-day Adventist Church in 2005, this sense of urgency is as relevant now as it was in the days of the apostles.

Since the church met for the General Conference session in Toronto five years ago, the world has changed profoundly.

Global events—wars, natural disasters, political developments—have left many people wondering what tomorrow will bring.

In the communities where we live, we find increasing anxiety, new tensions, fewer reasons to hope for the future.

During the past five years the church has also experienced tremendous change: we have welcomed some 5 million new members and established an Adventist presence in new areas of the world.

Tremendous growth in the challenging 10/40 window has enriched our church in so many ways but has also created the challenge of nurturing our new brothers and sisters in the faith.

We are an extraordinary global family, with a specific identity, a clear mission, and an acute awareness of the lateness of the hour in which we live.

As our church grows in numbers, the communities in which we are placed are becoming increasingly aware of who we are. In many parts of the world the Seventh-day Adventist Church is gaining greater recognition for its contributions to health care, education, and the well-being of society.

What is our central purpose as a church? As we review the past five years and look toward the future, what key values define us as a people?

EDUCATION AND
OUTREACH: Children learn
about Jesus at Chiang Mai
Adventist Academy,
Thailand.



COMPELLED TO MISSION

OUR WITNESS IS NOT OPTIONAL

Without mission, there is no church. As Ellen White writes, "The burning, consuming love of Christ for perishing souls is the life of the whole system of Christianity."¹ Christ's love compels us to share with others the hope and joy that we ourselves have found. This is our mission.

Growth is more than just a list of baptismal numbers on a piece of paper. It also means doing all we can as a church to grow stronger, healthier, and more capable of doing what God wants us to do.

In many parts of the world the witnessing ministry of our church is strong and growing. In other parts, the visible results are few. And yet the Lord has a plan and a future for the people in these difficult areas. Our task is to be faithful and to be prepared. For the days will come when what now seems impossible will become a reality.

Several new initiatives—including the Office of Global Evangelism, headed by Pastor Mark Finley; Go One Million; Sow 1 Billion; and the Office of Mission Awareness—reflect the absolute priority that we must continue to give to mission.

OUR WITNESS IS PERSONAL

Laypeople are central to all the church's outreach endeavors. Nearly 600,000 young people, ages 15 to 30, have already been involved in evangelism through the Elijah Project. The Women's Ministries Department reports that in 2003 alone women conducted 100,385 evangelistic meetings around the world. The members of Adventist-

Laymen's Services and Industries continue to further God's kingdom in countless ways.

In South America more than 60,000 small-group Bible studies—each run by laypeople—meet each week for outreach and fellowship. Here, seekers find not only the truth of Jesus Christ but also friendship and support that help ground them in their new faith. And Global Mission, with its force of some 30,000 lay volunteers, focuses the church's witness on unentered areas of the world.

OUR WITNESS IS GLOBAL

During the Year of World Evangelism 2004, more than 30,000 pastors conducted some form of outreach, involving more than 4 million lay members. Adventist Television Network, the church's satellite network, continues to grow in programming and global reach. Many thousands have come to know Jesus for the first time via satellite from stadiums in Rwanda, Ukraine, and the United States.

OUR WITNESS EXTENDS TO DIFFICULT AREAS.

God's Spirit is at work in areas where previously the church has struggled. We see this in Cambodia, where the church has grown from nothing in the early 1990s to more than 6,000 members. In 2003 there were still only some 200 Adventists in the capital city, Phnom Penh. But today, after the combined efforts of laypeople, pastors, and evangelists, there are more than 3,000 members in this city.

The church in Myanmar, a country in which outreach is restricted, celebrated its largest baptism ever in January 2004. The contributions of generous North American laypeople helped provide the infrastructure for outreach. More than 500 were baptized, most of whom had no background in Christianity.

Adventist World Radio continues to reach across borders to touch lives where the church can't officially operate. In many places that we

BRINGING HOPE:
Global Mission Pioneers offer new life in the challenging 10/40 window country of Chad.



ABOVE: Asking God's blessing: Church leaders pray for new believers in Chernovtsy, Ukraine.



LEFT: Baptism day in Cambodia: Hundreds wait their turn in the capital, Phnom Penh.

Growth

cannot disclose, thousands of church members meet "underground" to worship each Sabbath—often in life-threatening circumstances. They need our constant prayers.

The challenge of urban areas—the great cities of the world—has increasingly become a part of our mission thinking and planning. How can we share Christ's love with the countless millions who live in these cities, where the impact of the church has been small? The General Conference Hope for Big Cities Offering will provide seed money for world divisions to focus on long-term plans to nurture new churches in major cities.

OUR WITNESS IS CREATIVE.

In Hong Kong two young Global Mission pioneers—Sonya and Phoebe—work in the middle of a high-rise residential area. They operate a center where children from cramped apartments can come after school to study in a more comfortable environment and learn more about Jesus.

In the Trans-European Division the LIFEdevelopment.info initiative is





EAGER WITNESSES:

Adventist students in Mindanao, southern Philippines, hand out Sow 1 Billion Bible study invitations.

using a multimedia approach to reach out to Europe's unchurched post-modern population. In northern Asia Korean Adventists are pioneering a special Internet church for children.

A local game of soccer has become a form of outreach in Guayaquil, Ecuador, where each church member who joins the game also brings four unchurched friends and invites them to stay on for Bible study.

OUR WITNESS IS LONG-TERM.

When it comes to mission, discipleship and nurture are not optional extras. When a person accepts Christ and enters into fellowship with His family, this marks the beginning—not the end—of their Christian growth. A new life lies ahead, and a new believer must be prepared and equipped for that life.

It is encouraging to see outreach initiatives that embrace the need for proper care of new believers. The Euro-Asia Division's 300 Churches Project not only established hundreds of new congregations throughout the former Soviet Union but also provided a house church for each new group, along with pastoral support.

In the past few years the church has emphasized the need to incorporate discipleship and nurture into witnessing projects. It has also issued guidelines calling for better provision for these vital needs in all evangelism planning.

LOOKING AHEAD.

How can we find committed, qualified pastors and administrators to lead a church that is growing exponentially? How do we anticipate challenges and

plan for them? Two new offices, Leadership Training and Strategic Planning, have been established at the General Conference, and these will become increasingly important for positioning our church in its mission.

COMPELLED TO COMMUNITY

A SHARED IDENTITY.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in 2005 is truly a worldwide community. Adventist work is now established in 204 of the 230 countries and areas recognized by the United Nations, and our message today is communicated in 882 languages and dialects.

We rejoice in the bountiful range of gifts and talents the Lord has given our

make available 2 million sets of Ellen White books at an affordable price for church members around the world.

AN INCLUSIVE CHURCH.

In the body of Christ all members are valuable; all have a contribution to make. Are we doing all we can to ensure that each person is active in church life? Are we utilizing the talents of the women of our church? Are we listening to what our young people are saying to us?

During the past two years I've been delighted to participate in "Let's Talk"—a dialogue between Adventist young people and their church leaders that has taken place through a Web site and a series of satellite broadcasts.

But this is a conversation that should be expanded to embrace more people and different groups within our world family. We must do much more to har-



church members. We thank Him for the rich tapestry of cultures that make up our international family, the vast array of ways we worship the same God.

But we also have a common identity that we must continue to nurture, a heritage that must be shared with new believers. We are a prophetic movement, with a God-given purpose.

It is vital to find ways to more effectively pass on this spiritual inheritance—through our schools, our churches, our literature; within our family circles; and through new initiatives such as "Connecting With Jesus." This program, already under way, will

CAMPOREE ENERGY: 20,000 young people gathered this year at Santa Helena, Brazil. (above left)
 JOY IN JESUS: New Adventists in Central Africa praise God. (above right)
 "LET'S TALK": Listening to the young people of the church. (center)

Unity

Quality of Life

ness the gifts of all our members.

STAYING CLOSE.

It is God's plan that we are one around the world—bound together by a shared faith and a common hope in the soon return of our Lord. We need to talk with one another, defer to one another, support one another, and consistently look beyond our own four church walls.

But as our church grows in size and diversity, effective communication becomes more difficult, and more important. The recent launch and continuing expansion of the Hope Channel—broadcasting globally, 24 hours a day, with an increasing in-home viewership—reflects this priority.

The world church has also asked the *Adventist Review*—a journal that has played such a formative role throughout the years—to extend its reach. *Adventist World*, a new magazine introduced at this session, will initially be distributed once a month to more than 1.1 million Adventist families around the world.

COMPELLED TO SERVICE

The "abundant life" Jesus promised has many different facets. Our lives become full, spiritually, as we experience the forgiveness of sin and the assurance of salvation. Our priorities and values begin to change.

But this quality of life has a broader, physical dimension. Christ's healing ministry and His concern for society's most vulnerable members call us, His followers, to a life of service.

Poverty, injustice, ignorance, and sickness: we are called to proclaim to the world of Christ's victory over the evil one

WORSHIPPING TOGETHER: Angolan Adventists celebrate their family of faith.



LEFT: Wholistic care: Adventists share Christ's love with children with Indonesian.

BELOW: Sunshine Orphanage, India: Why is this place called Sunshine? "Because we're all so bright," says one young girl.

compassion for humanity. This too is our mission.

HIS LOVE COMPELS US

As we fellowship together for these few days, as we celebrate as an international family and make decisions for the future, let us remember that we are a church driven by mission and called to service.

May we never forget what it means to be an Adventist—living in joyful anticipation of the soon return of our Savior. And I pray that each of us may ever be a willing instrument in the hand of God.

"May the God of peace . . . equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen" (Heb. 13:20, 21)

* Scripture references are from the New International Version.
† Ellen G. White, *Life Him Up*, p. 134.

JAN RAUSCH, president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. The president's report, given in multimedia format on June 30, 2007, is here adapted for print.

and his handiwork.

Today, in almost every country of the world, Seventh-day Adventist schools, hospitals, institutions, churches, and individual members are visible symbols of this victory:

Whether it's Maluti Hospital in Lesotho, recognized nationally for its care of AIDS orphans and for its gardens that provide food for the community.

Or Adventist women in India who teach other women how to read and write.

Or groups of young people in Australia and Romania who visit different towns and ask, "How can we help? What can we paint, clean, or build that will contribute to the life of this community?"

Or church members in Kenya who have set up a shelter for young Masai girls—some as young as age 6—who have been forced into early marriage.

Or the Adventist Development and Relief Agency developing long-term water and food security in hundreds of regions, providing HIV/AIDS education, or responding to a disaster.

These are reflections of a time



SHAPE YOUR PERSPECTIVE.

Picture an education where learning extends far beyond the classroom—As the cornerstone of Adventist education, there is no better place than Atlantic Union College to study Evangelism and Clinical Ministry (Chaplaincy). Atlantic Union College's new Bachelor of Arts degree in Evangelism and Master of Education degree with emphasis in Clinical Ministry, gives you a foundation of theoretical knowledge combined with the application of Bible-based Christianity.

As you begin to think about where it is you want to spend your college years or continue your education, consider Atlantic Union College for the time of your life.

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“Behold the Lamb”

Devotional message presented Thursday evening, June 30, 2005

Those who live in the United States readily admit that the public commemorations for the Easter season in this country are never as extensive as we find for Christmas. Christmas has become the focal point of America's calendar year. The Easter season just doesn't call forth the same lavish attention. It is easier and much more pleasant to celebrate the birth of a tiny baby than a man dying on a cross.

However, it is significant to note that this modern priority is reversed in Scripture. In the New Testament, the birth of Christ is not the primary focus. In the four Gospel accounts of the Messiah's life, the events surrounding and including the Crucifixion carry the major emphasis. The staggering miracle of the birth of Jesus is mentioned only slightly by comparison.

After treasured recounting of the birth of Baby Jesus, both Luke and Matthew, and in fact all four Gospel writers, quickly shift emphasis. Rather than providing detailed, informative accounts of Christ's childhood and early adult life, the reader is almost immediately drawn into the events leading up to and including the Crucifixion. The pointed focus of all four Gospels is on just one week of Christ's life. From one third up to a half of each of the four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John is devoted to the week of Christ's death. All four Gospels rivet our attention on the cross. They force us to “behold the Lamb of God.”

The astounding miracle of Christ's birth at Bethlehem, His 30 years in Nazareth, His profound adult teaching, His mighty miracles of compassion and power—these vital events are not the central focus of the New Testament record of Christ's life. What dominates the Gospels is not



Jo Ann Davidson
*Professor of
 Theology, Seventh-
 day Adventist
 Theological
 Seminary, Andrews
 University*

the *living*, but the *giving* of the Messiah's life. As remarkable as His birth and ministry were, the great mission of Christ's life was His death.

Consider one of Christ's explicit sayings about His death. In Mark 10:32-45, we find Jesus heading to Jerusalem with His astonished disciples and a fearful group of followers. As they walk, Jesus graphically describes what is about to happen to Him. When He finishes the painful description of His impending death, James and John approach Jesus with a request: They want to be given the positions of greatest authority at the Lord's side when He comes into His glory, which they assume will happen shortly. The others resent that James and John have beaten them to the draw in their brash request. A squabble breaks out among them, and Jesus is forced to intervene. He reminds them of the nature of true greatness in His kingdom: Greatness demands not the self-assertion and lordliness of the

Gentile authorities, but sacrifice. Linger on His words: “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served,” He insists, “but to [slave] [what the Greek word really means], and to give his life a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45).

Here is Christ's own summary of His mission. He declares that His work finds its crown not in His teaching or in performing miracles, or in high position, even though that is what His disciples still presumed. Rather, He has come ultimately to *slave* and to die, clearly echoing the portrayal of the Suffering Servant in Isaiah 53. Jesus comes to pour out His life as a substitute for those of us condemned to death because of sin. We are liberated from the terrible penalty and bondage of sin by Jesus' sacrificial death. And this type of sacrificial slaving and dying displays the real nature of His kingdom.

Even the sacrament of the Last Supper, instituted by Christ Himself and the only commemorative act He personally authorized, dramatizes neither His birth, nor His life, nor His words, nor His works, but only His death. Christ Himself wished above all else to be remembered by His death.

And the memorial that best represents the mission of Jesus is the one that God Himself erected—the cross. But there on Mount Calvary, on that “old rugged cross,” hung a condemned criminal that most people were having a difficult time recognizing as God, for He was being summarily executed and dying. Jesus, who is God, was being crucified in a death designed to inflict maximum torture.

No, the cross was not a welcome sight then. And with our tidy, artistic representations of the cross on churches, on church bulletins, and in Christian materials, it is easy to forget how ugly and despised the cross really was in the time of Christ. It was the ultimate horror to face.

In light of the great war, the deadly battle with Satan that Jesus, our mighty warrior, fought and won on that cross, however, we would do well to deepen our own understanding of the Crucifixion. For to the biblical writers, the death of Christ is not some peripheral or optional theory, but the primary focus.

Many of our hymns rightly honor the love of Jesus for us, especially as seen in His sacrifice of Himself. Our children sing so happily, “Jesus Loves Me.” The love of Christ is warmly affirmed by all Christians. But the love of the Father for us is something many stumble over. To counter any lingering misapprehensions that through His death on Calvary Jesus was trying to persuade an angry Father-God to forgive us, we are pointed to the biblical passages reminding us that “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son” (John 3:16). Jesus likewise told His disciples, “I do not say to you that I shall pray the Father for you; for the Father Himself loves you” (John 16:26, 27).

The apostle Paul in Romans 8 also

reminds us of the deep affection the Father has for us. According to Paul, nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom. 8:38, 39). We dare not overlook that tiny preposition that insists that nothing can separate us from the “love of God.”

Scripture insists that the Father’s love is the source, not the consequence of the atonement. God doesn’t love us because Christ died for us: Christ died for us because God loved us. The horrible death of Christ was not made in order to entice the Father to love those He otherwise hated. It was not made to produce a love that was not in existence. It was a manifestation of the

*The Bible is
clear: God never
forgives sin.
Never! He forgives
only sinners.*

love that was already in God’s heart.

Scripture also carefully instructs us that the forgiveness God offers through the cross is no mere winking away or overlooking of sinfulness as if it were some trivial problem, as an indulgent parent might do, saying, “Oh, I forgive you. It’s OK.” Nor is it a matter of God’s feelings being hurt by our sinning. Scripture is clear enough that though God’s love for His children is indestructible, He is in deadly earnest against sin. We cannot avoid the large number of biblical texts emphasizing God’s intense wrath concerning sin. The Bible is clear: God never forgives sin. Never! He forgives only sinners. And the cross shows us how deadly sin is.

It is far too easy for us “modern” Christians to convince ourselves that despite all our “minor” mistakes—unforgiven bitterness, little white lies,

impatience, intemperance—we aren’t really so “bad.” We imagine that God shares this same complacency about us. Perhaps, because sin doesn’t make us angry, we find it difficult to believe that sin provokes the wrath of a holy God. Scripture, however, insists upon the seriousness of sin, and that sin separates us from God. None of the Bible writers ever suggest that a person might some day simply drift into the kingdom of God, naturally forgiven because God is love.

I find it important to review for myself these two basic foundational pillars of the biblical teaching of the atonement: God loves me, but He hates sin.

The sin problem is not just a trite matter of the God of heaven having His feelings hurt. Christ’s atoning sacrifice was not an artistic crucifix between two candles on an altar. It was an awful torturing death that tore apart God from God. It was an execution. Christ bore God’s holy wrath against sin to the utmost upon Himself because God loves us more than His own life.

But how could the Father love us that much? I have finally come to realize how much I need to learn about real loving and real forgiving. The Holy God against whom we have sinned Himself drank the dregs of the cup of punishment for sin that we deserve. The apostle Paul states it: “For [God] made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us” (2 Cor. 5:21).

What a better time than this world convocation of the Seventh-day Adventist Church to behold the Lamb of God, who takes away our sin. The cross was the ugliest, most horrible instrument of torture that had yet been devised. But this is not what killed Him. Our sins did that. Christ was willing to bear our punishment to win the great battle with Satan for me and for you. Because of that, the cross has been transformed into the glorious memorial of God’s love. Now we glory in that “old rugged cross.”

For Christ and His cross stand at the center of God’s disclosure of His

moral will and saving ways in Scripture. To stand beneath the cross is to stand at the one place where the character of God burns brightest and where His radical resolution of the sin problem is settled for all time.

It is hard to stand here, though. The cost of admission to this place is the humbling of our pride. It requires that we repent of our natural tendency to elevate our own ideas of what is right and wrong and instead accept the judgment of God on our sinfulness. The cost of admission includes being willing to be rid our self-righteousness and acknowledging instead how really corrupted we are inside. It demands that we displace ourselves from the center of the universe and elevate

Christ to that place of honor. It insists that we accept God's sobering evaluation of us rather than the rosy assessment we are inclined to confer upon ourselves.

This is a hard place to stand, and few choose to stand here. That is why so many have dismissed the cross, refusing to pay the cost. It is why in our own time, much preaching on the cross is hesitant to announce the extreme price of admission to its benefits—the humbling of ourselves and our need of repentance.

The fact of our salvation is more amazing than life. God adopted us at the cost of His Son's life and at the cost of His own sorrow. This is more than any human being can comprehend.

Ellen White reminds us that "in this life we can only begin to understand the wonderful theme of redemption. With our finite comprehension we may consider most earnestly the shame and the glory, the life and the death, the justice and the mercy, that meet in the cross; yet with the utmost stretch of our mental powers we fail to grasp its full significance. . . . The cross of Christ will be the science and the song of the redeemed through all eternity."²

"Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29).

¹ Scripture references in this devotional are from the New King James Version.

² Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 651.

America's Center, site of the session



Session-related Activities — continued from page 15

2:00-4:00 pm GC Session 101
Ardis Stenbakken

Wednesday, July 6

9:30-10:45 am **Transformed by Grace for Service**
Ella Smith Simmons

Thursday, July 7

9:30-10:45 am **Transformed by Grace for His Glory**
Gabriella Profeta-Phillips

2:00-4:00 pm **Women in Ministry Seminars**
Cynthia Prime; Nancy Van Pelt; Evelyn Nagel; Marti Schneider; Sarah Carter; Young-Ja Lee Nam

SS/PM WORKSHOPS
All sessions in Rooms B and E
12:00 pm-2:00 pm
5:00 pm-7:00 pm

These seminars will feature dynamic and creative authorities on Sabbath school and personal ministries. Twenty-two presenters will conduct workshops in a variety of topics, each one exploring an important aspect of these essential ministries for the local church.

Scheduled during noon and evening meal breaks, these workshops and seminars will provide a wealth of information, experience, and inspiration to attendees without their having to miss a single GC business session.

Look for workshops featuring time-tested interactive learning, PowerPoint presentations, video productions, and hands-

on materials and projects designed to take home and implement immediately.

Seminar workshop topics include the following:

- Member Conservation in Your Church
- Sabbath School Action Units
- Creating Good Discussion Questions for Bible Study
- How the Adult Bible Study Guide Is Produced
- Utilizing Multiple Intelligences in Sabbath School
- Using the GraceLink Curriculum
- Training Lay Evangelism for Active Witness
- Witnessing With Power
- Spiritual Gifts: Keys to Ministry
- How to Lead: Principles of Christian Leadership

- Principles of Personal Christian Witness
- Small Group Ministries in the Local Church
- Methods for Door-to-Door Visitation
- Simple Methods of Giving a Bible Study
- Principles and Methods of Obtaining Decisions
- Keys to Effective Sabbath School Class Leading
- Real-Life Discipling Through Adult Sabbath School
- Discipling Adolescents Through Sabbath School
- Sabbath School for Young Adults

SHOW ME HEALTH—ST. LOUIS
Sponsored by NAD/HM & Others

9:00 am-4:00 pm Medical Screening Vans will be circulating through St. Louis. Will stop in front of America's Center at times to be announced.

OTHER EVENTS

"GospelFest"
Tue, July 5 through Sat, July 9
11:30 am-1:00 pm **Lunchtime Concerts**
Kiener Plaza amphitheater

The Kiener Plaza amphitheater has been reserved Tuesday through Sabbath, July 5-9 for lunchtime concerts in the park, from 11:30 am-1:30 pm. Free to the public and featuring artists from the GC session in the Dome. Each day will feature 3-5 artists, with a mix of styles and nationalities on any given day. (Watch for any changes in times.)

Sonscreen Worldwide Film Festival Showcase

Wed, July 6 & Thu, July 7
7:00-9:30 pm
Sponsored by NAD/ACN
Roberts Orpheum Theatre
416 North Ninth Street
(two blocks from America's Convention Center)

This event will highlight the best of young Adventist filmmakers and will also include other Christian filmmakers from the community and from the film industry.
Film-screening Time: 7:00-9:30 pm
Professional Workshops: 3:00-5:00 pm
Cost: FREE

Bible Festival

Sponsored by NAD/Youth Dept
This Bible rewrite (involving thousands of youth) will be a *paraphrase*, taking place on the streets and squares of St. Louis.

Adventists from the convention as well as youth from area churches, synagogues, and mosques will participate. Each person will write a portion of Scripture as they see it, putting it in their own words. The resulting version will hardly be "authorized," but it will reflect a community's understanding and view of Scripture at a certain place and time. The resulting "St. Louis Bible" will be presented to the city of St. Louis as a gift. This event is being planned and coordinated by the Youth Department of the North American Division. Various denominational groups in St. Louis have been invited to participate. **(Look for time and place announcements.)**

Friday, July 1

3:00 pm
Classical Oratorio
By Virginia-Gene Rittenhouse
Christ Church Cathedral

A classical oratorio by Virginia-Gene Rittenhouse will be performed, under her production, in Christ Church Cathedral, an Episcopal church about six blocks from the Convention Center.



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THE

LOMA LINDA REPORT



Renatta Osterdock, MD (left), a pediatric neurosurgeon at Loma Linda University Children's Hospital, and Andrea Ray, MD, lead plastic surgeon for the Molina twins, hold Crystal and Cristina before they leave the hospital.

Identical twins, joined at head, separated at Loma Linda University Children's Hospital

Crystal and Cristina Molina share a bond closer than most siblings. Not only are the sisters identical twins, they were born July 16, 2004, joined at the head in one of the rarest types of conjoined twins. Parents Blanca Cabrera and Bernardo Molina of Coachella Valley delivered the

Information for this section is supplied by the Loma Linda University Medical Center office of public affairs.

girls at Loma Linda University Children's Hospital knowing this.

An ultrasound in March, 2004, showed Ms. Cabrera was carrying craniopagus conjoined twins. Only 2 percent of conjoined twins are joined at the head. A little frightened, Ms. Cabrera and Mr. Molina had the support of a 120-member team to deliver and care for their babies through what would be a very successful separation surgery a year later.

Renatta Osterdock, MD, lead neurosurgeon for the Molina twins, worked with one of the largest multidisciplinary teams ever assembled at Children's Hospital to meticulously chart a treatment plan for the girls from pre-natal care all the way through post-operative care and discharge.

Companies donated specialized equipment and beds for the twins' surgery, and the Riverside Parkview Community

Please turn to next page

"FULFILLING THE VISION"

“FULFILLING THE VISION”

Hospital employees funded a van for the family’s transportation needs. KNBC Channel 4 reporter Mary Parks documented the entire separation process with the help of Medical Center audiovisual staff Ganim Hannah, Marlon Paley, Janis Tucker, and Robert Raae-Nielsen. The spirit of cooperation and compassion that bonded the twins’ team made a large impression on Dr. Osterdock.

“It was truly remarkable to see how everyone came together to care for these girls,” Dr. Osterdock said, a glint of tear in her eye, on March 22, the day the twins went home separate for the first time.

Three weeks prior, on March 3, after two months of pre-operative care tense, with the risk of infection from skin expanders and implants for immobilizing the girls’ heads during surgery, she spent two hours working with a five-member anesthesia staff, lead by Linda Mason, MD, and Alexander Zouros, MD, neurosurgeon, to separate the girls. “The nursing staff did a tremendous job—we didn’t have one infection the entire time,” Dr. Osterdock remarked.

After the successful separation, Dr. Osterdock took a brief break to inform the parents of the good news before spending another three hours in the operating room as Andrea Ray, MD, lead plastic surgeon for the Molina twins, worked with her team to reconstruct the girls’ skulls.

“They have a full head of hair already, and these little hats that if they wear, you can’t even tell they’ve had a major surgery,” said Dr. Ray.

Crystal and Cristina don’t know it, but they were so popular during their stay at Children’s Hospital that they inspired two scrapbooking events resulting in three memory books for the parents and the girls. Alane Allbee, RN, and Jeannie Martinez, RN, case manager for the twins, organized two Monday night scrapbooking soirees for all of the team members who wanted to share photos and stories of the twins. Ms. Martinez was also instrumental in keeping such a large team communicating and working smoothly together throughout several months.

The twins’ skull bones were fused together, but no other major tissues were joined. Their brains were completely separate and even their blood vessels were



Crystal and Cristina Molina were born July 16, 2004, conjoined at the head, one of the rarest types of conjoined twins. Skin expanders shown in this photo, allowed the plastic surgery team to reconstruct the girls’ skulls without using skin grafts or artificial materials.

apart. Though one of the reasons for performing the separation surgery on children so young came from imaging that showed gradual evidence of the two girls’ circulatory system beginning to merge in their skulls. Dr. Osterdock devised three implants into each of the girls that would allow their heads’ to be fixated in place during surgery, preventing any flopping as the special bed rotated the girls during the

procedure. Normal methods for this apply 60 pounds of force to the skull, something an infant simply cannot endure.

After the twins left the hospital on March 22, when a luncheon was held to celebrate the successful surgery and complication-free post-op care, KNBC Channel 4 aired a ten-part series documenting the girls’ stay and the care received during the week of March 28 to April 1.



Blanca Cabrera and Bernardo Molina, parents of Crystal and Cristina, hold the twins as they leave Children’s Hospital on the day of their discharge.

Pleasing to Any Palate

Check out these options when choosing your daily bread.

Food is an important part of every General Conference session. And, as usual, session planners have arranged for tasty, nutritious, professionally prepared meals that will be served daily from noon to 2:00 p.m. and 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. in Halls 4 and 5 of America's Center. Tickets for these meals can be purchased in the Plaza Lobby area of America's Center. A bistro in the Plaza Lobby sells breakfast and snack items from 7:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. A concession stand in the commercial exhibit area also sells snacks and drinks.

But what if you want to absorb a little of "the spirit of St. Louis" and venture into some of the neighborhoods within walking distance of America's Center? Recently the *Adventist Review* called on members and friends of St. Louis's Northside Seventh-day Adventist Church, and asked them to assemble a list of nearby eateries. They went, they ate, and this is their report:

Restaurants Within Walking Distance of America's Center

Tenth Street Italian

504 Tenth Street

Phone: 314-241-9988

Hours: Mon.–Fri. 10:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Sat. 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Closed Sunday

The menu has several good vegetarian dishes. The price for lunch was moderate; dinner was a little more expensive.

Service: excellent.

The Edible Difference

615 Pine Street

Phone: 314-588-8432

Hours: Mon.–Fri. 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Closed weekends (Not visited)

An American Place

822 Washington Avenue

Phone: 314-865-5900

Hours: Mon.–Fri. 7:00 a.m.–10:00 p.m.

This trendy, upscale restaurant accommodates vegetarian and vegan customers easily. The dining experience may include fresh salads; assorted appetizers; house-made, whole-wheat pasta (ravioli); delicious entrées featuring lentils and mushrooms; and a wide range of vegetables. The restaurant's four-star rating makes it somewhat pricey. Salads and appetizers range from \$7.50 to \$13.00; entrées from \$17.00 to \$20.00. Reservations are recommended for dinner.

Charlie Gitto's Pasta House

207 North Sixth Street

Phone: 314-436-2828

Hours: Mon.–Thurs. 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Fri. and Sat. 11:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.

Not many vegetarian dishes; a little pricey.

Hunan Manor Chinese

606 Pine Street

Phone: 314-231-2867

Hours: Mon.–Sat. 11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Closed Sunday

Located four blocks from America's Center, it contains a wide selection of vegetarian dishes. A lunch buffet is served between 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Vegetarian entrées from the menu start at \$4.85. Dinner entrées are \$6.95 and include rice.

Hunan Manor is offering a special dinner buffet for groups with 30 or more people. Call in advance for reservations (mention that you're with the Seventh-day Adventists).

Lombardo's Trattoria

201 South Twentieth Street

Phone: 314-621-0666
Hours: Mon.–Fri. 11:00 a.m. to
11:00 p.m.
Sat. 4:30 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.
Closed Sunday

They actually have two vegetarian dishes, but you can order off the menu and adapt any dish to fit your need. Lunch items are \$8.00 to \$11.00; dinner, \$13.00 to \$25.00. Food is good; service is average.

TGI Friday's

529 Chestnut Street
Phone: 314-241-8443
Hours: Mon.–Sat. 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.
Excellent food, excellent service, moderately priced.

Kitchen K Restaurant

1000 Washington Avenue
Phone: 314-241-9900
Some vegetarian entrées. Average service and prices.

Hannigan's

719 North Second Street
Phone: 314-241-8877
Appetizers, soups, salads, quiche, sandwiches, etc.

Curry in a Hurry

612 Olive Street
Phone: 314-241-7900
Indian combos come with two or three entrées, plus basmati rice, vegetable biryani, and nan (a soft flatbread). Soups and appetizers are also available. Price: \$8.95 per person.

Old Spaghetti Factory

727 North First Street
Phone: 314-621-0276
The booths look like grandma's place gone oddly awry—iron bedsteads, velvet armchairs, and kitschy, fringed lamps. This shabby-chic motif is at the core of the chain's simple concept: Take an old warehouse, jam it full of whimsical antiques, then serve inexpensive, heaping plates of pasta. Lots of vegetarian offerings.

Other Downtown Eateries

Subway

707 North First Street
216 North Seventh Street

Hardee's

501 North Seventh Street

Taco Bell

223 St. Louis Union Station

St. Louis Bread Company

726 Chestnut Street

McDonald's

515 North Sixth Street

Burger King

1340 South Seventh Street

Wendy's

601 Chestnut Street

Chinese Gourmet

515 North Sixth Street

Quiznos

616 Olive Street

Chinese Wok

1009 Locust Street
214 North Fourth Street



GUY IMAGES

Agenda Highlights

What to look for, what to expect

BY HAROLD BAPTISTE

The fifty-eighth General Conference session of the Seventh-day Adventist Church has now convened in St. Louis, Missouri. Delegates to this quinquennial meeting represent the 13 divisions of the General Conference, 101 unions, 539 local conferences/missions, as well as institutions, lay members, and frontline denominational workers. They also represent 203 countries in which the church is established. The attendees to the meeting reflect the diversity of the church in language, culture, and customs, but they will also sense the spiritual unity that binds us together as one church.

The main purpose of the meeting is to transact the business that affects the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist Church. In that connection, the delegates will select a Nominating Committee, whose task it will be to come up with names of people to serve the church as officers of the General Conference, presidents of the 13 world divisions, and directors and associate directors of General Conference departments. The committee will also nominate the General Conference Corporation board of trustees and the General Conference Auditing Service board, as well as the board's director. These names will then be submitted to the session for its approval.

The delegates will obtain much information from the president's report, as well as those from the secretary, the treasurer, and the Office of Archives and Statistics. These reports will highlight the accomplishments of the church in the past quinquennium and the challenges facing the church in the future.

Following is a brief preview of some of the main items on the agenda:

1. *New Divisions*

As a result of the reorganization of the church in Africa, the session will be asked to recognize three new divisions in Africa, namely, the East-Central Africa Division, the West-Central Africa Division, and the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division. This action will increase the number of divisions to 13.

2. *New Union Conferences and Union Missions*

As the church grows it becomes necessary to reorganize local fields in order to achieve greater effectiveness and efficiency. A number of reorganizations were undertaken during the past quinquennium, resulting in 11 recommendations to recognize 15 new union missions, eight new union conferences, and upgrade one union mission to a union conference.

3. *New Fundamental Belief*

For the first time since the church's fundamental beliefs document was approved by the General Conference session in Dallas in 1980, a recommendation will be placed before the session to add another fundamental belief, entitled "Growing in Christ."

4. *Constitution and Bylaws Amendments*

The General Conference constitution and bylaws went through a major revision in Utrecht in 1995. One of the major thrusts was to reduce the size of the delegation to a General Conference session. It was observed by many that denominations the size of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and some considerably larger, had far fewer delegates to their major business meetings. Much time and care were invested in debate on the issue in an effort to address the matter in a responsible manner. The item eventually was voted, coming into effect and impacting the session held in Toronto in 2000. The challenge was to stay within the cap, while providing adequate representation for the institutions, sectors, and categories of delegates. It took time, effort, and originality to meet the challenges, and a number of amendments are being recommended to this session.

Among them:

1. To remove the current numerical limit of 2,000 as the overall size of a General Conference delegation.
2. To limit to less than 15 percent the increase in the number of delegates not affected by growth in organizational units.
3. To increase from 10 to 20 the number of delegates from each division without regard to membership.
4. To limit to 300 the number of delegates selected by the Executive Committee of the General Conference and its divisions.

5. To limit to 400 the number of additional delegates to which each division is entitled as a portion of the world church membership.

6. To stipulate that organizational units properly affiliated with a division or a union be granted delegates on the basis of two delegates for each union conference or local conference and one delegate for each union mission or local mission, without regard to membership.

5. Church Manual Amendments

Like the constitution and bylaws, the *Church Manual* can be amended only by the General Conference in session. This is, therefore, the first opportunity to consider amendments to its provisions since the session in 2000.

A few of the important items to be considered are as follows:

1. The addition of an optional brief baptismal vow that sums up the essentials in three sentences. The current vows consist of 13 statements of belief. Both vows will be in the *Church Manual*.

2. A proposal to allow divisions to approve alternative ways of transferring members from one church to another. This too is optional and may be used only within a division. If the transfer of membership is between divisions, the regular procedure outlined in the *Manual* must be followed.

3. Other *Church Manual* items on the agenda include: direction regarding proper method of disposing of the emblems (bread and wine) left over from a Communion service; establishing a quorum for church business meetings; the election of a Bible school coordinator; a revision of the statement in policy regarding the Children's Ministry Department; and a revision of the chapter on rebaptism.

6. Profiling Seventh-day Adventist Leadership

For five consecutive days, beginning July 3, a block of time consisting of one hour and 15 minutes will be reserved during the business session for the presentation and discussion of five papers on the subject of leader-

ship. The presentations will seek to profile and highlight the essential characteristics of Adventist Christian leadership.

One can anticipate an interesting and lively discussion of the items on the agenda. And that is good. Because, you see, the decisions made at this session will set the priorities

and the tone of the church for the next five years.

Harold Baptiste is a vice president of the General Conference.



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*Pastor Dwight and Karen Nelson
Berrien Springs, Michigan*



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The following list was supplied by the General Conference Secretariat and is complete as of May 19, 2005. Because of many visa complications, resulting from 9/11, the listing this time is more tentative than ever before.

East-Central Africa Division

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Astrouski, Ivan; Astrouski, Maisei; Avdalian, Mariia; Balkan, Arkadiy; Berbek, Anatoly; Bondarchuk, Lev; Boyko, Halyna; Centova, Eleonora; Chekelek, Nikolay; Chibuk, Oksana; Dmitrienko, Evgeny; Eliseev, Vladimir; Fedotova, Tatiana; Frolov, Anatoly; Grents, Vladimir; Gudumac, Nicolae; Hanulick, Petro; Hirle, Wilmar; Holovach, Heorhiy; Holovach, Hryhorii; Iovu, Sergey; Isakov, Oksiy; Ivanov, Valerian; Ivanova, Nadezda; Kalachina, Svetlana; Kapsamun, Dmitry; Kara, Viatcheslav; Katyushko, Vasyi; Khachatryan, Vigen; Kim, Oleg; Kislaya, Valentina; Korzhos, Borys; Kotov, Vladimir; Kovtyuk, Vadym; Krasilnikov, Igor; Kucheruk, Boris; Kulakov, Mikhail; Kulakova, Maria; Lungu, Oleg; Lymareva, Vera; Maminadova, Solma; Manilich, Ivan; Maruscec, Anatolie; Mikhailov, Vladimir; Muller, Heriberto; Nikityuk, Valery; Nosov, Stanislav; Oleynik, Mikhail; Ostrovskiy, Ivan; Panciuc, Leonid; Pavelko, Daniil; Plahota, Alexei; Prolinsky, Volodymyr; Protasevich, Boris; Ramanau, Uladzimir; Reband, Daniil; Remfert, Lubov; Ryabyi, Valeriy; Sergecheva, Elena; Smereka, Teryana; Smorzhev, Pavel; Snytko, Vladimir; Syrotkin, Petro; Tashchuk, Halyna; Tigley, Edwin; Tkachuk, Vladimir; Vartsaba, Ivan; Vasmout, Artour; Velgosa, Ivan; Vertylo, Dmytro; Vitko, Victor; Voloshchuk, Leonid; Wagner, Alexander; Yavorskaya, Marina; Zavrichko, Ivan; Zaytsev, Evgeny; Zhukova, Olga; Zozulin, Michael; Zubkov, Dmytro; Zukalyuk, Mykola.

Guests: Alycksyeyenko, Viktor; Andruscuc, Vsevolod; Begas, Anatoly; Burak, Valery; Costas, Victor; Dmitrienko, Dmitry; Dzulay, Vasyi; Grigoryan, Samvel; Hlibka, Veroniy; Kolback, Volodymyr; Koolik, Peter; Kuznenko, Yuri; Leahu, Ilie; Makusevs, Tibons; Manilich, Ruslana; Matryashin, Vladimir; Morar, Mikhail; Muratov, Zafar; Nechiporuk, Vasily; Nelson Dean, Richard; Nosova, Zinaida; Opanasyuk, Vladyslav; Pankratova, Larissa; Sarhu, Petru; Severenyuk, Anatoly; Titkov, Georgy; Veloso, Mario; Vladovskyy, Volodymyr; Zgherea, Vitale.

Euro-Africa Division

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Guests: Altinkaynak, Erkin; Badenas-Sanguesa, Roberto David; Barelli, Daniello; Ciobanu, Vasile; Czertl, Markus; De Clermont, Arnold; Derlefsen, Wilfried; Dorotik, Norbert; Haase, Martin; Marschner, Thomas; Memete, Pavel; Naether, Johannes; Peicu, Virgil; Petre, Teofil; Puyol Buil, Carlos; Verfaillie, Maurice; Walschmidt, Frank; Wanitschek, Rainer.

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Guests: Hongo, Kazuhiko; Liang, Jach Cheng-Hsiung; Miyazaki, Kyoichi; Oh, Bong Joo; Park, Kyung Yong; Son, Kyung-il; Su, Chu-Hui; Takahashi, Yoshibumi.

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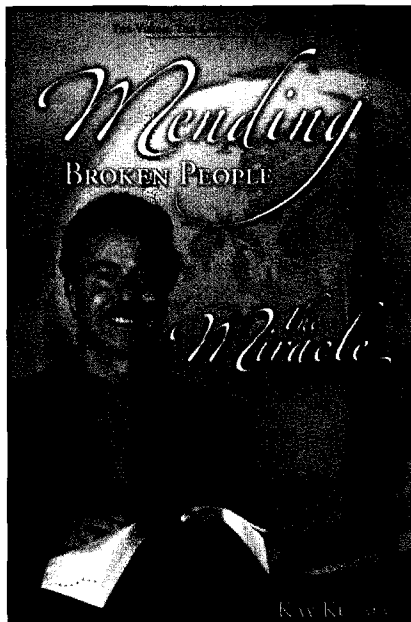
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Guests: Castilho, Maria Ana; Chisiwe, Sipiwe; Fabiao, Candido Fabiao; Kcofitlhile, Edward Oreeditse; Lote, Biriote Lote; Luneta, Bernardo Guilhorme; Maimbo, Khama Mwemba; Mataya, John Heston; Mdluli, Daniel; Mhuri, Jasper; Moyo, Makhosiwonke; Nzimande, Nkosenye Aubrey; Paiva, Benjamin Fausto; Rabenama, Charlin; Sithole, Lordreck; Williams, Susan.

South Pacific Division

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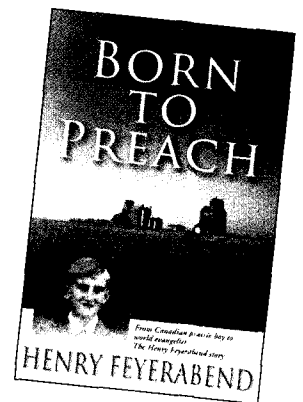
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Guests: No Guests.

Southern Asia-Pacific Division

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Guests: Abdulmajid, Abdulmusin; Bermudez, Vivencio; Camagay, Ulysses; De Los Reyes, Pinky Joy; Dumapig, Ronaldo; Fernando, Sydney Ranjan; Flores, Gladden O.; Gultom, Elisa; Habaradas, Joel; Kumolontang, Billy; Nangoy, Lenda Mambu; Nobuo, Willy; Panaglima, Pascual; Perera, K. L. Gratton; Riki, Agutustinus; Rumambi, Denny R. O.; Sakul, Noldy; Serrano, Wendell.

Southern Asia Division

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Guests: Arattukulam, Johncrysotem Tito; Babu Judson, Sighamony; Bandrapalli, Dyva Asirvadam; Chandanshive, Bhupal R.; Clark, Douglas; Doddannawar, Jayawant Peter; Godava, Merline; Isaiiah, Paulraj; Kandulana, Sudershan; Kore, Gnanaraj; Lyngdoh, Lionel Ford; Manickam, Enoch; Manuel, Manasseh; Marapaka, Devadanam; Mesipam, Mohanraj J.; Muthiyapillai, Shanmuga Sundaram; Nethala, Venkata Rathnam; Paradesi, Eswaramoorthy; Samson Gopali, Edwin Stanley.

Trans-European Division

Acimic, Radovan; Andersson, Audrey; Anthony,

Gavin; Arkangelo, Clement Joseph; Arthur, John; Bartosik, Roman; Bierka, Terje; Bojko, Arkadiusz; Burt, Christine; Chalupka, Roman; Clee, Paul; Daka, Dijana; Davison, Brian; Ditta, Frederick; Dunseth, Glenn; Dyrud Kolkmann, Mariantne; Eastwood, Patricia; Elmadjian, Yervant Alexander; Elofer, Richard; Faltas, Amir S. Ghali; Fargo, Basim; Francis, Egerton; Garvanovic-Porobija, Durdica; Gittens, Jean; Godina, Zhago; Hanna, Samir Naguib; Haugen, Bjorn; Heinanen, Markku; Hibner, Bertold Vinston; Jacob, Reynald; Jankowski, Ryszard; Jegard, Finn; Jugar, Tonu; Kendel, Ole Bjorn; Kirlew, Susanne; Kovacs-Biro, Janos; Leskinen, Anne; Lorencin, Miroslav; Mabior, Yithak, Paul; Mahon, Penny; Manglis, Apostolos; Masih Bhatti, Sharif; Mutohiti, Alban; McCormac, Heather; McFarlane, Donald; Milbreta-Holma, Hella; Moyi, Kay Christine Cathy; Odorcic, Tihomir; Papaioannou, Dean; Penner, David; Phillip, James; Pilmoor, Victor; Plavsic, Zorica; Pujic, Miroslav; Querijero, Loida; Rafi, Sohail; Rajala, Jukka; Rajki, Antal; Reke, Valda; Richardson, Roydon; Rigobert, Saska; Roennfeldt, Peter; Rytkonen, Onni; Saarits, Eeva; Sili, Vencel; Sitkeine Magyar, Tunde; Sleeman, Ian; Stabell, Lena; Swan, Patricia; Taylor, Jean; Thorman, Michael; Tokics, Imre Tibor; Tompkins, Paul; Vahtramae, Anne; Wlodarczyk, Zofia; Wollan, Anne-May; Woolford, Orville.

Guests: Clarke, Desmond; Coysten, Beverly; Dahl, Terje; Kubrick, Sretko; Laudurgs, Zigurds; Miler, Edvard; Milovanovic, Nebojsa; Murphy, Curtis; Osz-Farkas, Erno; Swain, Caroline; Trajkovski, Gjorgjija.

West-Central Africa Division

Abbu-Bonsra, Ohene Kwaku; Abolarin, Isaiiah O.; Adaelu, Emmanuel; Adeoye, Grace; Adesina, Adefemi; Agabus, 4687; Aghodouamenou, Komi Atsou; Agboka, Japheth; Agwu, Stephen; Agyeman, Charlotte Osei; Ajibade, Onaolapo; Akuamo-Debra, Samuel; Alalade, Adekunle; Alao, Samuel; Ampim-Darko, Mercy Tutua; Amponsem, Isaac Owusu; Anonaba, Kingsley; Anyaogu, Okorie Chukwu; Apollos, Bello; Asante-Mensah, Samuel; Asiem, John; Assienin, Salomon; Badu, James Kwaruf; Balais, Sylvain; Baleba, Martin; Bessala Ribouem, Bernard; Bilana Eteme, Cosmas; Boachie-Marfo, Bright; Boakye-Dankwa, Gabriel; Boma, Emmanuel; Bori, Biodon Aissatou; Buba, Gyang; Chentu, Jean Nemko; Codin Pelayo, Gervasio; Conte, Joseph Bom Amhra; Coulibaly, Lassina; Cruz, Diori; Dangana, Markus Musa; Djimadjibaye, Aime; Enang, Nkeruwem; Ewoo, Andrews Laurence; Eya Medjo, Clementeau; Fordjour, Alice; Francis, Robinson; Gamera, Swasi Senanu; Giebel, Herbert; Gomes, Alves Herculano; Ikonne, Chiemela; Jegede, Daniel; Kessie, Anthony; Kone, Allah-ridy; Kuntu-Blankson, George; Kwarbai, Hliya; Larmie, Samuel Adama; Laryea, Seth Abang; Magaji, Ezekiel Dutse; Manilla, Emmanuel; Mensah, Abraham Peter; Metonou, Akissi; Moampea, Edmond Nbio; Moukoko, Jean; Nana-Tuffour, Israel; Nengel, Sarah; Nlend, Emile Albert; Nlo Nlo, Jean Emmanuel; Nyamekye, John Forsu; Ocran, Thomas; Okai, Moses Onyendu; Okonkwo, Okei Ernest; Okpoti, Erasmus Abadio; Okwubunka, Sal Nwachi; Ola, Joseph Adehisi; Ononou, Chimezie; Onuoha, Luke; Orwubuariri, Valentine C.; Onadjo,

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Guests: Anim, Nathan Kwaku; Annor-Boafo, Kwabena; Da Silvate, David; Imbrah, Emmanuel.

Tables giving the delegate breakdown in regard to age, gender, and administrative/church employee/lay designations will be carried in Bulletin No. 2—Editors.

ADVENTIST Review

Publisher General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
Executive Publisher William G. Johnson

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Web site: www.adventistreview.org

Subscriptions: Twelve monthly issues: US\$18.95 plus US\$12.00 postage outside North America; 42 issues of the weekly *Adventist Review*, US\$42.95 plus US\$12.00 postage outside North America; full 52 issues (weekly and monthly), US\$61.90 plus US\$24.00 postage outside North America. Single copy US\$3.25. To order, send your name, address, and payment to your local Adventist Book Center or *Adventist Review* Subscription Desk, Box 1119, Hagerstown, MD 21741-1119. Prices subject to change.

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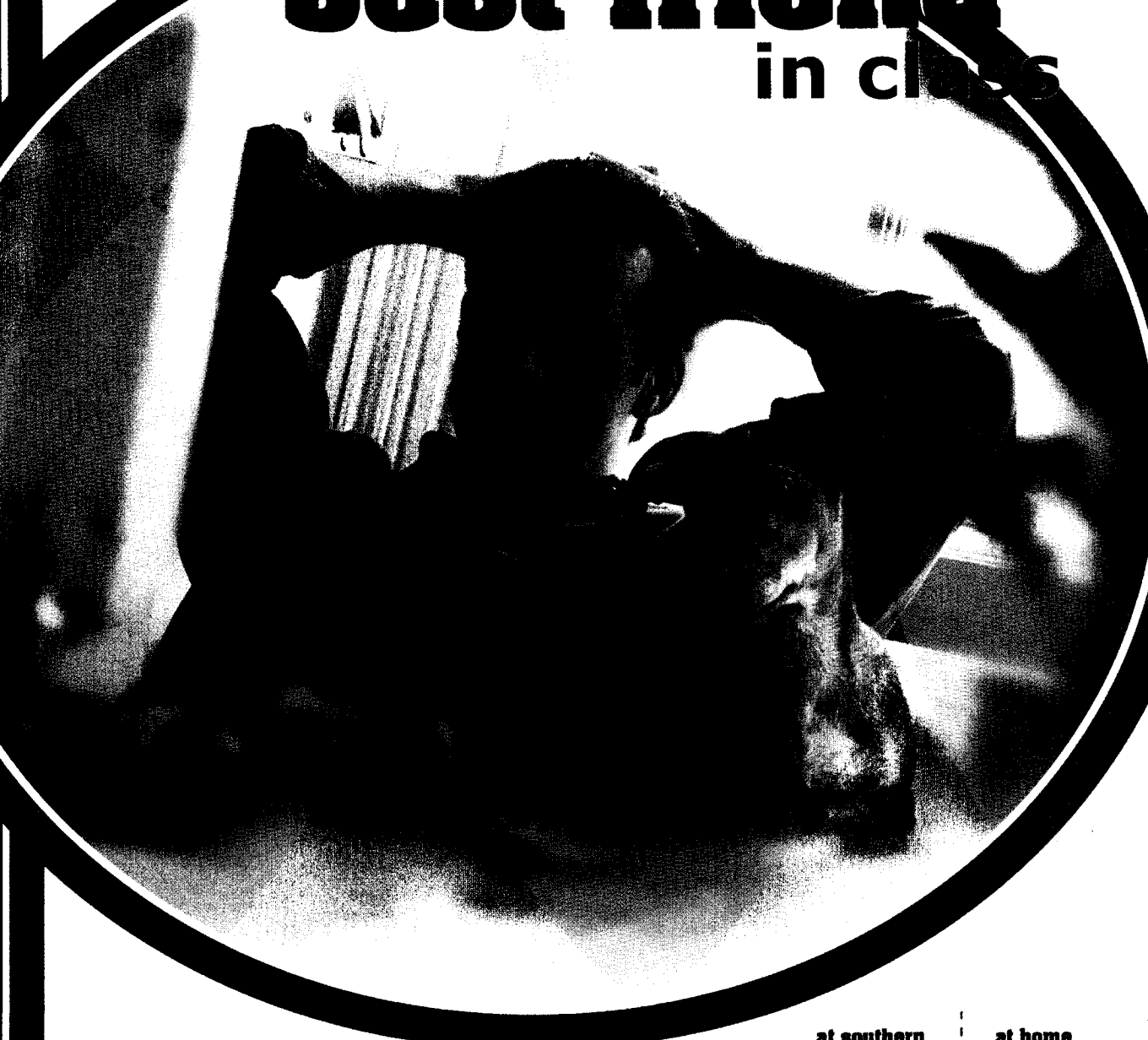
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