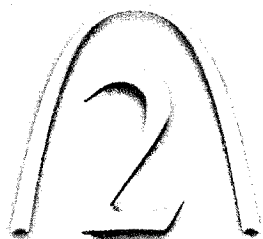


ADVENTIST REVIEW

July 3, 2005

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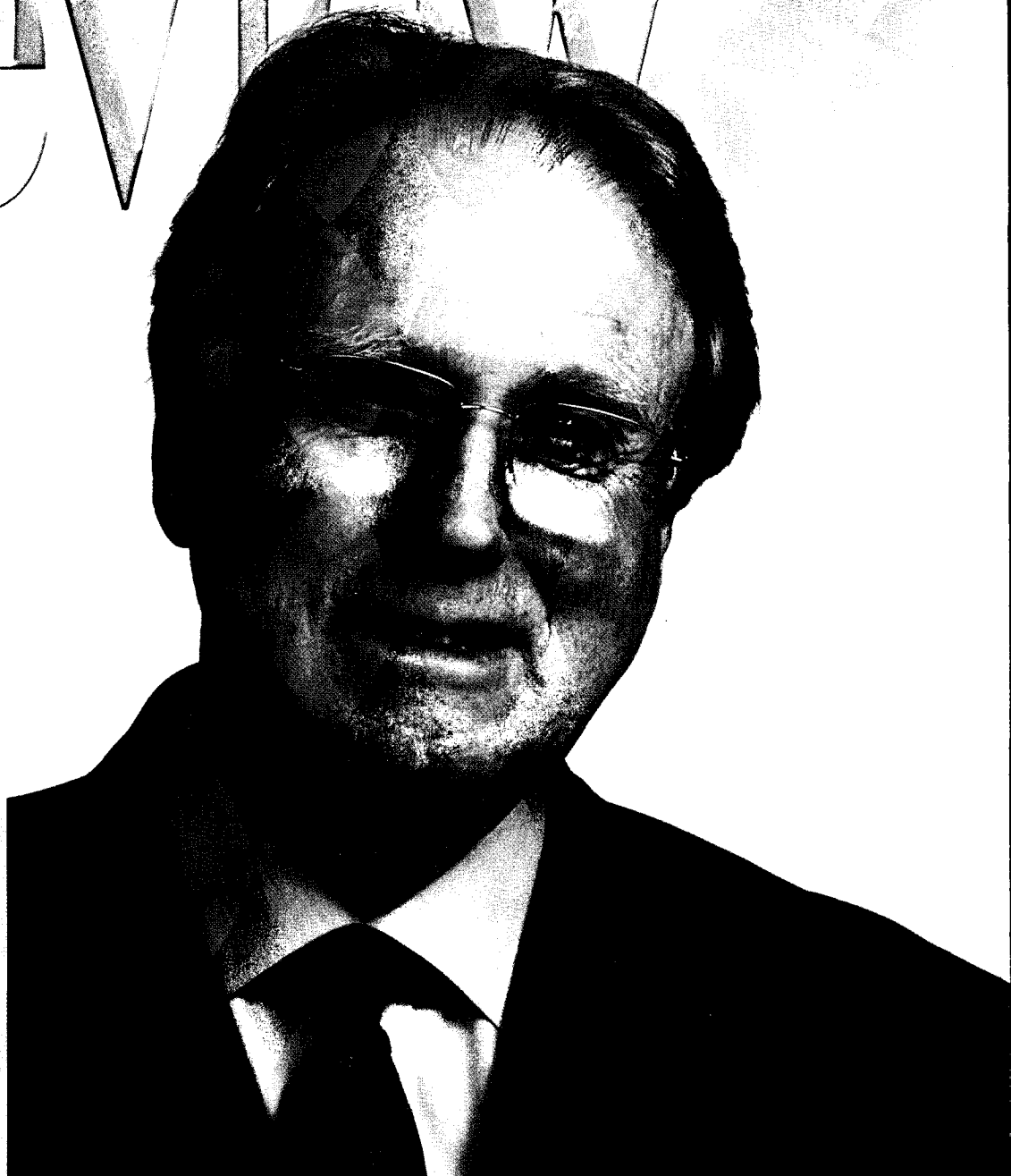
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Pastor Jan Paulsen
Reelected World
Church President

Paulsen Reelected for Second Term

BY BILL KNOTT

ST LOUIS—Delegates representing more than 14 million Seventh-day Adventists today elected Pastor Jan Paulsen to a second five-year term as president of the church's General Conference.

Paulsen, 70, has served as the church's first officer since being elected at a special session of the church's Executive Committee in March 1999. He was subsequently elected to a full five-year term at the denomination's 2000 international session in Toronto. He had previously worked as a general vice president of the General Conference; president of the church's Trans-European Division; and as a pastor, missionary, seminary teacher, and college president. A native of Norway, he is only the second non-North American to serve in the church's highest leadership post since the denomination was organized by 20 American delegates in Battle Creek, Michigan, in 1863.

The president and his wife, Kari, acknowledged the applause of the delegates and guests after the Nominating Committee report that recommended his election was voted by the assembly.

"It is a privilege to serve the Lord and the church in the leadership role that you asked me to fill," Paulsen said. "It is an honor, and I want to express appreciation for the trust you have placed in me. And I will do my very best to serve the Lord and His church—His people—as best I know how."

"The Lord is present with the Spirit," Paulsen continued. "I believe He has guided this congregation, this gathering. If I did not believe that, the responsibility that one assumes is too great to carry. I need to know that the



Jan and Kari Paulsen

Holy Spirit will be a constant companion and support, and I believe He will."

The afternoon vote by the 2,000 official delegates attending the world meeting endorsed the recommendation made by the 196-member Nominating Committee, and came less than 12 hours after Paulsen's keynote presidential report on Thursday night. The

multimedia report, which his wife also helped to present, highlighted Adventists involved in outreach efforts to alleviate poverty, assist with job training, and share Bible truth.

"When a church isolates itself from the environment in which it is placed; when a local congregation forgets the setting in which it is placed, something goes wrong," Paulsen told the Thursday night crowd of more than 10,000 in the Edward Jones Dome. "Too often we are caught up with ourselves, our own inner comforts, strengthening the ties within ourselves, that we forget that we are placed in a context. We are placed in an environment. We are in a specific community for a purpose. We are there to make a difference."

Paulsen also specifically addressed the young adults of the world church near the close of his evening report. "I want you to come in and to partner with the rest of us," he urged those between 15 and 30 years of age. "I want to make room for you, for you have energies and ideas that no one can quite match. If you don't find the church interesting, you can make it interesting; just don't walk away from it, for walking away is the worst possible thing that you can do."

The church's world session typically selects its lead officer first: the new president then meets with the Nominating Committee to help select other members of the church's administrative team.

“Mission Is Our Objective”

A Conversation With Pastor Paulsen

BY WILLIAM G. JOHANSSON

Is it true—that this very day, July 1, marks 50 years of your marriage to Kari?

Yes, that's right.

Congratulations! You two seem very comfortable with each other. What is the secret of your relationship?

When you have lived together for as long as we have, and found a good life in it, you become very comfortable with each other. I think the fact that we have so many shared values, not just in faith—though, of course, faith is the first one. We have shared values, shared interests, shared children. The more you can share, the closer you get to each other.

Looking back over the years, is there one highlight that stands out?

There are some intersections that came to be important as we look back. Going to Africa 43 years ago when we were a very young family, that opened to us a world that we had not known before. It's the world of the global church. We since discovered there are many, many other doors that you have to walk through, but that first one took us into the world, away from our more sheltered community in Europe.

Even though that experience exposed you to medical conditions that seriously affected Kari?

Yes. It did. It's the risk and price that you sometimes pay. But Kari was

always strong. Her mind is stronger than her health at times, but she has never looked back with regrets on that time we spent in Africa.

You married and you went into ministry immediately, right?

Well, we married and went into a study period. For the first four years or so after we married we were in studies. She supported me. I pursued full-time studies, and she was in full-time work.

She has a good theological mind.

She does. We met at our training school in Denmark. We were just 17, 18 years of age, beginning theological ministerial training. She has a very good, very sharp mind. Her mind was early on conditioned for these kinds of things.

without intimidation. We often talk together about the message and so forth, and she will sometimes give a human dimension to it that I would otherwise miss, thinking just biblically or theologically.

What is your vision or dream for the next five years?

I want the church not to be distracted from what we have already determined is our focus. I want the church—I want us as leaders—to be constantly focused on mission. Mission is our objective. The benefits that accompany it are the benefits of renewal. As you spend yourself, exhausting your energies and they get replenished, this is how spirituality complements an active life of mission. Also, I think it very important

for each of us to become involved. Particularly to sharpen the sense of ownership among those who are young and to give to them a sense of being trusted.

Many members will continue to pray for you and Kari. Is there a particular focus you would like them to have in their prayers?

That the Lord will give us the strength of mind, the Spirit, to do what He has in mind. I would ask them also to pray for the church, to pray specifically for this rapidly growing international global family to hold together as one.

The family does best as we strengthen the bonds that tie us together.



THE FIRST TAKE: Editor William G. Johansson interviews newly reelected GC president Jan Paulsen.

Does she interact with you in your speaking and sermons?

She does. She is the only one to this day who can tell me the truth

By the Incarnation

Devotional message presented Friday morning, July 1, 2005

In his influential book, *The Essence of Christianity*, the German philosopher Ludwig Andreas Feuerbach (1804-1872) argued that God was simply a human projection.

Richard Rice, in *The Reign of God*, declares that “no matter what we learn about the vastness of the universe or the intricacy of the atom, we ourselves are the greatest mystery of all. And the more we learn about ourselves, the more mysterious we become” (pp. 96, 97).

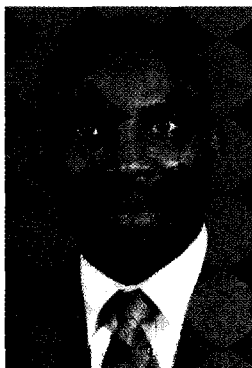
I suggest, however, that the greatest mystery with which the human mind could ever be confronted is the mystery of the Incarnation. The mystery of godliness, God manifested in the flesh, is the basis of every hope, the foundation of our salvation, the source of our transformation, and the reason for our rejoicing (1 Tim. 3:16).

The Creator becoming flesh—the Divine becoming human in the person of Jesus Christ, who was all God and all man at the same time—is fundamental and foundational in the transformation of sinners into saints. For the Christian, the Incarnation is distinctive and unique—and personal. It is in a particular life, in a particular person that “the Word became flesh” (John 1:14, NIV).

This is not an idea or philosophy. It is not an ideology or mere theology. It is not an all-pervasive force. It is in Christ and Christ alone that God became man. He is the *monogenes* [only begotten]. There is none other like Him.

This Creator became a creature—He who by the word of His mouth established this vast universe in all its immeasurable and inconceivable complexities.

This God, who established millions of galaxies and mighty stars not visible to naked mortal eyes; this God, who made the world in six days, creating humanity from the dust of the ground; this God became flesh. His signature appears



Glenn Samuels
Ministerial
Secretary, West
Indies Union

on the hard drive of Creation, and He, out of His great love for humankind, chose to become like one of them.

Celsus, who attacked the Christians with such vigor toward the end of the second century A.D., wrote: “God is good, and beautiful, and blessed, and that in the best and most beautiful degree. But if he came down among men, he must undergo a change, and a change from good to evil, from virtue to vice, from happiness to misery, and from best to worst. Who, then, would make choice of such a change?”

This is precisely the message that John brings.

John, the last of the original disciples, whose Gospel differs significantly in content from his other three Gospel-writing companions, seemed eager to make his point. John, writing from

Ephesus, according to tradition, sometime around A.D. 100, delivers this:

“When the world had its beginning, the word was already there; and the word was with God; and the word was God. This word was in the beginning with God. He made all things and there is not a single thing which exists in this world which came into being without him. In him was life and the life was the light of men. . . . So the word became (flesh) a person and took up his abode in our being” (John 1:1-14, paraphrased).

“In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him” (1 John 4:9).

The Humanity of Jesus

John’s Gospel uncompromisingly stresses the real humanity of Jesus.

1. Jesus was physically tired as He sat by the well of Sychar in Samaria (4:6).

2. His disciples offered Him food as an ordinary hungry man (4:31).

3. He had sympathy for those who were hungry and with those who were afraid (6:5, 20).

4. He knew grief, and He shed tears as any mourner might (11:33, 35, 38).

5. In the agony of the cross, the cry of His parched lips was "I thirst" (19:28).

The fourth Gospel shows us a Jesus who was no shadowy, docetic figure. It shows us one who knew the weariness of an exhausted body and the wounds of a distressed heart. It is the truly human Jesus whom the fourth Gospel sets before us.

The Divinity of Jesus

On the other hand, there is no other Gospel writer who sets before us such a view of the deity of Jesus.

1. John stresses the preexistence of Jesus: "In the beginning was the Word, . . . and the Word was God" (1:1); and "Before Abraham was, I am" (8:58).

2. He speaks of the glory that He had with the Father before the world was made (17:5).

3. He speaks again and again of His coming down from heaven (6:33-38).

4. No human being took His life from Him. He had power to lay it down and power to take it up (10:18; 19:11).

John presents us with a Jesus who was undeniably human and who yet was undeniably divine.

Love and the Incarnation

The force that moved God to experience the Incarnation, the foundation of our transformation, was the very essence of His nature—love. It is a love that is saving and revelational, and the mystery of redeeming love will occupy the minds of the redeemed throughout eternity.

He came down to our level because we could not get up to His, and with loving arms He is lifting us up to show what living is. In this, God's love is manifested. He is saving us, transforming us in the process as He reveals Himself to us.

On page 18 of the book *Steps to*

Christ, Ellen G. White states: "It is impossible for us, of ourselves, to escape from the pit of sin in which we are sunken. Our hearts are evil, and we cannot change them. . . . Education, culture, the exercise of the will, human effort, all have their proper sphere, but here they are powerless. They may produce an outward correctness of behavior, but they cannot change the heart."

Left to ourselves, we would self-destruct. Sin, like a cancer, has permeated every tissue of the human soul, made painfully evident in acts of brutality (covertly and overtly expressed), in our gross inhumanity one to the other, even in sacred circles.

The saving love of God is revealed in the birth of Christ. For John, the purpose of His coming is that we might live through Him. It is only as He lives in us, transforming us, empowering us, that we can experience true life—and only because He became one of us—all because of His saving love.

The Transforming Power of the Incarnation

By His becoming one of us, the transforming power of God, in Christ, is available and accessible to any and every believer.

This, for John, is the prime purpose of the Incarnation: "God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him" (1 John 4:9).

The Incarnation is the fundamental source and foundational platform for our transformation. The weakest, vilest, most wretched recalcitrant sinner, sinking beneath the weight of transgression, asks: Can God change and save a sinner like me? In the Incarnation, God shouts His response in an open-ended "Yes, I can, and I will!"

Paul says, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature" (2 Cor. 5:17). Transformed from a power-seeking despot with a desire to rule into a loving, caring undershepherd, the individual is called to serve, chosen to model the life of the transforming Christ.

My brothers and sisters of God's worldwide Seventh-day Adventist Church, we have been transformed in

Christ in order that we may be agents of transformation through Christ.

For whether we be doctors or patients, presidents or district pastors, teachers or students, administrators or lecturers, accountants or secretaries—let's be agents of transformation seeking to change lives by the Spirit of God.

Let us lift others, worldwide, with the hand of love and share with them the word of hope—that He is God with us, lifting humanity, saving humanity, transforming humanity, and preparing humanity to live with Divinity. Eden will be restored, and God and humankind will dwell together again—this time together forever—all transformed because Christ became "flesh" and dwelt among us. Amen.

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Matthew A. Bediako
Secretary

In a Time of Unprecedented Changes

Presented Friday morning, July 1, 2005

The first meeting such as this was held in 1863, with 20 delegates attending. These delegates represented the existing membership at the time: 3,500 Seventh-day Adventists. At that session the General Conference Executive Committee consisted of just three members.

At this fifty-eighth session we estimate the total number of delegates to number 2,000, with an additional 600 special guests. They represent the world church's baptized membership of 13,936,932, as of December 31, 2004. The first General Conference Executive Committee of three has grown to 292 members representing our work in 206 countries.

Since we met five years ago in Toronto, several momentous and tragic events have occurred. The terrorist attacks in New York City and in Washington, D.C., on September 11, 2001, shocked the entire world.

We have witnessed wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and the human disaster in Darfur, southern Sudan, where it is estimated that more than 1 million people have lost their lives. The day after Christmas, 2004, the horrific tsunami in southern Asia affected the entire world.

Yet despite these social upheavals, God continues to do marvelous things for His church. At these times of uncertainty Seventh-day Adventists are sure of our responsibility as unveiled in the prophetic picture of Revelation 14:6-12.

Reorganization

We began this quinquennium seriously looking at the growth of the church in many parts of the world field and asking: Is the organization in place strong enough to provide leadership and nurture for new members?

Africa

At the 2002 Annual Council we voted to reorganize the work in Africa, south of the Sahara, into three divisions. As a result, the continent is now home to the West-Central Africa Division—stretching from west of the Congo River to the western tip of the continent, with headquarters in Côte d'Ivoire; the East-Central Africa Division—comprised of the lake region of Africa, with Kenya as its headquarters; and the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division, with headquarters in Zimbabwe. The work in Nigeria was reorganized to create two unions—the Eastern Nigeria Union and the North-Western Nigeria Union Mission.

Inter-American Division

The rapid growth of the Inter-American Division also called for reorganization in the Central American Union and Mexico. The Annual Council voted and established three unions for Central America: North Central, Mid-Central, and South Central American unions. The work in Mexico was reorganized to include three unions: Inter-Oceanic Mexican, North Mexican, and South Mexican unions.

South American Division

The work in Brazil was reorganized to add an additional union—the West Central Brazil Union. In 2001 the Ecuador Attached Field achieved full union status.

Southern Asia Division

Unprecedented growth in India led to major reorganization. The division had 350,136 members at the beginning of the quinquennium. By the end of 2004 it was home to 919,782 believers, an increase of 262 percent since the last General Conference session. The division also reorganized itself to include seven unions.

Euro-Asia Division

A new union was created, bringing the existing number of unions in the division to six. We hope that in a year's time another union will be created to care for the vast western section of the territory.

South Pacific Division

In the South Pacific Division restructuring resulted in a reduction of unions, from five to four. These efforts have resulted in the creation of more conferences, missions, fields, and sections.

The worldwide Seventh-day Adventist Church now includes 13 divisions, 102 unions, and 540 conferences/missions/fields. We are beginning to witness positive outcomes from these changes. Leadership is moving closer to the local level, thereby strengthening the work.

New Initiatives

At the first Annual Council of this quinquennium, three focus issues were voted for promotion throughout the world field: growth, unity, and quality of life. Our worldwide divisions have expanded this list with their own local issues and are promoting them in their territories and churches.

Soul Winning

During this period the church voted to promote major evangelistic initiatives by establishing the Council on Evangelism and Witness. This committee has served as the powerhouse for Go One Million, Sow 1 Billion, the Elijah Project, and Global Evangelism. A detailed report of these initiatives will be given later during the session.

Supporting Independent Ministry

In the past, foreign missions and missions outside the local church came under the direct auspices of the church organization. Missionaries going overseas were all sent by the General Conference.

However, during the past two decades numerous mission initiatives have come from churches, schools, and hospitals. These initiatives have been a blessing to God's cause, for those who provide and receive these services have been equally blessed.

To coordinate strategies, share plans, resources, and foster effective communication, the General Conference appointed a committee to oversee these key objectives. The committee's goal is to encourage mission initiatives, while at the same time preserving unity, order, and financial support for the basic church structure.

World Baptism and Membership

The past five years have been the best soul-winning period in our entire history.

Church administrators, departmental leaders, and office workers throughout all levels of the church; teachers, doctors and nurses, students, literature evangelists, and our steadfast pastors; have all been galvanized to join lay members in conducting evangelistic

outreach throughout the world.

With the launch of Go One Million, Sow 1 Billion, and the Elijah Project, we have witnessed a marvelous upsurge of soul-winning activities in the church.

The Lord, through the Holy Spirit, has blessed His workers with a marvelous harvest. During this quinquennium 5,049,157 people have been added to the Seventh-day Adventist Church—an increase of 1,015,179 over the previous quinquennium. World membership grew from 10,939,182 to 13,936,932, and every division has contributed to these encouraging gains. In some divisions thousands have been baptized in a day.

Facts and Figures

About 33 percent of the Seventh-day Adventist membership lives on the continent of Africa.

The Inter-American Division continues to be the largest division, closely followed by the South American and East-Central Africa divisions. These three divisions make up 50 percent of our total world membership.

I am happy to report that by the end of December 31, 2004, the North American Division crossed the 1 million-member mark, and the Southern Asia Division has also reached the million-member mark.

A Tribute

This morning I stand to recognize my dedicated and committed colleagues in leadership throughout

all levels of the church.

Permit me to pay special tribute to God's workers who do not share the limelight on occasions like this, for often we hear very little about them. These amazing people are the local pastors and evangelists; workers in our educational and health institutions; the thousands of dedicated lay members, who—at the root of it all—face their daily tasks with tremendous courage. These people, under the power of the Holy Spirit, are responsible for much of the progress of the church.

And let me express my appreciation and gratitude to the "silver-haired" fathers and mothers in Israel who have laid the solid foundation we have built upon during these five years. To the thousands of retirees around the world who have played their parts so well, thank you, and God bless you.

Mission Cross-Fertilization

More fields around the world are now able to assume a greater share of responsibility at home and throughout the world. More and more, our workers are proceeding from all divisions to all divisions, from unions to unions.

These interdivision and intradivision workers provide a steady cross-fertilization of ideas and methods that enrich our outreach programs. They work with members and leaders of the church in the countries or regions to which they are assigned—not always in supervisory positions, but as workers together for God.

Facts and Figures

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004**
Accessions	1,090,848	1,043,843	961,542	980,920	991,717	1,071,135
Per day	2,987	2,858	2,633	2,686	2,715	2,933
Per hour	124	119	110	112	113	122
Accession rate	10.73%	9.54%	8.23%	7.96%	7.69%	7.99%
New churches organized every hour	5	4	4	4	4	4
Growth rate	7.63%	6.84%	5.42%	4.65%	3.98%	3.96%
Ratio of population to Adventist member	547:1	519:1	498:1	482:1	471:1	459:1

** Based on world population, mid-2004: 6,395,892,000

Prepared by the General Conference Office of Archives and Statistics. Updated April 11, 2005

In addition to the regular missionaries, we have a large number of short-term missionaries called Adventist Volunteers. These workers fill an important gap in the church's overall mission program.

We are happy about and proud of the contribution that student missionaries make to the world missionary program. Last year I visited many of these students in their places of work, and it is gratifying to note that many of today's regular missionaries were student missionaries at one time. We are so grateful to our colleges and universities for promoting this program. Without these student missionaries and volunteers several English language schools and high schools in Asia would certainly cease to exist.

Our summary of missionary departures during the quinquennium shows the following:

Appointees	737
Furloughees/OAL	1,992
Adventist Volunteers	8,199
Total	<u>10,928</u>

Conclusion

Delegates at this fifty-eighth session, you represent the organizational forces that have made the success of this quinquennium possible. Thank you.

On behalf of the church's leadership, I invite you to assume with us the weighty responsibility of sharing God's message in these last days. While we keep preaching and witnessing in areas that have brought great success, we must, with even greater zeal and vigor, dedicate ourselves to the area in which 60 percent of the world's population lives—an area in which less than 18 percent know Jesus. The challenges of megacities, the secular mind, and the materialistic world are yours and mine.

The task and the challenge are immense, and the logistics are staggering. However, the immensity of the task is not the chief problem. The problem is the measure of our faith, our spiritual vision, and our experience. The challenge of taking the good news to all people requires faith and sacrifice and a personal experience with the Lord.

Relevant activities need to be brought into focus for the finishing of God's work. Tried and honored plans must be further developed. God has a thousand ways in reserve to proclaim the gospel in all the earth, but these are yet to be discovered and prayerfully adopted. Specialized leaders must be called and sent into the 10/40 window and the megacities. Members of all age groups must be mobilized to serve as volunteers and "tentmakers" throughout the world.

This movement is not, and cannot be, static. It must be expanded into new territories. The church must ever work to enlarge our sphere of labor. We must lift our sights and see the immense task in a correct perspective. Then we will recognize that God is in charge of the evangelization of the world. The ultimate success and achievement of our endeavors are His.

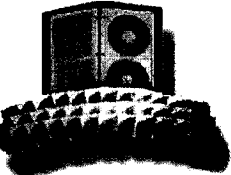
Our greatest need is to identify ourselves with God. The must-have goal of the Adventist movement must be to fall in step with God and advance with Him to the ends of the earth.

I appeal to you, fellow delegates to this fifty-eighth General Conference session, let us go from St. Louis with earnest determination to join hands, and, under the power of His Spirit, finish this work of evangelization.

Let me finish with a call from Ellen G. White, a servant of the Lord. She wrote: "Wake up, brethren and sisters, wake up. Sleep no longer. 'Why stand ye here all the day idle?' Jesus calls you, saying, 'Go work today in My vineyard.' Whoever has received the Holy Spirit will make it manifest; for all His powers will be employed in the most active service. All who actually receive Christ by faith, work. They feel the burden of souls. God now calls upon everyone who has a knowledge of the truth, who is a depository of sacred truth, to arise and impart the light of heaven to others" (*Christian Service*, p. 80).

She wrote also: "Wake up, brethren; for your own soul's sake, wake up. Without the grace of Christ you can do nothing. Work while you can" (*ibid.*).

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By Entering God's Rest

Devotional message presented Friday evening, July 1, 2005

This evening I remind you of a group of powerful and prominent leaders in the Bible. Because they were so prominent in Israel's history, you will no doubt recognize their names: Shammua, Shaphat, Igal, Palti, Gaddiel, Gaddi, Ammiel, Sethur, Nahbi, and Guel.

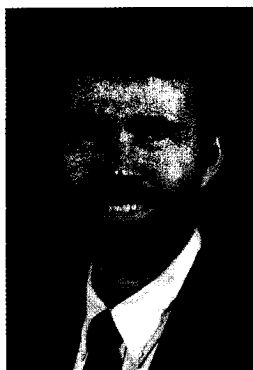
In fact, I have yet to find a group of Adventists who can identify these names as I read them, until I add the last two names on the list: Caleb and Joshua (Hoshea). Yes, these are the names of the 12 spies sent out by Moses under the command of God to survey the Land of Promise (Num. 13:4-16).^{*} Ten leaders were a dismal failure, dragging a whole generation down with them, while Caleb and Joshua were paragons of victory and success.

On Canaan's borders God had promised Israel through Moses, "For as yet you have not come to the rest [Hebrew *menuchah*] and the inheritance which the Lord your God is giving you. But when you cross over the Jordan and dwell in the land which the Lord your God is giving you to inherit, and He gives you rest [Hebrew *nuah*] from all your enemies round about, so that you dwell in safety" (Deut. 12:9, 10).

Reliving the Story

After dividing the inheritance among the 12 tribes, the author of the book of Joshua writes this powerful and thrilling summary: "So the Lord gave to Israel all the land of which he had sworn to give to their fathers, and they took possession of it and dwelt in it. The Lord gave them rest [*menuchah*] all around, according to all that He had sworn to their fathers" (Joshua 21:43, 44).

The people of God had entered His rest! True, they had



Richard M. Davidson
J. N. Andrews professor of Old Testament interpretation, and chair, Old Testament Department, Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, Andrews University

many battles yet to fight before they would actually possess the land in its fullness; yet in a real sense the promise of rest in the land of milk and honey was being fulfilled as they trusted in God's promise.

But the story of Joshua leading Israel into God's rest is not just a story of a people long ago and far away. It is our story as well.

Entering God's Rest

I used to think that the typological fulfillment of entering God's rest, as Caleb and Joshua and faithful Israel did, would take place at the Second Coming. But according to the book of Hebrews, we can already, by faith, enter God's rest. We may experience it now.

In Genesis 2 God rested by ceasing from His works on the Sabbath, and He invited Adam and Eve to rest on that first Sabbath. From what were Adam and Eve resting? From their own works? No, they were resting in God's finished work.

Thus even before sin there is a profound inference of the principle of righteousness by faith. And Paul draws the implication for believers in his day: "There remains therefore a rest [*sabbatismos*, Sabbath rest] for the people of God. For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God did from His" (Heb. 4:9, 10). Every Sabbath, as we rest from our work, we proclaim our experience of righteousness by faith, that we trust not in our own works, but in the finished work of Christ on our behalf. The Sabbath becomes the outward sign of the "rest of grace" (*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 928) that believers in Christ may experience all week long.

Rest in Christ

The precious thought that we can “rest in Christ” by faith and have assurance of our acceptance with Him is wonderful news. I dared not believe it even as a theology major in college, as a seminary student, or even as a young pastor.

As a young pastor I preached sermons full of Christ, yet devoid of the assurance that we could rest in Him. But through a chain of marvelous, providential leadings, the simplicity and beauty of the gospel began to dawn before me. I was “surprised by joy” with the clear scriptural testimony that I could have the assurance of entering His rest: “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life” (John 6:47). “These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life” (1 John 5:13; cf. verses 11, 12). “Come to Me, all you

who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matt. 11:28).

The message of confidently resting in Christ’s righteousness does not lead to cheap grace. Rather “its fruit is unto holiness” (*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 359; cf. Rom. 6:22). Only as I trust wholly in the merits of Christ, my substitute and surety, can I truly obey God in the spirit as well as the letter of the law.

Other Dimensions of Sabbath Rest

The apostle assures us in Hebrews 4:9: “There remains therefore a [Sabbath] rest [Greek *sabbatismos*] for the people of God.” This word, *sabbatismos*, refers not only to the spiritual rest of grace, but to an actual weekly observance of the seventh-day Sabbath, a multidimensional rest available to God’s people.

I have found seven dimensions of Sabbath rest highlighted by the various Hebrew verbs in the books of Moses.

As we welcome the Sabbath, I invite you to contemplate this multifaceted rest.

We have already spoken of the spiritual rest.

A second facet God offers us is physical rest. On the seventh day of Creation week God “rested . . . from all His work which He had done” (Gen. 2:2). The verb for “rest” used here is *shabbat*, which means “to pause, to cease.” In the fourth commandment we are invited to follow God’s example, to pause, cease from our weekday work.

The fourth commandment also indicates that God rested mentally as well as physically. The verb for “rest” used here is not *shabbat*, as in Genesis 2, but *nuach*; it means to “be tranquil, in a state of repose and peace.” After creating in six days, God sat back in tranquil repose, mentally rejoicing in the world He had created. On Sabbath He invites us to join Him in that sense

of restful repose and peace.

Exodus 31 adds a fourth dimension of Sabbath rest where it says God “was refreshed” (verse 17). The verb literally means He “took on new soul or life” (*nephesh*). Even though God was obviously not tired, He took on new life; He experienced emotional rest. On Sabbath God longs to recharge our emotional batteries, to refresh and restore our souls.

A fifth dimension of Sabbath rest is creative, celebratory rest. In Exodus 31 God pronounced: “The children of Israel shall . . . observe the Sabbath throughout

Session Snapshot

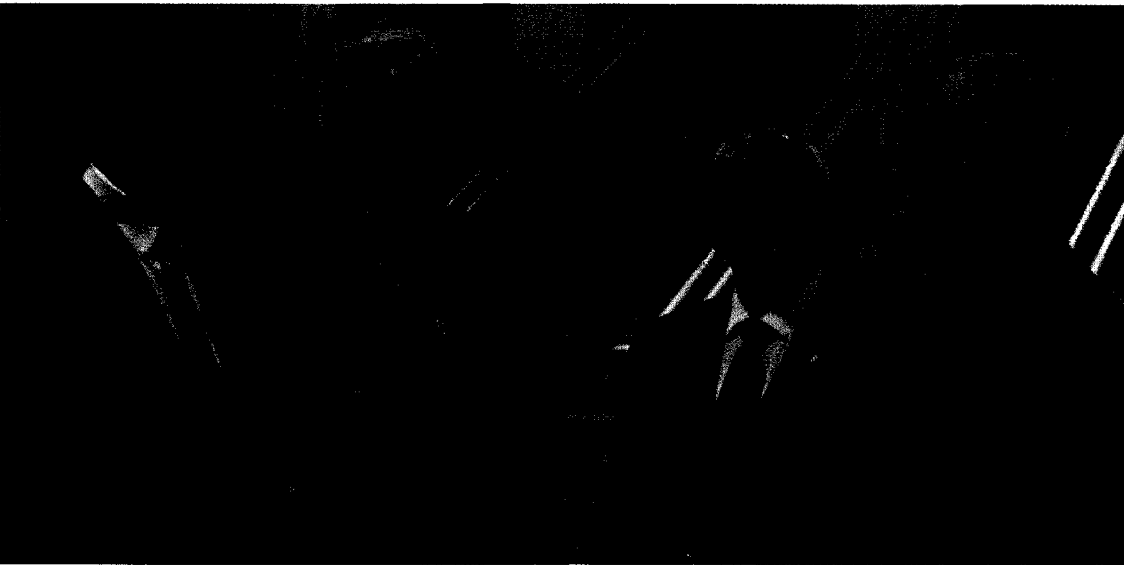


PHOTO BY ALDEN HO/REVIEW & HERALD

THE FOUR WHO’VE COME TO MORE: Searching for those who have attended the most General Conference sessions, including the current session, the *Adventist Review* found the following four contenders: (from left) Neal C. Wilson, former president of the General Conference, has been present at the last 15 consecutive GC sessions; his first was in 1941. Kenneth H. Wood, chair of the Ellen G. White Estate board of trustees and former editor of the *Adventist Review*, has attended 14 GC sessions. He was a young boy when he went to his first in 1926. Bert B. Beach, director for Interchurch Relations of the General Conference Public Affairs and Religious Liberty Department, is credited with being present at 14 consecutive sessions. He and his wife, Eliane, spent their honeymoon at the 1954 session. Roscoe S. Lowry, former president of the Southern Asia Division, has attended 10.

Wilson voiced his hopes for the 58th General Conference session: “Somehow this session needs to help hold the church together in these times of great fragmentation, and help the members become better prepared to fulfill God’s mission and be ready for the Lord’s great appointment for His second coming.”

their generations" (verse 16). We are to "make" the Sabbath—as God made the heavens and the earth—with all the creativity and energy that God displayed in His creative process. This verse in the New International Version captures the meaning by using the word "celebrating" instead of merely "observing" the Sabbath. God offers us on the Sabbath a chance to exuberantly celebrate His goodness.

The sixth dimension of the Sabbath is that it is filled with power. In Hebrew thought, for God to bless something is to empower it to fulfill the function for which it is designed. That sabbatic empowerment spills out into all the other days of the week.

The seventh dimension of Sabbath rest is captured in the words "God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it [or made it holy]" (Gen. 2:3). How does God make something holy? By His presence. The gift of Sabbath rest is not just the gift of a day, but the gift of a Person, filling the day with His loving presence.

The Heavenly Sanctuary and Rest

In the Old Testament the main noun for "rest" [Hebrew *menuchah*; Greek *katapausis*] also means "resting place," and is equated with Mount Zion (the city of Jerusalem), and in particular, with the place of God's throne in the sanctuary or Temple.

Thus it's no wonder that in the Epistle to the Hebrews, immediately after mentioning the Sabbath rest in Hebrews 4, the author invites us to "come boldly to the throne of grace [in the heavenly sanctuary, God's "resting place"], that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (verse 16). This is not just a metaphor for prayer. We are invited to actually come to the throne of grace in the heavenly sanctuary by faith. Three more times in the Epistle this invitation is given: Hebrews 6:19, 20; 10:19-22; 12:22-24. Four times we are invited now, by faith, to enter God's rest (i.e., His "resting place") in the heavenly sanctuary.

These passages repeatedly call us to consider that we actually *come* by faith

into the heavenly sanctuary in the heavenly Jerusalem. In these passages there is a call to more than metaphorical lip service to the sanctuary doctrine. This is what I like to call an invitation to "sanctuary life."

When faced with difficulties, whatever the pressures of life, you can enter God's rest. The "rest of grace" is the source of "mercy and . . . grace to help in time of need" (Heb. 4:16); it is "an anchor of the soul" (Heb. 6:19); it is connected with the privilege of "having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water" (Heb. 10:22); it is vitally linked with joyous celebration and worship in the presence of "an innumerable company of angels" (Heb. 12:22).

In a word, Jesus, the New Joshua, makes available to us the antitypical fulfillment of all that was implied in God's rest in the history of ancient Israel. We can come by faith to the heavenly Canaan (Heb. 12:22-24); we

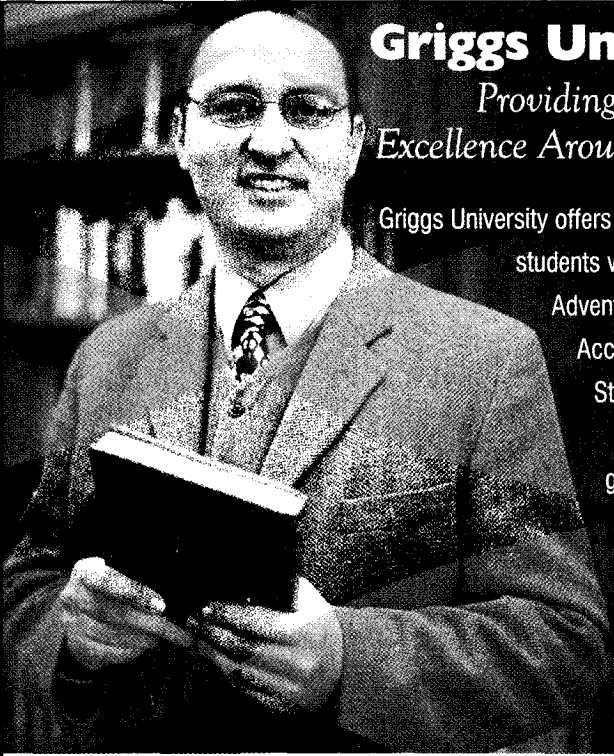
conduct spiritual warfare against our spiritual enemies (Eph. 6:10-17); and receive our spiritual inheritance (Acts 20:32; Eph. 1:11, 14, 18); and, praise God, we enjoy the spiritual rest of grace in His presence (Heb. 4:9-11).

What is ours to enjoy now, as a faith experience of entering God's rest, will one day reach its ultimate fulfillment in connection with the Second Advent and beyond. The author of Hebrews points to God's "rest" not only as a present experience but as a future hope: "Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest" (Heb. 4:11).

There will be a final, literal conquest of the enemies of God. We will enjoy our ultimate inheritance (Matt. 25:34; Col. 3:24; Rev. 21:7). And yes, we will enter God's glorious, eternal rest. May that day come soon! Amen.

*Bible texts in this devotional are quoted from the New King James Version.


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Robert E. Lemon
Treasurer,
General Conference

Treasurer's Report

Presented Friday, July 1, 2005

In preparing this report, it was inspiring to reread some of the treasurers' reports from past General Conference (GC) sessions. It is impossible to read these reports without sensing the marvelous way God has led through difficult times and thanking Him for His blessings and for the faithfulness of His children.

In Elder Rawson's report to the 2000 General Conference session, he pointed out, "The GC Executive Committee met on April 19, 2000, and in a historic decision dramatically revised the funding formula for sharing expenses of the worldwide church."

The new formula calls for all divisions to contribute 2 percent of gross tithe for the operation of the world headquarters and, in addition, for the North American Division to contribute an additional 6 percent of tithe to assist with the world missions program and with the support of GC institutions, most of which are located in North America. Other divisions provided additional funding directly to the mission territories within their divisions. The reduction from 10.72 percent to 8 percent of tithe from the North American Division and the increase from 1 percent to 2 percent from the other divisions was projected to result in a net reduction in funds available to the GC World Budget of \$12 million per year, which is approximately 10 percent of the world budget.

The new cap of 2 percent of world tithe for the GC headquarters' opera-

tions represents a reduction of approximately 18 percent, or \$6 million in the headquarters' annual operating budget. It was hoped that the annual increase in tithe would offset the reduction in tithe percentage each year during the five-year phase-in period so that appropriations to divisions and GC institutions would not need to be reduced and employees would not have to be laid off at the GC headquarters. In preparation for the change, the GC took major steps to reduce costs at headquarters and was already operating well below the old cap by the time the new formula was voted. A freeze on new positions under the cap was put in place and has been strictly adhered to throughout the quinquennium.

This quinquennium has seen great economic turmoil in the world. Financial markets have been on a roller coaster, the events of September 11, 2001, war, SARS, the tsunami, and others have affected the economies of various parts of the world. As we look back at the increases in tithes and offerings during this difficult period, we can only say, "Praise the Lord for the faithfulness of His people and for His bountiful blessings!"

Tithe increased worldwide by an average of 5.9 percent per year during the quinquennium. Because of this increase, and even though mission offerings remained essentially flat and the new Tithe Sharing Formula reduced the percentage of the gross tithe coming to the General Conference, the GC's total unrestricted

revenue grew by an average of almost 1 percent per year. Total net assets increased in each of the five years of the quinquennium, and working capital increased by \$17 million between 2000 and 2004 to meet the increased requirement. Appropriations to divisions and GC institutions were not reduced, and the GC has not had to dip into its working capital as originally projected.

Maintaining appropriations at the same level in U.S. dollars throughout the quinquennium meant that many organizations received less in local currency because of the weaker U.S. dollar. We have appreciated the spirit of collegiality in working through this period, and we thank the officers of the recipient organizations and their committees for the way they dealt with these budgetary realities.

We also thank the General Conference departmental directors, staff, and others who have worked hard to stay within budget and accepted that some positions were not filled when vacancies occurred. Everyone's combined efforts kept the average annual increase in costs at the GC headquarters to less than 3.3 percent during the quinquennium, in spite of a 5.7 percent average annual increase in the Washington area remuneration factor under policies set by the North American Division. The increase in the remuneration factor was the result of rapid escalation of housing costs in the area. Although we have completed only the fourth year of

the five-year phase-in, in 2004, the GC headquarters operated on only 2.04 percent of world tithe. This is only .04 percent above the fully phased-in cap objective of 2 percent.

The Big Picture

The work of the church is carried on through so many varied organizations, institutions, initiatives, and programs that it is difficult to find a meaningful way to report the total financial picture. The majority of the revenue of the church's nontithe-based organizations comes from earned income rather than from donations or operating appropriations. The summary of audited financial statements received by Archives and Statistics for 2003 shows the following revenue by line of work:

By Line of Work	Earned Operating Income	Net Operating Donations
Health-care Institutions	\$5,166,669,302	\$16,368,343
Educational Institutions	854,508,822	199,265,907
Food Industries	426,378,507	1,308,902
Publishing Houses	118,907,943	3,135,617
Media Organizations	10,031,641	22,469,813
Adventist Book Centers	63,222,771	5,499,514

The Adventist Development and Relief Agency's revenue totaled \$74,834,363, and Adventist Risk Management's was \$16,348,487.

In 2003 the total revenue of local churches and tithe-based organizations (local conferences/missions, unions, divisions, the General Conference and associations) was \$2,321,902,969.

Tithes and Offerings

Tithe increased worldwide 29.6 percent, from \$1,029,257,377 in 1999 to \$1,333,482,562 in 2004. Local church funds increased 17.7 percent over the same period and totaled \$486 million in 2004, which was equal to 36 percent of tithe. In 2004 World Mission offerings totaled \$50,523,551. Over the past 25 years, the World Mission offerings have remained basically static at around \$50 million per year, while tithe has increased from \$398 million to \$1.3 billion, a 226 percent increase.

Local church funds have kept pace with tithe increases and have actually increased from around 25 percent of tithe during the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s to more than 35 percent of tithe since the early 1960s. Mission offerings over that same period have decreased from approximately 60 percent of tithe in the 1930s to 3.8 percent in 2004. This steady decline has dramatically affected the ability of the church to provide funds for entering new areas.

A major shift in recent years toward more project giving has helped stimulate interest in missions and has been a great blessing in many areas. Various ministries and groups have taken on projects and helped strengthen the work. We praise the Lord for this! Each of us who supports these projects and ministries does so with the desire

to see souls saved in the kingdom. One of the drawbacks of an excessive reliance on project giving is that attention spans can be short. When there is greater need in another area, most of the support is shifted to the new area, often leaving the local organization (if there even is a local organization) to maintain the project or outreach without sufficient resources. Sometimes we lose all the progress that has been made. We still need a strong program of mission giving administered by the Executive Committee of the General Conference to make sure the work progresses in all areas, and not just in the areas where projects have been successfully promoted.

A strong mission offering program that can sustain major long-term initiatives is doubly important as we focus on the 10/40 window area. Many of the most effective outreaches in this area are ones that must be carefully

planned and funded for long periods of time, as no local organization or membership exists to carry them forward. They are of a nature that any communication to supporters about the progress made can itself put the work at risk. We must do a better job of communicating the continued and increased need for support of the mission offerings to finish the work in "all the world." Remember, none of us are "going home" until we all "go home."

General Conference Revenues and Expenditures

During this quinquennium the General Conference's average annual revenue, gains, and additions were \$152 million, and annual expenditures were \$146 million. These are broken down in the charts on page 15. Total net assets of all General Conference funds increased from \$167 million to \$198 million, and working capital, as of December 2004, totaled \$110 million, 104.7 percent of the amount recommended by policy.

During the Quinquennium

- Trust Services reported that maturities passed the \$1 billion (\$1,000 million) mark since reporting began in 1968, \$263.2 million of it coming in this quinquennium alone.
- In 2004 ADRA's annual operating revenues exceeded \$100 million for the first time.
- A new Philosophy of Remuneration Policy was approved.
- The Conflict of Interest Policy was revised to be more comprehensive and prospective rather than retrospective.
- Approximately 10,200 audits were completed by the General Conference Auditing Service (GCAS), the largest number in its history.
- Ingathering during this quinquennium totaled \$47.4 million, compared to \$58.1 million during the past quinquennium.
- 5,049,157 individuals joined the church, and membership grew by

27.4 percent, from 10,939,183 to 13,936,932.

- Approximately 400 million people were born, and 160 million died in the 10/40 window, which has an estimated population of 4.2 billion.

Our Financial Future

What shall we do for the future?

- “Vigorously continue our world evangelistic mission,” as Elder Gilbert put it in his 1995 report.
- Find better, more efficient and effective ways to administer the church.
- Focus all levels of the church on mission-driven budget allocations.
- Continue to increase transparency and accountability at all levels.
- Encourage financial maturity and greater self-support, particularly in areas where we already have a major presence.
- Increasingly focus the resources of the world budget of the General Conference on the 10/40 window

and encourage all to help with this great challenge.

- Increase the role and participation of young people and women in the life and leadership of the church.
- Reduce exposure to ascending liability without sacrificing unity.
- Strengthen the Adventist education system and focus its mission.
- Continue our mission of mercy to a hurting world through our health message and institutions and through our humanitarian outreach programs.

The Real Big Picture

One of the duties of the Treasury Department is to protect and maximize the value of the church's assets. We have talked about the financial assets of the church, but the real assets are not in the form of bank accounts, investments, buildings, or equipment.

The chief executive officer of a

major software development company, cited for having one of the best employee benefit programs in the United States, was asked in an interview why his company provided such excellent benefits to its employees. “Ninety-five percent of my assets drive out the front gate every evening,” he said. “It’s my job to bring them back.”

The real assets of the church—its members—walk out the front door of the church every Sabbath. It’s our job not only to make sure they return the next Sabbath but also to help them maximize their effectiveness during the week. The greatest contributions from church members are not tithes and offerings, but donated time and service. Think, for example, of the hours spent each week by the Sabbath school teachers in preparing for their important work in the children’s divisions. Add to that all the hours given by the others who help out in Sabbath school, Pathfinders, community services, witnessing, etc. Multiply that by

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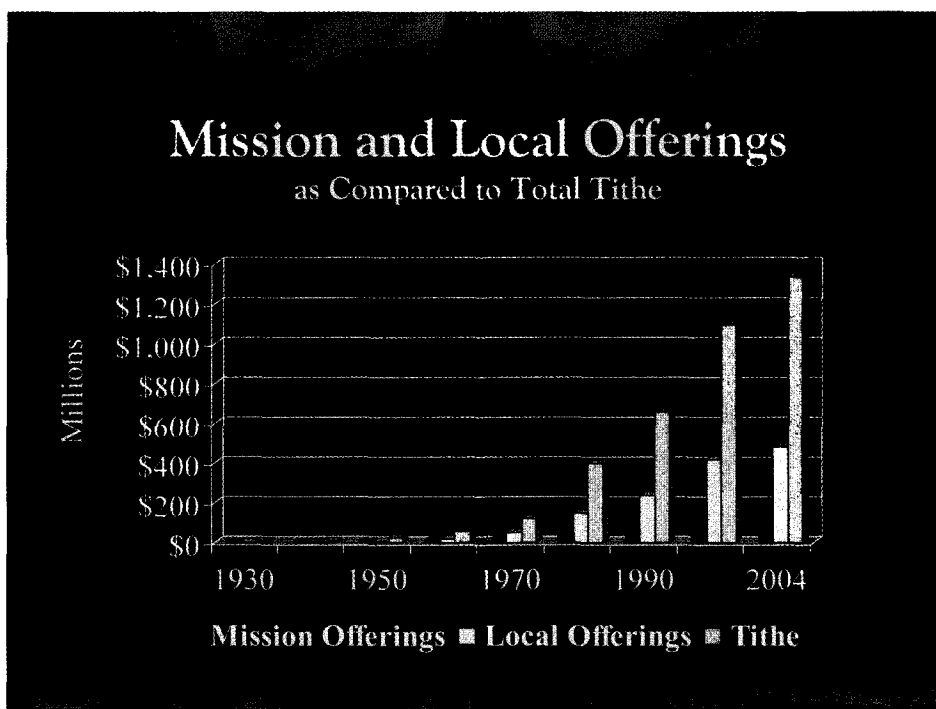
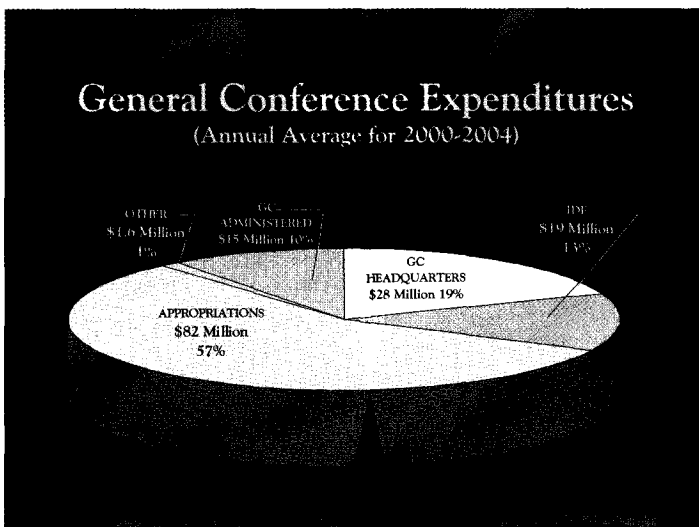
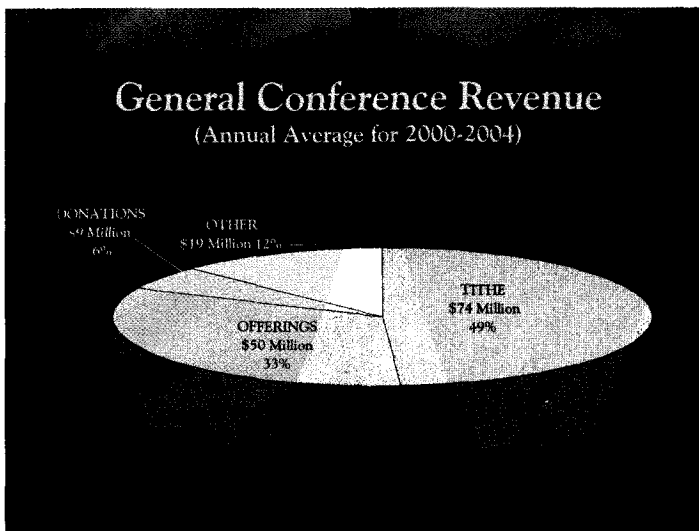
Transferring Funds

As we look at the figure of \$1,991,426,655 of tithes, offerings, and donations received during 2004, it is easy to lose sight of the sacrifice and faithfulness represented by each individual dollar. We have shown the total tithes and offerings to the dollar and not rounded them to the nearest million. We did that deliberately to remind us of the sacrifice and faithfulness represented by each kwacha, peso, ruble, dollar, and lira.

The Lord does not look at the size of the offering, but at the sacrifice on the part of the giver. Someone has said: "Giving is not God's way of raising money; it is God's way of raising people into the likeness of His Son."

Jesus admonished us: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matt. 6:19-21).

We cannot take our gold and



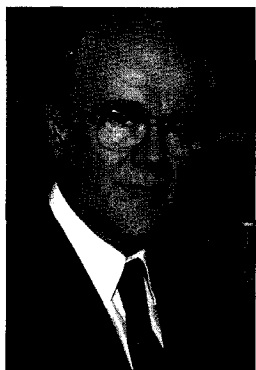
silver with us—hearses don't come with luggage racks. In 1979, in a country where my wife, Sherry, and I once served, the currency was suddenly changed, and the old currency became worthless overnight. It couldn't be changed even at the bank. During the next few weeks large amounts of the old currency were placed in offering plates, but they could accomplish nothing.

The only treasure that we can "transfer" to heaven is that which is converted into saved souls. There will come a time when our money will no longer be "transferable," even if given to God's cause.

The real report on the assets of the church has already been given by Elder Bediako, General Conference secretary, as he reported how the "Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."

After God promised to Joshua "every place that the sole of your foot shall tread

upon, that have I given unto you" (Joshua 1:3), we find these sad words: "The Lord said unto him, Thou art old and stricken in years, and there remaineth yet very much land to be possessed" (Joshua 13:1). May we not hear those same words in reference to the half of the world (10/40 window) that is still practically untouched by the gospel.



Bertil Wiklander
President

Pressing Ahead, Despite War, Intolerance, and Persecution

Presented July 2, 2005

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Trans-European Division has a strong sense of enthusiasm and urgency for God's mission to lost people. This is coupled with careful reflection on the secrets of growth. Growth in numbers is subject to spiritual growth in unity. Our work this quinquennium was therefore founded on a comprehensive plan named Growing Together, which guided our priorities and activities. God has blessed it. (The plan and a PowerPoint report are found at www.ted-adventist.org.)

The vast territory of the Trans-European Division has an extreme cultural and national diversity and a complex structure of scattered small churches divided into 13 unions and three attached fields. In membership numbers it is the smallest world division, with an enormous target population: 6,000 people for every Seventh-day Adventist. Particularly challenging targets are the unchurched secular Europeans, and Jewish and Muslim peoples. Most receptive of the gospel are immigrants in Europe and the Middle East, and specific people groups in Sudan and Pakistan. However, by changing our own attitudes, through church planting and friendship evangelism in small groups, we now see that the gospel may reach everywhere, even to secular Europeans and people in Islamic countries.

Increased Growth and Some Challenges

As of December 31, 2004, the number of churches and companies in the division had grown to 1,777 (from 1,537 five years ago). In the past five years the membership increased by 12 percent, and the total number of members at the end of 2004 was 98,575.

The largest number of baptisms were in the Middle East Union (6,110), British Union (3,460), Pakistan Union (2,616), and South-East European Union (1,552). Because of emigration caused by war and political tensions, some areas do not show a corresponding growth in total membership. However, the highest percentage of membership growth has occurred in the Israel Field (79 percent) and the Greek Mission (78 percent).

While there is also growth in the Hungarian Union, Netherlands Union, Polish Union, and Icelandic Conference (attached field), the statistics suggest challenges in six unions. In the Adriatic and Baltic unions, baptismal numbers have increased by 10 percent and 15 percent respectively, but the number of lost members is also high. The Nordic unions, covering Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden, have dropping membership numbers, but the church planting movement and the involvement of young people in evangelism give cause for optimism.

The British Union

The British Union is the largest in the division, with more than 24,000 members. The rich diversity of the union and the spread of nurturing and outreach activities have resulted in a

net membership growth of 20 percent (3,460 baptized new members). More than 300 new church plants and groups have been established.

The union launched in 2001 its boldest evangelistic initiative, LIFEdevelopment.info, to engage basically secular minds. Two TV programs in the series have been produced and uplinked in 2003-2005, providing needed relevant resources for mission.

The Middle East Union

Some 40 percent of people living in the Trans-European Division live in the Middle East Union, which consists of 14 countries. More than 90 percent of the population follow the teachings of Islam. While in the world there is one Adventist per 468 people, and in the Trans-European Division there is one per 6,000, in the Middle East it's one for every 16,000.

And yet this is where our division has had the largest number of baptisms (6,110) and a 38 percent growth in membership, giving a total of 14,166 members at the end of 2004. This growth occurred mainly in south Sudan among Christian and animist peoples, and in the Persian Gulf sections, where many immigrants live and work.

Here are some other *highlights*:

- **The Adriatic Union** (Albania, Croatia, Slovenia) had 3,988 members, and 392 baptisms were held during the period. The largest-ever youth evangelistic campaign (with pastor Juneroy Nugent, from the U.K. at the time, as guest speaker) was held in February 2002, with up to 300 young people in attendance. Forty-two young people surrendered their hearts to Jesus, and Nugent returned three months later to

baptize another 17 individuals.

- **The Baltic Union** (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania) conducted nearly 1,000 baptisms. But the church was also challenged by emigration, a more affluent “Western” lifestyle, and an aging membership. The union conducted a program of intense training of its laypeople under the umbrella of Go One Million. The successful church plant Korinta was recently established in Riga, Latvia, where many lost young people are now being led to Jesus.

- Evangelism is the main topic on the agenda in **the Danish Union**, where the church now has 2,667 members. Many Bible study groups were established, and 155 people baptized.

- **The Finnish Union** operates a viable church planting program involving many young people. Eleven new churches have been planted or are about to become planted, and 453 baptisms have led the church to a membership total of 5,264.

- For a long time **the Greek Mission** (attached field) had a declining membership. Eight years ago, however, a different evangelistic emphasis was made. Since then there has been a 375 percent growth in members and a 600 percent growth in tithe. In the past quinquennium the mission increased from 254 to 454 members.

- **The Hungarian Union** is reaching unentered people groups through a dynamic church planting strategy. New media products have been translated into Hungarian because the necessary technical equipment has been made available. Baptisms and confessions of faith have resulted in a net growth of 164 members.

- **The Icelandic Conference** (attached field) is the only Nordic country that shows an increase of members, which is a trend shift. The conference now has 563 members. There is a growing involvement of youth and laypeople who actively share their faith with friends.

- **The Israel Field** (attached field) had significant growth. Members

increased from 488 to 874 (79 percent). The churches and companies have grown from 14 to 29. In the past five years 526 people were baptized.

- Despite various challenges **the Netherlands Union** is growing, with 382 baptisms bringing the total membership to 4,507. In the month of October 2004 about 60 baptisms took place—a remarkable event for western Europe. The church planting movement is gaining momentum.



Evangelist Juneroy Nugent baptizes Petra Krajna in the Adriatic Sea (Croatia).

- **The Norwegian Union** is struggling with declining membership in a post-Christian and secular society. While 90 percent of the population formally belong to a Christian organization, only 5 percent are active church members. Despite 242 baptisms, the membership has dropped to 4,697. But there are positive signs: an annual increase in tithe, a church school system that remains strong and viable, and young people who are increasingly becoming involved in church planting. The church has also established a Norwegian television ministry, which daily transmits one hour of religious programming.

- **The Pakistan Union** covers the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, inhabited by 166 million people, 90 percent of whom are Muslim believers. God has

blessed the work in the past five years, despite the political unrest caused by the 9/11 event, which led to the evacuation of all expatriate workers. However, national leadership was strengthened by this setback, and God has blessed their efforts, with 2,616 baptisms leading the church in Pakistan to a membership of 9,168 (a growth of 38 percent). The church operates four institutions: Pakistan Adventist Seminary, Karachi Adventist Hospital, Qasid Publishing House, and the Peshawar Dental Clinic.

- **The Polish Union** also experienced growth, with 881 baptisms bringing the membership to 5,691. Benefiting from the Sow 1 Billion program, the union was able to print 3 million leaflets, and 2 million of those were quickly distributed. More than 630 volunteers are involved in the Go One Million program.

- **The South-East European Union** (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro) has grown significantly through 1,552 baptisms in the past five years, giving a total of 8,335 members at the end of 2004. This is the fruit of a combination of public meetings and church planting. About 20 new churches were planted across the whole union territory in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, and Serbia and Montenegro.

- **The Swedish Union** has emphasized church planting, church renewal, and the involvement of young people in these spiritual movements. After 144 baptisms, the total membership is now down to 2,767. The international church plant in Stockholm and the church renewal in Skellefteå are examples of outreach to “new Swedes,” who are becoming integrated into church fellowship in significant numbers. Some young people initiated an annual spiritual renewal conference during Ascension Weekend, and participant numbers went from 90 the first year to 240 in 2004. Club 39 in Linköping is an after-school club in the basement of the church that reaches out successfully to teens in the neighborhood.

Ministries and Departments*

A host of seminars, advisories, councils, and symposiums were held across the division. Here are a few other highlights:

ADRA and *Ingathering* keep our division among the three most prominent contributors to the world church. ADRA/Trans-Europe operated 1,900 projects and processed \$121,300,000 through 25 country offices.

Adventist World Radio (AWR) is supporting language production for Pakistan in Urdu, Pashtun, and Punjabi. Arabic programs are continuing to be aired daily into the Middle East. For South Sudan, AWR is assisting the production of Moru, Bari, local English, and Juba Arabic.

The *Children's Ministries Department* reports that 11,613 children attended 860 Vacation Bible Schools in the past five years, and 586 children were baptized as a result of various kinds of outreach. The GraceLink material is now translated and used in 12 unions.

The *Communication Department* has not only issued news and information through its weekly newsletter ANR and the Trans-European Division Web site, but has established the Music Ministry and the Adventist Music Association (AMA), and has cooperated with the British Union in the LIFEdevelopment.info program, producing a multimedia package for

secular evangelism.

Through the *Family Ministries Department* the annual leader-certification program (CFLE) is growing in strength as more countries send their directors for training. More than 900 *Global Mission* projects have been worked on, including some 70 church buildings.

Because health institutions find it difficult to operate in Europe, the focus of the *Health Department* has been to train the health directors and to provide seminars in local churches to foster greater health awareness and support projects of health evangelism.

The *Ministerial Association* has engaged in the training and support of pastors—for example, through the pastor's council in 2001, in which 900 pastors participated. An Adventist-Muslim symposium was also arranged in Cyprus in 2003, which attracted international participation from within our church.

The *Personal Ministries Department* (including *Sabbath School*) has organized seminars to train laypeople for evangelism. The quinquennium saw 500 small groups established across the division.

Besides holding many training seminars, the *Publishing Department* has developed a promising book project in which a book set will target health, children, and the Adventist message. The *Women's Ministries Department* made

significant impact on soul winning. As a fruit of 277 evangelistic meetings, 345 new members were added to the church and 364 former members brought back. Nearly 10,000 women participated in 320 retreats, 1,278 of whom were non-members. The *Youth Department* reports an increased involvement of youth in church planting and evangelism, with 108 youth sent as missionaries to various parts of the world.

The *Education Department* also played its role in the division. Through the evangelistic work of our educational institutions 533 students were baptized. The total student enrollment increased from 13,905 to 17,649. From our senior college, Newbold, 254 graduates emerged. Newbold College is connected to a set of union institutions providing pastoral training in the Adriatic, Hungarian, Polish, and South-East European unions. In 2002 the first 10 graduates received their Griggs University B.A. degree in theology through an ongoing pastoral extension program in Riga, Latvia.

Middle East College became the first institution in our division to achieve university status (2001), and Newbold College was able to forge a partnership with the University of Wales, Lampeter, in order to offer, for the first time, European-based Ph.D. research degrees in theology (2004).

Conclusion

The Trans-European Division family express thanks to God for His unfailing grace and constant blessing, in the face of war, intolerance, and persecution. We thank the world church for its generous support and assistance in countless ways. And we thank numerous members and friends for their prayers and for outstanding fellowship and unity. We commit ourselves to continue serving our Lord Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit, serving Him faithfully until He comes.

* Detailed reports of the division departments are displayed on our Web site at www.tedadventist.org.



A group of church planters at the European Church Planters X-change conference

First Business Meeting

58th General Conference session, June 30, 2005, 3:00 p.m.

PHYLLIS WARE: [Offered the opening prayer.]

DAVID OSBORNE: What God wants the most from us is for us to have a relationship with Him and to be close to His heart.

COPPERBELT HERITAGE SINGERS: [Sang "There Is a Land Which Is Rich."]

JAIME JORGE: [Rendered a violin solo, "Near to the Heart of God."]

JIM HOEHN: [Read the Scripture reading from Romans 8:38, 39.]

WILLIAM K. MILLER: [Offered prayer.]

DAVID OSBORNE: The theme for this General Conference session is "Transformed in Christ," and we are delighted that we have the first presentation by Dr. Jo Ann Davidson. Dr. Davidson is an associate professor of systematic theology at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University. We are delighted that she is going to speak to us, because she is not only an inspiring teacher and friend but also an inspiring speaker. She has been a professor at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary for eight years, and we are delighted that she is here to speak to us today on the subject "Behold the Lamb."

Before she brings God's message to us, let us worship as we listen to that beautiful song "How Great Thou Art."

JANICE CHANDLER-ETEME: [Rendered a vocal solo, "How Great Thou Art."]

JO ANN DAVIDSON: [Presented a devotional message.]

JOHN GRAZ: Mr. Chairman, brothers and sisters, dear friends, it is a privilege for me to introduce Carol A. Moody, president of the St. Louis Convention and Visitors Commission. Carol Moody and her team have been a continual support to our meeting planning team. They have opened doors for the General Conference and represented our interests through the city. In some difficult situations that arose during the planning process they stood firm for the wishes of Seventh-day Adventists. We recognize, Carol [applause], that such a meeting would have been impossible without your support, and we want to thank you very much for all you have done. [Applause.]

CAROL MOODY: Thank you very much, but I must also thank my staff who are seated in the audience here. Thank you very much, C.D.T. Singh. [Carol Moody expressed her thanks in several different languages.] Welcome to St. Louis, here on the banks of the mighty Mississippi River

in the heart of America. [Applause.] I bring greetings to the chairman and the president, Jan Paulsen, and distinguished delegates and to all of our guests here for the fifty-eighth General Conference session of Seventh-day Adventists from Mayor Francis Slay, St. Louis executive Charles Duley, the St. Louis Convention and Visitors Commission, and the entire St. Louis hospitality industry.

We are so honored to have the eyes of the world on St. Louis for the next several days as we host the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. We have been looking forward to this day for quite some time, and our staff even attended your conference in Toronto five years ago so that we could be better prepared to welcome all of you.

In 1764 French fur traders from New Orleans founded our city and named it after Louis IX, a king of France. Napoleon sold the Louisiana territory to President Thomas Jefferson in 1803, and overnight the size of the United States doubled. St. Louis was the center of the fur trade in America in 1804 when President Thomas Jefferson sent explorers Meriwether Lewis and William Clark to chart the new Louisiana territory. Last year we celebrated the bicentennial of this historic event. This year we celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the Gateway Arch. This beautiful monument was built to symbolize the role that St. Louis played in the westward expansion of the United States.

You have come to St. Louis at a very exciting time. Our downtown has been experiencing a renaissance over the past three years, and nearly \$3 billion have been spent on new hotels, restaurants, retail shops, condos and apartments, and treescaping. Another \$1 billion will be invested in downtown developments during the next year, which will include the renovation of the old post office, the bottle district just north of the Edward Jones Dome (where we are here today), and the new St. Louis Cardinals ballpark and ballpark village.

You can zip to many St. Louis attractions on the Metrolink light rail, and I understand that many of you are doing that. Outside downtown you will find city neighborhoods with great restaurants, shopping and entertainment, and many other places of interest. Forest Park has been restored to its former glory with a \$94 million facelift in time for the 100th anniversary of the Louisiana Purchase expedition last year. Within the park you will find the world-famous St. Louis Zoo,

an art museum, a science center, a Missouri history museum, and a 12,000-seat outdoor theater. St. Louis has many, many more attractions for all ages and all interests, and we hope that you will have time in between some of the business sessions and your worship services to visit them. We know that you will find the people of St. Louis to be warm and friendly and representative of the real America. We invite you to return to St. Louis again and again to enjoy the many reasons nearly 17 million people visit each year. Thank you for visiting St. Louis, and we do look forward to your return. Thank you. [Applause.]

LOWELL C. COOPER: Brothers and sisters, we have been welcomed to the city of St. Louis. We have assembled here in this city from all directions of the compass, from all continents of the globe, from all paths of human experience, to reaffirm, to demonstrate once again, that we are a global family of faith. We have had an opportunity, as a prelude to our business session, to spend time in worship and meditation and in fellowship to gain perspective about our purpose and our priorities.

And building on the platform of that understanding and in continuing the spirit of these moments that we have spent together thus far, we are gathered here this afternoon to address organizational business. For many delegates this is the first opportunity to attend a General Conference session. So I suppose it might be appropriate that we take a moment or two to share some procedural information. Now, even for those who have been to sessions before, there are some new things here, so I request your ear for a moment or two. [The chairman explained the purpose and use of the badge and how to use the microphones.]

We will turn to General Conference secretary Matthew Bediako to lead us into the agenda.

MATTHEW BEDIAKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to extend a happy welcome to all our delegates and their spouses. It is good to see you here.

The General Conference Constitution, Article V, Section 1, reads as follows: "Section 1. The General Conference shall hold quinquennial sessions at such time and place as the Executive Committee shall designate and announce by a notice published in the *Adventist Review* in three consecutive issues at least four months before the date for the opening of the session. In case special world conditions make it imperative to postpone the calling of the session, the Executive Committee, in

Continued on page 26.

Don't Give Up

Sermon presented Sabbath morning, July 2, 2005

In 1986 I was invited by the South Pacific Division to visit the Cook Islands and hold a two-week revival.

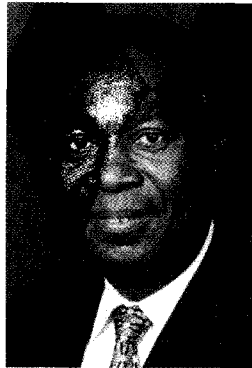
The night I presented the message on the blessed hope, I noticed a woman wiping tears from her eyes. After the meeting she came and asked me to pray for two children. Then, before leaving, she said, "I'll be expecting you at lunch tomorrow." (Arrangements had been made for me to have meals at the members' homes.)

The next day when the pastor came to pick me up, I asked him to tell me a little bit about the family. After a momentary pause he told me that one day her husband told her he was going fishing and would be back soon. Five years later he had not returned. Nobody knew what had happened. A search team had looked for him, but they had found nothing except his boat. This woman spent hours every week sitting at the place where they found his boat, waiting, expecting that someday she would see her husband.

That afternoon, after the meal, she told me her story. None of us could keep back the tears. She said to me, "Pastor, I don't know what happened to my husband. Friends have advised me to forget this incident and go on with my life.

"Last night you assured us that Jesus will keep His promise to take us home. I have looked forward to that day for 10 years. Should I continue to believe His promise?"

I sat on the chair next to her. I opened my Bible and read the promise "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:1-3).



Matthew A. Bediako
Secretary, General Conference

I ended our conversation with the verses "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) . . . For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry" (Heb. 10:23-37).

The Danger Facing Us

There may be somebody here this morning under the stress of life, disappointments, and discouragements, wondering how long we will have to wait. There may be those who believed and broadcast the message of the Second Coming who have become cynical about it. They were confident that Christ would come in their youth. But now, decades later, they have become disillusioned.

Even Christian preachers—including some Seventh-day Adventists—have decided that they will not preach on the topic of the Second Coming.

Fifty-three years ago, as a young boy, I heard the message of the second coming of Jesus. I still remember how the preacher narrated the events. I believed that Jesus was coming soon; that I was not going to finish high school or college; that there would not be time to marry and have a family.

Yet here I am, and Jesus is not here.

But I am not ready to give up. I am not disillusioned. I am not embarrassed to tell people that not only do I believe in the second coming of Jesus, I am eagerly waiting and watching for it. By God's grace I cannot, I will not, give up.

What is the alternative? What hope do I have other than the hope promised by Jesus?

A Lesson From the Past

The Jews in A.D. 27 looked hopefully toward the fulfill-

ment of Malachi's prophecy: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord" (Mal. 4:5). They longed for the coming "day of the Lord," when everything would be set right in Israel. When God would come suddenly and purify His people and restore their former glory.

If you had stopped at random any person on the street in Jerusalem to inquire, "Do you believe in the coming of the Messiah?" the answer would have been a positive "Yes." Everybody knew about it; it was part of their tradition. Yet only a handful was ready to receive Him.

In Luke 2 we read about a devout man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel.

Then a woman—Anna—"spoke of him [the Messiah] to all those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem" (verse 38, NKJV).

These individuals never lost hope in the promise of the Messiah. They believed the promise of God and built their lives around it.

But the priests, the scribes, and the Pharisees were unprepared for the coming of the Messiah. It was not because they did not know. The problem was that they had heard of it far too long and had become used to it.

The Faithful and Evil Servants

It is against this attitude that Christ told His parables about watchfulness and readiness (Matt. 24:45-51; 25:1-13; Mark 13:34-37; Luke 12:42-45).

Faithful servants, while waiting and expecting the master to return, do not sit idly, but continue to serve with expectation. Christians have duties and ethical responsibilities as we watch and wait.

On the other hand, evil servants neglect their responsibilities and misbehave because of the unfortunate delay. In the parable of the faithful and evil servants the evil servant beat his fellow servants, ate and drank with the drunkards because he assumed there was plenty of time to change.

Could the Lord's delay also affect

our relationships with one another in this family of faith?

Are you surprised by the problems in some of our churches? Are you surprised about name-calling among us? We identify some as liberals and some as conservatives; progressives and non-progressives. Are you surprised that in every world division, every union, and conference "concerned Adventists" are reporting fellow members to government authorities?

I am not surprised at the rise of tribalism, nationalism, regionalism, racism, and congregationalism—even among God's people.

The debate still continues about the proper style of worship. We fuss about the rigidity of our standards, or the increasing lack of them. We spend time arguing about who is right and who is wrong. It's hard to believe that we are looking forward to the soon return of Jesus Christ. If we cannot get along here on earth, how can we live together in heaven?

Dr. Paulsen, our president, in his book *Let Your Life So Shine* makes the following appeal: "It is late in the day, and we are almost home. We cannot now become reckless and careless. We owe it to the church, which is His body, to shore up and strengthen the whole body—the international family."

He continues, "I pledge to do what I can to make our church a loving community in which we support each other—carry each other, if need be—lift up our Lord, and seek to live our lives in obedience to Him; and arrange our lives, values, and choices, personally and in the church, accordingly. Now, let us embrace and hold hands firmly, let us 'press together,' as we move forward to finish the journey!"

I pray that in our Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ghana we will no longer speak about Ashantis, or Gas, or Ewes; in Rwanda, no Hutus or Tutsis; in South Africa, no Blacks, Whites, or Coloreds; in America, no Blacks, Whites, Asians, or Latinos. But that we will speak about the members of God's church as the children of God.

Exceeding Our Expectations

If you have doubts about the soon coming of Jesus, or feel that Jesus did not mean what He promised, read the story of Lazarus (John 11).

The chapter begins with the sad news that Lazarus was sick. Lazarus and his two sisters, Mary and Martha, were among Christ's best friends on earth. Because Jesus was known as a great healer, they sent a messenger to Him: "Your friend, Lazarus, is very sick."

The sisters expected that Jesus would drop everything and hurry to be with them. Or that He would speak a word of healing. They had faith in Jesus.

But Jesus' response was, "This sickness is not unto death" (verse 4). This was good news to the messenger. He returned the following day to tell Mary and Martha the good news.

As the messenger approached Bethany he heard weeping. He must've said to himself, "They are not mourning Lazarus; it must be another person. Jesus said Lazarus' sickness would not end in death." He soon discovered, however, that Lazarus was indeed dead.

Mary spotted the messenger and asked, "Did Jesus come with you?"

Then Martha, running after Mary, asked, "What did Jesus say?"

The messenger knew the relationship between these women and Jesus, and the trust they had in Him. Finally he gathered his strength, looked down, and said, "He said that the sickness would not end in death."

Mary and Martha then faced the greatest contradiction and disappointment of their lives.

Confused, Mary and Martha were in despair. Was Jesus what He claimed to be? They had trusted Him, but He had let them down.

Two days passed. Suddenly Jesus suggested to His disciples that they should go to Bethany. When they objected, He said to them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up" (verse 11, NIV).

"Well, Lord," they said, "if he is asleep, he will wake up."

Finally, Jesus informed them that

Lazarus was dead. He added, "And for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe" (verse 15, NIV).

Martha was the first to hear of the arrival of Jesus. She ran to Him, and with a voice full of disappointment and frustration she said, "Lord, . . . if you had been here, my brother would not have died" (verse 21).

Mary soon joined them, and Jesus wept with them. In the eyes of the sisters Jesus had proven to be unfaithful to His word.

But when they got to the grave, Jesus spoke, and Lazarus rose from the dead. Jesus not only met their expectations; He exceeded them.

Yes, it has been a long, long wait. Jesus' delay has raised doubts in our minds and has affected the way we live. But don't give up; don't look back! Jesus will exceed our expectations.

Rescued

During the presidency of Uganda's Idi Amin, an Air France plane was hijacked and diverted to Kampala, Uganda. Almost 100 Israeli passengers on that plane were detained by President Amin.

The governments of Israel and France condemned the hijacking, and appealed to Amin to release the passengers. They were soon joined by protests from the United Nations. But the more the Western press criticized Idi Amin, the more he threatened to execute the hostages. He visited them and told them that their government didn't care about their safety.

Finally Amin threatened that on a certain date, if the Israeli government had not complied with his demand to release some Palestinian prisoners, the hostages would be killed.

Meanwhile, Israel was working on a plan. They sent spies to Uganda to observe how Idi Amin visited the airport. The military put together a rescue team of commandos. Two C-130 planes took off for eastern Africa. One of the planes carried a rescue team, the other a black Mercedes-Benz sedan and a Land Rover. The planes managed to land at the Entebbe Airport undetected.

When the vehicles were unloaded, the commandos got into the Land Rover. Inside the Mercedes-Benz was a man who looked like President Amin. The car was like the one he used, adorned with the Ugandan flag and coat of arms.

The vehicles proceeded toward the building where the hostages were held. When the Ugandan security forces saw the vehicle, they stood at attention and saluted. When the vehicles stopped near the building where the president always stopped, security forces rushed to open the doors. The commandos followed, and, if I remember correctly, it took less than 10 minutes for the hostages to be rescued.

Friends, about 6,000 years ago the devil hijacked this planet. He is holding us hostage.

But the good news is that our rescue team is on the way—led by Prince Emmanuel, our Lord and Savior Himself.

Our rescue team will not be camouflaged. It will not be in secret. John the

revelator wrote: "Every eye will see him" (Rev. 1:7, NIV).

We are almost at the end of our journey. *Don't give up!* Jesus will not only fulfill our expectations; *He will exceed them.*

We might have to weep sometimes, but don't give up. We might face tough times, but don't give up. We might have some questions that have no immediate answers, but don't give up. We might be disappointed by the brothers and sisters, but don't give up. We might even disappoint ourselves, but don't give up.

Today God is inviting a people who are willing to live by faith in His Word and proclaim by faith the nearness of His coming.

Are you ready to respond to God's call to play your part in announcing the glorious reunion with our Savior, Jesus Christ?

He says, "I am coming quickly."

Let us respond by saying, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. 22:20)!

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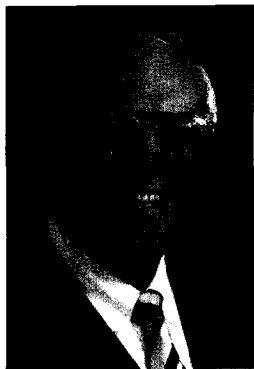
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Not all evening reports and musical presentations will be recorded for sale because of copyright restrictions. However, every effort is being made to make available as much as possible. Visit the AdventSource booth for availability.



Don Schneider
President

Faithful Stewards of God's Blessings

Presented July 2, 2005

I want our members in the North American Division (NAD) to be focused on the mission of Christ as reflected in Jesus' words: "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." (Mark 10:45, NIV).

During the past five years church members helped pastors baptize 153,000 new converts into the Seventh-day Adventist family in the 5,066 churches and 613 companies spread across North America. The division passed the one-million members milestone at the end of 2004.

New members feel it is an answer to their prayers to join the Adventist family. "The Lord has blessed me with a lot, and I love Him and owe the whole world to Him," said Rene Rodriguez, who joined the church in 2004. "That's why I am committing my life to Him."

Sow 1 Billion

Adventist Church leaders declared 2004 as the Year of World Evangelism and challenged its constituency to distribute 25 million Bible study invitation cards as part of the world church's Sow 1 Billion project. From the first two cards received from the Carolina Conference to the Wisconsin Conference's mailing 500,000 tracts and handing out an additional 100,000, the program saw results.

The Voice of Prophecy, the California-based ministry coordinating the Sow 1 Billion responses for North

America, received during the first week of March 2004 an average of 20 calls and 120 cards per day requesting Bible studies. This is the result of many churches and members adopting this project. For instance, a three-church district in northwest Montana mailed 15,000 Sow 1 Billion cards to their entire district and then coordinated newspaper advertising and evangelistic meetings as a part of the follow-up to those expressing interest. In a Houston, Texas, suburb, 2,300 people gathered at a conference center for lay training and equipping—which included various evangelism seminars for Sow 1 Billion. By the end of 2004 the Voice of Prophecy had received via mail and telephone approximately 27,360 invitations for Bible study. The request cards from churches and conferences also included materials in different languages.

Net Evangelism

In addition to the efforts of the Sow 1 Billion initiative, NET 2004 planners also contributed to bringing more people to the church. "Experience the Power," the NET 2004 evangelistic series presented by the *Breath of Life* telecast director and speaker, Walter L. Pearson, Jr., became a powerful force during the Year of World Evangelism. The 21-day series was uplinked from Baltimore, Maryland, to approximately 1,600 downlink sites all over the world and translated into Spanish, Portuguese, and Swahili. At the "home site" in Baltimore, Maryland, ministers baptized 149 people.

Taking Advantage of Unique Opportunities

The increase in membership can also be attributed to unique evangelistic opportunities in 2004. Mel Gibson's

movie *The Passion of the Christ*, which depicts the last hours in Christ's life, grossed more than \$370 million in the U.S. and Canada, awakening many spiritually. Realizing the impact this film was having on moviegoers, many Adventists in North America distributed the booklets *Passion of the Ages*, printed by the Review and Herald, and *The Passion of the Messiah*, published by Pacific Press and *Signs of the Times*, both comprised of material excerpted from Ellen White's book *The Desire of Ages*. To date, more than 800,000 copies of the *The Passion of the Messiah* booklets have been distributed, and Pacific Press will be printing 50,000 more. Each book takes its readers on a journey through the Garden of Gethsemane to the ascension of Jesus. Members engaged movie patrons in conversations about the book and movie while providing Bible studies at their local churches.

Adventist Chaplains

Approximately 21 Adventist military chaplains served in Iraq in 2004. These reserve chaplains served as pastors, teachers, or other religious workers until their units were activated. Ten active duty Adventist chaplains were deployed, serving at airfields, on ships, at command headquarters, or undisclosed locations. Currently, the Seventh-day Adventist Church has 50 chaplains serving on active duty, with another 34 in the reserve forces in North America.

In November 2004 Arthur Branner, pastor of the Fairfield, California, church, was one of these chaplains assigned for duty in Iraq. He considered his move to Iraq as a transition into a different phase of his personal

ministry. "I feel that the two most important positions in the Army are the medic and the chaplain," said Branner before he left. "While the medic works on the physical injuries, the chaplain works on the injured souls to make sure they are equipped to make the most important decision of their lives."

Embracing Service

Inspired by those committed to serving throughout the world, many NAD programs within the past five years similarly embraced the idea of service. This included the Pathfinder Camporee, held August 10-14, 2004, at the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) Campgrounds in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Approximately 30,000 Pathfinders attended the Faith on Fire Camporee and participated in pin trading, honor learning, marching/drilling exhibitions, archery, a talent showcase, and sporting activities. Perhaps more important, they impacted the local community through service assignments. Pathfinders helped in neighborhood cleanup initiatives, painting, and restoration projects.

As a result of nightly spiritual meetings 130 pastors baptized more than 290 Pathfinders on the Sabbath of the camporee. Thousands more committed themselves to study toward baptism.

For an Adventist Church committed to service, the Faith on Fire theme applied equally well a few months later. When the terrible tsunami hit southern Asia, Adventists in North America opened their hearts and wallets, contributing more than \$500,000 through their local church in January and February alone to aid those affected by this tragedy. The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) received millions of dollars from others throughout North America.

You can't tell people about salvation and Jesus Christ until you address their practical needs, states DeWitt Williams, director of the Health Ministries Department. "That's why we have



PHOTO BY KERMIT NETTER/ICG

One hundred thirty pastors baptized more than 290 Pathfinders during a mass baptism at the Faith on Fire Camporee.

trained and certified more than 5,000 members for community health outreach. We lift up Jesus in health by learning how to care for our bodies," says Williams. "There is a need for ministering to those who are not aware of the advantages of good health. We've had four national Health Summit training sessions with the Inter-American Division and will be having the second Health Summit West this year."

Financial Support

This notion of service was also seen in members' tithing and offerings. In 2002 NAD tithe increased by 3.3 per-

cent, compared to a 4.8 percent increase in 2004. Tithe for this quinquennium in the North American Division totaled more than \$3.5 billion—58 percent of the total tithe for the worldwide church. Total giving to the church for 2004—including tithe, offerings for missions, and local church funds—approached \$1.2 billion.

The conviction to help our neighbors in our communities encourages Seventh-day Adventist Church members to join national efforts. Each year the North American Division's philanthropic arm, Philanthropic Service for Institutions (PSI), invites employees at the General Conference complex to participate in a worthy cause through this national celebration.

"We want our colleagues to celebrate the spirit of the day that encourages others to give," said Ken Turpen, director of PSI. In 2003 proceeds went to fund a "goat bank" in Laos, Southeast Asia, and in 2004 to help Adventist World Radio send radios to rural areas in Madagascar, Cambodia, Masai lands, and the Philippines.

Committed to Global Mission

Other NAD ministries are dedicated to assisting globally as well. Adventist-Laymen's Services and Industries (ASI) is an organization of Seventh-day Adventist business men and women, professionals, and lay ministries dedicated to sharing the love of Christ and supporting the global mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and its outreach programs. Members recognize their stewardship of time, talents, and treasures given them by God. Under the motto "Sharing Christ in the Marketplace," they continually look for ways to live the gospel commission in daily business dealings and personal contacts.

In addition to inspiring its members to service, ASI has made a tradition of taking a projects-centered offering at its annual convention. The offering in 2004 totaled \$2.3 million to fund 45 different projects. During



PHOTO COURTESY OF ADVENTIST COMMUNITY SERVICES

Adventist Community Services specializes in disaster response by managing warehouse operations where volunteers sort, package, and store emergency relief supplies for distribution to disaster victims.

the past five years some 175 entities have received support. These included projects in nations as far away as China, Africa, Norway, Brazil, and Poland and places as close as Arkansas, Washington, Virginia, and Michigan. Examples include a clinic in Madagascar; a boys dormitory at Holbrook Indian School in Arizona; roofs for churches in Africa; billboards advertising Christian radio in South Carolina; an all-terrain vehicle for a school in the Dominican Republic; bicycles for Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, and the Congo.

Family Life

According to the National Center for Health Statistics, the total number of divorces in the United States reached 957,000 in 2000. The report also revealed that 43 percent of first marriages end in separation or divorce within 15 years.

During the quinquennium 18 From This Day Forward marriage conferences took place across North America. Hundreds of couples attended, many of them non-Adventists. More than 200 requested Bible studies after completing the conference. Some of the attendees shared that they were "on their way to divorce court but changed their plans because of the conference."

The Department of Family Ministries of the Seventh-day Adventist Church believes that stronger marriages develop into stronger families that form stronger churches and communities. "If our marriages are healthier, there is intentional discipleship of children taking place, more faithful stewardship practices, and a stronger witness to the world," says Willie Oliver, director of the Family Ministries Department.

Lay Involvement

The first-ever Festival of the Laity was held in April 2002 in Orlando, Florida. Attended by approximately 8,000 members, this convention affirmed and empowered the laity to continue witnessing and winning souls

for Christ. The festival featured 150 seminars, including "Winning Souls via the Bible Marking Plan," "Eight Habits of Highly Successful Bible Students," "Creative Outreach and Discipleship," and "Soul Winning Made Easy."

Women's Ministries departments across the division held 1,832 full-day leadership events during 2004. Some 91,000 people attended, with 10 percent being individuals who were not members of the church. This depart-



PHOTO BY MICHELLE MIRACLE

Kendall Pendergrass, 11, and Harrison Hosteter, 11, from the Gentry, Arkansas, Travelers Pathfinder Club repainted fire hydrants in Menasha, Wisconsin, during the Faith on Fire Camporee in August 2004. This was one of 23 community service projects sponsored by ADRA.

ment's belief in the power of prayer is demonstrated in its Web site www.nadwm.org.

The Adventist Volunteer Ministries Network reached record numbers in 2004, with more than 70,000 people participating in volunteer ministries. The Adventist Volunteer Ministries Network is the official agency responsible for leadership and networking of volunteer outreach ministries in North America. This means that churches, schools, conferences, and supportive organizations deploying volunteers for ministry can be a part of the growing volunteer ministries movement both here in North America and abroad.

In an effort to tell other more-specialized groups about Jesus, the North American Adventist Church launched a first-of-its-kind Bible study

course geared toward Native Americans in the Pacific Northwest in March. The course introduces Native Americans to Christ and the Adventist Church. Native Americans can request a free course packet, and the Voice of Prophecy will mail them the materials, including lessons and quizzes.

"This is the first time that there's ever been anything out there that is specifically [designed for] Native people, and written for Native people," said Monte Church, director of Native ministries for the North Pacific Union and Canadian Union conferences.

Use of Media

Radio and television, and increasingly the Internet, continue to be effective evangelistic vehicles for the church. From Florida Hospital a Christmas special aired on more than 150 television stations in 2004, including worldwide distribution on the Trinity Broadcasting Network and the Adventist Television Network.

The number of churches using Web sites showed dramatic increases in the past five years. The division recognizes one church per year for having the best Web site. For 2004 the recipient was the Camelback Adventist Church in Phoenix, Arizona. You can view the church's site at www.camelbackchurch.net.

NAD's Adventist Media Center, located in southern California, houses the Voice of Prophecy, Faith for Today, La Voz de la Esperanza, It Is Written, and Breath of Life. Additional ministries such as LifeTalk Radio and Amazing Facts mean more people are reached with the excitement of the Adventist message.

The way that the North American Division continues to expand in such new and exciting ways shows God's incredible blessings. I know that the mission is not yet done, but I hope each of us will know that we have had a part when the final report is presented and we are told, "Well done, thou good and faithful servants."

Continued from page 19.

regular or special council, shall have authority to make such postponement, not to exceed two years, giving notice to all constituent organizations.”

Mr. Chairman, I am happy to tell you that the following notice appeared three times in the *Adventist Review*:

General Conference Session

Official notice is hereby given that the fifty-eighth session of the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventists will be held from June 29 to July 9, 2005, in the America's Center Convention Center in St. Louis, Missouri. The first meeting will begin at 15:00 hours, June 29, 2005. All duly accredited delegates are urged to be present at that time.

Jan Paulsen, General Conference President

Matthew Bediako, General Conference Secretary

Mr. Chairman, Article V, Section 4, provides that the delegates to a General Conference session shall be designated as follows:

- Regular delegates not to exceed 1,240.
- Delegates at large not to exceed 760.

Mr. Chairman, Article V, Section 5, provides for the appointment of regular delegates by union conferences, divisions, and the General Conference. These delegates have been duly appointed in harmony with the constitution. The secretaries of the divisions have reported to me the following numbers of regular delegates from their respective organizations, and I shall read the numbers, Mr. Chairman: East-Central Africa Division, 130 delegates; Euro-Africa Division, 51 delegates; Euro-Asia Division, 52 delegates; Inter-American Division, 188 delegates; North American Division, 110 delegates; Northern Asia-Pacific Division, 42 delegates; South American Division, 134 delegates; South Pacific Division, 55 delegates; Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division, 74 delegates; Southern Asia-Pacific Division, 105 delegates; Trans-European Division, 65 delegates; West-Central Africa Division, 76 dele-

gates. Mr. Chairman, I move that these regular delegates be seated at this hour.

LOWELL C. COOPER: Thank you very much.

MATTHEW A. BEDIAKO: Mr. Chairman, Article V, Section 7(a), of the constitution provides that all members of the General Conference Executive Committee shall be delegates at large. The present membership of the General Conference Executive Committee is 290. Section 7(b) says that all associate directors and secretaries of General Conference departments and associations are also delegates at large. This number amounts to 27. Section 7(c) says that 20 delegates selected by the General Conference Executive Committee shall also be delegates at large. This number is 20. This gives us a total of 337 delegates for Section 7(a), Section 7(b), and Section 7(c). Section 7(d) says that 10 delegates from each division shall be designated as delegates at large. That gives us 130 delegates. Section 7(e) provides for other representatives of the General Conference and division institutions and other entities, and for those employees, field secretaries, laypersons, and pastors selected by the Executive Committee of the General Conference and its divisions. The number of these delegates shall be determined as the difference between the sum of all the other categories of delegates at large and 760.

Mr. Chairman, Section 7(a), Section 7(b), Section 7(c), and Section 7(d) give us a total of 467. The difference between 760 and 467 is 293. The distribution of 293 delegates have been made as stipulated by the constitution. Mr. Chairman, I move that these delegates at large be seated at this time. [Motion was moved, seconded,

and approved.]

MATTHEW A. BEDIAKO: Mr. Chairman, by adding 1,240 regular delegates to 760 delegates at large, we have a required grand total of 2,000 delegates. Mr. Chairman, this is a group of delegates provided by the constitution to initiate the work of the session. And so, Mr. Chairman, I present this delegation to you at this first meeting of the fifty-eighth session of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

This group of delegates present is now empowered to act on behalf of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists at its fifty-eighth session. I must hasten to say, Mr. Chairman, that I have just received an account of those who have already registered. We have 1,458 delegates who have registered. Registration will continue tomorrow morning, and I am sure that by the end of tomorrow we will have almost all of our delegation. Mr. Chairman, we now await your call to order.

LOWELL C. COOPER: Thank you, Mr. Secretary. On the basis of the information that you've presented regarding the composition of the delegation and the numbers of delegates who have registered and are present, I have the liberty of declaring that the fifty-eighth session of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists is open for business. [Applause.]

MATTHEW A. BEDIAKO: During this quinquennium, Mr. Chairman, there has been a reorganization on the continent of Africa and in several divisions. I now call on the associate secretaries responsible for these divisions to present these organizations and bring their recommendation for them to be accepted into the sisterhood of unions and divisions. I now call on Claude

Delegation Registration Stats*

Entity name	Total		Total	Men	Women	Lay	PTA*	GC
	Section 6	Section 7						
East-Central Africa Division	130	35	165	133	20	16	113	0
Euro-Africa Division	61	20	81	63	13	21	21	0
Euro-Asia Division	62	18	80	62	16	20	20	0
Gen Conf ADCOM/Insttns/Services	0	65	65	39	14	8	9	0
Gen Conf Dept Assoc Directors	0	27	27	19	7	0	1	0
Gen Conf Executive Committee	0	290	290	257	21	5	2	0
Gen Conf Office Appointed Staff	0	20	20	13	6	0	0	0
Inter-American Division	188	38	226	173	36	46	40	0
North American Division	110	68	178	130	43	47	35	0
Northern Asia-Pacific Division	42	20	62	55	4	15	20	0
South American Division	154	38	192	163	25	46	62	0
South Pacific Division	65	11	76	57	17	20	29	0
Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division	108	32	140	110	27	31	31	0
Southern Asia Division	74	19	93	79	15	18	19	0
Southern Asia-Pacific Division	105	20	125	96	16	34	15	0
Trans-European Division	65	18	83	50	26	27	23	0
West Central Africa Division	76	21	97	87	10	23	13	0
Total	1,240	760	2,000	1,586	316	377	453	0

* As of May 19, 2005

* Pastors, Teachers, and Administrators

Sabot to present the reorganization of the continent of Africa, the three divisions.

CLAUDE SABOT: Mr. Chairman, it is with pleasure that I move to recognize and record the reorganization of the former Africa-Indian Ocean Division and the Eastern Africa Division into three new divisions known as the East-Central Africa Division, the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division, and the West-Central Africa Division, effective January 1, 2003. To accept the East-Central Africa Division into the world sisterhood of divisions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. To accept the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division into the world sisterhood of divisions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. To accept the West-Central Africa Division into the world sisterhood of division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

LOWELL C. COOPER: With the pleasure of the body, we will hear now a series of motions respecting the recognition of unions to be brought now into the sisterhood of unions in the General Conference. If it meets with your pleasure, we will vote on these as a block. But each one will be presented as a motion. We'll take a moment to call question on the motion and to recognize the delegation from that particular entity. When we have completed the list of unions, we will invite a vote on the block of motions. We turn back to microphone 1, Agustin Galicia.

AGUSTIN GALICIA: Mr. Chairman, I would like to move to recognize and record the merging of the West Russian Union Conference with the Trans-Caucasus Mission to form the Caucasus Union Mission, effective November 1, 2001, and also to accept the Caucasus Union Mission

in the Euro-Asia Division into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

AGUSTIN GALICIA: I move, Mr. Chairman, to recognize and record the reorganization of the former North Mexican Union Conference and South Mexican Union Conference into three unions, known as the interim Inter-Oceanic Mexican Union Mission, the North Mexican Union Conference, and the South Mexican Union Conference, effective May 15, 2001. And to accept the Inter-Oceanic Mexican Union Mission in the Inter-American Division into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. And to accept the North Mexican Union Conference in the Inter-American Division into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. And to accept the South Mexican Union Conference in the Inter-American Division into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. I so move.

AGUSTIN GALICIA: I move to recognize and record the reorganization of the former Central American Union Mission into three new unions known as the North Central American Union Mission, the Mid-Central American Union Mission, and the South Central American Union Conference, effective April 20, 2003. And to accept the North Central American Union Mission in the Inter-American Division into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. And to accept the Mid-Central American Union Mission in the Inter-American Division into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. And to accept the

South Central American Union Conference of the Inter-American Division into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. I so move.

AGUSTIN GALICIA: Mr. Chairman, it is my pleasure also to move to recognize and record the organization of the Ecuador Union Mission, effective July 1, 2001, and to accept the Ecuador Union Mission in the South American Division into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist church. I so move.

AGUSTIN GALICIA: It is my pleasure also to move to recognize and record the reorganization of the former Central Brazil Union Conference and the South Brazil Union Conference into three unions known as the Central Brazil Union Conference, the South Brazil Union Conference, and the West Central Brazil Union Mission, effective January 1, 2005. And to accept the Central Brazil Union Conference in the South American Division into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. And to accept the South Brazil Union Conference in the South American Division into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. And to accept the West Central Brazil Union Mission in the South American Division into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. I so move.

CLAUDE SABOT: Mr. Chairman, it's a pleasure to move to approve the organization of the Botswana Union Mission in the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division, consisting of the South Botswana Field and the North Botswana Field, effective January 1, 2004. I move it. Mr. Chairman.

CLAUDE SABOT: Mr. Chairman, it is a pleasure to move to grant the Zambia Union Mission the status of union conference, effective August 12, 2004. I move it, Mr. Chairman.

LARRY R. EVANS: Mr. Chairman, it is a pleasure to move to recognize and record the merger of the Trans-Australian Union Conference with the Australian portion of the Trans-Tasman Union Conference to form the Australian Union Conference, effective January 1, 2001, and to accept the Australian Union Conference in the South Pacific Division into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. I so move.

LARRY R. EVANS: I do, and I'm also very pleased to

Delegation Composition*

Entity Name	Pastor/Tchr			Gen Conf	Total	Male	Female
	Laitly	Non-Admin.	Admin.				
East-Central Africa Division	16	113	24	1	154	133	20
Euro-Africa Division	21	21	34	0	76	63	13
Euro-Asia Division	20	20	41	0	81	62	16
Gen Conf ADCOM/Insttns/Services	8	9	16	5	38	39	14
Gen Conf Dept Assoc Directors	0	1	0	13	14	19	7
Gen Conf Executive Committee	5	2	40	260	307	257	21
Gen Conf Office Appointed Staff	0	0	0	1	1	13	6
Inter-American Division	46	40	118	0	204	173	36
North American Division	47	35	82	0	164	130	43
Northern Asia-Pacific Division	15	20	18	1	54	55	4
South American Division	46	62	80	0	188	163	25
South Pacific Division	20	29	26	0	75	57	17
Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division	31	31	42	1	105	110	27
Southern Asia Division	18	19	54	0	91	79	15
Southern Asia-Pacific Division	34	15	61	0	110	96	16
Trans-European Division	27	23	26	0	76	50	26
West-Central Africa Division	23	13	44	1	81	87	10
Total	377	453	706	283	1,819	1,586	316

* As of May 19, 2005

move to recognize and record the reorganization of the former Central Pacific Union Mission and the Western Pacific Union Mission into two new unions known as the New Zealand Pacific Union Conference and the Trans-Pacific Union Mission, effective January 1, 2001, and to accept the New Zealand Pacific Union Conference in the South Pacific Division into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. And to accept the Trans-Pacific Union Mission in the South Pacific Division into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. I so move.

BARRY OLIVER: There should be some additional wording after the words "Western Pacific Union Mission." It should read, "... and the New Zealand portion of the Trans-Tasman Union Conference." That portion of that union is also included in the new New Zealand Pacific Union Conference, Mr. Chairman.

LOWELL C. COOPER: Thank you; we've received that information from the secretary of the South Pacific Division, and that will be added to your motion.

TED T. JONES: Mr. Chairman, I am delighted to recognize and record the reorganization of the former Central Indian Union Mission and the South Indian Union Mission into five unions known as the East-Central India Union Mission, South-Central India Union Mission, Southeast India Union Mission, Southwest India Union Mission, and Western India Union Mission, effective April 1, 2002. And I move to accept the East-Central India Union Mission in the Southern Asia Division into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

TED T. JONES: Next, I move to accept the South-Central India Union Mission in the Southern Asia Division into the sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

TED T. JONES: Our next item is to accept the Southeast India Union Mission in the Southern Asia Division into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

TED T. JONES: I move to accept the Southwest India Union Mission in the Southern Asia Division into the sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

LOWELL C. COOPER: Question is called.

TED T. JONES: Finally, I move to accept the Western India Union Mission in the Southern Asia Division into the sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

CLAUDE SABOT: It's with pleasure that I move to recognize and record the reorganization of the former Nigeria Union Mission into two unions known as the Eastern Nigeria Union Mission and the North-Western Nigeria Union Mission, effective December 18, 2004.

CLAUDE SABOT: Mr. Chairman, I move to accept the Eastern Nigeria Union Mission in the West-Central Africa Division into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

CLAUDE SABOT: Mr. Chairman, I move to accept the North-Western Nigeria Union Mission in the West-Central Africa Division into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

LOWELL C. COOPER: Does that complete the presentation of union structures? All right, we've had a whole series of motions presented to us. We've called question on each one, and we'll presume that we are now ready to vote on the whole and to seat the delegates from these entities. [The motion approved.]

MATTHEW A. BEDIAKO: Mr. Chairman, at this time I would like us to take our program book and turn to pages 33 to 43, where we will find the daily programs. Mr. Chairman, I move that we accept the daily program as listed in the program book. [The motion was approved.]

MATTHEW A. BEDIAKO: Mr. Chairman, at this time I would like to turn to the agenda book and call your attention to the agenda itself. [An explanation was made concerning the various sections of the agenda. The motion was made and voted to approve the agenda.]

MATTHEW A. BEDIAKO: Mr. Chairman, in the agenda book, pages 17 and 18, we find the list of standing com-

mittees. These are the *Church Manual* Committee, Constitution and Bylaws Committee, Nominating Committee, and Seating of Additional Delegates and Additional Standing Committee Assignments. I would like to move that we approve these committees, with their respective chairs and secretaries. [The motion was seconded and voted.]

MATTHEW A. BEDIAKO: Mr. Chairman, I would like to point out that with these standing committees approved, all changes suggested by individuals from the floor will be referred to these standing committees for study.

Now, Mr. Chairman, a word about the *General Conference Rules of Order*. Each one of you should have received one in your bag. I would like you to turn to the central page, where we need to make one correction. [The correction was noted.] Mr. Chairman, as we have done in the past, these will be the rules that will guide the running of this session. Mr. Chairman, the General Conference Administrative Committee has recommended that Walter E. Carson, who served as parliamentarian at the previous session, serve in that same capacity at this session. I move that under-standing. [The motion was voted.]

MATTHEW A. BEDIAKO: Mr. Chairman, as we get ready to do business for the Lord and His church at this fifty-eighth session, I would like to quote a statement from the *Church Manual*, page 149, regarding the duty of delegates. It reads as follows: "A delegate to a conference/mission session or constituency meeting is not chosen to represent merely the church or conference/mission. A seated delegate should view the work as a whole, remembering that he/she is responsible for the welfare of the work in every part of the

Entity Name	Delegation by Age Group*						Total
	Under30	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70+	
East-Central Africa Division	2	18	59	47	17	3	146
Euro-Africa Division	2	14	22	18	6	0	62
Euro-Asia Division	4	23	33	15	1	3	79
Gen Conf ADCOM/Instns/Services	5	3	9	19	12	5	53
Gen Conf Dept Assoc Directors	0	0	1	14	6	2	23
Gen Conf Executive Committee	2	12	62	114	61	17	268
Gen Conf Office Appointed Staff	0	1	3	8	7	0	19
Inter-American Division	8	38	83	51	18	3	201
North American Division	1	3	35	69	49	5	162
Northern Asia-Pacific Division	1	1	12	23	17	2	56
South American Division	1	35	72	52	20	8	188
South Pacific Division	3	14	28	24	4	0	73
Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division	2	20	72	26	13	1	134
Southern Asia Division	1	2	33	50	7	1	94
Southern Asia-Pacific Division	0	7	34	51	15	2	109
Trans-European Division	2	17	18	28	6	2	73
West-Central Africa Division	0	10	33	38	13	0	94
Total	34	218	609	647	272	54	1,834

* As of May 19, 2005

field. It is not permissible for church or conference/mission delegations to organize or attempt to direct their votes as a unit. Nor is it permissible for the delegates from a large church or conference/mission to claim preeminence in directing affairs in a conference/mission session. Each delegate should be susceptible to the direction of the Holy Spirit and vote according to personal convictions. Any church or conference/mission officer or leader attempting to control the votes of a group of delegates would be considered disqualified for holding office."

Mr. Chairman, I think that this is a good counsel.

Now, Mr. Chairman, at every session we take note of those who have passed away. The delegations to this session represent about 14 million members and about 268,730 employees. Some of these workers fell asleep in Jesus during the past five years. Also many retired personnel have died. We miss their friendship and their fellowship, their support and dedication to the cause they so much loved. We look forward to meeting them again on the resurrection morning.

Mr. Chairman, at this time it would be appropriate for us to stand for a few moments of silence to remember these fallen soldiers of the cross. Now we will ask you, Mr. Chairman, to pray for the loved ones who have been left behind.

LOWELL C. COOPER: I invite the delegation and guests and visitors to stand for a moment of silence, which I will conclude with prayer. [His prayer followed.]

MATTHEW A. BEDI AKO: Mr. Chairman, I have deliberately left this next item for last. Some of you were witnesses to what happened at Toronto. During many of the business sessions we had few people present. We have talked about this, and I want to plead with all delegates—if you are a delegate, regular or at large, we plead with you to make sure you attend the sessions. We need you in order to do business here. And I have asked the division secretaries to take record of those who are absent. So I am pleading with you once more. On Wednesday afternoon there will be no business session. This will enable you to go to the exhibitions—so you don't need to rush off to the exhibitions. Wednesday afternoon the exhibition area will be closed to the public, and only delegates will be able to attend. So you have Wednesday afternoon to go and get all the gifts from the divisions and from the various organizations. But during the rest of the days, morning, evening, and afternoon, we expect every delegate to be here to do the business of God's church.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It has been wonderful to work with you this afternoon.

LOWELL C. COOPER: Thank you, Mr. Secretary, and thank you, delegates.

We have completed the formal actions that were needed to open the session. We are about ready to adjourn this meeting. Our next item of business will be to meet in the various division delegations. You will see in a moment on the video screens a list of the room assignments for the various division delegations to conduct their meetings for the selection of Nominating Committee members. [Delegates were informed of the various rooms to which they should go.] I invite you now to stand as we have our benediction for this first business session.

JAMES BRAUER: [Benediction.]

LOWELL C. COOPER, *Chair*

MATTHEW A. BEDI AKO, *Secretary*

BILL BOTHE, ATHAL TOLHURST,

FRED THOMAS, and CLAUDE

SABOT, *Proceedings Editors*

Session Actions

Fifty-eighth General Conference session, June 30, 2005, 3:00 p.m.

EAST-CENTRAL AFRICA DIVISION, SOUTHERN AFRICA-INDIAN OCEAN DIVISION, AND WEST-CENTRAL AFRICA DIVISION—NEW DIVISIONS

VOTED, 1. To recognize and record the reorganization of the former Africa-Indian Ocean Division and the Eastern Africa Division into three new divisions known as the East-Central Africa Division, the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division, and the West-Central Africa Division, effective January 1, 2003.

To accept the East-Central Africa Division into the world sisterhood of divisions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

To accept the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division into the world sisterhood of divisions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

3. To accept the West-Central Africa Division into the world sisterhood of divisions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

CAUCASUS UNION MISSION—NEW UNION MISSION

VOTED, 1. To recognize and record the merging of the West Russian Union Conference with the Trans-Caucasus Mission to form the Caucasus Union Mission, effective November 1, 2001.

2. To accept the Caucasus Union Mission (ESD) into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

INTER-OCEANIC MEXICAN UNION MISSION—NEW UNION MISSION

VOTED, 1. To recognize and record the reorganization of the former North Mexican Union Conference and the South Mexican Union Conference into three unions known as the Inter-Oceanic Mexican Union Mission, the North Mexican Union Conference, and the South Mexican Union Conference, effective May 15, 2001.

2. To accept the Inter-Oceanic Mexican Union Mission (IAD) into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

NORTH CENTRAL AMERICAN UNION MISSION, MID-CENTRAL AMERICAN UNION MISSION, AND SOUTH CENTRAL AMERICAN UNION CONFERENCE—NEW UNION MISSIONS AND NEW UNION CONFERENCE

VOTED, 1. To recognize and record the reorganization of the former Central American Union Mission into three new unions known as the North Central American Union Mission, the Mid-Central American Union Mission, and the South Central American Union Conference, effective April 20, 2003.

To accept the North Central American Union Mission (IAD) into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

To accept the Mid-Central American Union Mission (IAD) into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

To accept the South Central American Union Conference (IAD) into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

ECUADOR UNION MISSION—NEW UNION MISSION

VOTED, 1. To recognize and record the organization of the Ecuador Union Mission, effective July 1, 2001.

2. To accept the Ecuador Union Mission (SAD) into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

WEST CENTRAL BRAZIL UNION MISSION—NEW UNION MISSION

VOTED, 1. To recognize and record the reorganization of the former Central Brazil Union Conference and the South Brazil Union Conference into three unions known as the Central Brazil Union Conference, the South Brazil Union Conference, and the West Central Brazil Union Mission, effective January 1, 2005.

2. To accept the West Central Brazil Union Mission (SAD) into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

BOTSWANA UNION MISSION—ORGANIZATION

VOTED, 1. To approve the organization of the Botswana Union Mission, in the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division (SID), consisting of the South Botswana Field and the North Botswana Field, effective January 1, 2004.

2. To accept the Botswana Union Mission (SID) into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Zambia Union Mission—Conference Status

VOTED, To grant the Zambia Union Mission the status of union conference, effective August 12, 2004.

AUSTRALIAN UNION CONFERENCE—NEW UNION CONFERENCE

VOTED, 1. To recognize and record the merger of the Trans-Australian Union Conference with the Australian portion of the Trans-Tasman Union Conference to form the Australian Union Conference, effective January 1, 2001.

2. To accept the Australian Union Conference (SPD) into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

NEW ZEALAND-PACIFIC UNION CONFERENCE—NEW UNION CONFERENCE

VOTED, 1. To recognize and record the reorganization of the former Central Pacific Union Mission and the Western Pacific Union Mission and the New Zealand portion of the Trans-Tasman Union Conference into two new unions known as the New Zealand-Pacific Union Conference and the Trans-Pacific Union Mission, effective January 1, 2001.

2. To accept the New Zealand-Pacific Union Conference (SPD) into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

3. To accept the Trans-Pacific Union Mission (SPD) into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

KARNATAKA-GOIA UNION MISSION, KERALA UNION MISSION, AND WESTERN INDIA UNION MISSION—NEW UNION MISSIONS

VOTED, 1. To recognize and record the reorganization of the former Central India Union Mission and the South India Union Mission into five unions known as the East-Central India Union Mission, South-Central India Union Mission, Southeast India Union Mission, Southwest India Union Mission, and Western India Union Mission, effective April 1, 2002.

2. To accept the East-Central India Union Mission (SUD) into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

3. To accept the South-Central India

Union Mission (SUD) into the sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

4. To accept the Southeast India Union Mission (SUD) into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

5. To accept the Southwest India Union Mission (SUD) into the sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

6. To accept the Western India Union Mission (SUD) into the sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

NIGERIA UNION MISSION—NEW UNION MISSIONS

VOTED, 1. To recognize and record the reorganization of the former Nigeria Union Mission into two unions known as the Eastern Nigeria Union Mission and the North-Western Nigeria Union Mission, effective December 18, 2004.

2. To accept the Eastern Nigeria Union Mission (WAD) into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

To accept the North-Western Nigeria Union Mission (WAD) into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

DELEGATES FROM NEW UNIONS WELCOMED

Matthew A Bediako welcomed the delegates from the new unions to the fifty-eighth General Conference session.

GENERAL CONFERENCE SESSION 2005—DAILY PROGRAM

VOTED, To approve the daily program for the 2005 General Conference session as it appears in the session program booklet.

GENERAL CONFERENCE SESSION 2005—ADOPTION OF AGENDA

VOTED, To adopt the agenda for the 2005 General Conference session as it appears in the session agenda notebook, with the understanding that the order of business will be decided by the session Steering Committee and the chairmen of the business meetings.

GENERAL CONFERENCE SESSION 2005—STANDING COMMITTEES

VOTED, To approve standing committees for the 2005 General Conference Session, as follows:

CHURCH MANUAL

Armando Miranda, Chairman
Eugene Hsu, Vice-chairman
Vernon B Parmenter, Secretary
Janet Upson, Recording Secretary

Members: Rosa T Banks, Harold W

Baptiste, Bert B Beach, Wesley M Beene, James A Cress, Belzezar Denila, Larry R Evans, Nicodemus Falcao, Agustin Galicia, Raul E Gomez, Roscoe J Howard III, Yutaka Inada, Michael F Kaminsky, Dennis C Keith Sr, Linda Koh, Israel Leito, Dalbir Masih, Gabriel E Maurer, Kalapala J Moses, G T Ng, Stanley Wai-Chun Ng, James R Nix, John S Nixon, Salomey N Okwubunka, Barry D Oliver, Elizabeth E Ostring, Paul S Ratsara, Angel M Rodríguez, Iouliia Roussina, Blasious M Ruguri, Mozart S Serrant, Pavel Simek, Heather-Dawn Small, T V Thompson, Gilbert Wari, Harald Wollan, Rita Zirimwabagabo

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

Gerald D Karst, Chairman
Eugene Hsu, Vice-chairman
Larry R Evans, Secretary
Barbara Dickey, Recording Secretary

Members: Lucio Altin, Niels-Erik A Andreassen, Delbert W Baker, Bert B Beach, Matthew A Bediako, Lyn Behrens, Jannie Bekker, Guillermo E Biaggi, Steven N Bina, Lisa Burrow, Thomas Davai, Garland C Dulan, Laurie J Evans, Agustin Galicia, Joy Gashaija, Raul Gomez, Roscoe J Howard III, Daniel R Jackson, M C John, Michael F Kaminsky, Peter R Kunze, Robert E Kyte, Harold L Lee, Jose R Lizardo, Gabriel E Maurer, Eric P Monnier, Kalapala J Moses, Pardon K Mwansa, G T Ng, Stanley Wai-Chun Ng, Robert W Nixon, Mario Ochoa, Barry D Oliver, Orville D Parchment, Ruth E Parish, Juan O Perla, Juan R Prestol, Ted L Ramirez, Paul S Ratsara, Donald E Robinson, Blasious M Ruguri, Mack Tennyson, G Ralph Thompson, Jansen E Trotman, Gilbert Wari, Bertil A Wiklander, Harald Wollan

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

As provided for by the General Conference Constitution and Bylaws

PLANS

Ted N C Wilson, Chairman
Harold W Baptiste, Vice-chairman
Douglas Clayville, Secretary
Patti Banks, Recording Secretary

Members: Emmanuel O Abbey, Harold W Baptiste, George Baxen, Wesley M Beene, Adrian Bocaneanu, Joy M Butler, Eugene Danjels, Larisa G Demerji, Gwendoline Desmier, Melchor A Ferreyra, Danforth Francis, Jane Froma, James W Gilley, Eugene K Y Hsu, Alvin M Kibble, Hudson E Kibuuka, Thundiyl P Kurian, Peter R Kunze, Jose R Lizardo, Eric P Monnier, Mutuku J Mutinga, Wendell R McMillan, Donald E Robinson, Claude Sabot, Takashi Shiraiishi, Heather-Dawn Small, Ken Stanton, Remelito A Tabingo,

Yulia Tousina, Bill Townend, Orville Woolford

SEATING OF ADDITIONAL DELEGATES AND ADDITIONAL STANDING COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Eugene Hsu, Chairman
Claude Sabor, Secretary

Members: Roscoe J Howard III, Paul S Ratsara, Agustin Galicia, Matthew A Bediako

AMENDMENTS—REFER TO STANDING COMMITTEES

It was noted that all recommendations for amendments or substantive changes to the Constitution and Bylaws or to the *Church Manual* will be referred to the respective Standing Committees.

GENERAL CONFERENCE RULES OF ORDER

By common consent it was agreed to approve the *General Conference Rules of Order* to govern the business meetings of the 2005 General Conference session.

GENERAL CONFERENCE SESSION 2005—CARSON, WALTER E—PARLIAMENTARIAN

Walter E Carson, Associate Director of the General Conference Office of General Counsel, will serve as parliamentarian at the business meetings of the 2005 General Conference session.

Lowell C Cooper, Ted N C Wilson, Chairmen
Matthew A Bediako, Secretary
Larry R Evans, Actions Editor
Janet C Upson, Rowena J Moore, Recording Secretaries

Nominating Committee Report—1

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

GENERAL CONFERENCE

President:

Jan Paulsen

Session Snapshot



PHOTO BY ALDEN J. HO & REVIEW & HERALD

YOUNG AMBASSADORS: Musical group from Southern Asia-Pacific Division sing during the opening evening meeting, June 30, 2005.

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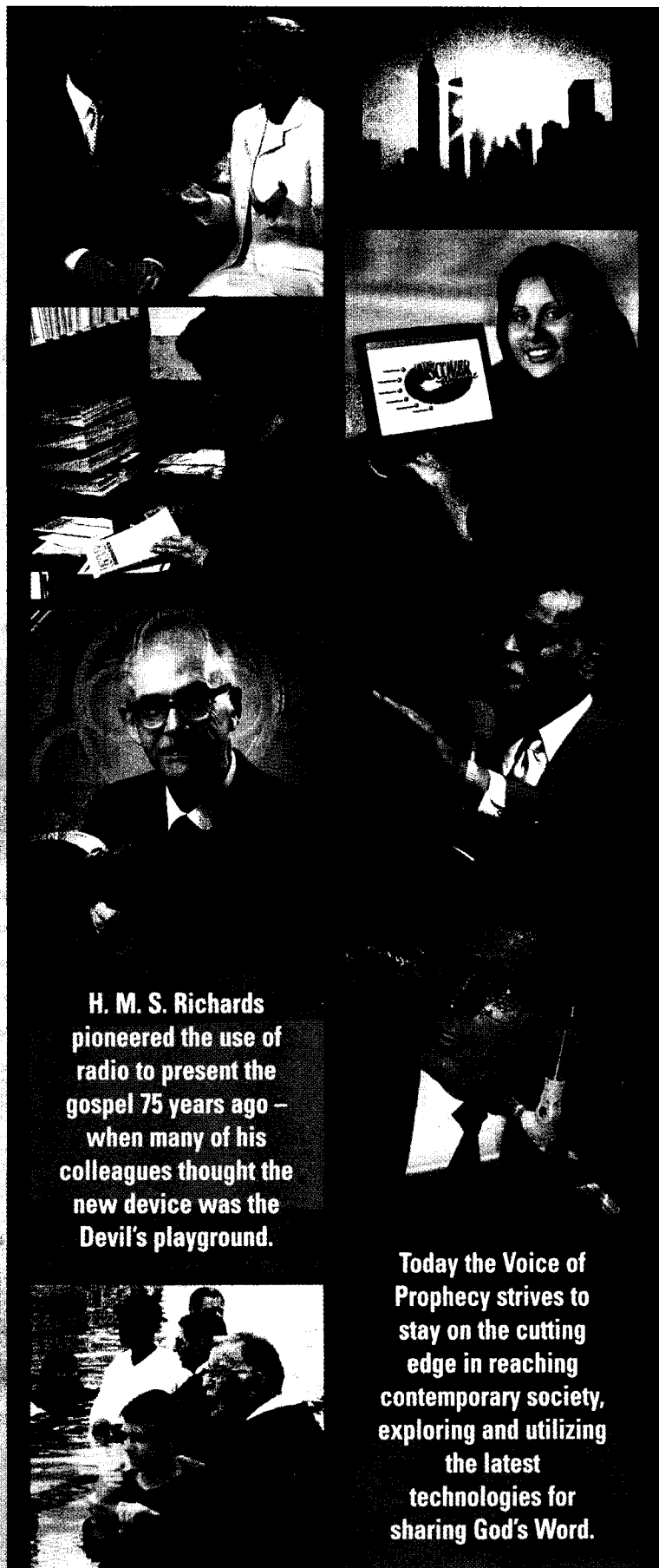
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