



The book cover depicts a cairn—a pile of rocks placed along a trail to show hikers the way to go. We remind ourselves that in Senior Youth Ministry it is important to keep our eyes on the ultimate rock, Jesus Christ. He will be our direction. He knows the path we should follow.



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Preface

The strength of youth ministry in the Seventh-day Adventist Church is that it is adaptable to its climate while remaining faithful to its call. It has gone through several phases, and has continually developed its approach and resources for each ever-increasingly complex generation of young people. This has taken the church from the early beginnings, when youth work was blended with Sabbath School, to the present day, in which youth ministry is divided into clearly defined areas of interest while pursuing the same goals.

Adventist Youth Ministries (AYM) has two broad age groups that are broken into two dedicated subsets of ministries.

Junior Youth Ministries (JYM): Ages: 6-15

Adventurer Ministry (ages 6-9)

Strengthens parent-child relationships by providing weekly activities tuned into the psychological needs of this age group and also giving parents opportunities for learning parenting skills and enjoying special activities with their children.

Pathfinder Ministry (ages 10-15)

Assists in the critical years of identity formation and adolescent transformation for boys and girls. Offering intentional activities of service and mission, Pathfinders takes the energy of young people to focus on their community.

Senior Youth Ministries (SYM): Ages: 16-30+

Ambassador Ministry (ages 16-21)

Designed to strengthen the current senior youth ministry of the church. It challenges them to experience and share a personal relationship with Jesus; helps them develop a lifestyle that is consistent with their belief system; provides training in diverse vocational interests; and provides them with a safe environment for the wholesome development of lifelong friendships.

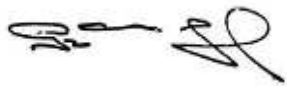
Young Adult Ministry (ages 22-30+)

Engages the vitality of a generation sharing their living relationship with Jesus in work and life, recognizing the diverse demographic from those in education or work, married or single, and probably parents. This critical ministry embraces empowering young adults for leadership, mentoring, evangelism, and healthy lives.

This manual, like its predecessor from 2005, is specifically for Ambassador and Young Adult Leaders (senior youth ministries), and instructions regarding Pathfinder or Adventurer Ministry Leaders (junior youth ministries) are not included. For more information about JYM, contact your local union, conference, or mission office.

This is a “how to” guide for senior youth ministries in the local congregation, university campuses, conference wide events, etc. It also serves as the training manual for Adventist youth professionals from the local church through the conference/mission/union levels. Our ultimate goal is to develop the leadership skills of the senior youth, connecting them with Jesus our Savior. We believe this will strengthen their faith walk within the Seventh-day Adventist Church and help them to reach out to their own local communities.

Note: It is important that we clarify the meanings of a few keys terms used throughout the handbook. The term “senior youth,” refers to everyone between the ages of 16-30+. The reason for the “plus” is that within some cultures, youth ministry is targeted toward those up to the age of 35. Senior youth includes both the Ambassador and Young Adult Ministries. It also includes any ministry unique to the local context—such Teens, Public Campus Ministry, AMICUS, and even simply the overall “Youth” designation which typically includes several supporting ministries. It includes people who are married, single, and divorced. It includes those who are working and those who are students. A “senior youth” is any individual between the ages of 16 and 30+ who would benefit from specialized resources and training.



Gilbert Cangy



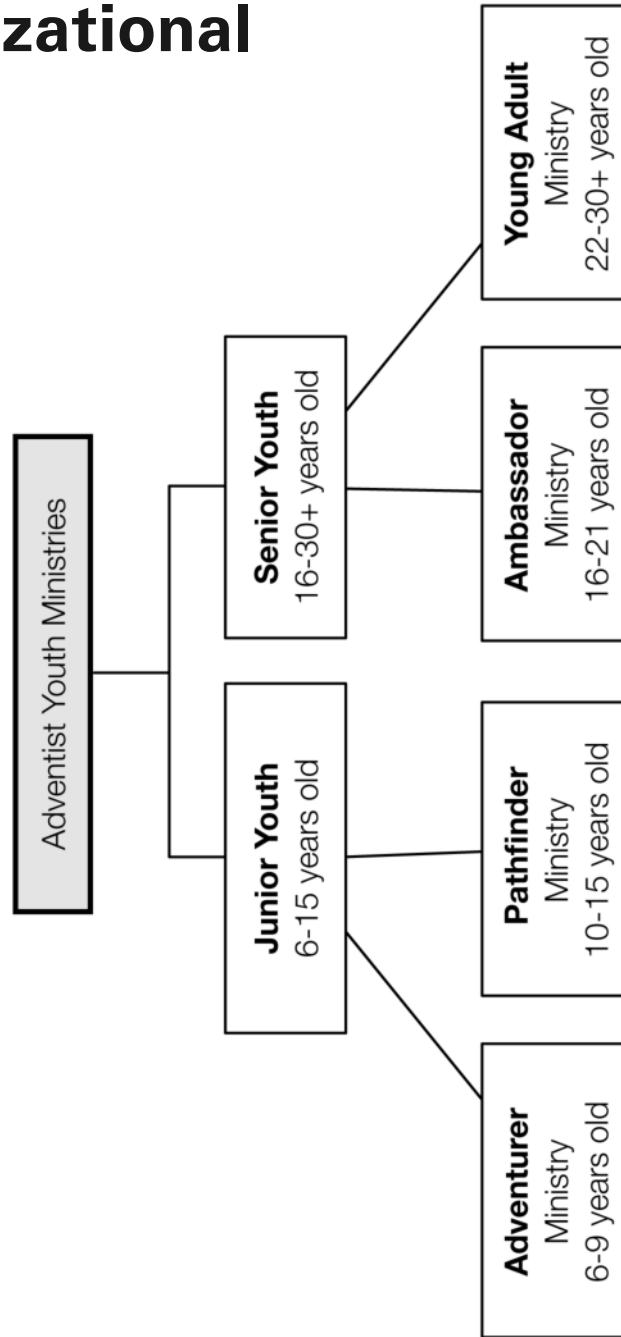
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Adventist Youth Ministries Organizational Chart



How to Use This Handbook

As soon as this handbook is printed, there will undoubtedly be sections that will appear out of date. That is the nature of Senior Youth Ministry. Change is rapid. Still, the intent of this handbook is to reach both novices and professionals within youth ministry. For the novice, we would recommend that you proceed through the book sequentially, chapter by chapter. Professionals in youth ministry may wish to simply read the summary sections at the end of each chapter and decide which ones would complement your current knowledge and practice. For both novice and professional, the book is designed with lots of margin space to encourage interaction with the text. Mark it up!

The “Contents” page will probably provide you with a good overview of the manual. However, for those who are used to the previous edition, it will be important to note that we have edited and merged the previous eight modules into the following three new sections:

1. WHY: Foundations of Senior Youth Ministry

You will open your Bible and establish a theological framework to guide the senior youth ministries you plan to lead. You will wrestle with your own context for appropriate applications. You will consider models of senior youth ministry and challenge yourself to always keep learning.

2. HOW: Practice of Senior Youth Ministry

Three resounding headings make up this section: Discipleship; Church and Community; and Mission/Service. Just exactly how do you engage senior youth in these three key areas of the Christian life while the wider culture attempts to attract their attention toward other things? These three topics form the core of the General Conference Youth Ministries Department’s re-visioning for this generation.

3. WHAT: Planning for Senior Youth Ministry

Your temptation as a novice will be to rush to this section and immediately start to implement a senior youth ministry. For the professionals, take what is useful and blend it with your experience and knowledge database. This final section will give you the application for training weekends.

These three sections carry all the basic elements needed for a novice to grasp the essence of senior youth ministry in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and serve as a springboard for professionals to lead more effective seminars and training weekends.

In addition to this manual, the Youth Ministry *Accent* magazine is full of ideas and further applications. The General Conference Youth Ministries website also provides resources from presentations in Keynote and PowerPoint through to addendums, articles, and book reviews and suggestions, such as the *Pastor’s and Elder’s Handbook for Youth Ministry*, prepared and published by the General Conference Youth Ministries Department and Ministerial Association—a must-read for every local church leader.



SECTION A

Foundations

of Senior Youth Ministry

THEOLOGY & PHILOSOPHY OF SENIOR YOUTH MINISTRY

Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. John 20:30-31

Everything written in the Bible aims to help foster a belief in Jesus as Savior. The information recorded is transformative, because the information is about Jesus. *Theology* (Theo = God + ology = study) is the technical term for a beautiful journey of discovering who Jesus is. Jesus Himself said that the Scriptures exist to point to Him. He is eternal life.

You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about me. —John 5:39

Granted, in theology there are multiple disciplines and foci including historical, systematic, practical, etc., but they all revolve around one quest: to know Jesus.

Ellen White, in the opening chapter of *Desire of Ages*, writes that God is with us through Jesus. Through her study of Scripture and personal connection, she encountered Jesus. She expresses that:

“Christ was treated as we deserve, that we might be treated as He deserves. He was condemned for our sins, in which He had no share that we might be justified by His righteousness, in which we had no share. He suffered the death which was ours, that we might receive the life which was His. ‘With His stripes we are healed.’” (p. 25)

Yet that image of God through Jesus is not as beautiful as it should be. The One we follow has been tainted by humanity. Thus the hard question we have to ask ourselves: does our Senior Youth Ministry remove the taint? Does it in fact shape the minds and hearts of these towards Jesus? Our theology calls for us to expressly know Jesus. He himself declares that everything revolves around Him.

Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” —John 14:6

Bailey Gillespie and Timothy Gillespie, in their book *Hey! Love Them and They Will Come* (a must read for every senior youth leader), comments on this same verse.

“This Jesus we are to believe in actually transcends the way that we talk of Him. If He is the way, the TRUTH, and the life, then we need to spend time dwelling in Him, rather than simply talking about Him. It is possible that we have spent the majority of our time making sure we have the right belief, but not believing in the right way. This is a big deal. To acknowledge Jesus as all and in all is different than talking about Him. It is a deep sense of abiding, of dwelling, and of living in Him and with Him. He is the ONE thing that binds us, the one thing that unites us, and the one thing that is inter/cross generational, cross-cultural, and defies any boundaries that we might have to put in His way . . . Ellen G. White . . . shares the centrality of Jesus. “There is one great central truth to be kept ever before the mind in the searching of the Scriptures—Christ and Him crucified. Every other truth is invested with influence and power corresponding to its relation to this theme.” (p. 170)

Christo-centric senior youth ministry is different to a ministry driven by psychology or sociology. Granted, those fields are essential to understanding and better implementing youth ministry, but they are not the reason why we minister; they are not the call. Kenda Creasy Dean, in *Starting Right: Thinking Theologically About Youth Ministry*, notes that:

“All Christians are called to be practical theologians, disciples whose obedience to God in the church and in the world puts our truth calls into practice. Theology that goes unmanned and unnoticed is powerless to change lives or ministries. Practical theology assumes that we live our convictions about who God is and how God works in the world, and that we practice our theology most faithfully when we do it on purpose.” (p. 32)

Start With Why

We have to be intentional about senior youth ministry. Simon Sinek, in his easy-to-read work *Start with Why*, explores what he calls “the golden compass”: three concentric circles that start with “why” in the center circle, “how” in the second circle, and “what” in the outer circle. He suggests that businesses that successfully follow the law of diffusion and thus gain the early and late majority market share answer the question “why” first. Those that have focused on “what” they produce have invariably had a weaker market presence.

Taking Sinek’s theory into Scripture and laying it over a fundamental text like John 3:16 provides us with this perspective.

Why? – For God so loved the world . . .

How? – . . . that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him . . .

What? – . . . should not perish but have eternal life.

What is our “why” and ultimate purpose of senior youth ministry? What is the theology that drives our philosophy and thus our practice?

Three Perspectives

Several years ago, the late Jim Cress, who was then the General Conference Ministerial Director, visited a church that I was pastoring and shared a message that helped to focus my personal approach to senior youth ministry. His insightful understanding of Luke 15 gave me the framework and clarity to shape my practice, revolving around three stories that Jesus told: that of the lost coin, the lost sheep, and the lost son. These three stories represent three broad groups that are leaving through the back door of the church.

Lost Coin

The story of the lady who lost her coin represents those who stay but are disconnected. They attend every week but do not sense they have heard the voice of Jesus in their life. For all intentions they look like they are engaged, but in reality they are lost inside the church. They have formal religion, but no heart. They have embraced institutional customs with no movement and passion. The apathy level is high and the routine is mundane. They are bored and disengaged. It is often easy for us as leaders to forget that they need just as much support and care.

Lost Sheep

The story of the lost sheep represents those who simply wander away. They miss a couple of Sabbath schools, they skip the occasional Senior Youth program, and they accept appointments that take them away from moments of connection. They know Jesus exists, but one day they simply forget to listen to His voice and they wander away, just like the sheep did.

Lost Son

The story of the lost son represents those who have chosen to leave. They have weighed their options and made a choice to leave, to step away in an act of defiance and rejection.

Those who remain, those who wander, and those who leave are all disconnected from Jesus by some shape or form. And honestly, these characteristics are representative of more than just the millennial generation—they can be applied to all people and to all generations.

David Kinnaman, in *You Lost Me*, has a similar approach with three groups that we will examine later under the section “Understanding the Times.”

Practical Solutions

But first, returning to Luke 15, we see that it also offers some very practical solutions for working with these three broad groups. For instance, the shepherd would never have noticed one of his sheep was missing unless he counted. In senior youth ministry, we should have accurate records of all our people. We, as a community, need to know when anyone is absent and find out why immediately. The woman who lost the coin worked tirelessly to find it. How much work are we as leaders willing to invest? How valuable are our senior youth? What do we have to do for the “brother” who stays? How do we celebrate when senior youth return? Do we embrace them immediately like the father did with his son?

It is especially interesting that all three examples in this passage focus on “one.” That is, for the *one* person who is almost Christian and for the One Jesus Christ. The character of Jesus is the reflection of God. The entire Great Controversy is about vindicating and lifting up God, who believes in the freedom of choice.

The General Conference Youth Ministries Department is re-visioning youth ministries. Focused on *revival* and *reformation*, its philosophy is articulated in the mission statement which reads:

MISSION: To lead young people into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ and help them embrace His call to discipleship.

This is the “why” for all leaders in senior youth ministry. It is, of course, the “why” for junior youth ministry too. The center of everything we do is Jesus. The map on the back cover of this handbook demonstrates that our theological conclusions take us all to an experience with Jesus Christ. Spiraling outward is the “how” of senior youth ministry that provides the “what” in our local congregations.

Youth ministry about the local church and its context. It is about the ability of each one of us to create places that model what church should be. It values an intergenerational approach to church and life. We are not here to set up separate kingdoms, as we all live in one kingdom from God. Our ministry must be about bringing everyone together. We should be collaborative rather than territorial in our ministry, just as the early followers of Jesus are described.

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to

meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. —Acts 2:42-47

Kyle Idelman, in his crucial message, *Not a Fan*, notes that the only way the church could have started like this was if the early Christians were really 100 percent followers of Jesus and not simply “fans”. Everyone had the power from Jesus. It was seen in the vitality of the local community. These Christians were able to take up their crosses daily—not by their own strength, but because of their love for Jesus. They understood and embodied the message Jesus came give, which is expressed well in the following passage:

After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. “The time has come,” he said. “The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!” —Mark 1:14-15

The gospel rang true to the early Christians. These men had dreamed since they were little boys to perhaps one day grow up and follow a rabbi, hoping that he would lead them to the Messiah. Now appeared a man who was no ordinary Rabbi, as N. T. Wright in *Simply Jesus* explains. Jesus did not do what people expected a Messiah to do, nor did He even teach like an ordinary rabbi. He was not acting like a priest or even a prophet. He superseded all that by being simply Jesus, and His call to follow was heeded instantly.

“Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.” At once they left their nets and followed him. —Mark 1:17-18

In *Jesus Manifesto*, Leonard Sweet and Frank Viola say that the ultimate question from Jesus is for every generation and must be answered by every generation for themselves: “Who do you say that I am?” When we experience Jesus, we will follow Him. We are called to share the gospel by following Jesus. Before we can lead others, we must follow Jesus. Senior youth ministry has the same mission:

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age. —Matthew 28:19-20

This charge provides a clear method for us today just as it did when it was proclaimed by Paul to the Philippians as follows:

In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God

something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. —Philippians 2:5-11

“Follow Jesus” is the theology and philosophy of senior youth ministry. It is founded in Jesus as the source of all strength with a strong call to discipleship that is lived out in the kingdom of God. How this is accomplished and what it looks like will vary according to context somewhat. But the results will all be the same: “Every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.” This empowerment is the gift Jesus left for all of us.

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. —Acts 1:8

re-VISIONING YOUTH MINISTRY

The re-Visioning youth ministry map on the back cover is biblically grounded and locates the operation of youth ministry within the context of the work of the Holy Spirit. The terms Revival and Reformation, Leadership Empowerment, Fruits, and Gifts have been carefully chosen to reflect the reality that our work is of a deeply spiritual nature.

The Senior Youth Handbook that you hold in your hands provides a framework and a sound theological/philosophical foundation for youth ministry. It is based on the re-Visioning youth ministry document that was adopted in 2011 by the General Conference Youth Advisory as the charter for global youth ministry.

This brief section of the handbook offers a model that translates these foundational principles into practice; this is one way of structuring your local church youth group.

If you are a youth leader in your local church and you already have in place a regular Adventist Youth meeting, we would encourage you and challenge you to be purposeful in the application of your program. We would strongly urge you to run your youth program along the foundations proposed in the re-Visioning youth ministry document. If you are a youth leader and you have just been appointed, this is a great opportunity for you to start fresh on solid foundations.

If you are involved in youth ministries in your local church and do not have a

regular youth meeting, this practical document will give you some clear directions on how to start a regular youth meeting.

If you do not have a youth meeting but run your youth ministry program along small groups, the same model that is being proposed can be applied effectively to your small group ministry.

An executive summary of the re-Visioning Youth Ministry model

Jesus is the center of our ministry. We propose TWO foundational passages.

1. John 20:21, NIV

Again Jesus said: 'Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.'

This passage calls for two questions: (1) *What* did the Father send Jesus for? (2) *How* did He carry out His mission? (i.e. the *Message* and the *Method*).

(a) The Message

If we are to be sent as Jesus was sent, it is crucial for us to understand what He was sent for. The clear answer to this question is given to us by Jesus Himself in Mark 1:14, 15. *"After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. 'The time has come,' he said. 'The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news'"* (NIV)!

Here we have the Timing, the Message, and the appropriate Response. The message is "The Kingdom of God is near." Jesus reinforces that message in Luke 4:42,43:

At daybreak Jesus went out to a solitary place. The people were looking for him and when they came to where he was, they tried to keep him from leaving them. But he said, "I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns also, because that is why I was sent" (NIV).

Jesus clearly points to the fact that the proclamation of the Kingdom of God was THE reason he was sent by the Father. This same purpose is consistently present throughout His ministry, that of the disciples and the apostolic Church find itself at the heart of the Advent message.

- After his disciples had learned from him, he sent them out with a specific message:

And he sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick
—Luke 9:2

- Jesus declared that this message of the Kingdom would be preached to the world and then the end would come.

And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come. —Matt. 24:14-15).

- After his resurrection Jesus spent his last 40 days on earth instructing those to whom he would entrust the most important mission ever given to men. He spoke to them about the Kingdom of God.

After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. —Acts 1:3

- After his ascension, the disciples preached the Kingdom of God.

But when they believed Philip as he proclaimed the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

—Acts 8:12

- In closing chapter of the book of Acts, Paul sums up the central theme of his ministry.

³⁰For two whole years Paul stayed there in his own rented house and welcomed all who came to see him. ³¹He proclaimed the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ—with all boldness and without hindrance! —Acts 28:30,31

- The three angels messages of Revelation 14, which is at the heart of our identity and calling as a church are delivered in the context of the everlasting gospel.

⁶Then I saw another angel flying in midair, and he had the eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth—to every nation, tribe, language and people.

While we proclaim the central message of Jesus, “The Kingdom of God is near”, and await with great expectation the culmination of human history with his second coming and the establishment of his glorious Kingdom, we are invited to enter the new life of the Kingdom of God in the present. Jesus says that ⁴⁵Jesus answered, “no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit”. This is an experience that begins in the here and now and finds culmination at the second coming. The Kingdom is not something to be accepted now and enjoyed later, but it is something to be entered in the here and now and will find its culmination at the Second Coming of Christ.

Several New Testament passages point to the present reality of God Kingdom among us.

- *Once, on being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, "The coming of the kingdom of God is not something that can be observed,²¹ nor will people say, 'Here it is,' or 'There it is,' because the kingdom of God is in your midst." —Luke 17:21*
- *For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." —Romans 14:17*
- *For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves. —Colossians 1:13*

The eternal life that begins with confidence in Jesus, through the Holy Spirit is a life in his present Kingdom, now on earth and available to all. The message of the Kingdom of God is good news for our life now, not just for when he comes a second time. It is about living now as his apprentices in Kingdom living. Our future is a natural extension of the faith by which we live now.

(b) The Method

If we are to be sent as Jesus was sent, it is crucial for us to understand HOW He was sent and HOW He carried out His ministry. His method can be summed up in the second part of John 20:22:

And with that He breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit" (NIV).

The Holy Spirit is presented as the person of the Godhead through whose power we are transformed and have access to Kingdom life. The following historical overview of the work of the Holy Spirit in Scripture affirms that we are living in the last days, the days of the Spirit's availability to all of us to finish the work God has entrusted to us.

What is Holy Spirit Empowerment?

Upon his first visit to the believers in the city of Ephesus, Paul does not even take time to greet them, but addresses them with this heart searching question: "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" They replied that they had not even heard that there was a Holy Spirit; they acknowledged the baptism of water, not the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Ellen White comments that "There are today many as ignorant as of the Holy Spirit's work upon the heart as were those believers in Ephesus; yet no truth is more clearly taught in the word of God."

An understanding of Holy Spirit empowerment is pivotal in Youth Ministry. We often refer to the promise of the prophet Joel that God would pour out His Spirit on all people in the last days, including young people. What is the significance of that promise in terms of salvation history?

The Holy Spirit and Leadership in the Old Testament

An example of the comprehensive, four-fold work of the Holy Spirit is referred to in the words of Samuel when he was called to anoint Saul as the first king of Israel (1 Samuel 10:5-7):

“The Spirit of the Lord will come upon you in power.”

God will make you strong. God is a God of power, and the gift of His presence in the person of the Holy Spirit comes with the power that is inherent to Him; it is not of human origin, it is divine.

Jesus rarely gives negative imperatives, but at the turning point of human history, at the moment when the everlasting gospel is to be entrusted to individuals, Jesus says, “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised.” Also, “you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:4, 8).

It is natural to have a sense of our powerlessness in the face of the great challenges of our work but, like Paul, we can say:

But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong. —2 Corinthians 12:9-10

The following concepts offer courage to those planning to take on roles as leaders. God tells us:

“You will be changed into a different person.”

God will transform you. In a world that is obsessed with external appearances, God offers a transformation of the heart. God offers radical heart transplant—a new heart and a new spirit, a heart of flesh instead of a heart of stone. He will write His law in our minds and our hearts. If anyone is in Christ, he or she is a new creation. (See Ezekiel 36: 26,27; Jeremiah 31: 33,34; 2 Cor. 5:17)

“You will prophesy with them.”

God will equip you. Prophecy is one of the gifts of the Spirit that God equips some

believers with to speak His words. Of course, not everyone has this gift—some have other equally important and valuable gifts. God promises that every single believer will be invested with at least one spiritual gift for ministry. There is no one on the bench on God's team. To each one, the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. We have different gifts according to the grace given us. (See Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 12:7)

“Do whatever you hand finds to do, for God is with you.”

God will dwell in you. It is a profound mystery that God the Father and the Son would make their residence in our hearts through the Holy Spirit. He gave us a counselor to be with us forever. He will not leave us as orphans; He will come to us. Our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who lives in us. (See John 14:15,18,23; 1 Cor. 6:19.)

The Work of the Spirit in the Old and New Testaments

The Holy Spirit is part of the Godhead—He is divine, eternal, and has always been at work; however, the scope of His operation is different in the Old and New Testaments.

In the time of the Old Testament, or before the coming of Christ and the ushering in of the New Covenant, the Holy Spirit (or the “Spirit of the Lord” as He is often referred in the OT) limited His operation to specific individuals like kings, prophets, judges, priests, and other particular individuals whom God called for a specific function. For example:

Exodus 31:1-3—Bezalel to fashion furniture for the sanctuary
Judges 14:6—Samson as judge
1 Samuel 16:13—David as king

Moses wished that God would put His Spirit on all people. Consider the insightful story found in Numbers 11:16,17; 24-30.

In the time of this limited operation of the Holy Spirit, a powerful promise is given that would bring an extension of His operation, in which He would make Himself available to all believers:

And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days. —Joel 2:28,29

Joel's inspired use of words is very intentional to clearly establish what was to come. He covers all categories of people: sons, daughters, old, young, men, women, even servants.

The coming of Jesus—a turning point

John the Baptist was called to prepare the way for Jesus. The four Gospel writers describe his message in the following words:

I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. —Matt. 3:11

After me comes the one more powerful than I, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit. —Mark 1:7,8

The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Messiah. John answered them all, 'I baptize you with water. But one who is more powerful than I will come, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.' —Luke 3:15,16

Then John gave this testimony: 'I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. And I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.' I have seen and I testify that this is God's Chosen One.' —John 1:32-34

Jesus is presented as a man who lived by the Spirit. Though divine, He chose to live like one of us, in absolute dependence on the Holy Spirit as demonstrated in the following passages:

Matt. 1:18-20: Conception: Of the Holy Spirit

Matt. 3: 16-17: Baptism: Holy Spirit descends (Example)

Luke 4:1,2: Preparation for Ministry: Led by Spirit to desert

Luke 4: 14-19: Ministry: In the power of the Spirit

Luke 5:17: Miraculous healing: In the power of the Spirit

Luke 10:21: Personal disposition: Joy in the Spirit (fruits)

Acts 1: 7-8: Passes the legacy: Promises Holy Spirit

Acts 2:33: Provider: Dispenses the Holy Spirit

Jesus made clear when this historical transition in the work of the Holy Spirit would take place

On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, 'Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within

them.' By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified. —John 7: 37-39

John identifies the moment of Jesus' glorification as the turning point. Jesus' exaltation in the presence of the Father confirms that in His high priestly prayer:

After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed: 'Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do. And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.' —John 17:1,4,5

After the event, Luke confirms the same:

God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it. Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. —Acts 2:32-33

Consider Ellen White's words:

"When Christ passed within the heavenly gates, He was enthroned amidst the adoration of angels. As soon as this ceremony was completed, the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples in rich currents, and Christ was indeed glorified, even with the glory which He had with the Father from all eternity" (*Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 38,39).

"Consider the twofold work of the Holy Spirit. In the Old Testament, He worked upon more from without inward, but did not dwell or abide in them permanently. He appeared to them and empowered them, but did not often take abode in them. But from Pentecost onward, there has been a great change. His is now a special work, differing from that of preceding ages. Provision is made for Him to enter and live in all Christian believers, and work from within outward, filling and abiding" (*The Coming of the Comforter*, p. 30).

Works of the Holy Spirit

The following offers an overview of texts that provide evidence of the Holy Spirit's work in the lives of early believers—and by extension, the promises relevant for us living today:

The fulfillment after the ascension

Acts 1:4,5: *The command to wait*

Acts 1:7,8: *Jesus defines role of the Holy Spirit*

Acts 1:14: *United & prayerful in waiting*

Acts 2: 1-14: *The fulfillment*

Day of Pentecost

Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: "Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning! No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. —Acts 2:14-18

Promise to all believers

The Holy Spirit's presence is essential for successful ministry—and it is promised to all believers:

When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call." —Acts 2:37-39

Kingdom community for all

The outpouring of the Spirit gave birth to mission, which resulted in a Kingdom community that every young person deserved to be part of.

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. —Acts 2:42-47

This is the context of our ministry. We could not and we dare not go forward without the empowerment of the Spirit.

Before His ascension, Jesus told His followers not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait—to wait for the gift His Father had promised as we read in Acts 1:8:

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

The Method comes through the empowerment brought about by the presence of the Holy Spirit. From birth to the end of His earthly ministry, Jesus bears witness to a life bathed in the presence of the Holy Spirit; He chose to live like one of us. As the Father sent him, He is sending us. It is the Holy Spirit that brings the new life of the Kingdom to us. Jesus said that unless we are “born of water and the Holy Spirit” we cannot enter the Kingdom of God. The transformation brought about by the Holy Spirit makes our lives a living letter to be read by all; we do not simply do witnessing, we ‘are’ witnesses.

The Message: The Kingdom of God is near;

The Method: The Presence of the Holy Spirit.

2. Luke 6:12-17 – A day in the life of Jesus.

We can talk about principles, philosophy, and foundations, but at the end of the day, they must find expressions in real life, in practice. By simply observing a day in the life of Jesus, we can see how His life principles played out.

1. Verse 12: “He went out on the mountainside to pray.” He spent the first hours of His day in communion with the Father. We will identify that as PERSONAL SPIRITUALITY/DISCIPLESHIP.
2. Verse 13: “When the morning came he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them.” Strengthened by His communion with the Father, He found himself in the company of His twelve disciples. The Christian was never meant to live in isolation; God is community. Jesus showed us the way to COMMUNITY.
3. Verse 17: “he went down with them . . . and a great number of people . . . had to hear him and be healed.” Together, they spent the rest of the day in service, in the proclamation and demonstration of the Kingdom of God. SERVICE AND MISSION.

Here we have the three FOUNDATIONS for youth ministry: Spirituality (which we will call Discipleship), Community, and Mission/Service.

Personal Application for Leaders

The practical application of these passages would mean the following:

1. Your ministry begins with a clear understanding of the mission and the method of Jesus and how He desires for your youth group/small group to function.

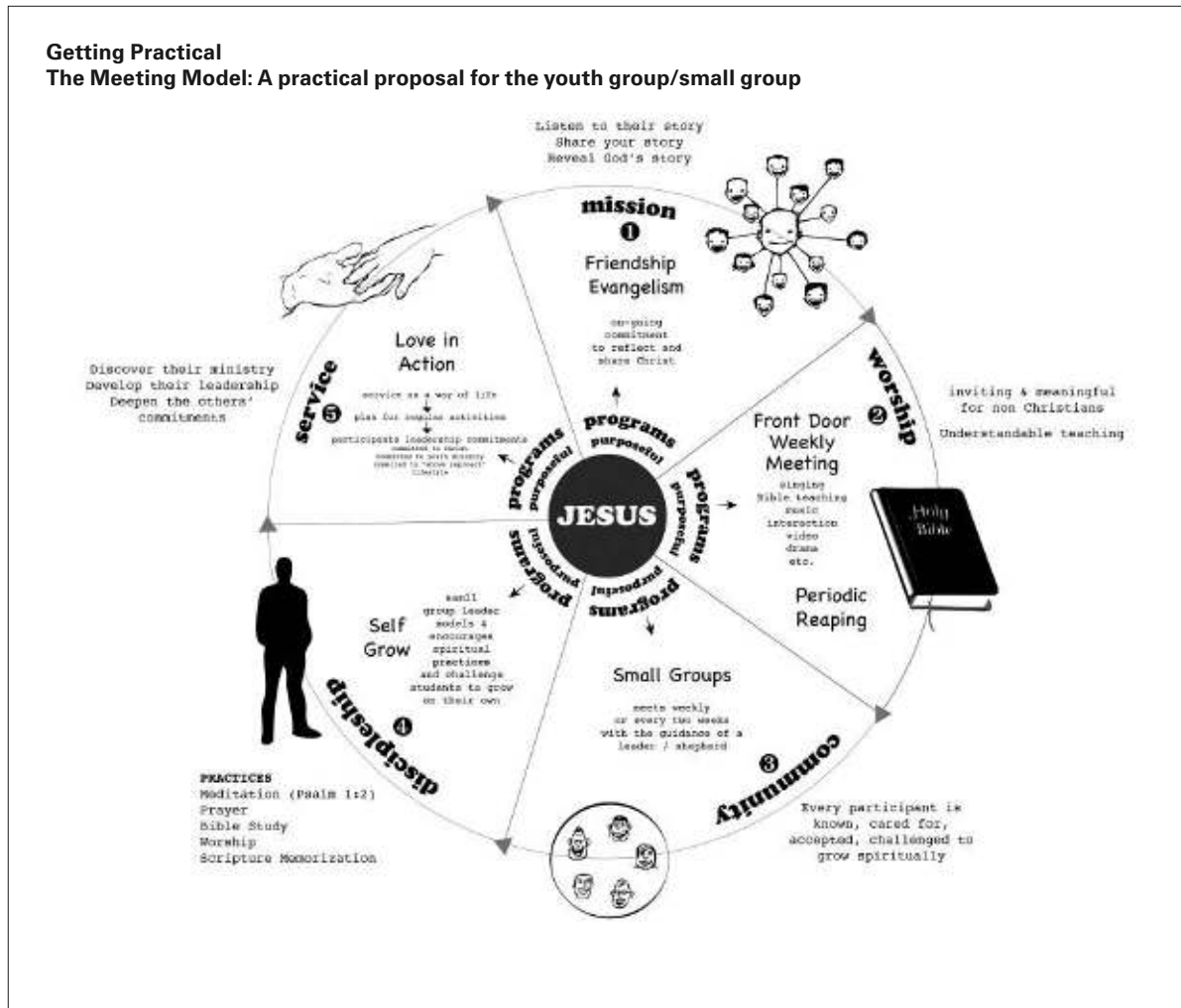
2. Jesus wants you to be a spiritual leader. Your ministry begins with you and God.
3. You carry out your ministry in the light of your relationship with God and in response to the power that His holy spirit will provide for you.
4. Your youth group/small group should function along the foundations that Jesus provided for us. Namely:

a. The fostering and development of spirituality. Following Jesus today does not literally mean to be with Him in the same way as His first disciples could; but the priorities and intentions, the heart and inner attitudes of modern disciples are forever the same. A disciple wants to be like the master and the disciple reorders the priorities of life in order to make discipleship possible. Jesus says that the Scriptures testify of Him and no discipleship is possible without spending time with Him through the meditation upon His Word. The Word, made alive by the Holy Spirit, will shape and transform the heart and life of the disciple to be like the master (Psalm 1:1-3).

b. The building of a community that will reflect love, support, and unity as a window on the kingdom of God. In this community no one is left out and every one is cared for. In this community there will be people at all levels on their journey with God. Some might be totally committed to Him, others might have no interest in spiritual things at all. Our task is to journey with all of them and to minister to them wherever they find themselves on the spectrum of faith.

c. Service and Mission are the heartbeat of your youth group/small group. Your outreach methods and activities will depend on your circumstances, the needs of the community, the resources that you and your youth group have, the spiritual gifts of your team, and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. Whatever shape or form your service/mission takes, they should always represent the ultimate objective for the existence of your ministry. Bare in mind the prophetic counsel given to us through inspiration: "Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, "Follow Me" (*Ministry of Healing* p. 143).

This youth ministry cycle is presented in order of steps 1-5. While it is recommended, your youth ministry cycle does not have to follow this particular order, if your circumstances do not allow. For example, if your ministry is structured along Small Groups, number two would not be part of your cycle; however, you could bring elements of number one into your small groups.



Here is how the model is applied:

No.1

Mission is at the beginning and at the end of the model. Train your committed youth to become contagious and effective in sharing their faith.

Equip all your committed youth for Friendship Evangelism. Use the "Contagious Christianity" training. Equip them to share their personal story/testimony and to be aware of opportunities at home, school, work, neighborhood, clubs that God will provide to influence someone else's life. Construct your AY/Youth meetings (No. 2) in such a way that they feel free to invite the friends and non-believers they are influencing toward Jesus to come. Let them see their youth meeting as part of the cycle of evangelism. Let it be a place/event that can be of assistance to them in their mission adventures.

Resources: "Becoming a Contagious Christian" training and other training tools are available at www.gcyouthministries.org.

No.2**Plan for your weekly meeting to be your Front Door for Evangelism**

Consider your regular AY meeting, youth group, or small group meeting as an event that will have multiple targets:

1. Minister to non-Adventist youth
2. Minister to Adventist youth who are nominal
3. Minister to Adventist youth who have made a commitment to Jesus

While your Message and Method are clearly defined and your three Foundations are firmly in place, these targets will define and determine the nature of your programming.

Elements of meetings:

- Relevant themes; develop a sense of belonging; make it attractive; engage the participants; use a variety of methods throughout the year.
- We live in the age of technology and wherever possible use technology in the context of your meetings.
- HOWEVER, always remember the foundations of your ministry and always be purposeful in your programming.
- Core elements that are generally present in whatever type of meeting you choose to run:
 - a. Creative and not repetitive
 - b. Relationally based and warm
 - c. Grounded in practical Bible teaching relevant to the theme of the day
 - d. Based on involvement and interaction
 - e. Anointed in prayer
- Meetings are generally constructed around a THEME and contain a number of elements that include welcome, prayer, songs, ice breakers, quiz, interaction, role, etc.; however, there is a main segment that can be presented in a number of different ways, such as:
 - a. Formal presentation by someone who has some insights on the theme
 - b. Debate on the theme
 - c. Theme presented to be discussed in a small group followed by reporting and summing up
 - d. A musical meeting based on a theme (different songs to be presented and discussed)
 - e. A theme to be role played by different groups followed by discussions
 - f. A presentation of a drama

Please Note

Provide periodical alternatives to your youth meetings; they do not always have to be conducted on the church premises. Here are some possibilities:

- Meeting in nature - in a park or simply go for a purposeful nature walk;
- Visitation of a hospital/nursing home/prison/orphanage/shut ins/friends who do not attend

It would be wise to dedicate a series of meetings at specific times of the year that could take the form of a reaping campaign, when you can challenge participants to cross the line for Jesus.

Resources: For ideas for youth meetings and Voice of Youth/ reaping campaigns, go to www.gcyouthministries.org. Look for Face Time and The One, among others.

No.3**Developing community, an essential foundation of your youth ministry**

Consider small group ministry to be an indispensable part of your ministry weekly or once every two weeks. This is a place of belonging for every participant, where they are known personally, cared for, accepted, and challenged to grow spiritually. This is the place where you will lead your 'seeker' friends for further investigation of the faith.

Resources: You will find the Care Group training and the Underground small group study guides and other tools at www.gcyouthministries.org.

No.4**Growing into Deeper Spirituality—Discipleship**

Our vision is to transition our youth from simply membership to authentic discipleship. Youth and small group leaders are encouraged to embrace spiritual practices that develop their character and grow into the likeness of Jesus, the master teacher. They should challenge all participants to grow in the same way, whether it is in the context of the small group or individually.

Resources: Steps to Discipleship—personal disciple scheme, Discipleship in Action for groups and other resources are available at www.gcyouthministries.org.

No.5**Youth Ministry begins and ends with Service and Mission**

Youth ministry has developed a reputation of service as something we do overseas or at home a few times a year; it is God's plan for us to develop service as a way of life. It is on the journey of service that young people come to find their unique place in ministry; this is what brings meaning and purpose in their spiritual journey.

We consider the following elements as essential as part of our Service/Mission tool kit:

1. My Story: the readiness and ability to share your personal testimony/story
2. His Story: the ability to simply explain the essence of the gospel
3. Our Story: a clear understanding and the ability to articulate the unique contribution of the Adventist Message
4. Regular involvement in acts of compassion, justice and mercy
5. Proclamation of the Word through regular evangelistic series.

Resources: All available at www.gcyyouthministries.org.

As you launch or restructure your youth ministry, remember the Word of God to young Joshua:

Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go. —
Joshua 1:7-9

Our Mission

To lead young people in a saving relationship with Jesus and help them embrace his call to discipleship.

Our Motto

The love of Christ compels us.

Our Aim

The Advent Message to all the world in my generation.

Our Theme



The Power of One

UNDERSTANDING THE TIMES

But you, Daniel, roll up and seal the words of the scroll until the time of the end. Many will go here and there to increase knowledge. Daniel 12:4

Seventh-day Adventists understand the time in which they live. We are diligent students of the Bible and its prophetic elements. The “Word” is key for us. In addition, within senior youth ministry, we are also aware of the relevance of culture and self-identify and its impact on community needs. Dean Borgman, in his book, *When Kumbaya is Not Enough: A Practical Theology for Youth Ministry*, suggests that we need to give careful study to all three elements. Ellen White, in *Ministry of Healing*, suggests that we need to learn as much as we can:

“Every association of life calls for the exercise of self-control, forbearance, and sympathy. We differ so widely in disposition, habits, education, that our ways of looking at things vary. We judge differently. Our understanding of truth, our ideas in regard to the conduct of life, are not in all respects the same. There are no two whose experience is alike in every particular.” (p. 483)

When we blend these three elements together—the Word, culture, and self—with community, we create a finely balanced arrow. But what if one of those elements is off? Skew the arrow and it loses its balance, and traveling over long distances will often miss the intended target.

For example, we may very well understand the fact that the goat of Daniel 8 represents the king of Greece. We may speak the language of the culture we are addressing. But if we miss that members of our senior youth group are in the middle of a personal crisis involving dating, the arrow will not have the desired effect. Jesus has multiple options for each individual’s life journey, and with family and community support, any crisis can be overcome. Furthermore, the Bible is full of wisdom from God on relationships, and together we can balance that arrow to make sure that our message helps people. To that end, we will briefly explore the Millennial generation, the secular mindset, and the recent postmodern to metamodernism transitions in mainstream society.

The Millennial Generation

The National Study of Youth and Religion (NSYR), as analyzed by Kenda Creasy Dean in *Almost Christian*, shares a silent reality already experienced in Europe and now being accepted in many other continents. There was a time when one was either a child or an adult. However, following World War II there emerged a generation in the middle called “teenagers,” an adolescent group of 13-16-year-olds with money and free time. Two generations later, the world the millennials arrived

and adolescence has become more prolonged. Twenty-one is the new sixteen (Dean, 2010). Youth professionals have started to use the term “young adult” as a title to handle this phenomenon. Society has adopted business market trends to extend the adolescent years instead of going against the grain and encouraging maturity. Twenty-five year-olds who handle million dollar mutual funds during the workweek are not yet seen as adults in their church with maturity and wisdom to lead, but instead are designated as “young” adults. Our church faces a steady and conservatively calculated loss rate of 50 percent of this generation. And the less connected they are with a church, the less likely it becomes that they will stay with their faith community.

Add to the formula an inactive faith expression laced with the lack of authentic joy in the lives of many senior youth and the results are all around us. The hard truth, as Dean suggests, is that we have passed onto senior youth “a well-intentioned but ultimately banal version of Christianity” (p. 15). In Europe and other regions, we have to go back to the core of Jesus’ message, recognizing that the legacy from at least two previous generations has not been passed on. Secularism has taken root and the power and presence of Jesus is missing. We have a generation who are “almost Christian” but lack vitality in their faith.

Editor Roger Dudley, with Allan Walshe, in *Ministering with Millennials*, shared that there are five main areas critical to engaging the millennial generation. First, their search for *identity*—grasping who they are and what it means to be Seventh-day Adventist. They are not afraid to ask hard questions or engage in taboo topics. They recognize that everyone has multiple labels to introduce themselves by and wrestle with their own label. Are they Christian, Seventh-day Adventist Christian, Christian Seventh-day Adventist, WASP, African American? Does their sexual orientation or status on Facebook define them? The search for an identity is critical to this generation. Second, *relationships* are key to their walk with God and humanity. In fact, they learn through relationships and thus mentoring is essential. They long for healthy relationships in a world where the model of “friends with benefits” is prevalent, where politics are open and painful, and where divorce and abuse are rampant. Third, they embrace *spirituality*, which offers a minefield of possibilities. But for them, this means to experience a genuine relationship with God. They need to hear Jesus’ voice. They long to move from theory to tangible experience. They are not afraid of discipleship, as long as it is not following a system or requirements but really brings them to Jesus. Fourth, there is a call for *leadership*. This generation wants to share the responsibility of the church. They want to both be and be inspired by transformational leaders. They embrace change, as have all previous generations for short periods of time. The fact that the millennial generation is so spread out causes angst when change is static. They desperately need leadership in order to harness their energy and power.

“As Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it (Ephesians 5:25) through self-sacrificing servant leadership, so this generation must be led to emulate His leadership style as a witness to the needy world.” (p. 9)

Fifth, they want to be engaged in *service*. This is a generation unlike any before—a generation driven by the value of making a difference. They thrive on mission and service. There are literally thousands of non-governmental organizations serving the entire planet, offering support. The Seventh-day Adventist Church has long held a passion for service—with the Adventist Volunteer Service program, with ADRA, with World-Wide Advent Missions. Our legacy was built on mission and service. This generation wants to be engaged, but in some cases, we may have made the process of getting involved overly complicated and this can be a deterrent to full senior youth involvement in ministry.

God’s Word is applicable to every generation. However, we have to find the right vocabulary to articulate and connect different generations with the heart of God, whose purpose is found in Jesus.

Secular & Postmodern Mindsets

It is remarkably easy to believe that the terms *secular* and *postmodern* are congruent, practically synonymous, but they are in fact entirely different. Yet they are not opposites. The easiest way to visualize these terms is to think of “secular” as a plot of land and “postmodernism” as a house on that plot of land.

Secular mindset

The secular land is not the original soil that God intended. Over time we have lost the rich topsoil farmers are so acquainted with and developed clay with high water tables. This doesn’t allow for deep roots, but does allow for building small houses. The secular mindset is all around us. Unless through an act of God, it is not likely to go away as an influence on society. What does it look like?

According to the secular mindset, everything good in life is attributed to luck or to ourselves. Secular-minded individuals struggle with giving credit to God or even recognizing that He works in their lives at all. They have little interest in spiritual matters and virtually no interest whatsoever in religion. The antonym of secular is “holy” or “religious.” The secular mindset that has been eroding our planet since the dawn of sin. While the secular mindset exists all over the world, it has taken root more powerfully in some locations more than others.. Timothy Keller, in his commentary on the Gospel of Mark, titled, *King’s Cross*, shares the findings of Scottish historian Andrew Walls, who noted that most religions have a geographical epicenter, e.g. Islam has the Middle East, Buddhism has the Far East, Hinduism has India. The exception is Christianity. He writes:

“The original center of Christianity was Jerusalem, but then the Hellenistic Gentiles, who were considered the unwashed barbarians, embraced Christianity with such a force that soon the center of Christianity moved to the Hellenistic Mediterranean world to Alexandria, North Africa, and Rome . . . northern Europeans . . . to North America.” (pp. 123-124)

Now the center is moving towards Latin America, Asia, and Africa. When Andrew Walls was asked why Christianity moves, he replied:

“One must conclude, I think that there is a certain vulnerability, a fragility, at the heart of Christianity. You might say that this is the vulnerability of the cross.” (p. 124)

Postmodern mindset

The consumerist desire for success continues to feed secularism. As the thirst for power and wealth blends itself into the soil, the secular strands take hold. The ground is weak. Christianity does not have the space to flourish. Add to this secular foundation the different houses—including postmodernism—and you will have a better picture of how to shape the delivery of the truth of Jesus.

How we perceive the secular foundation has changed in the last hundred years with gradual—or some may argue drastic—change from *modernism* to *postmodernism*. The fact is that both perspectives, or houses, exist—sometimes side by side, but often by neighborhood or geographical region, causing internal tensions and nearly impossible applications.

The modern house is built of brick; it is a very precise construction and values structure and logic. Every item has an exact purpose. It is built to withstand all predicted weather patterns. It stands at the top of a hill much like the Tower of Babel and claims to provide the way to understand all truth. Our faith movement, the Seventh-day Adventist Church, was built around this mindset. It is proof-text-driven, energetic, and purposeful at convincing others of “correctness.” Those with the modernist mindset enjoy debates and believe that both time and data will eventually illuminate truth for those who are initially skeptical. This house has served many generations—and our denomination—well, and still does so in many places around the world. Within senior youth ministry, the modernist mindset emphasizes programming and a good curriculum that can be replicated in any context. It is very similar in its model to most current educational systems.

In contrast, the postmodern house is unique in shape and construction and shifts according to the current owner’s preference. In this mindset, houses are only good as long as there is a need for them. These houses are more temporary and can be moved, demolished, or re-built at the gentle whim or need of the owner. These

houses are continually adjusting for the real future rather than the predicated future. They exist in the present. Information is important, but experience is king. Little emphasis is placed on logical conclusions or proof. Argumentation is not likely to convince those with a postmodern mindset of anything. For senior youth ministry, postmoderns focus on building relationships and community as a high priority. This point of view encourages both Sabbath school and small groups as places to explore and develop these.

One important note on this metaphor: We do not often get to choose the region we live in, nor the house. It is not that one house is better than the other, but rather that they represent the reality of the context in which we live and work, as well as the context in which we present the Gospel. While the Gospel itself does not change, our approach in delivering the message will be different and sensitive to the house and landscape in which we find ourselves.

Metamodernism Rumbings

In the last couple of years, there have been increasing critiques of the tension between the modern and postmodern mindsets, creating speculation that society might be on the cusp of more radical change yet! The *metamodernist* manifesto, for the sake of brevity, is attempting to define what happens after postmodernity. Will society simply gravitate back towards modernism for safety? Will it go further forward into the unknown chaos of postmodernity? Or will it be something in between or different from either of these outcomes?

Not every senior youth adopts a postmodern mindset at birth. Not every modern adult resonates categorically with empirical data only. It would seem that neither the *traditional* (modern) approach, nor the *emergent* (postmodern) approaches have built entirely healthy homes. Perhaps there might be, as Jim Belcher suggests in *Deep Church*, a third way. This third way has yet to be defined. It is not metamodernism. It is a response to the chaotic world where modern and postmodern ideologies battle for supremacy or, ironically, humility.

LEADERSHIP

Note. This section focuses on senior youth ministries (SYM) leadership. Please contact your conference/mission for junior youth ministries (JYM) leadership materials, such as the Master Guide. Included are aspects of training and actual practice of those activities required for senior youth leadership. The module includes both philosophical base and practical practices. Emphasis is placed on qualities of ideal leadership, the psychology of leadership, leadership styles and functions, and practical matters such as how to chair a committee.

In the Steps of the Master

“The youth need more than a casual notice, more than an occasional word of encouragement. They need painstaking, prayerful, careful labor. He only whose heart is filled with love and sympathy will be able to reach those youth who are apparently careless and indifferent.” (*Gospel Workers*, p. 208)

The call to senior youth ministry leadership is not one to be taken lightly. Whether novice or professional, employed or volunteer, lay leader or pastor, each hold a responsibility before Jesus and His community. Ellen White, in *Counsels to Parents, Teachers and Students*, emphasized:

“Upon Christian youth depend in a great measure the preservation and perpetuity of the institutions which God has devised as a means by which to advance His work. Never was there a period when results so important depended upon a generation of man. Then how important that the young should be qualified for this great work, that God may use them as His instruments! Their Maker has claims upon them which are paramount to all others.” (p. 99)

“Never before was there so much at stake; never were there results so mighty depending upon a generation as upon these now coming upon the stage of action.” (p. 536)

Leadership is the most-sought-after talent in the world today. History records the deeds of the world’s great leaders, many good and many bad. Each had the ability to influence, inspire, and galvanize into action masses of people. They were able to transfer their ideas and concepts into the minds of others and to encourage their followers to become dynamic forces for good or for evil. Today the same processes are being used to effect similar goals and results and, for this reason, leadership stands as a most powerful force.

Jesus called them together and said, “You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. 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 10:42-45

For the Christian, leadership can and must assume a servant role as demonstrated in the life and ministry of Jesus. Therefore, whether we are officially appointed leaders or not, we are only leaders because we serve others. And because we

serve, we should always portray a positive influence with the intent to transform the lives of the youth and young adults and guide them to strive for something better.

Role of youth ministry leader

A Christian senior youth ministry leader has some special and specific functions in the church, and although the leader should delegate responsibilities, he or she must also be sure that the functions are being fulfilled.

The leader should direct the senior youth to Christ and strengthen them in the faith. We are all inexperienced in facing the snares and tricks of an enemy beyond our ability to resist without the help of Jesus. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the leaders to help them rely on the power of the Holy Spirit.

The leader needs to connect senior youth in the broader matters of the church. We should engage them at all levels of church administration. Jim Clifton, in *The Coming Jobs War*, suggests that too many companies today are undercutting entrepreneurs instead of cultivating them, thus creating the future job wars. We take the same risks in church. Too many senior youth are disengaged from church and lost because their gifts have not been developed and used; it is part of the leaders' duties to cultivate a passion in the local church community.

The leader needs to create opportunities for the senior youth to live out their faith. Through acts of service and daily sensing the voice of Jesus in their lives they can also experience the energy of the present. It is through the leader's influence for good that senior youth will together change this world. Learning to live for others is the way forward.

Ultimately there are five basic needs of the senior youth ministry leader. First, to know Jesus as their personal Savior, daily taking up the cross and seeking His will in their life, and developing rich habits such as Bible study and talking with Jesus in prayer. Second, a leader must try to understand the problems, perspectives, needs, conflicts, and aspirations of the youth and young adults and be able to help them cope with the pressures they encounter in daily living. They must grow a loving heart for those they serve like the good shepherd from Luke 15 who actively left the 99 and went out to find the one lost sheep. Third, the leader should be spiritually and emotionally mature. They should have a pleasing personality, a good sense of humor, the correct hope and aspiration, self-control, stability, honest, good judgment, a good sense of order, and a capacity to organize. In order to guide and lead the church's senior youth in their own Christian maturity, the Christian leader must be sensible and emotionally well balanced. Fourth, the leader needs to have the ability and time for the work ahead. Where possible, the senior youth ministry leader should not have other responsibilities in the church so that all of his or her time may be dedicated to this ministry.

Working for senior youth has a basic requirement—to sacrifice personal interest for the benefit of others. Because senior youth are developing and constantly discovering new horizons, they claim more time from the leader to help guide them into bringing their discoveries in harmony with the expected Christian experience. In addition, the leader must keep up-to-date in knowledge and leadership skills by participating in seminars and administrative programs offered by the conference/mission and by using a good library equipped with pertinent materials that will permit him or her to be informed in the needed areas.

Resources

The General Conference Youth Ministries Department has many resources and links to others that can help. Resource materials must be collected and studied in order to keep abreast of the latest developments and research discoveries in youth ministry. The leader should keep in contact with the conference/mission youth director, who can help the youth and young adult leader in his or her development. This contact also will help the leader to keep informed on the latest denominational programs and plans. The final and fifth basic need of the leader is the ability to make friends, counsel, and communicate. The leader must be deeply committed to the senior youth and their needs. Friendliness will make him or her the choice counselor for senior youth. This special characteristic should be enhanced by trustworthiness in order to be able to give counsel and advice. The leader must have the capacity to listen to their needs and the ability to help them identify their problems and find their own personal solutions based on sound Christian principles.

Jesus, of course, was a brilliant example of what any leader should be like. He led by His life, making it an example, thus He lived what He taught. In the book *Education*, Ellen White writes:

“What He taught, He was. His words were the expression, not only of His own life experience, but of His own character. Not only did He teach the truth, but He was the truth. It was this that gave His teaching, power.”
(p. 78-79)

The Gospel of John also reports on Jesus’ powerful leadership example:

The words of Jesus overwhelmed the officers sent by the priests to arrest Him. They reported to the priests that no one had ever spoken as He spoke. —John 7:46

In *Ministry of Healing*, Ellen White writes:

“But the reason for this was that never man lived as he lived. Had his life been other than it was, He could not have spoken as He did. His words

bore with them a convincing power, because they came from a heart pure and holy, full of love and sympathy, benevolence and truth." (p. 469)

She adds that His voice conveyed appeal and power. When He called, men left all to follow. The world's enchantment was broken.

"At the sound of His voice, the spirit of greed and ambition fled from the heart, and men arose, emancipated, to follow the Savior." (p. 25)

"He went about lifting up the bowed-down and comforting the sorrowful. Wherever He went, He carried blessing." (p. 24)

Jesus understood people and was deeply sympathetic. As the apostle Paul declares in the book of Hebrews, there is a reason Jesus is our High Priest.

Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.
—John 4:14-16

In *Desire of Ages*, Ellen White explained how Jesus attracted huge crowds because His face and words contained a sweet, sympathetic spirit:

"Had it not been for the sweet, sympathetic spirit that shone out in every look and word, He would not have attracted the large congregations that He did." (p. 254)

She also adds that those who were afflicted felt as though Christ linked Himself with them as a faithful, tender, and loving friend. They loved to be in His presence and wanted to hear His eternal words.

"The afflicted ones who came to Him felt that He linked His interest with theirs as a faithful and tender friend, and they desired to know more of the truths He taught. Heaven was brought near. They longed to abide in His presence, that the comfort of His love might be with them continually." (p. 254-255)

Jesus was ever kind and thoughtful. Without a doubt His patience, kindness, politeness, and the sound of His voice were the compelling factors that made Jesus such a powerful leader as He dealt with people individually and in groups.

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. —Ephesians 4:32

“If Christ dwells in us, we shall be patient, kind, and forbearing, cheerful and frets amid frets and irritations.” (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 487)

“He was never rude, never needlessly spoke a severe word, never gave needless pain to a sensitive soul.” (*Steps to Christ*, p. 12)

Jesus understood His “why” and saw everyone as a possibility for heaven.

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. —John 3:16

The fullest meaning of John 3:16 is amplified in what Jesus saw in every individual—a chance for heaven! He saw infinite possibilities of what a person might be when transfigured by His grace. This achieved the following:

- His hope inspired hope
- His confidence in them inspired trust
- He was man’s ideal and awakened desire and faith for attainment of victory
- To the despised and fallen He brought inspiration and a desire to prove themselves worthy of His regard
- To the apparently spiritually-dead heart He brought an awakening of new impulses

Ellen White notes:

“In His presence souls despised and fallen realized that they still were men, and they longed to prove themselves worthy of His regard. In many a heart that seemed dead to all things holy, were awakened new impulses. To many a despairing one there opened the possibility of a new life.” (*Education*, p. 80)

Jesus cared for every person, regardless of his or her station in life. Most of His ministry was on a one-to-one basis because this, He knew, was the best approach. He inspired with hope the roughest and most unpromising. He gave individual assurance that His hearers might become blameless and could attain characters that would make them children of God. He met those who were under Satan’s control and had no power to break away. To these discouraged, sick, and fallen He spoke tender words that could be understood. Those who were fighting the adversary, He encouraged to persevere, giving them hope that they would win

and have the victory. As Ellen White shared in *Ministry of Healing*:

“Others He met who were fighting a hand-to-hand battle with the adversary of souls. These He encouraged to persevere, assuring them that they would win; for angels of God were on their side, and would give them the victory.” (p. 26)

Jesus saw in the children, men and women who would be heirs of the kingdom. In speaking to the children He came down to their level. He planted seeds of truth that in later years would spring up and lead to eternal life. “In the children who were brought in contact with Him. Jesus saw the men and women who should be heirs of His grace and subjects of His kingdom. . . . In teaching, He came down to their level. He, the Majesty of heaven, answered their questions and simplified His important lessons to meet their childish understanding. He planted in their minds the seeds of truth, which in after-years would spring up and bear fruit unto eternal life.” (p. 42)

Finally, Jesus understood His mission and goal as a leader as demonstrated in these passages of Scripture:

“Why were you searching for me?” he asked. “Didn’t you know I had to be in my Father’s house?” —Luke 2:49

“You are a king, then!” said Pilate. Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. In fact, the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.” —John 18:37

Adding further commentary in *Ministry of Healing*, Ellen White shared:

“In everything He subordinated His own life and needs to His mission. His will and His Father’s will were one. “In all things He brought His wishes into strict abeyance to His mission. He glorified His life by making everything in it subordinates to the will of His Father.” (p. 19)

“There was never one who carried the burden of sin and sorrow of the world, or who worked with such self-consuming zeal for the good of men, as did Jesus. “Jesus was an earnest, constant worker. Never lived there among men another so weighted with responsibilities. Never another carried so heavy a burden of the world’s sorrow and sin. Never another toiled with such self-consuming zeal for the good of men.” (p. 51)

Psychology of the Christian Leader

To be mature is to see differences, know differences, and be able to live and work with people who are different from ourselves. Human beings are not objects. Each person has his or her own personality, and we should not expect others to change their individuality and be transformed into our image. Leadership is knowing how to deal with different personalities and bring them together for the benefit of the organization. The intelligent leader will have the maturity to accept people just as they are, to work with them, and to help them to see and recognize Jesus as the perfect example for their own lives. Such maturity is achieved by getting out of one's own point of view and trying to understand others—not expecting others to conform to your views—but accepting and appreciating those contributions that each member brings to the group.

Know yourself

Knowledge of self is the ability to know that one is growing and changing. The saying, “This is the way I am, and no one can change me” should never be part of the vocabulary of a leader. Rather his or her prayer should be, “By God's grace, I can become like Him. I can grow. I can learn to treat others well and not be misled by their weaknesses.”

Those who can recognize their own weaknesses are strong. Knowing ourselves will help us to apply the golden rule in dealing with others.

We all live within our own worlds, but sometimes we must leave our worlds so that we can another way of being, making an effort to understand how others think. Do not look for, nor interest yourself in, the weaknesses of others.

Know others

Leaders must know the life circumstances that have caused people to act and to be as they are. The saying, “You can't please everybody” is not license to mistreat or offend those who do not think and act as we do. We must have an open mind to accept and work together with those who do not always agree with us. If others don't understand certain concepts as we do, we must pray that through example and precept they will be lifted to a higher plane of understanding. Leaders must realize that they are not working with perfect people, that many can say, “Be patient with me. God is not finished with me yet.” Allow for development of character that is modeled after Jesus.

If we dedicate ourselves to looking for weaknesses—in ourselves or in others—we will find so many that we will become discouraged. The only one who concentrates on the weaknesses of others is the one who is a failure. It has been said that, “He who has failed in everything is successful as a critic.” He who seeks to know the weaknesses of others is to accuse them and be judgmental.

Remember, when you point a finger at someone accusingly, your other fingers are pointing back at you.

It is important to look for the virtues in others and magnify them, elevating them to a more excellent plane. Such an attitude will lift the discouraged. One problem that exists among young people is a lack of self-esteem. The youth leader can do much to help build confidence and self-worth in each individual. It is said that even a broken watch is accurate two times a day (when it shows the correct time). Even the most negative person has some good that must be discovered. Always look for the good in others.

Be a courteous servant

True courtesy makes no exception of persons. The leader does not pretend, but under all circumstances will demonstrate true courtesy to all. Ellen White, in *Ministry of Healing*, stated,

“Christ was courteous, even to His persecutors; and His true followers will manifest the same spirit.” (p. 489)

Always be ready to help. Christ came to serve, not to be served. He is our example in everything. The true leader will always be ready to serve, to help the person whom society considers most humble.

Make others comfortable

We naturally choose our friends from among those who make us feel good and comfortable. The leader has to learn, however, to live with the strident voices of some youth and, though it may be difficult, he or she will do all that is possible in good conscience to create an environment where free expression can be practiced. All group members must feel free to speak even though their views may differ with others. They must feel accepted and appreciated and wanted. Do not complain of difficulties and problems.

Be tactful

When we deal with others, we should do so with kindness, courtesy, and tact. It is better to ask them to tell, to listen than to accuse, to focus on the problem, not the person. By asking questions rather than “pointing fingers,” help the other person recognize the real problem, then seek solutions together. Avoid trying to “blame” someone. What is done, is done. Seek ways to avoid the problem in the future. Ask, “What can we do so this does not happen again? How can we avoid this in the future?”

Understand different temperaments

We must recognize that most people have bad days. Different situations may cause a temporary change in the emotions of others. Problems at home, school, work,

and in relationships abound. The leader should know how to relate to these situations, recognizing that by modeling he or she can help group members learn to be patient, longsuffering, and accepting.

Seek understanding, spirituality and knowledge

Of the scores of leadership attributes appreciated and desired by most youth, three almost always surface as the favored qualities and are usually given in the following order: First, *understanding*. Without understanding it is impossible to help, guide, or instruct one who is in need. Everyone needs to be understood. Ask questions instead of presenting all the answers. Seek first to comprehend all the facts.

“The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding.” —Proverbs 4:7

It is the genuine spirit you offer that will be rewarded. Show compassion and love with all your understanding.

Second, *spirituality*. The most spiritual leader cannot help a youth or young adult who is not seeking. But if their heart is open, your spiritual journey and relationship with Jesus is going to be great news for them. Bring understanding and spirituality together and the most amazing conversations can happen, all leading to a stronger person in Jesus.

“The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace.” —Romans 8:6

Third, *knowledge*. Senior youth want leaders with experience and knowledge. They want to be part of something bigger and on the path to a life that makes a difference.

“Wisdom is a shelter as money is a shelter, but the advantage of knowledge is this: Wisdom preserves those who have it.” —Ecclesiastes 7:12

This requires time and actively seeking Jesus—hearing His voice and knowing that in the quiet hour Jesus is ever present.

Leadership Theories, Styles, and Functions

The concept of leadership has long been debated, and conclusions have varied with time. A popular definition of leadership is that it is *influence*. If that is the case, leadership has three important factors.

- Leaders know they have influence and they use that influence to the benefit of the organization or group.
- Leaders recognize that the situation in which they are involved may make a great difference.
- Influence is exercised through verbal and nonverbal communication.

Theories of leadership

One cannot discuss leadership without considering leadership theories that have influenced the world. During the eighteenth and nineteenth century it was believed that leadership was based on the “Great Men.” This is linked to the trait and circumstances theories.

Trait theory teaches that leaders are born, not made. According to advocates of this theory, people are born with certain physical or personality traits that make them stand out as a leader. Physical traits include things like height, weight, physical attractiveness, and body shape. Personality traits thought to be associated with leadership include self-confidence, dominance, enthusiasm, assertiveness, responsibility, creativity, originality, dependability, critical thinking ability, intelligence, and ability to communicate effectively.

It is true that many of these traits are found in effective leaders, but most researchers agree that the possession of these traits does not necessarily make someone a leader.

“Although leaders differ from followers with respect to various aspects of personality ability and social skills, tests of such traits have been of limited value for the selection of leaders.” (Ralph M. Stogdill, “Historical Trends in Leadership Theory and Research,” *Journal of Contemporary Business*, Autumn, 1974, p. 7)

While certain traits such as those mentioned above can be helpful to a leader, there are also a variety of factors that will hinder effective leadership—regardless of physical or personal attributes. These include:

- Being uninformed about the problem under discussion
- Being non-participative
- Holding to extremely rigid ideas
- Having an authoritarian attitude
- Using offensive and abusive language

The *circumstances* theory teaches that a leader rises according to a certain ideal set of circumstances; he or she can be effective in one circumstance while totally

ineffective in another. According to this theory of leadership, the circumstances make (or break) the leader.

The *function* theory teaches that leadership consists of certain behaviors or functions that groups need performed. These functions are identifiable behaviors that can be learned by any person; therefore, all can improve their potential as leaders by learning to perform these key functions more effectively. The trait and circumstance theories hold that unless you have certain traits or you are in a given circumstance you cannot be a leader. Function theory opens the door to anyone to become a leader.

Two important factors that are consistently associated with the function theory of leadership are: (a) task orientation, and (b) people orientation. These two concepts are not separate, and the good leader knows how to use both to balance his or her leadership approach. *Task orientation* emphasizes something (the task) that has to be accomplished, but *people orientation* balances this emphasis with the social and emotional conditions required to accomplish the task. Task orientation functions in an initiating structure, but does so with consideration prompted by people orientation. Task orientation seeks to achieve a goal, but is ideally balanced by the group interaction required to accomplish that goal (achievement orientation). In function theory:

“Designated leaders perform a variety of important functions. They provide liaison with groups or other individuals in the surrounding environment. They furnish a central point of responsibility . . . that demand[s] a clear line of accountability; they represent a central point when there are problems, changes in plans, and complications.” (Phillips Wood et al. *Group Discussion: A Practical Guide to Participants and Leadership*, p. 180)

Function theory shifts the emphasis away from the leader as a person and toward the specific behavioral acts that facilitate group success. Task- and people-oriented behaviors help to achieve the goals of the group, but they also help to maintain the interpersonal relationships within the group.

Leadership styles

Other studies have identified three basic leadership styles:

- Autocratic
- Laissez-faire
- Democratic

The main difference among these styles is the matter of control—who controls and what is controlled.

Autocratic leadership style

The autocratic or authoritarian leader has a high need for control, often to the point of being obsessed with it. This obsession can manifest itself in various types of behaviors.

- Avoids contact outside the structured setting and relates mostly to the task orientation. Arrives at a meeting place just in time for the meeting to begin in order to avoid contacts.
- Long winded. Makes long introductions, not to facilitate the process in the group, but to let others know how much he or she knows and how informed he or she is.
- Structured to the limit. The authoritarian leader will outline procedures in discussion in order to facilitate the work. For example: person A will present item 1, 2, 3. Person B will present item 4, 5, 6, etc.
- Puts people on the spot. Authoritarians specialize in directing questions to specific persons and seldom allow questions to which anyone in the group may offer an answer.
- Hates to waste time. Authoritarians cannot tolerate pauses in discussion. They need rapid verbalization from others or they will take over and speak themselves.
- Interrupts others frequently. This is done to satisfy three basic needs:
 - To correct errors—whether major or insignificant
 - To keep the person talking about what the leader desires
 - To show who is in command
- Encourages “communication noise.” Authoritarians encourage members to discuss unrelated matters as long as this is in harmony with their design.
- Manipulates. In clarifying contributions from others, authoritarians change the intent of statements to make them more acceptable to themselves (See Sattleg, William, and N. Miller. *Discussion and Conference*. p 250-251).

Laissez-faire leadership style

Although this is accepted as a leadership style, in reality it is no leadership at all. There is no concern for direction, control, task accomplishment, or interpersonal relationships.

The laissez-faire leader just holds a position, and by design or by default simply does nothing. This “style” of leadership behavior permits the members to do whatever they want to do. No policies or procedures are established, and every one is left alone; no one attempts to influence anyone else.

Democratic leadership style

The democratic leader tries to find a balance between authoritarian and laissez-faire leadership styles. The democratic leader provides direction in task and social leadership functions. This, however, must be done carefully in order to avoid dominating the group with personal views; it is believed that it is very difficult to lead without exerting some kind of control.

Leadership, regardless of style, is situational in that the situation demands different actions. For example: if a house is on fire, a democratic style is not appropriate. The situation calls for an authoritarian style, by someone who knows what needs to be done and how to do it quickly. This, however, does not provide an excuse to act in an authoritarian mode all the time.

So which leadership style is the best? Perhaps this can best be answered by considering various factors. Steward Tubbs, in his book *A Systems Approach to Small Group Interaction*, presents the following factors and says they will determine the type of leadership required in a given situation:

- The quality of the group output
- The time required to accomplish the task
- The satisfaction of the group members
- The absenteeism of the group members
- The independence developed in group members (p. 158)

Some research (White and Lippitt, 1968) has demonstrated that:

- Quality of group output is better under democratic leadership style.
- Group member satisfaction is greater under democratic leadership style (hostility was 30 times greater under autocratic leadership).
- Democratic leadership style produces less absenteeism.
- Democratic leadership style fosters more independence. A negative aspect of democratic leadership is that it takes more time to get the job done. However, even though autocratic leadership gets faster results, the quality and durability of the result is less than under democratic leadership.

Leadership functions

Leadership has many functions. Because leadership affects changes in people, these functions will facilitate the work of the leader in his or her interaction with the group. A clear understanding of these functions by leaders and others will help the process of getting the work done. These functions can be classified into three groups: general, maintenance, and organization.

General functions

Some of the general functions of leadership are to:

Initiate. Propose tasks and goals; define problems of the group; give suggestions and ideas to be submitted for consideration. The leader does not wait for things to happen in order to react, but initiates actions and guides the group to achieving pre-approved objectives.

Investigate. Ask for data on problems; look for pertinent information; ask for suggestions and ideas. Either the leader does it or gets the cooperation of others in doing the investigation.

Inform/report. Offer data and provide pertinent information; express opinions; give suggestions or ideas. The leader must realize that information means understanding and thus better cooperation. He or she will give pertinent information to the group in order to facilitate better understanding and cooperation.

Clarify and elaborate. Interpret ideas or suggestions; clear up confusion; indicate alternatives and points of dispute before the group; supply examples. Many cases of conflict are due to lack of understanding and can be reduced. The leader must help clarify issues, allow others to explain themselves, and if possible, find alternatives for problems affecting the group.

Summarize. Group ideas that are related; summarize the suggestions after group discussion. During discussion many ideas can be floating, but the leader must bring ideas to focus and help the group reach conclusions, and if possible, consensus.

Text public opinion. Submit the ideas to public opinion in order to determine how correct the conclusions of the group are; and be alert as to when a majority consensus of approval is reached. According to the systems theory of communication and leadership, no one group exists in a vacuum, and all are affected by or affect the environment and help the group to be the society conscience. For church related sub-groups, the leader must be aware of the larger body and guide the group to operate in harmony with the total body.

Maintenance functions

Some of the functions of maintenance are a guide to help the leader in his or her task of helping others discover their potential and, as a united body, achieve the goals of the group.

Encourage. Be friendly, caring, and sensible toward others; accept them for what they have to offer. Be a good listener; show interest and concern, giving others opportunity and recognition.

Express the sentiments of the group. Perceive sentiment, state of courage, and relationships within the group. Share your own feelings with the other members. The leader must be aware of the climate in the group, and through his or her leadership create such an environment that members are willing to be identified with the group because it represents their feelings and satisfies their needs.

Harmonize. Attempt reconciliation in case of dissension. Reduce tensions and encourage others to examine their differences of opinion. Help to solve conflicts. Because each group member has different social environments, these will impact relationships in the group. The leader is called to recognize this and strive to keep harmony in the midst of diversity in the group.

It is a fact that each group member brings to the group the influences received from other groups of which he or she is a member.

The overlapping area is the limited area of coincidence in a group, therefore, the potential for conflict is very large. A member coming with influences from home, school, work, etc., tends to contaminate the group with these influences. The leader must be cognizant of this and help to reduce the possibility of tensions and conflicts in the group. This delicate task of harmonizing requires great skills from the leader.

Be Fair. Be careful to see that everyone has an opportunity to express themselves, and that the discussion includes the whole group. Do not permit one or two individuals to impose their views without consideration of feelings and opinions of other group members.

Establish Objectives. Establish objectives to help the group reach what is proposed. Apply these standards to evaluate the group's productivity. Management by objectives is to help the group establish its objectives and stay on course. The leader acts in harmony with the group decision and guides the group to reach the objectives.

Organization functions

An important aspect of leader is to organize. A leader has to decide what tasks are to be accomplished and define the relationships of authority and responsibility among the persons who will work toward the goals. Planning and organizing are interdependent activities.

Give Directions. The leader must motivate, instruct, and supervise. Motivation is not something outside the person. It is the ability of the leader to help the person, or group, realize what can be done, what is possible, and create the will to do it. In motivating, the leader must help the person, or group, to realize their potential. To motivate is not enough, the leader must provide instruction and supervise the completion of the task, helping the subject to make corrections as progress is achieved.

Coordinate. The leader considers coordination a vital part of the successful operation of the organization. This function permits all to work in harmony. It means leaving the channels of communication open. The leader prevents and impedes possible conflicts so there may be cooperation among those who make up the organization.

Serving as Chairperson

I walk in the way of righteousness, along the paths of justice. —Proverbs 8:20

The role of chairperson is critical to the success and engagement of leadership across the church. The larger the committee the more you will need to follow set procedures such as those laid out in this section. It is good training to practice these skills in smaller committees, but do not feel the pressure to follow procedures slavishly if there are only two of you on the committee! The key is to use a system that facilitates safe engagement, that prevents individuals hijacking agendas, and that encourages all members to contribute. Generally speaking, the church as a whole follows the following protocols.

Rules of order

Public meetings, to be conducted in order, must operate on accepted rules of procedure. Therefore, every leader should possess some knowledge of the customs and rules of parliamentary order. Usually, only the most elementary rules are required. A brief statement regarding these rules is given in the following pages, focusing on a large committee such as a business meeting or the AYM committee in a large church.

Opening the meeting

Presiding officer

Whoever is to preside at a business meeting or a meeting of the AYM committee is usually called the chairman or the chairperson, though if any other term is adopted by the organization, such as president, the presiding officer is known by that title and is addressed, for instance, as “Mr. President” or “Madam President.” In many instances the formality is dropped, however, speakers address the chair in order to avoid development of personality conflicts.

The term *chairman* is still widely used and should be considered in the generic sense, that is, meaning both men and women. There are some locations where it would be more appropriate to refer to a female chair as “Madam Chair.” In some parts of the world, the term *chairperson* is more appropriate. It is also common to use the term *chair* when referring to the person who leads the meeting. It is usually best to determine local custom and follow it, lest you offend someone.

Calling the meeting to order

Promptly at the appointed time, the chairperson should call for the attention of the members (if necessary, by rapping sharply) and say, “the meeting will please come to order,” or “the time has come for our meeting to begin,” and then introduce the first item on the agenda. In the case of a religious meeting, church board, or any other meeting in which religious influence is dominant, the first item on the program will probably be a congregational song, and the second a prayer. Therefore, you (the chairperson) will announce:

“Let us open our meeting by singing number _____,” or any similar form of announcement. After the song the chairperson calls for the prayer by saying, for example:

“Elder Smith will now offer prayer”; or “We will all join in prayer with Sister Jones”; or “Let us have a number of sentence prayers this evening, asking God’s blessing on our meeting. Let _____ lead, after which let others join.” The announcement may vary as the occasion indicates. The smaller the group and the more informal the atmosphere, the less formal the announcements should be. The chairperson asks for the roll call by saying:

“The secretary will now call the roll.” Whereupon the secretary reads from his or her record sheet, name by name, and marks the record as the members answer, or fail to answer, “Present.” This can be bypassed by a simple head count in order to establish quorum for the meeting. (See notes on quorum.) It can also be established by passing a sheet of paper around with all the members’ names.

Approval of minutes

The secretary’s report is called for in much the same way by saying, for example, “The secretary will now present the minutes from the last meeting.” After the minutes have been read, the chairperson asks, “Are there any corrections to these minutes?” If any member raises a question, it is decided by the agreement or the dissent of all, or by a majority present, and correction is made or not made accordingly. If there is no correction offered, then the chairperson concludes the matter by saying, “The minutes will stand as read.” In some places, a motion is called for to accept and/or approve the secretary’s report. This is the signal to move on to the next agenda item. (See section titled “Making a Motion.”)

These are the main features of the opening of a business meeting.

Introduction of business

The business to be transacted at the meeting comes next. The presiding officer introduces this section of the meeting by saying, for example, "We shall now take up the business of the meeting." Then he or she asks, "Is there any unfinished business to come before us?" Whoever is in charge of that business (the secretary, if no one else offers) will state it. After this unfinished business has been taken care of, the agenda (previously prepared by the chair and sponsor) should be distributed.

Committee reports

If committees are active and have been instructed to report to the business meeting or AYM committee, the chairperson calls for those reports saying, for example, "Are there any committee reports?" Whereupon the person chairing such a committee (or that committee's secretary) introduces its report. Any report may be discussed by the group and a vote to accept the report should be called for by the chairperson.

Privilege of speaking

Getting the floor

As items on the agenda are discussed, any member or person in the meeting has the right to speak and should address the chair and be recognized. This parliamentary procedure prevents the confusion that results when several people try to speak at the same time. In a group of any size, the member desiring to speak should rise and address the chair saying, for example, "Mr. Chairman" or "Madam Chair."

He or she must then wait to be recognized, that is, until the chairperson speaks his or her name—"Mr. Terry" or "Miss Terry." (In the youth group people are usually recognized by the first name). Again, the principle in all these interactions is to err on the side of respect. This is the safest method in all cultures. The one addressing the chair is then free to speak, but the content should pertain to the matter under discussion.

Maintaining order

If any other person should attempt to talk while the person recognized by the chair is speaking, it is the duty of the chairperson to repress the disorder by saying, "Miss Terry has the floor." If there should be considerable confusion, say, "Order, please," or "Please come to order." If necessary, rap sharply to call the meeting to order. If the chairperson fails to uphold this right of the one having the floor, then that person may address the chair and say, for example, "Mr. Chairman, do I have the floor?" (This should not be necessary if order is maintained by following the rules.) When the person finishes speaking and sits down, another may obtain the floor by a similar procedure. In a small meeting,

people wishing to speak may rise or remain seated, as preferred, but in any case should “obtain the floor” by addressing the chair.

Motions

Making a motion

Any business placed before the meeting for action must be presented as a motion. Every motion must be seconded by another person. In the case of a committee report, the person chairing the committee or the secretary of that committee usually presents the report and concludes its reading by addressing the chair and saying, “I move that this report be adopted.” (Say, “I move,” not “I make a motion.”)

Seconding a motion

The report is usually seconded when someone else says, “I second the motion.” If no one seconds the motion, the chair should inquire, “Is there a second?” and then wait until someone responds. If there is no response, the chair may choose to ignore the motion, or say, “Since there is no second, there is no motion before us.” The way is then open for any other motion to be made.

Discussion

After the motion to adopt the report has been made and seconded, the person says, “The report is now before you for discussion.” Then anyone who wants to speak about the report is free to do so, after addressing the chair and being recognized.

Calling for the vote

When the motion has been discussed sufficiently, the chair calls for a vote by saying, for example, “All who are in favor of this motion, say ‘Aye’”; whereupon those who favor it speak out, “Aye.” The chairperson then says, “All who are opposed say, ‘No.’ or ‘’ Voters who oppose the motion should not say, “Aye”; nor should the chairperson ask them to say, “Aye,” for aye means “Yes,” and No means “No.”

Calling the question

If the discussion is too prolonged, the matter may be brought to focus by anyone who wishes to speak out and say, “Question on the motion.” This means that the one speaking desires the discussion to end and the motion to be put to vote. The chairperson then says: “The question is called. All who are in favor of closing discussion, say ‘Aye,’” etc.

It is not obligatory to “put the question,” as we say; that is, to put the motion to vote, when someone calls, “Question.” Discussion may go on after the question is called. When the question is called, it is an indication that some desire to have the discussion cease, especially if a number of people call, “Question.” In that case, the chair should recognize that it is time to cut off the debate and call for a vote. If in his or her judgment it is time to vote, and no one calls “Question,” the chairperson

should ask, "Are you ready for the question?" In response, one or more should say, "Question."

Announcing the result

After the vote is taken, the chairperson announces the result. If the majority have said aye, the chairperson announces, for example, "The motion is carried." If the majority have said no, the announcement is, "The motion is lost." If it is carried, of course, whatever the motion provides for is to be done. If it is lost, no further action is taken.

Methods of voting

Voting by voice is called "voting by acclamation," or sometimes *viva voce* (vi-va vo-se), and is decisive only when a considerable majority is evident on one side or the other. If, after taking the vote by acclamation, the chairperson is uncertain from the response whether the "ayes" or the "no's" have it, he or she may call for a vote by a show of hands or by standing. Or if any member is dissatisfied with the announcement of the vote, that member may call for a "a show of hands" or "a standing vote."

In either case the chairperson then says, "All who are in favor, raise your right hand," or "All who are in favor, stand," and a count is taken. When the count is complete, voters lower their hands or sit down. The chairperson makes note of the number, and then says, "All who are opposed, raise your right hand," or, "All who are opposed, stand," and counts those who thus show their vote.

Now that the vote has been counted and the exact number has been determined on each side, the chairperson announces the vote thus: "There were twenty-three in favor and nineteen opposed (or whatever the number may be); the motion is therefore carried" (or vice versa).

Another form of voting, which provides exact reckoning and at the same time secrecy, is voting by ballot. In this case, either prepared ballots or blank slips of paper are passed to each voter, who records his or her vote on the paper. The ballots are then gathered and counted, usually by tellers appointed by the chair. One of them then announces the result, and the chairperson declares the vote. This form is used mostly in voting for nominees to office.

The most formal and exact method of taking a vote, which, however, is used little except in legislative bodies, is by calling the roll. In this case the chairperson directs the secretary to call the roll of members, and as members' names are called, they vote, "Aye" or "No." As each one votes, the secretary records the vote opposite his or her name, and at the conclusion of the roll call counts up the "ayes" and "no's" and gives the result to the chairperson, who then announces the results. But this form of voting will rarely be found necessary in our assemblies.

Secretary's record

It is the secretary's responsibility to record the exact form of every motion that is made and seconded, and to record the vote, whether for or against. In writing this report, however, the secretary is obligated to record only such motions as were passed, or as the term is, "actions taken." However, if desired or if the business meeting or Adventist Youth Ministries Committee so directs, the secretary may record all motions, whether carried or lost, and state what the vote was. Minutes containing these actions must be kept safely by the secretary to be used for reference at any time the business meeting or AYM committee may call for them.

Kinds of motions

In parliamentary law there are different classes of motions, some of which take precedence over others; but we shall discuss here only the most necessary and simple of these. It is prudent, however, for persons who may be called upon to preside or who wish to be intelligent about parliamentary order to familiarize themselves with these rules. In legislative bodies and in organizations that make a great deal of parliamentary law for the sake of securing or blocking legislation, the knowledge and practice of all these rules is essential. And even in the AY Societies a good knowledge of them may be valuable.

Main motion

Of the two or three classes of motion with which you will have to know how to deal, the first is the main motion. This is the original motion proposing a major action. How to deal with it and when it is unhampered by other motions has already been described.

Amendments

A second class of motions is amendments. An amendment is a motion to amend or change a motion already made and under discussion. A motion to amend must be voted upon and settled before the main motion can be voted upon. A motion to amend may itself be amended, and of course the same rule holds that the secondary amendment must be disposed of before the primary amendment can be acted upon.

Whenever a member wishes to change or amend a motion, he or she may offer to do so after obtaining the floor by saying, "I move to amend this motion by adding the words (whatever words are desired), or by inserting the words (indicate the place and the text)." If this is seconded, the chairperson calls for discussion, just as for a main motion, and puts it to vote in the same way. If the amendment is passed, it changes the main motion only in the way indicated. It does not dispose of the main motion, which is still before the house and must be acted upon in its amended form, just as if no amendment has intervened. After the amendment is carried, the chairperson says, "The amendment is carried. The motion as amended will now be read by the secretary."

After the secretary reads the main motion as it is now worded with the addition of the amendment, the chairperson says, "Are we ready now to vote on the amended motion? Is there any further discussion?" If not, a vote is then taken as described previously.

Subsidiary motions

The third class is subsidiary motions, or motions to deal with the motion before the group. Probably the only such motion you will encounter is one to table or "to lay upon the table" a motion being discussed. The phrase "to lay upon the table" is, of course, a figure of speech that comes from the idea of carrying a written motion out of the hands of the chairperson and laying it away upon a table, there to wait until it is taken from the table and put back in the hands of the chairperson. Of course, no such action takes place; it is only figurative. But it signifies taking the motion out of consideration by the assembly, and it has the effect of stopping all action on it. It cannot be considered again until it is voted "to take the motion (designating it) from the table," which again places it in position to be acted upon. A member wishing thus to dispose of the main motion says, after getting the floor, "I move to lay the motion upon the table," or "I move to table the motion."

The motion cannot be debated and it cannot be amended. The chairperson must immediately put the motion to a vote, thus: "It is moved to table the motion. All who are in favor say, 'Aye' all who are opposed say, 'No.' It is carried, and the motion is tabled." After this, any other motion may be taken up. Or, if the vote indicates that the group does not wish to table the motion, the chairperson says, "The motion to table this action is lost. The main motion is still before us."

Privileged motions

A fourth class is privilege motions, of which we need to mention only the motion to adjourn. This motion is not debatable, nor can it be amended (except by a motion to fix the time at which to adjourn), and must immediately be put to a vote. The motion to adjourn can be made and is in order at any stage of proceedings, either when all business has been finished or while business is proceeding and another motion is pending, or when nothing is being done. A member simply says, for example: "Mr. Chairman, I move that we adjourn." Someone else must say, "I second the motion."

The chairperson then says, "There is a motion to adjourn. All in favor say, 'Aye'; all opposed say, 'No.' The motion is carried, and we are adjourned," or "The motion is lost, and we will continue our business."

When the motion to adjourn is carried, that is the end of the meeting, unless there are some necessary announcements or concluding ceremonies.

When there is any motion or any matter of business pending at the time adjournment is voted, that motion or business becomes the unfinished business to be taken up first at the next meeting.

The motion to adjourn may be called for by the chairperson whenever the business has been finished, when, if no one voluntarily moves to adjourn, the chairperson may say, "Our business is now completed. Is there a motion to adjourn?"

Appointment of committees

There are two classes of committees. The first is the standing committee, which is appointed for a definite term and is empowered to conduct its business as designated during that time. The second, a special committee, sometimes called an ad hoc committee, may be elected or appointed for temporary and specific duties. Either kind of committee may be instructed to report to the body appointing it or be empowered by that body to take action as designated.

Creating committees

A standing committee may be, for example, a committee on library or a committee on entertainment or a program committee. Whatever it is, its duties must be defined. It is thereafter expected to function without instruction, though the AYM committee may, whenever desired, refer pertinent matters to it for action.

However, the AYM committee should appoint standing committees only when their need is evident and there is something to be done that requires continuous attention. Otherwise a special committee may be appointed for a specific purpose and, when the duty is performed, the special committee makes its report and either automatically ceases to function or may be dismissed by vote. For example, a special committee may be a nominating committee, a committee on constitution and bylaws, or an entertainment committee for a special occasion.

Standing committees are usually established by the AYM committee at the time the new officers have their first meeting, but they may be appointed at any time there is a need. In some instances they may be appointed by the AYM committee in a business session, though this is not usually the case. Special committees are appointed in the way provided for in the motion creating them. Very often the person making the motion provides that the committee shall be "appointed by the chair," or that it "be appointed from the floor," in which case members may nominate the committee members one by one, and each name is voted on by the group. It is possible for the person making the motion to name the committee members in the motion, though this is rather arrogant and is not commonly done. The most common way is for the chair to appoint.

Special committees are expected to report their findings to the body that appointed them, unless power to act is voted at the time they are established (and even then they should report that they have acted as directed). If power to act is voted, terms of reference, that is, reference to the authority given that committee, should be clearly outlined in the motion that grants the power.

Appointment

After the motion to create a committee has been passed, the committee must then be appointed or elected as the action indicates. If the chairperson is to appoint the committee, he or she may take a little time while other business goes on to consider candidates before announcing the committee membership. If the AYM committee is to elect the committee, the chairperson should call for nominations, and each name should be voted upon.

Chairperson

The first member named is to chair the committee, unless otherwise stated by the appointing power, and is responsible for calling the committee together and for seeing that its business is conducted. At their first meeting, the committee members should select a secretary from their number, who is to keep a record of their work and, with the chairperson, prepare a report to present to the AYM committee (or other body as designated by the AYM committee).

Committee report

If a committee is ready to report when the AYM committee chairperson calls for committee reports, it is customary for the committee chairperson to rise, address the chair, and say, "Our committee is ready to report." Whereupon the committee secretary presents a report and moves its adoption. If the secretary does not move that the report be adopted, any other member of that committee may do so.

Quorum

A quorum is the number or proportion of the organization membership that is required to do business. Any organization may fix its own quorum as less or more. A quorum is not necessarily the majority of members, but the number of members that the organization determines as adequate for business transactions to be legal. Any action taken by the AYM committee when there is no quorum is invalid. However, in order for it to be recorded as invalid in the secretary's records, the matter must be brought up at a meeting when a quorum is present, and the point made that no quorum was present when that action was taken. The action is then declared invalid, either by the chairperson or by vote of the AYM committee. In some cases, the AYM committee members may want the action to stand—that is, declared valid. If the action is to stand, the common consent of the society must be given, which means that no one objects to the point of "no quorum."

To avoid this problem, the chairperson should always determine that a quorum is present before any business is conducted.

Ruling upon order

The chairperson is sometimes called upon to decide whether a motion or some person talking while a motion is being discussed is “out of order.” According to parliamentary law, this means, in the case of a motion, that the particular motion is not permitted at that time. (One reason, for example, is that another motion may be on the floor for discussion.) In the case of discussion of a motion, it means that the person who is discussing it is not talking to the point, but is discussing something else.

Anyone wishing to make this point of order rises and says, for example: “Mr. Chairman/Madam Chair, I rise to a point of order.”

The chairperson then says, “Please state your point of order.”

The member replies: “I think this motion is out of order because. . .” and gives the reason, or says, “I think the gentleman (or the lady) is not talking to the question.”

The chairperson then makes a judgment and says, “The chair rules that the motion is in order” or “not in order.” Or “The point is well taken. The gentleman (or the lady) who has the floor will please confine his (or her) remarks to the question under discussion.”

Of course, the chairperson, in order to be able to rule upon points of order, must be familiar with parliamentary law, and that is one reason why the AYM leader is advised to study fully into this subject. We recommend *Robert's Rules of Order* by Henry M. Robert as the authority on parliamentary law, and his *Parliamentary Practice* is very helpful.

How God Prepares Leaders

Qualifying

“Your service in the cause of God must be more hearty, full, and thorough.” (*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 215)

All of us should prepare our minds and hearts so that we will be knowledgeable in regard to the work for this time, preparing ourselves to do that of which we are most capable.

A mysterious change

A change that occurs or takes place through the Word is one of the greatest mysteries of the Word of God. "We cannot understand it, we can only believe that as declared by the Scriptures it is 'Christ in you, the hope of glory.' A knowledge of this mystery furnishes a key to every other. It opens to the soul the treasures of the universe, the possibilities of infinite development." (*My Life Today*, p. 26)

God works through simplicity

"But in these words spoken by the greatest Teacher the world has ever known, there is no parade of human eloquence. The language is plain, and the thoughts and sentiments are marked with the greatest simplicity. . . . He taught them as one having authority, speaking the words of eternal life." (*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 254)

"If the youth would become strong in mind, pure in morals, firm in spiritual power, let them follow the example of Jesus in His simplicity." (*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 132)

"Carry forward your work in humility. Never rise above the simplicity of the gospel of Christ. Not in the art of display, but in lifting up Christ, the sin-pardoning Redeemer, will you find success in winning souls. As you work for God in humility and lowliness of heart, He will manifest himself to you." (*Gospel Workers*, p. 355)

Vitality in small things

The work to which as Christians we are called is to co-operate with Christ for the salvation of souls But in order to accomplish this work we must follow His example of faithful, conscientious attention to the little things. This is the secret of success in every line of Christian effort and influence." (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 358)

"Great truth must be brought into little things." (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 359.)

God requires promptness

“. . . If anything is accomplished to the purpose, it must be done at the golden moment. The slightest inclination of the weight in the balance should be seen, and should determine the matter at once. Long delays tire the angels. It is even more excusable to make a wrong decision sometimes than to be continually in a wavering position; to be hesitating, sometimes in one direction, then in another . . . “

“I have been shown that the most signal victories and the most fearful defeats have been on the turn of minutes. God requires promptness of action. Delays, doubtings, hesitation, and indecision frequently give the enemy every advantage . . . ” (*Gospel Workers*, p. 134)

The way in which He has led

As we review our history, after contemplating the stages of our growth and seeing the progress that we have made and where we are today, we should praise the Lord! Ellen White offers this encouragement: “As I see what God has wrought, I am filled with astonishment, and with confidence in Christ as leader. We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us” (*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 31).

God Guides

- Psalm 43:3
- Proverbs 8:20
- Isaiah 42:16
- Isaiah 48:17
- Psalm 25:9
- Psalm 73:24
- Isaiah 58:11
- John 16:13

The finite with the infinite

“Whatever line of investigation we pursue, with a sincere purpose to arrive at truth, we are brought in touch with the unseen, mighty intelligence that is working in and through all. The mind of man is brought into communion with the mind of God, the finite with the infinite. The effect of such communion on body and mind and souls is beyond estimate” (*Education*, p. 14).

These Bible text also offer helpful perspectives:

- Philippians 2:5
- Hebrews 8:10

Cultivation of the mind

“It is the true elevation of the mind, not an affectation of superiority, that makes the man. The proper cultivation of the mental powers makes man all that he is.” (*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 438)

“Mental culture is what we as a people need, and what we must have in order to meet the demands of the time.” (*Gospel Workers*, p. 280)

“The highest culture of the mind, if sanctified through the love and the fear of God, receives His fullest approval.” (*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 47)

“For the mind and the soul, as well as for the body, it is God’s law that strength is acquired by effort. It is exercise that develops. In harmony with this law, God has provided in His word the means for mental and spiritual development.” (*Education*, p. 123)

“The human mind becomes dwarfed and enfeebled when dealing with commonplace matters only, never rising above the level of the things of time and sense to grasp the mysteries of the unseen. The understanding is gradually brought to the level of the subjects with which it is constantly familiar. The mind will contract its powers and lose its ability if it is not exercised to acquire additional knowledge and put to the stretch to comprehend the revelations of divine power in nature and in the Sacred Word.” (*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 546)

Mental development

“God is displeased with those who are too careless or indolent to become efficient, well-informed workers. The Christian should possess more intelligence and keener discernment than the worlding. The study of God’s word is continually expanding the mind and strengthening the intellect.” (*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 545)

The Holy Spirit and the mind

“The Holy Spirit has brought decidedly to your minds the important, vital truths for this time. Is this knowledge to be bound up in a napkin

and hidden in the earth? No, No. It is to be put out to the exchangers. As man used his talents, however small, with faithfulness, the Holy Spirit takes the things of God, and presents them anew to the mind. Through His Spirit God makes His word a vivifying power. It is quick and powerful, exerting a strong influence upon minds, not because of the learning or intelligence of the human agent, but because divine power is working with the human power. And it is to the divine power that all praise is to be given." (*Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 55)

Discipline of the mind

"To keep your heart in heaven, will give vigor to all your graces, and put life into all your duties. To discipline the mind to dwell upon heavenly things, will put life and earnestness into all our endeavors." (*Review and Herald*, March 29, 1870)

- Colossians 3:2
- 1 Peter 1:13

Today there is a never ending battle for the mind. Whoever controls the mind, controls the person. The media has a tremendous influence on all society and has advertised, legalized, glamorized, and popularized sin so much that the continual bombardment of the mind results in imperceptible changes. Peter counsels, "Gird up the loins of the mind" (1 Peter 1:13), and Paul gives us subjects upon which the mind should dwell in Philippians 4:8. (See also *Messages to Young People*, p. 285).

Mental courage

- 2 Thessalonians 2:1, 22
- Timothy 1:7
- Isaiah 26:3

Esteem for others

- Philippians 2:3
- 1 Peter 3:8

Especially for senior youth

"They may reach to the highest point of intellectual greatness; and if balanced by religious principle they can carry forward the work which Christ came from Heaven to accomplish, and in thus doing be co-workers with the Master." (*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 48)

Tribal Leadership

Dave Logan, John King, and Halee Fischer-Wright produced the transformative book, *Tribal Leadership*, which provides vocabulary to help leaders not only lead but manage their teams. These principles can all be transferred into senior youth ministry leadership and the support of these key leaders in the local congregation.

First, two key terms need to be defined: *tribe* and *tribal leadership*. A tribe is any group of 20-150 people. Second, tribal leadership focuses on the language and behavior of your tribe.

When leading your senior youth group or team (tribe), listen to the language used and help them decide what level they are at and how to move to the next level. There are five stages.

Stage 1

This represents 2% of professionals, when they cluster together they display behaviors that express hostility. Gangs would be a class example. They cut off social ties.

Stage 2

This represents 25% of professionals, they seem to be surrounded by people who have some power they lack. They believe other's lives seem to be working. When they cluster together their behavior is characteristic of being apathetic victims.

Stage 3

This represents 49% of professionals, usually connected to people in a series of dyadic (two-person) relationships. While they believe they are great . . . they also believe that you are not. When they cluster together they attempt to outperform one another and put others down. Sometimes with humor, each time striving for dominance.

Stage 4

This represents 22% of professionals. They form person structures called triads, in which they build value-based relationships between others. When they cluster together . . . their ethos implies that others are great too, but they express group pride.

Stage 5

This represents 2% of professionals. Non-profits would fall in this area. The Church should be in this zone. Very similar to stage 4 but there is no "they". They form networks with anyone who shares the same values. Competitors are irrelevant and they have innocent wonderment.

Senior youth ministry has the potential to operate at stages four and five easily, simply because of the call from Jesus and the motive for ministry.

The authors suggest that everyone must journey through all five stages to truly experience the stage four and five potential. Stages four and five rotate around the idea that we do things for a higher cause. If you as a leader are struggling to motivate and influence change, ask yourself and seek counsel from others about the authenticity of the goal or task. If Jesus is the cornerstone of your ministry—not yourself or personal gain—then you are in stage four/five.

Jesus called you to lead the present and future of His church. It exists to shape the world and to show that Jesus is the source of life and only hope for total restoration. Keep yourself as a leader in check by aiming for stage four/five quality. Do that by following Jesus. He is the higher cause and noble quest of all we do. Resolve all conflicts by going to Jesus and seeking His wisdom with an open heart. Keep the passion and honest love for your youth and young adults ever present in the forefront of your mind and heart and Jesus will bless your leadership. Remember, it is not about you; it's about the one, true cornerstone, Jesus Christ.

Leadership Paradigm Shift

Shifting paradigms is not for the light hearted. What appears in the text below is for your honest consideration. It will not work for everyone. Leonard Sweet, in one of his most thought provoking books, *I Am A Follower*, suggests that we consider leadership outside of the regular realm—focusing instead of followership:

The first words Jesus' disciples heard? 'Follow me.'

The first words Jesus spoke to Peter? 'Follow me'

The last words Jesus spoke to Peter? 'Follow me' (p. 19)

Jesus wants *followers*. Jesus does not need leaders who have their own path. He needs followers who connect with Him.

"The Jesus paradox is that only Christians lead by following." (p. 21)

For far too long we have used leadership as a tool to get others to do tasks we don't have time or a desire to do. This often creates leaders who are stuck in stage two or three, never feeling the freedom of stages four and five that Jesus has called us to. We have made leadership our king instead of Jesus.

"Its time we owned up to the false category of leader and its idolatry. Leadership is a function. Followership is an identity. If we don't recognize this, we are no different from the ancient Israelites in this exchange with God in 1 Samuel 8:

People: "We want a king (leader). Give us a king (leader) like the other nations have."

God: "They have rejected me as their King (leader)." (p. 34)

When Jesus defines the leader and follower relationship to His disciples, His simple call shows us that He is the one who calls and He is the one we follow. This is a leadership paradigm often missed. It is too easy to forget that we should be tied to Jesus each day. To rely on Him as the leader, to lift Him up instead of our accomplishments, would be the follower spirit. Anything we accomplish is all to His glory. It is wise to embrace this text in our leadership as a true follower:

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. —John 14:6

There is a simple progression of following Jesus in these three key words, which should not be mistaken for being a linear approach to discipleship or leadership as they all can and do occur simultaneously.

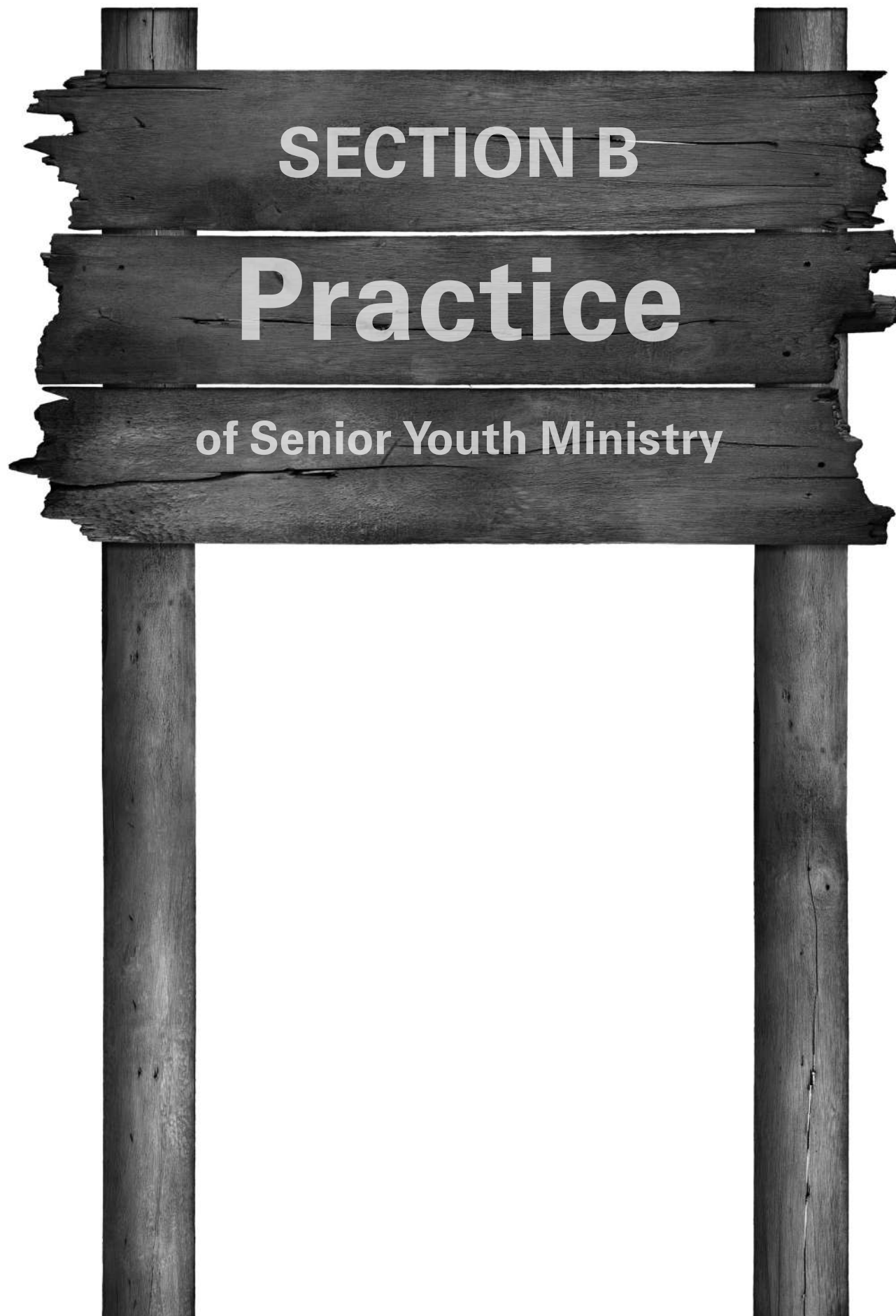
"First belonging (way), then believing (truth), then behaving (life)." (p. 92)

Ellen White wrote:

"The way to become great and noble is to be like Jesus, pure, holy, and undefiled." (Letter 7 to J. H. Kellogg, April 26, 1886)

Jesus is the model and source of all good we could ever be or do.





SECTION B

Practice

of Senior Youth Ministry

DISCIPLESHIP

The Emergence of a Global Youth Movement Transitioning from Mere Membership to Authentic Discipleship

Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. Then they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

—Matthew 28:16-20

This section deals with how to help senior youth become healthy disciples of Jesus and stay committed to their faith journey within the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It will address the development, nurture, and application of their faith to share the good news of Jesus' soon return.

Discipleship Vision

Discipleship

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." —Matthew 28:18-20.

The call to go and make disciples is at the very heart of the Gospel Commission. In a book entitled, *The Great Omission*, the author suggests that over the years the church has altered the Gospel Commission. Jesus called His followers to go and make disciples, but today the church is busy making church members. He describes a church member as someone who intellectually accepts a number of teachings, is baptized, pays his tithe and attends church fairly regularly.

What is a disciple?

In the rabbinic tradition of Jesus' days, a disciple was one who responded to the call of the rabbi to follow him. Following him would mean leaving family, friends, synagogue, and village to devote the entire life to becoming like the rabbi. A disciple is a follower, a learner, a student, an apprentice, and a practitioner. A disciple doesn't just want to know what the rabbi knows. A disciple wants to be like the rabbi and wants to learn to do what the rabbi does.

How do we make disciples?

During the time Jesus was on earth and was teaching and calling people to follow Him, there was a certain simplicity to being a disciple. Primarily, it meant to go with Him in an attitude of observation, study, obedience, and imitation. Disciples had to be with Him to learn how to do what He did. It was, in reality, a call to abandon whatever was necessary to follow Him. As costly as it was, it was the only possible access to discipleship (Mark 1:20; Luke 14:26, 33). Discipleship had a clear and straightforward meaning.

The circumstances and dynamics are not the same today. Followers of Jesus cannot literally be with Him in the same way as His first disciples could. But the priorities and intentions, the heart and inner attitudes of disciples, are forever the same.

In the heart of a disciple there is initially a desire. Having come up to some understanding of what discipleship means, having counted the costs, the disciple of Christ desires above all to be like Him. Therefore, “it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher” (Matthew 10:25) and “everyone who is fully qualified will be like the teacher” (Luke 6:40).

That desire to be like Jesus is naturally followed by a decision to devote oneself to becoming like Him. The disciple is one who, motivated by his or her desire to be like the master, gradually rearranges and reorganizes their life to pursue that very purpose. By these decisions and actions they engage in Christ’s training and become His disciples. There is no other way for disciples—disciples who want to make more disciples. Becoming a disciple leads into the abundance of life that Jesus said He came to bring (John 10:10).

This abundant kind of life offered by Jesus is indeed life of another kind; it is the Kingdom life. It is made available to all those who accept the invitation to follow. The good news of God for humanity is that the eternal kind of life is now on earth and is available to all who would follow. The message of and about Him is specifically a gospel for our life now, not just for when He comes a second time.

Discipleship to Christ is made possible through the supernatural power and presence of the Holy Spirit. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to bring the inward transformation of thought, feeling, and character that “cleans the inside cup” (Matthew 23:25) and “makes the tree good” (Matthew 12:33). Overtime the dissonance between belief and practice is resolved and we experience alignment between the intentions of the heart and a way of life.

Discipleship involves obedience to the teaching of Jesus

Jesus asks the people why they call Him “Lord, Lord” and do not do what He says. He showed them what someone who hears His word and puts them into practice is like: a man who has dug deep and built his house on a solid foundation. This man’s house will withstand the flood and the storm (Luke 6:46-48). The call to obeying all that He has commanded is integral to the Gospel Commission. The essence of that call to obedience is summarized in His two great teachings: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind” and “Love your neighbour as yourself” (Matthew 19:19).

Discipleship is supernatural

As mentioned above, but well worth repeating, taking on the character of Christ and obedience to Him is a supernatural operation that is accomplished under the guidance and the movement of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit brings to fullness in our individual lives, as it does in the Christian community, the work of God achieved in Christ.

Discipleship involves spiritual practices or heartbuilding habits

Following Jesus involves arranging life around activities that enable us to increasingly reflect His character; these activities have been described as heart building habits or spiritual practices.

Regular involvement in religious activities such as church worship, reading and meditating upon the Scriptures, praying, and serving others sooner or later leads to a desire and even a persistent urge for something more—an urge that cannot always be clearly defined and understood. Heart building habits are ways in which this hunger can be attended to as they open the door for God’s inner workings towards likeness to Jesus.

Spiritual practices are activities in our power that we engage in to enable us to do what we cannot do by direct effort. Heart building habits help us gain power to live life as Jesus taught and modeled it. The single, most helpful principle regarding spiritual growth is that there is an immense difference between trying to do something and training to do something. Spiritual practices are not a matter of trying harder, but training wisely. Paul’s encouragement to Timothy underlines this concept: “Train yourself to be Godly” (1 Tim. 4:7).

He reflects the same thinking in his advice to the church at Corinth, advising that

Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. —1 Cor. 9:25

An appreciation of the distinction between training and merely trying is key to transformation in every aspect of life.

Our role and the Spirit's role in discipleship

The notion of spiritual practices or heart building habits raises the question as to whether the work of spiritual growth is ours or God's. If it is ours, doesn't it mean that we are working out our own salvation, which would be inconsistent with the notion of grace?

To speak of discipleship only as the product of training might sound like something we can manufacture. That is certainly not the case. Transformation is the work of God; it is the mysterious work that the Spirit accomplishes in us. The Scriptures say that "The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit" (John 3:8).

To bring clarity on this issue of roles in discipleship, consider the difference between piloting a motorboat and a sailboat. We can run a motorboat all by ourselves and we can be in control of it. But the sailboat is different. We can hoist the sails and steer the rudder, but we are completely dependent on the wind, which does the work. If the wind does not blow, we do not move in the water—no matter how hard we try. Our task is to take our boat to water, get the sails ready, and do whatever enables us to catch the wind. So it is with discipleship. We can open ourselves to transformation through certain practices that facilitate the work of the Spirit, but we cannot engineer transformation itself.

It is our vision to see the emergence of a Seventh-day Adventist youth movement, transitioning from simply church membership to authentic discipleship.

Senior Youth—the Crisis Age

Some may ask, "Why should we consider a separate and special ministry for youth? Can't they just do everything with the rest of the church family? Aren't they a part of the church?" We certainly should consider youth to be an important part of the church. However, they are a segment of the church that is moving through a particularly sensitive period of personal development. Faced with a set of issues, problems, relationships, and tasks that younger or older members may not face with the same intensity, the youth have a spectrum of needs that require a distinct ministry specially directed towards meeting those needs.

The life stages of an Adventist

The baby Adventist progresses through Cradle Roll and Kindergarten, on to Primary Sabbath School, and eagerly participates in thirteenth Sabbath programs in front of mom and dad and brothers and sisters. Memory verses, finger plays, and coloring

books form a delightful part of the child's life. Sabbath and church are ideally synonymous with activity, fun, and learning about Jesus. For the little child, this age of is one in which the church is an important part of a happy, secure world.

At about ten to twelve years of age the child begins to make the transition into early adolescence. With it there is often a desire to make a real, "grown-up" spiritual commitment. Most young Adventists are baptized between the ages of ten and fourteen and usually have a genuine and personal desire to make a public commitment to Jesus.

Moving from early adolescence into middle adolescence, there often comes a time of spiritual barrenness, even though this may be somewhat superficial and due to peer pressure. Those who formerly sat near the front of the church now move to the back (or the last row of the balcony). It is "uncool" to sing hymns, and only "old" people carry Bibles.

Not every teenager experiences this time of "turn-off," but youth leaders and parents should be aware that if it does surface, it is a stage (hopefully a brief one), and to overreact is "overkill." It should also be remembered that the spiritual experience of childhood usually doesn't fade away completely. Rather it goes underground and, if nurtured, will surface a little later when the young person gains more self-confidence.

Towards the end of the teenage years, in the late adolescent period, youth are likely to critically examine the belief structure of their parents and the church. They may question the existence of God, the validity of recommended standards of behavior, or the relevance of certain doctrines of the church. In this review and assessment time, two critical areas of development take place. These are systems of belief and moral values. The youth's direction of life is being determined. This, of course, does not mean that either of these factors is set in concrete, but societal expectations and internal psychological pressures drive the late adolescent to make decisions in these areas at this time.

Youth issues

As stated above, young people in their teen years and even into the early twenties are faced with decisions that have longstanding effects on their future. These will generally include:

- Adoption or rejection of particular spiritual beliefs
- Establishment of a moral value system
- Refinement of social skills
- Broadening of intellectual skills through pursuit of education
- Career choice
- Marriage

The family unit, educational institutions, community groups, and the church each have a role to play in helping the youth with these issues. As a supportive Christian community, the church senses a distinct and significant responsibility to assist in the spiritual and moral development of its youth. This is, in fact, the rationale and objective of an effective youth ministry.

Adolescent developmental tasks

As a child approaches adulthood, a number of changes occur. Social scientists call these “developmental tasks.” A balanced adult will have successfully dealt with each of these tasks. A representative list of these includes the following:

- Achieving new and more mature relationships with age-mates of both sexes
- Achieving a masculine or feminine social role
- Accepting one’s physique and using the body more effectively
- Achieving emotional independence of parents and other adults
- Achieving assurance of economic independence
- Selecting and preparing for an occupation
- Preparing for marriage and family life
- Developing intellectual skills and concepts necessary for civic competence
- Desiring and achieving socially responsible behavior
- Acquiring a set of values and an ethical system as a guide for behavior
- Finding meaningful involvement in local church workshops and activities

Each of these developmental tasks forms a part of the basic task of identity formation: Who I am and what I am going to do, how I am going to behave, and in whom or what I will believe.

Though all of this may appear rather theoretical, to understand it is important, for now we can more easily show how faith and religion can and should play a significant role in identity formation, which is the primary developmental task of adolescents.

The role of faith and religion in adolescent development

It has been noted that ideology helps preserve identity, and this is very true in the life of the young person because a belief system is the guide that helps the developing adolescent shape his or her life. Without some ideological commitment, however implicit in a ‘way of life,’ youth suffer a confusion of values. The Christian religion offers a way of life in which ideological commitment is paramount. It is the perfect vehicle to assist the young person in shaping his or her life.

In the movement towards maturity, adolescence is the optimum age for identity formations. It is also the optimum age for the development of a belief system and for the adoption of a personal set of values. It is the stage of faith in which an individual sees deep meaning behind faith issues.

Youth needs

In discussing the needs of youth, needs that arise because of the special set of circumstances in which they find themselves, we should recognize that needs assessment and meeting those needs is a complex matter. Consider the following:

- Needs change from year to year and from place to place
- Needs may be conflicting
- Needs may arise from external or internal pressures
- Needs cannot always be fully satisfied
- Needs may be temporary or long-range
- Needs may be imagined or real

There are five basic needs of youth (these apply throughout life but are more intense during adolescence). They are as follows:

- Acceptance and recognition
- Affection
- Success and achievement
- New experiences
- Security

A balanced youth ministry will ensure that each of these needs is met in the context of the church or in its contact with the community.

Adolescent Development Stages and Implications for Senior Youth Ministry

Emotional development

Human development can be seen as a series of crises or conflicts that, if successfully resolved, lead to maturity and health development. Adolescence sees the onset of a crisis of identity. At this stage there is a new sense of self-consciousness. In some societies this is the time when the youth start to break away from the family and traditional ties in an attempt to establish their own identity. In other societies the straining of family ties may not be as accentuated, but still the adolescent ventures out to define his or her own identity. The stages are not totally clear-cut and, even before identity is satisfactorily established, adolescents will enter the next crisis period in their search for intimacy. Attempts to form a special closeness with other human beings may fail if young people are still deeply involved in their own search for identity. Therefore, they need to be placed in an environment where they are given many opportunities to establish belief in themselves. Youth ministry also needs to supply group opportunities so young people may meet prospective life partners.

Cognitive development

Adolescence marks the onset of the ability to think abstractly—but a significant body of research has shown that almost fifty percent of adults never fully attain the ability to think in this manner. In the context of youth ministry it is significant to note that the application of abstract thinking in relation to religious matters appears to occur later than in some other fields of learning. This is accentuated if the individual does not have an aptitude for religious issues. Rather than an abstract or theoretical approach to learning matters of faith and religion, youth ministry should attempt to relate Biblical truth and principles to the practical issues, experiences, problems, and needs of youth. Involvement in community or mission projects in which young peoples' energies are focused on helping others rather than on self-focus is a vital part of this maturation process.

Moral development

In attempting to influence moral development, youth ministry should avoid forms of communication and programming that consistently depend upon propositional or abstract modes of thinking. In other words, devotional modules, discussion of issues, sermons, prayers, songs, etc., should as often as possible reflect a more concrete thought form and give meaningful Biblical concepts to the life situations in which youth exist. Program content should sensitively encourage youth to face issues and guide them in the decision-making process. It is crucial to nurture them so that their mature ideological stance is that which they have carefully thought through and accepted as their own.

Faith development

Adolescence is a critical age in the development of faith. Children, during the age of credulity, accept the beliefs and values of those they regard as significant literally, but in adolescence there is a tendency to question these beliefs and values. Conflict arises as young people attempt to apply them in their ever-widening sphere of experience. Beyond adolescence, the individual will continue to engage in a critical assessment of these previously held beliefs and values.

Basic Personal Desires

Most people experience some basic personal desires. These desires may be expressed differently according to one's culture, but they are similar in principle. The wise youth leader will be aware of these needs and will attempt to fulfill each of them in the various ministries offered.

Acceptance

*For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God,
and approved of men. —Rom. 14:18*

All people desire to be accepted by their peer groups, parents, teachers, employers, and all with whom they associate. This is a natural need that must be filled. Without acceptance people can become paranoid, withdrawn, and reclusive. To be wanted and loved is life at its best. No person performs well at anything if he or she is rejected or unappreciated.

“Kindly affections, generous impulses, and a quick apprehension of spiritual things are precious talents. . . .” (*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 352)

Youth need to experience the same courtesy, consideration, and respect as adults do. True courtesy is measured by the way we treat others without intervening considerations such as age, socio-economic status, national origin, or other variables that separate people.

Trust

Youth are eager to be trusted. It seems as though there is a universal consensus that youth are not completely trustworthy, but the teaching of the Spirit of Prophecy go contrary to this opinion.

“Children and youth are benefited by being trusted. Many, even of the little children, have a high sense of honor; all desire to be treated with confidence and respect, and this is their right.” (*Education*, p. 289)

Help

Although young people may pretend to be in need of nothing from anyone, within they are crying out, “I am struggling alone, please be near to help me.” Disinterested and genuine help is always appreciated by young and old.

Success

And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power. —Col. 2:10

Success and achievement are basic to optimism, good health, a productive life, and relationships in general. In the absence of success and achievement, self-depreciation, a sense of worthlessness, and dejection may dominate the personality. It is not necessary for achievement to be great in the eyes of others, but it is essential that successful efforts be a realized trend. At the same time, it is important to recognize that no one succeeds in everything. An occasional failure can and should be a learning experience as well as lead one to depend upon the Lord.

Security and belonging

And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's. —1 Cor. 3:23

Security is undoubtedly a result of acceptance, since acceptance does provide a degree of security and a sense of belonging. But security is deeper as a basic desire. Man is not an island unto himself, for God never designed that anyone should be alone. In order to grow and flourish, people need the security of God's acceptance and love as well as that of humankind.

Experiments have demonstrated that newly born babies in hospitals who receive only minimal care such as feedings, changes, and baths, but who are not cuddled, touched, caressed, or spoken to are almost always irritable and fretful. They cry excessively and may be underweight. On the other hand, babies who receive an abundance of affection smile a great deal and are happy, peaceful, relatively quiet, and attain normal weight. There is security and acceptance in the touch of a loving hand. It is said by some psychologists that children and marital mates need upward of eight to twelve hugs each day in order to flourish.

The various ministries offered to young people must provide an atmosphere of group security and belonging. This is not to be achieved, however, through touching, but rather through the essential qualities that youth desire most in their leaders, as well as peer acceptance. Physically touching teens and youth can lead to problems, and leaders should refrain from practices that can be misinterpreted. The leader offers security and the sense of belonging by bearing, voice, self-restraint, understanding, and community direction. Youth do not expect or desire their leaders to go beyond that point.

Freedom

And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. —John 8:32

The mid-teen and late-teen years are periods of time when youth are torn between casting off parental/home controls while maintaining ties to their security. It is a time of frustration as they probe into the unknown and then retreat to the hoped-for security of home and friends. The probing actions represent a thrust toward freedom and independence as they experiment with untried and personally unproved values. Not only is this a fearsome experience at times, but it also becomes joyful and exciting as successes are achieved.

Independence is a natural part of the growth process, and the wise youth leader will accept with patience—and also pleasure—the challenging of ideas, systems, processes, and values as the youth passes through what some choose to call the “turbulent teens.” Again, the wise youth leader will endeavor to provide an

atmosphere that permits the growth of freedom and independence and at the same time establishes eternal truths and principles.

Inner peace

And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. —Phil. 4:7

One of the greatest joys of mankind is to be at peace with oneself and the world. This is undoubtedly the most sought-after and desired commodity of life. Fortunes have been spent seeking after it. When one feels good about himself or herself and relationships with others and God, when one experiences a sense of achievement and growth, when one enjoys new encounters and experiences, one is in a posture that brings forth the fruits of inner peace. Above everything else, to know that all is well between Christ and oneself and to know the assurance of salvation is to build the foundation for true and lasting inner peace. Youth leaders do well to reinforce the assurance of salvation through the righteousness of Christ as a here-and-now relationship. Uncertainty regarding eternal life is a sure and certain way to a troubled and non-peaceful lifestyle.

Common Problems of Senior Youth

Because youth are in a transitional stage, when values and past teachings are being evaluated, it becomes extremely important for youth ministry to be aware of the common problems youth experience in this stage. Therefore, youth ministry must provide a sheltered environment for discussion of these issues and must provide an intergenerational context for faith building where young people can feel at home and have a support group to help them deal with the common issues of this transitional period.

Peer pressure

Since adolescents like to be part of a group, they suffer when separated from it. Their group of friends and companions exert great pressure on them. To keep from losing the friendship of their peers, they will do things that under other circumstances and conditions they would not do. It is very important to them to be accepted by the members of their group, because at this stage of development most youth are not individualists.

Drug addiction

For many years, as a church we were able to maintain a fence of protection around the youth of the church as far as alcohol and drug addiction are concerned. Our success was not so much due to our methods, but rather that the problem was not so common.

However, due to peer pressure and the fact that there exist so many forms of drug

addiction, with drugs so readily available, some young people succumb to the temptation. These youth need to be helped, and the youth group should help others who have not yet developed strength to avoid the temptation.

Drug addiction can begin in ways that are difficult to detect but can lead to the use of even stronger drugs. Sniffing glue, gasoline, or liquids containing alcohol may be the prelude to addiction to stronger drugs. The use of alcohol in any form can be a starting point to deeper involvement with other drugs.

By organizing lectures, temperance marches, and other prevention activities, the youth group can be of great help in preventing drug use.

Fear

The unknown in any situation is the basic and underlying cause of fear. Well adjusted youth who experience security and acceptance are less likely to suffer any harmful results of fear. Fear of failure appears to be the most prevalent fear among young people. This can be seen in fear of being rejected by the opposite sex, fear of not fitting in with peers, and fear of rejection. Events surrounding youth can also heighten the fear of the future, with fear of not finding a good job topping the list. Other factors contributing to fear can include new social situations, the possibility of physical attack, and being alone, especially at night.

Envy and jealousy

These emotions have a powerful influence on later adult life, and unless controlled will lead to much unhappiness, dissatisfaction, and discouragement. Most envy and jealousy is directed toward people and things. Personal popularity, as well as quantity and quality of material things, are usually the most prominent objects of youthful envy or jealousy. The most common indicator of envy or jealousy is demonstrated by verbal attacks on people, usually behind their backs, in the form of ridicule and derogatory comments. They may make fun, criticize, or complain that they do not have as much or as nice things as others.

Exaggeration is also used in comparing their low-quality things with other possessions. This is usually done before parents or those who have the ability to help improve their lot. These negative emotions are best counteracted by spiritual values as demonstrated in Matthew 5, 6, 7 and Psalm 37:3-5, 7.

Worry and anger

Worry and anger frequently go hand in hand, with one exacerbating the other. Worry does not always bring anger, but public anger often brings worry, generally because of what others will think and what effect this will have in future social relationships, position or status, employment, school grades, and parental response.

Worry generally centers in that area where most of an adolescent's time is spent—school subjects in which he or she is not performing well and related tests. Other causes of worry are: future educational plans, relationships, physical athletic performance, and money. Youth will tend to verbalize these worries to peer groups. Anger, on the other hand, is frequently displayed with disagreeableness and sulkiness and is often brought on by what the person considers to be bossing by others, being imposed upon, unjust criticism or punishment, or ridicule. Additions to the list can include “lecturing” by parents, teachers, or employers, being treated in a manner below their age level, and being refused privileges in what they consider to be an arbitrary way.

AIDS crisis

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is committed to meeting the challenge of AIDS comprehensively and compassionately. Because of its far-reaching ministry in nearly 200 countries, Adventism will encounter many challenges posed by AIDS. Active education for the prevention of the HIV infection is necessary. The AIDS crisis provides the church, pastors, members, chaplains, and health professionals with an opportunity for public dialogue on AIDS, sexuality, marriage, interpersonal relationships, and health practices that provide a barrier against acquiring HIV infection. In advocating behaviors that prevent the transmission of HIV, we can demonstrate the love and compassion of God in our ministry to others.

In response to God's love, Seventh-day Adventists seek to view people suffering from AIDS through the eyes of Jesus. As the epidemic spreads, some people in the world may begin to see its sufferers as lepers were once seen—only as carriers of death, to be shunned and isolated. Jesus set a different example by showing acceptance and treating the people of His day with compassion. Jesus always distinguished between sin, which He never compromised, and care for the sinner, whom He always loved. Adventists are to follow Christ's example in dealing with those who contract AIDS or sickness of any kind.

Senior Youth Ministry in Contemporary Society

Distinctive characteristics of youth culture

Contemporary youth culture is characterized by high energy activity with a tendency toward competitiveness, materialism, and idealism. Any form of youth ministry that the church chooses to develop must recognize these characteristics—some it will work to counteract (competitiveness, materialism), others it will work to harness (high energy activity, idealism).

The impact of the media on society in general is such that it is transforming almost every aspect of life, including the formation of societal norms (or non-norms) and the manner in which we communicate and learn. Youth are typically affected more dramatically than other segments of society, therefore all those who

are active in youth ministry must recognize the impact of the media as a means of sculpting today's active youth.

In our society, which now professes few universal norms, Christianity can give purpose, goals, standards, and a relationship with God and the church. This provides an effective support system for living productive and meaningful lives. Effective youth ministry should therefore draw young lives to the place where they are able to observe and experience the reality and relevance of a faith relationship with God.

Contemporary youth attitudes

In shaping a pattern of ministry that is suited to today's youth, consideration of "typical" youth attitudes is important. For example:

Flexibility. Youth will respond to that which appeals and is flexible. Be willing to at least hear them out and try to understand how they perceive and experience life.

Creativity. Youth of this generation particularly appreciate and respond to the creative. Leaders who are willing to experiment and are not afraid of failure have greater impact on youth.

Impatience. Youth tend to be impatient with what appears to them to be irrelevant or obsolete. Leaders should be aware of this and work in such a way to help youth understand the relevancy of life.

Intolerance. Youth tend to be intolerant when issues have a negative impact on them. In the area of religion, youth appear to withdraw rather than do battle with authorities, that is, they will leave the church because of harsh criticism, hypocrisy, and perceived irrelevancies.

Idealism. Youth are typically idealistic and are particularly perceptive when inadequacies or irrelevancies exist or hypocritical attitudes are persistently held.

How to Help the Senior Youth

In the church family, all have needs, but we must recognize that because of the transitional stage that youth are passing through, they are most vulnerable to societal pressure, which they are often ill-equipped to handle.

To assist the youth through this period, we should do all that is possible through the union of divine and human agencies. In *Gospel Workers*, Ellen White sums up a basic approach to youth ministry: ". . . In our work for the youth, we must meet them where they are, if we would help them" (p. 209).

A special ministry for youth should be characterized by a leadership style, program format, content, and approach that provides the following:

- Fellowship
- Lifting of spirits
- Sense of participation/involvement
- Sense of enjoyment
- Change/variety
- Relevant religion so that youth are able to:
 - Gain youth-oriented insights into religious beliefs and traditions
 - See and accept the relevance of religious beliefs and traditions
 - Understand the relationship between a Christian and the world
 - Understand the role and real mission of the church
 - Be brought face-to-face with a realistic representation of God's ideal for mankind
- Be challenged to establish/maintain a relationship with Christ through His Spirit that brings direction, joy, and genuine peace to the individual's life

Leaders should feel that their function is like that of the parents, and that it could be said of each one of them as was said of Abraham: “. . . he will command the children and his household after him” (Gen. 18:19). There are many ways to help the youth, and some that have proven to be most useful are discussed here.

Accept them as they are

When we find fault with others we must consider that they are not what we want them to be, but if we are ready to accept them as they are, then we will be able to discover the good that is within them. When we insist on changing people who differ from our expectations, we create great tension. Youth tend to rebel if they perceive that we want to change them forcefully.

Youth ministry consists in helping to mold the character and the personality, but not to make others into our images. Even in the same family there are no two children who are alike, just as there are no two leaves of a tree exactly the same. No person should be compared with another.

Give unconditional love

My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. —1 John 3:18

This applies to our relationship with the youth, as well as to every other person. Most youth have the capacity to discover hypocrisy. Adults should not try to gain their confidence with material gifts. Never have conditions for loving and accepting them, nor offer anything for the love they give. Our love and acceptance should be unconditional, whether people are as we want them to be or not.

Trust them

Do not start out with the point of view that because they are youth, they are not to be trusted. The more trust we offer them, the better will be the response. “Lead the youth to feel that they are trusted, and there are few who will not seek to prove themselves worthy of trust” (*Education*, p. 290).

Listen to them

Communication with the youth does not consist so much in the assurance that we hear them, but rather that we understand them. They have many questions and problems and often need someone who will listen to them. One of the reasons for lack of communication between some leaders and youth is that some leaders give the impression of never having time to listen. Wise leaders do not take the authoritarian position of wanting to “have all the say,” they also spend the necessary time in listening.

Keep up with current events

Youth appreciate someone who can converse about the latest events and personalities in the world. Most youth are not so much interested in politics as in sports figures, Olympic champions, TV personalities and whether we approve or disapprove of some of the top-ten musical groups or performers. Knowledge of the “who” and “what” in this world of the young will result in the youth’s response, “This leader is really with it!” By keeping up-to-date, the leader can hold their interest.

Be sincere and honest

Never be deceptive with youth, for once you lose their trust it will be very difficult to regain it. If you do not have an answer or solution, it is better to admit it and refer the youth to another person who can offer help.

Be consistent and firm

“In the school as well as in the home there should be wise discipline . . . rules should be few and well considered, and once made they should be enforced.” (*Child Guidance*, p. 323)

The youth should know what to expect. If the rules are changed often, confusion is created and rebellion is fostered.

Delegate responsibility

One of our duties as leaders is to help the youth to become independent as soon as possible. This cannot be accomplished unless the youth are given responsibility. It may be necessary to supervise at first, but that supervision should decrease as the youth become more experienced.

Encourage family unity

The family should pray, play, and be together as much as possible. The recommendation is that the family be together for at least one hour of quality time each day and one day of each week in some shared activity. Let the youth have part in planning these activities, and they will take a greater interest in participation than if parents have a come-and-get-it approach.

Provide a Christian lifestyle model

“It should be the special object of the heads of the family to make the hour of worship intensely interesting. By a little thought and careful preparation for this season, when we come in the presence of God, family worship can be made pleasant and will be fraught with results that eternity alone will reveal.” (*Child Guidance*, p. 521)

Let children and youth help plan and participate in family worship to make it more meaningful. Also let them plan and participate in youth group worship.

Counseling Senior Youth

Counseling senior youth begins with a supportive relationship between adults and youth. Those most intimately associated with senior youth ministry in the church are youth leaders and youth sponsors. Much of what we say about counseling the young concerns the leader. The leader, as a counselor of youth, needs to develop a continuing relationship with them. All counseling with youth is built upon previously cultivated, supportive relationships. In the context of worship, youth meetings, and in contacts the leader has with the family, he or she can project feelings of concern, love, support, trust, and understanding. It becomes difficult to establish rapport if youth view the leader as the “preachy guy” who is always talking at them and seldom listens to them.

Leaders who are involved with the youth and risk themselves in sharing their own feelings have good chances of being successful counselors. They often find youth coming to them with problems and the need to have someone listen to them. It should be emphasized that when leaders find that the problems of the young are of a serious emotional nature, or simply feel uncomfortable in the role of supportive counselor, they should do all that they can to encourage the youth to talk with a professional counselor such as their pastor, school counselor, or other Christian counselor. When leaders work with youth they often become second parents. The supportive ways in which youth and youth leaders relate can be positive examples for youth as they relate to their parents. Caring leaders are significant friends and role models in the lives of young people.

The youth experience Christian community, the witness of faith, and the power of the Christian lifestyle as they look to and respect their leaders.

Counseling needs of teenagers

In the adolescent years, the young frequently find themselves involved in an identity crisis that may be resolved in later adolescence or could continue for many years into adulthood. According to some social scientists, this stage of adolescence is one of identity versus role confusion. At times during this stage, the young over-identify with peers and apparently lose their own identity and take on the identity of the peer group. The peer group has its own heroes and its own cliques. Much that young people do at this time of life is determined by the significant groups in which they find themselves. Their values, identity, and behavior are in large part dictated by extracurricular groups at school, social cliques within the context of school and family groupings, and the youth group within the church community. Thus in the process of struggling with their own identities and the identity given them by their peer group, most adolescents go through a crisis.

Part of this identity crisis will be a conversion experience for many young persons in the church. The young person is not only wrestling with relationships with others and finding his or her own unique contribution to society, but is also wrestling with his or her relationship with Christ and with the larger Christian community. For some in this period of adolescence the conversion experience is simply a function of the peer group at church, hence the faith of the peer group is adopted by the individual as his or her own faith. The older adolescent finds himself or herself alone, separated from earlier ties with peer groups and Christian groupings such as the family and the church, and often realizes that their faith and identity are not his or her own. In seeking to meet the particular needs of youth in the identity crisis and conversion experiences of adolescence, the youth leader can provide relational experiences within the context of youth ministry to meet these needs.

Meeting identity crises

It is possible to plan ways to meet these identity crises. Not all of these ideas will work for every teenager, but most adolescents will respond to efforts made on their behalf. Several ideas are offered here that may be helpful to leaders who want to try to meet particular needs. You might consider developing a special Sabbath school or other class for young people. This traditional model is undergoing some scrutiny in different church communions today, with the realization that very often what happens in a youth Bible class is a religious experience containing much peer-group pressure. Leaders are seeking ways to offer individual instruction as well as group experience. While a class can still be conducted as a small group, it should also be structured to include one-on-one counseling situations between adolescent and leader or other counselor. This one-on-one experience enables the youth leader to relate to the specific and unique needs of each person. This can help the teenager discover the meaning of accepting Christ as Lord as an individual, on a personal level. In this sense, the counseling relationship between a youth leader and a young person mediates God-saving love to that young person on his or her own level of need.

Developing relationships

Parental and peer relationships are very important during the adolescent years. We mention these together because there is so much interplay between the two sets of relationships. Parents have certain expectations of youth in relation to the friends they have, the types of behavior expected from their own children, and types of behavior expected from their children's friends. But another set of expectations is formed by the youth peer group.

Parental pressures come in many forms—pressures to earn high grades, to form certain friendships with acceptable groupings, and pressures to achieve. The young person is also seeking to form meaningful relationships in school, society, and church. In working with young people the youth leader can form relationships of a supportive nature that will model the constructive elements mentioned earlier. Through constructive relationships with adults in the Christian community, youth can learn how to relate to adults in other contexts.

You might hold a series of youth programs that focus on what parents expect of teenagers. This might be done in a panel setting where adults have developed a set of questions for youth, or vice versa. Then panels of youth and adults deal with the questions in a candid way. The key to such a program is the moderator, a knowledgeable adult who can handle this as a group counseling experience and point out constructive comments as the discussion develops.

To understand the parental pressure and expectations focused on a young person in a youth group, the youth leader needs to develop contacts with the parents. This can be done through sporting events, through social events, through

luncheon or dinner engagements, through home visitation and Home and School discussions. In the course of these contacts, the youth leader can explore and begin to understand what the parents expect of their child and thereby begin to work constructively with parents, enabling them to see their child through the eyes of another adult.

Through personal contacts with youth and within the context of youth meetings, the youth leader can observe and discuss youth's expectations of relationships and further clarify and more realistically assess those expectations.

Crisis counseling

Crisis counseling meets specific needs of young persons. Crisis counseling arises out of any meaningful loss experienced by a young person. That loss may be the result of the death of someone important, or the termination of a meaningful relationship, often referred to as "breaking up." SYM programs need to include studies on marriage and how husbands and wives relate to each other. Discussing home and family can be of great help. This serves two purposes. It helps the youth, as we have said earlier, to clarify their own personal role expectations. Second, it enables them to understand how their parents are relating to each other as husbands and wives. Too often a youth's perspective of his or her parents is limited to viewing them very narrowly and only in terms of their relationship with him or her.

The young need to see their parents as persons having their own relationships with each other and having to work through their marital relationships daily. In seeking to understand parents, the role expectations, the relating of husbands and wives, the issues of divorce, separation, and marital conflict can be talked about and understood before they might happen in a particular family.

Thus in discussing marriage, separation, and divorce, the youth group becomes a group counseling experience for youth in working out some of their feelings about these crises before they might happen. Also, in this pre-event time frame, we suggest groups study death and dying. Other meaningful losses are those of broken relationships with peers or close friends. These losses are very serious to youth and can be dealt with prior to a breaking-up.

The second time frame is during a crisis itself, when a separation, death, breaking-up, or other meaningful loss occurs. The youth leader needs to be there to encourage the release of feeling, to listen, to empathize, and to deal with whatever feelings may emerge—feelings such as guilt, hatred, anger, and grief. Some if not all of these stages are experienced by people going through a divorce, separation, a breaking-up experience, or a death. The stages of grief are denial and isolation, anger, bargaining, depression, acceptance, and a final attitude and outlook of hope.

Conflicting values

The counseling needs of youth also have to be understood in the area of conflicts over values. Many of the Christian values youth learn in a church setting and the values that their parents instill in them are questioned in the adolescent period. Some are rejected and replaced, and some are internalized. Programming needs to be planned for a youth group that will help members look at and identify their own personal values. The youth are responsible for the value decisions they make and the behaviors that result from those decisions. The Bible and Spirit of Prophecy are important resources in working with value conflicts.

A few words of caution at this point. The youth leader should not simply give a quick answer, for at times a youth will come with one problem or conflict that turns out to be only the surface problem. The real conflict often is much deeper and requires a significant portion of time.

Availability

It would be helpful if the youth leader would establish what can be called a listening post, which is simply a set time during the week when the youth leader is available for conversation or discussion on an informal basis. The young person should feel that this time has been set aside just for him or her and not be under the pressure of trying to “catch” the youth leader in the context of a youth meeting or other church activity.

Professional help

Particular problems and counseling needs of teenagers arise from alcohol and drug usage and abuse. The youth leader should work with the pastor or other professional to become familiar with all of the community resources available for dealing with these problems and the legal ramifications surrounding them. Very often the pastor or youth leader is not qualified to counsel with the drug user over a long-term rehabilitation process, and referral to the right agency is needed. Therefore, the pastor and youth leader need to be well informed of what is available. Alcohol and drug problems should be dealt with by a professional on a one-on-one basis or in a group setting that seeks to understand the causes and consequences of drug abuse.

Developing supportive relationships

We have been discussing at length the need for supportive relationships for youth and adults within the Christian community. Now we want to discuss briefly the meaning of supportive relationships. We believe that a supportive relationship would have the following characteristics:

Trust

The relationship that a youth leader seeks to develop with a youth needs to be a trusting relationship, one of confidentiality in which a youth feels free to share

openly with an adult and feels accepted and dealt with as a person of worth who is not manipulated from a stance of power. Many relationships between a young person and an adult have an inner play of power. Parents, teachers, and school counselors all have a certain power and authority over the young person. In the context of the Christian community, young people should find themselves loved and accepted just the way they are.

Listening

Listening is essential for developing a supportive relationship with youth. Listening is an art that is learned and it is essential for developing a supportive relationship. As the youth leader listens to the young, the young develop confidence. Trust builds, a feeling of rapport is established, and the youth are able to express their deepest feelings, an experience that is called catharsis. In so doing, the youth feel that they can trust and relate to this adult in a meaningful way. The youth experience empathy from the adult and often begin to trust what the adult says and recommends in the process.

Confession

As a supportive relationship builds, the youth sometimes begin to deal with feelings of guilt, particularly when they have not lived up to their own expectations. Wise youth leaders listen so as to reflect feelings, as well as to understand the problems verbalized. As young people confess their guilt, youth leaders need to reflect those feelings back to the person so he or she can hear them, recognize them, and deal with them. Again, we stress the confidentiality that an adult must have in discussing the guilt feelings of young persons and dealing with them on a completely private level. The youth need to be encouraged to confess their sins to the Lord and need to be reassured of God's forgiving and understanding love. It may be wise to suggest behaviors on the part of the young that will enable them to deal constructively with their guilt. A daily private devotional time with the Lord would certainly be an important first step.

Empathy

As the youth leader listens to the youth, he or she can also share personal feelings and experiences that will communicate empathy and understanding.

Faith

In building a supportive relationship, the dynamics of faith and prayer should always be felt and experienced within the relationship. The youth group has its own experience of faith and worship and prayer, in which the youth leader participates. In a one-to-one relationship, the utilization of devotional resources, particularly the Scriptures, the expressions of personal faith, and the shared experiences of prayer can undergird the supportive relationship between leader and youth.

Counseling contexts and models

Youth groups and small group experiences

The youth-group or small-group experience can serve to meet some of the counseling needs of the youth. Select a program theme for the small group that will focus on a particular concern such as role definition, conversion, peer relationships, family relationships, marriage, separation, divorce, death, value, clarification, or special social problems such as drug abuse, running away, etc. The role of the youth leader in a small group that deals with a counseling need can be that of a moderator. As such, the moderator focuses attention on the interpersonal relationships within the group, intervening only when necessary and calling attention to the interactions between persons that he or she feels were significant. In the context of a small group dealing with a counseling need, the role of the youth members may be varied. Some of the persons within the group can prepare and bring input material to the group that they have gathered from research. Various relationship exercises, games, and role-plays can be used to illustrate a problem, and sharing in pairs or trios can become important moments of relating feelings and building up the trust level of the group.

A small group might be formed to address a particular counseling concern of young people with a similar need. Many constructive things can happen to such groups when others are sharing similar problems and feelings, especially when they are of broken family relationships.

Individual counseling

Most counseling that is done with youth is of a short-term nature. Very often a youth will come to an adult with a specific problem that needs immediate attention. At times, though, the problem is symptomatic of deeper, interpersonal conflicts, one that requires a longer period of time to talk through and to work on. Again, some caution is needed as to when the adult should suggest referral. When the youth leader refers a young person to talk with another counseling professional, a supportive relationship should first have been built so that referral will not be viewed by the youth as rejection, but rather as a further step in his or her growth and maturation. In developing supportive relationships with young people, the youth leader also needs to communicate that talking to a counselor is not a sign of weakness.

The sooner they are able to recognize problems, conflicts, and needs within their own lives and deal with them constructively, perhaps with the help of a professional counselor, the sooner they will be acting maturely out of their strengths, not their weaknesses. When short-term counseling is required, a regular time each week should be planned and various techniques of counseling employed within a consistent counseling framework.

Family counseling

If young persons find themselves in family conflicts that cannot be resolved, then family counseling may be possible. The youth leader is in a unique position here. If, as we have suggested, supportive relationships have been built with both the parents and youth, the youth leader is in a position to work with a family as a group in seeking constructive solutions to conflicts that may hinder their relationships. The youth leader has already been seen as a person to be trusted by members of the family and can build on his or her rapport in the family-counseling process.

Counseling parents

The youth leader will be approached from time to time by parents who are having relational conflicts or are simply concerned about their children. Again, if the youth leader has sought to build supportive relationships all along, it makes it much more appropriate and non-threatening for a parent to come to him or her with problems. In counseling with parents it is important that parent confidences are not revealed to the youth or youth confidences revealed to the parents. Counseling with parents may be a short-term proposition in which it will take three to six weeks to work through a given interpersonal conflict. Very often, however, counseling with parents is a single-meeting situation at a meal or in the home in which they seek to talk through and share feelings with another adult who knows their child. Such counseling sessions offer a very good opportunity for the parents to express their observations of their teenager to a person who knows their teenagers well. It can be a growing process, not only from the standpoint of the parents' understanding of themselves but also of their understanding of their child through the eyes of another adult. Counseling with the parents provides many clues to the youth leader in understanding the behavior of a teenager when placed in a youth group setting.

Making contact

The following suggestions are made to assist youth leaders in structuring opportunities for themselves to develop supportive relationships and trust levels with youth and adults.

Have lunch with youth and parents. As the youth leader has time, it is very helpful to get into a one-on-one situation of being able to talk privately with parents and youth. Taking another person to lunch increases their feelings of self-worth and importance, and it allows for a closer relationship to be built.

Social activities. Other chance meetings for contacts that are significant are to be found in social activities where those casual contacts can do much to build rapport between the youth leaders and youth or their parents.

Potential problems

Transference. The youth leader should also be concerned about transference in the relationships so that he or she is able to handle it and understands its effects on counseling relationships. Transference may occur when parents who are relating to a youth leader or other counselor transfer a feeling they have for their teenager to the counselor. It may also occur when teenagers transfer their feelings for their parents to the youth leader. While the youth worker can allow some transference in order to build a supportive relationship, it should be carefully observed, and a dependent relationship should not be established so that the youth or parent becomes dependent on the youth leader or counselor for their own understanding of themselves and others.

Opposite sex relationships. A word of caution is necessary here, too. Youth leaders and others who counsel with youth or parents must be very careful in developing supportive relationships with those of the opposite sex. Feelings of compassion and caring may often be misunderstood in terms of their sexual dynamics. Transference can engulf the counselor or counselee into dependent relationships with sexual dimensions that are unhealthy and absolutely unadvisable. In this regard, then, it becomes much wiser for men to develop informal contacts and develop strong supportive relationships with males in the group, and for women to do the same with young females.

Collaboration with other professionals

The youth leader needs to develop strong professional ties with other supportive adults who can help in the counseling of youth and thus broaden the perspectives of the youth leader. It is strongly suggested that youth leaders should find professionals with whom to share feelings that grow out of counseling situations and whom they will find supportive in the growing responsibilities of youth counseling. The youth leader may find the pastor to be a sounding post for the feelings and the supportive relationships the youth leader is seeking to build. The pastor should seek out competent individuals such as Christian psychologists or pastoral counselors with whom to share feelings and from whom he or she can get some supervision in the context of pastoral counseling. Other counseling professionals are valuable resources for helping the counseling processes.

Techniques in individual counseling

Again, it is impossible to delineate the various techniques from the various schools of thought, and we would not want an untrained person who has not had special clinical experience in therapy to utilize many of the techniques. However, there are some important sources for the lay person working with youth. We want to emphasize three.

Biblio-therapy

Once a supportive relationship is built (utilizing the dynamics discussed earlier), the youth leader may suggest a number of excellent books for the youth to read during the counseling process. Very often a young person will come to an adult and not particularly want to talk, but would like to read something about a specific concern or problem. Utilizing the reading within the context of a supportive relationship and ongoing counseling is called biblio-therapy. First of all, youth leaders should be very familiar with the Bible as a devotional and instructional resource so that they can recommend constructive passages of Scripture for a person with particular concerns. However, it is most detrimental for a counselor to simply say "Well, read the Bible, it has the answer to all of our problems." When this happens, no mention is made of where those answers are to be found or how they are to be interpreted and applied.

By having a full knowledge of Scripture, the youth leader can recommend planned reading of passages pertinent to a particular need and then structure opportunities for sharing what is read. The youth leader should also keep a supply of Spirit of Prophecy paperbacks such as *Steps to Christ* or *Desire of Ages* to give or loan to young people.

Freewriting

Another technique for counseling is free writing. A young person may not feel comfortable in talking about concerns or may find that problems come at times when he or she cannot get in touch with a counselor. When the counselor can be contacted, he or she can instruct the youth to write out the feelings that need to be worked through. This free writing may be done in prose or poetry and may be kept to share with the youth leader or thrown away. It will have served its purpose simply through catharsis. If shared, free writing can give the youth leader deep insights into the young person's thoughts.

Role-playing

Finally, there is the technique of role-playing. Role-playing can be as imaginative and creative as desired. It can be constructed as teaching devices by the youth leader or real-life experiences that youth have had and want to cope with. In role-playing, two approaches can be taken. First, the role of each person can be well defined and the behavior described. Once each person knows his or her role, he or she then acts out the situation with the other players.

Second, a role-play is simply given to participants in terms of situation. The "actors" or players construct their own roles from their own personalities. The most important part of the role-play comes in the debriefing process at the conclusion of the activity. The players and other members of the youth group discuss what has taken place and the feelings expressed and felt. Role-playing in

the one-on-one counseling situation is also helpful in planning out constructive behaviors and responses for future interpersonal relationships.

Settings for supportive relationships in counseling

Most of the group counseling processes we have described can take place in youth meetings such as Sabbath school classes, weekday meetings, senior youth camps, or retreat settings. Much interpersonal group growth can occur in a retreat setting, where the persons are isolated from everyday routine and can deal with their own feelings and interpersonal behaviors. Much preventive counseling can be done through educational programming in the youth group that takes seriously people's feelings, their identity crises, their faith stances and value conflicts, and the crisis situations that have occurred or may occur in their adolescent years. We feel that a young person who has discussed and worked through personal feelings toward death, marriage, conversion, etc. in the context of a youth group can better cope with these feelings as they recur in crisis situations.

It is our hope that as youth programs are designed, plans will be developed for counseling opportunities, which are inherent in youth ministry.

Help youth to discover themselves

We should remember that the youth have their own personalities and ways of thinking. Our work consists of helping those who need counsel so they may discover their potential and make wise decisions.

Secrets of success

- Do not expect simple solutions to the problems of youth.
- Do not speak of "those good times" when you were young.
- Do not try to compare the group of young people with the group of youth with whom you grew up.
- Do not take a strong position for or against the problems of the youth.
- Do not limit your work to adolescents only.
- Do not try to be on the same level with the youth; what they want from their leaders is understanding, affection, help, and direction as a role model.
- Do not permit your program to be dictated by little groups of youth or leaders.
- Do not allow a small group of youth to destroy your program.
- Do not blame the parents when the youth do not attend the meetings.

- Do not make promises you cannot fulfill or plans you cannot adequately carry out.
- Do not expect too much of the youth.

Ministering to Senior Youth Singles

One of the biggest factors that draws senior youth to church is the social atmosphere. Church for them is a place where they can meet, connect, and network with other young people. For young singles, this networking is more crucial than for couples or those who have significant family connections in the church. Being single, for some, extends beyond not having a special friend of the opposite sex. Some singles are alone in other aspects—they're new to the area, they haven't accumulated many friends or acquaintances, their family lives in another state. Although the church is not a dating service, what better place for Seventh-day Adventist Christian young people to meet other young people who hold the same religious beliefs and ideas?

What often happens is that not enough programs hold the interest of young singles and also contain the necessary spiritual emphasis to help root and ground them in their faith. I could fill this chapter with numerous statistics and philosophical information, but none of that will assist you in ministering to this special group. You will probably find most of the information in the other chapters of this book. The first step is to find out what young singles want from the church, how they define church. Once we understand what these young people are really searching for, we will explore solutions for a positive, effective ministry.

Worship

What is worship?

A clear understanding of the concept of worship and its true meaning is essential in Senior Youth Ministry. The church's youth organization must help members in general and youth in particular to understand this important facet of their Christian experience.

The Bible exhorts us to worship the Lord "In the beauty of His holiness," and a clear understanding of this will make the act of worship more meaningful to all.

Psalms 29 is a good illustration of what real worship is all about. Real worship is the act of admiring God, what He has done, and what He will do. True admiration of God and His deeds will cause us to come before Him in awe and reverence, eager to identify with such a God. This takes away the feeling of "doing my own thing" or following "feelings" during worship. Not understanding what worship really means can cause worshipers to find substitute gods and substitute practices. Worship is more than getting information from the Bible. For lack of worship, some congregations turn to being mere Bible information centers where much

biblical information is given, but real worship is not fostered, “Where People come with empty notebooks and go home with full ones” (Up With Worship, by Anne Ortlund, p. 34). In some places, the church tends to become a center where people come together to fellowship, praise, and feel as if they are “in the family.” Some congregations, for lack of worship spirit, become a social welfare center where the poor can come for a bite to eat.

All these are good things to do, but they were never intended to replace true worship, which is a time for the contemplation, admiration, and recognition of the greatness of God.

The meaning of worship

“O worship the Lord in the beauty of Holiness, Bow down before Him. . . the Lord is His name . . . O Worship the Lord,” (*Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal*, p. 6). What a magnificent invitation to worship. In a world that worships anything and anyone, here is a call to worship God, the Creator and Redeemer.

Scripture insists that God is to be the recipient of man’s worship. “Worship God!” is the command of Revelation 19:10. “Exalt the Lord our God and worship at his holy mountain. . .” is the call of Psalm 99:9, NIV.

What does the word mean? According to research, the English word worship, a contraction of worthship, comes from the Anglo-Saxon word weorthscipe. It is concerned with the worthiness, dignity, or merit of a person. Hence, worship arises out of a sense of the worthiness of God.

Christian worshipers will especially recognize the worthiness of God through His salvation act in Jesus. Paul wrote:

Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. —Phil. 2:9-11, NIV

It is through a salvation relationship with Jesus that man enters into worship with God. Because of Jesus’ ministry, we are invited to come boldly into the presence of God. When we enjoy the gifts of God, recognize His great mercy, and see how He loves to have us spend time in contemplation of His love to us, we will worship Him.

Let’s remember that authentic worship means that not only will words and thoughts be directed to God, but they will be about God. Because God is the object of worship, any reference to the individual will be incidental (see Rev.5:9). If we set out to worship God, we won’t put ourselves at the center.

Prayer that is limited to asking for something from God isn't really praise and worship—not in the real sense of the word. Genuine worship happens when we recognize the greatness and power of God, and we bow in awe and reverence. However, when we do that, it's not a very big step to the place where we recognize our need of Him and call on Him. It's what we must do. He asks us to do it. But genuine worship will still mean that when we recognize our need, we concentrate on Him and His ability and desire to help us, rather than on all our sorrows or wishes!

Preparing for worship

A popular saying is, "You get out of church what you bring to church." This is a great truth that applies directly to the matter of worship. To worship God in the real meaning of the word, one must prepare one's self before coming to the place of worship.

No one can "worship for us," and no one else's experience will suffice for my need of worship.

Church can be so attractive and interesting to others, but be boring to me because I am not prepared. The hymns, sermon, and prayers can be very inspiring and helpful to others, while I am not being touched. All of these can take me to the fountain, but I must decide to drink.

Two basic factors in experiencing meaningful worship are:

- Confession
- Reconciliation

Un-confessed sins make us unworthy of appearing in His courts to worship. Peter speaks of the blessing that can be received by confessing our sins when he says, "*Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord*" (Acts 3:19).

Repentance and confession are essential in preparing for worship, for only thus can we approach the holy God whom we have come to worship. Confession opens the heart to the influence of the Holy Spirit, and helps the worshiper to be more aware of God's presence.

Reconciliation is another important aspect in preparation for worship. Jesus Himself gave the instruction to reconcile our differences before the worship experience can be fully lived.

Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.
—Matt. 5:23, 24

This advice is timeless and, if accepted, will foster the spirit of love, peace, and harmony, which are characteristics of the true worship experience.

“Mutual love and confidence must be encouraged and strengthened in the members of the church. Let all, in the fear of God and with love to their brethren, close their ears to gossip and censure.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 609)

Worship implies giving

We give because we love, because we admire, and because we want to be identified with the gift or the receiver. The act of worship, to be complete, must have the element of giving.

We are exhorted to “bring an offering” (Ps. 96:8) unto the Lord as we worship Him. Above all the offerings that we can bring, none is as important as the gift of self.

The Hebrew people thought of replacing the gift of self with the gift of things and splendor. Of this Ellen White says:

“The glory of the first temple, the splendor of its service, could not recommend them to God, for that which is alone of value in His sight, they did not offer. They did not bring Him the sacrifice of a humble and contrite spirit. It is when the vital principles of the kingdom of God are lost sight of, that ceremonies become multitudinous and extravagant.”
(*Prophets and Kings*, p. 565)

The best offering that we can bring, therefore, is the offering of self, recognizing that love demands total giving. My love for my Maker will make me give myself to Him in worship and thus let Him fill and take control of me. Such an attitude will definitely enhance our personal worship, not only in the sanctuary but also in our private devotional lives.

Church moves together

Contrary to popular belief, there is no church of tomorrow, no church of yesterday, only a church of today, where young and old come together to worship and serve the Lord. The history of Israel during the Exodus offers a good illustration. Young and old, man and woman, even different cultures were marching together; they left Egypt together and reached Canaan together. Togetherness is the key in worship.

Order

Order and information are essential. Everyone involved in the service should be aware of what is going on. To avoid confusion and distraction, the pastor or the one leading should inform all worship participants of the order of the service.

The same applies to the youth meeting, which should be understood as another form of worship. All involved should be informed of the sequence of the program in order to make it flow smoothly.

Attendance

Paul's admonition in Hebrews 10:25 is applicable to all church members: "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."

Part of our responsibility as senior youth leaders is to help the young understand that whenever the church doors are open, an opportunity to worship is presented, and all must take advantage of this.

In many places there are several basic meetings with opportunity to worship, for example: Sabbath school, worship (or divine service), evangelistic meetings, and prayer meeting. Senior youth should be encouraged to attend these programs.

Growing In Nurture

The ultimate goal of nurturing

The ultimate question in life is "What must I do be saved?" The ultimate answer is "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved." The ultimate goal in the ministry of nurturing our youth (and everyone else) is to lead them to ask the ultimate question and to find the ultimate answer. Only in Christ will any individual find satisfying nourishment and growth.

The nurturing church will understand that its duty is not done when the nominating committee or church board has appointed a youth leader to care for the young people. Youth need to perceive themselves as an integral part of every facet of church life. This will include the worship service, Sabbath school, business operations, maintenance, outreach, social life, and participation in decision-making bodies within the circle of church life.

Only by fostering a sense of belonging and acceptance will growth take place. To provide such a climate is the responsibility of every member of the body of Christ.

Encouragement: The key to nurturing!

Some youth struggle with feelings of inferiority and insecurity. Many are troubled with a poor self-image. Life's experiences bring many knocks along the way, and this feeds their feelings of worthlessness and rejection.

Within the confines of the church family every youth should sense a feeling of worth—of knowing love and acceptance. Instead of words of censure, the young should hear words of encouragement. No greater ministry can be given than the ministry of encouragement.

Encouragement and affirmation build lives. A lot of growth can happen in an environment filled with encouraging sentiments. "You can do it!" "You did well!" "I'm glad you're part of the group!" This takes little effort to say, but achieves remarkable results.

As spiritual life wanes and apathy sets in, we are often inclined to counter with upbeat programming and calls for greater commitment. While good programming and calls for commitment have their place, could it be that the real need would be met more effectively by seeking God's strength to provide a loving, caring, encouraging climate in which to function?

It has been said that "sticks and stones will break your bones, but names will never hurt you." How untrue this really is. There is destructive power in the tongue. The Bible says "death and life are in the power of the tongue" (Prov. 18:21). What we say also has tremendous healing power (Prov. 16:24) and is able to lift one above the besetments of daily life (see Prov. 25:11).

An imperative to nurture and growth is a knowledge of truth. Adventist youth need to be challenged with the great truths of the Bible. However, truth may be presented as nothing more than sets of principles and values. Jesus said, "I am the truth"—person oriented, relationship-oriented. Principles of truth and right values come alive to a youthful mind when they are part of a relationship-building model.

Sabbath School

Sabbath School plays a vital role in the process of nurturing Adventist youth. The youth Sabbath School has great potential in that it involves regular study of the Word, mission awareness, worship, and fellowship. Of all Adventist religious practices, none has a greater unifying and stabilizing effect than does the Sabbath School when rightly conducted. Basic Sabbath School objectives should include: worship, outreach, nurture, fellowship, and stewardship.

Scripture

Scripture—the study of God's Word—this is the heart of the youth Sabbath School, and the time for it should not be shortchanged (allow at least 30 minutes). The

Sabbath School lesson theme should be relevant to the needs of the Sabbath School class members. The effective teacher will reinforce the relevance and integrity of Scripture.

The youth Sabbath School should be divided into small classes for good lesson discussion. This is a sharing time where the youth interact socially and spiritually as a group in studying the Scriptures and discussing what it means to them. The class may wish to have a youth teacher and an older counselor whose task is to support the teacher or to help guide discussion so that it remains relevant to the lesson and needs of the group.

Worship

The youth Sabbath School offers a unique opportunity for group participation in praise, testimony, prayer, and music. Praise and music often are considered to be one and the same. However, praise can also include such things as poetry and responsive reading. Praise and music involve both group and individual participation.

Music and lively singing in the youth Sabbath School should be given top priority. Youth with musical abilities should be encouraged to use their talents by participating in special music either as soloists or as members of small groups such as duets, trios, and quartets. Group singing should be lively and a selection of modern Scripture songs should be included.

Testimony time allows each person the freedom to express what is happening in his or her life and to request prayer for specific needs. Prayer time is supportive intercession for each member and for our work at large.

This time of worship and fellowship in praise should be varied from week to week by introducing new features, which may even take place at a different time during the service. For example, rather than the traditional opening "song service," begin with a Bible quiz. The emphasis should be on creativity, open and informal expression, and involvement of as many youth as possible.

Nurture through giving

There is a need for youth to realize that they are a part of a world church. The Sabbath school offerings support world missions, and youth should be encouraged to be faithful in this gift to the Lord.

Creative methods should be used to make the mission emphasis presentation interesting. Each month, Mission Spotlight and videos supply an audio-visual description of the mission field featured for the quarter. Firsthand accounts from visitors to the area, returned missionaries, or former student missionaries have great appeal. Special items and displays from the countries involved are always

appreciated. Exchanging letters with young people overseas who live in the area where the thirteenth Sabbath offering overflow is to be sent will help spur an interest in giving.

There are five Sabbath School offerings that are scheduled on a continual basis:

- The twelve weekly offerings for missions received during each quarter are the main supply line of the mission budget of our church.
- The thirteenth Sabbath offering provides for special projects of great need and appeals to church members to help establish lasting monuments to the work of God. The special quarterly projects are featured on the back page of the *Sabbath School Lesson Quarterly* and should be kept before the attention of the young people throughout the quarter in anticipation of a thirteenth Sabbath gift.
- Sabbath School investment has provided countless demonstrations to individual members as to the joy that can be experienced in partnership with God. Watching God multiply the object of stewardship is an exciting experience for each committed Investment donor. Here is a venture in faith that will give the youth something to share.
- Birthday thank offerings express gratitude in a tangible way for the preservation of the giver's life and tend to remind us that our spiritual birth is also important. For young people this offering gives emphasis to the fact that "in Him we live, and move, and have our being." The presentation of this offering should be an occasion for thanksgiving and rededication. For these gifts, passing the offering plate in a routine manner should be avoided.
- Sabbath school expense offering, unless the church is on the combined budget plan, stays in the local Sabbath school to help purchase needed supplies such as quarterlies, offering envelopes, etc. It is an opportunity for the youth to share in the responsibility of finance and to show their appreciation for the fine materials and facilities available to them.

The ministry of giving provides youth the opportunity for growth by involvement and experience. It also gives them a way to respond to their sense of concern for the needs and spiritual welfare of others.

Fellowship

There is a social interaction and fellowship in a youth meeting because the youth share similar beliefs. Here they can participate in discussion and sharing of ideas and values.

Much of the emphasis in youth groups is on fellowship within the peer group. This naturally develops into more intimate relationships within the group as members become older. The youth should be encouraged to meet together in group social activities such as a picnic or a party where people can fellowship together in an informal atmosphere.

Fellowship groups of two or three members should be encouraged. During the youth meeting, take a few minutes to have the young people divide into groups of two or three. Have each group plan an event for that group only—something they can do in an evening or on a Sunday afternoon. Activities such as a special dinner, participating in a sports event, having a picnic, or going on a hike are examples of things to do. The event is less important than the time together. Repeat this from time to time, but have the young people form different groups so members get better acquainted with one another. This type of activity provides youth the opportunity to meet all the group members on a personal level and to develop a caring relationship and skills in communication. It will also help develop a sense of accountability as members share one another's concerns and pray together.

Outreach possibilities

When having a SYM meeting, notice who is missing and who is visiting. The leader must take care to find out why members are away, to check on prospective members, and to develop a fellowship of caring among the youth. Friendship teams can visit sick or absent persons to encourage them and show genuine concern for their needs.

Visitors attending youth meetings should be invited to the next youth social. As a prospective member becomes comfortable with the group, the invitation should be extended to other activities.

Ten minutes should be spent each week in discussing and planning for outreach. This provides local youth direct involvement in their community. Outreach plans developed through the Senior Youth Ministries committee are presented during this time and may include the following:

- Evangelistic series
- Friendship evangelism
- Evangelistic small groups
- Public evangelism
- Prison, hospital, or elderly home visitation
- Helping conduct a branch Sabbath School
- Local or conference wide camps
- Reclamation ministries
- Religious musicals or concerts
- Socials, seminars, training

- Getting involved in junior youth ministry
- Café churches, special services

During this outreach planning time, try to develop a fellowship of concern with emphasis on winning back former senior youth, encouraging visitors to become members and praying for one another. Although ten minutes is not adequate time for any detailed planning, this is the time when those youth who may not be coming to other youth meetings in the church can be exposed to the total youth program and be invited to become part of the ongoing activities.

Celebrating in Worship

Attitude

One writer suggests that praise tends to be more concerned with God's "presents," while worship is more concerned with God's "presence." While the energy of praise is toward what God does, the energy of worship is toward who God is. This author writes, "Praise is the vehicle of expression that brings us into God's presence, but worship is what we do once we gain entrance to that presence" (Cornwall, *Let Us Worship*, p. 151). That's an idea worth thinking about! It highlights the fact that God is at the center of true worship. Praising God for His acts has the risk of concentrating on the acts to the degree that God is forgotten, and man, the recipient of the acts, moves into the center. Any undue emphasis on the worshiper endangers authentic worship. In today's world, which is so influenced by the media, one must constantly be on guard that performance does not overshadow true worship. There is a fallacy in the philosophy that we often hear expressed by well-meaning youth leaders, especially in the area of music, that we have to give the young people what they want. Our goal should ever be to lift young people to a better lifestyle and more elevated tastes. At Baal Peur it was heathen music that helped bewitch the young Israelites and kept them out of Canaan.

True worship will not be some kind of casual thing to be taken or left at will. It needs to be seen as something of a privilege, something unique and special. It demands thought, planning, and effort, but the rewards will be well worth it.

Action

The most common word used in the New Testament for worship is *proskuneo*, literally meaning "to kiss towards." The meanings given to the word include "fall down and worship, do obeisance to, prostrate oneself before, do reverence to, welcome respectfully, depending on the object." The word is used to denote the custom of prostrating oneself before a person and kissing his feet, the hem of his garment, or the ground. It is used of Jesus, who is revered and worshiped as Messiah King and Divine Helper.

Worship is therefore an attitude that is expressed in action. It demands some kind

of response. It is a recognition of being in the presence of One greater than the worshiper. True worship will therefore be an activity! It can never be some kind of spectator sport! J. Robert Spangler wrote that “more and more the members [of the church] are becoming spectators. The church is rapidly becoming a theater in which the performers do their part” (Ministry, November 1980, p. 23). But worship can’t be something you just sit and watch! It’s something you have to do! It’s an action, and it has to be yours. In this action or celebration of worship, however, care must be exercised to keep all responses pure and orderly.

Investment

Dynamic worship will demand an investment by worshipers. They need to “buy into” the worship event. Worship requires an investment of self, of energy, time, and concentration. True worship is maintained at the cost of much thought, feeling, prayer, and involvement.

Ownership

The fact that worship is a communication event with God suggests the need for personal responsibility for the event. It has to be “owned.” True worship isn’t something done for you, or something that floats past you in some fashion. It has to be personally expressed. It is something that you give to God, and no one can do it for you. No one can say they have worshiped if they have only observed someone praying, singing, or reading the Word. They need to take these expressions of praise and make them their own. You can’t worship by “proxy.”

Problems preventing adequate worship

Even though people basically would like to worship, there are a few things that can affect worship negatively.

Inadequate theology of worship

A wrong concept of worship will naturally mean ineffective worship. The most common mistake is to see worship as an activity from which we “get” something, rather than somebody to whom we “give.” How many times have you heard somebody say, “Well, I didn’t get much out of worship today.” That was probably because they went to get something, rather than to give of themselves. We need to “give” our worship to God. That means that, as worship leaders, we need to design our worship events so that youth can do that. We need to provide time during the event that allows the youth to sit and give of their thoughts to God—their praise and adoration.

Another problem in this area is having a wrong concept of God. If we see God as a harsh judge, or as some kind of distant “power,” our worship may well be stilted and inappropriate.

A limited approach to content

Any worship event that is primarily designed as “information” may well fall short of its potential. True worship will not be just a transfer of information, but it will be a time of “communication.” Time spent in God’s presence needs to be a time for communication, and if it’s just information for information’s sake, you may leave your group cold!

What about?**Special Services**

A marvelous idea, and a necessity! Having a special youth service helps draw attention to the needs of the youth, as well as to their unique gifts and abilities in ministry in the church. Put special time into this. Use this occasion to celebrate God’s gifts, especially the gift of His Son. Call on all the abilities of your youth, and design a worship event that suits their gifts and talents. Make use of interviews, videos, slides, cassette recordings, symbols, skits, and anything else you can imagine! A service that highlights such themes as mercy, grace, and forgiveness are also well worth special thought.

You can design special church services that highlight unique times and events in history, or center on contemporary youth issues and concerns. Plan a youth service that highlights the senior members of the congregation! A “service” that highlights the “service” of youth to the community will be a real “service” to the members of the church!

Music

Music is such a key to anything worthwhile! Music has the ability to carry people along and take them in a certain direction. Music is for moods, for atmosphere, and has much to do with valuable worship times. While we use music for singing, taking up the offering, and leaving the church, we often fail to use it when it could really enhance our worship—quietly during prayer, announcements, and Scripture reading, for example. The next time you have a youth service, don’t be afraid to ask your organist to play during these special times. Ask him or her to play quietly, to be sensitive to each particular event, and then watch the results.

When you decide to do some singing, give thought to the order of your songs, as well as to which particular songs you are going to sing. The order is important. Start off with a hymn or song that’s not too loud and not too soft. Then, build up with each song being a little more exuberant than the previous one. Finish your singing time with a very happy, high-praise song. Then, sing a very quiet, meditative number with little background music. Follow this with prayer, which may come best unannounced. You will find that your group is quiet and ready to continue in their worship of God.

Preliminaries

When we see the welcome, prayer, offering, and special item as preliminaries, we miss their significance. A preliminary event is usually regarded as the one prior to the main event, and worshipers tend to straggle in during this time. But this must not be so when considering worship. All the aspects of worship are important. So plan well for each of them. Make the prayer a special time, using background music, for example. Suggest that the people pray together in their seats as families or as couples, or that each person pray with the person nearest him or her. Provide a theme for prayer. Have your youth pray together in small groups.

Give a lot of thought to the special item, and try to ensure that the congregation will be able to relate to it enough to enjoy it. Sometimes the value of special music presented by youth is lost because the singer or musician is a little too far away from the majority of listeners, or they have to put too much energy into dealing with the style of the song and have nothing left over to work with its message!

Worship!

It's an aspect of life for the Christian that needs more thought and study. Why not take your youth on a special retreat and invite them to grapple with the many issues that accompany this component of life and ministry?

Senior Youth Spiritual Growth

"The sentence 'Jesus and I are friends' contains the secret of the Christian life, and every Christian has the privilege of finding Jesus as a real, personal friend." This claim, made by pioneer youth writer, Matilda Erickson-Andross, and recorded in the devotional book *Alone With God* (p. 44.), is still as true as when it was first penned in 1917. It is a sure secret of success in the Christian life and echoes the teachings of the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy. Many of Paul's epistles are punctuated with the expression "in Christ," which shows the intimate relationship there is to be between Jesus and His people. It is the privilege of young people everywhere to have a friendship with Jesus that will enable them to have a balanced philosophy of life, to enjoy an abundant life now, and to have the hope of eternal life.

Senior youth leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church at all levels of administration need to know Jesus as a friend and as their personal Savior before they can successfully engage in youth ministry. The highest goal of any youth leader is to lead our youth into a love relationship with Jesus and then to inspire and train them for Christian service. Often leaders are so busy conducting programs that they neglect personal prayer. Martin Luther once said that he had so much to do that it would be necessary for him to spend two or three hours in prayer in order to accomplish all that needed to be done. Recognizing the need for divine guidance, leaders will continually be in the attitude of prayer. With God's help, they will make wise decisions based upon a true sense of life's priorities and will be able to accomplish all that needs to be done.

Prayer groups

The AYM committee of the local church is primarily a prayer group seeking the power of the Holy Spirit. One of the first messages from the Lord calling for the organization of Adventist young people linked the youth organization with a prayer group. This message was recorded in *The Youth's Instructor*, August 9, 1894: "Cannot you form a band of workers, and have set times to pray together and ask the Lord to give you His grace, and put forth united action?"

A youth organization for the young people of the church, as well as for non-church members, is doomed to fail its God-given task unless the young people of that organization are men and women of prayer and "have set times to pray together." The AYM committee of the church is not like a secular business, which operates without reliance on the Lord for guidance and direction in every detail.

"Let the worker for Christ remember that he is not to labor in his own strength. Let him lay hold of the throne of God with faith in His power to save. Let him wrestle with God in prayer, and then work with all the facilities God has given him. The Holy Spirit is provided as his efficiency. Ministering angels will be by his side to impress hearts." (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 232)

If this statement is taken seriously, the AYM committee and all other church committees that plan for youth activities will take time to pray for the youth and for power in youth ministry. The youth leader must bring the name of every youth in the church before the Lord in intercessory prayer constantly.

Discipling features

The AYM committee presents devotional features to help young people find Jesus as their personal Friend and Savior. Many of these, such as the *Morning Watch*, date back as far as 1907-1908 and have proved to be relevant in every generation. Other devotional features have been added over the years. Some have stood the test of time; others have been abandoned. In these last days it is appropriate to emphasize devotional features so the faith of the youth will be strengthened and they will be able to witness for the Master. World conditions, social pressures, Laodicean lukewarmness, and "the cares of this life" can be encountered triumphantly only by those whose trust is in the Lord. "If Christ is in the heart, the enemy cannot defeat us, but if Christ is not in, we cannot defeat the enemy" (Eickson-Andross, *The Life That Wins*, p. 24).

Morning watch

The *Morning Watch* is our appointment with our Friend and Savior. As surely as God called Moses to meet Him on the mountain, so He wishes to meet every youth and every youth leader in the secret place of prayer.

The morning watch period needs to be undisturbed. Jesus gave the first instruction concerning this time: “But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you” (Matthew 6:6).

From the teachings and examples of the Lord Jesus, it seems that there can be three definite parts to the *Morning Watch* plan: (1) Prayer, (2) Bible study, and (3) Meditation.

Bible study is the practical link in the *Morning Watch*. Without it, prayer may become formal and meditation may drift into vague dreaming. It is also good during the morning watch period to memorize the text for the day or another portion of Scripture.

To assist with the *Morning Watch* devotional plan, the GC Youth Ministries website has PDFs online for you to download. These have proved to be a valuable aid to the devotional life. In many homes the *Morning Watch* plan is read for family worship or private devotions. However, even when following the *Morning Watch* plan, one still needs additional time to study God’s Word, to meditate, and to pray for the Lord’s guidance throughout the day. This is following Christ’s example, who daily surrendered His will to His heavenly Father. Through inspiration, the divine counsel is given:

“Consecrate yourself to God in the morning; make this your very first work. Let your prayer be, ‘Take me, O Lord, as wholly Thine. I lay all my plans at Thy feet. Use me today in Thy service. Abide with me, and let all my work be wrought in Thee.’ This is a daily matter. Each morning consecrate yourself to God for that day. Surrender all your plans to Him, to be carried out or given up as His providence shall indicate. Thus day by day you may be giving your life into the hands of God, and thus your life will be molded more and more after the life of Christ” (*Steps to Christ*, p. 70).

Bible reading plan

Systematically reading the Bible is another devotional feature that dates back to the very beginnings of our youth organization. Names of the plans have changed over the years, but the basic principle of reading the Bible only, or reading it along with Spirit of Prophecy books, has remained unchanged. When we remember that “None but those who have fortified the mind with the truths of the Bible will stand through the last great conflict” (*The Great Controversy*, pp. 593, 594), we realize the vital importance of this devotional feature. Some check lists and plans available through the conference/mission youth departments are as follows:

Senior Bible reading check list

This plan gives Bible-reading assignments for senior youth for each day in the year.

Junior Bible reading check list

Bible-reading assignments for junior youth for each day of the year are listed in this leaflet.

Day-by-day reading plan

This plan correlates reading the Bible and *Messages to Young People*.

Encounter

Four AYM leaflets constitute the reading plan. Encounter correlates reading through the Bible and all the books of the Conflict of the Ages series over a period of four years. These are all available online at the GC Youth Ministries website. A brief summary of the plan is listed below:

Series 1: The Bible and *The Desire of Ages*

Series 2: The Bible, *The Acts of the Apostles*, and *The Great Controversy*

Series 3: The Bible and *Patriarchs and Prophets*

Series 4: The Bible and *Prophets and Kings*

The AY legion of honor

Applicable in some divisions today, the AY Legion of Honor is a code to which Adventist youth can voluntarily subscribe, and thus pledge to answer Christ's call and honor Him as they agree to live by the lofty standards of the following covenant:

I volunteer now to join the AY LEGION OF HONOR and by the grace and power of God I will:

HONOR CHRIST in that which I choose to BEHOLD.

HONOR CHRIST in that to which I choose to LISTEN.

HONOR CHRIST in the choice of places to which I GO.

HONOR CHRIST in the choice of ASSOCIATES.

HONOR CHRIST in that which I choose to SPEAK.

HONOR CHRIST in the care I give my BODY TEMPLE.

The AY Legion of Honor, a plan adopted by a standing vote of all the delegates present, was introduced at the 1953 Annual Council by the Youth Advisory Council, a group that senses anew the value of the following statement from the pen of Ellen White.

“Say firmly: ‘I will not spend precious moments in reading that which will be of no profit to me, and which only unfits me to be of service to

others. I will devote my time and my thoughts to acquiring a fitness for God's service. I will close my eyes to frivolous and sinful things. My ears are the Lord's, and I will not listen to the subtle reasoning of the enemy. My voice shall not in any way be subject to a will that is not under the influence of the Spirit of God. My body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, and every power of my being shall be consecrated to worthy pursuits" (*Messages to Young People*, p. 270).

Heritage of truth

This course in Bible doctrines will help young people interested in sharing their faith to understand the cardinal teachings of the Bible. The book, *Bible Truths*, when studied in depth, has a threefold blessing for the reader. It inspires confidence in the Word of God, prepares the reader to give Bible studies, and also fulfills a requirement for the Master Guide course.

Church heritage

Two church heritage manuals, one for junior youth and one for senior youth, have been prepared as guides for those studying the church heritage courses. However, these courses are also devotional features, for the review of history inspires confidence in God's guidance in our lives. "We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history" (*Life Sketches*, p. 196).

Sabbath School lesson study

Through the daily systematic study of the Sabbath School lessons, young people can tremendously enrich their devotional lives. Subjects for study are carefully selected to build faith and equip the learner for service. The combination of Scripture and Spirit of Prophecy gives a comprehensive survey of the subject for the week.

Endorsed by Ellen White, the first Sabbath School lesson study for young people was written by James White and appeared in *The Youth's Instructor* of August, 1852. Since that time, Sabbath School lessons have been a continuing feature of the church's Bible study.

During Sabbath school, young people have the opportunity of discussing together the lesson studied during the week. This open exchange of thought and further study of Scripture and the Spirit of Prophecy builds faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and the triumph of the Advent cause.

Books and publications

Many books and some magazines designed for young people aid in the development of a strong devotional life. From the inspiration and information of good books and magazines, young people can find guidance on their way to the kingdom and in the paths of Christian service.

The AYM book club is a special feature of youth ministry, and all youth directors have the responsibility of promoting the reading of profitable books. The selections listed for the book club present a balanced literature diet including inspiration, doctrine, adventure, culture, geography, health, missions, nature, arts, history, travel, science, and invention.

Declaration of loyalty

It is God's plan that everyone who claims to be a Christian shall declare his loyalty to Christ. Paul records God's will on this matter as follows: "If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved" (Rom. 10:9).

Since expression deepens impression, the devotional life is strengthened when one confesses the Lord Jesus Christ in public. Personal testimonies also have a great effect in influencing others to accept the Lord Jesus. Those in charge of youth meetings need to provide opportunities for young people to declare their allegiance to the Lord Jesus. At one stage in the history of the Adventist youth organization it was stated that this part of the meeting was the "heart of the organization" and, "without the consecration service, the youth organization could not truly live." It may be well for us to drop the terminology "consecration service" and "testimony meeting" because of the connotations that come to the minds of some people when they think of such long services in the past. However, we must never fail to give opportunity for young people to declare their loyalty to Jesus Christ and His church.

Senior youth week of prayer

The Week of Prayer has become an integral part of the church program. Weeks of Prayer, as conducted in churches and schools, colleges and academies, bring tremendous spiritual revival to youth around the world. During these annual weeks many decisions are made for Christ, His service, the remnant church, and the kingdom of heaven. Most of us can vividly remember the spiritual glow that accompanies Weeks of Prayer, and we speak with enthusiasm about these devotional experiences.

It is interesting to note that although the Week of Prayer is a highlight in the church year, very little has been written on the subject. However, when we consider the influence of the Week of Prayer and the responsibility of those

conducting the services, it is evident that there needs to be study, prayer, and careful planning.

One of the most important objectives of a Week of Prayer for youth should be to lead them into a vital personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. See Section C of this handbook for steps to prepare.

Youth baptisms

Baptismal ceremonies may be celebrated at any point in the year. However, there are some conferences and unions that choose special days or events (such as camp meeting) in their annual calendar as assigned for youth baptisms or even under the commitment celebrations.

Commitment Celebration

Commitment celebration is a time when the church celebrates the faithfulness of its senior youth. It is no small matter to remain faithful in the times in which we now live. Every year when commitment celebration time comes around, the church helps its senior youth remember that is only by the grace of God and the strength of the Holy Spirit that they can remain faithful and committed.

Statistics suggest that there are thousands of Christian young people in the world who have never been invited to be baptized. Many young people in our local churches who are good Adventists have never been baptized. Is it possible that not even one person has explained to them personally the importance of baptism, or has invited them to make that decision?

Ancient Israel had their religious celebrations and high days, yet many times our baptisms are relegated to a few minutes between services.

A commitment celebration is a time when youth join the church by baptism and participate in a great celebration for the whole church family. For those already baptized, it can be a day of commemoration and rededication.

See Section C at the end of this handbook for some practical application ideas.

Bible Conferences

Bible conferences are special meetings that can be conducted in the form of a camp retreat or a day meeting. They are normally organized by the conference/mission youth ministry department with the support of local SYM leaders.

The objective of Bible conferences is to get participants together in one place for a concentrated study of specific parts of the Bible.

Bible conferences are a must in the senior youth leader's program every year. It is the time when we can help give answers to our youth through Bible study.

See Section C for some practical applications to make these possible.

Gold and Silver Awards

What a day to be alive! The day that could very well usher in the Second Coming of Jesus Christ! A day that makes heavy demands upon Christian youth who are constantly being tempted to lower their moral, physical, and spiritual standards. Young people of the church recognize the fact that their bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost, that their bodies and minds are to be used in loving service for God.

To help them attain a state of physical and mental strength that will enable them to endure the pressures of the day, a plan has been devised that offers them an opportunity to find satisfaction in worthwhile achievement. This is the Gold and Silver Awards plan.

The gold award is presented to senior youth under the age of 31 who are enrolled in a college or university, and who have demonstrated exceptional qualities of physical, mental, and cultural development. The silver award is presented to Christian youth of pre-college age who have demonstrated exceptional qualities of physical, mental, and cultural development.

Adventist youth have difficult tests ahead of them in the climactic hours of history. Only those youth who are firmly rooted and grounded in the Word of God and whose morals reflect the purity of the Lord will be able to stand. The Gold and Silver Awards have been established to help young people develop these strengths. Booklets available from the conference/mission youth director contain more specific information regarding these awards.

CHURCH COMMUNITY

The Emergence of a Global Youth Community, United in Small Groups and Bound to the Wider Church Community.

Our church can only truly be the church if it makes a difference in the community. The community should know that we follow Jesus not simply because we say so, but because it is self-evident by the way we live. So it is with Senior Youth Ministry; it too must be self-evident in all it does for making a difference in the kingdom of God.

Our Organization Genesis

Early in the history of Seventh-day Adventists, Sabbath School, first organized in 1852, offered a beginning toward making provision, organizationally, to care for the

spiritual development of children and youth. Social fellowship in the setting of religious instruction directed by persons appointed by the congregation encouraged youth to consider the Christian life. The first lessons prepared for youth appeared in *The Youth's Instructor*, a journal first published in 1852 by James White. These provided impetus to early Adventist youth ministry.

Repeated calls came through the writings of Ellen White to organize all the young people into an "army" to finish the task of carrying the Advent message to the world. She declared that "every youth, every child, has a work to do for the honor of God and uplifting of humanity" (*Education*, p.58).

Development

The first youth organization in a local Seventh-day Adventist church began in 1879 when Harry Fenner, age 16, and Luther Warren, age 14, organized meetings in Hazelton, Michigan. For boys only, the meetings were held in a small room of Luther's parents' home. The purpose of this first little band of youth was to promote missionary work, raise money for missionary literature, and further the cause of temperance.

Later, girls were invited to join, and the meetings were held in a large parlor in a private home with some of the adult family members present.

An interesting discovery concerning this first youth organization is that the idea, although conceived by the boys as they walked along a dusty missionary road, was actually spawned by the concern of the parents in the Hazelton church. The old church record books indicate that at a board meeting parents discussed how they could help their young people, and Brother Fenner and others were asked to encourage the boys and girls. We see here, early in our church history, the prophecy of Malachi 4 being fulfilled where the hearts of fathers were turned to their children and children's hearts turned to their parents.

A call from the Spirit of Prophecy for the church to do something for its youth was written from Melbourne, Australia, December 19, 1892. It read:

"We have an army of youth today who can do much if they are properly directed and encouraged. We want our children to believe the truth. We want them to be blessed of God. We want them to act a part in well-organized plans for helping other youth. Let all be so trained that they may rightly represent the truth, giving them reason of the hope that is within them, and honoring God in any branch of the work where they are qualified to labor." (*General Conference Bulletin*, January 29, 30, 1893, p. 24)

Ellen White had observed the Christian Endeavor Society and counseled,

“Let there be a company formed somewhat after the order of the Christian Endeavor Society, and see what can be done by each accountable human agent in watching for and improving opportunities to do work for the Master.” (Extracts From *Letters From Mrs. E. G. White Relative to Medical Missionary Work*, letter dated October 2, 1893)

In 1891 a youth society was organized in Antigo, Wisconsin, under the leadership of young Meade MacGuire, with the encouragement of the local elder who helped get a vote of approval from the local church board.

In 1893 the Young People's Society of Christian Service was organized in Lincoln, Nebraska to secure the increased spirituality of the young people, their enlistment in all missionary activity through existing channels of work, and their elevation to a higher plane of living and thinking.

In 1894 Sunshine Bands were organized by Luther Warren in South Dakota. A Sunshine Band convention was held in ridge water, South Dakota in 1896 and a small paper named Sunshine was published at Omaha in the interest of this activity.

At a meeting of Ohio Conference workers at Mount Vernon in April, 1899, Ohio became the first conference to organize young people's work officially.

In 1901 the youth of Sigourney organized in Iowa. Several of the group later went overseas as missionaries, one to Portugal and two to China. That same year a youth society was organized in Des Moines, and shortly thereafter the work expanded in Iowa until there were 14 societies with 186 young members.

In 1901 the General Conference took steps toward forming an official young people's organization, approving the youth society concept and recommending that a committee be set up to form a plan of organization. The Sabbath School Department, directed by Mrs. Flora Plummer, was asked to care for the youth work at the General Conference level. Mrs. Plummer carried that responsibility until 1907.

The General Conference Council at Gland, Switzerland, early in the spring of 1907, approved the formation of a General Conference Youth Department and elected M. E. Kern as chairman with Matilda Erickson as secretary. In the summer of the same year, about 200 representative workers gathered at Mount Vernon, Ohio for a youth convention to select a name for the department and to draw up other recommendations.

The “Morning Watch Calendar” and the “Missionary Volunteer (MV) Reading Course” were adopted, and the group voted to observe MV Day in each church once a year. The name selected for the department was finally agreed upon as Seventh-day Adventist Young People’s Department of Missionary Volunteers. Through the years it came to be known as the “MV Department,” and the local church youth organization was called the “MV Society.” Public youth meetings were designated as “MV meetings.”

At the Mount Vernon convention, a concern for younger members among Adventist youth was expressed, and the first official action concerning the work for junior youth was voted. It read as follows:

“WHEREAS, in many of our church schools and churches, excellent results have been obtained from the organization of junior societies; therefore—RESOLVED, that we look with approval upon this work, and recommend that it be operated by our local conferences as seems best to them, and that great care be exercised in the choice of leaders and work for these societies.” (*The MV Story*, p. 86)

This action officially sanctioned and gave guidance to some of the experimentation then in progress. Many who had been waiting for it now set to work building the program. In California, C. Lester Bond, F. G. Ashbaugh, Julia Leland (Nelson), J. T. Porter, L. A. Skinner, and Guy Mann pioneered the Junior Missionary Volunteer (JMV)—Adventist Junior Youth (AJY)—approach; in Iowa, J. C. Nixon led out. In Michigan, Gordon Smith, Roy MacKenzie, and Grover Fattic fostered the youth camp idea.

As early as 1911, caring adults organized clubs for boys. Milton P. Robison, then normal director (in charge of teacher training) of Union College, Lincoln, Nebraska, followed the new trend with a group he called “Boys’ Pals.” In Takoma Park, Maryland, the Takoma Indians participated regularly in outdoor activities.

World War I temporarily retarded the development of youth ministry, but after the war Adventist youth leaders used storytelling, hikes, games, arts, crafts, and campfires to meet youth needs.

In 1919 A. W. Spalding, probably the foremost proponent of the new approach to junior-youth work, started a Mission Scouts organization in Madison, Tennessee, for his own boys and their friends. Handicrafts, woodcraft, trailing, and camping were stressed. The Mission Scouts developed a law, pledge, and aim, which formed the basis of the Pledge and Law eventually adopted by the church for Junior Missionary Volunteers.

Delegates to the Fall Council of 1920 voted to add a secretary (director) to the General Conference Youth Department, and elected Harriet Holt as an associate MV Secretary to promote the JMV Society. A year later guidelines were outlined for this program and worldwide promotion began.

JMV Classes were introduced in 1922, and 1928 saw a leadership-training course initiated to train Master Comrades (later called Master Guides).

In 1926, at Townline Lake, Michigan, Grover Fattic directed the first official MV camp conducted by a conference.

The first MV youth congress was held in 1928 in Chemnitz, Germany, in the Central European Division, with Steen Rasmussen as youth leader. Youth from the Northern European Division also attended with their division youth director, Len Minchin. The first North American Division youth congress, held in San Francisco in 1947 with E. W. Dunbar as world youth director, drew thousands of youth. In 1969 the first World Youth Congress was held in Zurich, Switzerland, with Theodore Lucas as world youth director.

The *Character Classics Reading Plan* (later changed to *Encounter*) was adopted in 1946.

John Hancock organized the first conference-sponsored Pathfinder Club in Southeastern California Conference at Riverside, California in 1946. From 1947 to 1950 the Pathfinder program continued to develop in the Pacific Union Conference under the direction of J. R. Nelson, union youth director. Finally, the General Conference adopted the Pathfinder Club organization in 1950.

In 1972 the name was changed to Youth Department of Missionary Volunteers, and conference MV secretaries received the title “youth directors.” In 1978 the name was changed again—to “Adventist Youth.”

The student missionary program started in 1959 when a student volunteer, sponsored by the college MV Society, left Columbia Union College to spend a summer in Mexico. A few years later the General Conference Youth Department and Secretariat assumed responsibility for maintaining the growing program and voted operational policies to guide its worldwide development. During the ensuing years, thousands of student missionaries have served throughout the world. Today, Adventist colleges in many of the world divisions send scores of students around the world to serve in this youth outreach.

The Taskforce Volunteer Plan was voted by the General Conference at the Annual Council of 1974 to involve youth in active work in local and union conferences and churches within their division for periods of three months to two years. This plan

is in operation in various forms within some divisions, with great results and blessings for those participating.

History of the AY/AJY classwork

As youth engaged in JMV Society activities, some leaders felt the need to help them develop strong Christian characters and prepare for effective witnessing so they would know how to do missionary work. The leaders studied the possibilities, including many helpful suggestions in the Spirit of Prophecy writings.

A system of classes developed from that study and through observation of similar organizations emerging at that time. Class requirements included Bible and nature study, homemaking skills, outdoor activities, first aid, personal and home health, physical fitness, community service, and many different avenues of witnessing. These meaningful activities helped youth to find true happiness.

Leaders envisioned an army of youth with talents and energies committed to Christ, an army with ranks filled by those whose hands would be ready to grasp any emergency and turn it to the glory of the great Master Guide.

During the General Conference session in San Francisco, California in the spring of 1922, the work of the Junior Missionary Volunteer Society was greatly strengthened by the addition of what had become known as “progressive classwork.” Two classes were provided at that time, and youth leaders returned to their respective posts throughout the world, bringing new inspiration to the youth of many lands where the program had already spread.

The 1927 General Conference Autumn Council in Chattanooga, Tennessee enlarged the Progressive Classwork to include three classes, Friend, Companion and Comrade, for junior youth and one class for senior youth and adults. C. Lester Bond joined the General Conference MV Department in 1928, and two major programs evolved that year: MV Honors and the Master Comrade Class—developed for senior youth and adults “who desired to prepare for junior leadership.” The first Master Comrade (later called Master Guide) was invested in 1931.

The MV/JMV Classwork (later AY/AJY), designed to help youth physically, mentally, spiritually, and socially, proved to be a definite factor in character building, and has become a blessing in the lives of thousands.

The formation of the MV Society and JMV Society was the beginning of the church’s answer to the inspired call to “do something for youth.” It was also an answer to the need of youth for involvement in spiritually stimulating church activities.

Name changes

The history of the youth movement clearly shows how the department's name has gone through many changes.

In 1901, the General Conference assigned the Sabbath School Department, under the direction of Flora Plummer, to oversee the youth. In 1907, a separate organization known as "the Young People's Department" was approved at the General Conference Session held that year in Gland, Switzerland. Milton E. Kern was named the first director, and Matilda Erickson was the secretary. During the following summer, there was a meeting in Mount Vernon, Ohio, with some 200 delegates, to hold a young people's convention, elect the official name of the organization, and present other recommendations. There, the name of "Seventh-day Adventist Young People's Department of Missionary Volunteers" [YPMV] was chosen.

Later, the name Missionary Volunteers came to be identified with the letters MV, through the years it came to be known as the "MV Department," and the local youth meetings began to be called "MV" meetings. In 1972 the name was changed to Youth Department of Missionary Volunteers, and the conference MV secretaries received the title of youth directors. In 1979, there was yet another change when the name "Adventist Youth [AY] Department" was adopted. During the early parts of the 60s and 70s, the world experienced what was termed as winds of change in the political world. In some countries the word "missionary" was equated to "colonial" powers. Due to this scenario, the World Church dropped the word "Missionary" and voted for the new name without it. In 2005, delegates at the General Conference Session in St. Louis voted to change the name to "Youth Ministries Department," to reflect the emphasis given to the various ministries in the whole department. Today that encompasses Adventurer Ministry, Pathfinder Ministry, Young Adult Ministry, and Ambassador Ministry.

Development of Adventist Youth Ministries (AYM)

Objectives

Ellen G. White sets forth the objectives of a youth organization as follows: (1) to train the youth to work for other youth, (2) to recruit the youth to help their church and "those who profess to be Sabbath-keepers"; and (3) to work "for those who are not of our faith" (*Signs of the Times*, May 29, 1893).

In seeking to reach these objectives, the youth are called upon:

- to pray together
- to study the Word together
- to fellowship together in Christian social interaction

- to act together in small groups to carry out well-laid plans for witnessing
- to develop tact and skill and talent in service to Jesus
- to encourage one another in spiritual growth

In response to these inspired directives, the Adventist Youth Ministries (AYM) Department was organized to give leadership training and to provide resource materials and evangelistic plans covering both the Junior Youth Ministries (JYM) and Senior Youth Ministries (SYM) in the local church.

Adventist youth ministries (AYM)

Adventist Youth Ministries (formerly Adventist Youth Society) operates through four committees: Adventurer Ministry, Pathfinder Ministry, Ambassador Ministry, and Young Adult Ministry, thus reaching all youth.

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

The servant of God called for the establishment of a youth organization in each church and told what kind of organization it should be: “Let there be a company formed somewhat after the order of the Christian Endeavor Society.” (*Counsels on Health*, p. 537)

“Let there be companies organized in every church to do this work.” (Ellen G. White, *Signs of the Time*, May 29, 1893)

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

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

While there is to be active Adventist Youth Ministries (AYM) in every church, it is important that the youth programs not be isolated from the rest of the church. In addition to their participation in the youth organization, the young people should be integrated into responsible leadership and involvement in the entire church program. There should be young elders, young deacons and deaconesses, etc., working with experienced church officers. The youth should be active in all lines of church work.

“In order that the work may go forward in all its branches, God calls for youthful vigor, zeal, and courage. He has chosen the youth to aid in the advancement of His cause. To plan with clear mind and execute with courageous hand demands fresh, uncrippled energies. Young men and women are invited to give God the strength of their youth that through the exercise of their powers, through keen thought and vigorous action, they may bring glory to Him and salvation to their fellowmen” (*Gospel Workers*, p. 67).

Why Adventist youth ministries?

The AYM is the center of earnest, happy activity and Christian fellowship for the young people of the church. The various ministries, clubs, and groups that might otherwise lose contact with one another are bound together in the AYM, and in the meetings find inspiration, fellowship, and strength. The AYM meeting is one of the most important appointments of the week for youth. Its importance is revealed in an analysis of its purpose.

- To keep the challenge of the aim, the motto, and the pledge.
- To deepen the devotional life of each AYM member.
- To integrate the vital AYM features and group activities into the thinking and life of the AYM.
- To keep the young people of the church in touch with the whole movement around the world.
- To give an opportunity for each member to obtain an experience in public address and teamwork: praying together, studying together, planning together, and working together.
- To hold before the youth Christian ideals and principles for Christian living in order to help young people find a positive solution to their problems.
- To study the most effective methods for doing different kinds of Christian service, and to organize the youth for successful witnessing.

- To provide a time when the members of the AYM may have an opportunity to tell “what they have tried to do for the Savior and what success has been theirs” and thus strengthen and inspire one another in their desire to live out the AYM Pledge.
- To provide pleasant Christian fellowship for the young people of the church.

The AYM that consistently endeavors to attain these objectives will be a successful society and will be a mighty spiritual influence in the church and in the world.

Ideals of Adventist Youth Ministries (AYM)

The ideals of the AYM are expressed in the Aim, Motto, Pledge, and Law, as well as in the objective and purpose for an Adventist youth organization in the church.

Objective of the AYM

“To save from sin and guide into service:” this true and only motive, so complete and impressive, was adopted during the 1926 General Conference session. To obtain the salvation of the youth it is necessary to give them every possible opportunity to participate in all Adventist youth activities. By keeping youth actively preparing for more efficient service, they are protected from evil. It is necessary to place them in some activity as soon as they are ready. “Seeking the good of others is the way in which true happiness can be found.” (*Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 24)

The enemy will not prevail against youth who are actively engaged in the things of God.

We hope that the youth will work for:

- Other youth
- Their church
- Their fellow men

This triple purpose that God has outlined for His youth is really the second part of the objective presented in a practical sense: “guide into service.” From the time youth missionary work first began, this triple purpose has been put into practice. The goal is to save each Adventist youth who faces the battle against sin, striving to rescue more and more souls for the kingdom of God. In 1947, the dynamic slogan “Share your Faith” brought new emphasis to soul-winning around the world.

That the youth may work for other youth. "Educate the youth to help the youth; and in seeking to do this work each will gain experience that will qualify him to become a consecrated worker in a larger sphere."

(*Messages to Young People*, p. 208)

"He [Satan] well knows that there is no other class that can do as much good as young men and young women who are consecrated to God. The youth, if right, could sway a mighty influence. Preachers or laymen advanced in years, cannot have one-half the influence upon the young that the youth, devoted to God, can have upon their associates."

(*Messages to Young People*, p. 204)

"Young men and women, God calls upon you to work, work for Him

You can do a work that those who minister in word and doctrine cannot do. You can reach a class whom the minister cannot affect."

(*Messages to Young People*, p. 207)

That the youth work for the church. The youth should work for the church and for "those who profess to be Sabbath keepers." Faithfully attending the services of the church, the prayer meetings, and the missionary meetings, helping in the Sabbath school and in the AY Society, and participating in the missionary activities of the church, they encourage and strengthen the church. "Loyalty to Christ demands the faithful performance of church duties." (*Education*, p. 269)

"The church is languishing for the help of young men who will bear a courageous testimony, who will with their ardent zeal stir up the sluggish energies of God's people, and so increase the power of the church in the world." (*Messages to Young People*, p. 25)

The youth may work for youth not of the faith. "Time is short. Workers for Christ are needed everywhere. There should be one hundred earnest, faithful laborers in home and foreign mission fields where now there is one. The highways and the byways are yet unworked."

(*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 488)

There is need for those who would work from house to house. "The Lord calls upon our youth to labor as canvassers and evangelists, to do house to house work in places that have not yet heard the truth."

(*Messages to Young People*, p. 220)

“The Lord calls for decided efforts to be put forth in places where the people know nothing of Bible truth. Singing and prayer and Bible readings are needed in the homes of the people.” (*Counsels to Teachers*, p. 540)

“They [the youth] can form themselves into bands to do Christian help work. . . They will find many opportunities to use the talent that God has given them in carrying melody and sunshine into many lonely places darkened by sorrow and affliction, singing to those who seldom have church privileges.” (*Counsels to Teachers*, p. 547)

“Companies should be organized and thoroughly educated to work as nurses, gospel visitors, and Bible readers, as canvassers, ministers, and medical missionary evangelists.” (*Counsels to Teachers*, p. 546)

The AYM that keeps these three purposes in mind will become a dynamic and spiritual influence of the church, and this is what it should be. The success of every AYM depends on the faithful fulfillment of these purposes and the way in which the members apply the spirit of the AY Pledge to their lives.

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

Aim of Adventist youth ministries

“The Advent message to all the world in my generation.”

How universal and how definite is this aim!

- “The message” is that which the youth will take.
- “To all the world” is where the youth will take the message.
- “In this generation” tells us when it will be taken.

The aim requires an ample knowledge of the message. No one can give to others that which he or she has not received. More is needed than a theoretical or intelligent concept of the message. Ultimately the heart must know, as well as the intellect. To know and feel the message, and to know and love the truth: these two conditions are necessary in order that the message might be carried to the world.

Therefore, Adventist youth should not only know the Adventist message—know that Jesus will soon return—but their lives must give evidence that they really believe it.

Mission of Adventist youth ministries

“To lead young people in a saving relationship with Jesus and help them embrace his call to discipleship.”

Motto of Adventist youth ministries

“The love of Christ compels me.”

Inspired by this motto, Adventist youth all over the world, in harmony with the marvelous aim, move forward in the conquest of souls for the kingdom of God. The motto, based on 2 Cor. 5:14, is the motivating force in the Adventist youth movement. Without love there is only formation and certain failure. With the love of Christ, success is sure, because it is a love that never deceives us. This is the love that always triumphs. It advances in the face of any difficulty until the task is done, the conflict won, and the victory achieved.

Pledge of Adventist youth ministries

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

Loving the Lord Jesus. This introductory thought directs our minds toward the motto of Adventist youth. It is the impelling force of the pledge and the movement of Adventist youth. The value of service for the Master is measured by the love and dedication with which Adventist youth serve Him. Does the Lord Jesus completely direct the life?

I promise. The word promise is synonymous, in this case, with desire, and can revolutionize the life. Promise means that youth are not dominated by someone else, but rather are ready and willing to follow the Lord’s leading. They have a purpose, and they are committed. This means that the youth are available for action and will decide for the best in life. They will follow the proposed path with determination and will keep their eyes fixed on the goal. The Master can count on them to fulfill their promises completely.

To take an active part in the youth ministry of the church. This means to be involved in the activities of the AYM, including the meetings and witnessing outreach. The Adventist youth will always be ready to help someone, and will support his or her AYM and church in their various activities.

Doing what I can to help others. This is a commitment that denotes readiness and dedication on behalf of others. It means to do one's best for a cause and represents the greatest effort to help in every phase of activity within the organization of the AYM and in the church. The true Adventist youth is always ready to take advantage of every opportunity to serve.

And to finish the work of the gospel in all the world. This last part of the Adventist Youth Ministries pledge urges the youth to think of the AYM aim. It represents the extension of the divine mandate of our Lord Jesus in a universal scope. It is a challenge to the youth to understand the divine command. First in Jerusalem, then in Judea, then in Samaria, and finally unto the ends of the earth.

Adventist youth can help in four different ways to finish the task: Living consecrated lives, making themselves available for every opportunity to serve, praying for the Lord's work both locally and worldwide, and giving sacrificially of their own financial means to spread the gospel and finish the Lord's work. Thus they enter into true stewardship, giving their time, their talents, their means, and themselves.

Officers of the Adventist Youth Ministries (AYM)

Selecting officers

Every AYM must have officers who are responsible for the performance of certain duties. The number of officers will be determined largely by the size of the AYM. In small churches the same person may be able to carry more than one office. Required AYM officers are listed in the following two sections. Others may be added as needed.

Officers elected by the church

AYM officers elected by the local church upon recommendation of the nominating committee are as follows:

- Young Adults Director (chair)
- Associate SYM/JYM leaders
- Secretary-treasurer
- Assistant secretary-treasurer
- Sponsor

In addition there are the ex-officio members of the AYM Committee:

- Ambassadors Director
- Pathfinder Director
- Adventurer Director
- Health Ministries Leader
- Sabbath School Director
- School Principal
- Sponsor
- Pastor

Officers elected by the AYM

The local church AYM committee may add officers needed to fulfill specific functions. Those officers listed below are recommended. Others may be required to meet the needs of ministry such as but not limited to:

- Leaders for the groups/bands of the society
- Communication leader
- Devotional/Discipling leader
- Educational leader
- Fellowship leader
- Service/Mission leader
- Outreach leader
- Prayer and personal workers groups
- Christian help groups
- Literature and correspondence groups
- Evangelism groups
- Ingathering singing groups (in season), etc.
- Chorister
- Accompanist
- Educational leaders and librarian
- Fellowship or social leader
- Service/Mission leader

The function of the AYM committee

The AYM committee, in a general way, directs every activity of the youth ministry in the church. The spirit generated in the committee permeates the whole church. A spirit of dedication, enthusiasm, and productivity will set the pace for all activities and functions of AYM.

As members of the AYM committee, all the AYM officers should participate in leadership functions. They, in turn, should involve the entire group in planning and decision making, as well as in society activities. The AYM committee should open channels for a steady flow of ideas and reactions from the membership.

AYM committee meetings

THE MONTHLY MEETING. The AYM committee should meet at least once a month at a time and place favorable to attendance of all the committee members, and should allow sufficient time to study and plan together. At times when there are no JYM or SYM committees, the AYM will assume all responsibility and thus also hold weekly meetings.

THE WEEKLY MEETING. Preceding each regular AYM meeting, a shorter meeting should be held to pray and counsel together regarding the meeting and to consider any items needing immediate attention.

Responsibilities of the AYM committee

BE AN OFFICERS' PRAYER GROUP. The leader and other officers of the AYM should carry a definite burden for the spiritual welfare of the young people of the church families. Upon beginning their term, the officers should take a careful census, or survey, of the young people connected with the families in the church, listing the names of all from 6-30+ years of age. This becomes a prayer list and is also important to the planning work of the executive committee. The officers should lead in personal work for the discouraged, the careless, and the unconverted. They should encourage these youth to attend the AYM meetings and to share in all its activities. One of the officer's most important tasks is to win the unconverted youth of the church to Christ.

BECOME FAMILIAR WITH ALL AY SOURCE MATERIALS. Members of the executive committee should study Messages to Young People, Youth Ministry Training Course, and Youth Ministry Accent, to name but a few, for a clearer knowledge of AY background and objectives and for developing leadership skills. Other resource materials available from the conference/mission office will be of importance also. (Ask the conference/mission youth director for a complete list.)

PLAN THE AYM MEETINGS. In a large AYM, the committee may appoint a subcommittee of its members to plan the details for the meetings, but this program committee should have its plans approved by the entire executive committee before carrying them out. The AYM committee is responsible for the youth program, as well as for the work of the various groups and officers.

Successful AYM meetings require careful preparation; "he who fails to prepare is preparing to fail." The committee should study the materials provided in the Youth Ministry Accent and generally follow these topics as subjects for the meetings, scheduling and adapting them to fit the local situation. By doing this, a well-rounded program plan will be carried on throughout the year. Early each month the executive committee should study the topics and schedule subjects to be presented during the month to follow.

In planning the AYM meeting, the committee should be guided by concern for members' needs rather than by a concern with "putting on" a program. Varied audience participation methods should be used often.

STUDY AND PLAN A CONTINUOUS OUTREACH PROGRAM. Operate a strong program of youth evangelism, using the study materials provided. Give attention to personal service ideas and group projects. Organize the various working groups, provide a leader for each, and help them plan their work. The executive committee should study the community or town in which the AYM operates, with a view to carrying on appropriate service projects. Endeavor to enlist every member of the AYM in some form of group activity. Member interest often depends upon how much the member shares in the activities of the group.

HEAR AND STUDY REPORTS from the AYM secretaries and group leaders, offering suggestions and giving counsel whenever necessary in order to improve the work of the various groups.

MAINTAIN A LIVE PROGRAM OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT by means of the AYM devotional and educational projects.

EXAMINE THE VARIOUS AYM RECORDS AT THE CLOSE OF EACH MONTH to see that they are well kept and up-to-date. Ascertain that the AYM reports have been sent to the appropriate person in the conference/mission youth department and that a copy has been sent to the church Personal Ministries leader.

CHECK ON THE PROGRESS made toward completing the projects undertaken by the AYM.

STUDY THE FINANCIAL NEEDS OF THE AYM and lay plans to secure funds for the supplies, for purchasing library books, Book Club selections, copies (one for each officer) of Youth Ministry ACCENT, literature for outreach work, and other supplies with which to carry on a strong program of study and outreach endeavors. Carefully study all plans involving the expenditure of AYM funds and authorize the society treasurer by vote to work with the church treasurer to disburse AYM funds to cover the society's expenses. (All AYM funds are to be deposited with the church treasurer who holds them in trust until the society determines how they shall be used.)

PLAN FOR THE SOCIAL AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE AYM in harmony with the principles of Christian recreation.

LAY DEFINITE PLANS FOR THE AYM WEEK OF PRAYER and organize the society early for effective soul-winning work during this important spiritual emphasis week in March/November of each year.

PROMOTE AN INTEREST IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION among the young people and the adults of the church.

DEVISE MEANS FOR THE PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT of each member in the AYM.

ENCOURAGE YOUNG PEOPLE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE of every opportunity for outreach endeavors.

FOSTER A SPIRIT OF LOYALTY among the youth that will lead them to:

- Share in the regular weekly services of the church.
- Return an honest tithe and contribute to regular and special church offerings.
- Carry a burden for the appointed days or Weeks of Prayer in the church.
- Move on, when the time comes, into service for the adult church organization.

NOMINATE THE FOLLOWING FOR ELECTION BY THE AYM: leaders of the groups/bands of the youth programs, discipling leader, educational leader and librarian, outreach leader, fellowship leader, communication leader, and any other leader, except the leader of the officers' prayer group, who is usually the AYM leader. In case of a vacancy in any office of the AYM, the committee should work in conjunction with the church board in providing a replacement until the next regular church election.

CONSIDER THE NAMES OF ALL PERSONS WHO DESIRE MEMBERSHIP in the AYM, and recommend for admission, by vote of the AYM members, those who satisfy the requirements for membership.

APPOINT A MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE consisting of the assistant AYM leader and two or more other young people who have gifts of friendliness and courtesy and who will be constantly on the lookout for new members.

APPOINT A STAFF OF ALERT, DEPENDABLE USHERS to serve at AYM meetings and at other times when needed.

RECEIVE AN AUDIT OF THE BOOKS of the AYM treasurer at the end of the year.

Responsibilities of AYM officers

The AYM leader should:

- Become thoroughly acquainted with the local conference/mission youth ministry department plans.

- Keep in touch with the local conference/mission youth department director or the assistant/secretary, informing him/her of plans and achievements and seeking counsel as needed.
- Feel the pulse of the activities of other AYM through bulletins and news stories, and share this inspiration with the local church AYM. Be informed at all times about AYM source materials.
- Plan for the regular meetings of the AYM programs, committees, and, in counsel with the associate leaders and secretary, prepare an agenda or worksheet to be used by the committee.
- Have specific plans to present to the committee, and present the plans recommended by the other committees to the AYM membership for discussion and action.
- Assign leadership functions to others as may be necessary for implementing plans and completing projects.
- Have a general knowledge of the duties of every officer in the AYM, know that each officer understands what is expected, and tactfully assist in his or her responsibilities as necessary.
- Preside at the AYM meetings, except when definite or (as far as possible) regular arrangements have been made for the associate leader to take charge.
- Lead the officers' prayer group or have the executive committee appoint someone to do so. If that happens, the AYM leader is to work in close cooperation with the appointed leader.
- Be an ex officio member of all working groups, and as such visit them and participate in their activities as much as other duties will permit.
- Personally visit those who intermittently attend the AYM meetings, or arrange for another officer to attend to this work.
- Keep in close touch with the AYM sponsor.
- Serve as a member of the church board, on which he or she represents the AYM, and attend church board meetings regularly.
- Maintain a cooperative and friendly contact between the church pastor or elder and the AYM.
- Cooperate in every way possible at the end of his or her term of office to assist the incoming leader to maintain continuity in the society's activities.

The associate leader should:

- Serve as a regular member of the AYM committee.

- Carry leadership responsibilities assigned by the leader and the AYM committee.
- Become informed of the AYM program, grow in skill, and share in the goals and privileges listed for the leader.

The AY society sponsor should:

- Serve as a member of the AYM committee and the church board.
- Become thoroughly familiar with the objectives and methods of the AYM program.
- Serve as a guide and counselor to the leader and other officers of the society.
- Join the AYM leader in bringing information to the church board from time to time regarding the needs, interests, and progress of the youth work.
- Serve as a sympathetic counselor to the young people of the church who may come to him or her for special guidance in their personal problems.

The secretary-treasurer should:

- Serve as a regular member of the AYM committee and act as the secretary, keeping a record of the minutes of the committee in a notebook devoted to that purpose.
- Obtain from the conference/mission youth director the AYM Record Book and study the instructions for its use.
- Keep a list of the names and addresses of all society members in the AYM Record Book. Obtain the names for this list on enrollment day. (At that time all young people eligible for membership are to repeat the AYM Pledge and complete the Application for Membership card or sign the Record of Membership found at the front of the secretary's Record Book. If you use the Application for Membership card (AYM Record Blank 1-S), order them from the conference/mission youth director prior to enrollment day. The name of each young person signing a card should be entered in the secretary's AYM Record Book and the card sent on to the conference/mission youth director, who will issue a Certificate of Membership. This Certificate of Membership will be sent to the local society secretary, who will sign it and give it to the AYM leader, who will, in an appropriate ceremony, present it to the one who applied for it.
- Keep an AYM Service Record for each member on the form provided by the conference/mission.

- Record any actions voted by the AYM meeting as a group, and keep these minutes in permanent form.
- Counsel with the AYM leader and then report progress made in various projects to the membership during the AYM meetings.
- Educate the young people to report their outreach work at the regular meeting. Gather weekly reports of the AYM work from the group leaders of the AYM. Prepare monthly reports of the AYM work and send it to the conference/mission youth director.
- Keep a list of the names and addresses of the local AYM officers in the secretary's record book.
- Keep a record of those who are enrolled in the Youth Leadership Training and those who have completed the AYM Book Club, a Bible reading plan, or any year of the Encounter series. The names of those completing these features should be sent to the conference/mission youth director so they may receive a certificate or other recognition.
- Ascertain from the class instructors the number of persons pursuing Youth Leadership Training class work who plan to take the examinations in Bible doctrines or denominational history, and notify the conference/mission youth director, who will arrange for the examination to be given. Immediately return all examination papers, used and unused, to the conference/mission youth director, who will report the grades to the AYM secretary to be permanently recorded in the secretary's AYM Record Book.
- Make a report to the AYM at least once each quarter, summarizing the outreach work done during the quarter.
- Receive and deposit with the church treasurer all funds of the AYM. The church treasurer is the AYM "bank." (If the church combined-budget plan is used, funds are usually budgeted for the AYM. In that case, the society treasurer works with the church treasurer to keep a record of AYM income and expenses.)
- Keep an accurate record of all cash received and turned over to the church treasurer. Request and retain receipts from the church treasurer as part of permanent records.
- Work with the church treasurer to disburse AYM funds as authorized by the AYM committee.
- Submit a financial statement at the close of each month to the executive committee, and include necessary items in the monthly report to the conference/mission youth director.
- Bring all records up-to-date at the close of the year. Request that financial

books be audited by the AYM committee, then turn them over to the incoming AYM secretary-treasurer.

- Be alert to see the things a secretary can do to assist the AYM leader.
- Order all AYM supplies. Ask for the conference/mission supply list that shows all AY items. Since conferences have varying plans of distribution, secure directions from your conference on how to order. (Note: all orders should be approved by the AYM committee.)

The assistant secretary-treasurer should:

- Serve as a regular member of the AYM committee.
- Carry responsibilities assigned by the secretary-treasurer and the AYM committee.

Membership

Where applicable, the membership system for AYM can be adopted as follows:

It should be easier to maintain a steady AYM membership by contacting youth in both the Sabbath school and the other JYM and SYM. Also, reporting their missionary activities can be coordinated in this way. Other youth activities such as temperance projects and ingathering participation will also be made more effective by a coordinated approach.

Young people aged 16 to 30 are eligible for membership in the senior AY Society. Upon joining the society they take the following senior membership pledge:

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

Three types of membership

There are three categories of membership in the AY Society.

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

Associate members. Young people who are not members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church but who have Christian ideals and desire to be associated with the young people of the church in missionary work should be accepted as associate members.

Associate members may not hold office, but they should be cordially received into all the AY Society work and into its bands, and should be encouraged to become regular members as soon as possible.

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

The importance of membership

By virtue of the name, the Adventist Youth Society is a group of Adventist young people who unite voluntarily to attain the objectives of the AY Society. Therefore, it is imperative that the society have a definite membership. Members are invested with certain privileges and responsibilities. No one is a member of the Adventist Youth Society automatically. When a young person accepts the Pledge, Motto, and Aim and asks to be a member, he or she accepts the challenge of having a part in finishing the work of the gospel.

"Every Adventist youth a member of the AY Society and every member participating in some activity of the AY Society" indicates that just attending meetings does not make one a member. In order to attain the objectives of the AY Society, the youth must feel the impulse of love for Christ and respond to that love by voluntarily promising to participate.

Therefore, AY Society leaders should make arrangements to recruit new members each week during the entire year. Generally, the society secretary bears this responsibility. If the AY Society is large, a committee may be named whose members will dedicate themselves to invite the youth to sign the application form and register as active society members.

Verifying membership

In 1923, after the Adventist youth organization had been established for sixteen years, a vote was taken encouraging societies to conduct a yearly campaign. In the Adventist Youth Society there is no permanent membership. The messenger of the Lord mentions active reserves, or "an army of youth." This army has a service to render and a goal to achieve. It is recommended that at least once a year the AY pledge should be reviewed and a roll call taken. The leaders ought to know who should be participating members. Each member needs a challenge of dedication at least once each year. This is the time for reaffirmation, for renewal of the vote of loyalty to the Captain of our salvation. This is the time to recognize youth who have become old enough and accept them as members. This is the time to

welcome into membership those who have moved to the area or have changed membership to your local church.

The secretary of the AY Society has a record book that has a place to list members according to their classification. It is very important that this list be kept up-to-date, with the additions and deletions carefully noted.

Conducting the annual recruitment campaign

The annual recruitment campaign is important to the life of the society, and there are various ways of conducting it. Some examples follow:

Recruitment campaign one

January of each year is the opportune time. In meetings during the first month of the new year, the society reviews its purpose and members are challenged to dedicate themselves anew and to participate in the groups planned for the new year. All who wish will receive an application form, which, after the forms have been filled out, will be gathered and delivered to the secretary of the AY Society.

After each application has been carefully examined and the secretary has all the necessary information, these applications are to be sent to the conference/mission youth director, who will see that the membership cards are prepared and sent back to the society's secretary. The secretary registers the names in the record book, and the membership cards are delivered to the members. The cards are valid for only one year. This plan helps to keep the membership records up-to-date for the local AY Society as well as for the conference/mission.

Recruitment campaign two

As another means of maintaining membership records of names, a paper may be prepared for the young people to sign. The paper is placed in the church vestibule during the AY Society meeting, and those who wish to may sign it as an act of dedication. This works better if the group is small. At other times these papers are circulated among the members to be signed after they have dedicated themselves to some special work within the groups. The papers with the necessary information such as age, date of baptism, etc., are collected and sent to the conference/mission youth director instead of sending separate applications. The conference/mission youth director completes the membership cards and sends them to the secretary of the AY Society for distribution.

Recruitment campaign three

In January, the conference/mission youth director may send the AY Society secretary a copy of the list of members as it appears in the conference/mission records. The AY society then has a roll call or verifies the list in some other way, adding names of new members and removing names of those who have moved away. This revised list is returned to the conference/mission office so that the youth

director may send the new membership cards to the local AY Society secretary. At this same time a ceremony to install the new officers should be celebrated so the youth may become acquainted with their new leaders and the new leaders may accept their responsibilities in a solemn way. AY Society leaders must always be alert to invite young visitors, as well as those who may desire to renew their interest, to register as members for the new year.

A bulletin board with photos and names of AY Society members may be posted in the church vestibule. Frequent changes, using new photos of groups and activities, will help keep the church informed and inspire more support for your society.

Senior Youth Ministries (SYM) Programs

Types of SYM meetings

There are various types of SYM meetings:

Regular weekly meetings

Experience meetings: When opportunity is given to various bands and to individuals to tell the experiences they have had in working for Jesus.

Evangelistic meetings: Organized and conducted during the SYM Week of Prayer or at other times for the purpose of winning the unconverted, reclaiming the careless, and deepening the Christian experience of every member.

Rallies and conventions in which the home SYM is host to visiting SYM.

Congresses and special programs such as:

- Special programs for youth, with the whole church attending
- Special programs for the promotion of some activity of project
- Congresses or youth rallies when SYM from several territories meet together
- Special program promoting temperance

Demonstrations: These teach how to begin a conversation that will lead to Bible studies, holding meetings in homes, showing slides, distributing literature, selling books, and conducting Revelation seminars.

Investiture ceremonies: Usually conducted once a year, are a type of recognition service where those completing class requirements are awarded certificates and other items that signify reaching a goal.

Success formula for youth programs

Purpose

Have a reason for holding meetings. If there is no motive it is better not to meet. Many times, youth programs function like a carrousel: people move in a circle of activities and, when the meetings end, despite all the action, one feels that nothing has been accomplished.

Plans

Good meetings are not mere accidents. They don't just happen. Good programs demand much planning, time, and effort.

Publicity

If attending the youth meetings is worthwhile, then it is worthwhile for others to know about them. One may ask, "Why don't more people attend the youth meetings?" It could be that meetings are not well publicized.

Sometimes someone announces in church, "There will be an SYM meeting this afternoon at the usual time." If we have nothing more interesting to say, then maybe it is better to say nothing. The more appealing the program announcements, the more people will attend.

Effort

No team in the field of sports wins without putting forth a great effort. The team that does not prepare well rarely wins the game. Success is the result of arduous work.

In sports, the coaches do not do it all. Each member of the team has a responsibility and has to put forth real effort; if not, he or she will soon be off the team. The youth program will be a success only if all are ready to pay the price of hard work.

Punctuality

Good programs begin on time and end on time. If members know that the leaders will be on time, they will be on time too. Should we keep the Lord waiting on us when we conduct meetings to meet with Him? Let us honor the commitment of our members by committing ourselves to beginning and ending meetings as scheduled.

Participation

No youth program will survive with the participation of the leader alone, or with the same three or four young people week after week. Meetings are better when various young people take part and, when the leader of the SYM finds it possible, he or she should encourage the participation of all the members in some way.

Better attendance and a growing enthusiasm for the program will result.

Planning programs

The program contributes either to the continuing life of the SYM or to the dwindling of its members. If you want interesting and beneficial programs, follow these recommendations:

- Make Christ the center of all meetings.
- Provide variety. Do not repeat the same kind of program over and over again.
- Avoid long pauses or gaps during the program so those present do not lose interest. Each participant should know the program schedule and promptly move into position to begin his or her presentation. If movement on and off the platform is required, an off-stage person should be appointed to move groups or individuals to their proper places at the right time.
- Provide attractive, vivid, and interesting meetings, always within the proper spiritual framework and purpose.

Preparing the youth program

- The task of planning the program belongs to the program committee.
- Use the material received from the local conference/mission office and adapt it to your society's needs, if necessary.
- Keep in mind the needs of your members. Do not plan merely for entertainment. The SYM should prepare youth for service in the church and community.
- Discover the different talents and skills of the youth in your church and put them to work, in accordance with their spiritual gifts.
- Try to use all the youth, not only those who can be easily persuaded to participate. Have youth encourage their peers who are reluctant to take part.
- Explain each part: the purpose of the meeting, the specific limits of the subject to be discussed or presented, its relation to other points of the program, the principal points, and the duration of the program. Give each participant a copy of the program with the order of events and, if possible, a time-element schedule.
- Motivate and stimulate initiative, but use planned programs to demonstrate available resources.

- Plan ways to tie the different parts of the program together; maintain movement toward a goal. Stimulate those thoughts of the listeners that will lead to a positive response.
- Try to obtain a positive contribution from each participant in the program. The comment that the program “was interesting” is not enough.
- Exchange ideas and methods. Do not follow an established ritual.
- Have those in the audience participate as often as possible.
- Make plans for future presentations.
- Carefully consider the meeting place: general appearance, cleanliness and order, visual aids, sound system, lighting, ventilation, song books, etc. Avoid confusion while people are arriving (See “Duties of Ushers”).

Program implementation

- Have ushers at the door to greet people and help them find a seat.
- Begin on time even when some who attend may come in late.
- Maintain an atmosphere appropriate to the program.
- Present a short introduction, unless the program is a complete surprise.
- While the program is being presented, the following questions should be answered in the minds of those present:
 - What is the purpose of the program?
 - What is going to happen?
 - How does this relate to me?
 - What is expected of me?
- When the public is expected to take part, the objectives and procedures should be carefully explained. Repeat complicated instructions.
- If there is to be a forum or a time for questions, it is best to create an informal atmosphere free from prejudice.
- Look for opportunities to make brief comments based on your own impression as to what the program is all about.
- If the program includes a call for dedication, make it an attractive and voluntary opportunity.
- Act in a spontaneous and natural way. Avoid compulsory methods. The program should always smooth the way and encourage those present to participate.

- End the meeting on a high note. Do not allow the public to leave in a frustrated attitude. The end of the program should be its climax.

Creative Programs

The Youth Ministry *Accent* magazine contains material for programs. It is not necessary to follow the program models to the letter. These program outlines serve only as a base to stimulate ideas from which you may prepare your own program.

Suggestions

PROMOTION OF BOOKS. Provide a place on the program to promote good books for youth, such as those recommended by the AYM Book Club.

TEMPERANCE. Many subjects on temperance lend themselves to good programs of interest to youth, especially in these days when so much focus is on problems with drugs, alcohol, and tobacco. All that needs to be done is to plan, organize, and select those who will take part in the program. Resource people from the community can be invited to participate.

FAVORITE HYMNS. Experiment. Present a program on favorite hymns or “The Hymn of My Life,” inviting participants to tell how the hymn influenced them or some other person. Encourage the congregation to participate. Stories of the origin of hymns are always of interest.

MY CONVERSION. Find out about the conversion stories of two, three, or four young people, and present them in an inspiring program that includes pantomime scenes, hymns, and oral testimony. This could be quite thrilling.

THE HISTORY OF MY LIFE. A subject much like the above, true stories of God’s leading could touch anyone’s heart. We all like to know things about the lives of others. Do not forget that a “This is Your Life” story has to be inspiring.

FAVORITE TEXTS OF THE BIBLE. Ask several young people to be prepared to read their favorite text and tell why it is important to them. Inviting the audience to share favorite Bible verses can also be interesting.

PRACTICAL INSTRUCTION. Having an instruction seminar once in a while could be rewarding and could provide a change in the routine. Celebrate two seminars a year where the Bible is studied, and conduct at least one Week of Prayer.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS. Youth enjoy this. It gives the timid person an opportunity to participate. Select a good coordinator and several capable persons to answer the questions. The coordinator will read the question and will ask someone to give an answer. The audience also may be invited to join in the discussion.

LETTERS. Write letters to other AY Societies in different parts of the world. Ask for items of interest from those places, especially missionary experiences. After you receive the information, invite the church to a program by saying something such as, "Next Sabbath the AY Society from Indonesia will be visiting us."

OUTREACH. Distribute literature or food in the area around your church. Divide the young people into groups of two and work for 30 or 40 minutes. Then return to the church and have them share their experiences.

MOTHER'S DAY AND FATHER'S DAY. Ask various young people to talk about the qualities they appreciate and respect most in their parents. Honor parents at a special recognition service.

COLPORTEUR PROGRAM. How long has it been since a colporteur has told experiences to your church members?

PROFESSIONAL ORIENTATION. Interesting programs can be given by professionals and career people. For example: "Why I am a lawyer," "Why I am a secretary," "Why I am a doctor," "Why I am a nurse," "Why I am a mail carrier." Encourage participants to tell how they can represent Christ in their work.

TIME TO MEDIATE. Dedicate at least five minutes to meditating with God. Have a young person talk for one or two minutes on prayer, and choose two young people ahead of time to pray. The prayer should have a purpose: pray for the poor and forsaken, the rulers of the nation, the young people who have left the faith, students, etc. The congregation should kneel while praying.

PRESENT A REPORT DURING THE PROGRAM. Refer to news items from the Adventist Review, union papers, or tell of some interesting scientific discovery or advances that can be related to the Christian life, the signs of the times, or the Second Coming.

INTERVIEW YOUNG PEOPLE, ADULTS, OR VISITORS. Be sure your questions are discreet and of interest to those in attendance.

FRIENDSHIP PROGRAM. Have the young men organize a program for the ladies the first quarter, and young ladies do so for the men during the second quarter. A short social in the evening will help to unite the youth.

PREPARE PROGRAMS BY GROUPS. Professionals, youth, young ladies, married couples, program on hobbies, program on nature, etc., may be interesting topics.

INTERCHANGE WITH OTHER SYM GROUPS. Present programs in other churches and invite other churches to give programs in your church.

SYMPOSIUM. Have a round-table discussion on marriage, drugs, entertainment, education, etc.

HISTORICAL PROGRAM. Present a program on the history of the Bible, some historical event from the Bible, denominational history, or the history of your own local church.

SPONSOR A CONTEST ON NATURE SUBJECTS IN THE BIBLE. Topics such as trees, rivers, mountains, flowers, and birds make good subjects.

OTHER CONTESTS. Use questions based on the *Morning Watch* readings, *Messages to Young People*, Bible texts and verses, beliefs of our church, etc.

MOTTO, PLEDGE, AND AIM. Have a program on the purpose and meaning of the Motto, Pledge, and Aim. During the program have the members repeat these together and have someone tell what each means and how each might be applied in his or her life.

READ SELECTED PASSAGES FROM BOOKS such as *Steps to Christ*, *Desire of Ages*, and *Messages to Young People* at the end of the program, before the last hymn. Select young people who read well and have a good voice to do this. Perhaps this could be a regular feature in your meetings. This part of the program could be featured as “Minutes of Inspiration.”

PROGRAM CONTEST. Choose a date for a special program. Invite the church to submit their ideas for a program concerning prayer, love, Jesus, friendship, the Bible, etc. Name a board of judges. Choose the best ideas and present these during the special program, giving the name of the contributor. Present a prize to the one receiving the highest score according to a point system established before hand.

TAG OR SURPRISE PROGRAM. Decorate a cardboard box and place inside it the various parts of the program printed on strips of paper. The leader calls on someone from the audience to come up and choose a piece of paper from the box. To the best of his or her ability, that person immediately performs the part of the program suggested on the paper. For example, “Read Psalm 23.” When that individual is through, then he or she calls upon the next person to go to the box and select a piece of paper.

You will be responsible for 52 programs during the year—a time of great importance for Adventist youth. From these programs they will receive spiritual strength, learn to develop their skills, and prepare to win spiritual battles for the week. May the Lord guide and give you wisdom, perception, and courage to do your work. May you dedicate your time and efforts to perpetuate the values of Adventism in our youth.

Add Sparkle

“Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance” (Ps. 89:15).

Someone mathematically inclined once determined that there are at least 326,880 different batting combinations for a baseball team. With such limitless possibilities, no baseball manager need ever get in a “rut” with his team’s batting lineup. In fact, even without any conscious striving for it, he is quite certain to achieve considerable variety in the batting order used with the team during a single season.

Similar possibilities for variety are open to alert leadership in planning the weekly youth meeting, with a minimum of a dozen basic meeting elements and numerous others that can be introduced for added sparkle and variety. The youth group’s “batting lineup,” if so desired, need not be the same any two weeks in a row. If the baseball calculations mentioned earlier apply here, the order of any one meeting would never have to be repeated for the next 6,286 years.

The possibilities for varied lineup of meeting features is virtually unlimited and should be given serious consideration by all who plan the Adventist Youth Society meetings week by week.

Variety for the sake of variety alone is not valid enough reason for expending the time and energy to achieve it, but when variety can be introduced for legitimate reasons such as increasing attendance, sparking new interest, or driving home spiritual truths with increased impact, then it should be freely employed. Quite standard with many AY Societies, and all too often “worked to death,” is a meeting order like this:

- Song service
- Opening song
- Prayer
- Scripture
- Announcements and offering
- Special music
- Evening message
- Closing song
- Prayer

For occasional use, it will serve its purpose well, but let's consider two primary ways by which it can be given new luster and appeal:

- By varying the order of the program elements.
- By introducing new variety into the individual meetings themselves.

Sample Programs

First, let us consider possible ways to vary the order of the SYM meetings, bearing in mind that all features should accent the theme, whatever it might be. Here are several suggested lineups:

PROGRAM 1

- Vocal solo (unannounced, planned to set the theme and mood at the meeting)
- Sing time
- Scripture reading
- Newscast
- Announcements and offering
- Prayer time
- Message (several youth speakers)
- Vocal solo (closing musical challenge to motivate to decision)
- Sponsor's summary
- Song
- Prayer

PROGRAM 2

- Scripture reading (unannounced, chosen to set the theme of the meeting)
- Hymn time (two or three hymns)
- Skit (raises and leaves unanswered a problem to be considered during discussion period)
- Chorus time
- Prayer time (planned to prepare young people for a decision to follow immediately)
- Discussion of the skit (youth participating)
- Scripture reading (several passages, each read by a different young person, shedding spiritual light on the problem)
- Sponsor's closing summary
- Announcements and offering
- Congregational song
- Prayer

PROGRAM 3

- Surprise interview (with missionary, exceptional or successful personal worker, or anyone wise whose main activity or work parallel the theme)
- Sing time

- Announcements
- Bible quiz (gifts to be given away)
- Reports (on previously assigned subjects that will help to prepare the group for the message to follow)
- Sponsor's two minutes (provides opportunity for sponsor to introduce the message)
- Message (by person interviewed at start of meeting)
- Special music (carefully chosen to follow message)
- Offering (encourage giving to a worthy cause as suggested by meeting theme and message)
- Special music
- Closing prayer

PROGRAM 4

- Surprise feature (special instrumental number, gospel magic, unique object lesson). Let this be of an unusual interest in order to make "on-timers" glad they were not late and "late-timers" wish they had been on time. Again, tie this feature in with the evening program theme.
- Theme Introduction
- Sing time
- Special music
- Chorus time
- Scripture reading
- Prayer time
- Hymn (to lead into next feature)
- Dialogue (skit)
- Sponsor's message or summary
- Announcements
- Group benediction

PROGRAM 5

- Poem or monologue (unannounced)
- Theme introduction
- Scripture reading and sing time, interwoven (a verse or passage of Scripture is read to introduce each song to be sung)
- Music time (two or three short specials, vocal and/or instrumental)
[Announce this music period, but let separate features proceed without interruption.]
- Prayer time
- Discussion (round table, open forum, or panel)
- Sponsor's minutes
- Special music
- Closing prayer

PROGRAM 6

- Theme introduction
- Questionnaire (Devise a question sheet to be completed by the young people at the start of their program. It should be designed as a basis for the message part of the meeting.)
- Scripture reading
- Announcements (newscast style)
- Bible quiz (awards to be given away)
- Sing time
- Testimonies (centered on meeting theme)
- Dialogue
- Sponsor's summary
- Vocal solo
- Congregational song
- Benediction

In the foregoing program listing, 21 different features are used, and they produce a plan of procedure for six different meetings. It could well have been one hundred or one thousand, without any two being identical in order. So, through the simple act of varying the order of the meeting, it is possible to produce endless variety.

Now let us consider a second way to introduce new sparkle into your AY Society meeting.

Variations of content*SING TIME*

- Sing different songs—don't get into a rut with the same old favorites every week.
- Learn new songs regularly.
- Build your sing time around a hymn quiz occasionally.
- Use hymn slides now and then.
- Spark new interest in stories of hymns or gospel songs.
- Build your song service around favorite songs of your church leaders such as your pastor, choir director, SYM leader, etc.
- Use instrumentalists.
- Have a series of "alphabet" songs; one week use songs beginning A to F, follow on the next week from G to K, etc.
- Vary the type of songs used:
 - Some hymns addressed to God
 - Some gospel songs
 - Testimony of fellow Christians
 - Choruses
- Take a poll of your group's favorites. Sing the top five. Ask someone to give a testimony and tell why the song is a favorite.

- Survey your community in a similar way and invite the community to come and sing their favorite songs during a “sing along” program.

SCRIPTURE READING

- Have three or four readers alternate.
- Have one or more individuals memorize verses or parts of a passage to recite for the Scripture reading.
- Have a passage read responsively (by guys and girls, or by the two sides of the room).
- Sing your Scripture reading by devoting this period to singing Scripture choruses.
- Use different translations of versions.

PRAYER TIME

- Call for volunteers if your group is spiritually advanced enough to respond.
- Call for sentence prayers.
- Secure prayer requests from the group and list them on a chalkboard.
- Don't always call on the limited few who usually lead prayer. Encourage others to participate.
- Prepare for your prayer time in different ways:
 - By reading selected Scriptures
 - By sharing prayer promises
 - By sharing prayer exhortations, etc
 - By singing an appropriate prayer hymn at the start and close of the prayer period

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Use publicity skits or pantomimes.
- Present in newscast style.
- Use two people, giving announcement in unison or different parts of it alternately.
- Use flash cards.
- Short chalk talk by your group artist.
- Plan interruptions. Make them without introduction over the p.a. system with a hidden microphone. (Be sure to use good judgment in spotting these so the devotional spirit is not broken.) Planned interruptions can also be made from the floor as young people stand up and speak audibly.

SPECIAL MUSIC

- Use vocalists and instrumentalists separately and together.
- Use soloists and ensembles occasionally.
- Have special music woven into the program, unannounced.
- Screen special music to avoid unacceptable musical renditions.

MESSAGE TIME

- Dialogue
- One speaker or multiple speakers
- Interview
- Discussion (round table, open forum, or panel)
- Object lessons (even for teens, when geared to their level)
- Chalk talk
- Charts
- Question box or quiz
- Live texting

Senior Youth Ministries (SYM) Activities

AY society features

Certain distinctive SYM features have been developed as a means of enlarging vision, instilling Christian ideals, and guiding in service.

Participation in some form of SYM activity is absolutely essential to arouse the interest and promote the growth of the individual Adventist youth in the life and work of the SYM and the church.

An SYM that expects to accomplish something definite during the year should focus on certain lines of work and direct its promotion toward those lines, maintaining a proper balance in the various classes of activity. Every member should be encouraged to engage in one or more of the activities listed as “features” of the SYM. These may be classified as noted below.

Upreach features

- Morning Watch
- Bible Year
- Encounter Series
- Prayers Groups
- AY Week of Prayer

Educational features

- Youth Ministry Training
- AYM Book Club
- AYM Leadership Club and activities
- Nature Clubs
- Hobby Clubs
- AYM Heritage of Truth Award

Outreach features

- SYM Congresses and Rallies
- SYM Voice of Youth
- Prayer and Personal Workers' Group
- Christian Help Group
- Super Mission/Impact Projects Literature and Correspondence Groups
- Other Witnessing Groups
- Ingathering Singing Groups (in season)
- Temperance Teams
- Community and Disaster Service Groups

Fellowship features

- Society Social Gatherings
- SYM Camps Young Married Couples' Club
- Senior Singles Club Retreats
- Recreational Occasions; singing festivals, hikes, excursions (to the hills, woods, swamps, seashore, to study birds, trees, insects, and to places of historical interest)

A large SYM will be able to foster more phases of work than a small SYM. But it is better to settle upon a few balanced features and promote them vigorously for a specified length of time (say for three months, six months, or an entire year), than to drift along carrying random activities, with no strong effort upon anything in particular.

It is good that every Adventist youth follows the Morning Watch, Bible Year, or Encounter Series.

Group witnessing

The importance of witnessing groups in the local AY Society cannot be overemphasized.

It is the essential unit of our world organization through which active work is done. Over and over again, Spirit of Prophecy urges that the young people of the church organize themselves into bands (groups) for service.

By associating together in groups, young people learn teamwork and find inspiration and happy fellowship in service. As groups they are to:

- Pray together
- Study together
- Plan together
- Work together

Personalized Planning for the Local Church

“Let all things be done decently and in order” (1 Corinthians 14:40).

Pattern for planning

The forward-looking church youth leader knows that planning is essential and necessary for the establishment and development of an effective ministry of upreach, outreach, programming, and recreation. But too often, either through procrastination or lack of understanding, the basic steps of good planning are not put into practice. The following steps should be considered in establishing a balanced activity in the areas that most affect the youth in church relationships.

Things to consider

Who—To whom are you trying to minister . . . senior youth and young adults? Know their age, gender, likes, dislikes, family relationship, and needs. These factors can be discovered only through a church-wide interest survey or by questioning the members.

Why—The church’s philosophy of planning, which includes goals for its program ministry, should come together in the actual planning process. A program should never be planned just to have something listed on the calendar. Each activity should have a specific purpose and goal.

What—Once you determine why you are planning, you can determine what activities will most effectively fulfill that purpose.

When—Determine the most appropriate time for each ministry in the weekly, monthly, and yearly calendar of the church so that the majority of the people to whom you seek to minister can participate.

Where—Plan the ministries according to the resources and facilities available, as well as the potential and capability of individual members.

How—Involve your youth leadership, church officers, and a variety of church members in studying, planning, and implementing the program.

Steps to success

The conference youth director

Invite the conference/mission youth director to make an appointment with the church pastor and/or the church youth leader to describe and share the kind of service the department can offer. This person can help you establish tailor-made and ongoing youth activities in Senior Youth Ministry programming, outreach, and recreational ministries. After you have met and discussed ways to work together,

ask the pastor for permission to meet with the church board and youth leadership, and request a convenient time to meet.

The church board and youth leadership

A presentation to the church board and youth leadership is made by the conference/mission youth director, detailing the services and materials available in helping to design a tailor-made program for the local church according to its resources, potential, and capabilities. At this time, the conference youth director informs the board and youth leadership that they will need a minimum of one planning session with the youth director for each phase of ministry in which Senior Youth Ministries chooses to become involved. Other meetings will be required to detail specific areas of operation. These are local church functions.

Upon acceptance of the plan, the youth director will ask the church board and youth leadership to appoint a working committee to join the youth director at an appointed date to begin organizing the ministries organization.

Reference material

Some reference materials are essential to planning a local youth ministry, which includes programming, outreach, and recreational activities. Some of these are listed here for reference purposes.

Church membership directory

Planners need an up-to-date membership list to refer to as they organize committees. The church clerk should provide a current listing.

Church officers list

A list of church officers is also a reference item required by the various committees, especially when personnel are selected for long-range planning.

Conference yearly calendar

The calendar of events planned by conference/mission and its departments should be available. This list should include camp meeting, Bible conferences, retreats, school calendar, seminars, rallies, congresses, Pathfinder fairs, and camporee dates. Other major church activities should be included also. Only with this information at hand can an annual and ongoing program be instituted that will not interfere with other events.

Non-baptized family members

Special attention can be focused toward this group in programs planned for selected times throughout the year with the objective of stimulating a commitment and decision for Christ.

Active youth and young adults

A record of active youth and young adults is necessary for the programming committee's reference, as well as for planning outreach ministry and recreational activities.

Inactive youth and young adults

This is a critical list, for it relates to the programming of outreach ministries and recreational ministries with the intention of involving these youth once again in fellowship.

Members studying away from home

Programming and recreational committees will be interested in this group, in utilizing their talents and in providing activity that brings them into group fellowship, particularly during short holidays and vacation periods when they are home.

Recreation/meeting facilities

Both recreational and programming committees will be interested in a complete listing of every beach, hiking trail, canoeing area, and other government or privately run facilities. As programs develop in both areas in the long-term concept, proper bookings can be made and a balanced activity created for the entire year.

Working committee

The SYM committees will first review the yearly calendars of the local church, school, and conference to determine the number and dates for youth meetings, outreach, and recreational ministry activities that can be accommodated for the year without interfering with any conference, church, or school appointments. Having determined available dates, the committee can then give priority to selecting activities that best serve the youth.

Program resources

The SYM committees will function much more effectively and efficiently if the conference/mission youth director provides resources for the members to evaluate. It is suggested that when the committee studies youth meeting programs and upreach activities, the following resources be provided:

How to Add Sparkle to Your SYM Meetings

This material will provide a multitude of ideas for varying the youth meeting format and content, as well as variation in each individual part or process of the meeting. It will act as a springboard for many programs, especially if the committee divides into small groups and creates its own design, which can then be presented to the committee as a whole. Take thirty minutes for this activity to give the committee an idea of how easy programming can be.

Youth ministry *Accent* magazine

For those interested in the development of a play or drama-type program, Youth Ministry *Accent* contains this type of material in the “programs” section.

Youth speakers

A list of youth-oriented speakers who specialize in areas of concern to youth should be available. The conference/mission youth director and the pastor can usually furnish this information.

School music or specialty groups

Sources of high school, academy, or college groups who specialize in Christian youth programs, or who can schedule special musical groups, will be helpful. If one is not available, make your own list and save it for future use.

Division, union, and local conference

Ask your conference/mission office for a bibliography of the division, union, and local conference resource library and youth leaders’ seminar materials.

Bible quizzes

Bible-quiz resource books will make the design of a quiz program exceptionally easy. The conference ABC usually has a good supply of these.

Youth emphasis week and commitment celebration

Copies of SYM Week of Prayer materials (available in the fourth-quarter issue of Youth Ministry *Accent*) will be a real asset in shaping and designing a meaningful spiritual thrust for this significant week.

Retreats and seminars

Bible conferences and study seminars create dynamic small-group situations and opportunities to study areas of youth concern that other situations do not afford.

Outreach ministries resources

The outreach ministries committee will desire and appreciate supportive materials as it designs a program that will stimulate presently active members and reach out to inactive and non-church youth. Establish short-term, easily reached objectives in the early stages of outreach.

Recreational ministries resources

When the committee considers a well-balanced recreational program, it will want to refer to recreation and meeting-place or facilities directories and to the AY Society calendar of events that will list the programming and outreach functions of the society. (See “reference material” section.) In order to select activities that complement and enhance the two other major ministries of the organization, the committee will want to consider the following:

- Activities that match the season of the year and available facilities.
- A balance of programs that does not overdo any one activity to the detriment or exclusion of others.
- Selection of activities that will permit the largest number possible to participate.
- Group activities rather than activities for pairs or couples.

Senior Youth Ministries Leadership Training

The SYM Leadership Training Manual covers all that is required to lead either an Ambassador Ministry or Young Adult Ministry.

Purpose

The purpose of the SYM leadership program is to train young people to work in all aspects of church leadership. Not an autonomous program, it is an integral part of the AYM program.

Organization

Under the auspices of the AYM, an SYM leadership club can function in every church. The officers of such a club are nominated by the AYM and ratified by the church board. The term of service is for one year, and these officers are responsible to the SYM for their activities and programming. If the club is to have activities away from the local congregation, church board approval must be sought.

Officers of the club

The officers of the SYM leadership club are:

Chairperson

This person, appointed by the SYM, should function as liaison with the AYM and represent the activities of the SYM leadership club on the AYM committee. It is the responsibility of this person to plan and conduct activities for the club.

Secretary

This person is in charge of all records of progress of club members. The secretary also is a member of the SYM Leaders Council that helps to plan and organize activities for the club.

Treasurer

The treasurer is in charge of collecting, recording, and passing all funds to the church treasurer, since the church treasurer is the custodian of all church funds. The treasurer also is a member of the SYM Leaders Council.

Curriculum

The SYM leadership club is made up of those youth who are receiving special training in the knowledge of church leadership. These are being trained in all aspects of church governance and as such must be thoroughly familiar with the requirements of each church officer, procedures of church leadership, and church policies as specified in the Church Manual.

The Church Manual is the basic educational tool in some divisions. Where a handbook for church leaders has been prepared, this also should be studied as it has more information than the Church Manual. In addition to the Church Manual, the Pastor's and Elder's Handbook for Youth Ministry can be a rich resource for training seminars.

The main emphasis of this program is to prepare leadership for the AY Society, but it also teaches about all other leadership functions in the church. It is expected that this training will give basic information about church elders, treasurers, Sabbath school superintendents, and all other church officers.

Uniforms and investiture

Where necessary, a special uniform can be worn by those in the SYM leadership club. The color of the uniform is set by the division. The international colors are gray pants and white shirt with burgundy tie for male members, and gray skirt and white blouse for female members.

The SYM emblem is worn on the left sleeve—two inches below the top seam. The SYM pin is to be worn in the center of the shirt or blouse pocket. Those wearing the Master Guide uniform wear the SYM emblem and the SYM pin on the sash, for these are not part of the Master Guide uniform.

Meeting Fellowship Needs

Some experts claim that one of the strongest attributes of youth ministry is a sense of community that the young people enjoy as a result of fellowship with one another.

Christian community, commitment, conversion, and Christian growth don't just happen; they cannot be legislated or forced. They are gained by:

- Growth that usually comes by relationships with others.
- Developing a relational and holistic approach to meeting youth needs through relationships forged out in fellowship.
- Having young people come to the place where they can learn to help one another to grow through listening and sharing, learning and supporting.

This level of relational fellowship must be developed over a period of time. The goal is to lead the group through the various stages of relational fellowship until these needs can be met so that true personal and Christian growth can occur in the youth groups.

Merely feeding information into the young mind is not sufficient; it has to be internalized.

Why the need for fellowship?

- Because it is fun—at this stage of life young people need fun, friendship, and enjoyment.
- Because it acts as a magnet to draw young people to our programs. (Other outside influences will use this magnet if we don't.)
- Because as we develop the bonds of relational fellowship over time, they can be used to meet the deepest needs of the youth and lead to their growth as young Christians.

A Biblical perspective

God created us as social beings. Right in the beginning, in Genesis 2:18, God said, “It is not good that man should be alone.” The human personality has been beautifully formed by God so that our living, loving, and emotional growing is all developed within relationships.

Fellowship answers youth needs

Let's face it, when we strip away all the psychology, fellowship is FUN, but it is also the catalyst for working out and providing answers (even if subconsciously) to young people's needs.

From the time the young enter the adolescent age group, they begin to have an inner struggle for independence from parents and start to seek their future. More than ever they need understanding parents and other people around them who will accept, affirm, listen, trust, participate, and help them learn to make their own decisions. During this adolescent period young people are going through the awkward stage of pulling away from having all their decisions made for them and becoming individuals. During later teen years they often must forge their own futures and make many of their own decisions. It is sometimes a time of turmoil, and many different needs arise during the period. These needs include:

SELF-ESTEEM

An inward need to be accepted and feel important in the eyes of others, especially peers and parents.

SELF-CONFIDENCE

The need to know that “I can handle it, and you don’t have to do it all for me.”
A sense of knowing that they can use their own abilities well.

SELF-REGARD

The need to care about how they look, feel, and think in relation to everyone else.
As one father said when his daughter got married, “Well, I lost my daughter in marriage, but I gained a bathroom!” How do you think the daughter felt? (The assumption is that girls spend much time dressing up.)

SELF-WORTH

The need to know that their comments, feelings, and thoughts really do count and can make a difference. Never should a comment be made fun of or carelessly cast aside in a group discussion.

CHRISTIAN STANDARDS

A time of “checking out their parents’ values” and the need to affirm them as their own.

SEXUALITY

Now that they are becoming acutely aware of sexuality, there is a need to learn how to handle it, as well as for developing skills in relating in a healthy way to members of the opposite sex. This is when group activities are very important for healthy and safer relationships.

FAITH

Now that the moving-away-from-parents transition has begun in some areas, there is a definite need for young people to learn to “grow their own faith” through meaningful experiences with God and their world.

Fellowship is vital

Use fellowship to meet youth needs and allow them the freedom to grow. We want to plan, design, and structure our fellowship time so we can meet the needs of every young person in every area of their lives—emotional, intellectual, physical, and spiritual—and so these needs are met in structured sharing in relationships. There are five stages of relationship, and we need to understand what the stages are and how we can lead the group through to the deeper stages so that growth can occur.

Five Stages of a Relationship

Stage one

This is the “Hi, how are you” casual relationship where we meet but don’t get too close. There is no sharing of self at all, and everyone remains safely in the isolation of his or her own world. It is all rather superficial, and yet an important part of the process of stage one is the first tentative step toward relationship building.

Stage two

This is the head talk stage. We now begin to talk, but only at an intellectual level where we share facts. In other words, we talk at a head level only and expose almost nothing of ourselves. We remain content to tell others what so-and-so has done and said, but we offer no personal commentary on these facts. We seek shelter in gossip items, conversation pieces, and little narrations about others. We give nothing of ourselves and invite nothing from others in return. (Unfortunately, many groups never proceed beyond this point.)

Stage three

We are now at the point of beginning to take some tentative risks. We begin sharing some of our ideas and revealing some of our judgments and decisions. At this stage we want to be sure that others accept our ideas, judgments, and decisions. If they raise their eyebrows or narrow their eyes we will probably retreat to safer ground or run for cover—silence; or worse, we will begin to say things we suspect that they want us to say. We will try to be what pleases them.

Stage four

This is the heart, or feeling, stage. When we reach this stage we cease to play games, but begin to share not only our ideas but our feelings and emotions. This emotional stage often determines what you do with what you think or imagine. It is at this stage that real growth begins to occur.

It takes time to arrive at this stage with any youth group, for it involves an element of risk for the young. They are not prepared to run the risk of sharing their true feelings or emotions until they have progressed through the other three stages and have been allowed to feel comfortable with responses from others.

Stage five

This is the deep and authentic stage. Stage five relationships will be based on absolute openness and honesty. To achieve this stage will probably require a lifetime. Only a handful of people will reach it, and therefore it may not be for the youth group. However, as we lead our young people through the first four stages of relationship, we will be helping to acquire some skills that are necessary to achieve this ultimate goal in relationships.

Recreation

Healthful recreation is a vital aspect of youth development, and much can be gained by providing healthful and instructive recreation for our young people.

The principal objective of recreation should not be merely to occupy time, but rather to provide wholesome change of activity, which will lead to fellowship, healthful activity, and intellectual stimulation.

Definition of recreation

“Recreation, when true to its name, re-creation, tends to strengthen and build up. Calling us aside from our ordinary cares and occupations, it affords refreshment for mind and body, and thus enable us to return with new vigor to the earnest work of life.” (*Messages to Young People*, p. 362)

Recreation is necessary

“Recreation is needful to those who are engaged in physical labor, and is still more essential for those whose labor is principally mental. It is not essential to our salvation, nor to the glory of God, to keep the mind laboring constantly and excessively, even upon religious themes.” (*Messages to Young People*, p. 392)

“It is the privilege and duty of Christians to seek to refresh their spirits and invigorate their bodies by innocent recreation, with the purpose of using their physical and mental powers to the glory of God.” (*Messages to Young People*, p. 364)

We should provide innocent pleasures: “Youth cannot be made as sedate and grave as old age, the child as sober as the sire. While sinful amusements are condemned, as they should be, let parents, teachers, and guardians for youth provide in their stead innocent pleasures, which will not taint or corrupt the morals. Do not bind down the young to rigid rules and restraints that will lead them to feel themselves oppressed, and to break over and rush into paths of folly and destruction.” (*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 335)

Proofs of true recreation

“Prove all things, hold fast that which is good” (1 Thess. 5:21). Can you ask the blessing of God upon it?” (See *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 337; *Messages to Young People*, p. 386)

Does it take you nearer to Christ or take away your desire to pray?
(*Messages to Young People*, pp. 407, 408)

Promote integrity and self-control? (*Messages to Young People*, p. 412, 415, 416)

Facilitates resistance to temptation (Christ's Object Lessons, pp. 49, 50)?
What influence will these amusements have on physical and mental health? (*Messages to Young People*, p. 379)

Does it prepare us better for our daily duties? Does it have the tendency to refine, purify, make virtuous, or does it lead to pride in dress, frivolity, infatuation, and vulgarity (*Messages to Young People*, p. 382; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 460, 461; *Counsel to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, pp. 366-368)? Is the time spent worth while? (*Messages to Young People*, pp. 373, 379)

Does it develop courtesy, generosity, and more respect for others, or does it wound their self-respect? Does it encourage kindness, or does it lead to power and brutality? (*Education*, p. 210)

Recreation or amusement?

"There is a distinction between recreation and amusement. Recreation, when true to its name, re-creation, tends to strengthen and build up. . . . Amusement, on the other hand, is sought for the sake of pleasure, and is often carried to excess; it absorbs the energies that are required for useful work, and thus proves a hindrance to life's true success."
(*Education*, p. 207)

"Between the associations of the followers of Christ for Christian recreation and worldly gatherings for pleasure and amusement will exist a marked contrast. Instead of prayer and the mentioning of Christ and sacred things, will be heard from the lips of worldings the silly laugh and the trifling conversation. The idea is to have a general high time. Their amusements commence in folly and end in vanity. Our gatherings should be so conducted, and we should so conduct ourselves, that when we return to our homes we can have a conscience void of offense toward God and man . . ." (*Messages to Young People*, pp. 385, 386)

"Any amusement in which you can engage asking the blessing of God upon it in faith, will not be dangerous. But any amusement which disqualifies you for secret prayer. . . .or for taking part in the prayer meeting, is not safe, but dangerous." (*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 337)

“Amusements are doing more to counteract the working of the Holy Spirit than anything else, and the Lord is grieved.” (*Messages to Young People*, p. 371)

Satan “. . . seeks to fill the minds of men with a desire for worldly amusement, that they may have no time to ask themselves the question, How is it with my soul?” (*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 337)

Amusements problematic to some Christians

- Games that lead to gambling. (*Messages to Young People*, p. 392)
- Card-playing and other games of chance. (*Messages to Young People*, p. 379, 380, 392)
- Attending theater, drama, and operas. (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 459, 460)
- Dances. (*Messages to Young People*, pp. 392, 398)
- Commercialized sports events and competition. (*Messages to Young People*, p. 213)
- Television and videos of theatrical releases or productions that are not in keeping with Christian standards. (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 459, 460)

It is important to remember that today's battle is for the mind, and whoever controls the mind controls the person. By beholding we are changed. Often this takes place subconsciously and imperceptibly until what a person once rejected becomes acceptable. TV has changed the thinking of the western world especially, and the Seventh-day Adventist Church has been insidiously affected also. We must “gird up the loins of the mind” as Paul admonished.

Social Programs

The human race has strong social urges and needs; people are made that way. We can be thankful to our Creator that in His wisdom this desire was built in as an integral part of man's personality and makeup. Mingling with one another in social contacts is vital to development, and to neglect these contacts may leave the individual with a one-sided, warped personality.

Social desires are woven into every fabric of human life. The desire to be together on a social basis is natural and should not be neglected. We should recognize this need and learn how to use it effectively. When this need is neglected, the young people are left to themselves and may find entertainment in dangerous or questionable areas.

A strong social program conducted by the church in the proper way will eliminate

many temptations for our young people and will help hold them close to the church.

Suggestions for planning a social gathering

The chairperson of the social committee should call for a meeting of its members with enough time to plan well before the date on which the social meeting will be held. The chairperson of the committee should think of some ideas to suggest to the committee in this first meeting. During this meeting the committee should decide the type of social to be held, a theme should be chosen, and there should be an exchange of ideas.

The work should be distributed among the members. A group should be in charge of planning the games and the program, others should be in charge of decorating the place where the gathering will be held, and others should be assigned to send out the invitations and plan the advertising. Members of these groups should accept and fulfill the tasks to which they have been assigned, keeping in mind that games and all other parts of the social should be related to the general theme that the committee chooses.

Five or six days before the social event is to be held, the planning committee should meet again to discuss their work and to make sure that everything is ready. The youth leader must work with the chairperson and the group to be sure that everything is ready on time.

Advertising for a social should be displayed several weeks in advance. If there are invitations, they should be distributed a week or two before the event because youth today have many activities and appointments. The invitation should indicate the theme of the meeting in order to awaken curiosity, but it should not include the program.

The leader should carefully arrange the order of the games and plan for an easy transition from one game to another. All the materials for the games should be prepared and be readily available at the moment they will be needed. The end of the gathering should be well planned, and if possible be related to the theme, so everyone will leave with the feeling of having had good Christian fellowship.

Advertising

Good advertising not only makes people aware of the program but also builds an atmosphere of anticipation for the event. Use several different methods of announcing your social such as:

- Notice in church bulletin
- Church announcement at eleven-o'clock hour
- Posters in conspicuous places

- Written invitations
- Personal phone contacts

Simple-but-attractive invitations make a person feel especially invited and that his or her presence is truly desired. General announcements and phone calls are also effective. If possible, place posters in conspicuous places so that all may know of the plans even if they are not able to attend. Make your first announcement far enough in advance so that people can arrange their programs and will not have to miss the social because of conflicting plans.

Who should attend?

This will depend largely upon the local situation and the type of social planned. In churches where there is a sufficient number of young people, it would be a good thing to have socials beamed at specific age groups. Junior and senior youth often prefer to be with their own age group. Where possible, plan separate social functions for junior and senior young people. There are times when the social should be planned as a family affair and should include all age groups of the church.

Young people should feel free to invite non-church member friends to attend their socials. If done in a proper attitude, much good can come from this opportunity to be friendly with non-member neighbors. Remember, it is not a time to preach. Our youth will enjoy these friends, and their presence will make a contribution to the gathering.

“Christians should be the most cheerful and happy people that live. . . . God is their father and their everlasting friend. . . . All who have indeed become acquainted, by experimental knowledge, with the love and tender compassion of our Heavenly Father will import light and joy wherever they may be. Their presence and influence will be to their associates as the fragrance of sweet flowers, because they are linked to God and heaven, and the purity and exalted loveliness of heaven are communicated through them to all that are brought within their influence.” (*Messages to Young People*, p. 363)

“Gatherings for social intercourse are made in the highest degree profitable and instructive when those who meet together have the love of God glowing in their hearts; when they meet to exchange thoughts in regard to the word of God, or to consider methods for advancing His work and doing good to their fellow men. When the Holy Spirit is regarded as a welcome guest at these gatherings, when nothing is said or done to grieve it away. God is honored, and those who meet together are refreshed and strengthened.” (*Messages to Young People*, p. 387)

When?

There is no commandment or decree stating, "Thou shalt have a social at certain specified times." Attentive church leaders see the need and recognize in the social a valuable tool, and they will not permit this tool to lie around and rust. Some churches see that a good, wholesome social program is planned for practically every Saturday night of the year. In other places a schedule like this would be difficult or impossible. Many have allowed this area to become completely neglected and are doing practically nothing of a social nature for their young people—this is tragic; where such conditions exist, a real effort should be made to change the situation.

Where should these gatherings be held?

Where to meet will depend entirely upon the local situation and the type of activity planned. Outdoor get-togethers are good. Perhaps some member has a large lawn that could be made available. A picturesque spot by a lake would be ideal. Indoor meeting places might include the church fellowship hall, school gyms, recreation halls, basements of individual homes, or public places available for such gatherings.

Finances

Many will wonder how they are to finance their gatherings. As a rule, part of the expense money of the society is used for AY gatherings. In schools the administration usually allows a certain budget for recreation and entertainment. If you do not want to use expense money, or if it is not sufficient to cover the costs, a charge might be made or an offering taken, but people should know about it before they come to the social.

Plan well in advance

The success of the church's recreational program depends upon good planning. This includes long- and short-range planning. Establish a definite schedule, outlining the recreational activities for at least a six-month period. This will not only improve the program, but will also make planning a pleasure.

How?

How can we have social gatherings that will attract and appeal to young people and yet be in keeping with a code of high moral principles? This is a question for prayerful study with an open mind—genuinely attempting to see the problem from a youth's point of view. It is not necessary to compromise principle to entertain, but on the other hand we don't have to remain stilted and sanctimonious in order to please God. Socials do not have to be sensational to be profitable and pleasing. Some of the simplest activities entered into enthusiastically often prove to be the most enjoyable.

Who should conduct?

Ordinarily the social get-together should be planned and conducted under the direction of the AY committee, with leadership given by the society's fellowship chairperson or another person appointed by the committee. Usually the AY committee seeks a social or fellowship chairperson who has special talents in social graces, who is a spiritual person, a happy Christian interested in young people, and a good mixer. The chairperson must give special study to the recreational needs of the church youth. It will be this group's responsibility to make specific assignments and get the program on the way.

Work of committees

Details of the program should be worked out beforehand. If properties are needed, select a "props" committee to see that they are available and ready when needed.

The decoration committee has a large responsibility to see that the meeting place is as attractive as possible. Simple, inexpensive decorations should be the rule.

Provide a reception committee so that everyone is made welcome as soon as they enter. This committee can also introduce some of the newcomers to help them get acquainted and make them feel at home. The refreshment committee should manage the ordering, preparation, and serving of food.

Suggestions for leading out in a social meeting

Only one person should be recognized as leader of the social gathering; committee members are helpers for the leader.

All the members of the committee should arrive at least thirty minutes before the meeting starts to be sure that everything is ready.

Much of the success of the meeting will depend on the way the social begins. An introductory activity or game should be planned for the guests who arrive early. Begin on time.

Make every effort to make it possible for everyone present to participate. If the activities are well organized, those present will be encouraged to become involved.

The leader should plan eight or nine games or activities that he or she knows very well. If a new game is to be used, the leader should study it until he or she knows it very well and is able to explain it clearly to the group. The games and the program in general should be planned in such a way as to have a good distribution among active games, quiet games, etc. No game should last too long, and the change from one game to another should be made smoothly. The person directing the games or other activities should station himself or herself correctly

to give the instructions. If directing a circle game, the leader will form part of the circle; if the activity requires two parallel lines, the leader will stand at one end between the two lines. After explaining the game, the leader will give opportunity for questions to be asked. If some do not understand the game, it is better to repeat the instructions and demonstrate what is to be done.

There should be no active games after refreshments have been served. End the meeting on time with a brief closing program, perhaps by forming the group into a circle for prayer and/or singing.

Return whatever has been borrowed, and put away the decorations and other things that can be utilized at another social gathering.

In order to learn from the evening's events, the committee should have a post-social evaluation to discuss if and how things could have been better planned. Such a meeting should help as plans are made for future social events.

Rules for planning and conducting a social program

Pick a theme. The objectives of the social will be realized more definitely if the social is planned around a theme. Keep in mind the season of the year. The theme will set the pace for invitations, announcements, publicity, materials and equipment, decorations, activities, and devotional or witnessing activities. Even the place of your social will be dictated somewhat by the selection of a theme.

Be specific in your plans. Assign definite duties to each member of the committee. Youth will measure up to your expectations if you are specific and expect and encourage the best in them. Don't neglect the details of successful planning. Make certain that each person clearly understands his or her responsibility, and you will have real team spirit.

Complete readiness. As stated before, have everything and every person assisting in complete readiness at least thirty minutes before time to begin. The chairperson and members of the social committee should have a brief prayer before the others arrive. This will do much to give a spiritual alertness to the social committee. If the social is an indoor function, "greeters" should be stationed at the doors to welcome all corners.

Social registry. Remember that a social is an opportunity to encourage AY, Sabbath school, and church attendance and membership. An attractive registration book or registration game of some type may be used to secure names and address. This will serve as a source for follow-through on new members and a check on the "reaching factor" of your social to your own youth. Also, it would be well to include brief facts on the type of social, color or decoration schemes, number attending, and any other information that may help in future planning and

evaluation. Guests can be introduced between activities—telling who they are, where they are from, who brought them—and made to sense the friendship of the group. Sometime during the social an announcement could be made about the next youth program and the guests can be invited to attend.

Begin on time. This is the best advertisement for the future. Choose an activity to begin with in which a few can participate so that the “on time” arrivals are not sitting around with nothing to do but wait. If they wait once they may never be on time again.

Signal for silence. Do not try to shout anyone in announcing activities. Never try to talk above other voices, but stand or sit and wait for silence. You will have no discipline problem if you can discipline yourself to wait the few moments necessary for silence the first time.

Clean-up crew. This responsibility, as all others, should be rotated during the calendar year. Those attending the social should always leave a place cleaner than when they found it.

Conclusions

Recreation by means of service

The best recreation is that which is useful to others. “No recreation helpful only to themselves will prove so great a blessing to the children and youth as that which makes them helpful to others.” (*Education*, p. 212)

“As a rule, the exercise most beneficial to the youth will be found in useful employment. . . . The best recreation will be found in some line of effort that is useful. That which trains the hand to helpfulness, and teaches the young to bear their share of life’s burdens, is most effective in promoting the growth of mind and character.” (*Education*, p. 215)

Oftentimes involvement in some community project provides opportunity for fellowship and meaningful social activity. In recent years, short mission trips sponsored by the local conference youth departments have brought great blessings to those youth who participated. As one girl testified, “I never knew what it was to be a Christian until I gave myself away in service.”

What not to forget

When committee members study a well-balanced program of recreation they will need to have access to a list of places where these activities could be held and a general calendar of all events to be held during the year.

In order to select the activities contemplated, the committee could take into consideration the following:

- Plan activities according to the season of the year and the facilities available.
- Make sure the programs are well balanced, not overdoing any activity to the detriment or exclusion of others.
- Select activities that permit participation of the majority.
- Select activities that develop into groups and not into couples and pairs.
- Check game-resource books and other materials available at your library or bookstores when you organize your activities.

Mission/Service

The Emergence of a Global Youth Movement Living Radically and Dangerously in Mission and Service, Proclaiming and Demonstrating the Kingdom of God.

The third element of Adventist Youth Ministries is seen in taking the message to the whole world. The Seventh-day Adventist Church has always been global. Harnessing all the passion, energy, and resources of senior youth towards mission and service not only affirms their faith but is the Great Gospel Commission.

Senior Youth And Evangelism

Why evangelism?

When we become Christians, our greatest desire is to fulfill the command of Christ to “Go ye therefore and teach all nations.”

In witnessing of the good news of salvation, the “all nations” begins in our community. Our work as a group is to mobilize ourselves to enter into our communities and become the “salt of the earth,” giving ourselves in service to help others.

There is no more important activity for youth than witnessing. “The work above all work,—the business above all others which should draw and engage the energies of the soul,—is the work of saving souls for whom Christ has died. Make this the main, the important work of your life.” (*Messages to Young People*, p. 227)

We will have joy in relating to the people in our communities and they will respond to the love we offer them. We can do this only through the power of the Holy Spirit. There is no higher work than this anywhere.

What can we do to have our youth group experience this joy? “Christ’s method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Savior mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, ‘Follow me.’” (*Christian Service*, p. 119)

Generally we divide evangelism into external and internal evangelism. It not only deals with going to others, but it also has to do with the work to be done among the youth of the church. The fact that the youth attend church does not necessarily mean that they are converted. “Not all can go as missionaries to foreign lands, but all can be home missionaries in their families and neighborhoods.” (*Adventist Home*, p. 485)

Outreach

“From town to town, from city to city, from country to country, the warning message is to be proclaimed, not with outward display, but in the power of the Spirit, by men of faith.” (*Evangelism*, p. 19)

It is necessary to draw near to the people through personal effort. If less time were given to sermonizing and more time to personal ministry, we would see greater results. The problems of the poor would be alleviated, the sick would be cared for, and those who suffer, those who grieve, would be comforted, the ignorant would be instructed, and the unlearned counseled.

“We are to weep with those that weep, and rejoice with those that rejoice. Accompanied by the power of persuasion, the power of prayer, the power of the love of God, this word will not, cannot, be without fruit.” (*Ministry of Healing*, pp. 143, 144)

We are promised power for witnessing for Christ. In action witnessing we will have the joy of doing something for others and will rejoice in a close relationship with the Lord.

Public evangelism has a place in the plan of God to extend the kingdom of heaven. Notice the following:

The example and command of the Lord Jesus Christ:

“Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye, and believe the gospel.” —Mark 1:14-15

*“And Jesus came and spoke unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.
—Matthew 28:18-20*

The teachings and practice of the apostles:

*“For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.”
—1 Cor. 1:21*

“And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.” —Acts 5:42

“Now to him that is of power to establish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began.” —Rom. 16:25

The counsel of the Spirit of Prophecy:

*“To us also the commission is given. We are bidden to go forth as Christ’s messengers, to teach, instruct, and persuade men and women, to urge upon their attention the word of life. And to us also the assurance of Christ’s abiding presence is given. Whatever the difficulties with which we may have to contend, whatever the trails we may have to endure, the gracious promise is always ours, ‘Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.’” (*Evangelism*, p. 15)*

*“I saw that many souls might be saved if the young were where they ought to be. . . .” (*Messages to Young People*, p. 206)*

There is a great need to reach the vast majority of the inhabitants of this planet who have not heard the message of a soon-coming Savior.

God is calling every Seventh-day Adventist young man and woman to become soul winners, to give of themselves in service. The Lord declares, “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” (Matt. 28:20)

In every generation the youth of the Adventist Church have responded to the challenge, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel.” Today there are thousands of young people in many countries who are serving the Lord as valiantly as the pioneers did.

In 1902, in the General Conference Bulletin, Ellen White first predicted that the youth of the church, when rightly trained, would help to finish the work of the gospel in all the world. The prediction reads: “With such an army of workers as our youth, rightly trained, might furnish, how soon the message of a crucified, risen, and soon-coming Savior might be carried to the whole world! How soon might the end come—the end of suffering and sorrow and sin!” (*Messages to Young People*, p. 196)

This statement is a prophecy that there will be an “army” of young people to help finish the work, and that army needs to be “rightly trained.” Particularly in this time when there are so many possible ways of witnessing, we need to understand and follow right methods.

Just as in an army, soldiers have different responsibilities, so in soul-winning different methods need to be used according to different situations and the different spiritual gifts of those involved. Helping each youth to discover and use these God-given talents will bring a sense of achievement and worthiness that will make for a strong AY Society.

“Each is to work in co-operation with Christ for the salvation of souls. Not more surely is the place prepared for us in the heavenly mansions than is the special place designated on earth where we are to work for God” (*Christ’s Object Lessons*, pp. 326-327).

What happens in witnessing in the youth society often can affect the young person’s entire life and even his or her choice of life’s work.

It is evident that the Lord has a definite plan of action for the youth to follow in their witnessing. All responsible for mobilizing young people for service need to have these and other Bible principles of soul winning clearly in mind.

Planning for Mission

The challenge

“Mission” means:

- The witness of one’s personal Christian faith and experience.
- The proclamation and demonstration in life and deed of God’s everlasting gospel as His wonderful plan of salvation for all peoples.

- That this proclamation and demonstration of the saving power of Christ be a priority of every caring Adventist young person and youth group.
- A maturing believer's example, which will help to inspire other maturing believers to the degree that they are also able to inspire maturing believers.

What should we be doing?

Do Christian people have “shoulds” in their lives? You know, those things that you know you should be doing, but are not!

If there's one “should” that is consistent throughout the church, it's the “should” of sharing one's faith. With few exceptions most Christians share a common pair of feelings: responsibility to witness to friends, relatives, workmates, and classmates; and guilt that they aren't doing it.

Why? Sharing our faith is a deeply personal act and self-disclosure doesn't come easy. If self-disclosure at any level doesn't come easy than disclosing the belief in Jesus Christ that lies within the deepest part of us is, for many, going to take some doing.

Overcoming barriers

Barriers like fear, lack of know-how, relationships with unbelievers, and loneliness can cut our youth off from a satisfying and joyous experience that is, or should be, part of the Christian life. God has called us to accept His Son and Savior, Jesus Christ, to know Him and love Him, and to invite others to know and love Him too. Anyone concerned that youth become involved as Christians in all aspects of life must, then, seek to involve them in personal evangelism.

However, rather than urging and demanding “witness,” we need to discover ways to guide young people into a healthy experience where witnessing becomes a way of the everyday.

What is involved, then, in leading youth to witness?

Factors leading youth to witness

Motivation

In the first place, our motivation is to be Christ's motivation: love. “. . .the love of Christ constraineth us. . .” (2 Cor. 5:14). Christ died for us because He cared. In other words, by application, “I want to witness because I want my friends to have what I have.” In the long run, of course, love means gain. We can never out give God; the more we spend for others for His sake, the greater the blessing and joy we experience. So one of the first steps is helping young people come to know unsaved persons as friends. Today, as perhaps never before, the most effective

communicator of Jesus Christ to a young person is another young person who will love him or her and share the reality of Christ in a person-to-person relationship.

We can begin to build motivation for witness as a natural expression of the Christian's life by:

- Developing a balanced ministry in which Christian young people are growing in their own relationship with God.
- Encouraging personal involvement and the development of friendship with non-Christians.
- Providing opportunities to share Christ.
- Providing supportive relationships with other Christian youth who are committed to and personally active in sharing Christ themselves.

Know-how and a sense of surety

The youth who will witness requires basic know-how and a personal sense of surety of their own understanding of Scripture and the Christian way of life.

The basic solution to lack of witnessing know-how is also found in experience. One philosophy suggests that information should be provided as necessary, concurrently with involvement. This is probably best for developing skill in sharing. "It is not enough to show how much needs to be done, and to urge the youth to act a part. They must be taught how to labor for the Master. They must be trained, disciplined, drilled, in the best methods of winning souls to Christ. . .Let different branches of missionary effort be systematically laid out, in which they may take part, and let them be given instruction and help" (Gospel Workers, p. 210).

Where this inspired counsel has been followed, good results have taken place. There needs to be a resource person to help the youth. We cannot expect them to know the best soul-winning methods when they have had little or no experience. Repeated failures because of poor methods result in discouragement and loss of interest. In some cultures role plays and simulations have a place, and through these methods young people can discover that outreach involves active acceptance, building friendship, and natural conversation.

Message and technique

Youth are hungry for love and care that lasts and answers that work. Young people need to understand that their sincerity counts more than approach, method, or terminology.

Full-cycle personal one-to-one evangelism

One of the primary goals of youth ministry is to produce disciples of Jesus Christ (Matt. 28:19-20). One of the roles of the youth leader is to help equip and assist committed Christian young people in their task of winning and discipling their peers for Jesus Christ.

“Full-cycle evangelism” includes the following steps:

Friendship. People win people to Christ. Programs are nothing more than tools in people’s hands. The young person ventures out and builds a friendship with a non-Christian. It’s true that the Christian’s lifestyle is not to be worldly. But so often the only people who have friendships with non-Christians are other non-Christians.

Verbal witness. As friendship and trust between a believer and unbeliever develops, the Holy Spirit motivates the Christian to share verbally. The Christian may say, “You know, there’s been a change in my life. Jesus Christ has given me a real purpose for living.” The non-Christian often needs that tug.

Knowing the right time to share and avoiding religious jargon are also important. A genuine, vibrant testimony that keeps Christ central can be very powerful. Through repetition it becomes natural and easier to do.

Outreach. The next step involves the young person bringing friends to a church event or activity. Such a program should present the Christian message in a positive light and will include elements of celebration, uplift, and acceptance. The environment should be non-threatening, attractive, and appealing to the unbeliever.

Conversion. This happens when the non-Christian accepts Jesus as his or her personal Savior and Lord. This will be encouraged by friendship, attendance at meetings, studying the Scriptures, and providing opportunities for the non-Christian to respond to the convicting work of the Holy Spirit.

Body-life program. The newly converted person has opportunity to pray, worship, fellowship, and study with a core group of God’s people on a regular, week-by-week basis (Acts 2:42).

Discipleship. The new Christian’s friend (the one who has led him or her through this whole process) needs to be a Christian model and continue to spend time with the new Christian:

- discussing their spiritual lives
- reading the Scriptures and praying

- having fun-times together
- seeking Christ-centered solutions to their problems

Spiritual parenthood. This concept comes from 1 Cor. 4:14-21 and means producing disciples, spiritual offspring . . . rearing them in the ways of the Lord. At this point the Christian has become the “spiritual parent” to the new Christian. The process comes full cycle as the new Christian gains the maturity to reach out in friendship to another unbeliever. If done properly, “Full-Cycle Evangelism” can produce a bountiful harvest (Adapted from Ray Wiley, *Working With Youth*, 1982, p. 66).

A bountiful harvest?

If one Christian would win one person and then disciple that person for the next six months so that person could win and train another, at the end of six months there would be only two people. However, if those two won two more and disciplined them during the next six months, there would be four.

At the end of the first year = 4 people

At the end of 1.5 years = 8 people

At the end of 2 years = 16 people

At the end of 2.5 years = 32 people

At the end of 3 years = 64 people

At the end of 4 years = 256 people

At the end of 5 years = 1,024 people

At the end of 6 years = 4,096 people

At the end of 16 years = 4,294,967,296 people

This is more than the entire population of the world! (Adapted from Barry St. Clair, *Discipleship*, p. 52)

Where to now?—A plan of action

The youth leader or someone the committee may designate must take charge of the outreach activities of the AY Society. That person should consult the AY Executive Committee on all outreach plans and work with your pastor and church personal ministries/lay activities leader to keep them informed and to support the local church in the outreach ventures.

How should you begin? Here are a few ideas that may be of help.

Begin with a group interested in witnessing.

Small or large, an AY Society can be trained, encouraged, motivated, and released to do outreach ministry. It is a place where leadership can be defined, skills sharpened, spiritual gifts uncovered in an environment where a young person can receive the permission to risk—even with the possibility of failure. It's the setting in which you can build your core witnessing group(s).

Conduct a spiritual gifts seminar.

According to Scripture, a spiritual gift is the ability to perform a specific ministry for God under the direction of the Holy Spirit.

The plight of too many is that they are square pegs in round holes. Organizing people into specific activities can produce guilt in those who feel unable to participate. It should be affirming to discover that God appoints each of us to a specific ministry, something we can do happily and successfully for Him.

Conduct a survey to discover the most common needs in your community.

Before venturing out, you will find it very profitable to know your community and what its real needs are. A simple questionnaire devised by the church can help in this evaluation process.

Survey youth to discover their preferences in witnessing and community work.

Discover what your young people would like to do as community service. Talk with them about their interests. Help them assume responsibility for projects they choose to undertake. One way that has worked for other groups is described below. Keep in mind that this list is only a guide. Your church and community needs must be considered.

Procedure:

- Prepare copies of the “Community Service Activities” check list (see next page), one for each member of the group.
- Distribute copies of the check list, asking group members to follow the instructions carefully when completing it.
- When check lists are complete, list all projects, indicating those which are the most popular. If possible, do this in the presence of the group, using a sheet of newsprint or blackboard to tabulate responses.
- Encourage individuals to choose the project(s) that they would be willing to support. The young people must own their project.

You will need:

- A copy of the “Community Service and Witnessing Activities” check list for each member of the group
- Pens or pencils
- Newsprint and felt pens

Check List: Community Service and Witnessing Activities

The following is a list of community service and witnessing projects that young people could undertake. Check the three that would interest you most.

A.

- Visiting the sick or old people in your area
- Helping such organizations as Meals on Wheels, hospitals, nursing homes, etc.
- Assisting in programs for groups such as the visually and physically handicapped
- Collecting money for organizations like the Red Cross, the blind, handicapped
- Cleaning up a recreational area or park
- Visiting backslidden youth
- Visiting needy or bereaved families
- Other (describe)

B.

- Ministry to singles
- Vacation Bible Schools
- Programs in hospitals, prisons, and orphanages
- Working with a drama team
- Singing Ministry
- Camping Ministry—Foster children, the blind, etc.
- Friendship teams—visiting homes in twos
- Distribution of literature and follow-up
- Voice of Youth evangelism
- Revelation or Daniel seminars
- “Five Day Plan to Stop Smoking”
- Stress management seminars

___ Cooking classes

___ Other (describe)

Assess the results of the Spiritual Gifts Inventory, the Community Survey, and the Youth Preferences.

Share these findings with your youth group and indicate clearly what directions members wish to take. Depending on the size of the group, there could be several projects or just one or two.

Elect group leaders

Break your larger group into smaller groups. Members will identify with the group project in which they have an interest. These small groups can then elect leaders. Alternatively, a group may prefer a collective leadership or consensus arrangement.

Provide training and resources

These may be readily available or created to meet the requirements of the strategy. This could well necessitate inviting the expertise of a resource person not directly connected to the group.

Set objectives; plan and try something

Begin to answer the question, "Why are we doing this?" For example: "We are going to run a Five Day Plan to Stop Smoking in this new suburb so we can build bridges to the community."

After thorough planning and consultation with your church pastor and church board, announce that you're in business through newspaper advertising, flyers, church bulletins, or whatever is most appropriate and effective.

Evaluate

Projects should be continually assessed. What is going well (strengths)? Why? What is not going well (weaknesses)? What changes should we make? Are we meeting our objectives? For example: "Is this Five Day Plan building bridges to an unbelieving community?"

Flexibility is essential. Be willing to change, adapt, and compromise and, if necessary, try a new approach.

Ideas for outreach

Here are some ideas for outreach. You will think of more.

Action Line

Form a small church team of people who are willing to phone fellow youth—especially the lonely—at a particular given time.

Birthday party for Jesus

During the Christmas holiday, invite the neighborhood kids to a party. Each child brings a gift. Upon presenting the gift they are told, “When you give a gift to one of the least of these (like poor children in an orphanage) you are giving that gift to Me (Jesus).” After the party the gifts are collected and distributed to unfortunates at the appropriate time.

Adopt a grandparent

Visit a convalescent center or retirement home. A young person can select an elderly person as a “foster grandparent” and visit that person on a regular basis—perhaps even take him or her out occasionally.

Bible study

Organize a group of youth to give Bible studies. It might be well for the group to begin by studying church doctrines together before inviting others to join them.

Branch Sabbath Schools

Develop a way of helping non-Adventists with a program similar to the Sabbath school.

CLASP (Concerted Love Action for Special People)

CLASP young people do great things for the Lord “silently,” that is, they perform acts that say “we care.” For example, they write encouraging letters to those who are sick, to bereaved families, contacts in jail, disappointed people, former Adventists, etc.

Caroling

Caroling is one way of raising funds for the needy and for community causes such as the Crippled Children’s Society, the blind, a home for the elderly, and so forth.

Camps for handicapped

Camps for handicapped are becoming a regular feature in our church. For a real growth experience the youth could sign up as an instructor or counselor.

Community services

The purpose of this phase is to present Christ to the community through activities such as the following:

- Distribute gifts of clothing and food
- Help an elderly couple clean or fix their house or yard
- Offer yourself for volunteer service to the Red Cross or other similar organizations
- Dedicate a day to clean streets, a park, or other community property
- Offer free service to baby-sit or visit the elderly

Community programs

A highlight of community service programs would be the health-and-temperance outreach. This outreach could include the following:

- Breathe Free or Five-Day Plans
- Adventist Youth for Better Living
- Home Health visitation
- Weight control classes
- Distribution of health-related literature
- Cooking classes
- Fair exhibits

The Health Ministries Department has operation kits and brochures for many of these witnessing programs. Contact your local conference/mission office for more information.

Day camp

Day Camp is operated with activities similar to summer camp and is usually held during the summer during the daytime from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. It can be scheduled for just a week or for all summer. Such programs must be carefully planned and supervised by responsible adults.

Friendship team

Visiting homes in twos can be an effective means of outreach. Encourage the teams to visit wayward or backslidden members, potential members, and visitors to church meetings. They might invite people to outreach meetings or simply enjoy a friendly visit.

Graffiti squads

If you live in an area where there is a lot of offensive graffiti on public walls, volunteer to remove it at no cost to the city or the building owners. This is a project that really gets the attention of the community.

God squad

Using the more direct approach, the God Squad enjoys passing out literature, enrollment cards, anti-smoking literature, magazines, etc.

Health service unit

Use medical personnel in the church to help develop a youth team that will be involved in a project to take blood pressure in the streets or business centers. This will require some instruction and practice, but it is effective in breaking down prejudice.

HOP club

H.O.P. stands for “Help Older People.” The H.O.P. Club is a program in which youth and adults work together to assist the elderly with work that they are unable to do for themselves. This should be an ongoing ministry as opposed to a one-time service project. The “adopt a grandparent” plan can be a part of this program.

Ingathering

Organize groups to support the ingathering program of your local church.

Life-style projects

Health assessment teams offer exciting challenges to youth who want to be involved. Some examples include:

- Floats—Join a street parade of floats and feature positive living.
- Show programs—Book a tent site and demonstrate lifestyle features such as vegetarian cooking and anti-smoking films.

Magazine ministry

Signs of the Times, *Message*, *Listen*, and other journals are used to present the good news of the kingdom of God. Some churches operate lending libraries and actually take the library to the doors of the people so that they can read books and magazines. These are left in the home and the youth return after a few days to see how the reading has been and to answer questions and follow-up.

Maranatha voyage

Visit beaches or other places of recreation to meet people, giving and sharing books, magazines, pamphlets, friendliness, and lots of warm smiles.

Missionary mail volunteers

The members of this group look for announcements in newspapers, on radio or television, concerning the sick or families of persons who have died.

Group members send them letters of condolence on behalf of the Adventist youth, bringing them comfort at the time of their great need.

Newspaper watch

A youth group can watch the local paper during the week for people who have experienced tragedies or who have special needs, such as having had a home destroyed by fire. These people might well appreciate food, clothing, or lodging. They might also appreciate help in cleaning up after such a disaster.

One-to-one witness

In promoting witnessing programs that involve group activity, we must always remind young people that one-to-one witnessing is still a most effective outreach. If every youth of the church witnessed every day to one person, we would reach more people than through all other areas of witnessing. The Lord has given encouragement that, as we tell people how we found Jesus, they may be helped to find the abundant life. This personal witness is called “genuine missionary work.”

“Strive to arouse men and women from their spiritual insensibility. Tell them how you found Jesus and how blessed you have been since you gained an experience in His service. Tell them what blessing comes to you as you sit at the feet of Jesus and learn precious lessons from His word. Tell them of the gladness and joy that there is in the Christian life. Your warm, fervent words will convince them that you have found the pearl of great price. Let your cheerful, encouraging words show that you have certainly found the higher way. This is genuine missionary work, and as it is done, many will awake as from a dream.” (*Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 38)

Operation handicapped

Organizations that care for the mentally handicapped are often understaffed and can use all the help they can get. Preparation is important. It would be wise to start with a visit to an officer of the organization to determine how your group might help in their work.

Operation fireside

Small meetings in the comfort of a home often encourage youth to bring their friends and contacts. Start by studying the Bible or using video Bible studies available from the local conference office.

Outings for unfortunates

Help the youth as they sponsor outings for children in an orphanage, for blind children, or elderly people.

Prison ministry

One of the tasks Jesus gave to the church was to minister to those in prisons, such as reform schools and correctional institutions.

How? Here are some possibilities—church services, book drives, special music, guest speakers, sports, special gifts.

Rake and run

This can be most enjoyable. On a given day young people, each armed with a leaf rake, can board a church member's van and move up and down streets looking for a place that obviously needs to have leaves raked. A group member goes to the door, knocks, and asks if the people would like their leaves raked without charge. If the answer is yes, all members pile out and get busy raking. Upon completion, a calling card giving the name and address of the church can be left at the home.

Recreational activities

Through a variety of recreational and social activities, young people are able to witness for the Savior and introduce other young people to the church.

Also, they can invite youth to conference camps, Bible conferences, and weekend rallies. Many a youth has found the Lord as the result of an invitation to attend a recreational activity of the church.

Revelation seminars

More and more young people are becoming involved in this kind of Bible-centered presentation. One of the real pluses is that all the resources are prepared.

Single-parent families ministry

Many single parents are lonely and financially hard-pressed. Invite them home for dinner, remember them at Christmas time and in your fellowship. Single parents with small children will appreciate free baby-sitting services while they shop or spend an evening with friends.

Street witnessing

Present the gospel through song, testimony, preaching in a city park, street, square, or at a mall. You may need to get permission from city authorities or mall owners before embarking on such an adventure.

Share-a-loaf

Have the youth make some homemade bread and deliver it to needy people in the community or to homes in the immediate church neighborhood.

Story hour

Youth of the church can specialize in the art of storytelling. They can bring together younger children from the neighborhood and the church and use character-building stories to help them learn about spiritual things.

Trash bash

Collecting rubbish from streets and vacant lots is a community service that goes over great with everybody. Big plastic bags and gloves will be helpful. One group turned this into a marathon event with kids working around the clock, taking turns to establish a record of 200 consecutive hours of trash collecting.

Tutoring ministry

Many children need tutoring lessons in basic subjects such as arithmetic and reading. Some young people in your group may be well qualified to render this kind of help. They might start their own program or offer their services to a local public school.

Vacation Bible schools

The youth can help by serving as instructors, leaders, music directors, storytellers, and in many other ways.

Vegetarian dinners

Invite non-Adventists to your fellowship activities that include dinners. Capitalize on the increasing interest in the vegetarian lifestyle.

Voice of youth

Develop a team to run a six-week public effort in a hall, church, or theater. This group could feature music items, sharing, a sermonette, film/video, refreshments, literature handouts, etc.

The "Voice of Youth" is a Christ-centered, public, youth evangelistic program. It is Seventh-day Adventist public evangelism geared to the abilities of young people. Following the divine blueprint, young people, under the direction of experienced leadership, conduct "Voice of Youth" campaigns.

"Voice of Youth" evangelism is front-line service and includes many youth, for young people are needed as prayer group leaders, Bible instructors, singers, announcers, musical directors, pianists, speakers, publicity managers, ushers/usherettes, and platform managers. A "Voice of Youth" manual and sample sermons are available from your conference/mission youth directors.

Window witnessing

Find a parking lot with lots of cars in it and supply a youth group with window cleaning materials (glass cleaner, paper towels, squeegees, etc.). After cleaning a front car window they could leave a note similar to the following:

Dear Shopper,

While you were shopping, your window was cleaned by a youth group of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Of course, there is no charge for this.

We just wanted to make your day brighter. We also hope you'll see your way clear to attend the church of your choice. God bless you!

Young and wise banquet

Have your young people plan a banquet, complete with a program, for senior citizens in the community. The planning would include picking up the elderly and taking them home.

Senior Youth in Service

A living example

A living example of the dedicated spirit of today's youth is the thrilling contribution of Adventist youth serving as missionary volunteers (student missionaries) in the Adventist Youth Service program. These youth are inter-division volunteers and usually raise their transportation expenses. Upon their return home, they involve themselves in a busy program of visiting friends and churches to tell about their experiences overseas.

It all began in 1959 when Dr. Winton Beavon, president of Columbia Union College, and Dr. William Loveless, pastor of Sligo Seventh-day Adventist church, teamed together to send Martin Mathieson to work in Mexico. During the first seven years only eight volunteers (student missionaries) went overseas, but then the program began to mushroom. Growing from work in one country in 1959, senior youth volunteers have now served in 83 different countries. From one Adventist youth in 1959 the program has grown to nearly 2000 being involved each year.

Thus far several thousand senior youth volunteers have served in regular one-year and short-term projects. In a number of divisions more and more senior youth volunteers are serving within their own division. It is also thrilling to realize that in 1974 the North American AY Taskforce program began as a home-based parallel program for the overseas operation, which called for additional volunteers—and the youth responded. It all says one thing—our youth are ready to go.

An senior youth volunteer must be a member of the church, be at least 18 years old, and be qualified to perform the service listed in the assignment they select. Local churches may sponsor one of their own members as a volunteer. The volunteer agrees to stay at a chosen location for the specific length of time listed for the assignment they choose. The volunteer and his or her family, along with whatever assistance can be provided by the church, care for the transportation expenses. The mission or institution where the volunteer serves provides food, lodging, and local travel.

Ways to serve

Many types of skills and talents are used in the program. The activities of most AYS volunteers include:

Agricultural

Supervisors of farm work who can teach farming techniques.

Business

Cashiers and business office workers of various types.

Craftsmen

Maintenance workers, mechanics, machinists, electricians, plumbers, and carpenters. Construction workers who can direct or assist in the building of mission facilities, as well as teach these skills, are also needed.

Educational

Teachers of music, physical education, science, Bible, English, math, and other subjects. Teaching English in language schools always includes teaching Bible.

Medical

Nurses, X-ray technicians, laboratory technicians, dental hygienists, nutritionists, and other medical and related skills.

Secretarial

Positions are available in many medical, educational, and mission offices.

The Adventist Youth Volunteer Service program (student missionary/taskforce) is carefully organized and operated. A serious effort is made to send only the best youth of the church to serve as inter-division missionary volunteers. The program is carried on as follows:

All calls for volunteer services come from institutions or missions to the General Conference through their respective union and division offices. Each autumn the list of openings is sent to all Seventh-day Adventist colleges and universities worldwide. In the North American Division students who volunteer to fill the positions are screened by their college Campus Ministry committees and by Youth Service (student missionary) committees. The General Conference AVS office works with other services of the General Conference to coordinate and finalize details. The Campus Ministry workers complete all application processes and send these to the General Conference AVS office. Adventist youth not attending an Adventist college who wish to become part of the AVS program may apply through their conference youth director who will process their application in a similar way. Their division is responsible for over-seeing their processing and traveling arrangements. The division keeps in touch with the General Conference AVS office.

From the divisions come words of appreciation for what our AVS volunteers are doing. The impact that returning AVS volunteers have on their churches and campuses has been an effective influence for missions. Most volunteers have found their own Christian experience greatly enriched through overseas service. In numerous cases mission administrators have spotted promising youth and have called them in later years to serve in the regular missionary program. This program is proving to be a blessing to the church.

For more information, visit www.adventistvolunteers.org.

Campus Ministries

Adventist campus ministries

Seventh-day Adventists base their philosophy of education on the belief that the ultimate purpose of man is to love and serve God; the life purpose must be directed toward helping to achieve this goal. One of the main objectives of the Seventh-day Adventist school system is to bring about the salvation of young people through acceptance of and faith in Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. Following that objective, the school system helps them achieve character growth so that they will become God-fearing, honest, stable, and productive members of society.

One of the goals of the Youth Ministry Department is to assist the educators, as well as young people on campus, in arriving at this objective—service for God, mankind, and their church—by encouraging youth to choose professions that enable them to serve others and to participate in the promulgation of the Christian faith.

To accomplish this goal, an office of Campus Ministry has been established on most Seventh-day Adventist campuses. Its director is a Seventh-day Adventist minister, who is also the college chaplain. Among his or her many and varied duties are:

- To coordinate religious activities of the institution with the student in mind.
- To conduct a personal ministry, a one-to-one counseling program, with both community and dormitory students.
- To have a visitation program to the homes of young students, young faculty members, and married students.
- To work with non-Adventist students, using curricular opportunities and in a pastor's Bible class.

When a youth from your church is in residence on a Seventh-day Adventist campus, it would be good for the church youth leader to be in contact with the campus chaplain:

- To guide in the selection of taskforce personnel for service in the local field.
- To encourage the student who is interested in becoming an Adventist youth ministry volunteer or taskforce worker by:
 - Giving assistance with transportation cost.
 - Providing necessary travel needs.
 - Continuing correspondence with the student while he or she is out of the country.
 - Planning a warm welcome upon his or her return home.
- To invite student missionaries to the church for a Sabbath or weekend program in order to acquaint church members with the world mission program and to give encouragement to youth of the church who are soon to be college students with future involvement.
- To make arrangements with the school for a “holiday home” visitation program for foreign students.
- To assist the campus chaplain (if applicable) in working with the student who is beset with home problems. Whenever possible, the local church youth leader should visit the campus. Before arriving, an appointment should be made to meet with the campus chaplain.

Public campus ministries

There are thousands of non-Seventh-day Adventist institutions of higher learning all over the world providing education for millions of students. These campuses are mission fields whose inhabitants must be reached with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Also present on the non-Adventist campus are Seventh-day Adventist students for whom the church must provide spiritual assistance. When a church is close to a college or university campus and a campus pastor has not been assigned by the conference, the local youth society should plan its program of “Inreach” to include the Adventist student on the secular campus as well as to plan for evangelizing the campus. It is suggested that the local youth society be prepared:

- To give aid to students in solving spiritual and social programs arising from their attendance at these schools of higher learning.
- To conduct retreats, seminars, and other helpful activities in order to involve students in the programs of the local church and to encourage them in witnessing activities.
- To organize them into a recognized student society at the school they are attending.
- To rent, where funds permit, a building very close to the campus where food can be served, a reading room made available, and a place provided for selling our books and health foods.

These are just a few suggestions. Further help can be obtained from the local union/conference office.

Student missionary

Since there are thousands of Adventist students studying in non-Adventist colleges and universities, these youth need to organize themselves to work for their fellow students. Also, in Adventist colleges they could organize themselves to help and work for the non-Adventist students.

Ellen White on campus ministries

“It is not enough to fill the minds of the youth with lessons of deep importance; they must learn to impart what they have received.

Whatever may be the position or possession of any individual who has a knowledge of the truth, the word of God teaches him that all he has is held by him in trust. . . .He who strives to obtain knowledge in order that he may labor for the ignorant and perishing is acting his part in fulfilling God’s great purpose for mankind. In unselfish service for the blessing of others he is meeting the high ideal of Christian education. . . .

“It is necessary to their complete education that students be given time to do missionary work—time to become acquainted with the spiritual needs of the families in the community around them. They should not be so loaded down with studies that they have no time to use the knowledge they have acquired. . . .

“If a missionary spirit is encouraged, even if it takes some hours from the program of regular study, much of heaven’s blessing will be given, provided there is more faith and spiritual zeal, more of a realization of what God will do. . . .

“Whenever possible, students should, during the school year, engage in city mission work. They should do missionary work in the surrounding towns and villages. . . .Students should take a broad view of their present obligations to God. They are not to look forward to a time, after the school term closes, when they will do some large work for God, but should study how, during their student life, to yoke up with Christ in unselfish service for others.” (*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, pp. 545-547)

See Section C for an example from Andrews University.

Reporting Missionary Activities

The origin of reporting

The origin of reporting is divine, thus the custom to report is a divine plan. The Bible is in itself a report from God to man about Creation, of the plan of salvation, of the incarnation, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. At the same time it is an exact report of the work realized in different ages, places, and by different persons.

The Spirit of Prophecy clearly tells us: “Words of kindness, looks of sympathy, expressions of appreciation, would to many a struggling. . .one be as a cup of cold water to a thirsty soul. . .every word and deed of such service is recorded in the books of heaven as done to Christ.” (*My Life Today*, p. 165)

“Order is the first law of heaven.” And this law includes a system of reports that is of vital importance to the progress of the cause of God.

It is clearly seen that Jesus recognized the value of reports when He presided over the missionary meeting with His disciples and these “told him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught” (Mark 6:30).

The “seventy returned again with joy” and reported to Jesus the marvelous things they had done, thanks to the influence of the Holy Spirit (Luke 10:17). And Jesus Himself, in His prayer, rendered a report to His Father of the work He had done on earth, as is recorded in John 17:4-8.

The Spirit of Prophecy repeats often the importance and need for reports. Some quotations are given here for your study.

“Let those who gain such an experience in working for the Lord write an account of it for our papers, that others may be encouraged. These reports should find a place in our papers, for they are far-reaching in their influence. They will be as sweet fragrance in the church, a savor life unto life. Thus it is seen that God works with those who co-operate with Him.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 336)

“When thou doest alms”

Matthew 6:3 is often given a mistaken application or interpretation. It is the sentence pronounced in the sermon on the Mount: “But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth.” Active members can be found everywhere who use this passage as an excuse for NOT uniting with the many

members of the church who report. It would be great if all of them would become acquainted with the commentary that the Spirit of Prophecy makes on this text.

“With many, the left hand does not know what the right hand does, for the right hand does nothing worthy of the notice of the left hand. . . .

“I was shown that this scripture does not apply to those who have the cause of God at heart, and use their means humbly to advance it. . . . The good works of the children of God are the most effectual preaching that the unbeliever has.” (*Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 193)

Therefore, all, the old and the young, men and women, isolated members, church groups, etc. are called to share the different missionary activities.

The system of reporting is a chain that extends from the individual member of the group or church to the conference/mission, union, division, and the General Conference. And just as a chain is not stronger than its weakest link, the reporting system remains weakened by negligence or any failure that is produced in the chain. “The law of service becomes the connecting link which binds us to God and to our fellow men.” (*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 326)

“Let the church members, during the week, act their part faithfully, and on the Sabbath relate their experience. The meeting will then be as meat in due season, bringing to all present new life and fresh vigor.” (*Testimonies*, vol. 7, p.19)

Environment

Concern for the earth’s environment has become a popular cause among many young people today—and with good reason! As we look at the frightening world picture—exploding population, increasing pollution, a shrinking ozone layer, ever-expanding landfill sites, and scores of other problems—it’s clear that we human beings haven’t been doing a very good job of taking care of the world God made for us.

Youth are often attracted to environmental causes; they can see that the world previous generations have ruined is the world they have to live in. Environmentalism is taught in schools and promoted through activities such as recycling programs.

But many Christians are uncomfortable with the environmental movement and don’t encourage young people to become involved in it. They may be uneasy with the New Age connections of some in the environmental movement (some extremists promote a reverence for nature that borders on pantheism) or with the extreme tactics some environmentalists are willing to use. Or they may simply

reason, “The Lord is coming back soon anyway, so why worry about the future of the planet?”

But there's plenty of Biblical evidence to suggest that Christians should be the most ardent environmentalists of all—not because we worship nature for its own sake, but because we recognize that this earth is the gift of a loving, wise Father who expects His children to care for His gifts. Humanity was given “dominion” over the earth (Gen. 1:28); this dominion was not intended as a harsh, totalitarian regime but rather as a wise stewardship, as is clear in Genesis 2:15 when Adam is commanded to “take care of” the Garden of Eden (NIV). Revelation 11:18 reminds us that when God does return, His task will include “destroying those who destroy the earth” (NIV). Yes, we believe He is coming soon, but when He comes back we hope He will find us taking care of the resources He has given us.

With this Biblical perspective in mind, we should encourage our youth to be active in caring for the environment—while warning them about some of the dangerous extremes within the environmental movement. Among our community service projects we can include those that nurture the natural world such as cleaning up a local park or river, or helping to care for animals. When you point to nature as “God's second book,” revealing His character and creatorship, remind youth of our responsibility to take care of His creation.

Urban and Provincial Evangelism

As of 2008, more than 50 percent of the world's population is living in cities, and this continues to grow. Urban evangelism cannot be ignored. Just as the Apostle Paul's quest was to reach Rome and share the good news, so we need to reach out to all the epic centers with creative urban evangelism. There many methods currently used in the provincial (non-city) territories that are transferrable.

When we speak of “evangelism” we are speaking of leading young people to a saving relationship with Jesus and to acceptance of our Seventh-day Adventist beliefs. As we train our young people to serve others in love, we train them also to become evangelists—to spread Jesus' message of salvation. Here are a few practical ideas for doing this.

Evangelism begins at home

As a youth leader, your most fertile field for evangelism is right in your youth group. Young people within the group who have not yet accepted Jesus as their Savior or who have not yet been baptized need opportunities to make these commitments. The youth in your group who are already committed to Jesus can begin their evangelistic work by sharing their faith with their own friends within the group. The witness of another young person can be powerful and effective.

When we talk about “evangelism” with our youth we should, of course, look outside our church family to try to win others to Christ. But we should never neglect the unsaved youth within our own “fold.” Take time to talk to them about Jesus, about the doctrines of the church, about baptism. Provide opportunities such as Weeks of Spiritual Emphasis and other events (discussed in more detail under “Discipleship Strategies”) where they will have the chance to respond to an invitation for commitment.

Campaigns and seminars

Although public evangelism, through large-scale campaigns, satellite events, and Daniel and Revelation seminars, has traditionally been a major part of the outreach program of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, evangelistic events of this type are seldom directed specifically at young people.

Children, youth, and young adults have different needs than adults. Largescale evangelism directed at young people is certainly one possible avenue of outreach, but the approach may need to be different. Use contemporary music, drama, a comfortable setting; use any approach—within the boundaries of acceptable Adventist standards—that will appeal to the particular group of young people you hope to reach.

Young adults of college age and beyond may be less comfortable than older adults with a traditional evangelistic series of sermons. A more informal approach that allows for discussion, debate, and small-group interaction may be more successful with this age group.

Most importantly, make sure that any evangelistic effort you spearhead with your youth is driven by the youth themselves. They need to take ownership of the program in order for it to work, and the unsaved youth whom you hope to win will only be attracted if they see young people like themselves actively involved and leading out.

Youth can also be active in evangelistic efforts directed at adults. Many churches and evangelists have had great success involving children and teenagers in traditional evangelistic campaigns. Young people can greet, provide special music, lead in praise singing, and even preach. Their own relationship with Jesus will grow deeper as they have the opportunity to win others to Christ.

Bible studies

All young people, especially those from unchurched backgrounds, need some in-depth Bible study, either one-on-one or in a small group setting, before they are ready for baptism. You should be prepared yourself to study the Bible with your young people, and you can also train them to lead other youth in Bible studies. If you have studied the concept of spiritual gifts with your youth, you will know that

some of them have a gift for teaching or explaining the Bible. Armed with a good Bible-study course and paired with an adult mentor with whom they can work closely, your young people can become skilled at sharing Jesus through Bible studies.

Friendship evangelism

Friendship evangelism is important for everyone, from children to the elderly. It is perhaps the most important type of evangelism for youth. Young people relate to their peer group. They consistently rate their friends as the most important people in their lives.

Obviously, a Christian peer group can make a huge difference in the life of a young person. Many Christians came from a non-Christian background to know the Lord as a result of associating with Christian friends when they were younger.

Every social activity your youth group does is an evangelism opportunity. Many of these events will not be overtly evangelistic: you don't need to preach to children on a Pathfinder camping trip or start a Bible study with teenagers at a Saturday night social. But if you encourage your youth to invite non-Christian friends with them to these events, these non-Christian youth will get to know Christian young people, form close bonds with them, and be far more receptive to our message when a more obviously "evangelistic" situation arises.

Young people, especially teenagers, can be very "cliquish," associating only with their group of close friends. If they all attend church and church school together, they can sometimes shut-out outsiders and fail to project a friendly, welcoming attitude. Take every opportunity to teach your young people about Jesus' command to love everyone and about the power of friendship evangelism.

"He desires to see gathered out from the homes of our people a large company of youth who, because of the godly influences of their homes, have surrendered their hearts to Him and go forth to give Him the highest service of their lives....They have learned to submit to God as their teacher and leader, and they are prepared to render Him acceptable service....Such youth are prepared to represent to the world the grace and power of Christ." (Ellen G. White, *In Heavenly Places*, p. 21)

Public campus ministries

With 70-90 percent of our young adults in public universities, it is probably one of our strongest fields for evangelism. Careful thought, resources, and attention should be given to your young adults in training them on how to live and share the gospel with their classmates and teachers.

Practical Community Service Ideas

Nothing inspires youth as much as getting their hands dirty—literally or figuratively—in projects where they can make a difference in the lives of others. Obeying Jesus' command to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, shelter the homeless, and visit the sick can transform even an apathetic group of young people into soldiers in God's army.

Youth in our postmodern culture need to do more than hear the Word preached. They need an opportunity to make Christianity real and practical. While they are very caught up in the materialist culture that surrounds them, young people are also more idealistic than adults and are quick to respond to the needs of others once their eyes are open to those needs. Training youth for service is an integral part of youth ministry. Even those youth who have not yet experienced a saving relationship with Jesus may be attracted by a service project and through that avenue may come to know Jesus for themselves.

Here are a few practical strategies for getting your young people involved in missions at home and around the world.

Volunteering in the community

Volunteers are the backbone of any community. Don't be afraid to take your youth outside the church environment to work with other churches and service organizations within your community. Whether it's serving lunch at a soup kitchen, singing to elderly people in a nursing home, shoveling snow covered sidewalks or mowing lawns for shut-ins, visiting with children at an orphanage, visiting or volunteering in nursing homes, or helping build homes for low-income families, your youth can make a positive impact on the community. Furthermore, people in your community will learn that Seventh-day Adventist young people can be counted on to help.

Get in touch with groups and organizations in your community that need volunteers. Find projects that match the skills and interests of your young people, set up a volunteer opportunity, and be on hand to model enthusiastic participation.

The King will reply, "I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me." —Matthew 25:40, NIV

Supermission/impact

Under different names and in different divisions of the world church, Adventist youth are catching on to the idea of selecting one city or community and targeting it with a variety of service projects over a short period of time. Often combined with a youth congress or youth rally, a project of this type might involve the youth

in activities such as feeding the homeless, helping street kids, cleaning the streets, donating blood, singing or performing drama on street corners, and holding evangelistic meetings. One of the largest-scale events of this type was Impact Toronto 2000, held in conjunction with the 2000 General Conference Session. Impact 2000 involved Adventist young adults from all over the world in dozens of different ministries.

When a project like this is finished, the community is left in no doubt that Seventh-day Adventist youth have been there! Furthermore, they know that Adventist youth care about the community and its people. The youth themselves gain experience in a variety of different ministries and are able to use and develop their own spiritual gifts. When they go back home, they carry that enthusiasm back into the community where their church is located.

Short-term mission projects

These projects are probably the single most powerful tool for giving young people a vision of service and changing their perspective on their own spiritual lives and the needs of the world. Each year, thousands of Seventh-day Adventist young people travel to an area, usually outside their own country, where they can work for a week or two on a service project. These projects may involve building, repair work, evangelism, or outreach. Youth groups and schools often work with organizations such as Maranatha or ADRA to plan short-term mission opportunities for their young people. If you have the opportunity to take a group of young people on a short-term mission trip, you will never regret the experience.

STORM CO.

This ministry (Service to Others Really Matters) has blossomed over the last twenty years and is a contagious and fun way to make a real impact on a community. Teams of youth stay in a rural community for a week and serve in whatever way they can, usually involving children and the elderly. Many of our youth have found Christ for the first time on a STORM Co. trip.

Fly-n-build

Fly-n-Build trips are popular among youth. It's not an official youth department program, but many of our youth take part in these short term building programs, usually in developing countries around the South Pacific. Fly-n-Build combines practical skills with a passion to make a difference and connect with others for Christ.

Essential needs

This involves food distribution, commonly for homeless children, hospital patients and inmates, as well as cleaning environments, commonly done in markets, on roadsides, and in public gardens.

Reading programs for children

This is targeted at low-income and multicultural families. Low-income families do not have enough money to send their children to a kindergarten or an institute. For them, the Adventist youth will be a reader. Children will have a teacher and friends to share their emotions, and consequently they will be sociable and never feel lonely. We can use a story from the Bible as an activity of evangelism. To meet children and share the love of Jesus is surely a fruitful activity.

Wall painting volunteer

This is a kind of talent donation. Make a group and find an old and dirty wall around where you live. For example, the wall of an orphanage can be a good subject to beautify. Through this service, we can provide a beautiful environment and make people feel happier. As we provide people a chance to participate in this beautification activity, we create the possibility of having a relationship with them.

Messy church

This is a once-a-month program run on Sabbath afternoon for three hours that is used as a community outreach project to make contact with families in the local area and introduce them to your church family. Invite local families with children to come along and join you for messy crafts, action songs, Bible stories, and a healthy meal all based on the monthly biblical theme.

Youth emergency services (YES)

This program provides specialized training for young people to deploy following a disaster and help support relief efforts. Youth are taught how to assist in a manner without jeopardizing their own lives. The assistance provided may include cleaning, providing meals, or just giving a hug to someone who has just lost everything. Hundreds of thousands of victims have been blessed by these efforts.

The youth ministry formula (YM2)

This resource has become the favorite as young people are trained how to establish and maintain ministries based on their own interests. One person can have up to 5 or 10 ministries. Most of these ministries are for the benefit of the community. A survey form is used for neighbor to select what ministry they are in need of.

TOP mission ideas for the:

Elderly

- Adopt a grandparent
- Adopt a home
- Wiser Generation Banquet

Children

- Church nursery or Sabbath school room makeover
- Baby-sitting service
- Toy service
- Support an orphanage

Sick

- Hospital visitation
- Adopt a sick person
- Encouragement ministry

Hungry and Homeless

- Sponsor a child
- Soup kitchen
- Planned Famine
- Food and clothing bank

Community

- Graffiti busters
- Adopt a park
- Public streets clean-up
- Vacation Bible School
- Special needs program/camp

SECTION C

Planning

of Senior Youth Ministry

APPLICATION

While we have scattered a few practical examples throughout the handbook, this final section offers run sheets focused on each module, outlines for weekends, and planning ideas for programs to develop faith.

Discipleship

The Emergence of a Global Youth Movement Transitioning from Mere Membership to Authentic Discipleship

Training weekend outline

These run sheets can be created online using www.planningcenteronline.com or you can create the same style in excel (Windows) or numbers (OS X). This is a sample weekend; as a division, union, conference/mission, or local leader, please feel free to use it as a base from which to start. It is essential to make sure, as has been suggested, that your training weekend fits well with everyone's calendar, that the location is supported, that the budget is approved, that the staffing and presenters are confirmed, and that the purpose and intention line up with the vision in your area.

Friday

- 5:30pm Registration & Supper
- 7:30pm Welcome & Orientation
- 7:35pm Worship
- 8:00pm Message: "What is Discipleship?"
- 8:30pm Grow/Life Groups
- 9:00pm Community Building
- 9:30pm Free Time

Saturday

- 8:00am Breakfast
- 9:00am Welcome & Orientation
- 9:05am Baptismal Preparation Sample
- 9:45am Q & A
- 10:00am Break
- 10:20am Faith Development
- 11:10am Q & A
- 11:25am Break
- 11:45am Worship
- 12:05pm Testimonies
- 12:20pm Prayer
- 12:25pm Message: "Following Jesus"
- 12:55pm Benediction & Announcements

- 1:00pm Lunch
- 2:30pm Grow/Life Groups
- 3:30pm Break
- 4:00pm Counseling
- 4:45pm Q&A
- 5:00pm Free Time
- 6:00pm Supper
- 7:30pm Mentoring
- 8:15pm Q&A
- 8:30pm Message: "The call from Jesus"
- 9:00pm Prayer Time
- 9:15pm Free Time

Sunday

- 9:00am Welcome & Orientation
- 9:05am Bible Study Sample
- 9:45am Q & A
- 10:00am Break
- 10:20am Postmodernism & Secular Mind
- 11:10am Q & A
- 11:25am Break
- 11:45am Worship
- 12:05pm Testimonies
- 12:20pm Prayer
- 12:25pm Message: "Go Ye Therefore..."
- 12:55pm Benediction & Announcements/Farewell
- 1:00pm Lunch

Week of prayer

These are some steps that should be followed in preparing and presenting the Week of Prayer, as follows below.

Phase I—pray

All concerned with the youth Week of Prayer should meet and pray for guidance in planning and presenting it in the school or church. This special week calls for spiritual preparation by the entire church and/or school, as well as by the speaker(s). All must be challenged to a deeper spiritual experience themselves before they can be used by the Holy Spirit.

Phase II—study

The committees and speakers concerned with the Week of Prayer should study the sermons prepared by the General Conference Youth Department and published in Youth Ministry Accent. Many hours of extensive preparation and careful research have gone into writing the articles, and they should be used

during the Week of Prayer. This does not mean that in all situations these readings have to be read word for word without comment. However, speakers should remember that themes have been carefully and prayerfully selected, and the content of each sermon was developed in an atmosphere of prayer, Bible study, and deep personal commitment by the writer.

Phase III—evaluate

Those planning the Week of Prayer should ask and answer the following questions in order to ensure its impact:

- What are the basic needs of the group?
- How can we arrange for all the youth to be in attendance during the Week of Prayer?
- How can the church members and/or faculty and staff be encouraged to participate in the youth Week of Prayer?
- What changes need to be made within the church or school in order to ensure that conditions are in harmony with the principles that will be presented during the Week of Prayer?
- What can be done before the Week of Prayer to prepare the hearts of the youth for the messages?
- Who can best present these messages in order to reach the youth with their particular needs?
- How can the Week of Prayer be followed-up effectively?

Phase IV—present

Some of the basic Bible and Spirit of Prophecy principles for the presentation of the way of salvation are as follows:

- Preach the kingdom of God.
- Outline the plan of salvation.
- Uplift the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Reveal truth progressively.
- Reflect the character of Jesus.
- Use effective and appropriate illustrations.
- Refrain from irrelevant storytelling and jesting.

Phase V—appeal

Advise the young people in advance when calls for decisions will be made so they can prepare themselves. Make specific calls for specific responses and keep them short. The first call can be the opportunity for those who have been baptized to reaffirm their commitment to Christ, and it can be followed by an invitation for those who have not been baptized to follow the Master in the sacred ordinance. Other specific calls can be made if there is a specific need.

Phase VI—visit

Some of the firmest decisions during a Week of Prayer are made during personal visitation. The speaker or speakers should allow time for “friendship teams” of young people to visit those youth who need to make a decision, and those presenting the messages should also make personal visits.

Phase VII—seek

At all stages during the Week of Prayer, but in particular when decisions are being made, all concerned with conducting the Week of Prayer should seek the power of the Holy Spirit. No soul is won to the Lord Jesus without the ministry of the Holy Spirit, and no one should attempt to conduct a Week of Prayer without earnestly seeking for the dynamic power of the Spirit of God. Jesus told Nicodemus that every disciple must be “born of water and the Spirit.” John 3:5. A person can give intellectual assent to a set of doctrines and be baptized but may have to confess, as did some in New Testament times, “No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.” Acts 19:2.

Young people need to learn about and claim the nine beautiful fruits of the Spirit as recorded in Galatians 5:22, 23. Then, too, they need a clear understanding of the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the church and the outpouring of the latter rain promised before Jesus returns.

Phase VIII—share

From the beginning, the times for sharing—or as it has been commonly known over the years, “testifying”—has been an integral part of the Week of Prayer. No doubt young people would prefer to use a word other than “testimony,” but whatever term is used, there needs to be a definite time when those present in the Week of Prayer meetings can tell of their acceptance of and love for the Lord Jesus Christ. At such times, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, confession of sins and the beginnings of a genuine revival will be experienced in the church or school.

The testimonies that are given during these sharing periods should also include thanks and praise for what God has done in bringing the knowledge of salvation to those present. It is interesting to note that these sharing times in Weeks of Prayer over the years have sometimes occupied several hours without people becoming weary. The Spirit of Prophecy clearly endorses the testimony period, and even suggests that sometimes it would be well for ministers to preach shorter Sabbath morning sermons and allow time for the people to speak (See *Gospel Workers*, p. 171).

Phase IX—follow up

The full effectiveness of Weeks of Prayer, however, cannot be accurately measured without follow-up. Too often there has been little or no contact with the youth after the meetings. Sometimes the guest speaker leaves within an hour of the last meeting. The sudden end to the spiritual emphasis and the abrupt re-entry into the orbit of church or community life leaves many youth in a vacuum. Some who have made full decisions suddenly face temptations and difficulties that overwhelm them. At this time there seems to be no one to turn to, and they do not know what to do. Others who were in the valley of decision when the Week of Prayer concluded just needed a little more time to make a full commitment.

The big question is, what can be done to ensure more adequate follow-up for Weeks of Prayer? Here are a few suggestions to the pastors, school administrators, and church officers who conduct youth Weeks of Prayer.

The guest speaker

The goal of all ministry is the maturing of Christians in the Lord Jesus and thus an ultimate entry into the kingdom of heaven. In the meantime, those who minister have a solemn responsibility to do all they can to help those to whom they minister to “grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18).

During the Week of Prayer the guest speaker could compile a list of names and addresses of young people who need particular help. The speaker should present these names before the Lord daily and, after the weekends, should correspond with them, or at least send cards with spiritual messages. If at all possible, the speaker should make return visits to the academy, college, or church. On these occasions he or she can preach and counsel, thus reactivating the spiritual climate of the Week of Prayer. This will give many senior youth the opportunity to have firsthand contact with the person the Lord used to help them make their decisions. Then, too, other young people who did not make their decisions during the Week of Prayer may do so during a subsequent visit.

School and church administrators

Those responsible for the colleges, academies, church schools, and churches where Weeks of Prayer are conducted need to provide follow-up. Too often, the only follow-up organized is a baptismal class, sometimes because of the emphasis placed on baptisms. In addition to the baptismal class, persons should be designated on campus or in the church to whom young people can go for guidance, prayer, and Bible study. The same efforts put forth during the Week of Prayer to create a climate for conversion should be maintained during the ensuing months. Chapel talks and sermons can be directed to help people with the problems of temptation and discouragement that inevitably follow a Week of Prayer.

The conference/mission youth department and the church or school administrators can work together to schedule Bible conferences, spiritual retreats, and evangelistic campaigns as follow-up. Those who have made a full commitment of their lives to the Lord Jesus and His service during the Week of Prayer will have a desire to share their faith. Then, too, as someone has aptly said, "If we do not share our faith, we lose it."

It is imperative that those who have deepened their spiritual experience during a Week of Prayer be led into a witnessing program. Isaiah admonishes: "lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes" (Isa. 54:2). The children of Israel were living in tents, and this analogy was very familiar to them. When extra space was needed in their dwellings they would have to add more canvas, make the cords longer, and use deeper stakes. So it is with Christians. When the spiritual stakes of our devotional lives are strengthened, we need at the same time to lengthen the cords. If we fail to have the balance of lengthening and strengthening, the tents of our Christian experience will be swept away.

Outreach programs to follow up the Week of Prayer can include Voice of Youth evangelistic campaigns, literature distribution, Bible studies, friendship teams, Branch Sabbath schools, and health and temperance witnessing teams. As the youth testify of their love for the Lord Jesus Christ in active witnessing, they will quickly develop into mature Christians and become well grounded in the faith.

Celebration day

Please provide this special day of celebration. Work with the pastor to plan a creative Commitment Celebration that involves the whole church, but especially the youth. Following are a number of suggestions to help in planning the day.

Give the youth special invitations, both personal and written, to this celebration. Pastors will want to be involved in preparing for a special baptismal service, and they can be of great help in planning the celebration day.

Communion

We must always remember the great center for all celebration—the cross of Christ. Before the crucifixion, all Scripture pointed to the special event; after the cross Christianity points back to Christ's death and resurrection.

Communion, a time of remembering the Lord's death until He comes, is a time of celebration, not only of the past, but of the future when the Lord will celebrate with the redeemed in His Father's kingdom. So it is appropriate to include the communion service during the day of celebration.

Involving your church family in a weekend of celebration

An original atmosphere may add much to the total impact of the service. If an auditorium or fellowship hall is available, tables covered with white tablecloths could be fixed in the form of a cross in the center of the hall. Place the bread and grape juice in a pleasing manner and accent the table decoration with candles. A crown of thorns framed and mounted on red velvet has sometimes been displayed to accentuate the suffering of Christ and His great sacrifice. After having separated for the foot washing, families may sit together around the perimeter of the hall. At the proper time, parents and spouses may serve the emblems to their families and to one another. In order to make the service even more significant, each person (including the children) within the family group could give a testimony of something for which they are thankful.

Many have had success in extending this format to include an “agape” feast, having the tables laden with a variety of fruits, breads, and nuts.

Sabbath school

Sabbath school would be an ideal time for the young people to present a special program. Allow plenty of time for preparation and be sure to offer guidance and encouragement as needed.

Divine service

An outline for the worship service is presented here as a suggestion. As you plan together, adapt this outline to your local needs.

Prelude

- Scripture reading: Psalm 100
- Invocation
- Hymn
- Tithes and offering
- Pastor’s prayer
- Children’s story
- Special music
- Sermon: “Youth Celebration”
- Closing hymn
- Benediction
- Sabbath Lunch

The fellowship and unity of this special weekend may be enhanced by a fellowship dinner for the whole church. Encourage the attendance of members and visitors. Make arrangements to have an abundance of food and table service so that there may be enough for all, and people will not feel they must leave because they have not made plans to participate.

Sabbath afternoon baptism and celebration

Wherever possible, consideration should be given to having this service at a river or peaceful lake. In order to encourage a spirit of unity, some of the older members could relate how they became Seventh-day Adventists. Some of the youth who have surrendered their lives to Christ could testify as to what the church means to them today. These presentations, interspersed with musical numbers by members of all ages, will make the baptism an event that will always be remembered.

Saturday night

One good way to end the weekend celebration is to have a church social with all the church family. Youth Ministry Accent presents new material and ideas for games and recreation for persons of all ages. A significant way to end your social is to organize everyone present into a circle around the hall, holding hands. End by singing together a hymn that the whole church knows well. The benediction should include special mention of those who were baptized that day.

Bible conference**Purpose of a Bible conference**

The purpose is to help youth strengthen their faith and guide them to:

- A deeper study and understanding of the Bible.
- Enjoy a Christian experience and fellowship that will affect their lifestyle, help them in their choices, and prepare them for the future in this world and in the world to come.
- Learn to interpret present world conditions in keeping with Adventist theological interpretation.
- Develop a deeper sense of their place in the church and participation in its leadership.

Where to meet

To be truly effective, meet in a place where the studies can take place without interruption. Campsites have been the favorite of many. Schools and churches also can be used. The goal is to be in a retreat-like environment.

Personnel

If the conference is held in a camp setting, support personnel will be required to provide food and other services. Other than support personnel, the most important people will be the pastors or teachers who direct the Bible study. Because of the delicate material of some subjects to be studied, there should be wide consultation before selecting the teachers. Always let your committee decide on this sensitive issue.

What to study

The experienced youth director may have a variety of topics to cover. Some choose portions of Scripture, perhaps a specific book of the Bible to study, while others select specific topics. Through a growing relationship with the youth and those who work with them, the youth leader can discover what is of greater interest, what is needed, and study those issues.

Suggested program

- Reveille, preparation for the day
- Personal devotions
- Group devotional
- Prayer bands
- Breakfast
- Bible study (first session)
- Discussion of the topic (in small groups after general presentation)
- Mid-day meal
- Rest and friendship development
- Bible study
- Discussion of the topic (in small groups after general presentation)
- Recreation
- Supper
- Friendship development
- Commitment time (outreach, demonstrations, etc.)
- Bedtime

Finances

As for all youth activities, a budget must be prepared and the organizers must strive to keep within that budget. Financial arrangements should be clear so all may understand. Costs of the program should be carried by organizers and participants. In many places the local churches subsidize the youth they send to this special event.

The organizers should make sure that all materials are on hand. Reference books such as a Spirit of Prophecy collection, Bible commentaries, Bible dictionaries, encyclopedias, concordances, etc., should be available for reference.

How to manage a Bible conference

Successful planning for a Bible conference will consider the following:

- A Bible conference is not another summer camp. The program should vary from a regular camping program, allowing participants ample time for study and meditation.
- Ample time for group discussion and youth input should be provided after

each large group Bible study.

- Discussion groups should be kept small in order to allow participation by all those attending. It is recommended that groups have no more than ten participants, including the group leader.
- Time should be provided in the schedule for prayer and meditation after the presentations and discussions.

Church Community

The Emergence of a Global Youth Community, United in Small Groups and Bound to the Wider Church Community.

Training weekend outline

These run sheets can be created online using www.planningcenteronline.com or you can create the same style in excel (Windows) or numbers (OS X). This is a sample weekend; as a division, union, conference/mission, or local leader, please feel free to use it as a base from which to start. It is essential to make sure, as has been suggested, that your training weekend fits well with everyone's calendar, that the location is supported, that the budget is approved, that the staffing and presenters are confirmed, and that the purpose and intention line up with the vision in your area.

Friday

5:30pm Registration & Supper
 7:30pm Welcome & Orientation
 7:35pm Worship
 8:00pm Message: "What is the Church?"
 8:30pm Grow/Life Groups
 9:00pm Community Building
 9:30pm Free Time

Saturday

8:00am Breakfast
 9:00am Welcome & Orientation
 9:05am Adventist Youth Ministries History
 9:45am Q & A
 10:00am Break
 10:20am Young Adult Ministry
 11:10am Q & A
 11:25am Break
 11:45am Worship
 12:05pm Testimonies
 12:20pm Prayer
 12:25pm Message: "Theology of Youth Leadership"

12:55pm	Benediction & Announcements
1:00pm	Lunch
2:30pm	Grow/Life Groups
3:30pm	Break
4:00pm	Ambassador Ministry
4:45pm	Q&A
5:00pm	Free Time
6:00pm	Supper
7:30pm	Exploring Programs
8:15pm	Q&A
8:30pm	Message: "Stewards of Time"
9:00pm	Prayer Time
9:15pm	Free Time

Sunday

9:00am	Welcome & Orientation
9:05am	Bible Study Sample
9:45am	Q & A
10:00am	Break
10:20am	Exploring Activities
11:10am	Q & A
11:25am	Break
11:45am	Worship
12:05pm	Testimonies
12:20pm	Prayer
12:25pm	Message: "The Kingdom of God"
12:55pm	Benediction & Announcements/Farewell
1:00pm	Lunch

WCYCS

The World Conference on Youth and Community Service (WCYCS) is sponsored by the General Conference Youth Ministries Department and occurs every five years.

The overall objectives of the WCYCS are:

- To celebrate God's grace as a global family of Adventist youth.
- Foster and develop friendship, community, and global unity among the diversity of nations and cultures that our world church represents.
- To experience revival and reformation through a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit.
- To mobilize a global Discipleship movement to extend God's Kingdom worldwide.
- To re-establish Mission as a priority for global youth.
- To provide firsthand experience in frontline Mission and Service.

The WCYCS comprises two phases:

During the first phase, the chosen region is saturated with Community Service Projects (CSP's) like orphanage visitation and improvements, construction, HIV/Aids awareness and prevention, school developments, community beautification projects, health expos, sports training, and evangelistic meetings. These will be carried out by participating groups from all over the world in partnership with local youths.

The second phase brings all CSP participants, as well as others, together for a celebration of what God would have done through our youth in the first phase and for the development of global community through small groups, discipleship, focused mission training, and worship in the second phase.

Young people between the ages of 16 and 35 and their leaders are encouraged to attend. All divisions, unions, conferences, churches, and educational institutions are urged to send young people and their leaders to this once-in-a-lifetime, life-changing event.

The 2013 WCYCS took place in Pretoria, South Africa. Check out www.gcyouthministries.org for information on the next one. Take any of the ideas/models from this event and add it to yours.

Mission/Service**The Emergence of a Global Youth Movement Living Radically and Dangerously in Mission and Service, proclaiming and demonstrating the Kingdom of God.****Training weekend outline**

These run sheets can be created online using www.planningcenteronline.com or you can create the same style in excel (Windows) or numbers (OS X). This is a sample weekend; as a division, union, conference/mission, or local leader, please feel free to use it as a base from which to start. It is essential to make sure, as has been suggested, that your training weekend fits well with everyone's calendar, that the location is supported, that the budget is approved, that the staffing and presenters are confirmed, and that the purpose and intention line up with the vision in your area.

Friday

- 5:30pm Registration & Supper
- 7:30pm Welcome & Orientation
- 7:35pm Worship
- 8:00pm Message: "Mission/Service"
- 8:30pm Grow/Life Groups

9:00pm Community Building
 9:30pm Free Time

Saturday

8:00am Breakfast
 9:00am Welcome & Orientation
 9:05am Public Campus Ministries
 9:45am Q & A
 10:00am Break
 10:20am Campus Ministries
 11:10am Q & A
 11:25am Break
 11:45am Worship
 12:05pm Testimonies
 12:20pm Prayer
 12:25pm Message: "Evangelism: The Gospel"
 12:55pm Benediction & Announcements
 1:00pm Lunch
 2:30pm Grow/Life Groups
 3:30pm Break
 4:00pm Short-Term Mission Trips
 4:45pm Q&A
 5:00pm Free Time
 6:00pm Supper
 7:30pm Community Service
 8:15pm Q&A
 8:30pm Message: "Social Justice & Justification by Faith"
 9:00pm Prayer Time
 9:15pm Free Time

Sunday

9:00am Welcome & Orientation
 9:05am Bible Study Sample
 9:45am Q & A
 10:00am Break
 10:20am Urban & Provincial Evangelism
 11:10am Q & A
 11:25am Break
 11:45am Worship
 12:05pm Testimonies
 12:20pm Prayer
 12:25pm Message: "Servant Leadership"
 12:55pm Benediction & Announcements/Farewell
 1:00pm Lunch

Global youth day

The General Conference Youth Ministries Department consulted with the 13 division youth directors, the GMEU, and the Israel field and has received overwhelming support for adopting a “Global Youth Day.”

The third Sabbath of March has been chosen as it marks the beginning of the Youth Week of Prayer globally. Although some divisions of the world field host their Youth Week of Prayer at a different time of the year, they will still unite as one on that day for a common purpose.

Objectives

The objectives of Global Youth Day are to:

- Recapture the reality of the Seventh-day Adventist Youth as a Global Movement;
- Lead our youth to rediscover the sense of belonging to a global army;
- Reposition Mission at the heart of Global Youth Ministry;
- Provide a much needed positive and constructive response to perceived fragmentation.

Grounded in the concluding words of Jesus in the parable of the Good Samaritan, “Go and do likewise” (Luke 10:25-37), the theme of the Global Youth Day will be:

‘ONE IN COMPASSION’

Adventist youths will be mobilized on the streets of our villages, towns, and cities around the world to be the hands and feet of Jesus through acts of kindness. A Simple, Global, and Relevant strategy has been devised.

Strategy

On Global Youth Day, youth will hear one less sermon in the morning. THEY will be the sermon. They will step out of the building to be the church and reach out in the name of Jesus.

There will be six elements to Global Youth Day:

- Young people from local churches, regions, or Conferences/Missions will meet for a time of consecration before spending the best part of Sabbath reaching out in local communities.
- They will be involved in Sabbath friendly acts of kindness that will have been chosen and planned for in advance.
- To provide a focus for the day after their diverse acts of kindness, youths around the world will donate blood as the symbol of the ultimate life-saving act of compassion.

- To complete the day's activities, young people will congregate in their local churches, regions, or Conferences/Missions for a time of worship and sharing of experiences to mark the beginning of the Week of Prayer, which is based on Mission & Service.
- Youths around the world will be connected through technology and live coverage as stories light up the world progressively through the different time zones.
- A specially designed T-shirt will provide identification with the global initiative.

The Global Youth Day will reposition youth at the center of the church's life and mission. It has the potential of being the dawn of youth ministry's finest hour.

Please visit the GC Youth Ministries Department website for annual dates.

Campus Ministry Sample

Andrews University campus ministry (AUCM)

The Office of Campus Ministries ensures appropriate pastoral care, resources, and services to the university campus. The university chaplain and associate chaplains function to enrich the spiritual and intellectual life of the campus by providing a variety of ministries appropriate to a spiritual, cultural, and socially diverse student and professional body, and to collaborate with other spiritual care leaders of the university community.

The leadership of Andrews University Campus Ministry (AUCM) operates at a level that ignites the passion of those who have been transformed by or are considering a relationship with Jesus Christ from the unique perspective of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. As such, we have identified these shared beliefs and values to help us fulfill the mission Jesus Christ has given us as we minister on the campus of Andrews University. We achieve this under the trifold process of Why, How, and What.

Why?

The essential question for the existence for AUCM is embraced in the transformative verse central to the Gospel of John, "Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." John 14:6. Embracing the ethos of Andrews University, AUCM believes:

We Seek the Way	Fostering and leading cooperate and personal worship on campus.
We Affirm the Truth	Creating places to explore and own our faith.
We Change the Life	Encouraging the application of thoughtful, sensitive, and tangible experiences.

How?

The application of our values and beliefs are expressed through:

Inclusion—Christ died for all so that he may save all. “For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. For ‘whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved’” (Rom. 10:12-13).

Exploration—Together we will find answers or we will search for new methods. “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you” (Matt 7:7).

Innovation—We will use all of the gifts and abilities available to us to be effective in ministering to a diverse community. Paul challenged his mentee, Timothy, in 2 Timothy 1:6 to “...stir up the gift of God which is in you...”

Preparation—We’ve been given all we need for success, but only accidents just happen. Matthew 25:20: “Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.”

Implementation—All programming should be timely and run well. In speaking of precision in planning, 2 Chronicles 8:16 says, “Now all the work of Solomon was well-ordered from the day of the foundation of the house of the Lord until it was finished.”

Communication—Campus ministry programs and projects should be well advertised. Audiences are not assumed, they are created. Luke 10:1 says, “...The Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place He Himself was about to go.” Marketing is an integral part of effective ministry.

Evaluation—Assessment is an integral part of effective ministry. Jesus evaluated the progress of His ministry with His disciples. He asked them in Matthew 16:13, “Who do men say that I the Son of Man, am?” We should always evaluate our activities to ensure that we are reaching our objectives.

What?*1. Seek*

- AUSA Week of Spiritual Emphasis
- AU Vespers
- Bible Study and Discipleship
- Clubs/Ad hoc groups
- CM Week of Spiritual Emphasis
- Co-ed Dorm Worship
- Graduate Week of Spiritual Emphasis
- Sabbath Morning Worship - New Life
- Sabbath Morning Worship - One Place
- Sabbath Morning Worship - PMC Second Service
- Seminary Week of Spiritual Emphasis
- Thursday Chapels

2. *Affirm*

- All Fired Up
- Area Churches
- AXIS - Leadership Training
- Evangelism Field School
- Faculty/Staff Support
- Fall Fellowship
- GPS Forums
- House of Prayer VBS
- NAD Chaplains Summit
- NAD CM Convention
- Sabbath School - New Life
- Sabbath School - One Place
- Sabbath School - Refresh
- Student Missions Training
- Teaching/Training

3. *Change*

- Benton Harbor Outreach
- Easter Passion Play
- Harbor Habitat
- Illinois My Town
- Magabooks
- Mentoring/Support
- Ministry & Club Fair
- Preaching/Teaching/Authorship Assignments
- Short-Term Mission Trips
- SPARK (prayer)
- Student Missions
- Visitation
- Young Adult Ministry Symposiums



SECTION D

Further

Reading

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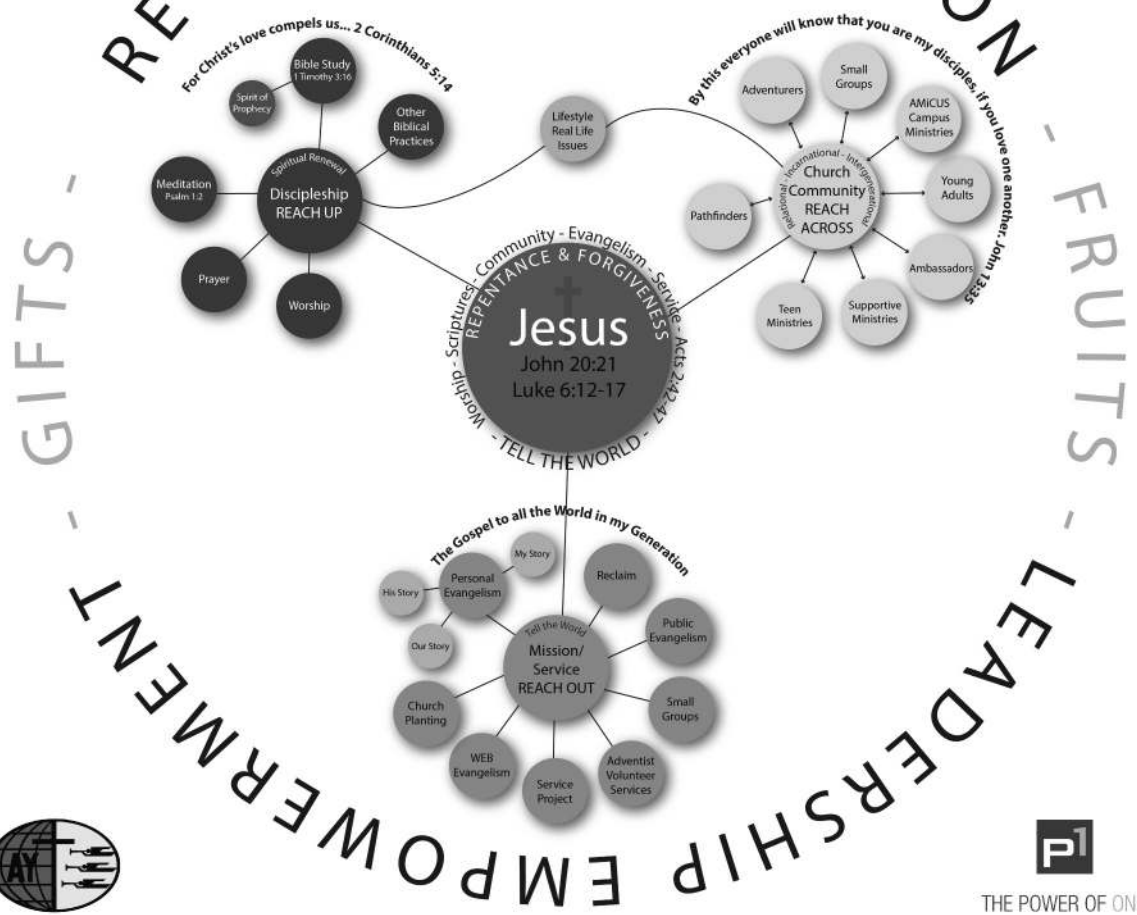
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