

Alberta Conference Adventist News

A window of information for Seventh-day Adventists in Alberta

Special Edition

What If . . .

Come dream with us. The concepts presented in this special edition are for your contemplation and thoughtful meditation. They are different, even radical. You might even say they are frightening. After you have time to think them through, the question we are asking you to answer is, are these concepts valid? If so, should we ignore them, or should we do something with them? If we do something with them, where do we begin?

When you stop and think about it, something seems wrong. In the past 10 years \$50 million have gone through the Alberta Conference, plus who knows how much more through the church budget of each local church. Now, that \$50 million is for absolutely everything the conference does, including money sent on to the Union, Division, missions, schools, camps, church buildings, teachers, pastors, evangelism and all the costs involved in running the conference program. And do you know, we have grown by a net total of 800 members over that same period of time. Does it strike you that some adjustment is necessary?

Is there a better way to expend our resources? To most people \$50 million is a lot of money. What can be done to provide more results for the stewardship of that money? We don't have all the answers, but the ideas and concepts you are about to read has really set a lot of people thinking. That provides a great atmosphere in which to dream. And dream we must. Come dream with us

Bill Spangler, Ministerial Secretary



In God's game plan, the church does not exist to serve her own organizational needs. Rather, the resources of the church are to be used, first, to build up the people of God and then to deploy those same people to take the mission of Christ into the world.

Donald C. Posterski

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From the President ...

What I Like About

A few years ago George Vandeman wrote a book with the above title. In that book each chapter talked about a different denomination and the contribution that denomination made to rediscovering the great truths of the Scripture. Because I so much appreciated his approach in that book I would like to piggy-back on his approach and in this brief column I'd like to share with you several things I like about the "New Model For Ministry."

I like the "New Model For Ministry" because it isn't really new! In reality, our call to implement this model is a call to return to the way our church understood ministry for the first hundred years of its existence. It is a call for the pastor and layperson to work side-by-side as equals in doing the work of the kingdom while recognizing our dependence upon one another. It recognizes that God calls every believer to be a minister for Him. While we each will respond in a different way because our talents vary, we each are responsible to advance the mission of God's church according to our abilities. The role of the pastor is to help church members recognize where they can make a difference in the church and to facilitate that contribution. But in the end the pastor and the lay person are equally responsible before God for the welfare of His church and its advancement.

I like the "New Model For Ministry" because it empowers lay people to make meaningful contributions to their churches. As one layman from an area that has taken giant steps toward implementing the "New Model For Ministry" said to me recently, "I always wondered why as an elder my church never gave me anything of significance to do. Now I have some real responsibilities and I feel as though I'm really doing the work of an elder!" Under this model the church becomes a team in which every member makes an important contribution rather than being a cheering section who watches an all-star in a solo performance.

I like the "New Model For Ministry" because it allows pastors to focus more of their attention on the work of building God's kingdom than the present role we have allowed ourselves to slide into over the past fifty years permits. God gave His church countless warnings in the spirit of prophecy about allowing pastors to "settle in" over congregations attempting to solve all of their disputes and challenges. That, she says, is a work that will never be finished and will divert the great commission Jesus gave to it. The pastors are to be considered "field workers" relatively free from church routine in order to take the gospel to new prospects and to train the lay people for their role in service.

I like the "New Model For Ministry" because it requires all of us to take a careful look at what we are doing in the church and why we are doing it. As we examine the traditions that have grown up among us (yes, we, too, have traditions just as persistent as the Jews of Jesus' day) it will give us an opportunity to see if those traditions are effective today in accomplishing the work of ministry that God has given to His church. It will likely require that all of us—lay person and pastor alike—obtain additional training to be better able to be used of God. Even after walking with Jesus for three-and-a-half years the disciples needed the training and preparation of the upper room experience before Pentecost could come. Surely in our fast-changing world we should recognize that some of our traditional methods and training may no longer be accomplishing what they once did and we should be prepared to learn new ways of doing the traditional work of kingdom building.

Finally, I like the "New Model For Ministry" because it makes me uncomfortable. Yes, I suspect that all of us involved in this effort are a bit uncomfortable as we stretch our wings and attempt to expand our horizons. Yet it seems to me that a church that prophecy indicates has drifted into a Laodicean condition needs to be disturbed a bit and made to see its true condition. We need to awaken from our slumber and earnestly seek God's guidance to warm the lukewarm waters. No, I'm not a masochist who enjoys pain. But when



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Trim Tabs and Ocean Liners

Little decisions matter. In the complexity of modern life we seldom stop to reflect upon how our values and behaviors get amplified in the feedback loops of our lives. Decisions become habits. Habits become traditions. Traditions become law. The momentum that systems develop make them virtually unchangeable. In fact, direct attempts to change a system are no more successful than Don Quixote was when he jousted with the windmills. Yet, systems change. Revolutions occur.

Usually something small, what at the time seems insignificant, unleashes a tidal wave of change. Think of an ocean liner moving at top speed through the ocean. Imagine what external force would be needed to push the bow of that ship sideways. But if a rudder is turned in the opposite direction from that which you wish the bow to go, a vacuum creates an action that *pulls* the bow in the direction you wish the ship to go.

Interestingly, you could never turn the rudder with the ship's steering mechanism. *But*, the rudder has a trim tab which the steer-

ing mechanism turns in the opposite direction you wish the rudder to turn. The trim tab creates a vacuum and pulls the rudder in the opposite direction of the trim tab. Something so small has the ability to turn a ship that otherwise would be impossible to turn.

If you look at the graph of membership 1988-2008, you see that from 1988 to 1996 the Conference spent \$50 million with a net growth of 738 members. Clearly the inertia of church bureaucracy is preventing any serious attempt to move

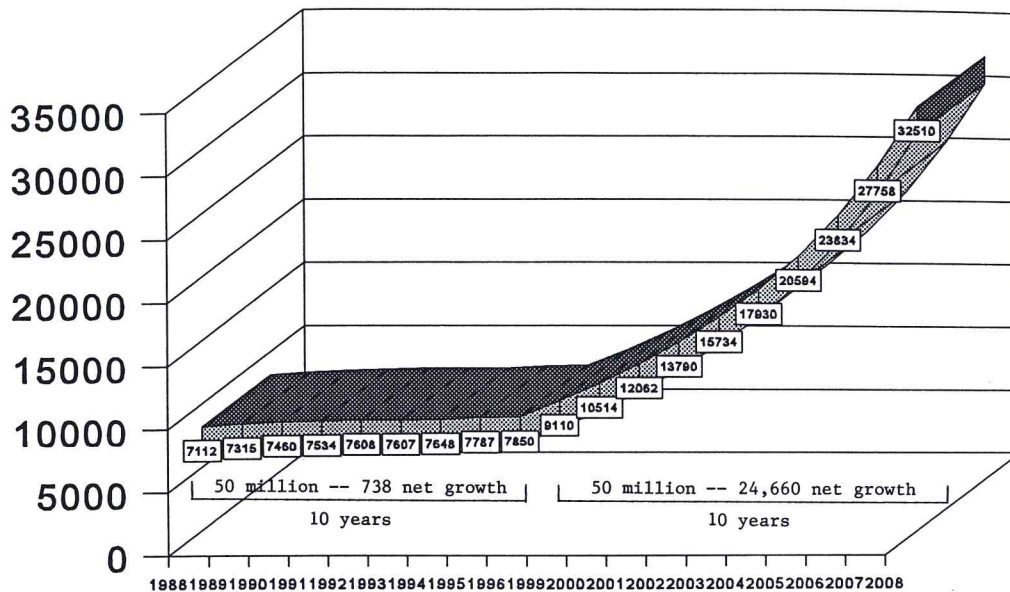
in a new direction.

But the simple change in the role of the pastor as it currently is seen to that of soul winner- trainer, though it seems insignificant, unleashes an incredible change in the outcome of the next ten years. The same \$50 million over ten years sees a net growth of 24,660 plus.

Little decisions matter. Wouldn't you like to see this ship moving in a new direction for a change?

Usually something small, what at the time seems insignificant, unleashes a tidal wave of change.

Membership 1988-2008



Membership

Norman Yergen, Secretary

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forced outside of the traditional ways of doing things within the church there will be some. That is true for the pastor as well as for the lay person. We all have new (to us today) roles to learn and understand. But I remember my eighth-grade school year. During that school year I sprang from five feet two inches to six feet tall. I had a fair amount of aches and pains in my muscles and joints that year but there was growth! And to this budding basketball player it

was worth it!

Yes, I like the "New Model For Ministry." Misnamed a bit? Perhaps. But as we return to the concept that every believer is a minister called by God to some special service, and we give more than lip-service to that concept, I believe that God will give us a sense of unity and direction that will enable latter-rain-power to guide and direct us.



Did Ellen White Mean What She Said?

We are a people who believe that Ellen White was a chosen

messenger of God for the purpose of pointing this church back to the Bible, and to give direction to this church as it attempted lift-off for the work of preaching the Three Angels Messages. Some have run way ahead of her and made her say things she never meant to say, while others have held way back and could almost care less what she has to say about anything. However, most Adventists believe that she is a voice that needs to be taken seriously.

Have we done that? Have we pretty much forgotten to seek her counsel in church work? Or, would we be interested in knowing what she has to say about how to go about this work of kingdom building? This article is not about Ellen White, and whether or not she is a prophet of God. Instead I want to ask a question: If we believe that she was sent to guide us, why

gether seeking God for wisdom and understanding, looking forward to opportunities such as revival meetings and camp meetings when pastors would be available to preach to them.

And the church grew, quickly! It was exciting. Churches and congregations were springing up everywhere. The pastors continued to preach, and the churches looked after themselves. It was the way church was done. There were no pastors settled over churches and communities. Pastors were given the challenge to make their own living and preach the message to raise up companies, and if they could do that they were hired to preach full time.

speaking to each other in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in our hearts and making melody unto the Lord. While you should respect the ministers highly for their work's sake, you must not trust them as your saviors, but build yourselves up in the most holy faith. When

In laboring where there are already some in the faith, the minister should at first seek not so much to convert unbelievers, as to train the church members for acceptable co-operation.

The churches are dying and they want a minister to preach to them ... unless they can stand alone, without a minister, they need to be converted anew, and baptized anew. They need to be born again.

James White wrote it this way: "In no way can a preacher so well prove himself as in entering new fields. There he can see the fruits of his own labors. And if he be successful in raising up churches, and establishing them, so that they bear good fruits, he gives to his brethren the best proofs that he is sent of the Lord." James White, *Review and Herald*, April 15, 1862, Vol. XIX, No. 20, 156)

In 1909 the *Baptist Recorder* reported that "All Seventh-day Adventist clergymen are missionaries—not located pastors—and are busy preaching, teaching, and organizing churches the world over."

There is much history that could be given, but let's look at Ellen White's perspective on it all. She has much to say on the subject, but a few pointed remarks make it clear what her position was. "Do not depend on the ministers to do all the work in your church and neighborhood. The pastors must seek the lost sheep, and you must help them; and while the ministers are called to labor in other parts of the vineyard, the people of God must have light in themselves,

you assemble in the house of God, tell your experiences, and you will grow stronger. While you speak in meeting, you are gaining an education that will enable you to labor for others." *Review and Herald*, May 7, 1889

"God has not given His ministers the work of setting the churches right. No sooner is this work done, apparently, than it has to be done over again. Church members that are thus looked after and labored for become religious weaklings. If nine-tenths of the effort that has been put forth for those who know the truth had been put forth for those who have never heard the truth, how much greater would have been the advancement made!" *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 7, p. 18

"There should not be a call to have settled pastors over our churches, but let the life-giving power of the truth impress the individual members to act, leading them to labor interestedly to carry on efficient missionary work in each locality. As the hand of God, the church is to be educated and trained to do effective service. Its members are to be the Lord's devoted Christian workers."

The Work in Greater New York, Atlantic Union Gleaner, January 8, 1902

"It has often been presented to me that there should be less sermonizing by ministers acting merely as local pastors of churches, and that greater personal efforts should be put forth. Our people should not be made to think that they need to listen to

Do not depend on the ministers to do all the work in your church and neighborhood. The pastors must seek the lost sheep, and you must help them ... While you should respect the ministers highly for their work's sake, you must not trust them as your saviors, but build yourselves up in the most holy faith.

don't we let her? I will narrow it down to one specific topic and look at her counsel and guidance about that.

When Adventism began in the mid 1800's there were preachers giving the message wherever they could find a pulpit and to whomever would stop to listen. As they would travel from place to place preaching, little companies of prophecy-studying believers would fall into place and continue to study the ideas presented by the "Advent" preachers. The companies would study to-

a sermon every Sabbath. Many who listen frequently to sermons, even though the truth be preached in clear lines, learn but little. Often it would be more profitable if the Sabbath meetings were of the same nature as a Bible class study." *Loma Linda Messages*, p. 179-180

Probably her most pointed statement reads like this: "The churches are dying and they want a minister to preach to them. They should be taught to bring a faithful tithe to God, that He may strengthen and bless them: they should be brought into working order, that the breath of God may come into them. They should be taught that unless they can stand alone, without a minister, they need to be converted anew, and baptized anew. They need to be born again." *Evangelism*, p. 381

Did she mean what she said? I think she did. The question is whether or not we are going to continue to ignore her, or see if we can respond in some way.

So, what would the pastors do? Is she saying we don't need them? Of course not. Ephesians 4 is very clear that it is the work of pastors to "prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up." (vs 12) Her counsel fits that picture perfectly:

"Let the minister devote more of his time to educating than to preaching. Let him teach the people how to give to others the knowledge they have received." *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 7, p. 20

"In laboring where there are already some in the faith, the minister should at first seek not so much to convert unbelievers, as to train the church members for acceptable co-operation." *Gospel Workers*, p. 196

"The greatest help that can be given our people is to teach them to work for God, and to depend on Him, not on the ministers." *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 7, p. 19

Ellen White continued to appeal for pastors to not settle over individual churches. Until she died in 1915 she was listened to, and the pastor's work was to train members and to preach the message to those who did not know Christ. It took only four years after her death for the trend to go the other way, until today churches are frustrated to have to wait even a few weeks between pastors when there is a transition.

H.M.S. Richards Sr., had an interesting perspective on this whole concept. He wrote "When I was baptized, and later became a

young preacher, we looked upon churches that had to have settled pastors over every flock as being decadent. Most of our preachers were out on the firing line, holding meetings, winning men to Christ, and raising up new churches. Then every few months they would come around and visit the churches that had already been established. This seemed to be, according to our view of it, the plan of the apostolic church." H.M.S. Richards, *Feed My Sheep*, Washington: Review and Herald, 1958, p. 156

There would have to be a commitment to the new model, for it is a new model and, to use a modern term, a complete "paradigm shift" from what we are used to.

What would happen if churches took her counsel seriously and allowed the pastor the freedom to work totally in the area of training and evangelism, both personal and public? What if members everywhere lined up to be trained to be a support to him in his endeavors? What if each pastor saw his role more as a trainer and preacher than a nurturer of those who already have great light? Those who have great light need nurturing to be sure, but God has not only given pastors that role, He has blessed every member with a gift for ministry, and some have the gift of pastoring (nurturing) those who need support for specific times in their lives.

Did Ellen White mean what she said or was that only appropriate for her day? If we take her seriously it would mean a major shift in our thinking. But maybe that's what we need. We aren't turning Alberta upside down the way we're doing it now, are we?

Here's what would have to happen to make the transition.

1. There would have to be a commitment to the new model, for it is a new model and, to use a modern term, a complete "paradigm shift" from what we are used to.
2. We need to remember that each church will relate to the model differently, and that is good, too. Larger churches will work out different scenarios than smaller rural churches will.
3. Pastors would have to sharpen their training skills and their evangelistic skills. Church members with leadership and administrative skills would have to step into the administrative gap and do some of the things necessary to keep the church machinery operating that pastors have become accustomed to doing.
4. Other church members with appropriate gifts would have to step into the "ministry to members" gap, and those needing that ministry would need to adjust their thinking so that they can be ministered to by someone other than the pastor.
5. All of us would have to accept and appreciate the effort it takes to turn the ship around and do our part.

Did she mean what she said? If she did, and if it's valid, and if it would improve things by following the directions, let's give it a try!! If she is God's messenger, we can't lose but can only be blessed.

Bill Spangler, Ministerial Secretary

Northwest Region Takes The Challenge

The Northwest Region of our conference has taken on the challenge of putting this counsel to the test. The region has been organized into one district, almost a mini-conference. All the pastors in the region will work in specific training and evangelistic work with all the churches in the region. Each pastor will be available to each church for training, preaching and support. Regional training events will take place regularly for the members who want to improve their skills in their gifted area of interest. Leadership is in place in the region to cover all the aspects of church life we are accustomed to, and the pastors have been challenged by the conference and the churches to do the work of evangelism that God has called them to do.

Will it work? We are excited and confident that it will without a doubt. Time will, of course, be the test. We are also looking for other versions of this counsel to be tried and tested in other regions of the conference. Most of all we look forward to God working through His church the way He has wanted to all along.

From Maintenance to Leadership

Don Fothergill, *Ministry*, September 1991

*Pastors are not mechanics to maintain churches in good repair.
Their call involves equipping the saints for the ministry.*

Jack was an incredible car mechanic—the best that Johnson Ford had ever had in their 35 years of doing business. When the service manager retired, it came as no surprise to anyone that Jack was asked to take his place. He and his wife were ecstatic about the job advancement as well as the pay increase. The other 20 mechanics at Johnson Ford all respected Jack and were very much in support of him as their new manager.

Three months later, Jack lost his job. While Jack could make an engine hum, he didn't have the managerial skills necessary to make the shop hum. Jack was spending 90 percent of his time under the hood of automobiles helping his fellow mechanics work through problems that were a little bit too sticky for them to handle. He was doing what he knew how to do best. The only problem was that no one was managing the garage. Parts were back ordered; customers would wait for hours before anyone would talk with them; and most days were way over booked with customers. Complaints flooded the owners of Johnson Ford. Try as he might, Jack was unable to shift from being a skilled mechanic to being a skilled manager

After seven years of ministry, good old Pastor Humbottom left St. Paul's for another church. Every single member of the church loved him. The members gave him \$7,000 as a going-away present. During this tenure, however, Sunday morning worship attendance had dropped from 175 to 115.

After 14 months of work, the search committee proudly presented George Evans to the congregation for approval as their new pastor. Right from the word go, Evans made it clear that he had no intention of doing

the Christian ministry for the lay people. On the contrary, his desire was to train and equip the lay people so that they might be God's ministers.

In the excitement of the new relationship, no one paid much attention to what was going to prove to be a significant difference in the style of ministry between Evans and his predecessor.

Within three months of Evans' arrival, worship attendance rose rapidly; the Adult

Christian Education Department grew substantially; and a leadership training system initiated a new type of ministry. However, rumblings from the older members were rolling in swiftly and furiously. Humbottom had been a hand-holder, a tear-dryer, and a pastor who regularly got around to visit all the members in the parish. Evans, in contrast, was a teacher, a motivator, an organizer, and a visionary. Humbottom's ministry made no waves, no friction, and no progress. Evans' ministry propelled the church to surge ahead—and raised waves and generated friction.

The church found the change in pastoral style and leadership difficult to accept.

Pastor Dexter, utterly exhausted, dropped onto the sofa. He had just returned home from a three-day church growth seminar where he and three other pastors had been pumped up and motivated to muster the troops in order to achieve great things for God.

In the course of an average week, Dex busied himself with twenty different min-

istries at King Road Church. Now the church growth experts told him to undertake three new things that would cause his ministry to "explode." Dex felt like he was going to explode. He knew that if King Road Church was going to make any progress, he had to turn most of these 20 ministries over to laypeople. But every time he had tried this in the past the ministry simply dried up and died. Dex would retake the reins and continue being a one-man show. There was simply no time left to envision for the church or to train leadership for tomorrow.

However, six years as pastor of King Road Church had extracted a heavy toll on Dex and his family. As he lay on the sofa, he felt a mixture of anger, frustration, failure, depression, and aimlessness. His was a case of burnout.

Dex turned on the TV. Johnny Carson was introducing his next guest. The fellow was an amazing juggler who proceeded to

keep 20 china plates spinning on the end of sticks all at the same time. One after another the juggler started new plates spinning, and when he finally got

plate number 20 aloft, plate number 1 was just about ready to crash to the ground. The juggler raced over to it and furiously spun it back into orbit just in time to rescue plates number 2, 3, 4... This went on for about seven minutes until the juggler was exhausted and Carson took a break for a commercial.

Dex stood up and yelled out to his wife, "That's it! That's exactly what I feel like; a plate spinner. I spend all week, every week, trying to keep those 20 ministries from falling apart. I never take time off to look at the larger picture and begin to envision for the future."

Dex had stalled in his ministry because

Evans made it clear that he had no intention of doing the Christian ministry for the lay people. On the contrary, his desire was to train and equip the lay people so that they might be God's ministers.

The church found the change in pastoral style and leadership difficult to accept

he was unable to shift his leadership style from doing everything himself to being an equipper of God's people.

Three different experiences. Each one illustrates how difficult it is to shift from a maintenance/survival mentality to an envisioning/growth mentality. Jack, the mechanic, could not make the shift. Members of St. Paul's could not make the shift. And Dex, our burned-out pastor, couldn't make the shift. And yet, if a church is going to grow, the change must take place and without grinding too many gears. Such a transition involves touching three significant bases.

Pastor's Self-image

An effective leader needs to have the heart of a dove and the hide of a rhinoceros. Nothing significant was ever accomplished without a barrage of criticism from onlookers. Learning how to handle that criticism and at the same time maintain sensitivity is no easy task. Most pastors try to avoid any type of criticism because they want everyone to like them. The result is smooth waters, like Pastor Humbottom had, but no progress. The pastor who takes charge and leads will find conflicts and hurdles, and he or she needs to learn to handle them creatively. I have found that I can defuse my critics and antagonists by finding points that we can agree on, by learning to laugh at myself, and by refusing to get defensive, no matter what.

Second, a pastor needs to be involved in the constant process of self-discovery and self-evaluation. No pastor, however successful, ever has all the cards sorted out. Life grows in abundance, fruitfulness, and insight as we reshuffle and regroup the cards that God has given to us.

I have experienced one of the most liberating exercises by working through Peter Wagner's *Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow*. There I discovered that God had not gifted me in every single area of ministry. For the first time, I felt OK about the fact that I don't really enjoy visiting shut-ins or counseling people or doing judicatory work. I realized that God had not

gifted me for leading the church. I could now give myself the green light to invest heavily in the areas in which God has, in fact, gifted me.

This concept of giftedness leads us to the third important area of vision. For years I prided myself on being a jack-of-all-trades inside the church. I could handle every area of ministry, from shoveling the church sidewalks to burying the dead, from calling on new folks to designing confirmation material. I was a one-man band, like our friend Dex. The problem was that the church did not grow in depth or in numbers. I slowly discovered that if I focused my energy in the area of my giftedness, not only did I enjoy my work more, but fruit began to appear. I began to evaluate and sort out my priorities in terms of my gifts and my vision for the church. I delegated to others items that did not directly contribute to my vision/focus or were not in the area of my giftedness. I even dropped some ministries that I enjoyed but was not gifted in. Little by little, my identity, my gifts, my role, and my direction began to shift and come into

focus. As all these areas jelled, my self-image strengthened.

The Trust Factor

The third and critical element to facilitate the shift from the maintenance/survival mentality to the

envisioning/growth mentality is trust. Before any lasting changes can be initiated, mutual trust needs to develop between the pastor and the congregation. Most established congregations are like huge ocean liners, needing a lot of time and a lot of room to turn around. Too much change, too fast, will pull the church apart. The pastor needs to monitor the rate of change, allowing only so much change to take place at any given time.

No congregation that has been together through thick and thin is going to follow a pastor they do not trust. Lay people will put up with a certain amount of change from a

new pastor during the honeymoon period. Unless the pastor wins the trust of the people, the change will be short-lived. In any case, the most productive period of a pastor's tenure does not begin until after his or her fourth or fifth year, and those first years are best spent earning and building people's trust.

I find it helpful to conceptualize trust building in banking terms. Every time a new pastor visits a family in their home, sees a shut-in, marries a couple, baptized a baby, comforts a widow, or oversees a funeral, that pastor is making a deposit in the "People's

Bank of Trust." As the years go by, the trust balance grows and pays dividends. When the time comes for the pastor to introduce change, a large balance has accumulated on which the

pastor can draw.

The shift from chaplain to leader is a long and difficult process. The shift will mean saying no to a lot of good things in order to say yes to the best. The shift will demand from the pastor and the people a better understanding of the meaning of ministry—that it is God's equipping the saints "for building up the body of Christ."

This article was reprinted by permission from Ministry magazine.

Congregational Expectations

In spite of Paul's counsel to "equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ" (Eph. 4:12, RSV), pastors generally spend the bulk of their time ministering to people personally rather than equipping them to minister. Most laity expect that from their pastors.

Father Mulcahey, the chaplain on the TV serial MASH, illustrates this point well. Father Mulcahey is a kind-hearted, honest man who prays for the sick, baptized babies, counsels soldiers, and raises money for the local orphanage. What a lovely minister.

However, when it comes to leadership and direction in the MASH 4077 unit, no one ever thinks of consulting him. His job is to hold hands, not to lead.

Most congregations hire pastors to hold hands, not to lead. Pastors are expected to

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hatch, match, and dispatch. They are expected to be present at all sorts of meetings, but not to lead. If the pastor were to recruit, train, and engage a group of lay visitors, no one would object until that person was in the hospital and was visited by only a layperson. "The pastor didn't care enough to visit me," he or she would complain. Well, as a matter of fact, the pastor cared enough to train a dozen laypersons to visit and multiply the ministry. (I seem to remember one ancient Rabbi doing something like that.)

workhorse in the area of visitation. When I asked him if he had ever trained laypeople to visit, he said, "Oh, yes, many times. But our laypersons constantly complained, saying, 'It was a nice visit, but it's just not the same as when the pastor comes.'" My pastor friend got so tired of trying to explain that his job was to train God's people for ministry rather than to do the ministry for them that he gave up and went back to daily visitation. I'm afraid that

If the pastor were to recruit, train, and engage a group of lay visitors, no one would object until that person was in the hospital and was visited by only a layperson. "The pastor didn't care enough to visit me," he or she would complain. Well, as a matter of fact, the pastor cared enough to train a dozen laypersons to visit and multiply the ministry.

One of my mentors in the faith was a

decision lowered the ceiling on his ministry more than any other single factor.

If the pastor is going to make this shift from chaplain to leader, it helps to know from the outset that it will be an uphill battle all the way. About one third of the congregation will pull along with you after a few years of training and teaching. This group, a delight of any pastor, will be the powerhouse for tomorrow's church. Another third will allow you to lead, equip, and delegate as long as you are still willing to marry their daughters and bury their parents. In time they will accept the shift in pastoral roles, but they won't help to accomplish it. You can count on the final third to vote no on every issue. It doesn't matter what the issue is—they are against it because anything new means change, and change is the last thing they want. These folks will dig in their heels and disagree with you either to your face (rare) or behind your back (common), or simply wait you out (very common). It takes vision, skill, and confidence to lead the first third; handshakes, smiles, and hugs to lead the second third; and a cast-iron will, guts, and funerals to bring the last third along. ■

Role of Pastor, Churches, Regions and Conference

The new *Model for Ministry* envisions the following benchmarks:

- ✓ The re-establishing of the separation of pastoral responsibilities such as preaching, teaching and evangelism from managerial responsibilities like charring boards, overseeing plant services and managing finances.
- ✓ The commitment to the Priesthood of all believers including participating in decision making regarding budgets, distribution of resources and the priorities in mission.
- ✓ That churches will learn the eight principles of natural church growth and will commit to establishing them in their congregations.
- ✓ That regions will work to assess and accredit congregations. Congregations will strive to continuously improve their churches.
- ✓ That regions will accept as their number one priority the responsibility to reach everyone in their region with the Gospel. They will do this not by hiring professionals to do the work but hiring professionals to train them to do the job.
- ✓ That regions will schedule training in preaching, administration, outreach, nurture and worship. Regions will work to build unity through regional rallies and events.
- ✓ The bringing together of pastors, lay leaders and conference leaders to the table as equals. Together we work as a team sharing leadership, responsibility and power.

Norman Yergen, Secretary

Would you like to Respond?

Maybe you have been challenged or even agitated in some way by reading this paper, and you would like to respond. Let us suggest a few ways in which you can do that.

- Write a letter to the Alberta Conference office and share your views.
- Call the Conference office and ask to speak to someone about the New Model for Ministry.
- Contact your church's Regional Management Team delegate and give them your input for when these things will be discussed in your region.
- Ask your church for a business meeting to discuss the concepts so the R.M.T. delegate can be informed of the feed back from the whole congregation.
- Regional Rallies are being planned that will give opportunity for input and discussion. Be sure to attend when there is one in your region.

Looking Back

Baptisms

Peace River Church

November 21, 1998

The following story was related from the baptistry during a baptism at the end of "The Next Millennium Seminar."

Once upon a time (it seems like long, long ago), there was a young student from the University of British Columbia who had been hired to serve as recreation director at a salmon fish cannery at Namu, B.C. Being a seasonal village, most of the population was made up of migrant workers who were there for the sole purpose of making a quick buck. They worked long hours and what leisure time they experienced was filled with the kind of recreation that the university student had been hired to replace. Not only that, but the milieu contained some three different ethnic groups. Though there was very little open hostility toward each other, the three groups were not on friendly terms most of the time.

This presented almost insurmountable challenges for the energetic recreation director. Furthermore, because there was often quite a bit of time on the young man's hands, he would regularly be conscripted to fill in for some cannery worker who had called in "sick." Of course, as I'm sure you can appreciate, the situation was most frustrating.

One Friday afternoon, the recreation director fell into conversation with a fisherman, about his own age, who had come in for the weekend. Several times over the ensuing two or three summers, these two occasionally renewed their casual acquaintance. Several times the recreation director invited the fisherman to accompany or even assist him in his effort to provide wholesome leisure activities. Because these functions were scheduled for Friday evenings and Saturdays, the SDA fisherman politely declined—only adding to the recreation director's frustrations.

The years rolled on. The recreation director graduated and went into full-time professional employment. The fisherman also gained a profession, left the area and those brief encounters were filed away in the dusty archives of memory.

And then, more than forty years after those brief summer encounters, those two men have met again. "The recreation director was Ryan Towers standing with me here in this baptistry, and I was that young fisherman. And now, Ryan, because..."

Frank Johnson, Peace River

Looking Back - Continued on page 2

Our Commission ...

We are all a part of Jesus' great mission to 'make disciples of all nations.' Wherever we are, we are to live and preach the good news to others. As followers of their risen Lord, loyal disciples have repeatedly and deliberately accepted Jesus' mission as their own. They have said yes to the assignment Jesus has delegated to them. They have intentionally lived and proclaimed God's good news to people who share their racial bloodlines. They have served people who are close to them. Others have left their homes and families and the cultures where they were comfortable in order to lift up Jesus where he was unknown.

One of the great temptations for committed Christians in North America is to believe in Jesus but to live without any sense of sharing his mission. The temptation is especially real because most people in our society live without a commitment to a cause that is beyond the range of their personal goals. Christians have a higher calling than to simply funnel their energy and gifts into the container of their personal pursuits. To believe in Jesus is also to be sent—sent with the good news of the gospel to those who are near and sometimes to those who are far away.

The primary vehicle through which Christ's mission is accomplished is the church. The church is a place to join with others who want to know God's ways and be nurtured in the faith. As a corporate entity, the church equips her people to live faithfully in the world. Being a participant in a community puts a check on individual excesses. But most importantly the church exists 'to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature.' Eph.4:12.

In God's game plan, the church does not exist to serve her own organizational needs. Rather, the resources of the church are to be used, first, to build up the people of God and then to deploy those same people to take the mission of Christ into the world. The church exists for mission. A missionless church is reduced to an activity center for members only. The church of Jesus does serve the wide-ranging needs of her members, but she also mobilizes her members into her Savior's mission.

Coming into a genuine relationship with Christ is a profound, life-changing experience. Conversion to Christ reorders the whole of life: God is restored to his rightful place, the focus of worship and praise; the self is released from tyrannizing egotism and freed to become a constructive part of a community; values are scrutinized and restructured; motives are energized; morals and ethics are raised to a level that is truly human; one's heart is sensitized to the needs of others; one's mind is elevated to think more noble thoughts and pursue that which is good and true; one's hands are extended out to the world and lifted up to the Redeemer.

Donald C. Posterski, *Reinventing Evangelism*, p. 162-164.

*Approximately 75 people were baptized as a result of
Net'98 meetings in Alberta.*

Calgary Central baptized a total of 29 people over three Sabbaths.



Looking Back

Ponoka, August/September '98

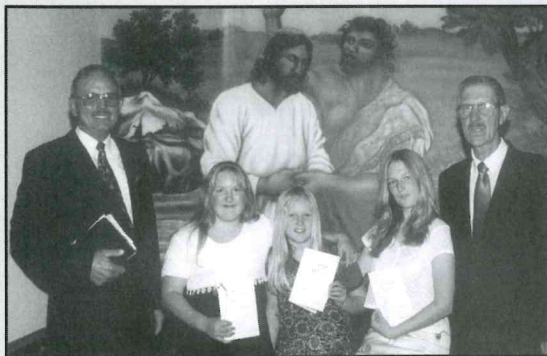
Pastor Les Sayler was privileged to baptize thirteen precious individuals who gave their lives to Jesus.



Hilda Davenport and Pastor Sayler.



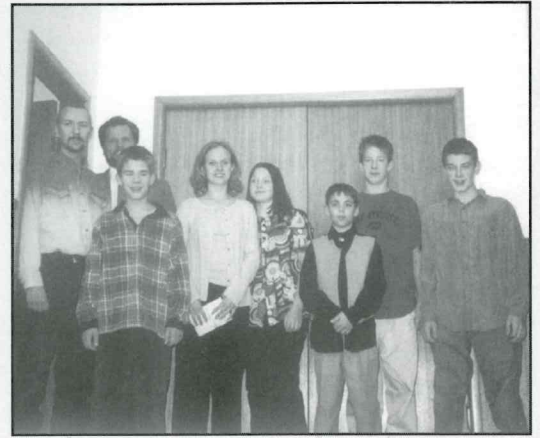
Back Row: Pastor Les Sayler, Ron and Freida Tarr; Middle Row: Benjamin Hirschorn, Clayton Lorenz, Ryan Hudema, Tarra Tarr; Front: Jackie Hudema, Lawrence Hirschorn, Jonathan Hirschorn.



Pastor Les Sayler, Jennifer Hindley, Amy and Krista Smallwood, George Lanto.

Sedgewick, November 14, 1998

L to R: John Bradshaw, Pastor Pohle, Jason Grovet, Tiffany Ball, Michelle Bullee, Brett Anderson, Brandon Ball, and Robby Pohle. Six of the seven baptized by Pastor Pohle were young people who had responded to an appeal made during the Net '98 series and became members of the Sedgewick Church. John Bradshaw joined the Loyalist Church. Pastor Pohle had studied with him for two years. About six months into the studies he asked, "Why is God revealing this to me?" As truck repairman in the oil industry, he was told that he could touch lives the pastor couldn't. As an avid Bible student and single parent who wants his young daughter to be ready for Christ's coming, he is enthusiastic about sharing Jesus with others.



Glen Carley

Calgary Spanish



Pastor Juan Perez baptized eight people this year in the Calgary Spanish Church

Sherwood Park October 10, 1998

Kayla Maksym was baptized by Pastor Jim Burgess.



New Pastoral Assignments



Pastor Gary Hodder - Medicine Hat, Brooks

Wife Almyra, Shawn 12, Natasha 10, Joshua 7, Tyson 5, Stephanie 2. Pastor Hodder and family returned to Alberta after pastoring in Newfoundland.



Pastor Lew Wiegel - Grande Prairie

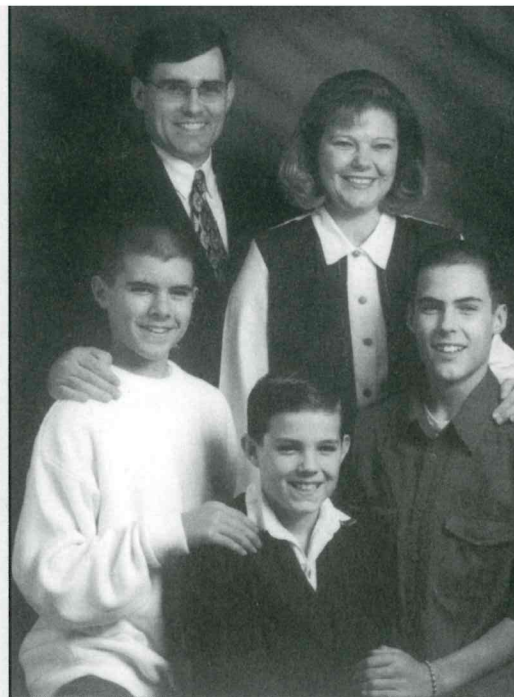
Lew and Elinor moved from Calgary to Grande Prairie area in the fall of 1981. Lew has worked in the

private business sector in the field of administration and management. He has been active in the Grande Prairie Church as head elder for most of those years. Lew and Elinor have two sons, both residing on Vancouver Island and one daughter who lives in Grande Prairie. They also have eight grandchildren and one great grandchild.

Pastor John Bullock - Calgary Pineridge

Before returning to Alberta, Pastor Bullock served the Ontario Conference as the Executive Secretary.

John and Debby Bullock have three sons, Reuben 14, Aaron 10 and Ben 15.



Pastor Dan Rochford - Edmonton South

Dan and Marian had pastored congregations in Ontario and Newfoundland. Most recently, they were stationed in the Toronto area where Marian was one of the grade eight teachers for the past nine years at Crawford Adventist Academy. Dan taught Bible at the academy and pastored. Their three daughters, Danielle, Amy and Stephanie are enrolled this year at Canadian University College.



Alberta People in Action

Lay Pastor Celebrates Baptisms in Toronto

Fay Mullings of the Calgary Pineridge Church had the privilege of helping out in Leo Schreven's crusade in Toronto, April 1998. From this crusade, a new church was raised: "It Is Written Seventh-day Adventist Fellowship Sabbath Celebration" Church. In October 1998, Fay returned to Toronto church to assist in their Net '98 meetings. During the last night of Net '98, eighteen people were baptized. After the baptism, Pastor Sil Lindo made an invitation to those who were touched by the Holy Spirit and wanted to give their heart to Jesus. Fourteen more responded to the call. Praise be to God!

Safe Home at High Level Receives Gift From ADRA

The Morning Star Church of Fort Vermilion has been generously donating to the High Level Safe Home every year for the last four years now. The food that they collected during Halloween was donated to the Women's Shelter. They prepared personal needs packages in two varieties—for an adult woman or for a mother and baby. The packages included toothpaste, toothbrush, shampoo, soap and other items, as well as baby products in the mother's package. The eighty or so packages were put together recently by church members and delivered to the Safe Home on November 21.

Investment at Sedgewick

Under the direction of Sabbath School Investment leader, Verda Grovet, the Sedgewick Church held its annual sale of a wide variety of items on November 22, 1998. The sum of \$2355.25 was realized.

Glen Carley



Wetaskiwin Food Bank Drive



Peace Hills Pathfinder Club had a fun evening collecting 301 food items for the Wetaskiwin Food Bank on October 31, 1998.

Prayer Ministry Team Visits Mirror



The Mission Statement of this voluntary prayer ministry team is to "assist churches in establishing a prayer ministry: equip and train local church prayer leaders and intercessors."

L to R: Don and Marlene Sinclair, Celestine Bishop, Brandon Lang, Rita DaBreo, Jeremy Satnik and Richard Ginn.

Looking Forward

Disaster Response Training Workshop

February 12-14, 1999

Bridgeland Church, 48 - 12 Street NE, Calgary

Fee: \$50

(meals and accommodation not included)

To register, call Sandy at 1-888-274-2372

Women's Retreat,

February 19-21, 1999

New Location: Holiday Inn, 67th Street, Red Deer

Keynote Speaker: Adelle Campbell

Fee: \$120 each/2 per room

To register, call Virginia Whitehead at 782-6008

Men's Retreat,

March 26-28, 1999

Foothills Camp, Bowden

Presenter Pastor David Vandenburg

Fee to be announced

To register, call Stan Bell, 887-5461 or Garry Sell 948-3376

Mission Trip to India

An exciting mission opportunity awaits 20 mission partners this summer 1999; you may be one of them. For three weeks, this team of people will fly to India, build a church building and conduct at least one, possibly two, evangelistic crusades. The time frame would include some sight seeing in India and possibly a brief visit to the Holy Land in return route. The proposed dates are July 13 - August 5 or August 8 - 31, 1999. Approximate cost per person is \$4000. To register your interest, please contact Pastor Kelly Schultz at 986-3161.

Dateline 1999

February	12-14	Disaster Response Training Workshop, Bridgeland Church, Calgary
	12-14	Marriage Encounter, Holiday Inn, Red Deer
	19-21	Women's Retreat, Holiday Inn, Red Deer
March	12-14	Youth Extravaganza - CUC
	12-14	First Serve Youth Leadership Training - CUC
	19-20	Bill Wilson Leadership/Children's Ministries Conference - St Albert
	26-28	Men's Retreat, Foothills Camp

Adventist Singles' Ministry Mission Trips

If you are single and feel the need to get out more and meet people that believe the same things as you do and help out in the work of the Lord in other parts of the world, please write to: Wade Cazes, Apt. A 108 Shannon Cres. S.E., Medicine Hat, Alberta T1B 4G3 or Ph/fax: 403-527-5849 or e-mail: wcazew@meplane.com.

Resource Material & Audio-Visual Equipment

If you have any borrowed equipment or resource material that belongs to the Alberta Conference, please return it immediately to Evangeline at the Conference office. A library system with resource material such as videos, audio tapes, books and workshop manuals will soon be made available to church leaders. Watch for more information in the next *Alberta Adventist News*.