Higher Education

Live from Andrews University, NET ’98 beams a message of love to six continents
Reaching the Cities

Regarding Monte Sahlin’s “Mission to an Island Named Manhattan” (Oct. NAD Edition). I am glad to see our church taking on the challenge of evangelizing New York City, but I have seen this same thing done before. When I was in school back in the 1960s, I remember an Adventist metro organization comprising the Atlantic and Columbia unions and their conferences in the Greater New York area. It got off to a highly publicized start, then faded.

I want to see the New York New Jersey Metro Ministry Long-range Planning Commission incorporate medical missionary work into its program, especially vegetarian restaurants. That doesn’t mean the ministers should operate restaurants. I see that as deacons’ work. The churches can support this ministry.

The past shows us that radio-and-television evangelism is not enough. I want to feel the influence of what happens in New York City.

—Albert Dittes
Portland, Tennessee

A Little News, a Big Invitation


You also know that four times a year (in the months with five Thursdays) you receive a special edition of the magazine. Here’s a sneak peak at the special editions we’re planning for 1999:

April 29: A Fresh Look at Our 27 Fundamental Beliefs
July 29: A Celebration of the Review’s 150th Anniversary
Sept. 30: Money and Stewardship
Dec. 30: Meeting a New Millennium

We Need Your Help

While we always welcome reader contributions to our magazine, we especially welcome your contributions to our special edition on the 27 fundamental beliefs.

Here’s what we’re thinking—27 colorful two-page spreads, each expressing a particular belief in a variety of forms: brief testimonies, anecdotes, photos, paintings, you name it. The more creative, the better.

And, kids, we’ll award a Review cap to the 27 best drawings/colorings of a fundamental belief. Your parents can help explain the beliefs, but real quick—here’s the list:

(1) the Holy Scriptures, (2) the Trinity, (3) the Father, (4) the Son, (5) the Holy Spirit, (6) creation, (7) the nature of man, (8) the great controversy, (9) the life, death, and resurrection of Christ, (10) the experience of salvation, (11) the church, (12) the remnant and its mission, (13) unity in the body of Christ, (14) baptism, (15) the Lord’s Supper, (16) spiritual gifts and ministries, (17) the gift of prophecy, (18) the law of God, (19) the Sabbath, (20) stewardship, (21) Christian behavior, (22) marriage and the family, (23) Christ’s ministry in the heavenly sanctuary, (24) the second coming of Christ, (25) death and resurrection, (26) the millennium and the end of sin, (27) the new earth.

Send submissions by February 1 to: Fresh 27, Adventist Review, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904; fax 301-680-6637; e-mail: 74532.2564@compuserve.com. Please include address and phone number.

By the way, if you don’t receive the weekly Adventist Review, just call 1-800-456-3991 to subscribe for yourself or for someone on your Christmas list. Let’s make 1999 our best year yet!
Thank you for publishing Andy Nash’s short interview with New York pastor Samir Selmanovic (“Ministry to Postmoderns: No Blueprints”). Selmanovich’s responses should be “required reading” and a talk item for every North American Division member and for our leaders and planners.

He may have thought to speak only about his Manhattan church. Actually, he was talking about all of us when he said, “Large imported programs have less and less leverage in mobilizing the power of laity. One life at a time, that’s where it’s at.” Exactly! He then implied that one-life-at-a-time ministry was undersupported, while “money and effort” were “being put in the same basket all over again.”

I am aware of a congregation (see the Aug. 20 Cutting Edge Edition) that has remade the current and previous extravaganzas into a yearlong, weekly small group study and discussion exercise between members and nonmembers, nearly one-on-one. Since NET ‘98 started, I am informed that they began the October event with a nearly equal number of nonmembers and members attending and now interacting in small groups. My church can’t equal that ratio. Does yours?

—Frank R. Lemon
Banning, California

Racial Bigotry
Bravo to Mike Oxentenko (“Babylon and Pentecost,” Oct. NAD Edition) for saying it like it is. When I joined the Adventist Church 30 years ago, I did so because this was the church of the Bible. However, the issue of racism, as displayed by segregated churches and conferences, brings me to tears. I cannot call my church the church of the Bible on this one. How embarrassing to face this issue as we witness to others.

When I have asked the reason for such overt bigotry, I have been told that this segregation facilitates political representation. I imagine the Romans thought changing the Sabbath to Sunday was in their best political interest also. If we really are the church of the Bible, we cannot afford to ignore its commands for any reason. If we really are the remnant, we cannot afford to distance ourselves from God’s presence, where all minister together as one body.

Racism is as anti-God as any other form of hate. We have been called to love.

—Colleen Wire
Silver Spring, Maryland

This article contained what I believe to be some factual errors. I refer specifically to the paragraphs regarding an alleged incident of some church elder threatening to shoot a Black person who accidentally sat in the wrong place in church.

The general feeling among the White Adventist congregations in the South was such that no White church would invite a singing group from Oakwood College to sing anywhere. That makes the speaker’s information suspect. Oakwood was and still is the only Black institution in the denomination.

Stories from 35 years ago have grown out of proportion to reality. We at Huntsville were in constant touch with what was happening in the church all over the South. There never was a threat of violence.

—Kenneth Noel
Madison, Alabama

Our author obtained the information from a published source and accepts its authenticity. His article, however, identified no particular institution.—Editors.

On the cover: Participants at the Next Millennium Seminar, held October 9 to November 14 at Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan. Photos by Richard Dower.
couple months ago I did something totally out of character. You can judge for yourself how stupid it was.

In financial matters I play it safe. Perhaps because I grew up in a home where we didn’t have much money, I early learned the value of a dollar. My wife, Noelene, who is a generous person, has helped steer me away from a tendency to stinginess, even with the Lord.

But in late summer I leaped into the fiscal abyss. And further, I pulled in the *Adventist Review* also.

For several months NET ’98 had been on my mind and in my heart. As I prayed about this fantastic global outreach, I felt impressed that the Lord was calling the *Adventist Review* to do something unusual. I thought of the thousands of new believers who would join the church in North America, and their need to be grounded and built up in the Lord and the message we hold dear. The Lord seemed to say: Find a way to get the weekly *Review* to every one of these My children.

I talked with church leaders. They thought the idea was wonderful, but they were busy with many projects, and budgets had long since closed. Go and do it with our blessing, they said—but you will have to make it happen.

I talked with the organizers of NET ’98. They responded enthusiastically to the possibility, but they were too busy with preparations for NET ’98 itself to get involved.

That led me to the day I did something really stupid. One Wednesday morning, when the *Adventist Review* staff had gathered for worship and prayer, I shared the burden on my heart. I told them I believed that the Lord was behind the dream, and that He was calling us—no one else—to take the lead. I suggested we go directly to our readers, inviting them to partner with us in making the dream a reality.

The staff—bless them—readily agreed. Soon I was writing “Let’s Do It—The $25 Club,” and you read it in the September NAD edition.

We got the idea of the $25 Club two years ago in connection with NET ’96. Our efforts then were tentative, but the Lord blessed them, and readers responded generously. Every penny that came in was earmarked to send the *Review* to new members.

This year we have a much bigger dream. We have invited the conferences around North America to partner with us, to put in $10 for every $15 we supply. That means that every $25 we receive will go nearly twice as far.

During the past couple months, my associates Bill Knott and Roy A merica and I have fanned out across North America, meeting with the union conference committees and working with each conference. We prepared a short video featuring new believers at the Templeton Hills church in central California and how they reacted to receiving the weekly *Review*. Everywhere the response was the same—overwhelming acceptance.

Several conferences asked us: Can you extend the offer to new believers who joined the church by some means other than NET ’98? We couldn’t turn down that request.

So, dear friends, here is the situation: we are facing a deluge of names, and I have committed the *Adventist Review* to the larger part of their funding. If during the next month or two the conferences send in names of 7,000 new families, our share of the cost will be $105,000. If they send in—as I think likely—10,000 or more names, we will need to come up with $150,000 or more as our share.

I’m not used to this sort of behavior. I’m not used to going ahead without a budget. And I have to confess that once or twice I have awakened in the night wondering if this was the most stupid thing I’d ever done. Most of the time, however, I have a deep peace, a sense that God is in this venture and therefore it cannot fail. This fiscal conservative is learning new dimensions of faith.

Noelene and I gave the first check—we believe in putting our money where our mouth is. When the $25 Club reaches $100,000, we will give another $1,000.

I invite you to pray for this faith venture. And also to join us in giving and giving again. Make out checks to the *Adventist Review* in multiples of $25—$100, $500, $1,000, $10,000—and mail to: The $25 Club, *Adventist Review*, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, Maryland 20904-6600.

* For those who give $100 or more, we will mail you a free copy of this video on request.
What do you do for an encore when you have just pulled off an international satellite broadcast that attracted an unprecedented number of viewers?

Well, first, you don’t claim any credit. God’s blessing—God’s alone—let us create the largest evangelistic endeavor in modern history to spread the three angels’ messages. It was God’s blessing that attracted hundreds of thousands in every time zone, from every inhabited continent on the earth, and moved tens of thousands of people to make decisions to accept His overpowering love and join His remnant church.

But what do we do as an encore? Rest on our laurels? Do a repeat? Try to top it?

Over the next few years North America will place a special emphasis on evangelism in the big cities of our territory, beginning next year in New York City. We won’t abandon satellite evangelism, but we will focus it on the special needs of large cities.

Net New York '99 is a major evangelistic thrust that embodies the elements of old-style and new-style evangelism. We will have 1,000 points of light radiating to the Greater New York metropolitan area.

Beginning September 10, 50 live public evangelistic campaigns will be conducted by conference pastors and other guest evangelists in New York City. One day later, starting September 11, Alejandro Bullon of La Voz de la Esperanza will speak from Orlando, Florida, via satellite to 150 Spanish-speaking groups in New York, along with hundreds of other audiences throughout the Western Hemisphere.

Doug Batchelor of Amazing Facts will host another round of satellite campaigns beginning October 15 that will target 100 English- and French-speaking congregations as well as families at home. Members can invite friends, family, and neighbors into their homes—just as members did 100 years ago—to share Christ the old-fashioned way via a twenty-first-century medium.

The meetings in New York City are part of a larger initiative to target many of the major cities in North America. Mark Finley and the It Is Written team will host an event in Los Angeles in the spring of 2000. Ken Cox and the Voice of Prophecy will take on Chicago that fall. Tentative plans for Toronto include a major evangelistic thrust to occur there sometime after the 2000 General Conference session.

Other satellite evangelistic initiatives also will be uplinked in North America. Walter Pearson and Breath of Life are planning a campaign in Nairobi, Kenya, that will be uplinked throughout North America. Mark Finley will circle the globe conducting reaping meetings under the name Acts 2000, and many of those series will be uplinked in North America.

These are major initiatives, every bit as bold and visionary as NET '98. Together they will require millions of dollars of funding. The individual media ministries have each committed hundreds of thousands of dollars to this next step in our evangelistic endeavors to reach North America for Christ. The North American Division, the unions, and the conferences are likewise committing extensive funding.

And God calls each of us to have a part as well. We may not each give an equal amount, but we can each make an equal sacrifice.

The Thirteenth Sabbath Offering overflow this quarter is for North American outreach to the large cities of our field. On December 26 we hope to receive at least $500,000 for this great project. Your offering—your sacrificial gift—will help make Jesus real to millions of people.

There’s something else you must do: God’s blessing, and His blessing alone, can bring success for these initiatives. Pray for the meetings in the four cities targeted for special emphasis: New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, and Toronto. Pray for the pastors and churches on the grassroots level who will be supporting these meetings. And pray for your city, your church, your neighbors. Pray that God’s work will be finished on earth.

Cyril Miller is vice president for evangelism in the North American Division.
ADVENTIST QUOTES

“Did you see that? They had a subcommittee after each song.”
— world church president Robert S. Folkenberg, after a September concert by The Singing Senators at the Aventist world headquarters

“It wasn’t a subcommittee. It was a prayer huddle.”
— Senator Trent Lott, responding to Folkenberg

“Stephanie Williams was baptized last Sabbath at Beechwood Lake following a terrific thunderstorm by Pastor Joyce.”
— a bulletin announcement at the Fletcher, North Carolina, church

GIVE & TAKE

ADVENTIST LIFE

Our family celebrates Christmas in a big way, simply leaving out some of the more secular or materialistic traditions. We didn’t realize how effectively we had eliminated Santa Claus, however, until we took our 20-month-old daughter, Jenny, to the mall during the holidays. As I pushed her stroller past the various Christmas displays, she greeted each bearded figure with a delighted “Hi, M ose!”
— Joy Cassano Coleman, Glen Burnie, Maryland

Our school bands have to start somewhere. When our daughter Andrea was to make her debut in the Hermiston Junior Academy third- and fourth-grade band at their Christmas concert, we were thrilled. We sat in anticipation, waiting for the first song.
Andrea’s 3-year-old brother, Graham, was eager too. The room was quiet; the parents were on the edge of their seats. When the band struck the first few measures of what must have been a Christmas carol, Graham piped up, “M ama—what’s that noise?”
— Debby Ménychenko, Umatilla, Oregon

THE REVIEW STAFF... AS YOU’VE NEVER SEEN THEM

At the Review and Herald Publishing Association’s open house in September, the Aventist Review decided to showcase the magazine’s four monthly editions in a creative way.
Representing the North American Division Edition (the one you’re holding), news editor Carlos Medley (third from left) sports apparel from the American West.
Representing the World Edition, editorial secretary Jean Sequeira (right) dons a two-piece outfit from Africa, where she served for 18 years.
Representing the Cutting Edge Edition, General Conference employee James Jordan (second from left) wheeled over from a bikers’ convention.
Representing the Anchor-Points Edition, editorial assistant Ella Rydzewski (left) dug out her reform dress for the occasion.
Finally, design assistant Stephanie Kaping (second from right) brought a little normalcy to the group.

CULTURE SHOCK: A diverse magazine for a diverse church.

As you can see, if you receive only the monthly NAD Edition of the Aventist Review, you’re missing three quarters of the picture. To subscribe for yourself or someone on your Christmas list, call 1-800-456-3991.

NEW FEATURE: DREAM CENTER

Have you ever had a knockout idea that you were just dying to share with other Adventists? This is your chance. Beginning soon, we’ll be printing your dreams for this church on the Give & Take page. Send submissions (100 words or fewer) to “Dream Center,” Give & Take, Aventist Review, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, M D 20904. Idea by Shasta Burr.

WE NEED YOU
Send Give & Take submissions to ... Give & Take, Aventist Review, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, M D 20904; Fax: 301-680-6638; E-mail: 74532.2564@CompuServe.com. Please include phone number. Submissions will not be returned.
The NeXt Level

Responding to fresh, relation-based evangelism, thousands find a forever friendship with God.

BY JACK STENDER, ANDREWS UNIVERSITY PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

BERRIEN SPRINGS, MICHIGAN — Something is obvious about Pastor Herry Mhando: The man is excited.

From inside his cubicle the Tanzania native watches a video monitor. The image flickering on the 12-inch color screen is of Dwight K. Nelson, speaker for the NeXt Millennium Seminar. Nelson’s message is about the relevance of Sabbathkeeping for a stressed-out world, but you sure won’t mistake Mhando for an unstressed person.

He paces. He nearly shouts with happy enthusiasm. His gestures are animated, and sweat covers his brow as he translates the sermon, “A Dying Queen’s Last Wish,” into the East African dialect of Kiswahili. It will reach 80 sites in the Congo, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda.

Of course, the nightly brain strain accompanying the simultaneous translation has been physically demanding. But it doesn’t dim Mhando’s enthusiasm— or his nightly pacing. “It’s exciting because we are part of something bigger here, and I’m proud to have a part in it,” he says.

EVERY TONGUE: Translators Manuel Ferro of Portugal and Julian Nam of Korea visit with Brad and Kandus Thorp, Adventist Global Communication Network coordinators.
Unknowingly the pastor speaks for more than himself. His dedication and enthusiasm reflect that of the global Adventist Church—for NET '98 was something much bigger than just human endeavor. The NeXt Millennium Seminar was about getting an eternal message of hope to a dying world.

Unprecedented Scope

To understand the scope of NET '98, maybe a little math is in order: six continents, 12 satellite feeds, 25 broadcast technicians, five cameras, 22 floodlights, 1,500 host site volunteers, 31 programs, 7,600 sites (2,000 in North America), 100-plus countries, millions of potential viewers, one message, one world, one God. All told, a global adventure that brought the Adventist Church to a world audience as never before.

Held October 9 to November 14, the church’s biggest global satellite campaign united the church in ways we’ve never seen before,” says Alfred McCulure, North American Division president. “And the unique thing was that around the world Adventists and their guests heard the gospel presented in the same way.”

The import of McCulure’s statement shouldn’t be lost. During a five-week span the Adventist Church put on a unified, and yes, distinctly North American face to the world.

In Papua New Guinea this unifying message prompted 110,000-plus people to gather in five outdoor stadiums. On makeshift plywood screens the Gen X guitar strands of contemporary Christian group Plan C were heard by villagers who traveled up to three hours by horse, bus, and boat to hear the message.

In western Australia an Internet connection meant NeXt Millennium viewers in the dusty

Worth Repeating

A few of Dwight K. Nelson’s memorable lines

“God is not someone to be afraid of. He’s someone to be a friend of.”
—October 9 and throughout the series

“Love that will not let you say no is not love. It’s called rape.”
—October 10, on the freedom God offers

“I can assure you that right now I’m sweating on both sides of my face.”
—October 16, during a difficult lecture on Darwinism, responding to a fax from Africa saying that Nelson seemed to sweat on just one side of his face

“Even the friends of Jesus get sick and die.”
—October 23, on Lazarus

“Human sincerity can never be a substitute for divine truth.”
—October 27

“They steal heart in the fear of... They also steal fear in the heart of every American. See, I get nervous even talking about them.”
—October 28, on the Internal Revenue Service

“Now you get to call Him ‘Dad.”
—October 30, on joining the family of God

“Revelation 12:17 is not an apocalyptic call to arrogance. It’s a prophetic call to faithfulness.”
—November 7

“They’re sick because they’re sin-centered rather than Saviour-centered.”
—November 14, on prayer

And finally here’s a quote, not by the NET '98 speaker, but about him:

“Now I know why they call him ‘Wight Nelson. It’s because of his hair.”
—a child viewer in the Oudshoorn church, George, South Africa

MAKING THE POINT: Energetic, funny, and relevant, speaker Dwight K. Nelson stressed humanity’s need for Jesus Christ. “I owe everything to my Forever Friend,” he said the final week.
outback saw and heard the majestic 75-rank Casavant pipe organ in Pioneer Memorial church, the campus church of Andrews University.

In 600 sites in Romania more than 45,000 people saw Bible-toting American college students crowding into church pews. “Imagine the impact when viewers from the formerly Communist countries of Eastern Europe see American college students leading out in a global evangelistic campaign,” says Nelson, senior pastor of Pioneer Memorial church. “Years from now we will call this series a ‘God moment,’ a time when He was at work around the globe in ways that we won’t understand until eternity.”

Thanks to the success of NET ’95 and NET ’96, the Adventist Church is familiar with the promise and results of satellite evangelism. So when Nelson and Andrews University were named speaker and host site for NET ’98, the world had a general idea of what to expect.

But even if the concept was not new, the extent of this endeavor was. “This was the first effort on the church’s part to reach the whole world,” says Brad Thorp, director for the Adventist Global Communications Network (AGCN), the General Conference agency that delivered NeXt Millennium messages to downlink sites. (The Adventist Communication Network, or ACN, delivered content in North America.)

After a relatively glitch-free opening on October 9, a General Conference press release aptly set the stage for NET ’98 Superlatives:

Personal impressions of an impressive fall campaign

BY ANDY NASH, ADVENTIST REVIEW ASSISTANT EDITOR

■ Most frequent expressions: Nelson’s “Come on!” and “It doesn’t take a rocket scientist…” Midway through the series, a laughing Nelson switched to “It doesn’t take a brain surgeon…”

■ Most awkward juxtaposition. A series-long emphasis on the imminent end of the world interrupted by a health lecture on “how to add 11.5 years to your life.”

■ Most improved element: the graphics. Not only were they greatly improved from past NET campaigns; they improved as this campaign went along. In this highly visual age, such effective graphics are one of the better arguments for satellite evangelism. Many local pulpits still completely ignore visual learners.

■ Most overused punctuation: the exclamation point. Though employed more sparsely than in previous evangelistic materials (“And guess what! This beast is none other than the United States of America!!!!”), the Adventist Church’s favorite punctuation still appeared too often on-screen and in print. It’s much more effective to punctuate key sentences with a simple period, allowing the reader room to do his or her own exclaiming.

■ Funniest moment: the precious coloring of Nelson, Anderson, and Burr, sent by a child in Germany and shown closing night.

GROUND CONTROL: More than 20 technicians worked together to produce the NeXt Millennium Seminar. Here, producer Colin Mead directs the camera crew.

CHILD SAVIOUR: Dwight Nelson shakes hands with 6-year-old Marissa Ayala—who was conceived in the desperate hope that her bone marrow might match that of her dying older sister. (It did.) Nelson used the story to illustrate God’s sending a Baby to save the human race.
for the campaign to follow: “An unprecedented outreach program produced by the Seventh-day Adventist Church has reached thousands globally.” On the opening night the percentage of non-Adventist guests at most sites exceeded 30 percent. Wide promotional efforts prompted more than 1,000 non-Adventists to attend the opening night meeting at Pioneer Memorial church.

The most expensive satellite event in Christian history relied on some of the most sophisticated technology available, including a $500,000 “encoder” that transmitted one video channel and 40 audio channels. Professionals from the Adventist Media Center, in Simi Valley, California, produced the program.

Downstairs, in contiguous soundproof cubicles, the team translated the messages into Mandarin Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Spanish, and 32 other languages ranging from Afrikaans to Zulu. Curious crowds flocked to hear the trainlike roar of voices, and to experience a modern-day Pentecost moment similar to the disciples’ multilingual address to crowds in Jerusalem.

Satellite dishes parked outside the church uplinked video and audio to nine communication satellites hovering over the globe. These messages were then downlinked to 4,600 sites. More than 3,000 other sites would receive the program on a taped-delayed basis, and cable channels in Bulgaria, Canada, Fiji, India, Italy, the Solomon Islands, the United States, and Venezuela also carried the seminar.

AGCN calculations indicate that each night’s message reached a potential audience exceeding 2 million people. And early projections, based on attendance figures, suggest that more than 150,000 people could join the Adventist Church in the immediate wake of NET ’98.

A Global Community

The breadth of the evangelistic effort was unprecedented in terms of both human capital and technology. But the responses to the meetings that were sent to the Berrien Springs-based NET ’98 communication center showed that the event was not about technology, but about sharing a message of hope. Hundreds of faith-inspiring dispatches were sent by fax, e-mail, and phone.

BRITISH WEST INDIES—“In the Cayman Islands, they have had power shortages and ‘shaky screens,’ but have not missed one night of the NeXt Millennium Seminar.”

FLORIDA—“Port Charlotte reports ‘unprecedented attendance and response,’ with 170 attending each night, including 48 non-Adventists.”

PAPUA NEW GUINEA—“The small grandstand that seats 3,000 people is filled up every night, and the entire ground is filled up.”

VANUATU, SOUTH PACIFIC—“Five venues have 3,500 attending, including civic and national leaders and pastors from other denominations. In the Solomon Islands one parliament member said he wants to become an Adventist Church member.”

Satellite technology was not the only way that NET ’98 created a global community. The overwhelming popularity of the NeXt Millennium website meant the evangelistic campaign was the church’s most significant Internet event to date.

The campaign website, www.net98.org, averaged nearly 500,000 hits per week, and more than 15,000 people used the graphic locator to find the nearest NeXt Millennium downlink site. A team of 65 counselors fielded more than 2,300 Bible questions, and NET ’98 chat rooms sustained ongoing cyberspace dialogue.

A message from a 20-year-old girl in Arkansas was typical of the Internet missives: “I have never heard someone preach like Pastor Nelson does. It just grabs my attention, and I find myself stuck to the TV.”

It Took a Village

The messages that changed lives around the nation and world also electrified the Andrews campus, the site of a massive volunteer effort. Church members and Andrews students filled in as camera operators, ushers, children’s ministry coordinators, parking lot attendants, row hosts, song leaders, and greeters. All told, more than 1,500 individuals volunteered during the five-week campaign.

“No matter how big or small the job, everyone did it with the same attitude in mind,” says Skip McCarty, associate church pastor and volunteer.
What's NeXt?

North America selects four cities as evangelism foci.

By Vikki Montgomery, Correspondent for the North American Division

New York. Los Angeles. Chicago. Toronto. The names of these cities have become almost a mantra to the members of the NAD Mission Strategy Council. These are the largest cities in the United States and the principal city in Canada, respectively. Many hopes ride on them. The $500,000 the division plans to raise during the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering for fourth quarter 1998 will be used to target evangelism in these metropolises.

“These are the icebreakers, the pacesetters, the examples,” says Cyril Miller, North American Division vice president for evangelism and Global Mission. “During our year-end meeting [in 1997] we said, ‘Let’s use them to spearhead activity. Let them be models to help others do the same thing.’” More than 44 cities in the U.S. alone have a population of 1 million-plus, and these four will be closely watched as they demonstrate what big-city evangelism should look like.

New York, which leads the way in size and numbers, presents an unusual challenge. The Greater New York metropolitan area encompasses two unions (Columbia and Atlantic) and five conferences (Greater New York, Northeastern, New Jersey, Allegheny East, and Southern New England). It’s Miller’s job to bring them all together in the Greater New York-New Jersey Metro Ministries Long-Range Planning Commission. Commission members are pioneering a different kind of evangelistic effort.

Called Metro ’99, this effort will be a combination of live and satellite preaching by Evangelists Doug Batchelor of Amazing Facts and Alejandro Buillon of La Voz de la Esperanza. As participants watch from theaters, churches, or—for the first time—homes, local evangelists will be scattered throughout the area.

Creativity and communication will come together starting in September 1999. It will continue as It Is Written’s Mark Finley, Voice of Prophecy’s Kenneth Cox, and Breath of Life’s Walter Pearson move by satellite across the division to the other three cities in the year 2000. You can be a part of this wave of metropolitan evangelism by giving generously when the offering plate is passed on December 26.
The Sins of the Church

THOUGH MANY LESSONS ABOUT FORGIVENESS CAN BE GLEANED FROM THE STORY OF THE WOMAN CAUGHT IN ADULTERY (JOHN 8), THERE’S ONE OFTEN MISSED—AND IT HAS TO DO WITH HOW CHRIST TREATED THE HYPOCRITICAL JEWISH LEADERS WHO TRIED TO ENTRAP HIM. AFTER DEFENDING THE WOMAN AGAINST HER ACCUSERS WITH HIS FAMOUS LINE “HE THAT IS WITHOUT SIN AMONG YOU, LET HIM FIRST CAST A STONE AT HER” (VERSE 7), JESUS CONTINUED TO WRITE ON THE GROUND WITH HIS FINGER THEIR INDIVIDUAL SINS.

Rather than publicly humiliating these accusers (who had no problem publicly humiliating the woman), Jesus chose to rebuke them in a way that, while making a point, didn’t air their sins publicly. Mercy was shown not only to the woman but also toward those who were purposely trying to hurt Jesus.

WHAT'S THE POINT?

As a church we will never be any better than the sum of the godliness and holiness of our members; and that depends solely upon the degree to which we surrender our lives to Jesus Christ. There’s no better indication of the degree to which we have allowed ourselves to become “partakers of the divine nature” (2 Peter 1:4) than in how we treat each other, especially those who err.

But what about when the church itself errs?

It’s one thing to show forgiveness and mercy to individuals, but what about the organization—the conference, the union, the division, or the General Conference? Do we demonstrate the kind of mercy, forgiveness, and love Jesus showed; or do we feel authorized to attack?

In many ways the church can be an easy target. Filled with erring sinful beings, the denomination has something for everyone—“liberal,” “conservative,” “moderate,” or “extremist”—to hate, criticize, and condemn. A person seeking to find fault, error, hypocrisy, incompetence, mismanagement, can find it in the church—all the way back to Abraham.

I know of nothing, either in the Bible or in the writings of Ellen White, that promises a flawless organization this side of the Second Coming. A nd as the president of the General Conference, as someone who has been to churches all over the world, I probably know more about our church’s problems than most of our most vociferous critics. We don’t like these problems; we prayerfully work to solve them. But reality and the human condition being what they are, when one problem is solved, a dozen more shoot up in its place.

The church has made mistakes. But instead of weeping, praying, and seeking to remedy the situation, do we make it worse by trumpeting the evil? Though some problems are indeed bad, time and again I’ve seen situations in which it seems as if the biggest sin isn’t so much the problem itself, but the attitude of those who feel impressed to herald those problems to the world.

Look at these words: “This is what the Sovereign Lord says: Because you said ‘A ha!’ over my sanctuary when it was desecrated and of the land of Israel when it was laid waste and over the people of Judah when they went into exile” [and] “because you have clapped your hands and stamped your feet, rejoicing with all the malice of your heart against the land of Israel, therefore I will stretch out my hand against you” (Eze. 25:3-7, NIV). Now, if the Lord felt that strongly about the Ammonites when they rejoiced over the failures of His people, how does He regard those who do so from within?

For the past year I have written about the church—its authority, structure, policy, and polity. But I conclude this series with an appeal to you, my fellow member. I assume that your love for your church motivates your concern for the problems you see in it. Do you treat the church with the same love and forgiveness that Jesus displayed, or do you become worse than the problem by making the problem itself worse?

When someone you love does wrong, do you abandon them, attack them, or parade their errors before others? Or do you seek through patience, love, and kindness to bring about healing, restoration, and harmony? The first alternative can make the problems worse; the latter, only better.

Christ left us a powerful example on how to treat erring individuals and organizations. Following it is solely up to us.

Robert S. Folkenberg is president of the General Conference.
The Birth of a Revolution

Was it a coincidence that Christ was born in obscurity?

BY STEPHEN CHAVEZ

BEFORE JESUS WAS BORN, BETHLEHEM’S main claim to fame was that David had watched his father’s flocks on the rocky hills and countryside around the small village. Before that, it was the home of Ruth, the young Moabite who had followed her mother-in-law away from her native country to a life of romance and adventure with her new husband, Boaz.

As far as ancient cities go, Bethlehem wasn’t more than a wide spot in the road, a dusty place where you could water your animals and store up provisions for your trip south to Hebron or Beer-sheba. If you were traveling north toward Jerusalem, you might not even stop, as you had less than five miles to reach your destination. Most people who came to Bethlehem were on their way to somewhere else.

On the night Jesus was born there was no mad rush of people frantically attempting to finish their holiday shopping; there were no decorations, no carolers, no pilgrims who had flown in on chartered jets to be near one of Christendom’s most revered shrines. Bethlehem was just Bethlehem—nothing more, nothing less. And despite what you may have seen portrayed on Christmas cards and in plays, the pilgrims who thronged Bethlehem’s narrow streets wanted only to satisfy their obligation to Rome and return quietly to their homes and villages.

Ordinary People

There was likewise nothing extraordinary about the couple from Nazareth who came to register for the census. Mary and Joseph blended easily into the crowd of common citizens. They wore rough clothing, they had no more than a rudimentary education, they carried only enough money for their immediate needs. But they had what most people in Bethlehem that night did not have—a mandate from heaven based on a revolutionary encounter with the supernatural.

For Mary it was an angel who appeared with the incredible message: “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God” (Luke 1:35, NIV).

To Joseph the angel’s message was “She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins” (Matt. 1:21, NIV).

In the confusion and mystery of that impromptu journey, there is nothing to suggest that the events of that evening in Bethlehem would change the course of cosmic history. It’s almost as if the Lord God didn’t want people to know that His one and only Son was going to be born that night.

Sure, there was one rather obscure snippet of prophecy: “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from old, from ancient times” (Micah 5:2, NIV); but the ones who interpreted prophecies lived in Jerusalem, not Bethlehem.

The events surrounding Jesus’ birth featured a cast of characters that has enchanted writers and storytellers in the centuries since: unlikely heroes such as the lowly shepherds, crude and illiterate, who became heralds of the most unbelievable news the planet had ever heard; noble foreign philosophers, affluent and cultured, yet unsophisticated in the ways of Jewish religious and governmental politics; homegrown mystics, Anna and Simeon, who had immersed
themselves in prayer and the reading of ancient writings and prophecies, hoping to be eyewitnesses to the fulfilling of God's promises.

While other characters in this drama were consumed with mundane matters such as finding lodging for the night, making a living, or protecting their turf, a handful of people—Mary and Joseph, the shepherds, the Magi, Anna and Simeon—suddenly found themselves playing a part on center stage in the fulfillment of God's revolutionary plan.

People who shape history are typically the ones who seize opportunities by virtue of their strength, their charisma, their wealth, their artifice. But except for the Wise Men, with their expensive gifts to present to the King, the principal characters in this drama were likely to be ignored if not disdained. Their qualifications had less to do with obvious or worldly talents and abilities than with their simple faith and their passionate desire to do God's will.

There's never been a shortage of people who want to impose their will on others. Many have been the attempts to influence others by means of force, coercion, or intellectual bullying. But those aren't the foundations of the kingdom Christ came to establish.

The ones who first adored the Christ child weren't so eager to persuade others that He was the Messiah as they were to be in His presence, to worship Him and somehow experience the miracle of divine love: “For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace” (Isa. 9:6, NIV). Seeing Jesus—God in human flesh—was, for them, the fulfillment of their spiritual quest.

Changed Forever

One can only imagine how the lives of those early pilgrims were changed by their encounter with Christ. It's not hard to believe that their lives were never the same again, because we know firsthand the difference Jesus has made in our lives. In addition to His extravagant salvation, He's brought light to our darkness, calm to our storms, strength to our weakness, and healing to our suffering.

Christ's activity on our behalf demands a response. We can no longer be merely spectators. We may not take center stage in the controversy between good and evil, but we're all involved.

From the stories that surround Jesus' birth, it's clear that God doesn't regard only the dynamic leaders, the influential powerbrokers, the well-read scholars. There's truly a place for leadership, authority, and knowledge in Christ's kingdom. But the primary qualification for usefulness in the kingdom Christ came to establish is a passion for knowing God's will—and doing it.

Before Jesus' first advent all serious-minded Israelites looked for the coming of the Messiah. They wanted, among other things, relief from Roman oppression, economic security, and spiritual reinforcement. And the population, fragmented by different religious, political, and social factions, found itself tugged between different philosophies and methods for realizing their dreams.
How to Keep Christmas Spiritual

Make a Nativity scene the center of Christmas decorating. Place it on a table, mantel, or other prominent location. Forget the teddy bears, mice, elves, reindeer, and Santas. Use a creche and retell the wonderful Christmas story. It will become a family tradition that children will continue in their future homes.

Jean Sequeira
Silver Spring, Maryland, U.S.A.

- Avoid materialism—resist the temptation to be swept along by cultural mores that focus on the giving and receiving of things.
- Focus on the incredible Gift and the sacrifice of the Giver that Christmas represents.
- Recognize that Christ didn’t really come in December, so don’t feel obligated to isolate the Christmas spirit to this time of the year. Amortize the Christmas spirit—decompartmentalize it and allow the spirit of exceptional goodwill to permeate the entire year, favorably flavoring our interactions with our fellowwomen and -women.

J. T. Shim
Longwood, Florida, U.S.A.

The result was religious and political chaos to the point that Jesus’ ministry as the Messiah—His birth, life, teachings, death, and resurrection—was ignored or repressed by the very people He had come to exalt.

Now, on the eve of Jesus’ second advent, the church (and society at large) is fragmenting under the weight of a thousand different religious, political, and sociological pressures. The world’s inhabitants look in vain for principled, dynamic leadership. Throughout the world truth and justice are trampled into the ground by greed, lust, and violence.

It’s time for another revolution.

There is a solution for this world’s problems, but it’s not a human solution. A s the course of world history was altered by the birth of Jesus (and also by His death and resurrection), only Jesus’ second coming will bring to fulfillment God’s ultimate plan for this planet.

But first there has to be a revolution in the way we think about accomplishing God’s will. Just as God chose the humble and unlearned—the uninitiated outsiders—to herald Jesus’ first advent, so He still looks for people with an odd combination of humility and passion. We needn’t unlearn all that we know—we still need to sharpen our skills and talents for the Lord’s service—but we can never forget that our usefulness depends less on what we can do than on what God can do through us.

Long Live the Revolution!

In the two millennia since Jesus was born in obscurity, the revolution He began is no longer a quiet one. The principles of Christ’s kingdom—love for God and loving service to friends and enemies—remain revolutionary. Lives are changed whenever and wherever they’re put into practice. But these principles have to be cherished and internalized. It’s easy to lose the passion of a movement and be satisfied with empty slogans and unconvincing rhetoric. But we can help maintain the momentum of Christ’s ministry.

N urture the dream. Ancient Israel expected the Messiah; they talked about it, prayed for it, hoped for it. But their expectations were filtered through mistaken notions of what the Messiah would accomplish when He appeared. Their lack of understanding prevented them from being prepared for the ministry of the true Messiah and the kingdom He came to establish.

Jesus’ second coming should be anticipated not only because it means the end of cancer, television sitcoms, and income taxes (minor irritants), but because it will mean the end of poverty, injustice, spiritual ignorance, and religious and political oppression (major issues).

Stephen Chavez is an assistant editor of the Adventist Review.

Wait patiently. Many Israelites lost their spiritual bearings because of their anxiety to follow some messiah, any messiah. They became vulnerable to some of the numerous “false christs” who wandered the area.

Our impatience may lead us to try to “run ahead” of God’s perfect plan, and use methods to build up His kingdom that are half-baked at best and un-Christlike at worst.

Serve in humility. As far as we know, Mary and Joseph never prayed that they could be the parents of Jesus the Messiah. Rather they were chosen because God saw that they were faithful. When the angel choir appeared to the shepherds in the field, the shepherds were simply doing their jobs. The Magi left their homes in obedience to the conviction that they were being led to a fuller understanding of the truth.

More than anything, God calls us to be faithful. Sometimes God calls us to different, more visible lives of service for Him. But more often He looks for witnesses who will serve Him in revolutionary ways under ordinary circumstances.

T he revolution that began with a Baby’s birth in an obscure village in the presence of a small group of largely anonymous witnesses will continue, gaining momentum until Jesus comes again in glory. In some places it will be loud, obvious, and hard to ignore. In other places it will be barely audible, like the sound of a baby’s whimper.

But the revolution will continue inexorably until all things are fulfilled. Then it will truly be said: “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom He favors!” (Luke 2:14, NRSV). ■
It's that time of year again, when covetousness is exalted to the status of art, if not religion. When Santa is commissioned to deliver the battery-operated heart's desire of every good boy and girl—and MasterCard is entrusted with the cravings of their parents. When sincere Christians blanch at the secularism and commercialism of it all and admonish one another to “keep Christ in Christmas.” Which forces a confession from my guilty lips: I don't know how to keep Christ in Christmas. Earnest appeals of the Christian community notwithstanding, I'm just not able to generate a seasonal sense of awe for the birth of my Saviour.

The Lord knows of my scandalously Scroogian incapacity of “keeping” Him close to me during Christmas—or any other time of the year. That's why He's called Immanuel—“God with us”—because it's His job to “keep my soul, and deliver me... for I put my trust in [Him]” (Ps. 25:20).

And the wonderful thing is, even before I knew how to put my trust in Him, before I acknowledged Him as Lord of my life, Christ took the initiative in keeping Himself near me and drawing me closer to Him. And if the Christmas season does little else, perhaps it can lend itself to a recounting of some of those times when, though unconverted, I was attentive enough to sense the presence of the One who calls Himself “God with us.”

Peter Forte was undeniably the most “challenging” developmentally disabled resident in Kelly Hall. His destructive and bizarre behaviors continually frustrated my attempts to keep order among the five men in my care. But in spite of all this—or perhaps because of it—the end of my shift invariably found me sitting at Peter's bedside, holding his dry, bony hand, trying to soothe away the demons so this unfortunate man could rise to thrash his way through another monotonous day of institutionalization. In such disheartening service I sensed the encouraging, compassionate presence of God.

As a severely asthmatic child in smoggy southern California, I knew the consequences of a night of hide-and-seek in the damp coastal air; I knew the ER nurses at St. Francis Hospital by name; I knew what it meant to spend the night with my head propped on the dining room table, agonizing over every breath, waiting for the sun to rise and bring blessed relief. At such exhausting times, weak and oppressed, I sensed the empathetic, comforting presence of God.

One day in October 1980 I was picked up while hitchhiking on Washington's Highway 97 by a man and his young son. Almost immediately Ron broke all the rules of witnessing and blurted out, “Have you ever heard of Ellen G. White? We believe she's a prophet. I think you'd enjoy her books.” At that moment the hair on the back of my neck literally stood on end and a silent, authoritative voice commanded, “Listen to this man. He's going to tell you something that will change your life.” At that time, and others like it, I experienced the compelling presence of God.

I can only wonder at the undeserved affection of this great God, who has so treasured my questionable company as to take the initiative in identifying Himself consistently with my daily concerns, my chronic illnesses—even my prodigal youth—long before I ever began to return the favor.

I can only marvel at the persistence of the Holy Spirit, who has so lovingly hounded my steps and mercifully broken into my life at just the right times and in just the right ways, startling me from my habitual self-preoccupation—long before I appreciated it.

I can only be forever grateful for the condescension of this Saviour called Immanuel, who, “being in very nature God, ... made himself nothing” (Phil. 2:6, 7, NIV); who “in all things” chose “to be made like unto his brethren” (Heb. 2:17); who “humbled himself and became obedient to death—even [my] death on a cross!” (Phil. 2:8, NIV).

Truly, I am not able to “keep” this mighty God anywhere. I can only prostrate myself in His holy, pervasive presence and allow Him entrance into my broken heart, that “God with us” may be permitted to live out His perfect redemptive will as “Christ in [me]” (Col. 1:27).

Leslie Kay is a wife, mother, and freelance writer who lives in Chloride, Arizona.
How can the Adventist Church effectively reach major cities in North America? What are the best methods and most effective tools? Who has the necessary expertise?

These key questions burned in the hearts of union and local conference officers, pastors, teachers, and lay members as they gathered for the North American Division year-end meetings, held November 1-5 at the Adventist world headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland.

This year's meeting was a historic gathering. The focus—reaching urban America—was designed to promote the division's large-city evangelistic initiative beginning in 1999. During the next two years major meetings and seminars will be held for target audiences in North America's four largest cities—New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, and Toronto.

The new thrust signals a different evangelistic approach for the church, which, except for Asian, Black, and Hispanic initiatives, has frequently concentrated efforts in suburban areas and medium-to-small cities.

On the year-end meetings' opening night Rod Colburn, of New York City, one of two lay members giving keynote messages, alluded to the church's traditional approach. "New York, if it is the world's capital city, represents a huge void in Adventism," he said. "Strange that such a global church would be so invisible in the world's most global city.

"It's not that we don't have a presence there. We've actually done a fairly good job of reaching first-generation Americans," he said. "But for the millions of New Yorkers who are second-, third-, and fourth-generation Americans, and thousands who move in from other parts of the country, we barely exist." Colburn believes that successful outreach will require the best pastors, evangelists, and church planters.

Walter Thompson, of Chicago, the other lay speaker, called on church leaders to refine their methods as they take on an urban strategy. "The NETs [satellite evangelism] have had their day. It's now time to go on," he said. "Conduct major evangelistic series via public media—television, radio, Internet, and cable—again and again, always in differing formats with differing audiences in mind.

"Go public with our message using newspapers and magazines—articles and letters to the editor. Let's speak up. Let's let our voices be heard and enable others to do the same."

By using lay members to give the keynote messages on opening night instead of division president Alfred C. McClure, NAD leaders underscored the importance of lay input in the large-city thrust. McClure scheduled to give the closing devotional message on November 5 but was prevented by illness.

The year-end meeting is where church leaders vote new policy items, hear reports, elect personnel, and approve the division's budget for the next year.

In his secretary's report Harald Baptiste said the division had maintained a growth rate of 2 percent over the past several years. As of December 31, membership was 875,811, a gain of 17,811, or 2.03 percent, over the previous year. During the first six months of 1998 membership reached 879,829.
DIVERSE GATHERING: Church leaders gathered from all corners of North America.

Though growth for the first six months was small, Baptiste said that many baptisms are expected before year’s end as a result of NET ’98. He noted that division membership could reach 1 million by the 2000 General Conference session in Toronto. “Let’s not rest on our successes but build on them to climb to higher heights in the future,” Baptiste urged.

NAD treasurer Juan Prestol reported that division tithe reached $534,169,178 in 1997, up 5.3 percent from the previous year and up 17 percent in the past five years. Per capita tithe also increased to $633 last year, up 3.4 percent from the previous year and 9.07 percent in the past five years. In the first six months of 1998 the division tithe reached $248,531,758, an increase of 5 percent over the same period last year.

Prestol noted that though increase in per capita tithe was significant, it failed to keep pace with the index of disposable income in North America.

Offerings for 1997, which include all offerings collected by the local church (excluding tithe), totaled $315,228,166, up 3.2 percent from the previous year and 15.7 percent over the past five years. Next year’s division budget will total $70,890,396, up $2,647,967, or nearly 4 percent.

Retreading Retirement. The NAD executive committee took a major step to secure the future of denominational employees when members voted a new retirement plan, effective January 1, 2000. The highly sensitive issue sparked discussion that lasted more than two hours before it was voted.

The new plan, a defined contribution plan, will replace the current defined benefits plan, which will be frozen on December 31, 1999. Under the new plan, Adventist entities will contribute roughly 4 percent of the employees’ salary to an employee-directed investment fund. An employee has an option to contribute to the fund, and the employer will partially match the contribution up to an additional 1 percent.

To help employees make their matching contributions, a 2 percent salary increase will be given at the start of the new program.

One advantage of the new package is that employees can keep the amount of their fund balance regardless of when they leave denominational employment. Some current benefits, however, such as the spouse allowance for employees with spouses who don’t have their own retirement plan, have been eliminated, and the official retirement age will begin to increase along with the Social Security official retirement age.

Delbert Johnson, associate administrator in NAD’s retirement office, explained that the change in plans was necessary because the increase in future retirees would deplete the current retirement fund in the next 13 years (by 2011).

In responding to Johnson’s presentation, several committee members voiced opposition to the discontinuance of spouse allowance. A Allegheny East Conference president Alvin Kibble pointed out that the geographical movement of (largely ministerial) employees makes it impossible for their spouses to acquire adequate retirement benefits. “By moving workers we create the problem, and we know it’s going to impact them when they are most vulnerable,” he said.

Pastor Ron Halvorsen Jr., of Keene, Texas, voiced the concern of many pastors. “My churches have always been blessed with two pastors when they get me, and my wife has always been the better of the two,” he said. “I would not want the work that may send me to an early grave to deprive the ones I love of benefits that should be there.”

To address the removal of spouse allowance, McClure proposed the establishment of a task force to restudy the issue and consider alternative options.

Some committee members voiced concerns that the plan offered some investment options that included “sin stocks,” securities in companies connected with alcohol, tobacco, gambling, and other businesses frowned on by the church.

Johnson explained that investment options will include mutual funds [which hold hundreds of stocks and bonds] that will be screened to reflect the church’s values, as well as unscreened funds [which may include some sin stocks]. “Our attorneys advise us that we must offer employees a wide...
NAD Committee Members Question Tithe System

BY CARLOS MEDLEY, ADVENTIST REVIEW NEWS EDITOR

It was born out of a routine report—a formality at the North American Division year-end meetings. NAD executive committee members were all set to vote the division’s 1999 operating budget of $70,890,396. President Alfred C. MccLure, who chaired the committee, called for questions and observations.

A mong those responding to treasurer Juan Prestol’s report was Joni Hamilton, a lay member from the Georgia-Cumberland Conference, who asked the critical question “When do we [the local Adventist church] get our little piece of pie?”

That simple question ignited an impassioned dialogue on how tithe funds are distributed. It was a question that many loyal church members ask as they see large amounts of tithe sent to the local conference while they struggle to meet local expenses with church offerings.

It was a question that has taken on a new urgency in recent years as several congregations have broken away from the Adventist Church. “I serve on our local church board, and we meet month to month and try to figure out creative ways to meet our budget,” Hamilton said. “We constantly try to educate our church members to the fact that locally our church budget has to be met over and above the tithe dollar. More and more we meet resistance. The result is that individuals divert the tithe dollar to meet the local budget. It’s out of frustration, also out of necessity. I just want to confirm that it is happening.”

“I believe that if no changes are made in our [tithing] system, the practice [of diverting tithe to local church funds] will become more and more common, to the detriment of our church,” Hamilton commented. “If the local church believed that help was on the way, you’d see dramatic increases in tithe. Until church members can look at these pie charts and see the smallest piece that said ‘local church operating,’ the frustration will be maintained.”

Pastor Helvius Thompson, of Texas, voiced his concern over the lack of consistent funds for community outreach and evangelism. “Our first-day churches are beating us over the head [with outreach programs] because of the funds that they have,” he declared. “My frustration is that there is not a definite amount of funds that return to the local church for evangelism, church growth, and outreach.

“There’s not a specific amount that a church can depend upon [for outreach]. We could plan three, four, five years in advance for outreach [with evangelistic funds],” Thompson said.

NAD stewardship director Edward Reid, however, voiced dismay at those calling for a return of tithe to the local church. “I’ve been a little embarrassed to hear this discussion,” he declared. “We are the wealthiest division in the world, and if our sister divisions could hear us saying that we can’t live on 90 percent that we keep to divisions could hear us saying that we can’t live on 90 percent that we keep and we need to use God’s tithe to operate our churches, then I think we should be embarrassed.”

“If we could just understand biblical stewardship, there’s plenty of money in our local churches to support the...
programs that we want to do,” he said, “and giving tithe back will not help our stewardship education at all.”

Pastor Ron Halvorsen, Jr., of Keene, Texas, noted that demands for funds are skyrocketing. “I’m in a church with 2,900 people, with a grade school and academy,” he said. “We can say that just the local offerings take care of the local church. We’re not only trying to survive on our local budget, but we’re being asked to support more and more projects from everywhere and everywhere. Money is being pulled left and right, and churches are left scrimping and trying to survive.

“There’s a growing tide of congregationalism, and I am against that and would do everything to stem that tide,” said Halvorsen. “It’s coming from my colleagues and local leadership. We need your help in stopping it.”

Lake Region Conference president Norman Miles told the committee that his conference has started a program that returns an amount equal to 5 percent of tithe increase back to local churches. “We’ve done this as an experiment,” Miles explained. “We hope to increase it to 10 percent next year. We believe this has encouraged our members to increase their giving, and we believe it is in part responsible for our 13.1 percent increase in tithe.”

Pastor George Pangman, of Georgia, expressed the dilemma that North American leaders find themselves in as they finance the world church. “We in North America have been given the opportunity to fund the world church,” he said. “But we cannot let the world make us incapable of ministering to our communities. We are losing members to full-service churches who can minister to the unwed mother when we can’t. It’s in these environments that we are asked to do evangelism and grow so that the tithe will increase, but it takes capital to do that.”

NAD president Alfred McClure promised committee members that a special task force would be established to probe a wide range of issues including tithe distribution, stewardship, church growth, and other factors affecting the local church and its mission.

Other Year-end Meeting Actions

In other business, the North American Division executive committee:

- Voted to designate 1999 as the Year of Religious Freedom in North America.
- Elected Debra Clements Brill, executive director of the NAD Church Resources Consortium, as vice president of ministries. Brill replaces Rose Otis, who became vice president and director of women’s ministries for the Texas Conference.
- Voted a new administrative model for the division’s Ministerial Association. Under the new format the association would consist of a secretary and three associate secretaries, including an African-American, a Hispanic, and a female.
- Voted into policy new procedures for handling allegations of sexual misconduct involving denominational employees and approved volunteers. The model procedures have been field-tested as guidelines for the past five years.

Dear Sirs: We are 15 university students from the Middle East living in [an Asian country]. We listen to your programs very eagerly, and we really enjoy them—they are informative and we like the beautiful hymns. We want to know about Adventists, since 14 of us are Muslims and one is a Jew who knows the Old Testament well. Could you send us a volume of the Bible in Persian? Is there an Adventist church in this city? If so, please send us the address. And please send us a complete list of your programs, since we want to inform others about them.

During these past years I was upset and bitter. That’s when I heard the gospel from you. And that’s when things finally came into real focus and I was ready for a new life. I determined to come back home, to be one of God’s children.”

— Ching, from China.

For information about Adventist World Radio, write to: 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600; or call toll-free: 1-800-337-4297; or e-mail: awrinfo@awr.org. Website: www.awr.org.
Southern Hospitality—
A Large Helping

The Tyler, Texas, church

Moving around the country as I do, I frequently receive directions—some good, others not so good. On this Saturday morning the directions were adequate, but my wife and I were “cramming” for the Sabbath school lesson in the car and not paying much attention to the road signs. (Forgetting our map didn’t help either.) Consequently, our 50-mile drive became a two-hour journey.

I considered turning around and going home, but my wife suggested that we phone the church. We talked to a man named Steve, who gave us detailed directions. Arriving at 11:00, we missed Sabbath school, but were just in time for the worship service. None other than Steve (and his baby) greeted us at the door. During our short conversation he told me of another church member I needed to meet—a guy named Dunbar, who was in my line of work.

A few chatting a minute in the church lobby, we met Harvey Meharry, who urged us to “come on in while the pickin’s good.”

Located 100 miles east of Dallas, Tyler is a bigger church than I had expected. Lisa Meharry gave the welcome and announcements—I was already beginning to put families together—and Trudy Doerner’s children’s story about a “big stinky dog” had me envying her animation and expressions, which the kids loved.

Several rows ahead of me I spotted the face of a former Adventist college student I had taken a racquetball class with. It seems that no matter how far you travel, you can always find an Adventist who either knows you or at least knows someone you know. This is somewhat scary, because I’m starting to remind myself of my parents whenever I say things like “Are you related to [so and so] from [such and such]?”

The guest speaker’s sermon, titled “Blood on the Door,” included an actual door frame on the platform next to him. I was a little worried when he took out red spray paint and sprayed the sides and top of the frame, symbolizing the action taken by the Israelites before the angel of death flew over Egypt, but no oversprayed “blood” reached the polished grand piano.

As the service ended, I was glad to receive a dinner invitation—especially since our drive back might take another two hours! Everyone seemed eager to have us visit again. A kindly gentleman, Bob Jinks, took a special interest in introducing us to other members, and before long Harvey and Bob were corecruiting us to join the church. Bob even volunteered to help us find employment in the area. “Have you met Dunbar yet?” he asked.

I finally got to meet Dunbar and his family over an excellent meal in the gymnasium. I honestly wouldn’t have eaten as much as I did, but a woman named J.J. kept telling me to go back for more—so I obliged.

I probably would never have heard of the Tyler, Texas, church had it not been for a high school friend who had dated and later married a girl who once introduced herself as “Trai-cy Truitt from Tahler, Texas.” At the church my wife and I had the chance to meet “Trai-cy’s” mother, stepfather, and grandmother. These “family ties” combined with a very genuine hospitality have my wife and me eager to attend Tyler regularly—until our traveling occupation takes us elsewhere.

Invitation to Readers

Over the past year Mystery Visitors A, B, and C have reviewed several churches across North America. Over the next year we’re inviting Review readers to participate. Send 800-word submissions to: Mystery Visitor, A dv entist Review, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904. Please include your phone number and, if a U.S. citizen, your Social Security number. Payment is $75 upon acceptance.

Note: While we’ve tried to make this feature as “honest” as possible, some have objected to our mentioning anything negative about a specific church—even when the essay was predominantly positive. (It’s the nature of any real journalism we attempt here.) So in a nod to these sensitivities, we invite you to review only those churches that “sweep you off your feet” in a strictly positive sense. Feel free to focus on one or two outstanding aspects of the church—as opposed to a blow-by-blow account of your visit.—Editors.

Mystery Visitor A is a twentysomething male.
WHERE JESUS’ NAME WAS NEVER HEARD

It’s a tough place to start a Seventh-day Adventist church. Yet Global Mission is changing lives in the Hindu city of Kurukshetra, India. Kurukshetra, holy to Hindus, is the site of the “glorious epic battle” of the Mahabharata and another holy scripture, the Bhagavad-Gita. Kurukshetra is a special place of pilgrimage and the heart of Hinduism.

When Global Mission pioneer Parveez Musih and his wife, Reena, arrived in Kurukshetra in 1997, nobody would rent a house to them. The problem was, they were Christians. Finally a man offered them accommodation on a trial basis of a month. When the Musih family moved in, a fundamentalist Hindu group threatened them and told them to leave the city. The landlord intervened and said that as a citizen of a free India he could have anyone in his house and listen to what they had to say. The fundamentalist group warned Parveez and Reena to speak only privately in homes. So they began visiting homes and telling people about Jesus. Today within the city limits more than 15 people are preparing for baptism. But this is only part of the story. This pioneer couple are working in eight other villages and studying the Bible with more than 340 people.

Miss the Annual Sacrifice Offering?

It’s not too late to support the Annual Sacrifice Offering and help God’s love break through in unentered parts of the world. Simply mark your envelope “Annual Sacrifice Offering” and place it in the offering plate.

TO THE TAR HEELS

CAMPUS MINISTERS: For four years John and Kellie Van Eyk have been running Campus Advent Ministry (CAM) in North Carolina—a ministry to secular university campuses. On October 3 they started a new congregation aimed at young adults and students near the campus of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-CH), and 65 people attended. John and Kellie began CAM while John was a student in the graduate physical therapy program at UNC-CH. Although John has now graduated, they continue this ministry to the secular campuses of five large universities and several smaller technical colleges in the Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill area. “Our program consists of outreach activities on campus, a midweek Bible study, Friday night vespers, retreats, Christian music concerts, and more,” they report. “We’ve found that Adventist students on secular campuses are very excited and willing to reach out to their peers and introduce Adventism on campus. This age group is searching and open for the truth. What could be a better mission field?” If you’re interested in starting a similar project in your area, contact John Van Eyk (phone: 919-935-4075; e-mail: camsda@juno.com).

GLOBAL MISSION: REACHING THE UNREACHED WITH HOPE

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A former Adventist, successful in business and society, gets some unlikely and unexpected counsel.

By J. R. Haney

BACK IN 1977 I WAS THE OWNER AND publisher of the Okmulgee County News, a county-wide weekly newspaper in Okmulgee, Oklahoma. I was the mayor of Okmulgee. Raised a Seventh-day Adventist, I was not attending church. I knew what I should be doing, but I wasn’t doing it.

My wife and I never really quit being Seventh-day Adventists. We were what I call “mugwumps”: we were kind of sitting on the fence, with our “mugs” on one side and our “wumps” on the other. There was no Adventist church in Okmulgee, so we didn’t attend church. It was 50 miles to the closest town where there was an Adventist church, and it seemed like we were so tired on Sabbath mornings that we just didn’t get up and go.

For the Children

But I noticed that my children needed some spiritual instruction of some kind, so I told my wife one day, “You know, maybe we ought to attend one of these churches here.”

She said, “If we’re going to attend any church, we need to go back to our own church.”

“But it’s so far,” I said. “We live here in town, and it’d be better to go to a Sunday church than to no church.” So we began to visit other churches, and we took our children with us. We enjoyed some of them, and some of them we didn’t.

In the course of things I met the pastor of the First...
Presbyterian Church, Bob Tull. I'll never forget Bob. He was a friendly guy, and he just went out of his way to be nice to me. We both belonged to the country club and played golf together. We were also both members of the Rotary Club. He used to invite me to his house to shoot pool in his basement. He had a real active church.

So I told my wife one Sunday, “Let’s get up and take the kids to the Presbyterian church.” And she reluctantly agreed to go. We didn’t get there in time for Sunday school, but we got there in time for the worship service. And I’ll never forget the sermon Pastor Tull preached.

He preached about what happens when a person dies, which agreed completely with the theology that I’d grown up with. And as I sat there listening, I couldn’t believe what I was hearing. This is unusual, I said to myself. I have to get to know this guy better.

Making the Pitch

We were back the next Sunday. We sat in Pastor Tull’s Sunday school class. I enjoyed his class and his church because they were outgoing people, very friendly. We had a good time there and attended several times.

One day I got a call from Bob. “I need about 30 minutes of your time. There’s something I want to talk to you about,” he said. “I know you’re real busy, and your office is like Grand Central Station, but I just need 30 minutes.”

So I blocked out some time and told him when I could meet with him. When he came to my office, I told my secretary, “Please hold all my calls.” We sat down in my office, and I closed the blinds so that no one could interrupt us if they saw us sitting there. My office was right across the street from city hall. And because I was the mayor, people were always coming to me with city business in addition to newspaper business. So it was like Grand Central Station.

Pastor Tull and I sat down and had a nice visit. He said, “In our church we vote on people before we ask them to become members. And I’ve discussed you, your wife, and your children with our church board. And we want you to become members of the First Presbyterian Church in Okmulgee.”

“Well, that’s very nice,” I responded. “I appreciate the invitation.”

“But there’s something else,” he said. “If you join our church, I want you to know that you’ll be on the board of governors. Now, I don’t know what your political aspirations are, but this will be a good place for you to be.” There were a lot of doctors, attorneys, judges, and other influential community people in the Presbyterian church, so he was saying that this would be a good step politically as well as socially for my wife and me.

I listened while he told me about all the good things the church was doing; then he said, “Before you answer my question about whether you’d be interested in becoming a member of our church, I have a question to ask you. You’ve been in my Sunday school class and you’ve asked some thought-provoking questions there. The questions you ask make me think that perhaps you have some kind of theological background.”

“Well, I guess I do,” I said. “I was a student at Union College in Lincoln, Nebraska.”

“You mean to tell me that you attended a Seventh-day Adventist seminary?”

“I did,” I said, “I was a student pastor up there for a while. It’s been many years ago, but I was a student pastor.”

Pastor Tull said, “J.R., were you raised a Seventh-day Adventist?”

“Yes, I grew up in the Seventh-day Adventist Church,” I admitted.

And he looked at me with the strangest expression on his face. He said, “J.R., I tell you what you need to do: you need to go home.” He got up and walked out of my office.

Up to that time my life revolved around my family, my work, and my civic responsibilities. Although I hadn’t deliberately turned my back on the Lord, I had become careless in my relationship with Him.

The Lord hadn’t forgotten about me, however. But it took Bob Tull, a Presbyterian minister and a real Christian, to help me make a decision for Christ and turn my life around and follow Him completely.

J. R. Haney, now retired, has served the Oklahoma Conference as a pastor, evangelist, and revival speaker. He lives in Disney, Oklahoma, with his wife, Faye.
Everything I Need to Know About Evangelism I Learned From My Sons

BY JUDY L. SHULL

I'D LOVE TO TELL YOU MY SONS ARE conference evangelists, but since they're 9 and 11, I know you would never believe me. Both boys are true evangelists, though; I've been watching them for years. I think I'm finally catching on to what it takes to be a good evangelist.

The first thing I've noticed is that they start by being friends. That's it. They just do friend-type things. Next door is a girl about the older one's age and the younger one's size. They play catch in the backyard and shoot baskets in the driveway out front. Wood for a building project keeps moving around the yard, but I'm a bit afraid to ask what the end result is intended to be.

While they are doing all this, they're talking constantly to each other. They share everything. They describe what they ate at supper, what wonderful new game their teacher taught them, and when they will get a day off school again. You know, really important things—right to the heart of what makes life worth living.

I hear them answering questions their playmate asks, such as: “Why don't we play football on Saturday?”
“Because that's the Sabbath.”

When their friend says “We go to church on Sunday,” they get their Bibles out and show their friend the Ten Commandments and point out the fourth in particular.

When she offered them a wonderful book she'd just read, my evangelists looked the book over and handed it back, saying, “We don't read stories about ghosts.”
“Why?”

“There are no ghosts; dead people are just sleeping until Jesus returns,” the boys told her.
“I thought they were in heaven,” she responded, confused.
“No, just asleep. When Jesus returns He'll call and wake them up. Then we'll all go to heaven together.”

When the school has a roller-skating party, the neighbor girl gets an invitation. When the church has a Vacation Bible School program, the boys bring her. When the school has a Christmas program or the boys have a piano recital, this good friend is always included.

The boys don't even feel insulted when their friend can't come. They just say, “Maybe next time.” Then they keep asking. They've brought their friend to...
so many activities that she knows lots about their school and their church friends, too.

One day I heard the movement of bicycles and lawn chairs in the shed. I peeked in and discovered I’d stumbled onto a Tuesday afternoon branch Sabbath school. There is still a lovely hand-lettered sign on the inside of the shed door that clearly asks “What Would Jesus Do?”

The other day my older son walked out of his room with a stack of his cherished Guide magazines. “I’m going to give these to Catherine,” he stated. “Why?” I asked.

“Well, her mother tells her she has to read for an hour on Friday evenings, and I think she should be reading Sabbath things, so I’m giving her something to read.”

Have they seen any baptisms from their efforts? No. Have they seen results? Their friend informed them one Sabbath afternoon that she had to go home and get cleaned up. She explained that her parents had decided to attend Mass on Saturday evening instead of Sunday morning. As she hurried home, the boys grinned at each other. The younger one said, “Well, at least she’s going to church on the right day now.”

Her mom occasionally asks for more information about the church school where I teach. She’s even let me give her some reading material about Adventist education.

My children have taught me a lot about what it means to be a backyard missionary. I’ve learned:

Be a friend.
Spend time together.
Answer questions.
Keep inviting.
Include other friends.
Embrace as part of God’s family.

Now I know how to plant seeds—gospel seeds. I know that the Lord instructs in the tending, and He is the one who will harvest. All He asks me to do is plant. My sons taught me that. ■

Judy L. Shull is a mother who writes from Grand Rapids, Michigan.
“Miracle” is the word that describes what God did in giving the very first Christmas gift, forever mending the historic rift between heaven and earth. Jesus, fully divine and fully human, is the eternal link between divinity and humanity. Jesus alone successfully navigates the path from earth to heaven, over the chasm of tragic sin. He is the eternal symbol of reconciliation.

The ministry of reconciliation is vertical. We are no longer separated from God, but are eternally and intimately joined to Him by the cross of Christ.

But just as the cross of Jesus has two posts—one vertical and one horizontal—so the ministry of reconciliation is not only vertical but also horizontal: “You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. . . . There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Gal. 3:26-28, NIV).

Paul here expresses an accomplished fact, not something for us to achieve. We can no more reconcile ourselves to one another than we can reconcile ourselves to God. Jesus has accomplished reconciliation already. He is its vital force. What’s left is for us, as the world may believe that you have sent me” (John 17:21, 22, NIV).

Is not this our great objective as a church, that the world might believe that Jesus Christ is the only one? Have we been trying to convince the world with our doctrine while failing to live our faith convincingly? Perhaps it’s time for a miracle among us.

The reconciliation that is ours in Christ Jesus is both vertical and horizontal. All division between us and God is overcome in the cross of Calvary. So also is all division between us and our brothers and sisters in Christ, whatever our culture, gender, or race.

What better present could we offer God this Christmas than the gift of ourselves, fully united in Jesus?

In October 1994 something was going on among Pentecostal Christians that caught the national attention. In print and broadcast media it was dubbed the “miracle in Memphis.” Twenty-one White Pentecostal groups gathered together with ministers and leaders from the largest Black Pentecostal group, the 5 million-member Church of God in Christ (COGIC), to end the racial rift between them.

The three-day conference was organized and paid for by the predominantly White Pentecostal Fellowship of North America (PFNA). The board members of PFNA demonstrated their change of heart by dissolving their organization and forming a new interracial group, the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches of North America (PCCNA).

Joining by some but not all of the bishops of COGIC, the new interracial organization elected Ithiel Clemmons as its chairperson, the first African-American to hold such a high leadership position among White Pentecostals. Charles Blake, a COGIC bishop, called the meeting a giant step in the eradication of racism among Pentecostals.

But the reconciliation was only a beginning and not a complete one. The presiding bishop of COGIC, for instance, did not even attend the conference, which some Black Pentecostals viewed as an attempt by Whites to invade their territory and take over their organization.

At one dramatic moment during one of the worship services a White pastor from Florida got up and girded himself with a towel. Crossing the room, he bent down and washed the feet of a Black pastor. Ministers throughout the auditorium fell to their knees and wept in humility.

In His prayer before going to the cross, Jesus pleaded for oneness among His followers, praying “that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us”—notice the expected outcome—“that the world may believe that you have sent me” (John 17:21, 22, NIV).

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John S. Nixon is senior pastor of the Oakwood College Seventh-day Adventist Church in Huntsville, Alabama.
Have you gotten your winter clothes out yet? If you live in a place where it's always warm, you may not have to do this. But many people have summer clothes and winter clothes. At some point during the fall they get their winter clothes from the basement or attic and they pack up their summer clothes until next spring.

It's kind of a pain, but in a way it's sort of fun because you get to wear clothes again that you'd nearly forgotten about. And that's almost like getting a bunch of new clothes.

There is one thing you don't want to find when you're getting out your winter clothes—moth holes. Sometimes moths get into woolen clothes and chew holes. Then the clothes are ruined.

Wait a minute. Moths don't have teeth. How can they chew holes in anything? They can't and they don't. We call them "moth holes," but we really should call them "caterpillar holes."

Sometimes moths lay eggs on woolen clothes. After the eggs hatch, the little caterpillars nibble on whatever is nearby. If it is your sweater, then it will be full of holes when you unpack it in the fall.


Jesus says, "Don't store treasures for yourselves here on earth. Moths and rust will destroy treasures here on earth. And thieves can break into your house and steal the things you have."

So store your treasure in heaven" (Matthew 6:19, 20, ICB).

What kind of treasure cannot be stolen from you? Who you are. What kind of treasure can you store in heaven? The things you do.

Your character is a treasure that no one can take away. And it is the only thing you can take with you to heaven.

The things you do in kindness are another kind of treasure. When you are loving and kind, it helps others, but it also enriches you. It builds your character. When you give, you get.

"Your heart will be where your treasure is," Jesus says (verse 21, ICB). If you love clothes and cars and money, you're going to be dealing with moth holes and rust and inflation. But if your heart is in heaven, then you will know what's really important, and you will pile up treasures of kindness and love and character.
early 50 years ago David Dunn wrote a book entitled *Try Giving Yourself Away*. The Updegraff Press, Ltd. (the publishers), have since allowed Prentice Hall to reprint it at least a dozen times. It not only was a good book, but it also taught a practical way of life. When you give something of value to someone who needs it, both parties gain.

One evening I was sitting alone in the lobby of a Victoria, British Columbia, hotel. A cross the way a pianist quietly played several selections that seemed to match my “away from home” mood. Others sat in the same lobby, but somehow they didn’t seem to notice or appreciate his musical contributions. A fer a while he paused to rest and look around the lobby, and as our eyes met, I silently clapped my hands in appreciation of his musical talents. Immediately he stood to his feet, walked over to my table, and said, “Thanks for appreciating my music. I was beginning to think no one noticed or cared whether I played or not.” He was beaming, my loneliness was gone, and he continued to play, much to the delight of everyone.

“There are a hundred ways to give a portion of yourself,” writes David Dunn. “But they all start from the same spot—your heart. The French have a proverb, ‘He gives nothing who does not give himself.’”¹

Being the beneficiary of someone else’s thoughtfulness brings its own unforgettable rewards too. In our mail one day we received a simple postcard from dear friends. The message was: “W e want you to know that ever y day this week you will be especially rem eembered in our prayers.” We have had a special glow ever since that day, and especially when we think of that precious couple who remembered us in prayer when administrative burdens seemed particularly heavy. Since then we too have adopted a similar plan in the hope that it will be a blessing to someone in need.

Hanging on the wall of my study is a heavy, hand-carved, carefully crafted piece of woodwork. A ll across its 30” x 40” face are carved depictions of various Bible heroes and inspiring stories. This masterful carving, requiring many hours of patient handwork, was lovingly presented to me by a woman who lived at that time in the far north of Alberta, Canada. I had not known her until one day, as a conference administrator, I received a letter from her. She stated that she and her family were isolated members, surrounded by neighbors who pried her with questions about her beliefs, and that she needed a projector and filmstrips to help answer their questions. I arranged for the shipment of the requested witnessing tools and wished her well in her desire to reach her neighbors for Christ.

Several months later she presented me with the lovely carving that has been hanging on my study wall ever since. It was her way of saying thanks. You can’t really give yourself away—it always comes back to you.

“It didn’t take me long,” writes Dunn, “after I took up giving-away as a hobby, to discover that it is virtually impossible to give yourself away without getting back more than you give—provided you give away with no thought of reward.”²

Some anonymous person wrote the following:

“I stand by the side of a river
A s it enters the restless sea.
A nd men of all sorts from many ports
C ome in to be healed by me.
A nd some have more sin than sickness,
A nd some have more grief than pain.
Lord, help me to make whole, both body and soul,
Before they go out again.”

Try giving yourself away. The rewards for all concerned are out of this world.

² Ibid., p. 20.

H. J. Harris, a retired minister living in Portland, Oregon, continues to serve the Seventh-day Adventist Church as president of the Retirees’ Association for North America.