



Network News

COMMUNIQUÉ OF THE NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION ADULT MINISTRIES NETWORK

OCTOBER 2008

Volume 4

*"Thy word is a
lamp unto my
feet, and a light
unto my path."*

Psalms 119:105

- KJV

• *"When you shoot
an arrow of truth,
dip its point in
honey." -Arab
Proverb*

• *"Home is where
you go when
other places
close." - Joseph
Laurie*

• *"The art of being
a parent is to
sleep when the
baby isn't
looking." --
Unknown*

IN THIS ISSUE

- **Fellowship? Who Needs It!**
- **What Are Small Groups Really About?**

FROM ELDER JOHNSON

"Looking Toward The Future"

Hello, Ministry Partners!

Our prayer continues to be that you are in an active place of surrendering to The Will of Our Lord, and that you are resting in His care, and in the empowerment of The Holy Ghost.

A common greeting when people meet is "What's Up?" or "What's Going On?" There is something quite natural and quite fine within us that desires to know what is "around the corner." We are an expectant people!

Ministry Partners, I am pleased at this writing to emphasize some of the good things that Our Lord has placed in our Vision for the next three years. Our Adult Ministries Committee has voted to authorize:

1. The 2009 North American Division Adult Ministries Semi-Virtual Festival Of The Laity. This is a DVD that contains 134 Ministry Enhancement Training Power Point Seminars that will be mailed to your congregation in late January, 2009. These Sabbath School, Personal and Prison Ministry tools are designed to strengthen your personal and congregational witness. The DVD comes at no charge!
2. The North American Division Adult Sabbath School Summit will convene April 24, 25, 2009 at the General Conference World Headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland. It is open to anyone who is interested in strengthening their local Adult Sabbath School. The goal will be to "Brainstorm" more means of creatively applying the four Goals of Sabbath School through the local congregation. There is no fee to attend. However, persons desiring to attend and receive the Complimentary Meals and Materials must register at www.plusline.org, www.festivalofthelaity.com or www.nadadultministries.org before the deadline date of **April 9, 2009**. Details are on the websites.
3. Plan for the next Full Ministries (Big Tent) North American Division Festival Of The Laity in the Fall of 2011. It will be the best ever! Listen for details.

In the meantime, we continue to Consult, Communicate, and Pray that Our Lord will keep on empowering you and your local colleagues through the daily Baptism of The Holy Ghost. Let us know how your ministry is going and share ways that you sense we may be of assistance to you. MARANATHA!

JAJ II

IT'S ALL ABOUT SABBATH SCHOOL

WHAT ARE SMALL GROUPS REALLY ABOUT? There are various definitions of a small group. Here are a couple examples:

- "A small group within the church is a voluntary, intentional gathering of three to 12 people regularly meeting together with the shared goal of mutual Christian edification and fellowship."
- "A small group is an intentional, face-to-face gathering of three to 12 people on a regular time schedule with the common purpose of discovering and growing in the abundant life of Christ."

Some definitions ignore the important element of outreach. I have attended nationwide small group training events in which small groups were seen as primarily for nurture while outreach was ignored. This is a serious error. Outreach is implied in Acts 2:46, 47, which speaks of the house-to-house activity of the disciples followed by new accessions to the faith.

Ellen White also states that small groups are for both outreach and nurture: "The formation of small companies as a basis of Christian effort is a plan that has been presented before me by One who cannot err. If there is a large number in the church, let the members be formed into small companies, to work not only for the church members, but for unbelievers also" (*Evangelism*, p. 115).

Four relationships are key to a successful small group:

- **God-to-person:** The group focuses on what God wants to happen to the members individually and on being sensitive to His touch in their lives.
- **Person-to-God:** Group members must be aware of the Holy Spirit touching the lives of group members so they can be supportive.
- **Person-to-person:** As they grow in the Spirit, members will pray for each other, help with personal needs, be more understanding and forgiving, and desire for others to have the same experience.
- **Person-to-world:** A group cannot be spiritually whole and not reach out to others beyond the circle. This is one critical factor in the success of a group.

Will such an approach work? Let me share a story about a friend of mine who visited a small group. Members were studying Bible prophecy and had Christians and seekers (people who haven't accepted Jesus) attending. During the meeting it was obvious that Martha, one of the non-Christians, did not understand the Bible study. At the end of the meeting, my friend was talking with Martha. She told him that she was going to become a Christian and join the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

He was curious because he knew Martha did not understand the prophecy in Daniel 9 that the group had just studied. My friend questioned Martha about her understanding of the teachings of the Adventist church.

She responded: "There are some things I know are true. Once I continue to study and understand that which is not clear to me, I know I will find it biblical, because everything I have understood so far is rooted in Scripture. Besides, these people love me; they are my family."

This is what small groups within the Adventist church are all about!

Kurt Johnson, VOP

Sources: Neal McBride, *How to Lead Small Groups*, p. 24.



WHAT'S HOT!

SOME OUTREACH MINISTRIES ACROSS THE NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION (NAD) AND THE WORLD AT LARGE

SOUTH AUSTRALIA - LIVING MINISTRY

Pastor Jan Pollok e-mailed me from Australia: "Just to let you know every last Sabbath of each month, I lead special workshops for the Sabbath School teachers, and small group leaders. Here in South Australia, we started this informal training program called Living Ministry, I coordinate this activity. Just last Sabbath afternoon, we had teachers and superintendents from three other churches. I nurture a leader's network. It really makes a difference."

SAN SALVADOR, EL SALVADOR

Carolyn Bland, United Prison Ministries International, Verbena, Alabama, held a Share Him Evangelistic Program in San Salvador for 21 nights, resulting in the baptism of 30 precious souls. During that same time, there were 34 Share Him crusades being held simultaneous in El Salvador.

DISCOVER GUIDES ON YOUR CELL PHONE (Discover News)

The current generation of teenagers communicates with each other via their cell phones. They can text-message faster than you and I can talk. To help connect teenagers and adults with Bible study options, the Discover Bible School has made Discover Guides available for the cell phone. The guides are especially formatted for cell phone use and are self-grading. Future development includes instructor/student interaction. Open up your browser and get started!

www.biblestudies.com/cell. Check it out!

HOUSTON TEXAS

Carlos Turcios, Greater Houston Area Coordinator, Texas Conference, says they are in the middle of their seventh crusade at Austin First Spanish, and counting God's blessings. So far, the Lord has given them 157 baptisms, and counting. Turcios hopes to have 200 hundred baptisms by the end of the year. Praise the Lord!

CINCINNATI, OHIO

Allegheny West Conference celebrated the dedication of the Central Cincinnati Hispanic Church, its first full-fledge Hispanic congregation. Libny H. Dubreuze, Multicultural Ministries director for the conference was the pastor from 2006 until April 2008 when Pastor Sergio DaSilva came on board. Conference officials celebrated with the church's 87 members.

Source: Catch the Vision Allegheny West Conference Newsletter

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Director: J. Alfred Johnson II
Jalfred.johnson@nad.adventist.org

Editor: Carol Barron
Carol.barron@nad.adventist.org

Consultant: Cleveland Houser
cleve.houser@comcast.net

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**North American Division
Adult Ministries Adult
Ministries Network**
12501 Old Columbia Pike,
Silver Spring MD 20904

Phone
301.680.6430

Fax
301.680.6464

E-mail
Carol.barron@nad.adventist.org

We're on the Web!
www.nadadultministries.org

Q & A

How can we "revive" Investment in our church? I remember it as a child and I found it fun, exciting, and rewarding. Can you help?

Help and Revival are here! This article by Thurman Petty will run in two parts. The articles will get you started and give great Investment ideas. (Google: cool tools for Sabbath School for more helps.)

Investment giving does impact the local church. When members work in partnership with God for Investment, they receive personal blessings. The church finds the collective spiritual interest activities increasing as well. In fact, some report that internal strife fades as matters of contention lose their importance, replaced by the focus on raising funds for missions. When it comes to their Investment project, many people have said that "Investment increases their faith in God." Some Sabbath School leaders have forgotten about the importance of Investment. Others give Investment unimportant status. "Who cares?" some ask. Or, "The Investment offering never amounts to much anyway." In 1999, however, the total amount of Investment turned in from the world field exceeded US2\$ million.

Set a goal. When you have no specific, measurable objective, your efforts may fall short of what they could have been if you'd had a target. When you go on vacation, you usually have some destination in mind before you start. Some vacations are built around wandering about, seeing the beauties of nature—even that is a goal. After you decide on a destination, you plan how many miles you want to travel each day and where you will spend your nights along the way. So by making an ultimate goal and deciding on sub-goals, you usually arrive at your intended objective. The same holds true for Investment. Decide how much you want to raise, how much you need to raise each week, or each month to reach that objective.

Stagger the goals. Some projects receive their dollar payoff at the end of the season—harvest time, for instance. But even in this case sub-goals are needed for plowing, planting, weeding, and cultivating. These sub-goals provide checkpoints to ensure success and to help keep interest high. Many projects have been used to help the church reach a predetermined amount of money that the Sabbath School wishes to reach. Let's walk through the idea of staggered goals using three of the ideas that have been used successfully by many church members.

Quilting: A group decides to make a quilt and sell it for Investment. They will set a date when they wish to complete the quilt. They will also set dates to finish certain segments of the project.

Sales: The first goal is to decide what you will sell—everything received or specialty items, such as children's clothes, furniture, white elephants, etc. The next goal is to find a storage area for materials that people donate to the sale. Set a cut-off date for receiving sale items and a sale date. Set a date to review how the project went and a date to report to the church.

Loose change: The first goal is to get the money into a receptacle at home each day. The second goal is to deposit the money into a receptacle at church, perhaps a five-gallon jug. The next goals are set as periodic reports. The final report completes the project.

Thurman C. Petty, Jr.

PERSONAL MINISTRIES – SABBATH SCHOOL’S PARTNER IN MINISTRY

WHO NEEDS FELLOWSHIP?

“Why do people NOT come to Sabbath School?”

One Sabbath during August 1996, my family visited my sister-in-law and her family in New Albany, Indiana. That Sabbath the church had not organized a fellowship dinner. However, my sister-in-law learned that guests from Idaho had just arrived in town, so she invited them to eat at her home. While we were enjoying good fellowship at the dining room table, the husband of this family from Idaho said: “My wife and I had planned to visit around before deciding on our permanent church. But since we have been invited to lunch by your family today, we will immediately transfer our membership to your church.”

Increase your options - Have a potluck for members and guests at least once a month. Host hospitality dinners specifically for guests the rest of the month on site or in members’ homes. Have a variety of hosts to ensure compatibility with guests with regard to family size, gender, etc. Try assigning dinner dates to Sabbath School classes or other church departmental leaders, as well as forming volunteer teams with special interests: senior citizens, children under 5, or teens, etc. What else can we do? Consider the following:

Introductions – Instead of just keeping a guest book open at the reception desk for guests to sign, diversify your fellowship approaches. Introduce guests during Sabbath School class time. Introduce guests during the church announcement period and invite all church members to welcome them. Follow up by arranging for members to visit guests in their homes.

Nurture the faithful - Make sure that longtime members get regular visits too, especially the elderly, single parents, and other single members. The stiff-upper-lip members and professional smiles may also be longing for fellowship. Empty-nesters and younger siblings of older brothers and sisters would welcome young adult visitors. Members who are always in the church and engaged in every activity may be working themselves to frustration to fill the fellowship needs they crave. Visit them in their home. Give them the gift of fellowship.

Updates – Do not inform only guests and missing members about upcoming Sabbath School or church programs; update members who are absent on any given Sabbath about announcements they have missed. Keeping Sabbath School classes small not only encourages class participation; fellowship opportunities are also increased. This intimacy increases the “missed you” factor when members are away even for one Sabbath.

“Eleven o’clock only” members - It’s not easy to know why people do not attend Sabbath School. Once in South America a family was missing from Sabbath School. That afternoon the pastor visited the family and found that two small children had been left alone in the house for three days without knowing that their parents had been in an accident. The children may have died if members had not visited that Sabbath afternoon.

Increase the nurture – Encourage members to meet in small group ministries during the week. Studying, praying and sharing with each other strengthens family bonds. Strong bonds of fellowship strengthened by His love keep members active in the church. Who needs fellowship? We all do!

Jonathan Kuntaraf, General Conference

"INMATE SPIRITUAL COUNSELING" CURRICULUM SEGMENTS

"Inmate Spiritual Counseling" with an emphasis on Volunteer Prison Chaplaincy, is the new training curriculum for those who are very serious about updating their Prison Ministry skills. The 46-hour course is offered by the North American Division Academy of Continuing Education, and will be conducted in association with the International Institute of Christian Ministry of the General Conference Sabbath School/Personal Ministries Department, which has a direct relationship with Griggs University. Continuing Education Credit is a possibility for college credit in the future.

Curriculum Segment Highlights: Inmate Worship VCHP.230

Prison Chaplain Mike Roper, Rowan Correctional, North Carolina, says, "Within the confines of the prison walls, you'll find men that are someone's father, brother, cousin, nephew, and grandfather. Some inmates who actively attend services while in prison even volunteer with the prison ministry after their release."

Salisbury Post: Internet

Description

Inmate Worship will expose the student to the need to foster religion in corrections. To provide a fundamental knowledge of the cultural environment that he/she would be called up to minister to the disenfranchised. A general knowledge of how to be an effective worker in the prison providing worship for the incarcerated.

Overview

This module, **Inmate Worship**, denotes a microcosm of sub-cultural events that necessitates ministry to the disenfranchised to provide a base and a need for reconciliation. It suggests a vital need for an effective method of ministry to those who are behind bars and offers suggestions for its feasibility. This module also makes a definitive statement for religion in Department of Corrections Facilities.

Learning Outcomes

1. To expose the student to what is going on behind the walls, to give him a framework to minister.
2. To introduce the student to the fundamentals of ministry to prison inmates.
3. To expose the volunteer to the need to minister to inmates.
4. To establish this basis for inmate worship.

Each issue of **Network News** will feature a segment from this 17 Module Curriculum. We, at the North American Division Adult Ministries Academy of Continuing Education, encourage our readers to enroll. Call Carol at 301.680.6430 or log on www.adventsource.org for registration information.



PRISON MINISTRY HAPPENINGS

ONE MONTH, ONE MINUTE SEASON OF PRAYER

Matt Morgan, Lead Volunteer of True Gospel Ministries Seventh-day Adventist Group writes, "Our incarcerated Brethren at MCIJ have requested for us to join them as they celebrate this Season of Prayer. For the next month

they will be praying at noon, at 3:00 p.m., and at 6:00 p.m., each day for at least one minute.

"The prayers and petitions will be made on behalf of the inmates, those who are sick and need strengthening, for the True Gospel Ministries, and other Christian groups in MCIJ. Also for Chaplain Bellamy and Warden Caroline Atkins. We want the Holy Spirit to have His way."

SOUTH BEND, INDIANA – PCM PASTOR RECEIVES AWARD

On Saturday, August 23, 2008, the Westville Correctional Facility honored their more than 650 volunteers and Practical Christianity Ministries. Westville Prison is a 3,500 man facility and is Indiana's largest prison. Volunteers provide an array of services including mentorship, counseling academically, spiritually and emotionally.

The Practical Christianity Ministries (PCM) received two awards. It was one of four volunteer groups to receive an additional Outstanding Award, awarded to Pastor W.P. Jeffrey. Pastor Jeffrey developed the Practical Talk Lecture Series (PT). PT is a cognitive reorientation program designed to aid in the restructuring of the thought pattern of the offender. Pastor Jeffrey volunteers several hours per week meeting with and mentoring the inmates at the prison. PCM also conducts church services for the inmates.

RICHMOND, VIRGINIA – PAPMO CELEBRATION

CONGRATULATIONS go out to Hector Cruz and the prison ministers in the celebration of **PAPMO's 10th Anniversary**. Former PAPMO director Kris Kober was the Keynote Speaker for the September 20, 2008 celebration. PAPMO, founded in September, 1998, has made great strides in prison ministry, bringing Christ to the incarcerated.

EDITOR'S P.S.

My phone rang that Sunday morning, September 21st. It was Elder Johnson calling to tell me his mother, Mrs. Annabelle Hord Johnson, had fallen asleep in Jesus Christ, at the beautiful age of 97.

In the office, Elder Johnson would talk about his "Mommy", about his visits to her in Philadelphia; show me pictures. Such wonderful and nice memories!

Many of you have expressed condolences to Elder Johnson by e-mail, letters, flowers, telephone calls, personal visits, and assuring him of your prayers.

Elder Johnson wishes to say, *"Thank you very kindly for your warm condolences in remembering me in the passing of my Mother. Your prayers, your thoughts, your acts of kindness will always be remembered. Thank you so very, very much."*

I'm outta here!

CB



