

WHAT IS HAPPENING TO TITHING?

NEWS • ANALYSIS • OPINION

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ADVENTIST TODAY

JANUARY • FEBRUARY 1995

FROM RUSSIA
WITH
GRATITUDE

FOLKENBERG
CRITICIZES
NURTURERS AND
REVISIONISTS

EVANGELISM IN
THE FORMER USSR



Inside Adventist Today

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This issue features a cluster of insightful articles on the unprecedented opportunities, needs, and challenges that confront Seventh-day Adventists to develop a strong, vigorous, multifaceted church in the vast reaches of the former Soviet Union. Our Russian brothers and sisters desperately need our personal interest and involvement in meeting this challenge while the door of opportunity remains open.

For a number of years evangelistic teams from the West have returned home with thrilling reports of large baptisms as the result of evangelism in the former Soviet Union. In this issue Albina Tomenko, a Russian Seventh-day Adventist translator for some of these crusades, opens a new and informative window on the challenging needs of the fast-growing church in Russia. In three years the membership has tripled, and it is beyond the capability of the fledgling Euro-Asia Division to provide adequately for their urgent needs. As a Russian Seventh-day Adventist she here describes those needs as no one from the West could possibly do. John Carter, leader of one of these evangelistic teams, heartily applauds Tomenko's article.

Aivars Ozolins, a national of Latvia now studying theology in the United States, emphasizes the need for those who participate in evangelism in the ethnically diverse regions of Russia to be sensitive to, and respect, local cultures and ways of doing things. People are hungry for God's Word, for "the plain gospel that changes lives," and do not need what he refers to as "gimmicks." After an evangelistic crusade, "long distance" support from participating Americans can be a major factor in assisting local pastors to retain new members.

Paul J. Landa of La Sierra University in Riverside, California, an authority on the church and church history, analyzes the needs of the church in the new Russian Federation and outlines a series of specific proposals regarding what can and should be done to transform the thousands of new members into a mature, fully developed Christian community. Gloriously successful "hit and run" evangelism is only the first step on a long and arduous journey toward maturity, he observes.

Responding to these needs, two writers report some of the creative projects currently in progress. Harvey Elder, MD, of Loma Linda University, relates the glowing appreciation accorded a recent School of Medicine team project to update physicians of the Russian Adventist Medical Association. Four years ago the Upper Columbia Conference initiated "Operation Bearhug" as a conference project adopting the eastern Siberia coastal city of Magadan as the locale for assisting a local Adventist congregation in the development of a well-rounded program of nurture and outreach. Max Torkelsen II of Upper Columbia reports an investment of more than a million dollars thus far in Operation Bearhug.

Concluding this feature series on Russia, an editorial by James Stirling of *Adventist Today* stresses the importance of "helping people understand the gospel within their own cultural framework."

Closely related to this "Bearhug" cluster is *Adventist Today* executive editor James Walters' interview with Gary Patterson, director of global mission for the General Conference, who defines his assignment as an endeavor to refocus Adventist attention in what he terms "donor divisions" of the world on the urgent need of the rest of the world for the gospel.

Without adequate financing global mission is impossible. Albert Dittes, a journalist personally committed to the tithing principle, takes a hard look at reasons for "What Is Happening to Tithing" in North America.

Of particular interest to *Adventist Today* editors is the summary by our Director of Development, Dean Kinsey, of comments made by subscribers and donors during the recent phonathon. They were asked to say what they like and do not like about our journal's coverage. We think our readers will like to know what they said, too. Their comments, and your comments, will help *Adventist Today* serve you more effectively.

Raymond Cottrell

About the cover: St. Isaacs Cathedral in St. Petersburg.
Inset: Cherie Garrett (L), American school teacher, and Era Ogonkova (R), Russian medical student, became friends when serving together as volunteers for a Moscow health expo. Photos by Cherie and Wayne Garrett.

EVANGELISM IN THE FORMER USSR

- 4 From Russia With Gratitude and Some Suggestions *Albina Tomenko*
- 6 Ukrainian, Russian, and American Physicians: One Big Family *Harvey A. Elder*
- 7 American Evangelist Responds *John Carter*
- 8 In the Footsteps of Paul *Aivars Ozolins*
- 9 To Russia, With Loving Concern *Paul J. Landa*
- 12 Operation Bearhug *Max C. Torkelsen II*
- 14 The Loaf and the Wrapping *James H. Stirling*



Albina Tomenko 4

MISSION

- 15 Mission or Missions? *Interview with Gary Patterson*
- 17 What Is Happening to Tithing? *Albert Dittes*



Paul J. Landa 8

COMMENTARY

- 16 1844 Revisionists Not New *Raymond Cottrell*
- 19 Theology of the Sanctuary: A Response to Roy Gane *Glen Greenwalt*
- 21 New Perspectives on "A New Noel" *Virginia-Gene Shankel Rittenhouse*
- 22 Adventist Today Readers Respond to Survey *Dean Kinsey*



Albert Dittes 15

LETTERS

- 20 Quality and Freedom
- 20 Thanksdoing Optimism
- 20 Good News Author Responds

IN THE NEWS

- 24 Folkenberg Criticizes Nurturers and Revisionists
- 24 Teske Issues Warning to New York and Western Cities
- 24 New Graduate Programs in Psychology and Social Work at LLU



VG Rittenhouse 21

REFLECTIONS

- 23 You Are Here *Bonnie L. Casey*

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From *Russia* with Gratitude and Some Suggestions

Like a spring day following a severe winter, a new time has come to the former Soviet Union. The old generation of Adventists in the former Soviet Union expected that in some far off future, God would intervene in some way. But we did not imagine that this change would be so soon or so overwhelming. We as a church were not prepared to meet the many demands and take advantage of the many opportunities miraculously opened.

A church is a united body, and the whole world church had suffered long while one part was encased in a spiritual cast of plaster. With the cast thrown off, the part needed therapeutic exercise. One of the best therapies has been the evangelistic campaigns. During the past three years, many articles have been printed about evangelism in Russia following the opening of the former socialist countries to the free preaching of the gospel. Generally, the authors of these articles are those who helped with the evangelistic meetings.

Some are beginning to doubt the necessity of continuing with such campaigns. Among their reasons are the opposition of the Orthodox church, the possibility that foreign pastors will be prohibited from preaching in public places, and the relative loss of interest in attending meetings. Now, however, is the most appropriate time to continue something

Albina Tomenko, a native of the former USSR, has been a translator for American evangelists. She is now pursuing graduate studies in North America.

by *Albina Tomenko*

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that has had such a marvelous beginning. The Adventist church in the former USSR increased from 26,000 in 1940 to approximately 34,000 in 1990. At the beginning of 1994 we had more than 100,000 members. These statistics give us great joy, but also indicate a tremendous challenge: the former Soviet Union is the largest territory in the world, a country in which more than 100 languages are spoken and in which more than 300 million people live.

So, will we answer yes or no to the continuing of evangelistic campaigns? Those millions of suffering and anguished people are seeking peace and hope now. We should ask: how many things can be done in a country where five Adventist magazines or one Bible can be bought for \$1.50, where the salary of one worker is \$10 per month, where after a series of evangelistic meetings there is no church building for those who are baptized and so a theater or cultural center has to be used instead?

In the Ukraine alone are 84 churches under construction, but it will be impossible to finish them because of the lack of funds. There are not even enough pastors for large congregations! In one conference of the Ukraine, there are 27 churches and only 6 pastors. Pastors who work in the enormous Euro-Asian Division know nothing of vacation time or days off. Some district pastors have to travel all Friday night in order to preach in their churches on Sabbath. It is impossible to buy houses or cars for the pastors. In the Ukraine, for example, where a

pastor might receive \$12 or \$16 per month, a car would cost \$30,000!

The answer, then, is yes, we should continue the evangelistic campaigns. Much can be done by anyone who asks God to show the best way of helping.

In the name of the whole Euro-Asian Division, as its representative, I want to express again our immense gratitude to the pastors, lay coordinators, doctors and musicians, to those who have worked with the children, to any who in any way have participated in the campaigns, either in person or through their financial contributions. They have all participated in great spiritual feasts and must share in the joy of heaven. Hopefully they have returned to their daily tasks enriched by such an experience.

I think the question which should most occupy our attention presently is *How?* Which is the best way in which to present the truth? How can we reach the most people? Which methods should we use? How can we retain those whom we do reach? There are several major issues. First is an urgent need to find new approaches to use with the different levels of society. We cannot continue blindly in the formal use of evangelistic meeting series, even though these may give the best results in other countries. Whenever presentations are made, they should be made without losing sight of the background of the listeners, or of their problems or specific needs.

Secondly, we must focus on the main goal of our outreach. Is it to inform the public about the doctrines of the Adventist church? Or do we want to demonstrate to sinners that there is a God, living and real, who heals all wounds with his forgiving love? Whenever we reach out to people, we should start with topics of indispensable importance: sin and repentance, prayer, the plan of redemption, and Christ as the center of all, the only hope and the only solution in all difficulties, the only one in whom we can find infinite peace, security, and happiness. It is not necessary to start with slides of horrible, nonexistent beasts. Neither should we attack the listeners with historical dates and arguments in favor and against.

What people long to know in this world of so many afflictions and so much suffering is a way for the disoriented now, a light of truth for the desperate and sad now, comfort today, a future today. They will joyfully join the great worldwide Christian Adventist family and perceive their warm welcome



We are not dealing with an atheistic country, but rather with a country which has a thousand-year-long history of Christianity.

to the believers' circle. For we are not dealing with an atheistic country, but rather with a country which has a thousand-year-long history of Christianity. In Armenia, for example, Christianity has existed since the second century. In general, it's not so much that people are against God now; it is that they do not know God. Often, an atheist is looking for the meaning of life, looking for God, wondering if a supernatural power does exist. Baptism can be a confusing issue for Eastern Europeans. We people of Slavic origin have been influenced by the Orthodox church to believe that baptism is a ritual which, once done, guarantees prosperity, health, success, and in the case of death, the assurance of direct access to paradise. Many not baptized in the

Orthodox church have lived with a heavy load on their consciences, a feeling of not being protected by God. For them, baptism is not a beginning step in a Christian life full of trials and struggles and victories, but rather a very important step after which all relations with God are automatically fixed forever. Many of these people take advantage of a free baptism now, rather than the Orthodox baptism for which one has to pay, thinking they receive the guarantees of the Orthodox church.

We must also be honest with ourselves. We are happy because of the large number of baptisms, but also saddened by the large number of apostasies, numbers which do not appear on the reports of those who congratulate themselves for many baptisms. We could do a much better work, and we could have far fewer apostasies.

Deep in their hearts, the Slavs are very pious and God-fearing. Although not many listeners have been practicing Christians, they know well the difference between the sacred and the secular. They take for granted that everything associated with religion will be treated with great seriousness. The "show" type of evangelism is a shock for many people. These people, after hearing some jokes or anecdotes told by the speaker, find it difficult to respond to a serious call for Christian commitment.

Neither can these people understand the relationship between little gifts given away at a series and the great solemnity of the Christian message. The exception to this would be the use of religious books as gifts for attendance or as door prizes. It is not now necessary to try to attract people with cheap things; sometimes this has a counterproductive effect. The thing that is most attractive is the

high quality of the presentation and the spiritual depth of the speaker and the message.

Especially valuable contributions have been made by the doctors who have given talks about a better style of living, especially in the five-day plans to stop smoking. As a result of these campaigns, the membership of the church is more balanced, in contrast to campaigns where 80 percent of those baptized are women and only 20 percent men.

After a campaign, the active members of the new church can visit places the evangelist was not able to reach. But who is going to respond to the invitations to go to the modern cities in Siberia and their surroundings? These cities have an average of 100,000 inhabitants, most of whom are young people and belong to the generation which knows very little, if anything, about God. The call for the 20th century is not a call from Macedonia, but a call from Siberia, from thousands of small and large cities.

If we trust fully in God, however, each difficulty will be converted into a challenge! An overlook of past evangelistic campaigns will help us understand

what can be done in spite of our weaknesses and faults. And now after three years of preaching, we understand that it was only the beginning. Now we must go forward.

During almost 70 years the world church has had little opportunity to help the church in the former Soviet Union. Now is the opportune moment. For 1994 we planned 60 evangelistic campaigns. What a magnificent opportunity to experience the greatest happiness on this earth, to be participants and witnesses to the glorious miracle of seeing sinners respond to eternal love. A lawyer who was baptized in a campaign in Ufai said, "When you came, we had hearts like pieces of ice, and each day, little by little, you broke that ice into small pieces, and you taught us how to love." The great apostle Paul, who proclaimed the power of the Gospel in 13 new countries, preaching "Christ, and him crucified," once wrote: "Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men." (Gal 6:9,10)

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Ukrainian, Russian, and American Physicians: One Big Family

Harvey A. Elder

The following diary excerpts were written during July, 1993, in Moscow.

I am part of the LLU School of Medicine team, teaching the Russian Adventist Medical Association physicians about Christian medicine. Our classes are held alongside a major crusade by *It Is Written*. About 220 physicians (including several who spent seven days by train to arrive!) are attending the RAMA meetings. We planned to run our classes for the Russian physicians as we do in the states; however, we were told that the Russians wouldn't discuss. They would just stare at us as if we weren't there! It's been with fear and trepidation that we journeyed east.

The first day has been really awful. You look at a Russian and smile and their face does not flicker. . . There seems to be suspicion everywhere, between Ukrainians and Russians, between "old guard" Christians and new converts.

We're looking at scripture, at case histories of patients with diseases secondary to their behaviors and lifestyles. We want these doctors to deal biblically with the issues of human suffering, acceptance, and love.

The sessions have ended, and the Russians and the Ukrainians share the platform together. The "old guard" have caught a new enthusiasm for the God we serve. The new members are better rooted in the necessity to change destructive behaviors. Friday night graduation. The doctors receive certificates and Bibles. They are thrilled beyond words. A most moving service. It's hard to tell who is happier, faculty or students. There is a deep unity of Americans and Russians, old guard and newly baptized, doctors who practice in big cities and those who practice alone. We've become one big family.

On Sabbath, long after the sermon and benediction, they keep on singing . . . for almost an hour! They don't want it to end. As they leave, they shake our hands, hug and kiss us. There are tears in their eyes. I am moved to tears myself. Outside of family, I have never felt so appreciated in my life.

Harvey A. Elder, M.D., Ph.D., is Chief of Infectious Diseases at the Pettis V. A. Hospital in Loma Linda, California.

American Evangelist Responds

As one who has had the great privilege of baptizing more than 5,000 precious Russian souls during the past 24 months, after reading Ms. Tomenko's article, I am constrained to say "Amen and amen." I agree wholeheartedly with everything she says. She writes with great understanding and wisdom as one who truly understands the soul of these suffering Slavic peoples. May I have the privilege of highlighting some of her convictions and insights.

1. With a population of some 300,000,000 souls, spiritually starving and receptive to the preaching of the blessed gospel of Christ, the ex-Soviet Union remains the largest and most fruitful mission field in the world today. As Tomenko states, the question to be decided is not whether we shall continue to evangelize, but how.

2. The view that new approaches should be sought to meet the needs of the people of the ex-Soviet Union is completely valid. Traditional Adventist North American evangelistic approaches do not always appeal to the Slavic mind. We are in real danger of thinking that we have all the answers. There is also the danger of believing that it is necessary for us to export American Adventism to these people, with a total disregard for their rich culture and unique customs.

3. How perceptive is Tomenko when she writes that our main task is to present Christ and his love to the people:

"Sin and repentance, prayer, the plan of redemption, and Christ as the center of all, the only hope and the only solution in all difficulties, the only One in whom we can find infinite peace, security, and happiness. It



John Carter, employed as an evangelist in Southern California, has held evangelistic campaigns around the world, including Russia, where he has baptized 5,000. He believes the greatest need of Adventist evangelists and their listeners is to understand righteousness by faith.

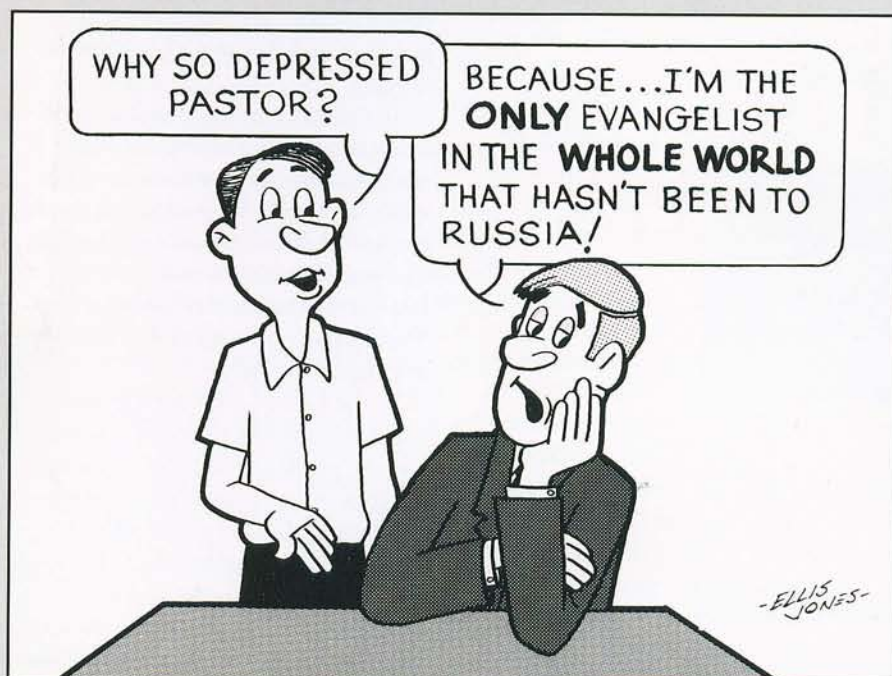
John Carter

is not necessary to start with slides of horrible, non-existent beasts..."

Tomenko's appeal for Bible-based,

Christ-centered preaching is just what is needed in the lands of the ex-Soviet Union; she is right on target. These people desperately need to know that there is a personal, loving Creator-God and that they are his children, made in his image, saved by the blood of the cross.

With Tomenko, I thank God for all that has been accomplished for God in these formerly hostile countries. I thank God for the scores, even hundreds of foreigners who have gone to proclaim the message of God to these starving souls. With Tomenko, I also believe that this is no time to sound the retreat. Now is the time to move forward, learning from the mistakes of the past, with a determination to present God's truths in such a way that lasting hope, joy and peace will be brought to these dear people who have sat so long in the "valley of the shadow."



In the Footsteps of Paul

After years in missionary service among diverse cultures, Paul explains, "I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some." (1 Cor 9:22, NIV) Paul is talking about cultural sensitivity or contextualization: As a missionary, I must do everything possible to understand and accommodate the culture and the people, even at the expense of my own convenience and my well-worked-out methods.

How are the modern Pauls doing in this respect, who go to the vast and fruitful territories of the former USSR, which yield so much success and perhaps some glory, too? These territories include a great number of ethnically diverse nations. It is extremely important therefore that missionaries going to one of these areas (or any area) take the time and effort to become familiar with the local culture and ways of doing things and shape their methods accordingly.

What about our message? Some in the former USSR are upset and frustrated by the superficial preaching of some Western evangelists who use cheap jokes, which the people don't understand anyway, and rely on entertaining stories. We are not going there to entertain people. They may be so desperate in their struggle for survival that this might even offend. We don't need gimmicks—we only need the plain gospel that changes lives.

Sometimes in the former USSR we have made the health message just a lure. In the US, evangelists may need attention-getting devices, but not in the former Communist countries, where people are hungry for the word of God. Let's present the health message as something valuable in itself, and make realistic recommendations that can be implemented locally. For instance, let's keep in mind what foods are available there.

Great frustration, deep disappointment, and mistrust have resulted from evangelists making promises and then



Aivars Ozolins

Aivars Ozolins grew up in communist Latvia. He holds an M.A. degree from Newbold College and now pursues doctoral studies at Fuller Theological Seminary, focusing on development of Christian leadership in post-communist countries.

failing to keep them. Sometimes, Americans have promised something grand, then delivered something small and cheap, thinking that because the people are poor, they are uneducated or primitive, and they won't know the difference.

In different cultures, people respond and make decisions differently. If that is not taken into consideration, the retention rate of newly baptized people can be very low. I was told about an evangelist who had worked there with good success—several hundred people were baptized. Today, only a handful of these are still church members.

In the former USSR, after an emotional presentation, when the evangelist asks the people to accept Jesus by standing up or raising a hand, almost everyone will do it, to do what everybody else is doing, and not be embarrassed. However, most of these will not yet understand what is really involved—that it means a commitment, a total change of direction

in life. It takes time and effort to lead people to a decision which is not only emotional but also intellectual and experiential.

Some have asked me, "How are Americans doing in their missionary work in the former USSR?" Generally, the meetings they hold are very good, if efforts are made to give new converts a full understanding of biblical truths, and only those are baptized who have studied and understood them. Also, it is imperative that after a crusade, we continue our support from abroad, if only in a long-distance fashion. This would show we really care and would lend valuable help to the local pastors who carry on the work.

Respect and sensitivity need to inform evangelists' behavior, not just abroad, but upon return home to America, as well. What we do or say back home after the conclusion of the meetings may affect the results of our work in the mission field. Ours is a very small world; one cannot say something in one part without people on the other side knowing.

Sometimes in the reports we present about our work, we tend to over-emphasize the problems the local people of the mission field are having, thus creating an aura of greatness for ourselves who have done so much for these poor people. Let's be honest: Is this not a little bit of a sense of superiority? It would be better to leave all the glory to God.

I hope Americans will continue going to the former USSR. I really appreciate this sacrifice of time, effort, and money, but I invite missionaries to be more sensitive to the local culture, the needs of the people, and their ways of doing things. Following Paul's example, may we learn how, in going to Latvians, to become like Latvians; to Tajiks, to become like Tajiks; and to Russians, to become like Russians, so that by all possible means we might save some. And let's give God all the glory.



TO RUSSIA

with

Loving Concern

For over 70 years until 1988, the Russian people were spiritually starved by godless overlords. The extent of that starvation became apparent with the recent collapse of communism. By the hundreds of thousands, Soviet citizens from all walks of life turned to religion once again and reached out to God to satisfy their spiritual hunger.

Seventh-day Adventists, along with other churches and denominations, were quick to respond to the need. In a matter of months, we were among the first to establish a Christian publishing house, to build a seminary (at Zaokski) for the training of Christian workers, to open a Christian health center in Moscow and to reach out to the Russian people with religious programs on radio and television. Now, every Monday night, millions watch the *It Is Written* telecast on prime time in Moscow, St. Petersburg and surrounding cities. It is also seen in 15 other large population centers, as well as the countries of Ukraine and Moldova.

The Adventist church was the first to conduct a major evangelistic effort in the Kremlin, drawing huge nightly audiences, resulting in 14,000 decisions for Christ and over 2,500 baptisms. Other large crusades followed, conducted by Adventist evangelists from the United States, Australia, Latin America and Europe, who spread the good news in dozens of large cities. And people responded—over 20,000 baptisms in less than two years! Tens of thousands of Bibles have been given away, and our church is currently spearheading “Project 66”—a brand new translation of the Scriptures into the Russian language.

This is a time for rejoicing as one thinks of the growth of the Adventist church in the countries of the formerly godless Soviet Union. It is also a time for loving concern, because our church’s efforts in that part of the world appear opportunistic, with no clear sense of direction and a lack of thoughtful planning—unless our determined goal is simply to raise

as many churches as possible in the shortest time possible. We seem to be able to do that very well.

But comparatively little is being said and done about planting, nurturing and growing these churches for the long term. This is where the reasons for our concern are to be found. It is painfully clear that the Adventist church in Russia and the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States is unable to cope with the flood of new converts unleashed by evangelists from the West and by the random manner in which these same evangelists are conducting their endeavors. They are seemingly oblivious to the critical shortage of people and material resources to organize, build and care for “instant,” and often large, congregations.

Our Russian church has no experience in addressing the needs of multiethnic and highly diversified congregations (ranging from ordinary laborers to highly educated professionals). It lacks the resources to take care of the young, to establish church schools, to develop Christian-oriented curricula and to write and publish textbooks. Indeed, it cannot support at the moment a viable publishing venture. It cannot run an effective media ministry, for it lacks the means to respond to the many thousands who would express an interest in religious literature and Bible studies. It cannot operate a credible medical ministry outreach, and the list goes on. These observations are not intended to be derogatory of Russian Adventists. Rather, they acknowledge the fact that after decades of repression and isolation from the rest of the world, the Russian Adventist church lacks the people and the means to cope with what is presently being thrust upon her by well-meaning Western evangelists and church leaders.

Should a moratorium be imposed on all evangelistic work in the lands of the former Soviet Union? Absolutely not. What is called for is a plan of action that will more realistically match needs with means

Paul J. Landa



Paul Landa teaches history of Christianity at La Sierra University and provides advice on strategic planning to institutions of higher education, churches, and church organizations in the U.S. and abroad. He has authored two manuals on strategic planning.

It is time for
pastors in the
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and the generating of resources, with the ultimate goal being to establish a solid Russian Adventist presence that will become like “salt and yeast,” permeating all of society.

The plan of action should be based on a multi-pronged strategy that ought to include not only church raising (public evangelism), but also church planting (organizational development), church nurturing (spiritual and relational growth of members) and church growing (local, regional and national outreach). While much could be said about each segment of this quadrilateral, a few constructive ideas will be suggested here in the hope of generating more from readers both near and far.

Church Raising

First, it is time to integrate more carefully the activities of “hit and run” evangelists from the West into a comprehensive church raising plan. This plan would still use short-term efforts, but would favor the work of soul winners who are prepared to spend a minimum of two years on location to follow up interests, to organize and build churches, to assist new converts in applying their newly found religious principles to the practical problems of daily life, to train them to become lay pastors and to do everything possible to prevent their defection due to the lack of adequate pastoral care and nurture.

It is time for pastors in the West to become more sensitive to the problems that “hit and run, gypsy evangelism” creates for their hosts. In a region as spiritually starved as the former USSR, it is relatively easy to arouse interest in religion and to win members in large numbers. But it is considerably more difficult to organize these members into functioning churches and to support them in their struggles to live the Christian life in a society undergoing massive upheaval. The difficulties are greatly exacerbated by the lack of experienced, trained pastors to minister to them, the lack of supportive member networks, and the lack of money to provide them with such simple items as Bibles or Sabbath school quarterlies. Those who propose to go to work in the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States should commit themselves to remain there for a while to bring their efforts to fruition and to help reinforce the pastoral and leadership ranks.

Second, evangelists from the West should acquaint themselves with the culture of Russia before landing there. They should make an effort to learn the rudiments of conversational Russian, not with the view to preach or teach in that language (although that would be ideal), but in order to be able to converse with the average person and with fellow workers. There is no better way to develop meaningful friendships and ties with the Russian people.

Finally, pastors going to Russia should learn something about the thousand-year-old Russian Orthodox Christian tradition and should revise their sermon

notes with the view to develop theological “friendship bridges” that would enable them to build a quicker rapport with the many who, despite the nightmare of Communist atheism, still managed to maintain ties to that ancient and stately form of Christianity.

Church Planting

Organizing, building, nurturing and growing churches is more costly than winning converts in public crusades. This being the case, pastors proposing to work in Russia would do well to use the “Tandem Budget” system in which, for every dollar spent on public evangelism, two additional dollars will be budgeted (and raised before the start of any program) to organize, build and maintain the church or churches that will emerge from a crusade for a period of two years. The second two-thirds of the Tandem Budget should provide enough money to cover the start-up costs for erecting one or more new church buildings, for amortizing salaries, for literature and for other resources to support one or more viable congregations.

Given the rapid growth of the church in Russia, given the need to organize immediately, and given the lack of a sufficiently large corps of adequately trained local leaders, it is to be expected that the General Conference will, for the foreseeable future, continue to dispatch experts to “show them how to do it” (our way). It is the most practical and cost-effective thing to do. But we should not neglect to develop native leaders, capable of generating their own plans to meet their own needs. One good way of doing this would be to identify gifted men and women who would be given the opportunity to travel to those parts of the world where our denomination operates successful organizations and institutions. There they could observe and learn directly what makes those entities productive. They would be left to decide for themselves what can or should be adapted to their particular setting back home. A modest fund would easily cover travel, living and training expenses for periods of one to six months. Such exposure to the work of the world Adventist church would also be marvelously enriching and inspiring to persons who have known nothing but isolation and who have little comprehension and appreciation for what Seventh-day Adventism really is in its global shape.

Rather than replicate in Russia the church structure which exists elsewhere in the Adventist world—a structure that does not always promote productivity and cost-effectiveness—why not allow our Russian believers to develop an organization of their own, customized to their own setting and capable of being more responsive to their own peculiar conditions? Diversity of structure from the rest of the world church need not threaten nor destroy the theological integrity of Russian Adventism.

Church Nurturing

Traditionally, church nurturing has not been as highly regarded as church raising (hence the emphasis on public evangelism) by Adventist leaders. That lack of serious attention to the spiritual and relational growth of members has become the principal cause for the high level of apostasy which debilitates so many Adventist churches throughout the countries of the Western world. It is a problem which is already being experienced by our Russian church. It deserves prompt action not only because dropouts very rarely ever come back, but also because they usually end up giving the church a bad name. Moreover, their capacity for mischief against the church can often hinder or neutralize the best efforts of our best workers. Obviously the prevention of apostasy through a comprehensive nurturing ministry must be given high priority.

Everyone who has anything to do with our church in the lands of the former Soviet Union must also be especially sensitive to the tremendous personal hardships faced by our members. It isn't good enough to indoctrinate them with the beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Much greater emphasis must be placed upon the practical and relational consequences of actually living the Christian life in a chaotic society undergoing radical political, economic and social changes.

There is yet a better reason to place greater emphasis on church nurturing. The lack of a strong Russian professional ministerial corps provides the church with a marvelous opportunity not to repeat there the sad experience of so many churches in other parts of the world where the presence of a professionalized ministry has stifled individual initiative, commitment and involvement. Instead of simply aiming to train a group of several dozen Russian pastors at Zaoski Seminary, why not in addition proceed to equip thousands of lay members to be pastors to one another in small-group gatherings (following Paul's advice in 2 Tim 2:2), forming in each congregation a network of family-like "church cells" oriented to Bible study and prayer, and capable of ministering the grace of God in its many forms in all sorts of supporting ways, without having to rely constantly upon spiritual spoonfeeding and intervention from the ordained clergy and administrators? In this model, pastors are like orchestra conductors: they do not play all the instruments as well as lead the ensemble. Wouldn't it be exciting if our Russian believers could demonstrate to the rest of the Adventist world how to make this concept really work!


Church Growing

Once again, the indispensable task of growing the church locally, regionally and even nationally will succeed in the Commonwealth of Independent

States when nonclerical leadership becomes the primary medium through which the gospel is propagated. To this end, more opportunities must be provided for persons representing indigenous talent to become involved in every facet of the church's work, and especially its outreach. To cite but one example: it isn't good enough to publish Russian translations of articles written for American or European or Australian Adventist magazines. Such translated pieces, no matter how good, often fail to touch the Russian soul. What is needed are articles and books by Adventist Russian writers who see, feel and understand issues the "Russian way." Similarly, radio and TV programs must feature Russian speakers, with props and music that reflect authentic Russian tastes. Special efforts must be made to prepare and field Adventist Russian educators at all levels, business administrators, physicians, dentists and other health professionals. Lay members with professional expertise from western countries should be recruited to assist in the training of laity in Russia on a voluntary basis.

In addition, scholarship funds dedicated for Russian lay members should be established on most of our college and university campuses, in hospitals, at the Adventist Media Center in California, in conference offices and even the General Conference to enable Adventist Russians of promise to travel to North America, Western Europe, South America and elsewhere, to obtain new skills or perfect existing ones in order to be able to launch and administer with success their own outreach projects back home.

Conclusion

The emerging Adventist churches in the countries of the former Soviet Union are facing a period rich in opportunities, and we who belong to the body of Christ in the West, together with our fellow believers in Russia, are responsible to see that these opportunities are not bungled by a lack of integrated vision and planning. Every effort must be made to assist them, not in a haphazard or disorganized manner, but following a thoughtful plan that will help them and empower them in the task of church raising, and then beyond that, in the tasks of church planting, church nurturing and church growing. Let us allow them to learn from our successes as well as from our mistakes; allow them to develop a sense of involvement, ownership and responsibility for their own church affairs; and above all, allow them to develop their people resources to the maximum so that all their congregations will not become warehouses of underused Seventh-day Adventist Christians, but instead will be lively centers where members are involved in making church happen through worship, caring, serving and evangelizing, acting as "salt and leaven" for all of society. 

We who belong to the body of Christ are responsible to see that these opportunities are not bungled by a lack of integrated vision and planning.



Upper Columbia Conference

Operation BEARHUG

“**O**ur conference is not just building a church [in Russia], we’re building a whole network which includes health, evangelism, education, and nurture,” reports Jere Patzer, Upper Columbia Conference (UCC) president. The dream was born four years ago, when the conference was looking for a special project as part of the North Pacific Union Operation Bearhug initiative. Patzer envisioned a long-term commitment “to provide training through example leadership and help to develop a basic infrastructure.”

The first team of 17 volunteers went to Magadan, Russia, in 1991 to hold a short series of evangelistic, health, youth and family life meetings. As it turned out, the trip coincided with the historic coup d’etat that ended the presidency of Gorbachev and brought Yeltsin to power. Contacts with medical professionals were made, negotiations for obtaining land to build a church sanctuary began, and valuable relationships were established with city and regional officials. When this group returned to the U.S. they left the Russian pastor with a new Bible study group of 160 persons.

Since that time the UCC has been instrumental in assisting the Magadan church in the following ways:

Evangelism. Two full-scale public evangelistic efforts have been held, with nightly attendance from 800-1,000. These efforts have resulted in 427 baptisms, increasing the membership of the Magadan Church by almost 1,500 percent.

Church Building. The three-story, 400-seat sanctuary is 90 percent complete. It is located on Karl Marx Avenue in the cultural center of the city, with a library and museum across the street. The only other church in the entire city is a Russian

Orthodox chapel. The basic plans were produced by Russian architects, and Russian laborers have worked side by side with American volunteers during most phases of construction.

Literature. During the month of July 1993 we led out in a massive distribution of 50,000 Russian-language copies of *The Desire of Ages* to every home and apartment in the city of Magadan. Teams of Russian and American volunteers spent 12 hours per day walking up and down apartment building stairwells, delivering in person the 40 tons of books. The church received in excess of 3,000 response cards requesting Bibles and study guides.

Medical Supplies. Dr. Glyn Marsh of Clarkston, Washington, has coordinated the collection and distribution of over a million dollars worth of donated medications and medical supplies for hospitals and other medical facilities in Magadan.

English Language School. The year 1992 marked the beginning of an English language school, with a staff of four teachers under the direction of Mr. and Mrs. Greg Bratcher. The initial response to the school was overwhelming, with more than 500 applicants. The school continues to operate under the leadership of Richard Bennett.

Health Expo. During the Grand Opening Week of the new church a health expo was conducted in the newly completed fellowship room of the church. The expo provided demonstrations and screening tests, and presented the eight natural remedies through attractive displays. More than 2,500 people visited the Health Expo. Both Magadan television stations sent crews to cover the event, and reporters from several newspapers and radio stations also gave favorable coverage. The mayor of Magadan, as well as the director of health for the region, visited the

Max C. Torkelsen II



Max Torkelsen II is health and communications director for Upper Columbia Conference, in the Northwest. Since visiting the former USSR in 1993, he urges that though evangelistic efforts may bring many baptisms, we need to concentrate more on long-term efforts to institute self-sustaining churches.

exhibits and expressed appreciation "for a church interested in the health and well-being of all their citizens and not just interested in baptizing converts."

Pathfinders. The Wayne Hicks family spent five weeks in Magadan conducting a Pathfinder training program. As a result of their efforts a strong club of about 40 members has been organized. These young people are providing the core leadership, not only for the Pathfinder Club, but also for other aspects of the church program as well.

Volunteers. Over 250 volunteers from Upper Columbia Conference and some sister conferences have donated varying amounts of time to actually work on the project.

Children's Ministry. Each summer an active children's ministry has been conducted. Leadership has included Sue Patzer, Linnea Torkelsen, Cheryl Wagner, and Rhonda Backman. As interest and awareness grew, as many as 1,000 lively kids attended every day.

Retention. Endeavors have been made to ensure successful retention of new members by training leaders for an ongoing small-group ministry. The commitment of UCC to Operation Bearhug is for the long term, and as needs continue to become apparent, attempts will be made to respond.

Individuals. Several individuals with urgent medical problems or educational needs have been recipients of humanitarian efforts on their behalf. Katia Platonova had life-saving heart surgery at

Endeavors have been made to ensure successful retention of new members by training leaders for an ongoing small-group ministry.

Spokane's Sacred Heart hospital. Zina Koloskova had corrective surgery for a life-threatening scoliosis problem. Irina Statsuk completed the school year at Upper Columbia Academy last year and will be attending the Adventist seminary at Zaoski. Two additional individuals have recently arrived for treatment. All these efforts have been coordinated and funded by UCC members.

Ted Lutts, UCC treasurer, reports that over \$1,021,000 has been invested in the project, excluding transportation costs of volunteers. Some predicted that with all the attention on Magadan, the home church would experience a decline in local giving. On the contrary, Upper Columbia Conference has led the North Pacific Union in tithe increase (9.7 percent during 1992) and also had the highest per capita Sabbath School missions giving in the United States (\$11.18 World Mission Fund per capita, second quarter, 1993). This evidence illustrates Ellen White's statement about the "reflex influence:"

To show a liberal, self-denying spirit for the success of foreign missions is a sure way to advance home missionary work; for the prosperity of the home work depends largely, under God, upon the reflex influence of the evangelical work done in countries afar off. (*Gospel Workers*, page 465)

"If the extent of the project had been anticipated in the initial phase of planning we would have hesitated to proceed," admits Patzer. "However, as the scope of the project has grown, our faith and commitment have increased in proportion." 

Religious World View in Post-Soviet Societies

There are not many professing atheists left in Eastern Europe, according to 1993 data developed by Roger Russell Research in the UK. More people claim a religious world view than a Marxist or atheistic one. The Bible is viewed with a fair degree of favor, and there is a fairly high degree of familiarity with the basic stories of creation, David, and the birth of Jesus. The following table summarizes some of the results.

	CZECH REPUBLIC	SLOVAKIA	HUNGARY	POLAND	EUROPEAN RUSSIA	UKRAINE
Orthodox	< 0.5%	2%	< 0.5%	< 0.5%	66%	60%
Catholic	42%	64%	66%	96%	< 0.5%	4%
Protestant	8%	13%	23%	< 0.5%	< 0.5%	1%
Muslim	0%	0%	0%	0%	5%	< 0.5%
No religion	49%	20%	8%	2%	17%	16%
My world view is:						
Religious	33%	54%	50%	80%	20%	22%
Marxist/Atheist	14%	11%	3%	< 0.5%	19%	17%
Favorable to Bible	34%	47%	46%	68%	56%	64%
Have a Bible or New Testament in the home	33%	48%	60%	57%	34%	54%
I read it occasionally	18%	25%	40%	39%	25%	41%

Note: Figures as reported. Do not necessarily add to 100%.

Taken from *Religious and Social Attitudes and the Book Market, Central and Eastern Europe, 1991-1993*. Swindon, UK, Roger Russell Research, 1993.

The Loaf and the Wrapping

In this issue we celebrate the success of the Adventist church in conducting evangelistic meetings and other forms of outreach to the spiritual and material needs of Russia. The territory occupied by the former USSR was truly huge—more than double the size of the United States. It stretched across stupendous distances. From London to Moscow is about 1500 miles; from Moscow to Magadan, near the Pacific Ocean, is more than 3500 miles. Magadan, described in the article by Max Torkelsen, is almost as close to Seattle as to Moscow. The area has great diversity in cultures, languages, physical types, and traditions. The high rate of inflation and other disruptions following the breakup put many of its people in hunger and want.

Several American churches, including the Adventists, sent in relief supplies to help the needy and also evangelists to bring the good news of the gospel. Vast crowds gathered to hear the new evangelists. Baptisms were counted in the thousands.

The initial blush has worn off the evangelistic campaigns, however. Some American critics, as Albina Tomenko observes in her article, say we should turn over the evangelizing to local Russian preachers—after all, the country has a long history of Christianity. She disagrees with this thinking, but points out that Adventists ought to consider carefully what teachings they bring to Russia.

The Russian situation challenges the Adventist church to consider what its message really is. What do we really communicate? Muscovites must have marveled that satellite transmission allowed them to interact with church members in America. They knew and appreciated the

vast quantities of food and medicine the Americans had sent, not to mention Bibles and other rewards for church attendance. But how much of what they have seen and heard do they interpret as the marvelous cunning and wealth of the American genius? And to what extent does the evangelistic message really fit their needs?

A thoughtful writer in one missionized country said, "Before the bread of life (the Christian faith) came to our part of [the world], it stayed in Europe for over a thousand years. There the Europeans added a plastic bag (their own customs) to the bread. And when they came to us, they fed us the bag along with the bread.

The Russian situation challenges the Adventist church to consider what its message really is.

Now, the plastic bag is making us sick! The plastic is theirs. We know that God planned for us to receive the bread just as he planned for them to receive it. We can remove the plastic, and enjoy the bread."

Although Americans also received their "bread of life" from Europe, they have added wrappings of their own. Adventists have a unique message—by the grace of Jesus, humankind can be restored to harmony with God's purpose. This can be good news to people with fragmented lives or who have no one to turn to. Unfortunately, some missionaries have tried primarily to convince people

to accept some brand of liturgy or dress style or doctrinal creed.

Bruce Bradshaw writes in his book *Bridging the Gap* about the need for helping people understand the gospel within their own cultural framework. He tells of a village where a medical mission operated a "child survival" clinic, hoping to reduce the high infant mortality rate. The villagers seemed indifferent to the dying babies, and the medical missionaries wondered why. Finally someone asked a villager, who said flatly that the program was a waste of money. The people all knew that dead babies went to heaven to assure God's favor for their parents. They couldn't see why anyone would want to interfere.

The missionaries had been missing a chance to fit the gospel into the belief system of the village. Once they discovered what the people actually believed, they could point the people to God's baby Jesus, who had grown up and gone to heaven to serve as the great Mediator for all humankind.

As we Adventists continue to respond to calls for help from Russia and elsewhere,

we must remember to look at the bread and the American packaging. We should learn to ask ourselves why we promote some ideas, and why other people should adopt them. What are our motives in what we teach and practice; what cultural values and behaviors are merely the wrapping on the bread? And how can we help people find in their own way how to cooperate with God in restoring wholeness to humankind? If meeting the challenge of overseas evangelism can lead us to such self-examination we will come closer to realizing our potential as a church.

—James H. Stirling

MISSION or MISSIONS?

An Interview with **Gary Patterson**

James Walters for *Aventist Today*: The church has done well in developing worlds in terms of mission. Why is there a need for the new office of mission awareness at this time?

Patterson: There was a concern expressed at the 1993 Annual Council in India that the sense of mission was waning from the days of such luminaries as the Halliwells, when everyone seemed to have a unifying vision of mission. So it was suggested that mission promotion be moved out of the departmental structure of church ministries or Sabbath school and placed at the officer level, to give it more impact.

So, have you just described your job as an effort to revitalize the view of missions to go back to the old days?

Well, not necessarily to get back to the old days; we can't go back to the old days. Maybe to find something comparable in the new days that will again give us the kind of vision and commitment to mission that we had then. But we can't go back; we have to find new ways to do things.

Will your work be primarily in the developing world where 85 percent of Adventists now reside, or in countries like U.S.A. and Australia?

We have basically donor sections of the world and recipient sections. We need to find the stories of need in the developing worlds to share with the donor sections, but we also need to revitalize the sense of mission in the donor divisions. We can't be content in North America with the "pray and pay" concept.

So, from what you say, I gather that many church leaders saw this position primarily in terms of a need that has come because of flagging, diminishing giving patterns on the part of the North Americans.

Not just North Americans, although a lion's share of the support comes from North America; but there are other donor areas as well. It is more than just the money, it is also the commitment to mission; and we are talking here about commitment to mission, not commitment to missions.

As the General Conference "mission" person, how do you define Adventist mission for the coming new century?

World mission awareness takes in "global mission" and Adventist Development and Relief Agency, Adventist World Radio, and Sabbath school offering projects. But the mission, as far as we are concerned, is pressing back the forces of evil and establishing the kingdom of God on the earth. That sounds rather broad, but to me that's what Christian mission is all about.

Well, how broadly should Adventist mission be defined? Should the local Adventist construction worker see himself as part of Adventist mission?

Adventist mission is available to us in everything we do. Divine appointments for mission are around us in our daily contacts and work. You don't have to go to some exotic place to do mission. When we think only in terms of institutionalized missions, we limit the possibilities that are available to us in the broader concept of the mission of pushing back the forces of evil and establishing the kingdom of God.

Recently a coalition of leading Protestant evangelicals and Roman Catholics criticized the practice of "proselytizing" for converts. How do you react to our traditional Adventist emphasis on proselytizing to gain accessions to the church?

It seems rather foolish to put a negative definition on proselytizing, and maybe we have to use some other word. When we set about to accomplish the task of pressing back the forces of evil and establishing the kingdom of God, the people who respond to his call become the church. That is basic, classic New Testament theology.

Several years ago at a G.C. session a Christian reporter listened to our meetings and said, "It sounds to me as if you Adventists are saying that until Adventism is preached throughout the earth the Gospel has not gone to the world."

We have gotten carried away into that type of thinking at times. Sure, we have focused narrowly and have

We can't be content in North America with the "pray and pay" concept.



Gary Patterson has served as an Adventist conference president and college church pastor. Recently, he was appointed Director of Mission Awareness, a new General Conference post.

seen the work of God advancing only as it advances through our 27 fundamental beliefs. But this is no different from others who have an irreducible evangelical nub of ideas necessary for salvation. That is why I prefer the mission statement that says, "Pressing back the forces of evil and establishing the kingdom of God."

But your mission slogan sounds so untraditionally Adventist.

Perhaps it is, but it is the traditional Matthew 25 emphasis. When the Lord returns he does not ask who had the doctrine straight or the 27 fundamental beliefs. He says, "When I was hungry you gave me something to eat, when I was thirsty you gave me a drink, when I had no clothes you clothed me." It is rather curious to some of us that the approbation the Father gives at the second coming is to those who have extended Christian love and kindness to everyone.

Your emphasis will make some Adventists feel good about joining other Christians—and those who aren't particularly Christian—in making this world a better place.

I would hope it would.

But what about the way many Adventists have been conditioned to feel that unless we are doing something that is uniquely and strangely Adventist we are failing?

It does not exclude doing the things that are uniquely Adventist; it just does not require that we do only those things.

Your perspective seems to be quite essentially New Testament, with Jesus doing more healing than preaching, Jesus not feeling guilty that not all of the lepers should avail themselves of everything he could give them. Jesus was happy to do good as he could.

It seems to me that we compromise our doing of good when we always do it for an ulterior motive and that becomes apparent.

An ulterior motive could be gaining converts to the church.

Yes, well, you know that the ultimate ulterior motive is to get people to merely agree to the cognitive content of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and become members. If that is the only reason we ever do anything good, then we have compromised our doing of good. Now, having said that, I am not obviating the New Testament principle that those who hear and respond to the call of God become the church community. I just am not willing to let people make it an either/or. I am adamantly insisting that it is both/and.

I *It does not exclude doing the things that are uniquely Adventist; it just does not require that we do only those things.*

1844 Revisionists Not New:

President Indicts the Church's Scholars

On October 22, Robert Folkenberg, Adventist church president, indicted "loyal Seventh-day Adventists" who are in reality "the devil's minions" because they seek to revise traditional Sanctuary and 1844 beliefs, but do not "have the integrity to admit" that "they are not [genuine] Seventh-day Adventists." He thus invites doctrinal autopsies of many loyal Adventists over the past half century who would need to plead guilty if judged on this criterion.

W. W. Prescott served the church as editor, college Bible teacher and president, and General Conference administrator for 52 years, from 1885 to 1937. He was respected by his brethren in the General Conference—among whom he spent his last years of service—in spite of his open belief in a position Folkenberg denounces.

Adventist college Bible teachers in North America unanimously responded to a 1958 questionnaire acknowledging that there is no valid linguistic or contextual basis for the tradi-

tional interpretation of Daniel 8:14. These 27 teachers included every college Bible department head and everyone able to read the Bible in Hebrew.

Bible scholars and 15 administrators were appointed by the General Conference to the Committee on Problems in the Book of Daniel as a result of the 1958 questionnaire, to study the very problems Elder Folkenberg mentions. After five years of intense study, the committee acknowledged that it was unable to resolve any of the problems.

Of 40 responses by Adventist college Bible teachers in North America and overseas to a comprehensive 1980 pre-Glacier View questionnaire on all aspects of the interpretation of Daniel 8:14, there were 32 who replied that, when written, this passage applied either primarily or exclusively to ancient Israel under the old covenant, and 29 applied it to 1844 only in a secondary sense, or not at all, or as one of multiple possible fulfillments; 27 replied that the

sanctuary of Daniel 8:14 was the ancient temple in Jerusalem, and 25 that Christ entered upon his ministry in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary at the time of his Ascension.

Replies of the 115 top-echelon administrators and Bible scholars of the Sanctuary Review Committee to the two questionnaires at Glacier View revealed that 39 took at least some exception to Article 23 of the 27 Fundamental Beliefs ("Christ's Ministry in the Heavenly Sanctuary"), and some took major exception.

The Consensus Statement voted at Glacier View acknowledged (1) the validity of five major points in Desmond Ford's position on Daniel 8:14, and (2) the fact that two others were in need of further study.

The 17 Adventist Bible scholars who signed the Atlanta Affirmation in 1981 did so with the conviction that the Glacier View conference of the Sanctuary Review Committee did not give a fair hearing to Ford's objections to the traditional interpretation of Daniel 8:14.

Was it Folkenberg's intention to classify all of these persons as "the devil's minions" who lack "the integrity to admit" that "they are not [genuine] Seventh-day Adventists"?

—Raymond Cottrell

WHAT IS HAPPENING TO

TITHING

Albert Dittes



Albert Dittes is a newspaper reporter and journalism teacher. Raised and schooled in the Adventist church, he began tithing when he got his first job. He is shocked at the fall-off in tithing. He believes in tithing and also in holding church leaders accountable.

While the record shows North American Division (NAD) Seventh-day Adventists gave \$454,792,768 in tithe in 1993, the same report indicates many church members are not giving, with serious implications for the denominational program. The Southern California Conference tithe-per-capita (or tithe per member) is lower than that of the Mountain View Conference (West Virginia). The 131st Annual Statistical Report for 1993, published by the General Conference Department of Archives and Statistics, lists the Southern California Conference at \$462.51 (down from \$475.28 in 1992), and Mountain View at \$596.07. The average for the entire NAD--\$580.50--is lower than that of the Mountain View Conference. Two other California conferences are also below average: Southeastern--\$530.27--and Central \$578.28. The Northern California Conference--\$673.82--is above average.

The regional conferences, with large memberships, have low tithe-per-capitas. Even the wealthiest black conference--Allegheny East in the Columbia Union--has \$554.13, lower than the NAD average of \$580.50.

Bjarne Christensen, president of Southern California Conference, says that area is just not wealthy any more. "The giving base is not here now," he says. "Los Angeles has been in a recession the past two or three years. Defense cuts have greatly impacted our area." Christensen considers his people faithful tithers with low incomes. He says 30 percent of his constituency is Hispanic. "Some minority people are more faithful in their tithe giving than the white members," he says.

Christensen's constituents gave a .10 percent tithe increase at the end of 1993 over 1992, while a 4 or 5 percent increase is needed to keep pace with inflation. Ohio Conference president Edward Motschiedler says tithe there has increased at 1 percent annually for the past 10-15 years, really not enough. He says, "We had to cut our church ministries staff and eliminate some assistant pastor positions." The Ohio Conference tithe-per-capita for 1993, \$615.77, while above the NAD average, is lower than that of neighboring Pennsylvania--\$717.03--a less wealthy conference whose western half is mostly Appalachian.

To be sure, some conferences have healthy tithe-per-capitas. Bermuda registers highest in the NAD, with \$965.65. Georgia-Cumberland has the highest on the

mainland, \$832.51 for 1993. Other conferences over the \$800 figure for 1993 are Carolina (\$824.44) and Chesapeake (\$825.07).

William Geary, president of the Georgia-Cumberland Conference, attributes the impressive tithe showing there, as well as in Carolina, to its many retired conference workers. "Some of them pay a double tithe," he says. "Our retired workers, some of whom have been overseas, know the mission of the church and tend to be good givers." Geary says his conference has a 4 to 5 percent tithe increase each year, with their lowest being a 3.5 percent gain during a recession.

The NAD had a 1.7 percent tithe increase by the end of 1993, according to treasurer George Crumley. "Last year's increase was the lowest in the past several years," he says. "We had had over 4 percent increases the two years before that. The 1994 over 1993 tithe increase amounted to 1.75 percent."

Crumley says economic recessions have come and gone from other parts of the country with varying effect, but nothing has hit the North American Division like the low tithing in the Pacific Union, which accounts for 25 percent of NAD's total. "Southern California used to be our highest tithe-per-capita conference," he says. "The government's closing down so many bases there hit middle-management people hard," he comments, indicating some of these are the best tithe payers. "As a result, we aided Southern California with a \$400,000 subsidy in 1993. No conference has replaced it as a big tithe giver." The result has directly affected Loma Linda University and the overseas mission program. "We give minor increases to Loma Linda each year," Crumley says. "But their wants are greater than what we can appropriate." Crumley says the General Conference has cut the overseas staff to about 1,000 workers, half of what it used to be.

So a look at the tithe figures does raise many questions. Are poor and high-income people giving? Are the regional conferences baptizing large numbers of non-tithers? Has the church recovered from Davenport?

Ohio Conference President Edward Motschiedler says surveys done in the Columbia Union show tithing through the traditional channels has not caught on among the younger generation. "Newer members are not giving in the same patterns as the older," he says. "The baby busters sup-

port the tithe fund even less than the baby boomers. They would rather give to local projects than to the national or worldwide work." As an example, he cites the conference paying 40 percent of church school teachers' salaries from the tithe fund. Many people feel they can do the same and just keep their tithe dollars at home. Randomly selected Southeastern California pastors suggested possible causes of reduced tithing: low income in a depressed economy and questions about church policy and structure. Severe cut-backs in employment and defense have apparently hit Orange County, California, hard, according to Ralph Smith, head elder of the Garden Grove Church. "But I think we have a positive attitude. I feel our people are basically supporting the conference, but our unemployment has increased."

Another church elder, asking not to be named, feels the changing social mix of the church has had a lot to do with changing tithe-giving ways. As an example, he suggests that some people apparently held back their tithe as a result of the church voting not to ordain women. Other minority groups have gone after special privileges. "The result has been fruit basket upset," he says. "As more come in, they will want their own church, their own conference. Some of the high-income people are not happy with the money going to minorities. They can't see the traditions of the church carried forward. For example, one minority pastor took a group of young people to the conference youth camp and wanted to play basketball on Sabbath afternoon."

Lyndon Gorle, pastor of the 900-member Garden Grove church, says tithe there is up 22 percent over last year, but several factors have hurt the system at large. Defense cut-backs have affected contractors like Hughes, Northrup and McDonnell-Douglas and the Adventist engineers who worked for them. "Our people over here are faithful, but a lot of people are out of work," he states. "Some of our most faithful families moved east in search of jobs." The main sentiment, he feels, is dissatisfaction with the Adventist church structure. "Many are tired of church hierarchy and don't feel it is an efficient organization," Gorle says. "They don't feel the church is as responsible in trimming down as it should be. For example, why do we have union conferences? This has led to some giving 50 percent of their tithe income to the conference and the other half to special projects nearby such as inner city ministry. "We live in a competitive religious market here," he says. "Trend-setting churches like the Crystal Cathedral and Calvary Chapel have very effective ministries. Some of our singles go there on Sunday. Also, our Christian education program is taking a bite out of the tithe dollar. As our enrollment and conference subsidies have declined, tuition has risen. That has led to pressure to keep tithe dollars at home. More of our people don't give the traditional way. They don't care if somebody said this is the way to do it."

Gorle also says some of his younger families tend to give to the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) because it doesn't have so much overhead. And

the minorities tithe regularly, especially the Americanized, second-generation people with regular incomes.

"People nowadays are more excited about ministry than pipe organs and stained-glass windows," Gorle says. "So they can find places to put their money."

"We just don't have any high-income people here," says Marvin Fehrenbach, elder of the El Centro Church. "I know of nobody sending tithe to other organizations. I never hear about Davenport anymore but wouldn't say the people have full confidence in the church." Some tithe goes to independent ministries. Two independent Adventist ministers confirm that tithe dollars support their organizations. "People do send their tithe to us, and we use it to do the work of the gospel," says John Grosboll, director of Steps to Life in Wichita, Kans. "We are a ministry like It Is Written, Voice of Prophecy and Quiet Hour. Our supporters indicate their tithe dollars, and we use it to support ministers and Bible workers."

Grosboll would not say how much tithe he receives per year but said Steps to Life operates a radio and television ministry as well as a Bible correspondence school in the United States and overseas. Much of his work is to help develop overseas home churches. "We don't tell people where to send their tithe," he says. "They send it to us on their own free will."

Independent Television evangelist John Osborne, based in Mt. Dora, Florida, 20 miles north of Orlando, says he receives tithe dollars from an 11,000-member base of conservative-element Seventh-day Adventists. "The people say they give their tithe to us instead of the conference," Osborne says. His corporate headquarters in Mt. Dora employs 45 people in a new \$775,000 building. Nearby is a 12-grade school with eight teachers and 70 students and a 700-seat church under construction to be complete by mid-1995. His organization just purchased a \$5 million short-wave radio station in Scotts Corner, Maine, which he claims to be five times as powerful as the Guam-based Adventist World Radio and capable of reaching half the population of the world. He plans to hire 20 people there. New call letters will be WVHA, standing for "World Voice of Historic Adventism." Osborne's television ministry includes a paid-for \$950,000 TV production truck and another \$350,000 satellite uplink truck.

"We are totally supported by Seventh-day Adventists dissatisfied with the conference," Osborne says. "There is no way the conference will finish the work. They have abandoned preaching the three angels' and Elijah messages. Their standards are trailing in the dust. The conference has cut off the backbone conservative element of Seventh-day Adventists. The liberals certainly won't give much financial support."

These figures all show that the North American Division needs revival and reform—probably as much in the way conference administrations spend their tithe revenues as in the ways rank and file church members conduct their lives.

Tithing through
the traditional
channels has not
caught on among
the younger
generation.

Theology of the SANCTUARY

A Response to Roy Gane

I am surprised by Roy Gane's response to my article entitled "Sanctuary in the Year 2000" in the last issue of *Adventist Today*. My article is undoubtedly hard to follow, as Gane says, if one reads it in terms of traditional Adventist explanations of time prophecy. Actually, I have high regard for Adventist time prophecies. The Seventh-day Adventist Church would not exist today had our pioneers not used such prophetic interpretations. But Adventists have always understood that the Jewish sanctuary service represented more than a time chart of the end. It represents the multifold glories of Christ. In my article I seek simply to draw attention to the spiritual and moral implications of the sanctuary doctrine for today.

In my thesis that 1844 represents a prophetic fulfillment of a pattern of presence/defilement/restoration, I can only plead that I was following the lead of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Habakkuk, Matthew, Luke, and John the Revelator. All interpreted their own history in light of the simple covenant described in Leviticus, which says that the sanctuary was established as the spiritual center of God's presence in Israel, that sin defiles this covenant, and yet even when we sin, God stands ever ready to restore his relationship with his people. (See Jeremiah 7-9, Ezekiel 8-11, 34-43, Daniel 9, Habakkuk 3, Matthew 21, 23, Acts 7, and Revelation 21,22.)

Interestingly, Ellen White herself understood the experience of God's people in 1844 as fulfilling another page in this long drama of salvation history. While Ellen White in the *Great Controversy* repeats the theological arguments of the pioneers in defense of the date 1844, her own emphasis lies elsewhere.

For her, "The message, Behold the Bridegroom cometh! was not so much a matter of argument, though the Scripture

Glen Greenwalt

Glen Greenwalt teaches theology at Walla Walla College. He recently presented a paper on sanctuary at a meeting in Switzerland and also contributed a chapter to the book *Why I Believe in a Creator*.

proof was clear and conclusive." Rather, "there went with it an impelling power that moved the soul." (See *Great Controversy* p. 402.) For Ellen White, the evidence that confirmed the movement was of God was the fact that "it bore the characteristics that mark the work of God in every age..." (See *Great Controversy* p. 400.)

Not only does Ellen White locate her discussion of 1844 and the meaning of the sanctuary in the context of God's work of restoration in every age, but she explicitly states that "The history of ancient Israel is a striking illustration of the past experience of the Advent body..."


If all who had labored unitedly in the work in 1844 had received the third angel's message and proclaimed it in the power of the Holy Spirit, the Lord would have wrought mightily with their efforts. A flood of light would have been shed upon the world. Years ago the inhabitants of the earth would have been warned, the closing work completed, and Christ would have come for the redemption of his people. (*Great Controversy* p. 458)

And what is the work of restoration God calls us to? It is a work that stands in contrast to those who "trust to their

creeds, theories, and theological systems" (*Great Controversy* p. 456). It is a work set apart from those who persist in the error of fixing dates, for "those who persist in this error will at last fix upon a date too far in the future for the coming of Christ." (*Great Controversy* p. 457). It is a work that differs as night from day from those who "act from policy rather than principle in religious things" (*Great Controversy* p. 460). It is simply and explicitly the work of spiritual and moral renewal.

If he restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, confess his sins, and love God and his fellow men, the sinner may be sure that he has found peace with God. Such were the effects that in former years followed seasons of religious awakening. Judged by their fruits, they were known to be blessed of God in the salvation of men and the uplifting of humanity. (*Great Controversy* p. 463)

Gane says that "Greenwalt's superficial biblical interpretations appear designed to serve a sociological agenda to redefine Adventism." I wish to point out, however, that my article presents theology as Ellen White conceived it. For Ellen White, Christ's work in the heavenly sanctuary is inseparable from its effects on earth. Separating Christ's work in the heavenly sanctuary from his work on earth, Gane rejects the pastoral concerns of my article as representing a sociological agenda. His attitude is alarming, especially as it indicates a growing trend in Adventism.

I must admit that I am shocked when a concern for people in their everyday hurts and anxieties is termed superficial or unbiblical. Gane claims I am turning Adventism on its head by drawing attention to the fact that God's grace stands ever ready to restore hurting and disappointed people. Then so be it. I would call it keeping Adventism on its feet. 

QUALITY AND FREEDOM

I highly appreciate the contents of *Adventist Today*. First, because of the quality of the articles. Second, because we can read articles written with freedom of expression.

George Tichy
Riverside, CA

Each edition of *Adventist Today* has been a real help to me in my experience. My wish is that the issues that are being discussed would have appeared earlier in my walk with Christ. I appreciate the frankness and honesty in the approach of problems that have long caused me to rethink my faith.

Enclosed is a check, and with it a prayer that God will continue to bless your ministry.

George W. Renton
Berrien Springs, Michigan

THANKSDOING OPTIMISM

I very much appreciate your publishing pictures of the authors of the articles in your journal. I was interested to see what a self-proclaimed pessimist looked like, but Bonnie Casey didn't have the thin-lipped face of one resigned to the suffering of outrageous fortune that I expected. Drawing valid conclusions from a photograph of a person's face is probably not a science.

Her essay "ThanksDoing" fit my feelings so well I wanted to write (do something) to say, "Thank you." Because I believe, as she does, that what we do can influence what we think and who we become.

I like her underlying sense of humor, but it shows her to be an optimist rather than a pessimist. She seems to be writing satire, which is the humor of an angry optimist. She believes that the evil she exposes and makes fun of can be abolished, whereas if she were writing comedy she would be a good-natured pessimist believing that all we can do is laugh at the evils that beset us and generously tolerate them because they cannot be changed. W.H. Alden said, "The goal of satire is reform, the goal of comedy is acceptance."

However, the above is a mere quibble. I enjoyed what she wrote and how she wrote it. For me it falls in the category of: "Often thought but ne'er so well expressed."

Lynn R. Heath
Loma Linda, California

KNOWLEDGE FOR DECISIONS

I subscribe to *Adventist Today* because I am interested in issues, and because I am interested in what the liberal critics are saying, just as I am interested in what the conservative critics are promoting.

After following *Adventist Today* from its very beginning I detect some strong biases on your part. A case in point is a statement in your letter. I quote, "Next year we would like to have an editor attending the General Conference Session to guarantee you an unbiased report of the proceedings in a special seventh issue at AT." This reveals a mistrust of the *Review* and other denominational media. Why should I trust your reporter more than the others? The fact is that after reading each issue of *Adventist Today* from cover to cover, I have good reason to mistrust the direction you are taking.

Alvin M. Bartlett
La Junta, Colorado

We appreciate your work with *Adventist Today*. God is open. He is particularly so in the Old Testament. I was reared in an atmosphere of "Don't say nuthin because there are young people here," or "Don't say nuthin because there are new members here." So I believe in making decisions with full knowledge.

God bless you in your work with *Adventist Today*.

Albert C. Koppel
New Market, Virginia

MAGAZINE IS HELPFUL

I was happy to read your "Faith and Reason: Two Eyes" in the September/October, 1994 issue of *Adventist Today*.

The Cottrell style harked back to your days with *The Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald* and the *SDA Bible Commentary* with your clear, incisive, analytical coverage.

I enjoyed the development in your line of reasoning, as well as your conclusions.

Thomas Geraty
Angwin, CA

I have enjoyed your series on creationism. There is much to be learned here, much that I imagine some do not want to learn about it!

I enjoy your magazine, God bless and press on regardless!

Robert Forman
Monmouth, Illinois

Your magazine is highly valued and read with interest. I feel it is filling a need in the Adventist community.

Arthur L. Hands
Silverton, Oregon

PRESS TOGETHER

Regarding your recent flap with the president of the GC—the details of what was said at the Loma Linda meeting and "what I said and what he said"

are a bit fuzzy to me. At the time I read the report in *Adventist Today*, I felt there was a gray area, an area open to misunderstandings on both sides. This matter is beyond my expertise to offer any positive suggestions. However, it is my hope and prayer that all concerned may see this matter in its proper perspective. I feel that the realization of our blessed hope is imminent and that we should all press together.

Erwin Hodde
Greenville, Tennessee

GOOD NEWS AUTHOR RESPONDS

In reading Lloyd Rosenvold's letter to the editor (November/December 1994) in response to my article "Bad News, Good News" (September/October 1994), I find several glaring misperceptions that need immediate correction.

First, Rosenvold concludes that when I "steamed up car windows" with my boyfriend at age 16, we must have "gone all the way" into "fornication." This is neither true nor was it implied. This incident was illustrative not of immoral behavior, but of my unhealthy inability to say "no" to undesired physical involvement.

Second, Rosenvold implies that therapy brought back my memories of childhood sexual abuse. The article clearly states that this awareness came from my own clear memories (not "hidden memories" that a psychiatrist managed to "dig up") combined with information given by family members.

Third, Rosenvold calls such memories "supposed forgotten molestation in infancy," "just something that maybe a dirty old man did to her when she was 5." This is an insensitive and spiteful derision of what in my case, and many others, was very real and verifiable abuse. As my intent was not to focus on the abuse but rather the healing, I did and will spare your readers the details.

Last, Rosenvold implies that knowledge of one's abuse leads to irresponsibility, that abuse victims believe their inappropriate actions are "not their own fault at all" and use an "elusive lost memory" to "place blame for . . . adult sins." The truth is quite the opposite. The article states clearly that "I blamed myself for [the problems I experienced.]"

I agree heartily with Rosenvold that "Christ is the only answer to problems" such as I experienced. I believe firmly that it was He who guided me to the truth about my past and He who has brought about powerful and miraculous healing in my present life. Ultimately, it is always the Truth who sets us free.

Cheri Lynn Gregory
Southern California

Letters to the Editor

Adventist Today, P.O. Box 1220
Loma Linda, CA 92354-1220

New Perspectives on "A New Noel"

Virginia-Gene Shankel Rittenhouse

When Andrews University was invited for the first time on national television for a Christmas Eve service, I was pleased. Having heard wonderful sermons and fine organ music there on numerous occasions, I looked forward to a top-quality performance.

The opening and closing portions of the program provided some very effective moments including the University Singers, the children's choir and the speech choir—all well-trained. But the main body of the presentation created an overall impression which, in my opinion, did not represent Andrews University at its best nor the Seventh-day Adventist world church.

A distinct lack of unity and coherence rendered the whole production unprofessional. Apparently in an attempt to "be all things to all men," there ensued such a bewildering diversity of styles that the program lost continuity and direction. The melancholy ballad (verse upon verse) so reminiscent of the 1960's was followed by the breathy gospel-style of singing. Then came a rather undistinguished arrangement of "Go Tell It on the Mountain" which certainly did not show the choir at its best—and, with the accompanying clapping seemed out of place in the Christmas setting. All of this interspersed with vague fragments of carols.

The spoken word sections suffered similarly. An over-long children's story was followed by the experiences of the three young couples. This feature would have been quite appropriate in an evangelistic meeting but hardly had a place in a once-in-a-lifetime Christmas special. I have understood the speaker to be a celebrated minister. In this instance, however, he came across in the somewhat breezy per-



Virginia-Gene Shankel Rittenhouse, performer, conductor, and composer, holds a doctorate in musical arts from Peabody Conservatory, plus numerous international awards and honors. She has conducted the New England Youth Ensemble since 1972 on tours throughout the U.S. and the world.

sonality of a TV evangelist, even though the basic concept of the sermon was good. The atmosphere of the children's story ("He done it for love") carried over uncomfortably into the adult sermon. The pastor's failure to make eye-contact with his TV audience was also disturbing.

Moreover, the logistics of the staging did not bespeak excellence. The whole altar-area was dominated by what appeared to be orange-colored bunting which clashed stridently with the red carpet and poinsettias. Also, the haphazardly scattered folding chairs around the speaker became distracting.

I have encountered a number of unfavorable reactions to "A New Noel," some even stronger than my own. One non-Adventist viewer remarked, "Well, your church certainly will not be asked to be on national television again." This confirmed my own fears and regrets. We have, in my opinion, lost a great threefold opportunity. First, coming from a university campus, the program should have created an image of dignity, devotion and high-level achievement for the Church. Second, a gripping message on the true meaning of the Incarnation with a striking focus on the Second Coming could have touched upon the core of the Adventist witness to the world. And finally, the program should have reflected the many beautiful Christmas services being held in our leading churches all over the country—services featuring the inspiring

heritage of Christmas music from the great masters presented in artistically decorated settings.

Therefore, I maintain, "A New Noel" was not a typical Adventist Christmas service, 1994. It came off trying to "say everthing" to everyone in one hour rather than striving for an ideal. The result has been a kind of intellectual and spiritual indigestion.

Note from the editors: According to Skip MacCarty, pastor, Pioneer Memorial Church, \$114,000 was paid to produce "A New Noel": \$68,000 for production, \$35,000 for TV Guide advertising, and \$11,000 to the National Council of Churches. Pioneer Memorial contributed \$15,000, and the rest came from the North American Division and its union conferences. Immediately after the "New Noel" telecast, the SDAnet newsgroup revealed many Adventists who were delighted with the program, but we thought our readers would also like to read a thoughtful evaluation from one of our leading music directors.

Adventist Today Readers Respond to Survey

Dean Kinsey

Last fall a significant event occurred: *Adventist Today* inaugurated a phonathon and a survey. Subscribers who had renewed at least once were targeted to participate in the phonathon/survey, and nearly half of them responded. In a sense there were two separate events. More than 150 subscribers asked not to be contacted by phone but responded to the survey. Nearly 900 responded to the survey over the phone and talked with the Loma Linda University students who called.

The survey was not designed to provide scientific data regarding the subscribers' views about the journal. It was an attempt to provide dialogue that will be helpful to the editorial committee as they plan for future issues. The questions were open ended, giving the respondent considerable latitude.

One question asked what the readers liked best about the journal. By far the response most often given complimented the editors on choosing writers who presented differing viewpoints. The editors appreciated this response, because one of the aims of *Adventist Today* is to provide dialogue. This comment from a reader in North Dakota is typical: "*Adventist Today* is something that we should have had years ago. You present the issues so honestly. No cover ups. God bless you." Another reader said, "While the *Review* is the official journal for our church (as I see it), *AT* is respectful of the church and its doctrines, but takes a more honest, realistic, candid position in relation to Adventism."

Another question asked which articles or issues the respondent felt were the most important. The three most frequently mentioned were: creation and the age of the earth; "A Gathering of Adventisms;" and women's ministries, including the ordination of women. Each of these issues had run within the past year and were not difficult to recall. Yet, many recalled the very first issue, which dealt with the Waco events.

The most controversial issue, however, was the ordination of women. Almost as many said it was the least important topic as said it was among the most important ones. Several expressed their view that the book and movie reviews were the least important, and no one said they were the most important.

Readers really want to know what is going on at all levels of administration in the church.

The most controversial issue, however, was the ordination of women.

Readers really want to know what is going on at all levels of administration in the church. They appreciate the news that *AT* prints, and the comments as well. A reader in Minnesota said it like this: "Enjoy *AT* very much. It tells things as they are. I like the news as it happens, not just what the church papers want us to know."

A Maryland reader put it this way: "It is refreshing to get the whole story—unbiased and factual. The reader can decide, or draw his own conclusions."

When we asked for topics to be covered in the future, most readers did not have much to tell us. There were a few, though, who had some great ideas. Among them: Describe how our church can move from a cult to genuine Christian denomination; give us more on Ellen G. White and the nature of inspiration; give us some insight into church standards for the 90s; more on creation and the age of the earth; give us good coverage of events within the church and away from California and Washington, DC. A Texas reader noted, "I look forward to your coverage of General Conference next summer." And someone in New York said, "Understandably, you tend to be a bit Southern California centered. Some of us live in other conferences."

Then there was a small number who had mostly negative responses. One person said, "Don't like it. Not interested in it anymore. Take me off your mailing list." (We did.) But another said, "I like the magazine and the articles. It's just fine to have some things I don't agree with." A California reader remarked that "My preference does not lean toward the art work on the covers." We keep trying; maybe that reader liked the cover on the November/December issue, by a different artist.

Not many readers responded about the Letters to the Editor section, which we like very much. One reader told us how he felt: "(You) need more letters published. I'm peeved you didn't print mine." Well, we apologize for not printing that letter. The truth is that we wish we had more room for letters. If there are several letters which make the same point, we publish the one which, in our opinion, gives the best argument.

And now about the phonathon. We genuinely appreciate everyone who responded with a nice conversation. And a special thanks to those who could make a pledge or an immediate donation. We have faith that you will surpass our goal of \$15,000. We will be sending reminders out in February to those who have waited until '95 to fulfill their pledge.

Adventist Today has perhaps the greatest group of subscribers that exist anywhere. Thanks to all of you for your support.

You Are **HERE**

At every station platform on the Washington, D.C., subway system there are illuminated maps of the immediate neighborhood, each bearing a bright red arrow accompanied by the words "YOU ARE HERE." The city provides these maps as a public service and, at any given time, there are groups of people huddled around them trying to figure out where to go from HERE.

Washington is, after all, our nation's largest theme park, full of tourists fully capable of standing on a grassy patch of the Capitol Mall, scratching their heads and asking passersby where they might find the Smithsonian Institution. They are touchingly grateful when informed that they could throw a rock in almost any direction and hit some part of the Smithsonian. Yes, most of us have some notion of where we want to go. Often the key to getting there is knowing where we are.

Which is why I'm a bit puzzled by the apparent success of one of the latest services offered to devoted viewers of daytime television. (After prolonged recuperation from surgery, I can attest that there are indeed toxic levels of daytime television consumption.) I'm referring to the 900 numbers which you can dial day or night and, for only \$4 a minute, have an intimate chat with "your personal psychic." These selfless Samaritans promise to read your future and offer trenchant counsel on your chances for "love, money, travel, and romance." (I've noticed that these seers never calculate the odds of "duty, disappointment, pain, and hard work" showing up on your personal radar screen.)

Among the current crop of pay-per-view Nostradamuses, my favorite is Jackie Stallone, mother of Sylvester. Having never fallen to the temptations of good taste, La Stallone could be seen on the talk-show circuit a couple of years ago offering fashion advice to sixty-somethings. (Suffice it to say it involved a lot of spandex, sequins, and mascara.) Now she's reinvented herself as "Psychic Astrologer to the Stars" and is offering her services at the going retail price. Her slogan is, "I have predicted fame and fortune for movie stars and celebrities around the world, and I can do the same for you." Right. I mean, how hard can it be to predict

that fame and fortune will befall the rich and famous?

Nevertheless, business seems to be booming for Mother Stallone because enough people out there are dying to know what is going to happen to them in the future. I don't understand this.

Faced with the chance of discovering what is going to happen to me and the people I love next year, next month, or even in the next 15 minutes, I would run screaming in the opposite direction. How could such information possibly be helpful?

Surely the worst aspect of knowing the future is how such knowledge affects the present. If you knew you could not alter or control events in any way, that the future would happen just as ordained, regardless of your actions, how could you cope with the here and now? Bad news would either plunge you into despair or paralyze you with terror. Even "good" news (you'll win the lottery!) could lull you into complacency. I've come to believe that the best we can do in this world is to live in a constant state of hope. If we could know the future, it would remove the possibility or the necessity for hope.

Instead of my own personal psychic, what I want is a spiritual version of those subway road maps. A sort of "YOU ARE HERE" of the soul. That would be something really useful! Imagine yourself in your son's bedroom. You're driving the car pool this morning, school starts in 30 minutes, and he's sitting at his desk in his underwear, exploring off-ramps of the Information Superhighway unintelligible to anyone who can remember Woodstock. It's a continuum, one end of which is labeled "Perfect Parent," the other, "Neurotic Child Abuser." Somewhere along this line is a little red arrow with the legend, "YOU ARE HERE."

This inner road map could come into play in any situation where you need to know your position relative to sane serenity and grave peril. While arguing with your boss (YOU ARE HERE!), reading the menu at your favorite restaurant (DO YOU REALLY WANT TO BE HERE?), scouting the Labor Day sale at Nordstrom (YOU ARE WA-A-A-Y OVER HERE!). That would be information worth paying for. Maybe even \$4 a minute.

Bonnie L. Casey

Instead of my own personal psychic, what I want is a spiritual version of those subway road maps. A sort of **YOU ARE HERE** of the soul.



Bonnie L. Casey works as a freelance writer and as an editor in a Washington, D.C., law firm.

Folkenberg Criticizes Nurturers and Revisionists

In sermons recently given on opposite coasts, Robert Folkenberg, General Conference president, openly criticized those he perceives as soft on evangelism and those who would revise traditional Adventist ideas.

On October 22, 1994, Folkenberg led out in celebrating the 150th anniversary of the Great Disappointment, held at the William Miller farm in upstate New York. His sermon didn't dwell on disappointment, but focused on God's two "great appointments"—the first occurring on October 22, 1844, and the second on the coming Advent. However, a central point of the sermon received special attention across the country. We quote it verbatim:

"Brethren and sisters, the Judgement, the 2300 days, the Sanctuary—those are the keys to our unique identity as a movement. Pull those away and we cease to exist. Due to their critical nature and their import, they are a special focus for attack by the Evil One, and the Evil One rarely uses attacks from outside. They are too easily identified. He would rather bring the undermining of these critical beliefs dressed in the trustworthy garb of fellow saints who present themselves as fellow members, as local church leaders, pastors, teachers and leaders, dressing themselves in the modern regalia of pluralism, saying, 'I am a good Seventh-day Adventist, but I can define that in any way I want to.' Beware of the devil's minions dressed as loyal Seventh-day Adventists who feel perfectly free to set aside the Sanctuary to define the 2300 days in other irrelevant terms, as far as we are concerned, and to make of none effect the message of the Sanctuary. The problem is, they are not Seventh-day Adventists. They simply have not had the integrity to admit it."

This interpretation of Adventism, for example, caused a small group of pastors, meeting with one of their former seminary professors, to venture that "we don't know if Folkenberg would still consider us Adventists."

President Folkenberg, a month later on November 19, led a missions-emphasis Sabbath at the Walla Walla College church. A remark made there caused what one church member called the most "widespread outrage" ever in the congregation. Emphasizing the importance of world evangelism, Folkenberg said:

"The Lord calls us to action, not to—hear what I am going to say—the Lord does not call us to nurture. I have come to the point that I call 'nurture' a four-letter word, because nurture is a justification for inaction."

The president asked the congregation, "What good is a sermon that doesn't step on some toes?"

Many members were deeply hurt by the remark, according to the church pastor Bill Knott, who explained that the Walla Walla College Church prides itself on taking the concept of nurture very seriously.

The next week's Sabbath service at Walla Walla was a previously scheduled celebration of the work public servants do to make any community thrive. The pastor had invited the local mayor, city council officers, a sanitation worker and others as special guests. Out of concern for spiritually hurt members and without referring to the previous week's sermon, the pastor remarked, as an aside, that nurture is a 'seven-letter word,' and that the number seven is important to Adventists.

Teske Issues Warning to Western Cities

More than 800,000 copies of a tabloid edition of portions of The Great Controversy were distributed in late December, 1994, in Los Angeles as part of a program sponsored by Reuben S. Teske, of Cove, Oregon. Under the name of "Hope International," he and helpers had already mailed or delivered some 2 million copies of the publication entitled "Earth's Final Warning," at a cost of some \$200,000. Most

of this was financed by Teske himself, although fund raising efforts were also used. Targeted communities included 200 cities in Idaho and 180 in Alaska, and the "core" areas of Portland, San Francisco, and Oakland. Teske works closely with Our Firm Foundation. His choice of cities was determined partly by his personal convictions that these Western areas are in special need of the warning messages of his publications. Copies are also being distributed in New York City.

New Graduate Programs In Psychology and Social Work at LLU

Loma Linda University has begun two new graduate programs, in social work and psychology.

The social work program, leading to an MSW degree, accepted its first students in the fall of 1993, and has grown to 65 students. It has been very successful in attracting government grants. The psychology program has 26 students, with a choice of two degree programs—Doctor of Psychology (PsyD) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD). Both will equip students for clinical practice, but PhD students will develop leadership in teaching and research. Besides seeking full accreditation, the program will bring a Christian perspective to its teaching and practice.

Some of the faculty for the two programs were recruited from La Sierra University when it became apparent that LSU was not proceeding with graduate education in the behavioral sciences. They had already laid personal plans to go elsewhere to schools with such advanced programs in their fields.

The doctoral program will be made available to social work, public health, and family therapy graduates and others.

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