



General Conference Executive Committee Newsletter

An informative publication for members of the General Conference Executive Committee as a service through the office of the Chair

JUNE/JULY 2018

Sabbath School and

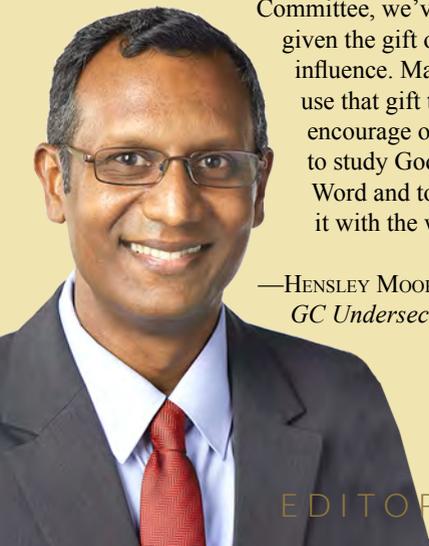
Personal Ministries are in my DNA! When I'm traveling, even to accomplish my Secretariat-related duties, I go to church on Sabbath and am always ready to teach the Sabbath School lesson. I prefer teaching the young people and take care to always point them to the Bible and the lesson study guide. Often, they exclaim, "Oh! I didn't know that Sabbath School was so interesting! Now I want to study the lesson!"

I've found I can promote it only when I have experienced first-hand the joys and blessings of studying the lesson myself, as it leads me into deeper study of the Bible. When I present the lesson—I pray that God uses me in such a way that it will encourage others to study the lesson for themselves.

In this issue of the ECN, Ramon Canals and Jim Howard share their enthusiasm and well-thought-out plans to nurture and disciple our members and grow our churches through the wonderful gifts of Sabbath School and Personal Ministries. I hope you will take the time to carefully consider what they have to say.

As members of the GC Executive Committee, we've been given the gift of influence. May we use that gift to encourage others to study God's Word and to share it with the world.

—HENSLEY MOOROOVEN
GC Undersecretary



EDITORIAL



THE HEART OF THE CHURCH Empowering Members Through Sabbath School and Personal Ministries

A CONVERSATION WITH

RAMON CANALS, DIRECTOR, GC SABBATH SCHOOL AND PERSONAL MINISTRIES DEPARTMENT (SSPM) AND JIM HOWARD, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, (GC SSPM)

I imagine millions of Seventh-day Adventists actively engaged in Bible study and prayer, fellowship, community outreach and witness, as they reach out to neighbors, friends, relatives, and colleagues, bring them to Jesus. Think of more than 84,000 Seventh-day Adventist churches around the world lighting up their local communities as they serve as community outreach centers and Bible study schools.

Sound impossible? Ramon Canals and Jim Howard don't think so, and they are eager to share an effective, win-win strategy that involves every church, and every member—through Sabbath School and Personal Ministries.

"Sabbath school is the heart of the church, and the basis of our Christian

growth," says Canals. "It is the daily, weekly, continuous focus on God's Word that leads an individual and the church collectively to grow in spiritual strength.

"The power of Sabbath School is that it follows the divine model for true discipleship: Bible study, prayer, fellowship, and mission."

This divine model for true discipleship is based on Acts 2, when the followers of Jesus were focused on studying the Word of God, eating together, and preaching the gospel, and the Lord "added to their numbers daily."

In some places over the last several years, however, Sabbath School seems to have lost its vibrancy, and attendance has been in decline. From preliminary

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Two members of the GC Sabbath School and Personal Ministries Team: Ramon Canals, director, left, and Jim Howard, associate director

“
We believe that Sabbath School is what binds us together as a people and without it the church would not be such a cohesive unit of believers.
”

observations, Canals attributes this, at least in part, to three perceptions people have regarding Sabbath School: 1) it is not as spiritually educational as it used to be; 2) it tends to be predictable and boring; 3) it has lost its focus on mission.

SABBATH SCHOOL ALIVE!

Recognizing the vital importance of Sabbath School to church growth, and to the spiritual life of all members, Canals and his staff are developing a robust plan, called “Sabbath School Alive!” that can be implemented everywhere.

“Because Sabbath School is the heart of the church and is a common thread that helps bind together members from all over the world, Sabbath School Alive! will highlight three vital, key components of a thriving Sabbath School, Canals said. These include:

1. Bible study and prayer

Resources and training will be provided to assist Sabbath Schools around the world rediscover the power of robust Bible study and prayer. This essential component is part of the church’s overall strategic goal of “Reach Up.”

2. Fellowship

Sabbath School helps members

experience the joy of fellowship through Bible study and service, building up community in the body of believers. To help facilitate this, classes will meet not only on Sabbath morning, but will also get together outside of the Sabbath morning experience. This embraces the church’s overall strategic goal of “Reach In.”

3. Mission

Sabbath School will be a place to gain world mission education as well as local community outreach and training. It will provide focus for both local and world mission. This supports the world church’s strategic goal to “Reach Out.”

RESOURCES AND TRAINING

Sabbath School Alive! will provide resources and training to help every local church worldwide, according to Canals. This will be accomplished in two primary ways:

1. Regional Convocations;

2. Resource availability through a new Sabbath School Alive! website and a kit containing a how-to guide, short video, and other resources, some of which will be available at this year’s Annual Council.

“We want to help our teachers teach inspiring and practical Sabbath School classes,” says Canals, “and to move away from the teacher being a preacher, but rather a facilitator.”

How to effectively incorporate mission into Sabbath School, and, very importantly, how to reclaim inactive members will be a part of the training at the Sabbath School convocations.

Division-wide convocations for training Sabbath School leaders are planned for the next two years, beginning in 2019. Each convocation will gather leaders from several divisions, providing inspiration, training, and resources to bring Sabbath School Alive! to their areas.

The first convocation will be held January 20-23, 2019 for East-Central Africa Division (ECD), Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division (SID), and West-Central Africa Division (WAD). Another convocation will be held September 29-October 3 for the Inter-European Division (EUD), Trans-European Division (TED), and Euro-Asia Division (ESD).

“We believe that Sabbath School is what binds us together as a people,” says Canals, “and without it the church would not be such a cohesive unit of believers. We cannot afford to lose such

an important institution of the church, and that's why it is incumbent upon every member, pastor, and leader, to help in this effort to bring life back into our Sabbath Schools everywhere.”

MAKING IT PERSONAL

Having a strong Sabbath School is the first step in having a healthy, growing church. The second involves a robust plan encouraging every member to embrace their role as a missionary, and every church to become a Bible school and training center.

“Sometimes we think when we are baptized we are simply members,” says Canals. “But Ellen White tells us that everyone who is baptized becomes a missionary. Because of this, we need to make sure that every church becomes a school where we train and disciple people for their calling as missionaries.

“It is so important to prepare people so that they can have the skills they need,” he adds. “They already have the passion and the desire. They simply need to be equipped, resourced, and empowered to accomplish the mission for which they have been called.”

A REPLICABLE AND SUSTAINABLE FRAMEWORK

To provide a replicable and sustainable framework for this training, Jim Howard has developed the GROW Your Church training initiative for making disciples. The initiative has already been tested through a pilot program in a local conference of the North American Division, with very encouraging results.

Howard outlines the initiative in five essential phases:

1. **PREPARE THE SOIL** of the heart with friendship and service.
2. **PLANT THE SEED** of God's Word with personal testimonies, spiritual conversations, and truth-filled literature and media.
3. **CULTIVATE SPIRITUAL** interest with ongoing Bible studies.
4. **HARVEST DECISIONS** with appeals to follow Christ and be baptized.

PREPARE



PLANT



CULTIVATE



HARVEST



PRESERVE



5. PRESERVE THE HARVEST

with ongoing discipleship training through total member involvement and mission.

“With each of these phases, we have a specific goal,” Howard explains. “The first phase is to prepare through service. Our goal is for every local church to have *church-wide* community need-based ministries. The key is in *church-wide*. This is more than a few people at a community service center. This is determining the needs of the community and engaging the entire church.

“The goal for the second phase, planting the seed, is having an *active* literature and media ministry. The key is *active*. This is more than a meager tract display in a dark corner of the church. It means having a prominent and robust literature display from which members are trained to take and distribute literature *every week*.

“The third phase is to have a *vibrant* Bible study ministry in every local church. The key here is having a *well-organized system* that *involves every member* in some way, such as simply offering Bible studies through an invitation card or some other means, hosting a Bible study group in their home, and/or giving individual or group Bible studies. Every church can be a Bible school.”

The fourth area is the harvest. The goal is for every local church to hold *regular* evangelistic meetings, and the key is regular, meaning publicly proclaiming the three angels' messages at least once or twice a year for at least one week.

The fifth and final phase, is preserving the harvest. “Our goal is for every church to have a systematic discipleship program,” says Howard, “which includes implementing an intentional ministry to mentor new members, encouraging a regular devotional life, family worship, and church attendance, providing ongoing instruction, social integration, and engaging new members in soul-winning service.”

For each of the five GROW Your Church goals, resources are being developed to aid local churches.

Enhancing the Local Church's Capability

Currently, Howard is working on an exciting project that will greatly enhance the local church's capability in reaching interested people in their communities, while involving the church's members.

During a meeting of the International Association of Bible Correspondence Schools held in Jerusalem last April, a renewed emphasis was placed on the involvement of every member in Bible study ministries. The plan of every church serving as a Bible school was well-received and has gained a lot of traction.

"Since the overall strategy of Personal Ministries is to make disciples," Howard says, "it's important to involve each member in bringing others to Jesus."

For many years, when someone has indicated an interest in studying the Bible—through various Adventist media outlets and ministries, internet sites, literature, etc., a common procedure has been to forward the person's name and contact information to central Bible correspondence schools where teams of paid individuals assist in sending out and grading Bible studies. While these schools are still needed, a greater emphasis will now be placed on local churches receiving and following up Bible study interests.

Howard says, "We are focusing on developing systems to better distribute interests to local Seventh-day Adventist churches throughout the world field." New, internet-based systems are being developed, while other variations may be used in parts of the world where internet may not be readily accessible.

"We can provide a system in certain areas of the world, and in other areas where they already have a system, we want to make sure they have what they need," Howard adds.

The Ultimate Goal

The ultimate goal is to encourage every local church to be a Bible study school, and to encourage all members to participate in some way. Equally important, according to Howard, is "making sure that we are getting good follow-up on the interests that are sent to local churches."

This is no small task and involves training, providing resources, and outlining a clear picture of what it means to have a vibrant Bible study ministry. According to the plan outlined by the Sabbath School and Personal Ministries Department, this includes the following:

1. The local church must have Bible study materials, lessons, videos, or at least a Bible-marking plan, available for members to use.
2. A system of recording and tracking Bible study interests must be in place—whether on computer or other electronic devices, or simply written on paper.
3. The church needs to recruit and train members to offer Bible studies, and invite them to serve as Bible study leaders, facilitators, or hosts.
4. Every member should be involved in some way—whether passing out tracts and invitation cards, opening their home to a



Bible study group, and/or leading out in Bible studies.

5. Every means possible should be employed to obtain new Bible study interests. In rural areas, that may simply be asking people if they would like to study the Bible. This is "the number one way," according to Howard. Member advertising—through yard signs, bumper stickers, offers at booths and fairs is another way to get the invitation out to the public. Howard recommends including Bible study offers in every piece of literature and other media that the church distributes. Paid advertising on radio, billboards, and direct mailings are another way to get the word out.

6. Local leadership needs to support the church's Bible study ministry by publicly promoting it, through financial support, and by providing accountability for people who are following up on the interests.

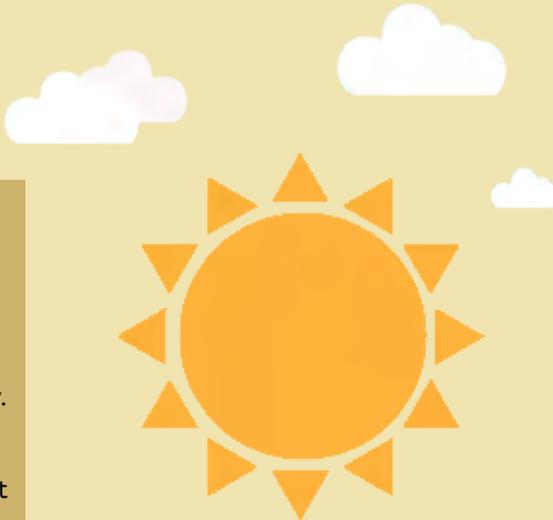
7. Most importantly, Howard stresses the need to pray for laborers. "The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest" (Luke 10:2, NKJV).

If you are interested in bringing life back into your Sabbath school or in GROWing your local church, two helpful websites are coming soon: alive.adventist.org and grow.adventist.org. You may also contact Ramon Canals directly at canalsr@gc.adventist.org or Jim Howard at howardj@gc.adventist.org.

CHECKUP



FRESH AIR AND SUNLIGHT¹



Sometimes the simplest things can have a profound effect upon our well-being. Take, for example, fresh air and sunlight. Inspiration tells us:

“In order to have good blood, we must breathe well. Full, deep breaths of pure air, which fill the lungs with oxygen, purify the blood. They impart to it a bright color and send it, a life-giving current, to every part of the body. A good respiration soothes the nerves; it stimulates the appetite and improves the digestion; and it induces sound, refreshing sleep.

“The lungs should be allowed the greatest freedom possible. Their capacity is developed by free action; it diminishes if they are cramped and compressed. Hence the ill effects of the practice so common, especially in sedentary pursuits, of stooping at one’s work. In this position it is impossible to breathe deeply. Superficial breathing soon becomes a habit, and the lungs lose their power to expand” (*Ministry of Healing*, p. 272).

Do you sit a lot during the day? Take regular breaks to stand up, stretch, and breathe deeply. Some potential benefits of deep breathing include:

- **Relieves Stress**
- **Relaxes Tense Muscles**
- **Lowers Blood Pressure**

If possible, go out into the sunshine. There are many benefits of moderate sunlight exposure:

1. Promotes Vitamin D Production

Vitamin D is necessary for healthy bone formation, proper immune function, cell growth, nerve and muscle function, and reducing inflammation. Research also suggests that a proper amount of Vitamin D could play a role in preventing and treating various other diseases such as type 1 and 2 diabetes, hypertension, glucose intolerance, and even multiple sclerosis.

2. Better Mood

Being in sunlight helps to promote a “sunny disposition,” whereas the lack of sunlight can lead to gloominess. There is a type of depression called Seasonal Affective Disorder that affects some people during the winter months when they don’t get enough sunlight. Experts believe that the sunlight has widespread mood-elevating effects on us.

3. Cancer Prevention

Although too much sunshine can lead to skin cancers, studies have shown that other cancers and infectious diseases could result from too little sunshine. The risk of dying from breast, ovarian, colon, pancreatic, prostate, and other cancers was higher in those who got too little sunshine.²

4. Autoimmune conditions

According to some reports, exposure to UV radiation appears to suppress an overactive immune system and may help with autoimmune diseases such as psoriasis and lupus. Another study also suggests it might help alleviate asthma.³

5. Better Sleep

Natural sunlight can balance out the production of melatonin, a hormone produced at night that makes you drowsy. This helps maintain a normal circadian rhythm, so you’re more likely to feel tired at bedtime. Going outside in the sunlight for fifteen minutes at the same time each day, preferably in the morning, can be beneficial. Getting proper amounts of natural sunlight can especially help the elderly, since melatonin production is known to decrease as we age.

¹ Adapted from Fukuda, M. and Fukuda, D. (2016). *Habits That Heal: Habits of America’s Longest Living People*, 38-41.

² Mead, M. (2008, May). Benefits of Sunlight: A Bright Spot for Human Health. *Environmental Health Perspectives*, 116(4), 161-167. www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2290997/

³ Kotz, D. (2008, June 24). Host of Health Benefits Attributed to Sunlight. From <https://health.usnews.com/health-news/family-health/articles/2008/06/24/host-of-health-benefits-attributed-to-sunlight>.

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE TAKES STEP FORWARD IN UNITY PROCESS

Document to be considered by GCDO
and at the 2018 Annual Council

The GC Administrative Committee (ADCOM) voted on July 17 a document recommended by the Unity Oversight Committee. The recommendations came after nine months of listening and consultation with church entities around the world, and outline a process of addressing entities not in compliance with the actions of a GC Session, the GC Executive Committee, or working policy. The outlined process includes setting up a number of compliance review committees that will address specific issues of non-compliance and will make recommendations to GC ADCOM.

The Unity Oversight Committee was informed by quantitative and qualitative data gathered from church leaders worldwide as well as dialogues with the thirteen world divisions, GC Leadership Council, and GC institutions. Comments from Executive Committee members during previous Annual Councils were also considered.

The Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research was tasked with developing a questionnaire and administering a survey of all union and division presidents worldwide. All those surveyed submitted a response, even though in some cases they chose not to answer all questions. The results of the survey were published in a previous article ([click here](#)), and showed that a majority of the world Church's union presidents favored some kind of process for dealing with non-compliance.

Following standard process and protocol, the document, as all other Annual Council agenda items, will be discussed by the General Conference and Division Officers Committee (GCDO) before going to the GC Executive Committee at Annual Council this October.

REGARD FOR AND PRACTICE OF GENERAL CONFERENCE SESSION AND GENERAL CONFERENCE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ACTIONS

A sacred trust exists between church members and their elected Church leaders. Unity and trust are strengthened as church members and organizational leaders commit to being led by the Spirit to regard and honor the constituted decisions made by fellow church members and leaders.

“Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.”—Eph 4:3. “We are coming to a time when, more than ever before, we shall need to press together, to labor unitedly. . . In unity there is strength.”—2SM 374.

Where regard for and practice of General Conference Session and General Conference Executive Committee actions have not been followed, these principles shall apply:

1. All perceived non-compliance shall officially be identified and reported by the Administrative Committee of a conference and/or union and/or division successively to the next higher organization, beginning with the administrative level of the Church closest to the matter. If any level of organization does not report an issue of non-compliance, it becomes the responsibility of the next higher organization.

2. Planning for and implementing compliance shall initially be the responsibility entrusted to the administrative level of the Church closest to the matter.

3. Administrators dealing with any matter of perceived non-compliance shall exercise Christian due process which will (a) include much prayer and dialogue, (b) provide a clearly written statement defining the perceived non-compliance, (c) provide an opportunity for the executive officers of the perceived non-compliant entity to provide both a verbal and written explanation, (d) create an atmosphere by which compliance and unity may be achieved, and (e) provide a reasonable timeframe to realize change and consistent progress.

If, in the opinion of the executive officers of the conference and/or union and/or division and/or General Conference, change has been requested but has not been realized or there is no evidence of consistent progress, the General Conference Administrative Committee may request the appropriate General Conference Compliance Review Committee* to implement its terms of reference. If, in the opinion of a General Conference Compliance Review Committee, reasonable time has been given for discussion and review, the General Conference Compliance Review Committee may directly make recommendations to the appropriate Administrative Committee.

An entity seeking appeal may do so directly to the assigned General Conference Compliance Review Committee.* The appeal process made by the non-compliant entity shall be considered part of the work of the General Conference Compliance Review Committee* as defined by its terms of reference.

4. With sound judgment and prayerful discernment, administrators may use existing General Conference working policies and guidelines as tools for resolving matters of non-compliance.

5. If the matter continues to be unresolved, the next higher level of Church organization is tasked with the responsibility to resolve the matter or facilitate the initiation of a process leading to consequences.

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REGARD FOR AND PRACTICE OF GENERAL CONFERENCE SESSION AND GENERAL CONFERENCE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ACTIONS, continued from previous page

In the event the due process referenced above does not bring about compliance and does not result in the reversal of the action taken by the non-compliant entity and/or the constituency-elected leader of that body (the union president, who represents both the voice of the union constituency and the voice of the world Church and who is an *ex officio* member of the General Conference Executive Committee), the entity and its duly elected leader may be subject to the following:

1. Warned—By vote of simple majority of the General Conference Executive Committee, unions/unions of churches that have complied with a General Conference Executive Committee and/or General Conference Session actions but have taken actions that are not in compliance with the practices of the Church as defined by the General Conference Constitution and Bylaws and the General Conference *Working Policy* may be “warned.” Being “warned” applies generally to a non-compliant entity and does not intend to identify individuals for further action or mention.

2. Public Reprimand—By vote of simple majority of the General Conference Executive Committee, the president of such unions/unions of churches that have not complied with General Conference Executive Committee actions and/or General Conference Session actions, including *Working Policy* that has been voted by the General Conference Executive Committee and/or General Conference Session, may be given a public reprimand. Each time the union president exercises his right of voice to address the General Conference Executive Committee, the members will be informed that the speaker has been given a public reprimand.

3. Placed on Removal for Cause and Subject to Policy Application—When non-compliance continues after public reprimand, the relevant General Conference Compliance Review Committee,* by virtue of prior General Conference Executive Committee actions and General Conference Session actions, shall have authority to consider and recommend to the General Conference Administrative Committee, division officers, and General Conference Executive Committee, applying the existing General Conference working policies and guidelines, such as removal of the individual member “for cause.”—Bylaws Article XIII Sec. 1. c. and GC B 95.

In the event that entities that have been “warned” or “reprimanded” take actions that bring their entities into compliance with the practices of the Church as defined by the

General Conference Constitution and Bylaws, the General Conference *Working Policy*, and voted actions of the General Conference Executive Committee and/or General Conference Session, the relevant General Conference Compliance Review Committee* shall recommend to the General Conference Administrative Committee that they be reinstated to regular standing by the General Conference Executive Committee. In the event that entities that have been “warned” or “reprimanded” continue in non-compliance with voted actions of the General Conference Executive Committee and/or General Conference Session, the relevant General Conference Compliance Review Committee* may recommend to the General Conference Administrative Committee to pursue other actions that may be available in the General Conference working policies and guidelines or the Constitution and Bylaws of the General Conference. If, after the organization closest to the matter has been unable to resolve a compliance issue and the General Conference Compliance Review Committee* has recommended consequences, only the General Conference Executive Committee and/or the General Conference in session has authority to implement the recommendation.

Presidents of conferences/missions whose unions have been “reprimanded” shall continue to exercise voice, as provided by the General Conference Bylaws, and the body will be notified that the invitee requesting voice is a constituent representative of a conference/mission of a “reprimanded” union.

In instances where a president has been removed from the membership of the committee “for cause,” other members of the General Conference Executive Committee from that union shall continue to exercise full privileges without mention of reprimand.

Entities who desire reconsideration of a General Conference Executive Committee and/or General Conference Session action, may seek recourse through processes already provided for in the General Conference *Working Policy*. The process of seeking recourse and the “Regard for and Practice of General Conference Session and General Conference Executive Committee Actions” shall run concurrently.

As circumstances warrant, this process may be used as a model by other levels of Church organization.

* As per General Conference Administrative Committee action of July 17, 2018.

Informed by the comments received from the Executive Committee members as well as from the qualitative data gathered from dialogues conducted with divisions, the General Conference Administrative Committee has started a process of establishing certain General Conference Compliance Review Committees. Their primary objective is to review issues of non-compliance submitted by the relevant conference/union/division Administrative Committee.

By August 14, 2018, the General Conference Administrative Committee will have determined the appropriate names of these committees and identify qualified individuals to serve as members.

VOTED, To establish a plan for the compliance review committees with terms of reference as follows:

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR COMPLIANCE COMMITTEES

TERMS OF REFERENCE	AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY
1. As a committee, to be comprehensively knowledgeable and accept as authoritative the existing officially voted beliefs, policies, statements, and guidelines of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists germane to the committee of assignment.	1. Power to Act
2. Develop and recommend to the General Conference Executive Committee (GCC) Guidelines that explicitly describe the conduct and behavior of denominational employees as well as any individuals representing the Church germane to the committee of assignment.	2. Power to Act
3. Examine non-compliant entities as identified and recommended by the Administrative Committee (ADCOM) of a conference and/union and/or division and/or General Conference.	3. Power to Act
4. Advise and serve as a resource for the organizational unit(s) addressing issues of non-compliance.	4. Power to Act
5. Periodically receive progress reports from the ADCOM of a conference and/or union and/or division and/or General Conference developing and implementing compliance plans and periodically report plans and progress through the General Conference Administrative Committee (ADCOM), and General Conference and Division Officers (GCDO), and the General Conference Executive Committee (GCC).	5. Power to Act
6. Exercise overview, and with divisions, work with germane-committee-specific non-compliance issues that primarily are the administrative duty of unions.	6. Power to Act
7. After evaluating the results of the implementation of the document “ <i>Regard for and Practice of General Conference Session and General Conference Executive Committee Actions</i> ”, recommend to the General Conference Executive Committee (GCC), through the General Administrative Committee (ADCOM), and General Conference and Division Officers (GCDO), the voted compliance plan of the non-compliant unit(s) or after much prayer and consideration, recommend to the General Conference Executive Committee (GCC), through the General Administrative Committee (ADCOM), and General Conference and Division Officers (GCDO), consequences identified in the document “ <i>Regard for and Practice of General Conference Session and General Conference Executive Committee Actions</i> ” document for non-compliant unit(s).	7. Power to Recommend
8. Process appeals received from non-compliant unit(s) which do not agree with the recommendations of the appropriate Administrative Committee.	8. Power to Act

HOW A BROKEN SUV BECAME A MISSIONARY

Returning tithe brings unexpected blessings

BY ANDREW MCCHESENEY

WWW.ADVENTISTMISSION.ORG



Parking at home after a weekend camping trip, Joe Marcellino saw a trail of oil going up the street from his Isuzu Trooper SUV.

Joe, a 33-year-old IT manager at the Seventh-day Adventist world church headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland, called a friend for help.

The friend, Eric Armer, found that the oil had spewed from the oil filter's rubber gasket and warned that the engine had probably sustained significant damage. He estimated that repairs could cost more than \$3,000.

Joe and Susan, recently married, had about \$3,000 in the bank. But Joe was reluctant to spend the money on the SUV because the couple had fallen behind in returning tithe and owed about \$1,500 for the past three months.

Susan saw no room for discussion.

"We need to give our first fruits," she said.

Joe and Susan prayed and decided to return tithe rather than repair the SUV.

REPAIRING THE SUV

After this decision, Eric contacted Joe and advised him to contact the gas station that had changed his oil shortly before the camping trip. The gas station sent a mechanic to Joe's house and, after an inspection, took responsibility for the damaged engine and paid them \$3,000.

Joe asked another friend, Bill Brody a car mechanic, to rebuild the engine. When the repairs were finished, Joe received the bill—for \$1,500. To his surprise, the \$3,000 from the gas station's insurance had been enough to cover the cost of the repairs and his tithe.

Bill, the mechanic, also cautioned Joe not to keep the SUV.

"As a personal friend, I advise you to sell it as soon as possible," he said.

Within a week, Joe was approached by Wayne Calbi, the purchasing director at the General Conference. Wayne asked

Joe whether he would be willing to sell the SUV.

"A missionary in Africa has asked specifically to buy an Isuzu Trooper," he said. "Are you willing to sell it?"

Joe immediately shared the SUV's history and his worry that the engine wouldn't last long.

"I'll take the risk," Wayne said.

SHIPPED TO AFRICA

He gave Joe a fair price and had the vehicle shipped to Africa. Seeing Joe's concerns, he promised to keep him posted on what happened to the SUV. The vehicle had 40,000 miles (about 64,000 kilometers) at the time of the sale.

After about 18 months had gone by, Wayne said to Joe, "You remember that SUV? It now has over 100,000 miles on it."

"Praise the Lord!" Joe said. "I didn't think it would last that long."

A couple years later, Wayne said, "Joe, I wanted to let you know it's passed the 200,000-mile mark."

Now Joe was truly amazed.

A few years later, Wayne said the SUV had passed 300,000 miles.

"It is the Lord who kept it going for this missionary!" Joe said.

Joe, now 61, said the experience taught him an important lesson about mission and the importance of returning tithe first.

"The Lord met our needs when we sat down as husband and wife to give our first fruits to Him and to put our trust in Him," Joe said. "He didn't only meet our needs, but He also met the needs of the missionary in Africa. He knew other needs down the line that we didn't know about, and the SUV was a blessing that kept on giving year after year."

To watch a brief video of Joe and Sue sharing their story, [click here](#).

“
As a
personal
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NEW LEADERSHIP FOR RHPA

The Review and Herald Publishing Association (RHPA) Board voted Brad Thorp as its new president, and Melinda Worden as vice president for operations as of April 16, 2018.

Since 2016, Thorp has been assisting the General Conference (GC) president as a Field Secretary for evangelism outreach. He will continue in that position part-time in addition to his new RHPA responsibilities. Previously, he served as president of Hope Channel for 22 years, overseeing Hope Channel's growth from a NET satellite uplink in the 1990s to a global television network broadcasting in multiple countries and languages.

"From the beginning of our Church's history, the Review and Herald has given strong support for evangelism and mission. In this digital age, I believe the Review and Herald will provide even more materials that are easily available for the world church family to advance our mission. With the blessing of God, as we boldly use all resources available to us, I believe God will help everyone in our world learn of Jesus' soon return."

Melinda Worden began work at the Review and Herald in 1995, and most recently served as publishing operations manager. Previously, she served in a number of other capacities at the publishing house and has an extensive knowledge of the RHPA activities and the publishing work.

"I am honored to accept this new position and continue to be part of the Review and Herald," said Worden. "The books, magazines, music, art, and audio-visual materials published by the Review and Herald hold a special place in all our lives. For many of us, we can trace our earliest understandings of God's message from something published by the Review and Herald. It is God's publishing house, and I am looking forward to carrying on His publishing work, reaching and touching the lives of many more."

The GC has continued the Review and Herald Publishing Association, which includes its intellectual property, as a General Conference institution, functioning with limited publishing house activities, even though it will not have its own general physical production plant.

Since its transition, Robert Lemon, retired Treasurer of the General Conference, served as the RHPA president.

"We are extremely grateful to Bob Lemon for his fine and diligent work during a very complicated and difficult period for the Review and Herald," said Ted N. C. Wilson, General Conference president and chair of the Review and Herald Publishing Association Board. "But Bob is wanting to phase out of this work to more fully enjoy his well-earned retirement."

Looking from the past to the future, Wilson noted, "The Review and Herald has had a long history of proclaiming the Advent truth, and we are extremely grateful for that heritage, which will not end. We want RHPA to move into directions that will provide helpful services and resources to the Advent movement worldwide, proclaiming the three angels' messages."

Wilson emphasized that "the Review and Herald will take a very spiritual approach to all that is done, asking the Lord to impress the team as to what should be accomplished to bring glory to God in the proclamation of the Advent message through the power of the Holy Spirit.

"Various ideas will be reviewed," said Wilson, "and we ask people to pray earnestly as RHPA works closely with Adventist publishing institutions and others as a support service and as a resource center for proclaiming Christ, His righteousness, His three angels' messages, His sanctuary service, His health message, and His soon coming."



BRAD THORP



MELINDA WORDEN

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NEWS TO SHARE WITH ADVENTIST STUDENTS AGES 18-25



Adventist students around the world are invited to creatively express, in 1 minute or less, what mission means in their lives.

Submit your film by **August 31, 2018**, for your chance to go on an all-expenses-paid film trip with Adventist Mission/Mission Spotlight® to gain résumé-worthy experience, learn from professionals, and improve your skills!

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1 According to *God First*, an e-newsletter of Adventist Stewardship Ministries, Adventists from the **Hungary Union Conference** have the highest percentage of tithers in the world—with 60 percent of the members returning a faithful tithe.

2 More than 19,000 individuals were baptized in **Tanzania** in June, following a three-week “Revelation of Hope” series with Mark and Ernestine Finley, and a health outreach where more than 9,000 patients were treated. Geoffrey Mbwana, a GC Vice President and native Tanzanian, assisted in coordinating the meetings. TMI was evident in numerous ways, helping the effort to succeed. For more, [click here](#).

3 Construction on the Creationist Center in the **Galapagos Archipelago**, located 1,200 kilometers off the coast of Ecuador will begin in August. The Center will be maintained by the Adventist Church’s institutions and will be located on 741 sq. meters of land on Charles Darwin Avenue in the center of Santa Cruz, the most

populated island in the archipelago.

4 After years of prayer and fasting, the Southeast Asia Union Mission inaugurated its Center of Influence in **Hanoi, Vietnam** on May 22, 2018. Located in the heart of the city, the seven-story building was purchased to serve the community’s needs and extend the opportunity for health and healing through lifestyle change.

5 A special meeting for South Korean pastors who are willing to serve in North Korea when the door opens was held in **Yanji, China**, June 4-7, 2018. This educational meeting for NK PMM (Pioneer Mission Movement for North Korea) was attended by 17 pastors willing to serve in this special mission. The group visited several areas near the border of North Korea and heard inspiring testimonies for a Chinese member who is reaching North Koreans through his business. For more, [click here](#).

6 Children in Adventist schools throughout **New Zealand** recently participated in the popular “Adventist Health

Week.” The children and their teachers were involved in a daily health challenge for five days; those who completed the challenge received a Health Week certificate. Along with the five-day challenge, the children participated in various initiatives to raise money for the “10,000 Toes” campaign, an initiative of Adventist Health and the Adventist Development and Relief Agency to tackle the epidemic of diabetes in the South Pacific.

7 The Fourth International Bible Conference was held in **Rome, Italy**, from June 11-21 with the theme of “Biblical Eschatology.” Nearly four hundred Adventist scholars, pastors, educators, and church leaders gathered from around the world to explore biblical, theological, historical, ethical, missiological, and scientific perspectives on eschatology. At the close of the event, attendees voted a consensus statement reaffirming the role of Bible prophecy and its mission implications. Read the statement [here](#).