



# Network News

COMMUNIQUÉ OF THE NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION ADULT MINISTRIES NETWORK

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Volume 4

*"The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself."*

*Proverbs 11:25, KJV*

- *"There's one thing you can give and still keep, it's your word." –Reuben Matiko*
- *"Do you respect the face in your mirror?" – The Pocket Power Book of Integrity*
- *"Whenever elephants fight—the grass always gets hurt." – African Proverb*

## IN THIS ISSUE

- **Missing From Action! How to Contact Inactive and Former Members**
- **Directions To My Father's House – A Poem**
- **Find Out Why Members Miss Church**

### FROM ELDER JOHNSON

#### "RESIDENT HOLY GHOST"

Hello, Adult Ministers!

Resident! The dictionary defines "resident" as living or staying in a place while working, carrying on official duties.

The Holy Ghost **Within Us** (*Resident Holy Ghost*) demonstrates that our lives, our characters, are congruent with the Life of Christ, as revealed in the Bible.

The ministry of the Holy Ghost, which many understand to be the exclusive Gift of the Spirit to us for all times and occasions, is conversion to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, manifested through display of the character and attitude of Jesus with "Love, Joy, Peace, Longsuffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, Temperance. . ." (Galatians 5:22, 23) – **The Fruit of the Spirit.**

The Fruit of the Spirit has a very clear objective—to demonstrate the result of The Holy Ghost **Within Us** (*Resident Holy Ghost*), we naturally begin to manifest the character of Christ—we become nice people.

The Holy Ghost **Within Us** (*Resident Holy Ghost*) grants us the capacity **To Be Like Jesus** in our characters.

The Holy Ghost wants to manifest Himself in at least two ways: to **RESIDE IN US** giving us the capacity to reflect His character, and He also wants to come **UPON US** to give us capacity to do good ministry in His name—vis-à-vis – Peter and the Brethren on the Day of Pentecost.

To be continued . . . . .

MARANATHA!

J. Alfred Johnson II, Director of Adult Ministries

North American Division

## IT'S ALL ABOUT SABBATH SCHOOL

### WHY DO MISSING MEMBERS MISS CHURCH?

***Most studies estimate that approximately 40 percent of church members on the books are inactive. Why are they inactive?***

**There are four basic reasons why people stop attending church:**

#### **Conflict**

More than half of all inactive members leave because of unresolved conflicts with the pastor, with the members, theological issues, or church standards and policies. Conflict creates discomfort and the tendency of most people is to simply retreat.

#### **Unmet Expectations**

Sometimes members become discouraged because they feel the church ignored them or didn't help them during a time of stress in their lives. Sometimes people become upset when they get burned out with church work and are unappreciated. People expect to find friends in the church and if they are not able to penetrate existing groups, they will leave.

#### **Law Of Affinity**

A single mother may feel out of place with married couples; a young person may feel alienated by a congregation of senior citizens; professionals may find it hard to communicate with working class people.

#### **Inability To Relate**

Some people have trouble with social relationships wherever they go. They have difficulty relating to people in general and in building meaningful relationships.

#### **Ideas for Reintegrating Non-Attending Members**

- Make sure the class record is taken every week. The record is the key resource for identifying missing members.
- Memorize the names of your class members, their spouses and their children. Be acquainted with their work, hobbies and leisure-time activities.
- Give missing members a reason to come to your class. Make sure the lesson is well-planned and interesting.
- Sensitize yourself to others' needs. Try to discover the reason that a member chooses to stay away. Look for hidden hurts that you can help heal.
- Invite missing members to a church activity such as a dinner, an outing, or a party. Often people stay away because they lack fellowship and a sense of belonging to the group.
- Train your class members in visitation skills. Assign names to be visited or contacted during the week.
- Every special Sabbath School program or church activity is an opportunity to call the missing member to let them know what is happening. Offer to pick them up if transportation is a problem.
- Mail a copy of the new Quarterly to each missing member. Better yet, take it to them.
- Mail or deliver a bulletin to each missing member every week. Keep the absentee in touch with what is happening in church.
- Encourage regular members to place missing members on their personal prayer list. Prayers can reach behind closed doors, and they can melt cold exteriors.
- Remember missing members with a greeting card on their birthday, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Christmas, and other special occasions.
- Never give up! People will often put up barriers to avoid being hurt. Persistence will break down those barriers.



## **WHAT'S HOT!**

### **SOME OUTREACH MINISTRIES ACROSS THE NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION (NAD)**

*Across the NAD in 80 seconds or less (or however long it takes you to read this).*

#### **Atlantic Union - Sabbath School Class Members Minister to Community**

As shoppers strolled along Newkirk Plaza and people whizzed to and from the busy subway station, they were greeted by children from the Brooklyn church. The Children's Sabbath School classes distributed bottles of water and tracts to people along the bustling stretch. The children, ages 2 to 12 years old, made it a fun-filled outreach venture as they ministered to this diverse community.

Five-year-old Joshua Clarke and seven-year-old Carlton Parks, bravely approached one man who was smoking and gave him a "Stop Smoking" tract while admonishing the man about the dangers of smoking. The man took the tract and immediately threw his cigarette on the floor. He stomped on it while proclaiming, "I can't smoke anymore!"

One woman who received a tract upon exiting the subway station, called the church seeking help just a few days later. She is currently receiving counseling from the church pastor, Artemas Julien.

Cradle Roll and Kindergarten leader, Marsha Clark, and her staff, organized the evangelistic event. She says the main reason for undertaking this project was to "help our children realize at this early stage that sharing their faith with others is a vital part of being a Christian. By the time they get to youth, I want this to be already ingrained in them."

*AMA News Vol. 12 #1*

#### **MICHIGAN CONFERENCE - KEEPING PEOPLE WARM AND FED**

Members of the St. Johns Church Women's Ministries Department gathered together for an "old fashioned quilting bee" to provide blankets to the needy in their community. The ladies donated several yards of material and created 11 no-sew fleece blankets. Five blankets will be distributed to the Hazel Finley Nursing Home. Also, Care Baskets of fresh fruits, vegetables, paper products, soap (laundry, body, and/or dish), gifts of clothing, toys, and other items were provided. Said, Fay Denton, assistant CSC director, "This program is such a blessing not only to the recipients, but also to the people that donate items, and to everyone involved in the preparation.

Michigan Memo. Brenda Roys, communication leader, St. Johns Church

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## Q & A

**I'm really at a standstill when it comes to Community Outreach Possibilities. Can you give me some suggestions?**

**Outreach Possibilities, Outreach Projects, or Outreach Programs, whatever you call it, for Sabbath School classes (and the entire church) are limited only by your own creativity. I'm listing just a few ideas to get you started. With these ideas, and the ones that you will come up with (you'll say "Oh, yes, this will work"), should keep the Sabbath School class and the entire Church busy, happy and excited.**

- ❖ Literature evangelism by distribution to homes
- ❖ Letter writing
- ❖ Missionary telephone calls
- ❖ Prayer bands for specific interests
- ❖ Prison ministry
- ❖ Video tape ministry
- ❖ Branch Sabbath school (cottage meeting) in a home
- ❖ Religious survey
- ❖ Bible studies by projector/DVD
- ❖ Neighborhood Bible Club
- ❖ Once-a-month Ingathering plan
- ❖ Singing groups
- ❖ Helping Hands Club
- ❖ Literature racks in public places
- ❖ Lending libraries
- ❖ Home Bible study (printed lessons)
- ❖ Visitation of Bible school interest
- ❖ Hospital visitation
- ❖ "Welcome Wagon" service
- ❖ Helpers for single parents
- ❖ Vegetarian dinner guests
- ❖ Senior citizen services

You would want to do some Vision-building with your Sabbath School class. In the next issue of *Network News*, you'll find some handy and helpful tips on "Building a Vision for Your Community." But until then, give one or two or three of the above Outreach Ministries a try.

This original article appeared in *Discipleship Journal*. Sue Kline

## PERSONAL MINISTRIES – SABBATH SCHOOL’S PARTNER IN MINISTRY

### THE DROPOUT TRACK – Missing From Action! Contacting Inactive and Former Members

**Dropping Out** is something that happens as a long, slow process, not an abrupt change. The dropout track unfolds over a period of six to eighteen months. The key phases of the dropout track have consistently surfaced in hundreds of interviews with inactive Adventists conducted by Adventist pastors.

1. A cluster of stressful events
2. Subtle attempts to reach out for help
3. Pastor and members do not respond
4. Hurting members feels angry at no response
5. Involvement in church decreases
6. Hurting member quits attending, expecting to be contacted
7. No one contacts them to ask why they dropped out
8. They try to forget the painful memories
9. They reinvest the time they use to spend at church

There is evidence that the dropouts are people who never bonded with the core group of their congregation, never felt a part of the "inner circle." Two out of three participated in church, while they were active members, only by attending, and did not hold office or have some volunteer task in the congregation." They report few visits by church members or pastors, even while they were still regular attendees. Only about one in three have attended an Adventist school at any level, kindergarten through college.

The majority of those who drop out of church do not think they have lost their faith. They often state they do not need to be church members to be believers. Many say they intend to come back, and would probably do so now, if someone cared enough about them to invite them back and to welcome them when they return. Those who drop out generally feel no one has seriously missed them.

#### Resources for Reclaiming Ministry

##### **Safety Zone- A Workshop for Friends Reaching Friends Who Quit Church**

is an eight-part seminar designed to introduce Missing Member Ministry in the local church. It includes a Leader's Guide explaining how to use the materials to train a visitation team; training video with step-by-step dramatizations showing clearly how to set up and make a visit to a former member; and interviews with local church leaders with pilot programs as a "safe place" for former Adventists. This resource can be used to help interested church members become comfortable in working with missing members. Available from the Center for Creative Ministry at 800.272.4664.

**Learning to Care** is a two part training package to prepare a local church for a visitation program by helping the leaders to understand and analyze the dropout problem in their congregation and by equipping group of lay visitors to make effective house calls on the inactive and former members. The Church Leadership Retreat is a six hour weekend event for the elders and church board. The Visitation Training Seminar is a 17 hour program presented over two weekends, two weeks apart between which practice visits are made. A number of certified instructors are available across North America. For the name of the nearest instructor, contact the Center for Creative Ministry - 800.272.4664.

**Reclaiming Missing Members** is a continuing education package designed for pastors. Included are an overview of the dropout problem and a careful review of the skills necessary to reclaim former and inactive members, and organize a Missing Member Program in the local church. It is available through *AdventSource* at 800.328.0525.

## "INMATE SPIRITUAL COUNSELING" CURRICULUM SEGMENTS

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

### **Curriculum Segment Highlights: Inmate Manipulation PM.111**

***"A lot of inmates spend their life [thinking of] how to manipulate people, from members of their own family to those in the Department of Corrections," says James Topham, a former Criminal Investigator with the New Hampshire Department of Corrections.***

***"Not every inmate [is out to manipulate], but every inmate in the right set of circumstances can own any officer. It's a game, but it can be a dangerous game." (Internet: A Look Back At Corrections in 2002.)***

**Introduction to Inmate Manipulation** identifies characteristics of inmate manipulators, factors of volunteer and/or staff to inmate manipulation, methods of defending against inmate manipulation.

This Module examines the reasons inmates manipulate. What is in it for them and why it is necessary for them to be successful in mastering the art of manipulation? The student will understand the tactics and the methods of inmate manipulators.

### **Overview**

This Module will provide the student with insights into the manipulative mindset of manipulators behind prison walls. The student will understand and be acquainted with the methods necessary to avoid the manipulative endeavors of inmates. This Module will help the student to know how to confront manipulative behavior.

### **Learning Outcomes**

1. To equip the student with tools on how to avoid manipulation tactics of inmates.
2. To familiarize the student with the numerous ways that manipulators play manipulative games.
3. To help the student to understand the mindset of those who manipulate.
4. To gain insight on how to deal with inmates and their manipulative skills.

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



## PRISON MINISTRY HAPPENINGS

**My friend, who's incarcerated, is such an encouragement to me. He often sends me notations, thoughts to ponder, and other musings. Enjoy with me one of his latest findings.**

### **Directions to My Father's House**

**Make a right onto "Believeth Boulevard."**

**Keep straight and go through the green light which is Jesus Christ.**

**From there, you must turn onto the "Bridge of Faith" which is over troubled water.**

**When you get off the bridge, make a right turn and keep straight. You are on the "King's Highway" – Heaven bound!**

**Keep going for three miles: One for the Father, One for the Son, and One for the Holy Ghost. Then exit off onto "Grace Boulevard."**

**From there, make a right turn onto "Gospel Lane." Keep straight and then make another right on "Prayer Boulevard."**

**As you go on your way, yield not to the traffic on "Temptation Avenue."**

**Also, avoid Sin Street, because it's a Dead End!**

**Pass up "Envy Drive" and "Have Avenue."**

**Also, pass "Hypocrisy Street", "Gossiping Lane" and "Backbiting Boulevard."**

**You do have to go down "Long-Suffering Lane," "Persecution Boulevard" and "Trials and Tribulations Avenue."**

**But that's all right, because VICTORY Boulevard is straight ahead!**

*Submitted by Marvin Crossell*

### **EDITOR'S P.S.**

When my son, Torrence was a little boy, in the scurry of our moving to a new location, he was "missing." I'll never forget the overwhelming emotion of dread I felt—not to think of how my little boy was feeling—missing – missing from the action that was taking place in the house – he was all alone. I stopped whatever I was doing and frantically began looking for him - calling his name - asking the neighbors if they had seen him. I looked everywhere! I didn't stop until, at last-- I found him. How relieved I was! (He was under the sink.) How happy he was-- Mommy had found him. I picked him up and held him close to me. He was safe.

I believe missing members are waiting for us to find them. We must go on a search and rescue mission – no resting until they've been found. Some we may have to search hard, high and low; remember, a costly price was paid for them—the blood of Jesus. We must find our "Missing from Action" church members, so they can be happy, relieved, and safe and secure in the arms of Jesus.

I'm outta here!

CB

