

Seventh-day Adventist

**Pastor's and Elder's Handbook
For
Youth Ministry**

Prepared and Published by
The Youth Department and the Ministerial Association
The General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
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Foreword

The defining reality of what it means to be a Christian is Christ Himself. Understanding and receiving the boundless grace of God in Jesus Christ is central to the experience of Christian faith. Seventh-day Adventist youth ministry is all about introducing our children, teens and young adults to their Savior and nurturing their development into fully mature disciples of Christ.

This book is a practical guide for pastors, elders, volunteer youth leaders, parents and others in the local church who desire to create a new youth ministry program or strengthen an existing one. Rather than present a one-size-fits-all prescription for youth ministry in every situation, this small volume sets out a comprehensive philosophy

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Youth Department

Mission Statement

The primary focus of Youth Ministry is the salvation of youth through Jesus Christ. We understand youth ministry to be that work of the church that is conducted for, with, and by young people.

Our task is to:

- ❑ Lead youth to understand their individual worth and to discover and develop their spiritual gifts and abilities.
- ❑ Equip and empower youth for a life of service within God's church and the community.
- ❑ Ensure the integration of youth into all aspects of church life and leadership in order that they might be full participants in the mission of the church.

To accomplish our task:

- ❑ We will achieve a balanced ministry by incorporating the biblical dynamics of fellowship, nurture, worship, and mission.
- ❑ We will be committed to keeping relevant and effective in ministry by relating all ministries to the needs of the youth. It is imperative that we listen to and are informed by their perceptions, concerns, and suggestions. Effective ministry becomes possible in an atmosphere of love, acceptance, and forgiveness.
- ❑ We will conduct ongoing research to discover areas that need attention. We are committed to experimentation and innovation in our programs because we recognize the ever-changing nature of today's youth.
- ❑ We will find inspiration in God's word and our history, and have faith in God for the future. Our philosophy will find expression in a wide variety of God-ordained ministry styles and programs.

We will provide regular evaluation to ensure that our primary focus is achieved.

Introduction

Pastors and elders fill the role of leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist local congregation. In this role, their understanding of youth ministry is paramount to the implementation, development and facilitation of this ministry at this level.

Youth ministry is one of the mediums through which our church is preparing for today's and tomorrow's challenges. It is designed to support the local church and is dedicated to helping Adventist youth develop to their fullest potential and to use that potential for the fulfillment of the gospel commission. All those called to participate in this ministry must be aware of their high calling and the noble work in which they are engaged.

As local church leaders, you must realize that it is your primary duty to give full attention to the youth of the church. You have not been called to entertain the youth, but to lead them. You have not been called to do the work alone, but to help others understand their responsibility toward the youth of this church. A clear understanding of the nature of youth ministry will be of great help.

You are not called to be the only ones with “know-how” or to guard zealously your knowledge and expertise; you are called to train and help local lay youth leaders discover ways and means to help the youth of their churches and to assume responsibility for their youth. For this, a proper understanding of youth ministry in the local church is pertinent.

Youth ministry in the church is an interrelationship of adult-youth leadership geared to the youth population of the church. Through the youth organization, the church supports and works for and with its youth to meet their needs today.

The primary purpose of Adventist youth ministry is to win, train, commission and hold the youth, ages 6-30. To fulfill this purpose, there is need for an active Youth Ministry that must have:

1. An organization through which it works.
2. Trained leadership to plan and lead in its activities.
3. Materials with which to work.
4. A supporting constituency.

In His master plan, “the Lord has appointed the youth to be His helping hand” (*Testimonies*, vol. 7. p. 64).

Youth are not only the future of the church; they are also very much a part of it today! “The youth, if right, could sway a mighty influence” (*Messages to Young People*, p. 204). This army of youth, “rightly trained,” can hasten the soon return of our Lord and Saviour (see *Messages to Young People*, p. 196). The minister's first responsibility is to learn how to work for young people and train them for service (see *Gospel Workers*, pp. 207, 210; *Christian Service*, p. 34; *Testimonies*, vol. 6, pp.435, 436).

Ministry for Adventist youth is important, because “...the spirit of unselfish labor for others gives depth, stability, and Christ-like loveliness to the character, and brings peace and happiness to its possessor... Those who thus exercise the Christian graces will grow and will become strong to work for God. They will have clear spiritual perceptions, a steady, growing faith, and an increased power in prayer... The only way to grow in grace is to be disinterestedly doing the very work which Christ has enjoined upon us—to engage, to the extent of our ability, in helping and blessing those who need the help we can give them. Strength comes by exercise; activity is the very condition of life” (*Steps to Christ*, p. 80).

Thus, the goals of ministry to Adventist youth in the local church are:

?**To organize** the resource of youthful energy for active service for others.

?**To instruct** church youth leadership in the various methods of teaching theory and give them program techniques of ministry to help Adventist youth reach their goals.

?**To save** the children and youth of the church by leading them personally into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ and by training them to share Christ happily and skillfully, realizing that “those who thus devote themselves to unselfish effort for the good of others are most surely working out their own salvation” (*Steps to Christ*, p. 80).

God’s work can never be finished without the young people of our church. The future of this cause depends upon them. The youth ministry sponsored by this church is to save our youth, train them for service and involve them in the commission “And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come” (Matt. 24:14).

As leaders in the local church, you need to help the youth under your care to realize this. In so doing, the need of being humble before the Lord and living daily close to Him is absolutely essential. Your strength is in the Lord. “For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him” (2 Chronicles 16:9). Long ago, Ellen White wrote:

“The youth need more than a casual notice, more than an occasional word of encouragement. They need painstaking, prayerful, careful labor. He only whose heart is filled with love and sympathy will be able to reach those youth who are apparently careless and indifferent (*Gospel Workers*, p. 208).

Churches are challenged to support our youth. Pastors elders, teachers, parents—everyone must join together to give our young people both moral and financial support. If we want to see our Seventh-day Adventist heritage—our values, our dreams of carrying the Savior’s message to the whole world—if we want to see those things live on in a new generation, then pastors and elders must commit themselves unreservedly to nurturing, leading and loving that generation of young people.

It is our prayer that this manual will serve as a training program for the purpose of equipping pastors and elders of local churches for a thorough understanding of youth and youth ministry and also for their roles in facilitating and implementing youth programs and activities that encourage participation and involvement in the life and work of the church.

Chapter I—Foundations of Youth Ministry

1. What Is Youth Ministry?

Youth ministry is that work of the church that is conducted for, with and by young people. While many discussions of youth ministry focus primarily on ministry to teenagers, our church's youth ministry includes programs to meet the needs of young people from elementary school age right up to young adults.

2. Philosophy of SDA Youth Ministry

The basic philosophy of Seventh-day Adventist youth ministry is one of "Salvation and Service." Our twin goals are to lead youth into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ and to train them for service to others. Ellen G. White's best-known statement on youth emphasizes the importance of service as an essential element of youth ministry:

"With such an army of workers as our youth, rightly trained, might furnish, how soon the message of a crucified, risen, and soon-coming Savior might be carried to the whole world!" (*Education*, p. 271).

3. Brief History of Seventh-day Adventist Youth Ministry

Most of us are familiar with the story of how Seventh-day Adventist youth ministry was started by two teenagers, Luther Warren and Harry Fenner, in Hazelton Township, Michigan in 1879. These two young men, concerned about the spiritual needs of their peers both inside and outside the church, prayed together and then launched what became the first Adventist youth society—a small group of boys (later boys and girls) who met weekly to sing, pray, study the Bible, do missionary work, and enjoy wholesome recreation.

Other youth-led societies sprang up on a local level, and in the first decade of the twentieth century the church as a whole, encouraged by Ellen White and others who saw the importance of youth work, began to organize a youth program. The first official Seventh-day Adventist youth organization was founded in 1907 under the name "Young People's Society of Missionary Volunteers." The name was chosen to clearly indicate the focus on service and outreach as an integral part of our youth ministry.

Though the name has been changed to "Adventist Youth" (1979), in the 100 years since then, the focus of the Seventh-day Adventist youth movement has remained one of salvation and service. Adventist youth ministry is now a worldwide movement focusing on winning young people to Jesus and training them to share His message of love with others.

4. Biblical Principles for Youth Ministry

Throughout the Bible, we are frequently urged to pass our knowledge of God's love and His principles for living on to the younger generation. While this responsibility begins with the family, in the biblical context it is also the responsibility of the community. In our era, this challenge is passed to the faith community: God's church.

These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up (Deuteronomy 6:6,7, NIV).

One generation will commend your works to another; they will tell of your mighty acts (Psalm 145:4, NIV).

Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruc-

tion of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4, NIV).

See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the Lord comes. He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers; or else I will come and strike the land with a curse (Malachi 4: 5,6, NIV).

The Bible also makes it clear through example that youth and young adults have an active role to play in doing God's work on earth. Both Old and New Testaments are full of examples of young people who were called to serve the Lord: Joseph, Samuel, Namaan's Israelite maid, Mary of Nazareth, Jesus in the temple at age 12, Timothy. It was to Timothy that his mentor, Paul, wrote:

“Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity” (1 Timothy 4:12, NIV).

These words should be an encouraging admonition to Adventist youth today, and should also provide guidance to those of us who work with youth, who should not “look down on” them but be willing to learn from their example, as we hope they will learn from ours.

5. Functions of Youth Ministry

1. To raise the level of the devotional life of the individual young person.
2. To lift up the standard of attainment of the youth.
3. To educate and train for service.
4. To provide opportunities for outreach and service.
5. To teach the principles of stewardship.

6. Today's Challenge: Youth Ministry in a Postmodern World

In many ways, youth ministry faces similar challenges to those it faced in the days of Luther Warren and Harry Fenner. Adolescents and young adults, now as then, are going through a time of tremendous changes and choices in their lives. They are completing their education, choosing career paths, and preparing for the choice of a life partner. As always, young people need the support of a Christian community and the guidance of mature Christians while they move through these crucial years.

These elements of youth work have not changed in over a hundred years. But some things have changed. The world of the early twenty-first century operates on different assumptions than did the world of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. We often think of temptations such as drug abuse and premarital sex, which are far more available to youth in this generation than in previous generations. But society has also changed at a deeper and more basic level: there has been a significant shift in most people's worldview, the way they perceive truth.

In past generations, both Christian and non-Christian people tended to view many major truths as absolute and applicable to everyone. Societal standards were more generally agreed-upon. Certainly there were rebels who flouted those standards, but they were aware that they were transgressing widely accepted societal rules.

Today's society is often called “postmodern,” and one of the key identifying factors of postmodernism is the idea that all truths, all values are relative rather than absolute. To put it in everyday language, What's right for me may not be right for you. Our youth are growing up in a society that emphasizes tolerance and acceptance of everyone's views, everyone's ideas as a primary value.

This can be positive, in that it can cause young people to be more open to others, more flexible, less rigid and judgmental, more accepting of diversity than those of earlier generations. The drawback, however, is that youth—even committed Christian youth—are far less likely to see biblical values and standards as absolutes that apply to everyone in

every situation. This affects the choices they make in their individual lives—it is easier than ever to rationalize, “This rule doesn’t apply to me in this situation.” It also affects the way they view other people and the world around them—they are far less likely to condemn sin and seek to share the gospel with others if they believe that those “others” are following an equally valid “spiritual path.”

The challenge to pastors and church elders in the twenty-first century is to understand the postmodern world in which our youth live and emphasize its positive aspects, while at the same time pointing them to biblical truth, which has remained unchanging throughout thousands of years of shifting worldviews and philosophies. Our challenge is to introduce them to a Jesus who is as relevant and as needed in the twenty-first century as He was in the first.

Study Guide
Foundations of Youth Ministry

Seventh-day Adventist Youth Ministry is biblical and historical. Youth ministry is that work of the church that is conducted for, with and by young people.

As you read the chapter, seek to develop a clear definition of what Youth ministry is in the local church. Ask yourself the questions, “What is youth ministry?” “Why do we have youth ministry in the local church?” “What is the primary focus of youth ministry?”

Know:

The basic philosophy of Seventh-day Adventist youth ministry is one of “Salvation and Service”.

Youth ministry started in the local church.

Seventh-day Adventist youth ministry is based on Biblical principles.

The functions of youth ministry in the local church.

The challenge of youth ministry in the postmodern world.

Learn:

1. The primary focus of youth ministry is 1. _____ and 2. _____. Our twin goals are to lead youth into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ and to train them for service to others.

2. The two teenagers who started Seventh-day Adventist youth ministry were 1. _____, 2. _____ in Hazelton Township, Michigan, 1879.

3. List four Biblical principles for youth ministry:

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.

4. List five functions of youth ministry:

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.

5. List three challenges of youth ministry in a postmodern world:

- a.
- b.
- c.

DO:

1. What is your understanding of “Salvation and Service” in Adventist youth ministry?
2. Why do you think it is important to have youth ministry in your church?
3. Can you briefly tell the history of Seventh-day Adventist youth ministry.
4. Explain your understanding of Deuteronomy 6: 6, 7; Psalms 145:4; Malachi 4:5, 6, Ephesians 6:4.

Break Out Session
Questions for Group Discussion

1. What is youth ministry?
2. What is the primary focus of youth ministry?
3. How can you show that your local church youth ministry program is based on “Salvation and Service”?
4. What was the original name of the Adventist youth organization, and what was the focus of the Department?
5. What are the Biblical principles for youth ministry?
6. How are the five functions of youth ministry reflected in the youth program of your church?

Chapter II—Your Church's Youth Ministry Program

1. The Importance of Local Church Youth Ministry

Every local church, no matter how many or how few young people attend, should have a youth program. An active youth program with caring, committed leadership can be a powerful force to keep young people involved in church, to win back inactive youth and to reach out to youth and their families in the community. Pastors, elders and nominating committees should make it a high priority to find a team of leaders in the church willing to commit time and energy to building and nurturing a youth program.

2. Organization of the Youth Program

The larger and more diverse your youth group, the more detailed organizational structure will be required. In a small church with just a handful of young people, one or two parents of young people, or the youth Sabbath School teacher, may take responsibility for running a youth program. In larger churches, where more youth are involved, you will need a more structured approach.

The *Church Manual* recommends following the AYS (Adventist Youth Society) plan of organization, with an Adventist Youth leader, a sponsor who should be an elder or board member, and AYS executive officers. Some churches have organized a “youth leadership team” or “youth council,” which serves the same function under a different name. Whatever you call your youth leadership body, it should consist of adults who have a love for the Lord and for youth, and representatives of the youth themselves who are committed to serving Jesus and their fellow young people. Also of equal importance are the nominations of Adventurer Club director and Pathfinder Club director who serve on the church board (see *Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual*).

Everyone in your church who is concerned with youth work should work together harmoniously. AYS officers, Sabbath School teachers, Pathfinder leaders, the academy pastor or chaplain if your church has one—all should meet together to plan activities that will complement rather than compete with one another.

3. Youth Ministry Organization for Local Churches

ADVENTURER MINISTRY

The Adventurer program is the first level of youth ministry within the local church. It is conducted as an organized club or society for children six to nine years old with four classes: Busy Bee, Sunbeam, Builder, and Helping Hand.

The Adventurer program is distinct and separate from the Pathfinder program and has a different operating policy and philosophy.

A separate leader for the Adventurer program is to be elected by the church; however, this leader should sit on the Pathfinder Council and coordinate Adventurer Club activities with the Pathfinder director. The church elects the Adventurer leader, who then is responsible directly to the church board.

PATHFINDER MINISTRY

In terms of importance, the Pathfinder organization is equal to the AY organization. Pathfinder ministry embraces all activities conducted through the Pathfinder Club, which is for youth 10-15 years old.

Pathfindering is a holistic approach to junior/teen ministry in a club situation. It is well adapted to meet the

developing mental, spiritual, social and physical needs of young people. It is operated primarily for Seventh-day Adventist youth but is not exclusive and has tremendous potential for youth evangelism.

The church elects the Pathfinder director, and he or she is responsible directly to the church board and not to the youth leader. The Pathfinder director is to lead in all Pathfinder activities and meetings.

SENIOR YOUTH MINISTRY

Senior Youth Ministry is directed to all senior youth and young adults aged 16-30. The main purpose of this ministry is to train and prepare the youth of the church for service. For this purpose, Senior Youth Ministry prepares two groups of leaders: Master Guides to work with the juniors and AY leaders to work for the church at large. We encourage pastors and church elders to be a Master Guide and/or invested AY leaders in order to increase their influence upon the youth. The conference Youth director can provide the training for the pastors that were not invested at the seminary in addition to the local church AY leader and Master Guide clubs.

Master Guide

This class prepares the youth for leadership roles with Adventurer- and Pathfinder-age children. Because of its closely connected work with Adventurers and Pathfinders, this class is seen as a transition between Adventurer/Pathfinder ministry and Senior Youth ministry. It is expected that all those in the Master Guide Club are or will be active in church activities relating to Adventurer- and Pathfinder-age children. As senior youth, they find nurture and growth with other senior youth, but primarily they work with Adventurers or Pathfinders.

Adventurer- and Pathfinder-age activities are not limited to club activities, but may also involve other activities for these children and youth—Sabbath School, Vacation Bible School, Child Evangelism, etc.

Requirements

Participants in the Master Guide program must be at least 16 years of age and members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

I. Prerequisites

1. Be at least 16 years of age.
2. Be a baptized member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
3. Complete a basic staff training course in one of the following:
 - a. Adventurer ministries
 - b. Pathfinder ministries
 - c. Youth ministries

II. Spiritual Development

1. Read the book *Steps to Christ*.
2. Complete the devotional guide Encounter Series I, *Christ the Way*, or a Bible Year plan.
3. Keep a devotional journal for at least four weeks, summarizing what you read each day.
4. Demonstrate your knowledge of the 27 Fundamental Beliefs by completing one of the following:
 - a. Write a paper explaining each belief.
 - b. Give an oral presentation on each belief.
 - c. Give a series of Bible studies covering each belief.
 - d. Conduct a seminar teaching each belief.

4. Enhance your knowledge of church heritage by completing the following:
 - a. Reading the *Pathfinder Story*
 - b. Earning the Adventist Church Heritage Award
 - c. Reading a book on some aspect of church heritage

III. Skills Development

1. Attend and complete a two-hour seminar in each of the following areas:
 - a. Leadership skills
 - b. Communication skills
 - c. Creativity and resource development
 - d. Child and youth evangelism
2. Have or earn the following Honors:
 - a. Christian Storytelling
 - b. Camping Skills II
3. Earn two additional Honors of your choice not previously earned.
4. Hold a current Red Cross First Aid and Safety certificate or its equivalent.
5. Supervise participants through either an Adventurer Club or Pathfinder Club curriculum or teach a Sabbath School class for at least one quarter

IV. Child Development

1. Read the book *Education*.
2. Read at least one additional book on child development or attend a three- hour seminar dealing with child development within the age group of your chosen ministry.

V. Leadership Development

1. Read a current book on your choice of topic under the general category of Leadership Skill Development.
2. Demonstrate your leadership skills by doing the following:
 - a. Develop and conduct three worships.
 - b. Participate in a leadership role with your local church children's/youth group in a conference sponsored event.
 - c. Teach three Adventurer Awards or two Pathfinder Honors.
 - d. Assist in planning and leading a field trip for a group of Adventurers, Pathfinders or Sabbath School class.
 - e. Be an active Adventurer, Pathfinder, Youth Club, Sabbath School or AY Society staff member for at least one year and attend at least 75% of all staff meetings.
 - f. Identify three current roles in your life at least one of which is spiritually oriented, and list three goals or objectives for each.

VI. Fitness Lifestyle Development

1. Participate in a personal physical fitness plan for a minimum of three months and evaluate any level of improvement of physical condition.

SINGLES MINISTRY

Most of our church activities are geared to the family, and this is good. However, the youth director should not overlook the fact that there are others in the church, such as singles, university students, etc., who need special attention.

Thousands of single men and women are members of our churches, and we need to recognize this fact and give them the attention they deserve. Singles have special needs, and these should be addressed in the context of youth ministry.

This doesn't mean the youth directors are in the business of matchmaking. Singles ministry is a service that the department gives through its youth sections to help pastors minister to singles within the church.

Adventist Youth Leadership

AY leadership deals with the training of senior youth to work for other young adults and the Adventist youth societies, youth federations, and for general church leadership. It is the hope of the church that the full program will be used to train and prepare future leaders.

Training includes AY Society leadership and general church administration. Manuals for this training course are: *The Church Manual*, *Youth Ministry Handbook* and the division church leader's handbook or guide.

Requirements

A qualified person approved by the conference youth director—such as pastor, teacher, youth pastor, Master Guide, area youth coordinator or Youth Federation leader—is to be authorized to verify the completion of the requirements for a leader.

Section 1: You and God

1. Complete the ten-hour Youth Ministry Training Course.
2. Be a faithful student of the Sabbath School lessons. Read one Spirit of Prophecy book of your choice and write a report (not more than five pages double-spaced). The following points should be covered:
 - a. Main ideas
 - b. How the reading has strengthened your faith
 - c. What conclusions you have drawn from the reading.
3. Pass the Bible Truths examination; choose at least one church doctrine and, in writing,
 - a. Show how Christ is the center of this doctrine.
 - b. List ways the belief in this doctrine affects your daily living.
4. Do one of the following:
 - a. Complete the Adventist Youth Honor in Physical Fitness.
 - b. Complete the Adventist Youth Honor in Nutrition.
5. Do two of the following:

- a. Belong to a local temperance society.
- b. Participate in a temperance oratorical, poster or photo contest.
- c. Participate in a temperance march.
- d. Attend a Youth-to-Youth Seminar.

Section 2: You and Youth

1. Attend a seminar on counseling and a seminar on interpersonal relationships.
2. Study the Bible, Spirit of Prophecy, and other materials. Then, conduct a study or seminar during an AY meeting on two current issues that relate to Adventist youth.

Section 3: You and the Church

1. Pass the Church Heritage test.
2. Complete a course in local church leadership.
3. Do one of the following:
 - a. Plan and direct or co-direct a weekend church or campus senior youth retreat or a Spiritual Emphasis Week for youth.
 - b. Plan and direct, or assist in, at least two senior youth recreational activities, covering a total time span of at least six hours.

Section 4: You and the Community

After studying the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy teachings on spiritual gifts, write a brief summary of how your gifts can most effectively be used in Adventist Youth Ministry (see Ephesians 4:11, 12; 1 Corinthians 12:28). Choose and do one of the following:

1. Participate in a visiting activity to one of the following:
 - a. Hospital
 - b. Orphanage
 - c. Retirement home
 - d. Reformatory
 - e. Prison
2. Complete a community service training course and be an active member of a welfare organization (or volunteer for an activity to help others).
3. Complete a lay evangelists' training seminar.
4. Complete a Sabbath School teachers' training course.

4. Suggestions for a Successful Youth Ministry

A few pointers will help your church start a youth ministry or revitalize an existing ministry.

- **Find leaders who really love young people.** Youth can spot someone who doesn't genuinely care about them, and they won't follow that kind of leader. A leader who truly loves God and youth will be able to learn almost any other skill he/she needs to do the job.

- ❑ **Reach out.** Broaden the scope of your youth ministry beyond the children, teens and young adults in your church family. This is especially important if you have a small church with only a few youth. Throw the doors open to non-Adventist friends of your youth, neighborhood youth, non-SDA students attending your SDA school—any young person you can find. Youth ministry is a growth ministry.
- ❑ **Place your church's resources behind your youth.** Let your young people know that they, and their youth program, have your full support. Do this through financial support, through your own participation and involvement—come out to youth activities, invite youth to your home—through friendly and encouraging words, and through including youth in the life of the church at large.

If your youth leaders are looking for guidance on how to build their ministry and their own strengths as leaders, valuable resources to suggest are *Seven Principles for Youth Ministry Excellence*, produced by the North American Division Youth Ministries, and *Youth Ministry Manual*, produced by the General Conference Youth Department. The seven principles, in brief, are:

- ❑ **Ensure that you, the leader, are growing spiritually.**
- ❑ **Learn leadership skills.**
- ❑ **Nurture relationships with the youth.**
- ❑ **Plan your programs and activities thoroughly.**
- ❑ **Empower your youth for leadership.**
- ❑ **Communicate with the youth, their families, the church and the community.**
- ❑ **Mobilize youth for service.**

5. Youth Ministry Concepts

The basic organization for youth work is in the local church, and conference youth leaders should be aware of the functioning of the same. AY ministry is organized for senior youth and junior youth ministry. Conference youth directors should take leadership in promoting both. Senior youth ministry deals basically with the training of senior youth for service and is divided into AY leadership and Master Guide.

Conference/Field Youth Ministry

Senior Youth Ministry	Junior Youth Ministry
AY Leadership	Adventurers
Master Guide	Pathfinders

Church Youth Ministry

AY Leader	Pathfinder Director	Adventurer Director
AY Society	AJY Society	Adventurer Club
Master Guide Club	Pathfinder Club	
AY Leader Club		

It is the responsibility of pastors, church elders and youth directors to foster strong AY Societies in all churches and companies in their territory.

The church operates through the AY Society to dedicate special and quality time to the youth.

Local conference youth directors should help organize the AY Societies in their field, train their leaders and

monitor their functions.

It is part of the duties of youth directors to visit the AY Societies, counsel with the pastors and advise in improving the function of each society within their territory.

Once a year, preferably soon after the churches have finished their elections, youth directors should conduct AY leaders' seminars to explain the yearly program to church leaders, introduce materials to be used, conduct leadership training and discuss itineraries.

The quarterly youth ministry reports from the local AY Societies should be constantly monitored in order to help the AY Societies improve and upgrade their programs.

The AY Society operates two training programs for senior youth. These are intended to equip the senior youth for church leadership. The AY Leadership Course prepares and trains the youth for general leadership and all functions of local church leadership. The Master Guide Course prepares the youth to work especially with the children of the church. Both programs should be sponsored by the AY society.

6. Financing Youth Ministry

Youth work, like every other type of ministry, requires money. Your church probably already has a category within the church budget for Youth Activities, the Adventist Youth Society, or Pathfinder Club. If you are not currently budgeting for youth ministry, meet with your board and/or finance committee and make it a priority to do so.

Many youth leaders find the budget assigned to them inadequate to the task at hand. If your church simply cannot allocate a greater portion of the budget to youth work, then you should enthusiastically support appropriate fund-raising activities planned by the youth group. Youth often work quite hard to raise money to attend youth congresses, go on mission trips or put off special programs. If the church—especially the pastor, elders, and board members—willingly support these fund-raising efforts, that support means a great deal to young people and their leaders. It also sets a good example for the rest of the congregation and reduces the financial burden on the families of the young people and on youth leaders, who often pay for many activities out of their own pockets when other resources run dry.

7. Youth Sabbath School

The youth Sabbath School is the weekly teaching time and fellowship time for your young people. Some churches face problems with low attendance and lack of enthusiasm for youth Sabbath School programs. Some youth leaders will downplay the importance of the Sabbath School class, but by doing so they miss a valuable opportunity to disciple youth on a regular basis and to integrate them into the life of the church. Youth leaders should be encouraged to make use of all resources the church provides to make Sabbath School attractive and meaningful to youth. Parents should also be encouraged to make Sabbath School attendance a priority, both for themselves and their children.

8. Weekly Youth Programs

A church with a lively youth ministry will also provide other weekly programs for the youth, in addition to the Sabbath morning class. "While a successful youth ministry program in the local church includes a strong youth Sabbath School, there must be a specific time and place for more interaction, fellowship, recreation, witnessing outreach, and leadership training, which are all a part of the concepts to be fostered in the Adventist Youth Society," counsels the *SDA Church Manual* (p. 79).

In many churches the most important youth program is the weekly Adventist Youth meeting or vespers program,

generally held on a Friday or Sabbath afternoon to coincide with sunset. The content of these programs varies widely in different churches, though they often take the form of a youth-led, youth-oriented worship service, with a musical program, dramatic presentation or group activity sometimes taking the place of the sermon. The value of a weekly youth program cannot be stressed too much. Again, encourage your youth leaders to explore all the resources available to them to make the AYS meeting time valuable for the youth. The *Youth Ministry Accent*, a quarterly magazine produced by the General Conference, may provide additional ideas.

Ellen White advocated a lively, creative, youth-oriented approach to what are now called AYS meetings. “Do not imagine that you can arouse the interest of the young by going to the missionary meeting and preaching a long sermon. Plan ways whereby a live interest may be aroused. From week to week the youth should bring in their reports, telling what they have tried to do for the Saviour, and what success has been theirs” (*Gospel Workers*, pp. 210, 211).

Some churches have a less traditional style of weekly youth meeting, perhaps in the form of a small-group youth fellowship that might meet on a Friday or Sabbath evening or at the same time as your regular church prayer meeting on Wednesday night. This type of meeting can be wonderful for discipling youth and building fellowship within the group, especially if it is held in someone’s home. The host individual or family has a wonderful opportunity to mentor this group of young people, but we should encourage a weekly youth meeting in the church and a formal young adult organizations to give our youth representation in the church board and involvement in the mission and leadership of the church through the Adventist Youth Society.

If your church has an active Pathfinder program, this is another important weekly event for youth aged 10-15. Pathfinder meetings, generally held in the church or church school on a weeknight, involve the youth in hands-on learning activities, small-group dynamics, recreation and fitness. An Adventurer Club can provide the same kind of opportunities for younger children, aged 6-9, usually with the involvement of their parents. If your church does not have a Pathfinder or Adventurer Club, make it a priority to find a parent or other volunteer who is willing to lead this ministry.

Sabbath School, AYS meetings, Pathfinder and Adventurer Club meetings are the major weekly youth events most churches plan. Many churches with an active youth program plan others, such as a weekly Saturday night youth social event or a weekly Sabbath afternoon outreach when youth minister in the community by visiting nursing homes, hospitals and orphanages, conducting children’s ministries, distributing literature, performing street drama or doing any one of a number of other things to share God’s love with the community.

9. Youth Church Services

In most cultures, young people prefer a different worship style from that of their elders. Naturally, these preferences will vary depending on cultural practices, but younger people often prefer a livelier, less formal, more interactive worship style than older Adventists usually do.

While there are many ways to accommodate the worship needs of your youth (see “Youth and Worship in the Local Church,” below), having the youth lead your main church worship service on a regular basis—perhaps once a month, or once a quarter—is always a good idea. Besides allowing the youth to direct the worship experience, it also gives them valuable leadership and training skills, and allows the older adults in your church to appreciate the gifts and talents your young people have.

Work with your youth and their leaders to plan a regular youth church service. Encourage the youth to take as much ownership of these programs as possible. Be flexible enough to allow these services to be different, in format or style, from your regular church services, while still remaining within the boundaries of what your congregation considers acceptable for worship.

10. Major Youth Events

Events such as youth rallies or youth congresses, retreats, teen prayer conferences, junior and teen summer camps and Pathfinder camporees bring together Adventist young people from across a wide geographical area—conference, union, division or even worldwide. Events like these give young Adventists, especially those from small churches, the opportunity to see that they are not alone in their beliefs. As they form bonds of friendship with other Adventist young people and benefit from the planned programming at such events, their commitment to Christ and to the church is deepened. Many Adventist youth make their first commitment to Jesus at such events. Please, refer to Youth Ministry Handbook and Pathfinders Administrative Manual for more details on major events.

If such events take place on a regular basis in your conference, encourage your youth leaders to bring their youth to these events. Rally the church's support to help raise needed funds for travel. If your local conference is not sponsoring youth events like these, talk to your conference youth director about planning some major youth events.

11. Youth Federations

In many areas, groups of local Adventist Youth Societies from several churches join together to form federations. These groups work to coordinate activities, plan area-wide programs, share ideas and develop leadership skills in the youth leaders/pastors. If there is no youth federation in your area, talk with your youth leader and conference youth director about whether your church and other nearby Adventist churches could benefit from forming a federation. *See Appendix A, pg. 69*

12. Campus Ministries

Campus ministry is an important element of youth ministry. Almost all youth and young adults attend school or college. Your church should have a ministry to meet the needs of these young people in their school environment.

“Campus ministry” can mean many different things, depending on the needs within your congregation. If your church supports a church school or is located near an Adventist academy, you as pastor or elder, or someone on your church's pastoral team, should be involved in some way with the spiritual life of the school. This might include providing chaplain services at the school—giving worship talks, counselling with students—or, in a small school without a full-time Bible teacher, perhaps teaching Bible classes. Your church and school should be partners in youth ministry, so make yourself available to the school and its students as much as possible.

If some of the youth from your church attend public school, university or college, try to find ways in which your church can minister on that public school campus. While public schools in some parts of the world discourage religious programming, pastors or church youth leaders can become involved in the school in other ways—perhaps through volunteering to coach a sports team or lead an extracurricular activity. This will give you a valuable opportunity to get to know both the Adventist and non-Adventist students in the school.

If your church is near a public college or university campus, make sure you have an outreach to Adventist students on that campus. This might involve an organized campus club with yourself or the youth pastor/leader serving as sponsor or chaplain. If the Adventist group is not large enough to form a campus club, campus ministry can be as simple as inviting a group of Adventist students to your home for Sabbath dinner or Friday night fellowship on a regular basis or any day during the week. Such invitations will help them to feel connected to the local church, will ease homesickness for those who are far from home and will encourage them to bring non-Adventist friends to your church activities. In this way, your campus ministry can be a true outreach. *See Appendix B, pg. 91*

13. Week of Prayer

A Week of Prayer (sometimes called a Week of Spiritual Emphasis) is as beneficial for youth as it is for adult church members. Many Seventh-day Adventist schools hold a Fall and Spring Week of Prayer. Sometimes a guest speaker is invited to address the youth; sometimes youth themselves take leadership of the Week of Prayer program and give the daily talks. If the majority of your church's youth do not attend an Adventist school, the AYS or youth department of the church should hold a regular Week of Prayer. The General Conference Youth Department provides Week of Prayer readings for both junior and senior youth, published in the youth ministry journal *Accent*.

14. Yearly Themes

During each quinquennium the General Conference Youth Department develops and promotes Spiritual Yearly themes for the world church to be used by local Youth organizations. You can order "Starter Kits" full of ideas from your local conference to assist you in ensuring that your church participates in the program.

Study Guide
Youth Ministry Program in the Local Church

The Seventh-day Adventist Church places high importance on youth ministry at the local church level. Youth ministry is part and parcel of the whole local church program.

As you read the chapter, seek to understand the organization of the youth program in the local church. Ask yourself the questions, “What is the organization of youth programs for local church?” “Who represents these organizations on the local church boards?”

KNOW:

The importance of youth ministry in the local church.

The various levels of youth ministry in the local church.

Pointers for a successful youth ministry.

The place of pastors and elders in fostering youth ministry in the local church.

LEARN:

1. Every local church, no matter how many or how few young people attend, should have _____.
2. _____ and _____ and _____ committees should make it a high priority to find a team of dedicated leaders in the church to work with youth.
3. List the five youth organizations of local youth program:
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
 - e.
4. Senior youth /Young Adult ministry is directed to all _____ and _____, ages _____.
5. The main purpose of Senior/Young Adult youth ministry is to _____ and _____ for service.
6. _____ have special needs and these should be addressed in the context of youth ministry.
7. List the three youth leaders with their ministries who sit on the church board:
 - a. _____ (director), _____ (ministry)
 - b. _____ (director), _____ (ministry)
 - c. _____ (director), _____ (ministry)
8. The church operates through _____ society to dedicate _____ and _____ time to the youth.
9. List the seven principles for youth ministry excellence:
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
 - e.
 - f.
 - g.
10. List five major youth events:
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
 - e.
11. Mention five ways in which you can assist youth in meeting their financial needs:
 - a.

- b.
 - c.
 - d.
 - e.
12. List three reasons why you should establish a campus ministry program in your church:
- a.
 - b.
 - c.
13. What are yearly themes?
14. Why is planning of worship with youth important?

DO:

1. As a pastor/ elder, why do you think youth ministry is important in your church?
2. Review the youth ministry organization for local churches.
3. In what areas do you need training to enable you to become knowledgeable with youth organizations in the Seventh-day Adventist church?
4. How can you make a youth Week of Prayer an event that is attended by the whole church?
5. How many youth magazines can you mention that are used as resources for youth programs in your church?

Break Out Session
Questions for Group Discussion

1. What is the importance of youth ministry in the local church?
2. How can you show that all age levels of your youth in the local church are being served according to the youth ministry organization?
3. What are the differences between Adventurer Ministry, Pathfinder Ministry and Senior/Young Adult ministry?
4. Explain the difference between Master Guide and Adventist Youth Leadership?
5. What are the unique needs of single church members needing youth ministry spiritual support?
6. What suggestions do you have for a successful youth ministry in your local church?

7. How can you accommodate the worship needs of your youth?
8. Should youth be allowed to lead out in the main church worship service?
9. Why should a local church hold special Weeks of Prayer for its youth?

Chapter III—Youth Leadership in the Local Church

1. The Youth Pastor/Youth Leader

Some Seventh-day Adventist churches, usually larger ones, employ a member of the pastoral staff whose primary responsibility is youth ministry (sometimes shared with other responsibilities). If this is the case in your church, your youth pastor should work harmoniously with the rest of the pastoral team to meet the overall goals of the church, while placing youth concerns front and center.

In the majority of Adventist churches, a full-time, paid youth pastor is not available due to budget restrictions. Usually, the role of youth leader is filled by one or more committed volunteers. These might be church school teachers, parents of teens, or young adults in the congregation—anyone who has a burden for the needs of youth and is willing to help meet those needs. The youth leader’s official church office might be that of youth Sabbath School leader/teacher, or AYS leader or sponsor, but in a small congregation one or two individuals will usually be found filling a variety of roles as they attempt to meet the needs of youth in the church.

Although your volunteer youth leader is probably not a trained and ordained pastor, remember that he or she will be filling a pastoral-type role for the young people. While you, as pastor or elder, should be prepared to supplement and support the work of the youth leader, you will also need to respect his or her “territory” and the relationship he or she has established with the young people. A good youth leader should be an advocate for youth in the church and should build bridges between young people and older adults in the church.

2. AYS Society Officers

The *Church Manual* and the youth ministry handbook outlines the official executive positions recommended for the Adventist Youth Society. These are:

- ❑ **The leader**, whose task is to guide, counsel and motivate, and to liason with pastors, church board and the conference youth director.
- ❑ **The assistant leader**, whose role is to assist the leader and chair AYS meetings in the leader’s absence.
- ❑ **The secretary-treasurer**, whose role is to record the AYS activities and send reports to the conference youth director, and to keep track of the AYS budget.
- ❑ **The chorister and other musicians**. “Since music plays such an important role in the formation of the youth character, musicians should be as carefully selected as the rest of the officers of the Adventist Youth Society” (*Church Manual*, p. 103). The job of the chorister, also known as the worship leader, is an important one.
- ❑ **The sponsor**, a church elder or other qualified board member, whose role is to work with the youth leader in bringing the needs of the AYS before the church board. An older adult serving in the role of AYS leader might also fulfill the function of AYS sponsor, but if the youth leader is a youth or young adult, it is especially important to have an older adult sponsor to connect the youth program to the church board and the church program as a whole.

The *Church Manual* and the Youth Ministry Handbook states that the AYS officers may also appoint other officers such as fellowship/social leaders, devotional leaders, librarians, publicity leaders, and action group leaders. (See the *Church Manual* for a full list of appointments pertaining to youth ministry in local churches.)

The size, culture and style of your church and your youth organizations will determine how exactly your church follows this recommended model of organization. Even for small youth societies that would never be able to fill such an extensive slate of officers, this model is helpful as a guideline in pointing out areas of leadership that need to be filled—although in a small church, several of these roles will necessarily be filled by the same person.

3. Adventist Youth Ministries Committee

The *Church Manual* recommends that the AYS officers meet with all others in the church whose ministries concern the youth—the Youth Sabbath School leader, Personal Ministries leader, Health Ministries leader, church school or academy principal, Pathfinder and Adventurer Club directors. This committee should be an umbrella organization planning the youth ministry program in the local church. Though the *Church Manual* does not specifically direct that the pastor or a church elder must sit on this committee, it would obviously be beneficial to you, to the Youth Ministries Committee and to the church as a whole if you, as a pastor or elder, were involved in the planning of the youth program.

4. The Pastor's Relationship With Youth Leaders

A smooth relationship between the pastor and the youth leader(s) is essential if the youth ministry is to be a viable, vital part of the life of the church. Do not allow the relationship to become combative, competitive or confrontational. Youth leaders sometimes see senior pastors as being unsympathetic to the needs of youth, “out of touch” with youth culture or more interested in meeting the needs of older, more conservative church members. Do your best to disarm these prejudices by taking a personal interest in the youth leaders, the youth program and, most important, in the young people themselves.

5. Role of the Youth Leader in the Local Church

The youth leader(s) should be active, supportive members of the church. Ideally, the youth leader, or else a youth sponsor, should sit on the church board. The youth leader's role is to present the needs of the youth to the church and to integrate youth activities into the life of the church as a whole.

6. The Church Board and the Youth Council

At least one person on the youth council—usually the AYS leader or sponsor—should also be a church board member, in addition to the Adventurer and Pathfinder Club director. This provides a liaison between the youth council and the board. Ideally, the relationship between the youth council and the church board should be a smooth and supportive one. This is not always the case; sometimes the youth council may feel the church board is failing to provide enough support (either financial or moral support), or the church board may be critical or suspicious of the youth council's program. As pastor or elder, your role can be to mediate disputes and help these two bodies work harmoniously together.

7. The Youth Department and Other Church Departments

The Youth Department should work in harmony with other departments of the church, and, wherever possible, youth should be involved in the work of many church departments. As noted above (Adventist Youth Ministries Committee), the leaders of departments whose work involves the youth should meet together with the youth leaders to ensure that their programs complement and enhance one another.

8. Supplies for the Youth Program

Your youth leaders should have a budget to allow them to purchase needed materials for the youth program. Work with your conference office to make sure your youth department receives all pertinent materials, such as *Youth Accent*, *Insight* magazines, youth Sabbath School quarterlies, Pathfinder materials, youth leadership resources, locally church-produced resources, etc.

9. The Youth Library

Your church should have a library of Christian books that will interest and inspire young people. If your church uses the Pathfinder or AY Reading Certificate programs, youth can be encouraged to choose reading material from the church library to fulfill their requirements. If your church does not have such a library, look into the possibility of starting one. If you do have a library of youth materials, make sure it is kept current, adding new books as they are published. Young people enjoy reading material that is up-to-date and relevant both in content and in design.

Your youth leaders will thank you if you also include in the church library current, good-quality resources on youth leadership, produced by our denomination and by other Christian groups.

10. Training Seminars for Local Youth Department Officers

Professional development is always necessary for those who wish to enhance their ministry skills and build relationships with others in their field. Your church's youth leader may be a professional—a paid youth pastor—or he/she may be an unpaid volunteer, but in either case the need for training is the same. If your conference or union offers training seminars for youth workers, encourage your youth department officers to attend and do everything you can to make it possible for them to do so (this may include persuading the church board to vote them a travel subsidy). If such seminars are not in place in your area, ask your conference/mission or union youth director to look into providing training for youth workers. In some areas, excellent youth leadership training programs may be available from other Christian denominations or non-denominational groups. Your youth workers should be encouraged to attend such events as a supplement to, but not a substitute for, training seminars provided by the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

11. Training Courses

To make membership in voluntary organizations such as the AY Society and Pathfinder Club meaningful, leaders need to apply the best skills and leadership. The Youth Leadership Training Course and the Pathfinder Staff Training Course, properly conducted, meet this need. The Master Guide and AY Leader's requirements are in the leadership-training category. Some AY specialty plans, such as the AY Voice of Youth, also include training sections.

A continuous, carefully planned training program is one of the conference youth director's most exacting and challenging responsibilities. It is also one of the most rewarding in present and long-range benefits. Training materials now available offer the advantages of years of study, research and testing. Your directors should include systematic training programs as part of their responsibilities and make sure their fields will be covered every year with up-to-date training methods and materials.

12. Evangelism

Workers in Adventist youth ministry have developed specialized plans of evangelism, which are fully explained in printed materials. Youth directors are to be first and always soul winners, either directly or in related services. The officially adopted plans have the appeal of mobilization for concerted action and the stimulation of sharing a common goal. This does not preclude local initiative on the part of conference youth directors of local AY Society leadership. Such initiative is encouraged, along with established plans, and often creates new insights and methods that may go far beyond the point of origin. The evangelistic slogan "Outreach" has become the timeless trademark for Adventist youth. It represents a concept that should be the basis for all AY planning, teaching and activity.

13. Meetings

Effective conference youth directors plan frequent meetings for young people. These will include the following:

- AY Society officers' councils (especially near the beginning of the year)
- Youth revivals
- Youth Bible conferences
- Youth leadership training
- AY rallies
- Youth congresses

High on the schedule of priority meetings each year is the AY Week of Prayer, which has become one of the most fruitful evangelistic endeavors of the church. Every church must be urged to participate, *Youth Accent* provides the material for this special program.

Youth directors should recognize, however, that youth ministry is not an institutional function, and they should encourage churches to develop and carry out local programs.

The trend of making youth ministry a conference program, and not a church-centered program, should be discouraged. It is the duty of youth directors to promote and foster strong local church organizations and programs. Small churches may band together in Youth Federations to achieve common goals.

14. AY Materials

A prime requisite of modern AY leadership is a clear knowledge of AY resource materials and their function. New youth directors must first be well informed by becoming familiar with all such materials. It is too much to expect that youth leaders will be enthusiastic about their responsibilities if they have little knowledge of resource materials. The supply list should be distributed to all local church youth leaders at least twice a year. A frequent checkup on knowledge and use of AY materials will pay big dividends and make a difference in youth ministry.

Study Guide
Youth Leadership in the Local Church

One of the most important things in the local church is to ensure that there is a strong youth leadership to support the various activities of young people. Pastors and elders are to support the local youth leadership and the work connected with youth ministry.

As you read this chapter, broaden your understanding of youth leadership.

KNOW:

A pastor or elder is a key to the success of a healthy youth program. You are a very vital link in the local youth programs. Your support for the youth leaders is very crucial.

Pastors, elders and local youth leaders should work as a team. The pastors, and elders should organize training seminars for youth leadership.

Remember that you are not only a local church leader for adults but for the youth as well.

Ensure that right leadership is appointed to foster the work of youth ministry in your churches.

Pastors and elders are the spiritual parents of young people.

Encourage church adults members to support youth programs in anyway that can give growth to youth ministry in your local church.

LEARN:

1. The role of youth leader is filled by one or more committed volunteers, these might be:
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
2. Volunteer youth leaders fill a _____ role for the young people.
3. List some of the key AYS officers:
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
 - e.
4. Who comprises the youth ministries committee?
5. The youth department should work in harmony with _____ departments of the church.
6. List four resources used in your local church youth program:
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
7. What is the importance of having a youth library?
8. Who should be responsible for organizing training seminars for local youth department officers?
9. List two training courses for youth ministry?
10. What is the timeless trademark for Adventist youth?
11. List six frequent meetings that are planned by effective pastors and elders for young people:
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
 - e.
 - f.
12. The trend of making youth ministry a _____ program, and not a _____ program should be discouraged.
13. A prime requisite of modern AY leadership is a _____ of AY _____ and their function.

DO:

1. How can I and the local youth leaders work together to minimize friction?
2. What could I do to publicly support youth programs?
3. How can I ensure that AYS society officers are appointed during the yearly nominating committee?
4. What can I do to disarm prejudices among youth leaders who see me being unsympathetic to youth needs?
5. Think of ways you can hold training for local youth leaders.
6. In thinking of the frequent meetings for your young people in your local church, how many times have you attended the following:
 - a. AY Society officers' councils
 - b. Youth Revivals
 - c. Youth Bible Conferences
 - d. Youth Leadership Training
 - e. AY Rallies
 - f. Youth Congresses
 - g. Pathfinder Camporees
7. What are some ways of building a library for your young people?

Break Out Session
Questions for Group Discussion

1. Why is it important for pastors, elders to work as a team?
 2. Why is it necessary to appoint specific dedicated people to serve young people?
 3. What is the role of the youth leader in the local church?
 4. What is the usual point of conflict between pastors/elders and youth leaders?
 5. Has your churches made yearly training seminars for local youth leaders?
 6. In what ways can you assist youth leaders to make evangelism the basis of all youth programs?
- Chapter**
IV—Youth and the Local Church

1. Youth Involvement in Church

Sometimes we make the mistake of thinking that the only way in which youth need to be involved in the church is through the youth program. This is an error.

“While there is to be an active Adventist Youth Society in every church, it is important that the youth program not be isolated from the rest of the church. In addition to their participation in the youth organization, the young people should be integrated into responsible leadership and involvement in the entire church program. There should be young elders, young deacons and deaconesses, et cetera, working with experienced church officers. In all lines of church work the youth should be active. ‘In order that the work may go forward in all its branches, God calls for youthful vigor, zeal, and courage. He has chosen the youth to aid in the advancement of His cause’—*Gospel Workers*, p. 67 (*SDA Church Manual*, p. 101).

Encourage your church board, your nominating committee, the chairs of various church committees, the platform elders, all to make use of the talents of young people whenever and wherever possible. Young people feel committed to a church where they feel needed, valued and respected.

2. Empowering Youth

Youth are empowered by involvement. They need to take ownership of a program if they are going to care about it and be committed to it. This applies to your Adventist Youth program; it applies to all aspects of church life. Apathetic, unmotivated young people are usually those who have never been given an opportunity to become actively involved in the life of their church.

Trusting youth to take leadership and ownership is risky, because they will make mistakes. But just as Jesus was patient with the mistakes of His disciples as they learned to serve Him, so church leaders who are truly committed to discipling young people will be patient with them as they move through the learning process.

Remember the New Testament story of John Mark, Barnabas' young cousin, who accompanied Paul and Barnabas on a missionary journey, but turned back out of discouragement. When he later wanted to join them again, Paul refused, but Barnabas was so committed to giving this young man a second chance that he resigned his role in Paul's popular, successful evangelistic team to start up his own ministry with the unpromising young John Mark. John Mark was so empowered by Barnabas' faith in him that he later became a leader whose worth even Paul acknowledged. In this case, the great apostle Paul is not the example we should strive to follow. Rather, church leaders should endeavor to follow Barnabas' example. Have faith in young people, have patience in them, place trust in them, and watch them grow! (See manual *Empowering Youth* prepared by the General Conference Youth Department.)

3. Nurturing Youth

Youth grow through relationships. They grow in Christ through relationships with committed adult Christians. In the example of Barnabas and John Mark, Barnabas was willing to serve as a loving mentor to the young John Mark. Relationships of this caliber will transform the Christian experience of your young people. Youth need positive relationships with adults who can model the Christian life and truly care about the young people.

While the example of Christian parents is vital, not every young person in your church has committed Christian parents. Even for those who do, it's essential that they have other positive relationships with adults outside the family to supplement parental influence.

Do not assume that nurturing youth, spending time with them, listening to their problems and mentoring them is solely the task of the youth leader or church school teachers. You, as a church leader, can have a powerful influence on young people by entering into relationship with them, especially since they will perceive that this is not just “part of your

job,” as it might be for the youth leader—you are going out of your way to get to know them just because you care.

4. Pastors and Elders Cooperating With Youth

Youth need to see that their elders and leaders are working alongside them, supporting and getting to know them. Whenever the opportunity arises—a fundraiser, a community work project, even a social event—attend, roll up your sleeves, and work together with the youth. Show them that you are concerned about and supportive of their goals, and willing to “get your hands dirty,” either literally or figuratively!

5. Conflicts Between Youth and Church Leaders

Younger people and older people do not always see eye-to-eye, even within the church. Even Christian young people have a youthful tendency to question and sometimes even to defy authority. The “generation gap” can lead to conflicts between youth and church leaders.

If such conflicts occur in your church, be sure that you and all your church leaders take a redemptive, nurturing approach in their dealings with youth, rather than a harsh, rigid approach. It is important to look at the “big picture”: being proven right in a particular conflict is less important than the ultimate salvation of the young person involved. While church leaders should never deny their principles, they may need to be flexible in their attitudes when dealing with youth.

Your youth leader should be able to serve as a mediator in serious conflicts between youth and church leaders. He or she should be able to talk honestly with both the young person and the adult involved and help each to see the other’s point of view.

6. Church Discipline for Youth

While young church members are subject to the same standards of church discipline as adult members (as outlined in the *Church Manual*), special care needs to be taken in dealing with discipline situations involving youth. Young people often go through periods of rebellion against adult authority, which may include church and school authority. If they are counselled in a loving and accepting manner, these crises can often provide opportunities to strengthen their ties to the Lord and to the church, rather than break them.

Many young adults, after leaving home and perhaps the sheltered environment of a church school, go through a period during which they do not attend church and do not actively pursue an Adventist lifestyle, though they may still adhere to Adventist beliefs. If their contacts with the church and with older adult members are positive during this time, they often choose to return later, perhaps when they have married and begun raising children of their own. If you see this pattern among young adults in your congregation, discuss it with your youth leaders. Rather than a reason to drop the young adults from membership, this may be an opportunity for your church to begin a young-adult ministry that reaches out to these young people.

7. Youth Baptisms and Baptismal Classes

Most young people who grow up in an Adventist home choose to join the church through baptism sometime during their pre-teen or teenage years. (The average age of baptism in the Adventist Church is 10.8 years). Work with your youth leaders to approach young people about baptism and plan either one-on-one studies or group baptismal classes for those interested in joining the church.

Baptismal studies for youth should focus on providing a clear understanding of the church’s fundamental beliefs, but also, and more important, on a saving relationship with Jesus. Young people who choose to be baptized should understand the full impact of the commitment they are making. If this means encouraging some would-be baptismal candidates to wait until they are a little older, this is fine. It may also mean avoiding “rushed” baptisms following an emotionally charged event

such as a Week of Prayer, youth rally or evangelistic series. It is wonderful if youth make a commitment to follow the Lord and be baptized at such an event, but their commitment should always be followed up with study to ensure that they are really ready for baptism.

8. Transmitting our Lifestyle Standards to Youth

Older Adventists are often very concerned when they look at young Adventists. The older generation may see youth wearing jewelry and dressing in ways their elders find inappropriate, or taking part in forms of entertainment (movies, dancing, secular music) their elders were taught to scrupulously avoid. It is natural for older Adventists to wonder whether the youth have any knowledge of, or respect for, traditional Adventist lifestyle standards. When addressing these issues, a few facts are worth remembering:

- ❑ **Some degree of rebellion is a normal part of adolescence.** A young person's need to assert his or her individuality often takes the form of outward appearance—choosing clothing, hairstyles or decoration that differ from his/her parents' taste. This means that even Adventist young people who are sincerely committed to Christ may choose to wear and do things that will raise the eyebrows of their elders.
- ❑ **Young people want to know “Why?”** This has always been true, but it is even more true in today's postmodern culture. Presenting young people with a list of do's and don't's doesn't work. They want to know the values that underlie these standards, so we need to be prepared to talk about those values when we discuss lifestyle issues with youth. (See Lifestyle Brochures produced by General Conference Youth Department.)
- ❑ **Youth despise inconsistency and hypocrisy in their elders**—even though they are quite capable of being inconsistent and hypocritical themselves! If an adult tells a teenage girl that she is showing “outward adornment” by wearing a pair of cheap costume-jewelry earrings, the teenager will probably be quick to point to the older woman's expensive watch, dress and handbag and ask, “Aren't you spending more of your money on outward adornment than I am?” Be prepared to deal with questions like these when you discuss such issues with youth, and be sure your own views on lifestyle issues are consistent.

9. Youth and Church Business Meetings

Young Adventists rarely attend church business meetings, even if they are baptized church members and eligible to do so. Of course, they can hardly be faulted for this, since in many churches adult members rarely attend business meetings either! While you may be working hard to convince adults in your congregation of the importance of attending church business meetings, do not forget the youth. Take time—or have the youth leaders take the time—to explain to young people what goes on at a church business meeting and why it is important for them to be there. Often, young people feel that they have no input and no voice in the church. Show them that they can share their views by attending, speaking and voting at business meetings.

In some churches, sadly, adults are reluctant to have young people attend the business meeting (or even sit on the church board) because they feel the youth may be discouraged by the un-Christian attitudes that members display toward each other in these settings. If this is the case in your church, the problem is not with the young people! Church members need to be educated to treat one another with Christian love even when discussing “hot” topics. Perhaps for some adults, having their young sons and daughters attending might inspire them to curb their tongues! However, if you sense that an upcoming business meeting may be controversial and your young people have been encouraged to attend, you might ask the youth leader to prepare them for the possibility, perhaps by giving a devotional talk on the ideal of Christian love and how as sinners we often fall short of this goal. Encourage the youth always to fix their eyes on Jesus, not on church members, as the ultimate example of a holy life.

10. Youth and the Lord's Supper

In far too many churches, even baptized young people choose not to participate in the Lord's Supper (communion

service) and, even more frequently, in the ordinance of humility (footwashing). This may be because they do not fully understand the significance of these ceremonies, because they feel adults in the church do not make them welcome during communion service, or because (in the case of footwashing) they feel embarrassed and awkward with the ritual.

If this problem exists in your church, talk to your youth leaders. You may even want to take a youth Sabbath School class or AY program to talk to the youth directly about it. Work with the youth leader to plan a program that explores and explains the meaning of the Lord's Supper. Find out from the youth themselves why they are not participating and what would make them more likely to do so.

In some churches, offering special rooms where young people can perform the ordinance of footwashing together may make them more comfortable than expecting them to mingle with the adults during this part of the service.

Special youth communion services, often in the format of "agape feasts," can be very powerful. Youth leaders, with the help of pastors and elders, can lead young people through the footwashing and Lord's Supper in a reverent environment. However, services such as these should lead the way to, not take the place of, full youth involvement in the main church communion service.

11. Church Leaders Need to Show Support for Youth Programs

One of the best ways that pastors, elders and other church leaders can show support for the youth is to actively support their programs. When youth activities are open to adults and church members in general, the pastor and elders should attend as much as possible. Attend youth events not in a spirit of judgment or criticism—do not sit in the back row, frowning as if you are waiting to catch the young people making a mistake—but in a spirit of joyful participation. Worshiping, playing and praying alongside the young people will build bonds of trust and respect and allow opportunities for mentoring. Your support for youth programs will also provide tremendous encouragement to your youth leaders.

12. Youth and Worship in the Local Church

Youth need to feel involved in your church's worship. While youth and adults may have different worship needs, you and your church worship committee must strive as much as possible to create a worship experience that meets at least some needs for people of all generations. No, you cannot please "all of the people all of the time," but no one, young or old, should repeatedly go home from church Sabbath after Sabbath feeling that the service has been irrelevant and meaningless to them personally.

In his book *The ABZs of Adventist Youth Ministry*, veteran youth worker Stuart Tyner, of the Hancock Center for Youth and Family Ministry at La Sierra University, suggests ten ways to transform your church worship service to meet the needs of your church's youth:

- ❑ **Energy.** A more energetic, faster-paced service "makes us feel like the congregation really believes."
- ❑ **Informality.** Youth like to be "comfortable, not uptight."
- ❑ **Creativity.** Try something new—change the routine.
- ❑ **Practicality.** Youth want a service that gives them something they can apply to their everyday lives.
- ❑ **Challenge.** "We don't want pat answers and clichés. We want to think about this, find the principles, be challenged."
- ❑ **Relevancy.** Choose illustrations that come from the world youth are familiar with, not only from the adult world.
- ❑ **Sincerity.** "We don't mind sincere emotion. We want the message to come from the heart."
- ❑ **Contemporary.** Use current music and language youth understand.
- ❑ **Uplifting.** "We definitely want to leave church with hope and peace and a closer walk with God."
- ❑ **Variety.** Youth like different approaches, different styles, even different locations for worship.

Study Guide
Youth and the Local Church

As you read this chapter attempt to expand your understanding of the place of youth in the local church.

KNOW:

Young people feel committed to a church where they feel needed, valued and respected.

Empowering youth is the by-product of Salvation and Service emphasis which the Youth Department underscores in the church.

Remember that committed adults are needed to foster youth nurturing.

Pastors, elders and local youth leaders have responsibilities to work as a team. Youth leaders should function as supporters of the whole church's program. Pastors and elders work alongside youth leaders, supporting and getting to know them.

In dealing with youth leaders, where conflicts arise, church leaders should take a redemptive, nurturing approach, rather than a harsh, rigid approach.

Church discipline is a must in some instances, but the church leaders should counsel youth in a loving and accepting manner.

Remember one of your functions is to transmit church lifestyle standards to youth.

Ensure that youth's needs are met during the local church worship and weekly youth programs.

LEARN:

1. Young people feel committed to a church where they feel:
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
2. Mention three ways for empowering youth:
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
3. Youth grow through _____.
4. The “_____ gap” can lead to conflicts between _____ and _____ leaders.
5. _____ care needs to be taken in dealing with discipline situations involving youth.
6. Mention two focuses of youth baptismal studies:
 - a.
 - b.
7. List three facts worth remembering when addressing Adventist lifestyle standards:
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
8. List ten ways to transform your church worship service to meet the needs of your church’s youth:
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
 - f.
 - g.
 - h.
 - i.
 - j.
 - k.

DO:

1. In what practical ways can you empower youth in your church?
2. Come up with a sample of nurturing youth.
3. How can I be a leader and a friend to young people?
4. Make a program for the following:
 - Youth Baptism
 - Lord’s Supper
 - Youth Worship

5. What are some ways to help your church effectively transmit lifestyle standards to youth?

Break Out Session
Questions for Group Discussion

1. What are the benefits of involving youth in the church?
2. How can you tell that a church is empowering youth?
3. What is the most elemental in nurturing today's youth?
4. How should the church handle discipline for youth?
5. What suggestions do you have for an attractive youth baptism?
6. How can you transmit lifestyle standards to youth effectively?
7. Explain how you can transform your church worship service to meet the needs of your church's youth.

Chapter V—Youth Ministry and the Family

1. Family-based Youth Ministry

Young people do not exist in isolation. Each youth in your church is part of a family, and your youth ministry should reflect this reality. If your church has a department of family ministries, the youth leaders and family ministry leaders should work together to ensure that youth ministry includes the family. While youth need time to associate with other young people, apart from their families, they also need to be recognized as part of a family unit. Encourage your youth leaders to plan programs and activities that youth can participate in along with their parents and siblings—family potlucks, family camp-outs, parent-teen games, father-son or mother-daughter dinners, seminars on issues of concern to both youth and their parents.

2. Communicating With Youth and Parents

Parents in your church need to be aware of the goals, programs and specific activities the youth department is planning. Encourage the youth leaders to include direct communication with parents in their public relations plan. Telling youth about an event or activity and reminding them to “Tell your parents!” is usually not enough. By contacting parents directly, the youth leaders will build bonds of trust and communication with them.

As pastor or elder, you may find that a parent approaches you, rather than the youth leader, when they perceive a problem with their son or daughter or with the youth program. Do not bypass the youth leader in this situation, but work as a liaison to bring together the youth, the parent and the youth leader to discuss and resolve the difficult issues.

3. Dating for Youth

Interest in the opposite sex is normal for youth and young adults. Both you and your youth leaders will need to be sensitive to the appropriate norms for dating in your church culture. Youth social activities should be structured so that these norms are respected (for example, if you are in a community where the majority of parents do not permit their teenagers to date, a youth event such as a couples banquet, where dates are expected, would be inappropriate and insensitive to the standards of your community).

When youth and young adults in your church are dating, stay in friendly communication with the young couples. Let them know, in an informal way, that church leaders like them and care about them. Criticism and disapproval drive relationships underground, where unhealthy sexual behaviors can flourish. Make sure young couples are welcome in your home and the homes of church members. Encourage happily married adults in the church to mentor dating couples, modelling a positive marriage relationship.

A young person who is seriously dating a non-Adventist or a non-Christian should be tactfully counselled about the dangers of being “unequally yoked,” but their unbelieving boyfriend or girlfriend should be welcomed into the church family with friendly enthusiasm at every opportunity. Many non-Christian young people have been “loved into the church” by their future spouse’s caring church family.

4. Marriage Counselling and Weddings for Young Adults

As the youth in your church grow into young adults, many will marry, and many of those will come to you to perform their weddings and provide marriage counselling. This is a wonderful opportunity for you, not only to pass on our church’s values and standards on the subject of marriage, but to form a relationship with a young couple. Be a positive, loving force in the lives of young people who marry in your church. For many, especially those who are lukewarm in their church attendance and commitment, this is the one chance the church and its pastor will have to make a significant impact on their lives. If you can make that a positive impact, they will see the church as a warm, friendly place to which they will want to return and in which they will want to raise their children. (Refer to *Ministers Manual*.)

5. Ministry to Single and Divorced Young Adults

Don't overlook young singles in your congregation. Encourage your youth leaders to plan young-adult activities that specifically include the divorced and the never-married, who often feel excluded in the primarily "couple-oriented" atmosphere of the church. If your church has a large enough group of singles, some singles-only activities might be planned—or your youth leaders might want to team up with other area churches to begin a singles ministry.

As a church leader, look for opportunities to connect with single young adults. Invite them to your home for Sabbath dinner or for a Saturday night get-together, and encourage other adults in the church to do the same. Do not stress "match-making" in your conversations with them, unless you know that the young person is actively seeking help in finding a partner. It is far better to let a single young adult know that you value him or her for him or herself, rather than seeing them as someone who needs to be "married off." Show interest in the single person's career, education and other interests, not primarily in his or her social life.

Study Guide
Youth Ministry and the Family

Youth ministry within the family structure is a must for a successful youth program. Youth programs should be tailored to allow both participation of youth with their parents and siblings.

KNOW:

Young people in your church do not exist in isolation.

Families are vehicles for developing spiritual maturity.

Family based youth ministry prepares youth to be responsible citizens, church members and parents.

Youth ministry should provide marriage counseling for young adults.

Ministry to single and divorced young adults must be given undivided attention within a local church.

LEARN:

1. Young people do not exist in _____.
2. Parents in your church need to be aware of:
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
3. When youth and young adults in your church are dating, stay in _____
_____ with young people.
4. In every church marriage _____ and _____ for young adults should be held.
5. Do not overlook _____ in your congregation.
6. As a church leader, look for opportunities to connect with _____.

DO:

1. Explain what “Family-based Youth Ministry” means to you?
2. Plan a social program in which you involve parents with youth.
3. Plan a Sabbath vesper in which families take lead in the program.
4. How can you help young people to understand Christian dating?
5. How many seminars in the following areas did you conduct last year in your local _____ church?
 - a. Dating
 - b. Marriage Counseling
 - c. Weddings
 - d. Single Ministry

Break Out Session
Questions for Group Discussion

1. What is Family Based Youth Ministry?
2. How can you assist parents to develop a positive communication climate with their children?
3. Mention several activities in which parents and youth/children can participate?
4. Why is it important to hold seminars in dating for young people?
5. In what areas do you need further training to be an effective marriage counselor?

Chapter VI—Help for Hurting Youth

1. The Pastor's Role as Counselor

As a pastor, counseling is a large part of your role. If your youth leaders are volunteers, as is often the case, you probably have more specialized training and experience in counseling than they do. Thus, it will often be your responsibility to take up where the youth leader leaves off in helping young people in difficult situations. Remember to be sensitive, not only to the young person's needs, but to the "territory" of the youth leaders as you do this. Do not give the impression that you are coming in as the "expert" to take over where they have already established a trusting relationship. You are a caring, trained servant of God coming to give extra help and assist the youth leader's efforts.

2. Ministering to Deeply Troubled Youth

Unless you are a fully trained professional counselor, there are some youth whom you will certainly need to refer to such a counselor. Any of the young people in the situations described below may become so depressed or so deeply enmeshed in a problem that only a professional counselor can help. In addition, youth who have been physically or sexually abused, youth who are suicidal and youth who suffer from mental illnesses (depression, bipolar disorder, serious behavioral disorders) should always be referred to professional counselors.

You should be aware of trained, experienced Christian counselors in your community to whom you can refer such young people. Do not give youth the impression that you are "washing your hands of them." Rather, listen lovingly to their problems, pray with them and assure them that you will continue to pray for them, and then act as a liaison to help them make an appointment with an appropriate counselor. Continue to "touch base" and encourage the youth leader to do the same, asking the young person how the counseling is going, how they are doing in general, and reminding them that you are praying for them and are always ready to listen.

3. Ministering to Bereaved Youth

When death touches a family in your congregation, young people are usually involved. Almost certainly, youth in your congregation have lost parents, grandparents, siblings or friends. When ministering to a bereaved family, be especially sensitive to the needs of the young people involved. Young people, particularly teenagers, may not always express their grief openly, but may be devastated by a loss. Keep in friendly contact with youth who have suffered bereavement, and encourage the youth leaders to do the same. If a young person seems to be having a particularly difficult time adjusting to the loss of a loved one, you may want to suggest some counseling, either with you or with a professional counselor.

4. Ministering to Youth in Broken Relationships

Broken relationships—whether dating relationships or marriages—are among the most common problems faced by youth and young adults. If you have an opportunity to counsel youth whose dating relationships have ended, be sympathetic to the pain they are experiencing, even if, in your judgment, the relationship was better ended. Encourage them to look toward the future with hope, and remind them that God has a plan for their lives.

In the more serious situation of a married young adult whose marriage is ending, your role, if the couple is willing, is to provide counseling in the hope that they will choose to rebuild their marriage. (See *Ministers Manual*.) If no reconciliation is possible, both parties need to be assured that they are still loved by God and by the church family. Depending on the situation surrounding the marriage break-up, church discipline may be required, but this should always be done in an atmosphere of love and restoration, not harshness.

Young adults who have experienced divorce become part of your church's group of young singles, and as such have special needs. See section V, above, "Ministry to Single and Divorced Young Adults."

5. Ministering to Youth With AIDS and Other Terminal Illnesses

Comfort and care for the dying is a normal part of your role as a pastor or elder, but when the dying person is a youth or young adult, the job is especially difficult. Young people do not expect to die in the prime of their lives. They may feel angry at God or question why He has allowed this to happen to them. A young person with AIDS, depending on how the disease was contracted, may also be struggling with feelings of guilt and shame and, perhaps, a sense that the disease is God's punishment for an immoral life. You can share with them the truth that, although we suffer the natural consequences of our sins in this world, God's love and forgiveness is all-encompassing.

Minister to terminally ill youth as you would to any terminally ill church member, but be especially aware of the particular feelings of loss and resentment they may feel at having their lives cut short.

Remember that social interaction is a very important need for young people, even for those with fatal illnesses. Encourage your youth leaders and young people in the congregation not to forget or ignore the sick youth because of fear or awkwardness. Do everything you can to ensure that your church family surrounds the terminally ill young person with an atmosphere of love and caring.

6. Ministering to Homosexual Youth

Researchers have not conclusively proven what causes some young people to be attracted to the same sex, but whatever the cause, it is likely that in a large community of young people there will be a few who feel this attraction, usually when they pass through puberty and others of their age are beginning to notice the opposite sex. Because of the strong disapproval of homosexuality both in the church and society at large, young people who experience these feelings usually will not confide in an adult, especially a pastor.

However, if a young man or woman does come to you, or to the youth leader, for counseling because he/she is attracted to people of the same sex, handle the matter with tact and discretion. Young people with homosexual feelings usually feel a tremendous burden of guilt and self-hatred; it is not your job to add to this. The young person will probably already be familiar with biblical passages condemning homosexual activity. You will need to reassure them that they are still loved by God, no matter what their feelings.

If you feel poorly informed on this issue, tell the young person frankly, "I do not know much about homosexuality, but I am willing to talk to some others and find some reading material on the subject that I can share with you." This also may be a situation where you may wish to find a qualified Christian counselor to whom you can refer the young person.

You should also remember, and point out to the youth you are counseling, that many heterosexual people have occasional feelings of attraction for members of the same sex, especially during the difficult years of adolescence. Explain that such feelings do not necessarily mean that the young person is a homosexual.

Whether the young person is experiencing occasional feelings of attraction to the same sex or a persistent, deep-rooted homosexual orientation, your role is not to condemn but to help, counsel and, above all, to assure the young person of God's infinite love and grace and His power to transform the sinners.

7. Career Counseling for Youth

The teenage and young adult years are a key time for deciding on career directions. While a young person is most likely to receive career counseling from a guidance counselor in school or at college, some young people may turn to a pastor, especially one they are comfortable with, for career guidance. This will be particularly true for a young person who is considering a career in ministry and may wish to talk to an experienced minister about this calling.

You will probably not be familiar with everything a guidance counselor is expected to know in terms of career planning, educational requirements for various jobs, et cetera. If the young person needs that kind of counseling, you can assist in finding a competent guidance counselor. What you can do, as a pastor, is listen, pray with and for the young person and give assurance that God has a plan for his or her life and will provide opportunities for service to Him in whatever career the young person chooses.

8. Ministering to Unemployed Youth

Young adults, especially those who live in economically depressed areas, often find themselves without work at a time when they would prefer to be working. Young people in this situation may need practical help and advice—suggestions about where to look for work, advice about getting further education, perhaps the help of a trained guidance counselor to whom you may, again, be able to refer them. In addition, however, unemployed young people need from their pastor an assurance that they are still valuable despite being unemployed—failure to find work often leads to a low sense of self-esteem. As with other troubled youth, you can offer the unemployed ones the assurance that God still cares for and guides, and you can offer to pray with and for them.

9. Youth With School Problems

Young people often struggle with difficulties in school or college. If youth (or their parents) share their concerns in this area with you, you may feel that as a pastor rather than a teacher, you are not equipped to help. However, many of the same points made in the previous two sections still apply. You can direct the young person and his/her family to resources in the school or community that can help—teachers, tutors, possibly even doctors, who may be able to test the young person for a learning disability, if that is a concern. But your most important role will be to offer love, prayer and support. Youth who struggle in school, like those who are unemployed, are very vulnerable to feelings of low self-esteem and the sense that no one values them. You can assure them that God values them highly, and you can underline that assurance by your actions—showing that you value them as a person and that you care about them, regardless of their performance in school.

Study Guide
Help for Hurting Youth

As you read the chapter, think of how your church can help hurting youth. Ask yourself, “How does God equip me to help hurting youth?” Note specifically what it involves to be a youth counselor.

KNOW:

The role of the pastor as counselor.

Ministering to troubled youth requires wisdom and patience.

Special skills are needed for various problems youth face in their lives.

LEARN:

1. As a pastor, _____ is a large part of your role.
2. List seven situations which should be referred to a professional counselor:
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
 - e.
 - f.
 - g.
3. List eight areas mentioned in the chapter calling for a special attention to hurting youth:
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
 - e.
 - f.
 - g.
 - h.
4. _____ do not expect to die in the prime of their lives.
5. A young person with AIDS may also be struggling with feelings of _____ and _____ and, perhaps with the thought that the disease is God's _____.
6. _____ interaction is a very important need for young people, even for those with fatal illnesses.
7. Young people with homosexual feelings feel:
 - a.
 - b.

DO:

1. List several ways that you and your church might be involved and contribute to counseling hurting youth.
2. In thinking about counseling youth list ways that your church has been successful in the past.
3. What are some new ways you might use in counseling youth?
4. What structure can you put in place to ensure that youth can access for help when needed?
5. Write down some practical ways you can apply in counseling all kinds of hurting youth.

Break Out Session
Questions for Group Discussion

1. Why is counseling youth an important role for a pastor/elder?
2. How can you show youth that you are open for helping them when they are in deep trouble?
3. When visiting AIDS patients if they start blaming God for their illness, what should you say to them?
4. What are some tough areas that you have encountered while counseling youth?
5. Does your church have a structure set up for counseling hurting youth?

Chapter VII—Youth Outreach

1. Youth and Church Growth

Our young people are a vital part of our church growth. All the evangelism your church can produce is meaningless if your young people are slipping out the “back door” of the church just as new converts are being brought in by the “front door.” The church grows when its children grow up to become young people who value their church family and its beliefs, and who choose to join the church through baptism.

These same young people provide another wonderful opportunity for growth when they reach out to their young friends and neighbors. A warm, welcoming church with a lively youth ministry and a concern for youth in all their programs will attract youth.

2. Creative Approaches to Youth Ministry

Young people value creativity and variety. In most countries, it is difficult to attract teens and young adults with a traditional lecture-style evangelistic series. Approaches such as street ministry, music ministry, drama, “java-house-” style events and recreational ministry have proven successful in attracting young people to church-sponsored events. If your youth group and their leaders are motivated to reach your community for Christ, they will probably come up with some creative and nontraditional methods for doing so. You may have doubts, but once you have discussed the planned program with the youth leaders, be willing to take a chance and trust the young people’s instincts—after all, they know better than adults what appeals to other youth. Their results may surprise you!

3. Youth and Community-based Projects

Adventist youth should be visible in their community as young people who care about others. Encourage your youth leaders to get the young people involved in worthwhile projects in the community—feeding the hungry and homeless, visiting hospitals, nursing homes and orphanages, building or maintaining homes for low-income families—there are endless possibilities. When you hear of a need in your community, ask yourself, “How can our church help? How can our young people help?” Encourage your youth leader and Community Services leader to work together to involve young people in service. When the youth initiate a service project, adults in the church can also become involved. Inspire your whole church to support the young people’s efforts to help in the community.

4. Youth Missions and Service

Most youth leaders have found that youth are empowered and inspired by service opportunities. Among the most popular service activities for youth are short-term mission trips (for groups), and one-year volunteer mission terms as a student missionary (for individuals).

It is vitally important that the church and its leaders wholeheartedly support both individuals and groups of young people who choose mission service. If your youth group is raising funds for a short-term mission trip, throw your support behind them as publicly as possible, and church members will follow your example.

Although short-term missions can be tremendously beneficial to Christian young people, experience has shown that they are only permanently effective when they occur as part of a long-term commitment to service. In other words, a two-week mission trip will not effect lifelong changes in your youth unless they continue to be involved in service and ministry in their own church and community after their return. Talk to your youth leaders about making service and missions a permanent part of their program.

Youth Outreach Study Guide

As you read the chapter, think of new ways your youth can do outreach. Ask yourself “How does God prepare youth to do outreach?” Note what is involved in equipping youth to do evangelism.

KNOW:

Young people are a vital part of church growth.

The support and promotion of youth outreach is an important function of local pastors and elders.

It takes preparation through seminars for youth to be effective soul winners.

Youth are empowered and inspired through service opportunities.

Youth mission and service should be highly promoted and supported in your local church.

LEARN:

1. A warm, welcoming church with a lively youth ministry and a concern for youth in all their programs will _____ youth.
2. Young people value:
 - a.
 - b.
3. Mention four of the new proven evangelistic approaches that have successfully attracted young people:
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
4. Encourage your youth leaders to get the young people involved in community projects such as:
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
 - e.
 - f.
 - g.
5. Youth are _____ and _____ by service opportunities.
6. _____ and _____ should be made a permanent part of youth program.

DO:

1. List several way youth in your church can participate as part of evangelism.
2. In thinking about youth outreach, list ways that your youth have been successful in the past.
3. What are some new youth approaches you might use in youth evangelism.
4. How can you assist your church to sponsor short mission or long term mission for your youth?

Break Out Session
Questions for Group Discussion

1. Why is it important to involve youth in outreach programs?
2. What can you do to show that your church is interested in sponsoring youth for mission trips?
3. What practical things can you do to motivate youth to participate in the mission or service programs?
4. Why should mission and service be a permanent program for your youth and how can you achieve it?
5. What forms of youth outreach have been successful in your church?
6. What others forms of youth outreach should be included in youth outreach programs?

Conclusion

Youth ministry should be a vital part of any Seventh-day Adventist congregation. You, as a pastor or elder, can help make it so. You can ensure that your church has committed youth leaders who love the Lord and the young people. You can help to inspire those leaders with a vision—the vision of saving youth for Jesus and training them to serve others. In countless ways, you can help the work of the youth leaders to run smoothly, mentor and connect with the young people themselves and build bridges between youth and older adults in your congregation. You have a central role to play in training the mighty army of youth who will do the Lord's work in this generation and the next.

Resources:

Apart from the Bible (NIV) and works of Ellen White as cited, the major resources used in preparing this document were:

- ❑ *The Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual*, revised 2001, 17th edition.
- ❑ *The ABZs of Adventist Youth Ministry*, by Stuart Tyner, North American Division Edition, published by the Hancock Center for Youth and Family Ministry and the North American Division Church Resource Consortium, 2000.
- ❑ *Seven Principles for Youth Ministry Excellence: Practical Strategies to Turn Yourself and Your Youth Into Leaders*, NAD Youth Ministries, First Edition, by Jim Feldbush and William Hurtado, with Ron Whitehead, published by the Center for Youth Evangelism, the Church Resources Consortium and AdventSource, 1999.
- ❑ *Youth Ministry Handbook*, General Conference Youth Department, 2000.
- ❑ *Pathfinder Administrative Manual*, General Conference Youth Department, 2000.
- ❑ *Adventurer Administrative Manual*, General Conference Youth Department, 1999.

Appendix A

YOUTH FEDERATION

Youth Federations are organizations of AY Societies within a district, city, etc., in the conference territory. Such organizations have no authority over the AY Societies but function to advise and coordinate programs.

Each AY Society member of such a Federation is responsible to its own church, church pastor and church board. The organization of a Federation should not take the place of the AY Societies but rather promote strong youth organization in the local churches.

The concept of Youth Federation finds its inception in the Allegheny East Conference in the U.S.A. as an answer to an urgent need among the youth of the church. From a humble beginning in this conference it has circled the world.

SECTION I

Purpose

A. Coordination

A Federation can greatly facilitate the work of the conference youth director by helping to coordinate the work within the federation territory.

By staying in touch with the Federation leadership, the youth director can gather and give information necessary for successful youth ministry.

B. Sharing

The Federation allows its member churches to share in the cumulative experience of its leaders and thus advance in greater strides. When functioning properly, the Federation can be very helpful to smaller churches, encouraging them to participate and put together meaningful programming for their youth.

Methods and programs that have functioned in other areas can be readily available for all the participating churches.

C. Leadership Development

Adventist Youth Federations provide a great opportunity for expanded leadership development beyond the local church level.

By having the opportunity to function on a wider and different level from that of their particular local church, young people will develop skills and acquire leadership abilities that can be put to work in other areas of the church as well.

D. Fellowship

Youth Federations allow young people to fellowship with youth from other churches and thus give the awareness that there is a large group of believers to which the particular Society belongs. This opportunity of growing up with a large group of believers in religious, educational and athletic activities is invaluable.

E. Single Adults

Ministry to this group should be a high priority. There is a critical need for program development in the area of ministry to single adults. It is suggested that clubs for this group be organized in each church, and that a relationship be promoted with the AY Society. Retreats and special weekends should be organized to provide a sensitive listening/learning forum for development of a meaningful ministry to this group.

F. Programming

One of the Federation's primary tasks is to assist in the development of a relevant program for each youth-age group in every church. The following is a list of activities around which a dynamic program can revolve:

1. Have a membership drive to make every youth a registered member of your AYS. This includes learning the pledge, law and motto.
2. Organize a program committee to develop ideas for youth Sabbath afternoon programs.
3. Develop Bible- and denominational-knowledge programs to include all age groups. This includes Bible Bowl teams and Heritage of Truth classes.
4. Plan interchurch involvement in designated areas that will include outreach action teams, temperance action teams, Bible contest teams and athletic teams. The goal is to achieve participation by every church in each Federation.
5. Develop leadership through junior youth and senior youth leadership training sessions.

SECTION II

Federation—Adventist Youth Society Relationship

The Federation relates to the Adventist Youth Society in the following ways:

By invitation only

The Adventist Youth Federation has no rights except those granted by the local church. It is an organization whose sole purpose is to assist in the development and implementation of programs beneficial to the local Adventist Youth Society.

Fresh Ideas

Make fresh ideas available to each Society.

Common Objectives

The goals of the Federation and the goals of the local Adventist Youth Society are the same. To provide projects and programs that develop Adventist youth and lead to their salvation and involvement in service to God.

SECTION III

Pastoral Involvement

To organize and carry out an effective program, the pastor must be involved. A few suggestions for getting pastors involved are listed here. Add others as desired.

A. Invite Pastors

Invite each pastor in the Federation churches by letter and telephone call to all committee meetings.

B. Request Calendars

Request a calendar of events from each pastor in the Federation.

C. Share Schedules

Present each pastor with a Federation calendar of events and an executive committee meeting schedule.

D. Demonstrate Interest

Demonstrate an interest in each pastor's church and evangelistic program. Never assume that the Federation meetings automatically take priority. Publicize and support the special meetings in the churches within the Federation.

SECTION IV

Conference Officer Visibility

Federation ideas and plans often call for encouragement and support from conference youth directors. Federation officers should take the initiative in maintaining positive relations with the Youth Department.

A. Your conference youth director should be invited to all committee meetings. Early notification of date and time should be made by letter and/or telephone call so the youth director can plan to be present.

B. Conference officer presence demonstrates an interest in the local church program that transcends finance. It also provides opportunity for observation and suggestion in program refinement in the local Society or Federation.

- C. High visibility breeds familiarity. This works for the Federation and the local Society. The Federation officers should demonstrate good leadership. Frequent visitation from the conference office gives opportunities to discover developing leadership for the future.

SECTION V

Relationship of Federation to Youth Department

The duty of the Federation organization in relationship to the conference Youth Department is that of processor/coordinator of all matters of promotion, development and finance. The following list describes some activities.

- A. Processes all information and reports regarding Bible contests, temperance orations, sports, evangelism, et cetera. This includes planning questions for interchurch Bible events, planning intra-Federation oratorical contests and encouraging youth evangelism campaigns and programs. The Federation also assists in encouraging groups to forward promptly all AYS, Adventurer and Pathfinder monthly reports to the Youth Department office.
- B. Enthusiastically encourages participation by all Societies in conference-wide congresses, retreats, camps and conventions. This includes reaching delegate quotas where designated, participation in officers' conventions and leadership training programs for new youth officers and monetary plans necessary to finance such activities. In short, the Federation serves as a coordinator/promoter/developer that serves the churches on one hand and the conference Youth Department on the other.

SECTION VI

Sample Year of Federation Activities

- JANUARY** New Year Celebration
AYS Membership Drive
Sectional Socials
Executive Committee Meeting (planning congress, camp meeting, youth camp, Federation meeting dates)
- FEBRUARY** Sport Activity Preparation
Bible and Temperance Contests

Week of Prayer Preparation

Secure Sites for Evangelism

MARCH Youth Evangelism Month

Youth Week of Prayer

APRIL Executive Committee Meeting

Pathfinder MonthCCamporee

MAY AYS Olympics (Physical Fitness Finals)

Oratorical Finals Preparation

JUNE Camp Meeting

JULY Summer Camps

Camp Meeting

Patriotism Month (This can be modified to fit with the month that your country celebrates.)

AUGUST Singles Camp Meeting

Married Couples Retreat

SEPTEMBER Better Living Month

OCTOBER Senior Youth Retreat

Street Ministries Month

NOVEMBER Ingathering Month

DECEMBER Caroling Season (neighborhood, city corners, malls, shopping centers)

SECTION VII

Sample constitution for AY Federations

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

of the Federation of Adventist Youth

PREAMBLE

WHEREAS it is our desire to unite our efforts in God's service and to promote unity of purpose, we, the young people of the Youth Societies in [name of field] of Seventh-day Adventists, do hereby form this Federation and establish this Constitution to promote friendliness and good will among our Societies; to unite our efforts for more extensive missionary endeavor; to provide varied spiritual, social, and recreational activities; and to develop the leadership ability of our young people.

ARTICLE I—NAME

This organization shall be known as the Federation of Adventist Youth Societies.

ARTICLE II—MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Any organized Adventist Youth Society in the district/city shall become an active member upon signing the constitution and paying the initiation fee. A Society shall remain active as long as it fulfills its duties and obligations as set forth in the constitution and bylaws.

Section 2. The body of this organization shall consist of the members of the active Societies of the following churches:
[List them.]

ARTICLE III—OFFICERS

Section 1. The officers of the Federation shall be a president, vice presidents (the president from each Society where possible), a parliamentarian, a secretary-treasurer, an assistant secretary and/or assistant treasurer (or assistant secretary-treasurer), a director of public relations and a chairperson of the planning committee.

Section 2. Officers shall take office on January 1 following their election and shall serve for one year. All shall hold their offices until their successors are elected and enter upon their duties.

Section 3. No person shall continue to serve as an officer, committee chairperson or member of the executive and/or constitutional committee who shall cease to be a member in good standing of a recognized Seventh-day Adventist church.

Section 4. Election of officers shall be according to acceptable Seventh-day Adventist Church procedures (see the

Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual, chapter 10).

Section 5. This organization shall maintain the following standing committees: (a) Executive, (b) Constitutional, (c) Planning, (d) Religious Activities, (e) Social Activities and (f) Outreach Activities.

ARTICLE IV—MEETINGS

Section 1. Federation meetings shall be held at the time and place designated by the Executive Committee.

Section 2. To process nominations and conduct other business, a simple majority (50% + 1) of the Federation membership shall be considered a quorum.

ARTICLE V—BYLAWS

The members of this Federation may make bylaws and amend or repeal them at any duly called meeting of the Federation. The scope of such bylaws may embrace all subjects consistent with the constitution.

ARTICLE VI—AMENDMENTS

All amendments to the constitution must be presented in writing to the Federation constitutional committee at a Federation meeting and must be ratified by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of the members in attendance at the next meeting.

BY LAWS

ARTICLE I THE PRESIDENT

The responsibilities and duties of the president are as follows:

- a. To preside at all meetings and executive committee meetings.
- b. To coordinate the various activities of the Federation.
- c. To appoint, with the approval of the executive committee, such committees as he or she shall judge necessary and expedient for the proper functioning of all Federation activities.

- d. To supervise and manage the Federation according to the provisions of the constitution and bylaws.
- e. To render a quarterly report of the activities of the Federation to the conference Youth Department.

ARTICLE II—VICE PRESIDENTS

The responsibilities and duties of the vice presidents (to be chosen among AY leaders where possible) are as follows:

- a. To coordinate the various Federation activities within their Society.
- b. To serve in the absence or disability of the president if designated by the president.
- c. To bring a report of AY Society activities and a financial statement to the executive committee meetings.
- d. To attend all executive committee meetings and other meetings.

ARTICLE III—PARLIAMENTARIAN

The responsibilities and duties of the parliamentarian are as follows:

- a. To serve as parliamentarian of the Federation.
- b. To serve as chairperson of the constitutional committee.
- c. To present reports of the constitutional committee to the Federation executive committee.
- d. To interpret the constitution.
- e. To attend all executive committee and other meetings.

ARTICLE IV—THE SECRETARY-TREASURER

The responsibilities and duties of the secretary-treasurer are as follows:

- a. To keep all records of items of business.
- b. To be responsible for all correspondence of the Federation.
- c. To send a copy of the minutes of all meetings to the Federation president and to the conference youth director.
- d. To attend all executive committee meetings and other meetings.
- e. To receive and receipt all Federation funds.
- f. To disburse funds upon the authorization of the executive committee.
- g. To keep an itemized account of all receipts and expenditures.
- h. To bring a financial report and bank statement to all meetings.
- i. To have all books and accounts audited by the mission/conference/field auditor at the end of the calendar year.

ARTICLE V—THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY-TREASURER

The responsibilities and duties of the assistant secretary-treasurer are as follows:

- a. To serve in the absence of the secretary-treasurer.
- b. To assist the secretary-treasurer by recording all statistics relative to Federation meetings and other meetings, including the following items:
 - 1) The Societies present
 - 2) The attendance
 - 3) Other information that the executive committee may specify.
- c. To give all statistical data to the secretary-treasurer.
- d. To serve in the absence of the treasurer.
- e. To perform duties as assigned by the treasurer.

ARTICLE VI—DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

The responsibilities and duties of the director of public relations are as follows:

- a. To advertise and publicize Federation activities.
- b. To attend all executive committee meetings and other meetings.
- c. To attend all Federation meetings.

ARTICLE VII—PLANNING COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

The responsibilities and duties of the planning committee chairperson are as follows:

- a. To chair the planning committee.
- b. To render reports of committee activities for executive approval.
- c. To attend all Federation meetings.

ARTICLE VIII—RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

The responsibilities and duties of the religious activities committee chairperson are as follows:

- a. To chair the religious activities committee.
- b. To render reports of committee activities for executive approval.
- c. To attend all Federation meetings.

ARTICLE IXCSOCIAL ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

The responsibilities and duties of the social activities committee chairperson are as follows:

- a. To chair the social activities committee.
- b. To render reports of committee activities for executive approval.
- c. To attend all Federation meetings.

ARTICLE X—ADVISORS

The conference youth director shall be the chief advisor. All conference officers, pastors of churches within the Federation and former Federation presidents shall serve as advisors.

ARTICLE XI EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1. The executive committee shall consist of the following persons:

- a. President
- b. All vice presidents
- c. Parliamentarian
- d. Secretary-treasurer
- e. Director of public relations
- f. Chairperson of the planning committee
- g. Chairperson of the religious activities committee

- h. Chairperson of the social activities committee
- i. Chairperson of the Pathfinder activities committee
- j. Conference youth director
- k. Church pastor and one Seventh-day Adventist school principal, if possible.

Section 2. The responsibilities and duties of the Executive Committee are as follows:

- a. To exercise general administration over all matters pertaining to the work of the Federation.
- b. To set the time and place of all meetings.
- c. To appoint persons to fill vacancies, subject to the approval of two thirds (2/3) of the members present at a duly called meeting.
- d. To appoint all chairpersons of standing committees.

Section 3. Quorum of the executive committee shall be set by the constitutional committee and voted at the time of acceptance or revision of the constitution by the Federation members.

ARTICLE XIICONSTITUTIONAL COMMITTEE

Section 1. The constitutional committee shall consist of the following persons:

- a. The parliamentarian as chairperson of the committee
- b. A secretary selected by the nominating committee
- c. Conference youth director
- d. One (1) elected representative from each AY Society within the Federation who is NOT the Society president

Section 2. The responsibilities and duties of this committee are as follows:

- a. To see that the Federation is conducted according to the provisions of the constitution and bylaws.

- b. To study proposed amendments to the constitution and report its recommendations to a duly-called Federation executive committee meeting.
- c. To notify the Federation president and conference youth director when an office is not being maintained according to the provisions of the constitution and bylaws. The conference youth director, the Federation president and parliamentarian shall counsel with the offending officer.
- d. To take the following steps when the Federation parliamentarian and president and the conference youth director shall decide that an officer is still negligent after counseling:
 - 1) The parliamentarian shall call a meeting of the constitutional committee to send the offending officer written notice that a recommendation is being made to the constituency that this office be declared vacant.
 - 2) The parliamentarian shall present the recommendation to the executive committee which shall call a constituency meeting to act on the recommendation.
 - 3) The constitutional committee shall be empowered to call a constituency meeting should the executive committee fail or refuse to do so.
 - 4) The procedure shall apply to all Federation officers except the president.
- e. When the parliamentarian and the conference youth director shall determine that the president is negligent, the following steps shall be taken:
 - 1) The parliamentarian and the conference youth director shall counsel the president.
 - 2) When the parliamentarian and the conference youth director shall decide that the president is still negligent after counseling, the parliamentarian shall call a meeting of the constitutional committee to send the president written notice that a constituency meeting will be called to recommend that this office be declared vacant.

ARTICLE XIII—ARBITRATION

The Youth Department of the conference shall serve as arbitrator in unresolved issues between the executive committee and the constitutional committee.

ARTICLE XIV—PLANNING COMMITTEE

Section 1. The planning committee shall consist of the following persons:

- a. A chairperson elected by the constituency
- b. The planning committee chairperson from each AY Society

Section 2. The responsibilities and duties of this committee are as follows:

- a. To plan and coordinate Federation congresses.
- b. To plan and coordinate special projects as designated by the executive committee.
- c. To render reports and submit all committee decisions to the executive committee for approval.

ARTICLE XV—RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

Section 1. The religious activities committee shall consist of the following persons:

- a. A chairperson appointed by the Federation officers
- b. The religious activities chairperson from each AY Society

Section 2. The responsibilities and duties of this committee are as follows:

- a. To plan and promote the religious activities of the Federation, with emphasis on the program outlined by the Youth Department of the local conference.
- b. To render reports and submit all committee decisions to the executive committee for approval.

ARTICLE XVI—VOTING

The following persons are considered delegates and are entitled to vote in a Federation constituency meeting:

- a. Two delegates from each active Society in the Federation

- b. Every Federation officer and executive committee member
- c. Every conference Youth Department representative
- d. The pastor(s) of each church within the Federation territory
- e. Every AY Society leader from the societies participating in the Federation (as a delegate-at-large)

ARTICLE XVII—ELECTIONS

Section 1. The following procedure shall be followed in the election of Federation officers:

- a. Elections shall be held during the last quarter of the biennium.
- b. The executive committee shall nominate a nominating committee consisting of eleven (11) persons, as follows:
 - 1) Three (3) members of the current executive committee
 - 2) Five (5) members of the current active delegation
 - 3) The conference Youth Department representative
 - 4) Two (2) pastors of churches participating in the Federation
- c. The executive committee shall present its report at a duly-called constituency meeting, and the report must be approved by two thirds (2/3) of the members present.
- d. The nominating committee shall nominate the following officers:
 - 1) President
 - 2) Vice-presidents—one from each AY Society
 - 3) Parliamentarian
 - 4) Secretary-treasurer

- 5) Assistant Secretary-treasurer
- 6) Director of public relations
- 7) Chairperson of the planning committee
- 8) Secretary of the constitutional committee
- 9) One (1) person from each AY Society to serve on the constitutional committee

e. The nominating committee shall present its report to a duly-called constituency meeting, and the report must be approved by two thirds (2/3) of the delegates present.

Section 2. All officers shall take office on January 1 following their election and shall serve for the term of their election. They shall hold their offices until their successors are elected and enter upon their duties.

Section 3. The following persons shall serve by appointment:

- a. As many church pastors as is deemed necessary by the conference Youth Department.
- b. The chairpersons of the religious activities, social activities and cultural activities committees, as appointed by the Federation officers. The executive committee shall select persons to fill any vacancies, subject to the approval of two thirds (2/3) of the delegates present at a duly-called constituency meeting.

ARTICLE XVIII—ASSESSMENT OR FEES

Section 1. Each Society shall pay the following assessments:

- a. An initiation fee of _____.
- b. The AY Society shall be assessed _____ according to membership. (See Section 2.)

Section 2. Annual dues from the churches shall be assessed at the beginning of each calendar year. Each conference is to create a scale for the collection of dues based on church membership.

For example:

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP 10-50

51-100

101-200

201-300

301-400

DUES \$10.00

\$20.00

\$25.00

\$40.00

\$50.00

ARTICLE XIX—ORDERS OF THE DAY

The Federation executive committee shall approve the orders of the day for all Federation meetings.

ARTICLE XX—OFFERINGS

The distribution of offerings collected at Federation meetings shall be as follows:

- a. All missionary offerings and conference offerings shall be forwarded to the conference through the treasurer of the host church.
- b. A special Federation offering shall be collected during the divine worship hour on Sabbath.
- c. Funds collected during the AY hour shall belong to the Federation.
- d. The conference youth director, Federation president, planning committee chairperson and the pastor of the host church shall determine the distribution of any unspecified offerings that may be collected.

ARTICLE XXI—DISBANDING THE FEDERATION

Section 1. The local conference reserves the right through its executive committee to disband the Federation.

Section 2. All funds and assets belonging to the Federation shall be divided on a pre-established percentage basis (see Article XVIII) to the member churches. This is to be done by the local conference.

Appendix B

Sample constitution and by-laws for a student association or an Adventist Christian fellowship Constitution.

Article I

NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Adventist Christian Fellowship (ACF) or Adventist Student Association (ASA).

Article II

PURPOSE

Section 1. The objectives of the Adventist Christian Fellowship (or Adventist Student Association) are:

- a. To provide the opportunity to become acquainted with and enjoy the fellowship of students, faculty and staff who hold membership and have interest in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
- b. To promote spiritual and intellectual growth both personal and corporate.
- c. To encourage and involve members in personal service and evangelistic outreach for others.
- d. To keep members informed of recent trends and concerns of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Article III

MEMBERSHIP

Section I. Membership will be open to all Adventist college/university students.

Section II. All full- or part-time faculty of a college/university who are members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church are eligible for election into this organization.

Section III. All full- or part-time staff of a college/university who are members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church are eligible for election into this organization.

Section IV. There shall be no discrimination in membership privileges based on creed, race or sex in this organization.

Article IV

GOVERNMENT

The laws of this organization shall consist of the local constitution and by-laws, and the interim actions and regulations of said college/university fellowship (or association.)

Article V

OFFICERS

Section I. The officers of this organization shall be president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer.

Section II. The executive board will consist of the president, vice-president, treasurer and the sponsor(s).

Article VI

ELECTION AND APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS AND LENGTH OF TERM

Section I. Election of officers shall occur during the end of each academic year. Terms of office will last until the following election.

Section II. A nominating committee should be named to study names and present these to the general assembly for voting.

Section III. The election of officers shall be conducted by secret ballot.

Article VII

MEETINGS

Section I. The Adventist Christian Fellowship (or Adventist Student Association) shall meet a minimum of once each month during vacation months. Meeting date and time will be determined by the membership.

Section II. The executive board will meet when determined by president and sponsor(s).

BYLAWS

Article I

MEMBERSHIP

Section I. Membership in the Adventist Christian Fellowship (or Adventist Student Association) will be active after fulfillment of the below-stated requirements.

Section II. Qualifications of the membership should be registered Adventist college/university students, full- or part-time staff who are members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Also those who are not members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church but who express like interest and goals (as determined by the executive board) will be admitted to regular membership.

Section III. The active member is one who has met the financial requirements of the organization and has not missed three consecutive meetings.

Section IV. Members will revert to inactive status after four months of nonpayment of dues, if interest and

goals change (as determined by the executive board) or upon missing three consecutive meetings.

Section V. Any member absent from campus for official university business (or any situation as determined by the executive board) may be considered inactive membership status.

Article II

OFFICERS

Section I. In order for a member to be nominated for an office in the Adventist Christian Fellowship (or Adventist Student Association) he/she must be an active member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the Adventist Christian Fellowship (or Adventist Student Association).

Section II. Nominations will be with active members present and election will be by a simple majority of the quorum.

Section III. Any officer other than the president may resign when such resignation is submitted in writing to the president. The president may resign when such resignation is submitted in writing to the sponsor(s).

Section IV. When a vacancy occurs, an office shall be replaced by a simple majority vote of a quorum.

Article III

AMENDMENTS

Section I. These by laws may be amended by a simple majority of a quorum.

Article IV

Section I. The sponsor(s) shall be a full/part-time college/university faculty member or pastor/teacher and shall be elected annually along with the officers.

Article V

IMPEACHMENT

Section I. Any officer who does not perform his duties as outlined by the constitution may be impeached by a majority of the quorum at two consecutive meetings.

Article VI

MEETINGS

Section I. The Adventist Christian Fellowship (or Adventist Student Association) will meet a minimum of once each month except during vacation months.
Meeting date and time will be determined by the membership.

Section II. The executive board will meet when determined by the president and the sponsor(s).

Article VII

FINANCES

Section I. There will be an annual membership fee determined by the executive board.

Section II. All revenue shall be dispensed as prescribed by either the executive board or the membership at a monthly meeting.

Article VIII

COMMITTEES

Section I. Committees shall be appointed by the president protempore as deemed necessary.

Article IX

QUORUM

Section I. A quorum shall be mandatory for constitution amendment and the election of officers.

Section II. The executive board quorum shall be a simple majority of the board membership.

Article X

AMENDMENTS

Section I. This constitution may be amended by a simple majority of the quorum.

