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DISCIPLES ON FIRE:

Rediscovering the Heartbeat of the Church

Before ascending to heaven, Jesus gave His followers a clear mission: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...” (Matthew 28:19). The Great Commission was not only for the early apostles but for every believer in every generation. In today’s fast-moving, distracted world, the church must once again place disciple making at the centre of its purpose.

But what is a true disciple? A disciple is more than a church attendee or a casual believer. A disciple follows Christ wholeheartedly, learns from Him daily, and reflects His character to the world. Jesus did not command us merely to fill buildings or increase membership; He called us to make disciples who, in turn, will make disciples. This mission remains the heartbeat of the church.

The world around us is filled with confusion, fear, division, and spiritual emptiness. Many are searching for hope in places that can never satisfy the soul. At such a time as this, the church cannot afford to be silent, distracted, or spiritually asleep. We are called to shine the light of Christ boldly and lovingly in our homes, schools, workplaces, communities, and beyond. Every believer has been entrusted with the privilege and responsibility of sharing the gospel and helping others grow in faith.

Yet disciple making cannot be accomplished solely by human effort. We need the power of the Holy Spirit. In Acts, ordinary men and women became powerful witnesses because they were filled with the Spirit of God. The same Holy Spirit is at work today. We must seek a fresh outpouring of spiritual fire so that our faith does not grow cold, routine, or powerless. A church on fire for Jesus will pray fervently, worship passionately, serve faithfully, and witness courageously.

Now more than ever, unity within the body of Christ is essential. The enemy seeks to divide believers through pride, offence, competition, and distraction. Yet Jesus prayed that His followers would be one so that the world would believe (John 17:21). When the church stands united in love and purpose, it bears powerful witness to a broken



world. Though we come from different backgrounds and cultures, we share “one Lord, one faith, one baptism” (Ephesians 4:5) and one mission. Together, we are called to proclaim salvation through Jesus Christ.

The urgency of this calling intensifies as we remember that the second coming of Christ is very near. This is not a time for complacency or compromise, but for revival, repentance, and renewed commitment to Christ and the Great Commission.

Therefore, let us rise with fresh determination to make disciples wherever God has placed us, united in heart and purpose. Let pastors equip believers, teachers nurture students, parents disciple their children, young people boldly share their faith, and every member become an ambassador for Christ. May our churches become centres of prayer, holiness, evangelism, and spiritual transformation as we support one another and work together for the cause of Christ.

As Ellen G. White wisely wrote, “The work of God in this earth can never be finished until the men and women comprising our church membership rally to the work and unite their efforts with those of ministers and church officers” (Testimonies for the Church, vol. 9, p. 117).

Jesus’ command and promise still stand: He is with us always. Empowered by the Holy Spirit and united in purpose, let us continue making disciples until He comes.

■ **Pastor Edwin Martin**
Editor

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THE PRESIDENT'S VISION AND CALL

From a Follower to a Disciple

“Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.” Matthew 4:18–20

Across North America—and within our own congregations—church leaders are increasingly recognising a sobering reality: we are often successful at making converts but far less effective at making disciples.

While baptisms and membership numbers matter, Scripture and experience remind us that Jesus never called us merely to fill churches with followers, but to form lives shaped by faithful discipleship.

This concern is not new. In the book *Behind the Stained Glass Windows* (p. 44), the Stewardship Project team uncovered two significant findings that continue to challenge the church today. First, “church members have changed from stewards into consumers.” The rise of the “felt needs” approach, while helpful in some contexts, has often limited spiritual growth. Many who attend user-friendly churches never move beyond meeting personal needs. Christianity, in this model, becomes a consumer product—a free ride—rather than a life of sacrificial following.

Second, the research showed that churches grew faster and healthier when they emphasised a deep relationship with Christ and a commitment to faithful discipleship.

These findings point to a necessary paradigm shift in our churches: from followers to disciples.

Defining a Disciple

In *DiscipleShift*, the author reminds us that the first task in any discipleship movement is to clearly define what a disciple is—and that definition must be unmistakably biblical (p. 45). One of the clearest definitions is found in Jesus’ call recorded in Matthew 4:18–20:

“Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.”



SCAN FOR AUDIO



In this short invitation, Jesus reveals three essential characteristics of a disciple:

1. “Follow Me” – A Call to Intentional Following

Discipleship begins with a response to Jesus’ invitation—something we must do. For Peter and Andrew, Matthew 4 was actually their second invitation.

The first encounter is recorded in John 1:35–42, when Andrew (and likely John) heard John the Baptist point to Jesus as “the Lamb of God.” Moved by the Holy Spirit, they followed Jesus and spent a short time with Him. Jesus’ simple invitation, “come and see,” was relational. They spent time with Him, listened, observed, and began to learn. Andrew was so impacted that he immediately brought his brother Simon to Jesus. In that meeting, Jesus spoke transformation into Peter’s life even before it fully unfolded, renaming him Cephas—a stone.

Ellen G. White captures this transitional moment powerfully:

“Until this time none of the disciples had fully united as collaborators with Jesus. They had witnessed many of His miracles, and had listened to His teaching; But now Jesus called them to forsake

their former life, and unite their interests with His” (The Desire of Ages, p. 246).

To follow Jesus begins with mental acceptance—a cognitive decision to recognise Him as Teacher and Lord. But following is more than agreement; it is commitment. As Jesus later said, “If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me” (John 12:26).

2. “I Will Make You” – A Call to Transformation

The second characteristic of discipleship is transformation, and this is the work that Jesus does in us. As the author in DiscipleShift explains, discipleship is not merely a mental decision; it is a Spirit-led process in which our hearts and affections are changed (p. 48).

Scripture is clear that disciples are shaped into the likeness of Christ:

“We... are being transformed into His likeness with ever-increasing glory” (2 Corinthians 3:17–18).

Jesus described this process as pruning—loving, sometimes painful, but always purposeful—so that our lives would bear fruit (John 15:1–2).

**“We are often successful at making converts,
but far less effective at making disciples.”**

That fruit is relational and visible: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22–23).

Discipleship involves a transfer of values and a daily spiritual response to the Holy Spirit.

3. “Fishers of Men” – A Call to Mission and Action

The final characteristic of a disciple is mission. At first, the disciples followed Jesus while still remaining fishermen. But when Jesus met them again—this time in their workplace along the shoreline—and performed the miraculous catch, everything changed. Head belief and heart transformation have now moved into action. Their purpose was redefined.

What led them to leave everything immediately? Jesus cast a compelling vision for their lives—and they embraced it.

That same vision was later extended to all believers in Matthew 28:19: “Go and make disciples...” Ellen G. White reminds us:

“The Saviour’s commission... includes all believers in Christ to the end of time” (The Desire of Ages, p. 822).

A disciple, then, is someone who is following Christ, being changed by Christ, and committed to the mission of Christ.

Creating a Disciple-Making Environment

For our churches to become places where followers are transformed into disciples, intentional change is required—personally, congregationally, and corporately.

As Kidder explains, “Christian discipleship is a process that influences a believer to be open to personal transformation by the Holy Spirit... to make other disciples” (Moving Your Church, p. 29).

A disciple becomes a change agent, not merely a participant. This is especially urgent when we consider that in many congregations, 20% of members do 80% of the ministry, while the rest remain consumers.

Leading congregational change requires both vision and action (Herrington, Bonem & Furr, p. 155).

Prayerfully, the Ontario Conference is embracing changes to support a disciple-making culture, including:

- Decentralising ministry and mission, empowering regions to plan according to local needs.
- Transitioning worship from mainly celebrational to deeply inspirational.
- Shifting growth environments toward one-on-one discipleship and missional small groups.
- Moving from attractional to missional churches, engaging communities relationally.



“Jesus never called us merely to fill churches with followers, but to form lives shaped by faithful discipleship.”

Ellen G. White’s counsel remains timely:

“Nothing must be allowed to divert the church from the accomplishment of the mission of Jesus. ...There can be no renewal of the church without a corresponding involvement in mission” (Testimonies, vol. 7, p. 18).

May God lead us—individually and collectively—from being mere followers to becoming faithful, fruitful disciples who make disciples, until Jesus comes.



■ **Pastor Jakov Bibulović**
President, Ontario Conference



TREASURY REFLECTION

God’s Faithfulness in Every Season

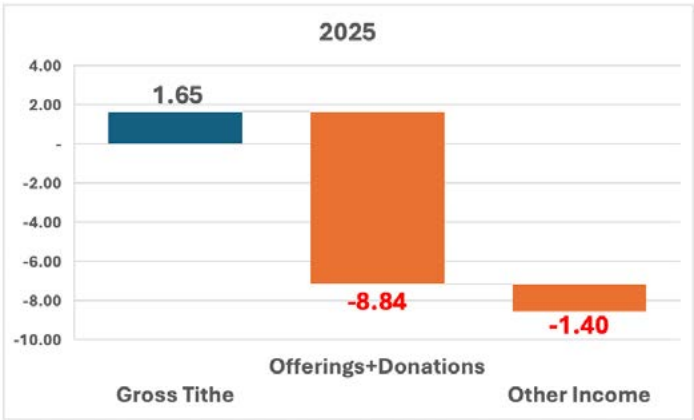
**“But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”
- Philippians 4:19**

Faith anchored in a God who keeps His promises naturally overflows with praise and thanksgiving, for He consistently shows up for His people. In these uncertain times, we are reminded of the importance of placing even greater trust in our ever-present and faithful God.

The Ontario Conference Treasury Department can confidently affirm that our members and the donors understand this concept. Through both challenging and prosperous seasons, God’s people have remained steadfast and resolute, putting Him first and personal desires last.

Presented here is a brief financial overview as of December 31, 2025, along with a snapshot of operations up to March 31, 2026. It is clear that God’s faithfulness remains evident. This is demonstrated by an increase in our tithe income, despite a decline in offerings and other sources of income.

This is shown and summarised below:



Note: The vertical axis in the chart above is represented in percentages.



AdventistGiving.org



As of December 31, 2025, the tithe figures were up 1.65% compared to 2024, with offerings, donations, and other income showing declines of 8.84% and 1.4%, respectively.

As of March 1, 2026, tithe figures still reflect a 1.65% increase compared to the same period in 2025, while offerings and donations have risen by 18.2%.

It is important to note that the reported offerings and donations reflect the conference's allocated portion. When considering the church summary—representing the total offerings and donations retained by local churches—there is a 1.17% increase by the end of 2025 compared to 2024, and currently a 4.27% increase compared to March 31, 2025.

Expenditures for 2025 remained leveled up with the 2024 operating year and were managed even more conservatively in response to the volatile micro- and macroeconomic environment, though certain costs remain unavoidable.

Of the total expenditures for 2025, the Ontario Conference maintained its commitment to key areas of ministry: supporting pastors through wages and continuing education, sustaining schools and teachers through salaries and appropriations, and assisting churches through reversions and evangelism funding.

A total of \$1 million was budgeted for local church evangelism, with a special emphasis on Pentecost 2025. In addition, \$466,000 was received from NAD and SDACC to augment the evangelism budget, and these funds have already been disbursed to churches.

We are thankful to the higher organisations for their support, particularly in education and evangelism, which helps supplement the conference budget and further the cause through these departments. In education, \$4.5 million was appropriated to our schools and colleges to support their educational programmes.

Overall, the financial position of the Ontario Conference remains strong. The Treasury Department continues to exercise prudent stewardship over the resources entrusted to us by the Almighty God. He has surely provided for our needs.

We recognise the challenges our members and donors face in these uncertain times, and we remain deeply thankful for their continued faithfulness over the years.

May we all respond with a willing “yes” to the call to support God's work, as we look forward to that glorious morning when we will see Jesus Christ return in the eastern sky.



■ **Dalu Sifani**
Associate Treasurer,
Ontario Conference

Why is it that we so easily ask God to take care of us daily...

*yet hesitate when it comes
to being used by Him?*

Pray “Use Me”

How often do we pray, “God, take care of me,” while overlooking the ways He is calling us to care for others?

What if we shifted our prayer?

What if we stepped outside the comfort of praying only for what concerns us—our families, our needs, and the occasional request—and instead, prayed, “Lord, use me”?

Use me to see others as You see them.

To notice the overlooked.

To speak to the hurting.

Use my hands to serve (Galatians 5:13).

Use my heart to love beyond comfort (Matthew 22:39).

Use my words to speak life (Proverbs 18:21).

Use my mind to discern Your will (Romans 12:2).

Use my steps to go where You send me (Isaiah 6:8).

Use my resources to bless those in need (2 Corinthians 9:7).

Use me to stand for justice (Micah 6:8) and to love in action (1 John 3:18).

We are not called to be passive recipients of God’s blessings, but active vessels through which He moves.

This week, let your prayer stretch beyond comfort
Beyond routine,
Beyond self,
And ask to be commissioned.

Instead of “God, take care of me,”
pray, “God, use me.”

“Here am I. Send me.” (Isaiah 6:8)



■ **Khalilah Bruzual**
Kanisa Fellowship
Seventh-day Adventist Church

DISCIPLESHIP & EVANGELISM

Disciple-Making Direction 2026

The Ontario Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is poised for a spiritual awakening. With over 38,000 members across the province, we are not just a denomination—we are a movement. In 2026, that movement is being re-centred on the mission Jesus gave us: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19). The Disciple-Making Direction 2026 emphasis is more than a campaign; it is a divine summons for every believer to become an ambassador of God’s kingdom.

This emphasis, “Disciple-Making Evangelism,” unites two powerful pathways: one for reaching non-believers and one for growing believers into disciple-makers. Together, they form a seamless journey from spiritual death to spiritual multiplication. From -9 to +9, every soul is invited to move toward the cross—and beyond—into a life of purpose, mission, and reproduction.

Evangelism Pathway: Reaching the Lost

Jesus modeled a relational approach to evangelism. He mingled, showed sympathy, met needs, and invited people into truth. The Evangelism Pathway follows this pattern in four phases:

1. Prepare (-9 to -7): Build trust through service, friendship, and prayer. “He went about doing good” (Acts 10:38).
2. Plant (-7 to -5): Share testimony, introduce spiritual themes, and sow gospel seeds. “The kingdom of God is like a man who scatters seed...” (Mark 4:26).
3. Cultivate (-5 to -3): Begin Bible studies, answer questions, and nurture interest. “Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:17).
4. Harvest (-3 to -1): Present the gospel, invite decisions, and prepare for baptism. “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few” (Matthew 9:37).

Every member has a role—Bridge-Builder, Story-Sharer, Nurturer, Decision-Coach. Evangelism is not an event; it is a lifestyle.

Discipleship Pathway: Growing the Found

Once someone crosses the line of faith, their journey is just beginning. The Discipleship Pathway moves believers from spiritual infancy to spiritual parenthood. Based on 2 Corinthians 5:17–20, it affirms that “if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation... and we are ambassadors for Christ.”



1. Stage 1 — Spiritual Birth (+1 to +3): New believers need care, assurance, and basic teaching. Church support includes mentors, foundations classes, and spiritual habits workshops.
2. Stage 2 — Spiritual Infant (+3 to +5): Believers begin sharing their testimony and healing from past wounds. They need belonging and relational discipleship.
3. Stage 3 — Spiritual Child (+5 to +6): Believers serve in simple ministries, practice hospitality, and participate in outreach. They need purpose and exposure.
4. Stage 4 — Spiritual Young Adult (+6 to +8): Believers lead small groups, teach Bible studies, and organise outreach. They need training and responsibility.
5. Stage 5 — Spiritual Parent (+8 to +9): Believers mentor others, reproduce small groups, and multiply disciple-makers. They need coaching and a multiplication mindset.

This pathway transforms passive members into active ministers. It equips every believer to become a Messenger, Missionary, Minister, and Mentor.

Why This Matters Now

Ontario is spiritually diverse and increasingly secular. Many people are open to spirituality but closed to institutions. They will not come to church unless the church first goes to them. Ellen White wrote, “Every true disciple is born into the kingdom of God as a missionary.” She also declared, “The work of God in this earth can never be finished until the men and women comprising our church membership rally to the work.”

The Disciple-Making Direction 2026 emphasis is our rallying cry. It is our moment to shift from membership to movement, from programs to purpose, from attendance to ambassadorial action.

A Biblical Vision for a Missional People

Scripture affirms our calling:

1. “You are the light of the world... let your light shine before others” (Matthew 5:14-16).
2. “As the Father has sent Me, I am sending you” (John 20:21).
3. “Always be prepared to give an answer... for the hope that you have” (1 Peter 3:15).
4. “The gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world... and then the end will come” (Matthew 24:14).
5. “Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men” (Matthew 4:19).

These are not suggestions; they are identity statements. They define who we are and what we are called to do.

An Appeal to All 38,000 Adventists in Ontario

This is your invitation. This is your mission. This is your moment.

God is calling you to become His ambassador in 2026 and beyond—not because you are perfect, but because you are willing; not because you know everything, but because you know Jesus; not because you have all the answers, but because you have a story, a testimony, and a heart that God can use.

The Disciple-Making Direction 2026 emphasis provides the tools. The Holy Spirit gives the power. The church offers the community. But only you can give God your “yes.”

SCAN FOR AUDIO



Let 2026 be the year Ontario rises—not as spectators, but as ambassadors; not as members, but as disciple-makers; not as consumers of ministry, but as co-labourers with Christ.

Will you step forward as God's ambassador?



■ **Pastor Sereivudh Ly**
*Church Planting, Revitalisation, & Evangelism
Director, Ontario Conference*

DISCIPLESHIP IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Young Disciples in the Digital Age

From the beginning of time, people have been discipled by others and have in turn discipled others. Life in the 21st century stands out from all other ages in discipleship because of the new tools it offers Christians. Tools such as AI, social media, and the internet present many opportunities; however, if used incorrectly, they can become obstacles rather than advantages.

One opportunity the digital age presents is the ability to reach numerous people instantly with the click of a button. The world is at our fingertips. Christians can share the gospel like never before, but we must be aware that the enemy uses the internet to his advantage as well. Lies can now be easily spread—and just as easily believed. The key to using the internet is to use it wisely and watch out for falsehoods that the enemy may set. We must be careful about what we share so that we do not help spread lies ourselves. Jesus wants us to be mindful of what we do and say, and we face choices daily between right and wrong. I have learned that asking yourself, “What would Jesus do?” whenever faced with difficult decisions can be helpful.

In our Christian lives, we often ask, “How can I serve God today, even if I’m very young?” Sometimes, the best things come in the smallest packages. We can serve God by simply visiting a neighbor who lives alone or by setting aside time in our busy day to read the Bible. These actions may seem small, but in doing so you are giving the most valuable thing you have: your time. The digital age can trap people online, causing us to forget to connect face-to-face. We can get trapped in the virtual world and forget the real world. Do not allow the enemy to steal your time from doing good works or meditating on God’s words. Those quiet moments are the times when you can hear God’s silent whispers, and that is when He can work miracles in your life.

When I was eight years old, I pondered, “How can I serve God?” I wondered if it was even possible at such a young age. With some good advice from my mom, I figured out that you do not need lots of money or influence to make a difference in the world. She encouraged me to use the talent God gave me—writing. I love to write, speak, and communicate, so writing a book was a natural fit. Since then, I have written and published three books, which are now available in several Canadian public libraries. I had the chance to share God with others through my stories and public readings. My books are written for children, teaching simple yet crucial biblical moral lessons that every child should learn from God’s Word. I did not allow the enemy to steal my time online; hence, I could hear from the Holy Spirit, who gave inspiration for my stories.

In conclusion, we are never too insignificant to serve God, but we must avoid losing valuable time online and give it to Him instead. Find your passion, and God can use it to spread goodness and even change lives. Pray, ask for guidance, follow God’s directions, and He will take you on the adventure of a lifetime.



■ **Anna Neriya Abdulla**
Belleville Seventh-day Adventist Church

DISCIPLESHIP IN THE 21ST CENTURY

My Real Life as a Disciple of Christ

In my daily life, I try to follow Jesus in everything that I do and say. Each day, I wake up and spend some time in God's word, whether through my Sabbath School lesson or a Bible passage that I find relevant. More often than not, the Holy Spirit impresses upon my heart what I should read, and whatever devotional I choose applies to my day or helps me deal with a problem. These little bits of spiritual wisdom are so powerful and are at the foundation of my life as God's disciple. This essay shows how I live like Christ from day to day and reflect His attributes toward others.

Since my baptism in 2021, I have learned that the Christian walk is not easy. Following Christ and demonstrating His attributes is more than just reading my Bible, praying daily and nurturing an eternal relationship with Him. While these things form the basis for daily following of Jesus, there is much more. In my home, discipleship is similar to what it is outside, but more personal. As I interact with my family, I have learned that when I have a negative attitude, it spreads like wildfire and negatively impacts the home atmosphere.

Now that I am no longer homeschooled and am attending public school, I must purpose in my heart, like Daniel, to be a representative of God. Each morning before I leave the house, my dad reminds me to "have a great day, represent Christ, and be a witness for Him." I have heard him say this so often that it has become my personal motto. As I leave for school, I ponder how I can demonstrate Christ's character in everything that I do. Being in the public school system means that I see and hear things that would be unpleasant to God. Since I have made a conscious decision not to display those kinds of behaviour with God's help, I show my peers that I am different from everyone else. I can tell that others notice this difference and wonder why. My response is simple: I am a child of God, representing who He is to others both inside and outside my home.

One of the challenges young believers face is standing out because of their beliefs. I have often felt out of place when I am around non-believers or even believers whose faith differs from mine. When I feel discouraged, I remember the Bible verse that says if we are ashamed of Christ, He will also be ashamed of us (Luke 9:26). This thought encourages me and helps me continue in my walk with God. I am not perfect, and I still make mistakes, no matter how hard I try. Dying to self helps ensure that I am truly repentant and willing to let Jesus take control of my life. The most important

(Continued on page 18)



WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A

Disciple of Christ in the 21st Century

Imagine with me for a moment.

Suppose I was recently hired as a physician at a hospital. Every day, I show up for work. I walk the halls. I greet patients. I mingle with the staff. But I never examine a patient, never prescribe treatment, never offer care. At the end of each day, I go home, only to repeat the same routine the next morning.

What kind of physician would I be?

Perhaps you would call me negligent—or at best, a non-laboring physician who has not taken the calling seriously.

In much the same way, when I became a Christian, I became a disciple. With that identity came a divine commission: “Go therefore and make disciples” (Matthew 28:19).

Jesus also reminds us that “The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few” (Luke 10:2).

The tragedy is not that there is no harvest. The tragedy is that many appear to be laborers, yet do not labor. We mingle. We gather. We attend. But do we disciple?

This brings me to the central question: **What does it truly mean to be a disciple of Christ in the 21st century?**

**“Before I can share Christ
with others, I must experience
Him personally.”**

I believe there are three essential dimensions to authentic discipleship today.

Discipleship Begins with Me

Before I can share Christ with others, I must experience Him personally.

It is not enough to possess head knowledge of Scripture—to explain doctrine without intimacy with God. True discipleship flows from experiential knowledge. I must be able to testify, not merely theorize.

Discipleship begins in the quiet place—time spent in the Word, surrendered to the Holy Spirit, trusting God’s Word. It requires enduring difficult seasons, believing that God is refining my character and strengthening my faith.

Scripture reminds us:

“He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver...” (Malachi 3:3)

A refiner does not abandon the silver. He watches carefully until he sees his reflection in it. Likewise, God refines us until His character is reflected in ours.

When Christ’s character is formed within me, laboring becomes natural. The most powerful sermon I will ever preach is the testimony of what God has done in my life. But testimonies are not meant only for church audiences. If we share our experiences exclusively with believers, we may have the wrong audience.

The vineyard is not confined to church walls. The vineyard is the world.



Discipleship begins with understanding God's will for my life and choosing obedience over comfort. It means refusing to be a "non-laboring laborer."

Discipleship Requires Intentional Outreach

Being a disciple in this century demands purposefulness.

As I go about my daily life, I ask myself: Who can I reach today? Sometimes that means carrying literature—a tract, Steps to Christ, or The Great Controversy—in my purse, ready to share when God opens the door.

During the pandemic, when many people were walking outdoor trails for exercise, I noticed how many people passed along a particular path near my home. Along the fences, I began hanging clear bags containing literature and small bottles of hand sanitizer. I checked the weather forecast to ensure no rain would ruin them. I prayerfully placed the books and waited.

Each day as I walked, I observed that the bags were being taken. Some left the sanitizer behind, but the books were gone. My heart was encouraged.

One day on that trail, I met a young woman named Ruby. We exchanged greetings and began walking together. In conversation, I learned she was Muslim and half-Afghan. As we built friendship, I shared my faith gently, beginning with common ground—the law of God and the Ten Commandments. Over time, we exchanged

numbers and deepened our friendship. I invited her into my home for meals and family gatherings.

When I told her about the Sabbath, she began wishing me "Happy Sabbath." Eventually, I invited her to church. To my amazement, she said yes. Ruby has attended several times, though she continues practicing her faith. I continue praying that one day she will fully surrender her heart to Jesus.

Discipleship in the 21st century requires creativity, courage, and consistency. It means looking beyond programs and waiting less for organized outreach, and more for Spirit-led opportunities in everyday life.

Discipleship Is About Genuine Relationships

True discipleship is not recruitment—it is relationship.

People quickly discern whether we are interested in them as projects or as persons. Making friends for the gospel must be sincere. My daily prayer is simple:

"Lord, give me Your heart—one of love, care, and compassion for souls."

I do not wait for church programs to initiate outreach. When the Holy Spirit impresses my heart, I order literature myself and distribute it in my community. I pray for opportunities to host Bible studies in my home.

Through this journey, I have learned that prayer is the key. Human effort must always follow divine direction. I have also discovered a beautiful spiritual principle: when I prioritize praying for others before myself, God faithfully takes care of my needs. It is an experience that deepens trust and strengthens faith beyond words.

The more I pray for souls, the more I see God working. The more I



seek His kingdom, the more He handles the rest.

Conclusion

The harvest is still plentiful. The need is still urgent.

The question is not whether there is work to be done, but whether we will labor.

To be a disciple of Christ in the 21st century means:

- Allowing God to refine our character.
- Intentionally seeking souls in everyday life.
- Building genuine relationships rooted in love.
- Praying first, acting second.
- Refusing to be passive Christians in an active mission.

Let us not be non-laborers in the vineyard. Let us take the sacred privilege of discipleship seriously.

May Christ see His reflection in us—and may the world see Christ in us.



■ **Angela Bedward**
Barrie Seventh-day Adventist Church

*This piece was selected as the winning entry in the 18+ age category of the 2026 Ontario Conference Discipleship Essay Writing Contest.

(Continued from page 15)

part of a relationship with God is following His commands, and I experience this in my day-to-day life. Sometimes I feel tempted to act in ways that are not of God, but He gently reminds me that my sinful desires do not reflect Him. Most of the time, I choose to obey, but there have been instances when I foolishly decided to follow my own way and faced the consequences.

As I continue through life, I want to continue demonstrating discipleship in the way God has called me to - through my own actions. I aim to represent Him wherever I go, listening to His Holy Spirit and letting Him guide me. Being kind and Christ-like toward those I come in contact with at school and at home. Most importantly, I seek to nurture my relationship with God and ask Him to transform me. Discipleship is not easy, but with God's guidance, I can help win souls for Him.

■ **Yasmin Robinson**
Heart Lake Seventh-day Adventist Church

*This piece was selected as the winning entry in the 13-17 age category of the 2026 Ontario Conference Discipleship Essay Writing Contest.

The Flame in the Frame

Jesus shines through us so others can see Him.

Matthew 5:16: "In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."



The Window and the Candle

Imagine walking past a house at night.

You see a window, but inside the house, it is completely dark.

There is no lamp, no candle, no light at all.

What do you see through the window?

Nothing but darkness.

Now imagine walking past another house.

This time, a small candle glows inside the window.

Suddenly, the window shines! You can see the warm light from far away.

The window didn't change — the light inside made the difference.

Our church ministries are a little like that window.

Things like Sabbath School, singing, helping others, and serving together are the frame.

But the flame is Jesus shining in our hearts.

When Jesus' love shines through us — when we are kind, helpful, and caring — people can see His light.

Just like a candle shining in a window.

In Matthew 5:16, Jesus Christ says: "Let your light shine before others."

When we follow Jesus, we become a flame in the frame so others can see His love.

Think about it:

**How can you show Jesus' light to
someone this week?**



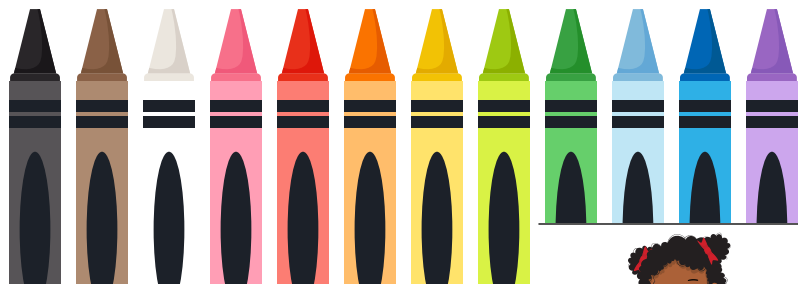
Draw the Flame

Draw and decorate a big window frame, and inside, draw a candle.

Instructions: Draw ways you can shine Jesus' light inside the flame.

Examples:

- helping someone
- praying
- sharing
- inviting a friend to church
- Using kind words to encourage



Be The Flame This Week

Pick one thing to do:

- Help someone at home
- Sit with someone new
- Say thank you
- Pray for someone
- Share a Bible story



Bible Spotlight: The Woman Who Became Light



Bible Story: A Light to Her Town

One day, Jesus was traveling and stopped at a well to rest. While He was there, a woman from the town came to get water. Jesus began talking with her and told her about the living water that gives real life.

During their conversation, the woman realized that Jesus was the promised Savior. Her heart was filled with excitement and joy!

She left her water jar and ran back to her town to tell everyone, "Come and see the man who told me everything I ever did!" Because of what she said, many people came to meet Jesus and believed in Him too.

When the woman met Jesus, it was as if a flame lit in her heart. She became a light for others so they could find Him, too.

Your Challenge

This week, tell one person something you love about Jesus.

Activity: Find The Light



Look around your home and see how many things you can find that give light. Can you find:

- A lamp
- A candle
- A flashlight
- Sunlight shining through a window

You might even discover other lights too!

All these things help us see in the dark. But there is another light that helps guide our lives.

In the Bible, Jesus says, "I am the light of the world." (John 8:12)

Just as a lamp or flashlight helps us see where to go, Jesus guides us, shows us the right path, and fills our lives with His love.

Think About It:

Which light did you find that reminds you the most of Jesus' light? Why?



"Dear Jesus,
Help me shine your light today.
Show me how to be kind, loving, and brave.
Let others see You shining bright in me.
In Jesus Name, Amen."

Prayer Corner



Craft Corner: Flame in the Frame

Let's make a reminder that Jesus' light can shine through us!

What You Need:

- A paper plate or a piece of cardboard
- Yellow or orange paper
- Markers or crayons
- Glue

What to Do:

1. Use your marker to draw a window frame on the paper plate or cardboard. You can make it look like a big window with four sections.
2. Cut out a flame shape from the yellow or orange paper.
3. Glue the flame in the middle of the window.
4. Around the frame, write or draw ways you can shine for Jesus.

You could write things like:

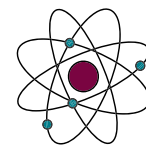
- Be kind
- Help someone
- Pray for a friend
- Share about Jesus
- Say thank you

When you finish, hang your Flame in the Frame somewhere you will see it. Let it remind you to let Jesus' light shine through you every day!

Science Corner: Reflect the Light!

Did you know mirrors don't make light? They reflect light!

Let's try a simple experiment.



What You Need: Flashlight, small mirror, dark room or a dim space, wall

What to Do:

1. Turn off the lights so the room is a little dark.
 2. Shine the flashlight at the mirror.
 3. Watch what happens when the mirror reflects the light onto the wall.
 4. Move the mirror slowly and see how the light moves around the room!
- The mirror didn't create the light. It reflected the light from the flashlight. Our lives can be like that mirror. Jesus is the true light, and when we follow Him, His love shines through us so others can see it. Jesus said, "I am the light of the world." (John 8:12). When we are kind, loving, and helpful, we are reflecting His light to the people around us.



■ **Patricia Ferreira Lopez**
Children's Ministry Director, Ontario Conference



DISCIPLESHIP & EDUCATION

Disciple-Students in Seventh-day Adventist Schools

In a world that constantly shapes young minds through culture, media, and technology, education plays a crucial role in forming not only intellect but also character. Within the global network of schools operated by the Seventh-day Adventist Church, including our nine schools in Ontario, the concept of the “disciple-student” stands at the heart of its educational philosophy. Seventh-day Adventist education seeks to develop students who are more than academic achievers—it aims to nurture disciples of Christ who live out their faith in practical, transformative ways.

At the centre of Seventh-day Adventist education is the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. Students are encouraged to model His example of love, service, humility, and obedience to God. Being a disciple student means more than just attending Bible classes or chapel services; it involves cultivating a daily relationship with God through prayer, Bible study, and reflection. Faith is not treated as a subject confined to one period of the school day, but as a lens through which all learning and life are viewed.

Our Seventh-day Adventist schools in Ontario emphasise holistic development—mental, physical, spiritual, and social. This approach reflects the belief that true education restores the image of God in humanity. A disciple-student, therefore, strives for excellence not

only in academics but also in healthful living and moral decision-making. Our Adventist schools in Ontario promote healthy lifestyle principles such as balanced nutrition, exercise, and rest, reinforcing the idea that the body is a temple of the Holy Spirit. Through these practices, students learn discipline, responsibility, and respect for themselves and others.

Service is another defining mark of disciple-students in our Seventh-day Adventist schools. Inspired by Christ’s ministry, students are encouraged to serve their communities through outreach programs, mission trips, and acts of kindness. Whether participating in local community service projects or supporting global humanitarian initiatives, students learn that discipleship





involves action. Faith becomes tangible when it is expressed in compassion and service to those in need.

Academic excellence remains a strong priority. Our Seventh-day Adventist schools are known for integrating faith and learning, helping students see connections between biblical principles and subjects such as science, history, and literature. Teachers serve not only as instructors but as mentors and spiritual role models. In this supportive environment, students are challenged to think critically, act ethically, and pursue knowledge with integrity. The goal is to prepare young people for meaningful careers while grounding them in enduring spiritual values.

The community also plays a vital role in shaping disciple-students. Our Seventh-day Adventist schools often foster close-knit environments where relationships are built on mutual respect and shared beliefs. Worship services, weeks of prayer, and spiritual emphasis programs create opportunities for students to deepen their faith together. Through fellowship, our students learn accountability, leadership, and the importance of encouraging one another in their spiritual journeys.

Ultimately, the vision of a disciple-student in any Seventh-day Adventist school extends beyond graduation. It involves preparing young people to live purposeful lives, guided by faith and committed to serving God and humanity. In a changing and often uncertain world, Seventh-day Adventist education seeks to anchor students in timeless truths while equipping them with the skills and character needed to make a positive difference. By nurturing both hearts and minds, Seventh-day Adventist schools aim to send forth disciples who reflect Christ in every aspect of their lives.



■ **Pastor Reynold Hazelwood**
Superintendent of Schools,
Ontario Conference

SCAN FOR AUDIO



ADVENTIST EDUCATION IN ONTARIO



8 Elementary Schools

Adventist Christian Elementary School (London)

College Park Elementary School (Oshawa)

Crawford Adventist Academy Elementary (North York)

Crawford Adventist Academy East Campus (Pickering)

Crawford Adventist Academy Peel Campus (Mississauga)

Grandview Adventist Academy (Mount Hope)

Ottawa Adventist School (Ottawa)

Windsor Adventist Elementary School (Windsor)



1 High School

Crawford Adventist Academy Secondary (North York)



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To register your child, go to the link below.



More Information

Ontario Conference Office of Education
1110 King Street East, Oshawa, ON L1H 1H8

education.adventistontario.org/schools



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SYMBOLS OF FAITH

The History of the Seventh-day Adventist Logo

Over the past couple of decades, there has been much speculation about the official logo of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The most reliable sources for answers are history—examining past events and timelines—and our official publications.

In 1849, when James and Ellen White, the church's forerunners, published the first paper, *The Present Truth*, there was no logo or image. In 1850, the paper was renamed *The Advent Review*, still without a logo. It would take another ten years for the first image or logo to appear in our official publication.



1860 Logo

In 1860, the *Advent Review* featured an image of the Ark of the Covenant, with two covering cherubim. By 1863, when the Seventh-day Adventist Church was formally organised, this image served as the logo in official publications. In

1866, the logo was updated: the Ark remained, but in a different graphic style. Two new elements were added—a cross and a crown—emphasising Christ as King, the kingdom of heaven, and the centrality of the cross.



1863 Logo

Between 1870 and 1879, the logo disappeared entirely. For a decade, there were no images on the *Review's* banner. In 1880, the *Advent Review* brought an image back to its cover. This time, the Bible replaced the Ark, reflecting renewed emphasis on the Word of God. The Bible became the priority.

By 1886, as world mission gained momentum, the banner depicted a globe labelled, "Our Field," with the Bible and descending dove symbolising the Holy Spirit—shifting focus to global evangelism. The whole world is our field!

In 1889, the slogan became "The Field is the World", initially identifying America and Europe as the primary mission territories. In 1902, S. America was added as the work expanded into South American countries. In 1905, the names of the three continents were removed, and the globe was rotated, while the Bible and the dove remained.



1886-1906 Logo

In 1907, a new format was introduced, featuring two cherubim above the Ark, the Law visible beneath the banner, and a dove illuminating the globe with rays of light. The Law—the two tables—re-emerged prominently in the 1910 banner. The first *Harvest Ingathering for Missions* edition that year featured several logos on subsequent pages: the top banner showed the Law between two torches, with an angel blowing a trumpet below. The next page included a Bible in the banner as a symbol of the publishing work; another showed a sower scattering seed with a Bible above the globe. A new image emerged in 1913—an angel descending from heaven, illuminating the earth with His glory, as illustrated in Revelation 18. The graphics were refined in subsequent editions.

A significant return to the old-style logo occurred in 1914, with the onset of the First World War. In a special "War Extra" edition, a

SCAN FOR AUDIO



throwback to the former banner from a previous decade appeared, followed by a similar new design: the globe with the banner “The Field is the World,” the Bible, the dove (as in 1902), and now a flaming torch behind the globe. All of this occurred while Ellen White was still alive, and she never commented on a banner or logo.

As the church navigated shifts in theology, inspiration, leadership, and fundamentalism, the logo remained essentially unchanged until 1928. That year, the Week of Prayer edition featured a redesigned logo. The Bible and the dove were removed, and the globe became less busy, featuring the torch behind the world. Six months later, it changed again. This banner lasted until 1933.

In 1934, the Bible returned while the globe, torch, and slogan disappeared, leaving only a simple Bible image. In 1935, a secondary logo appeared featuring the Law, with Christ descending from the clouds above and the promise “I will come again.” The main logo remained on the front page, while this second banner appeared within, emphasising the conclusion of the Three Angels’ Messages—Revelation 14:12.

**1935 Logo**

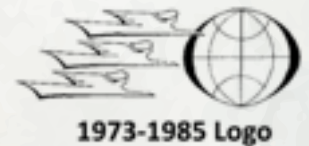
In 1939, the logo was removed again, and the publication's title was shortened by removing the words “Advent” and “Sabbath.” The original title appeared on the following page. One wonders whether readers complained about the removal of these words, because by the fifth issue—just a month later—they reappeared on the title page. With slight artistic adjustments, this minimalist banner, without a logo, continued into the 1960s. In 1951, the

word “Review” was emphasised. For over two decades, no logo appeared on the church's publications.

On May 4, 1961, a three-leaf clover shape appeared around the letter “R,” symbolising belief in the Trinity—a debated topic at the time. Still, this was not an official logo. Then, on September 7, 1967, the Review introduced the Three Angels logo. It became the emblem of that era, loved by many for its distinctive portrayal of the Three Angels’ Messages.

**1967-1973 Logo**

The design underwent adjustments. In 1973, the angels were depicted slightly differently, approaching the globe rather than hovering over it. The logo disappeared from the Adventist Review at the end of 1985. During the 1970s and early 1980s, conferences, churches, and institutions worldwide created their own versions of the three angels and globe. Many variations emerged.

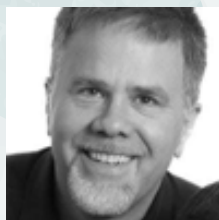
**1973-1985 Logo**

The South Pacific Division had designed a new logo and hoped the General Conference would adopt it for global unity. Designed by an architect it was very linear - a digit 7, stylized letter A, and a cross.

**1988 Australian Logo**



In 1996, the Seventh-day Adventist Church adopted a new official global logo, designed by Bryan Gray, an art designer for various Adventist publications. The logo incorporated all the major elements of previous designs—the open Bible, globe, cross, and three flames.



In Scripture, angels are called seraphim, “the burning ones,” so the three flames represent the Three Angels’ Messages enveloping the world. The logo first appeared on the title page of the Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook in 1998.

In 2016, graphic designers refined the logo into the version used today: an open Bible, cross, and three flames circling the globe, ascending toward Christ’s Second Coming.



Seventh-day
Adventist® Church

The flames, formed by two sets of three lines, represent the Three Angels of Revelation 14 as they circle the globe, underscoring our commission to take the everlasting gospel to the entire world. The overall shape forms a flame, a symbol of the Holy Spirit. Rising from the Bible, the logo reflects the foundation of our beliefs and our acceptance of God’s Word. The central cross represents the gospel of salvation, emphasising Christ’s sacrifice, while the upward movement symbolises His resurrection, ascension, and our anticipation of His soon return.

When someone makes a bold claim about what Adventists once believed, what pioneers taught, or what the church has always done, we must lovingly ask, “Show me the source. Go deeper. Study for yourself.”

Ellen White said, “We have nothing to fear for the future except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us.” History anchors us, but the future of Adventism is not in a logo or a past banner—it is in Jesus: His character, His presence, and His soon return.



■ **Alex Golovenko**
Lead Pastor,
Windsor Seventh-day Adventist Church

¹ The Advent Review and Herald of the Sabbath. December 20, 1870.

² Advent Review and Sabbath Herald. December 18, 1879.

³ Advent Review and Sabbath Herald. January 1, 1880.

⁴ The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald. April 16, 1889.

⁵ The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald. April 8, 1902.

⁶ The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald. May 11, 1905.

⁷ The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald. February 14, 1907.

⁸ The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald. November 3, 1910.

⁹ The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald. October 9, 1913.

¹⁰ The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald. August 24, 1914.

¹¹ The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald. October 15, 1914.

¹² The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald. November 8, 1928.

¹³ The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald. May 30, 1929.

¹⁴ The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald. January 4, 1934.

¹⁵ The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald. January 3, 1935.

¹⁶ Review and Herald. January 5, 1939.

¹⁷ The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald. February 2, 1939.

¹⁸ Review. September 7, 1969.

¹⁹ Advent Review & Sabbath Herald. January 4, 1973.

²⁰ Adventist Review. December 26, 1985.

²¹ Tor E. Tjeransen. Letters. Logo. Adventist Review. October 6, 1988.

²² Yearbook: a Directory of The General Conference, World Divisions, Union and Local Conferences and Missions, Educational Institutions, Food Industries, Healthcare Institutions, Media Centers, Publishing Houses and Periodicals, Radio and TV Stations, Risk Management, and Denominational Workers. Review and Herald Publishing. Hagerstown, MD. 1998.

ADVENTIST LOGO AND NAME

Church Symbol and Meaning

The logo reflects the core values of the Seventh-day Adventist® Church. Its foundation is the Bible, the Word of God, shown open because its message should be read and put into practice. Central to that biblical message is the cross, which is also a central feature of the logo. Above the cross and the open Bible is a burning flame that represents the Holy Spirit, the Messenger of truth.



Source: North American Division Brand Guidelines, 2018, p. 6.

OFFICIAL CHURCH NAME AND IDENTITY STANDARDS

Churches are encouraged to use the official name and logo of the Seventh-day Adventist Church consistently across all forms of communication. Because the Church's name and logo carry spiritual significance and are legally trademarked, they should not be modified, and local churches should refrain from creating independent logos or alternative brand identities. Leaders and members are also encouraged to use the full name "Seventh-day Adventist Church" or simply "Adventist," rather than the abbreviation "SDA."

These standards apply to signage, podium displays, website domain names, social media handles, apparel, and all printed or digital materials. Consistent use of the Church's official identity strengthens unity, reinforces professionalism, and ensures a clear and recognisable presence throughout the global Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Choosing the Right Display for Your Church: Projectors, TVs, or LED Walls?

In today's worship environment, visual technology plays an important role in communication, worship, teaching, and outreach. Whether displaying song lyrics, Scripture passages, sermon slides, announcements, videos, or other content, churches rely on screens every Sabbath to help the congregation follow and participate. Because of this, choosing the right display system is an important decision for both ministry effectiveness and responsible stewardship.

For many years, lamp-based projectors have been a common choice for churches. They are familiar, flexible, and often more affordable than other large-format display options. A lamp-based projector can work well when room lighting is controlled and the screen is properly sized. However, these projectors can struggle in bright rooms, where lyrics and slides may appear faded or difficult to read. They also require ongoing maintenance, including cleaning, alignment, filter changes, bulb replacement, and managing brightness loss over time.

Laser projectors can be a strong upgrade option for churches that want to maintain a projection setup while improving brightness, reliability, contrast, and maintenance. Unlike lamp-based projectors, laser projectors do not require regular bulb replacements and tend to maintain brightness more consistently. They also offer better contrast and more consistent image quality, helping text in lyrics, sermon slides, and video content appear clearer and easier to read. Another practical benefit is faster startup and shutdown time. Instead of waiting for a lamp to warm up or cool down, many laser projectors are usually ready within seconds—helpful when powering on an AV system. They can be a wise middle-ground option for churches that already have a screen and want better image quality without moving to TV screens or a full LED wall. However, they still require proper screen placement,

room lighting control, mounting, throw-distance planning, and the right brightness (lumens) for the space.

TV screens can also be a practical option, especially for smaller sanctuaries, fellowship halls, overflow rooms, or lobbies. Modern TVs can offer strong brightness, clear image quality, and simple operation at a reasonable cost. They are often easier to install than projectors or LED walls because they do not require projector alignment, throw-distance calculations, large projection screens, or specialised video wall processing. TV screens also generally have lower power requirements than large LED walls, making them easier to support with standard electrical circuits. This makes them a helpful choice for churches that need a clean, reliable display solution without a complex installation.

For churches that need a larger display area, multiple TV screens can be combined to form a video wall. Narrow-bezel or near bezel-less commercial displays can create a larger image while reducing the visible gaps between screens. This can be a useful middle option when a single TV is not large enough, but a full LED wall is outside the budget. However, even narrow-bezel displays typically still show some separation between panels and may require proper mounting, alignment, calibration, and a video processor or display controller to show content correctly across multiple screens.

Because of these factors, TV screens are often best suited for spaces where viewing distance is reasonable and screen size fits the room. While the size-to-cost ratio has improved in recent years, a single TV may not be large enough for a bigger sanctuary. Multiple TVs—especially consumer models—may not appear as seamless as a projector screen or LED wall. Churches should also consider mounting height, viewing angles, glare, cable management, and whether a commercial display is better suited for long-term use.

LED walls have become an increasingly popular option for churches that need bright, sharp, and flexible displays. Because an LED wall produces its own light, it remains visible in environments where projection may struggle. LED walls can be built in various sizes and shapes, making them useful for lyrics, sermon graphics, videos, worship backgrounds, and stage design.

However, churches should carefully consider pixel pitch—the distance between LED pixels. A smaller pixel pitch produces a sharper image for closer viewing distances but it usually increases the cost. A larger pixel pitch may be more affordable but can appear rough or pixelated if viewed too closely.

Quality and serviceability are also important when considering an LED wall. Cheaper or poorly manufactured walls may have inconsistent colour, uneven brightness, weak power supplies, poor calibration, or premature pixel failure. Individual pixels can burn out or fail over time, creating visible dark spots or inconsistencies. Before purchasing, churches should ask about warranty coverage, local service support, replacement parts, spare modules, and how pixel failures are handled. A lower-cost wall may seem attractive at

first, but it can cost more in the long run if repairs are difficult or expensive.

Ultimately, the right choice depends on the church's space, budget, worship style, viewing distance, lighting, and ministry needs. A lamp-based projector may be best for a lower-cost, large image. A laser projector may be a good middle-ground upgrade with better reliability, improved image consistency, and faster startup. TV screens work well for smaller rooms or simpler display needs, while multiple narrow-bezel displays can serve as a middle option when a larger image is required. An LED wall may be the right fit for churches seeking high brightness, strong visual impact, and long-term flexibility.

The goal is not to choose the most impressive technology, but rather to choose the one that helps the message be seen clearly, supports worship, and uses church resources wisely. Whether using a lamp-based projector, laser projector, TV screens, or LED wall, churches should make decisions with clarity, stewardship, and mission in mind.



■ **Ashton Blake**
Web Developer and Media Support,
Ontario Conference

ONLINE RESOURCES

Discipleship and Evangelism

In response to the Great Commission—“go and make disciples” (Gospel of Matthew 28:19)—and in anticipation of Christ’s soon return, every Adventist is called to intentionally share the gospel with the world. This mission can be carried out through both personal witness and digital ministry. Below are online resources for discipleship and evangelism to equip you in leading others to Christ:

Bible Study Lessons & Evangelistic Sermons



Hope Study
www.HopeStudy.ca



Voice of Prophecy
www.voiceofprophecy.com/bible-studies



ASI Ministries New Beginnings
<https://asiministries.org/newbeginnings/>



General Conference Evangelism
<https://www.gcevangelism.net/>

Digital Ministry



Social Media: Faith Made Social
<https://www.faithmadesocial.com/>



Ontario Conference Centre
for Communications & Media Ministry
(Launching soon)
<https://adventistontario.org/>

Discipleship



North American Division
Discipleship
<https://www.nadadventist.org/topic/discipleship/>



Adventist Learning Community
<https://www.adventistlearningcommunity.com/>



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DISCIPLES ON FIRE:

AMC 2026 Inspires Over 700 in Ontario



March 13–14, 2026, marked the gathering of more than 700 ministry leaders, volunteers, and members at the Sheraton Parkway Toronto North Hotel & Suites in Richmond Hill for the Adventist Ministries Convention (AMC) 2026. Centred on the theme “Disciples on Fire,” this biennial event drew participants from across the Ontario Conference for a dynamic weekend of spiritual renewal, practical training, and meaningful fellowship.

Pastor Joel Nembhard, Ontario Conference Personal Ministries Director and Chair of the AMC Planning Committee, said, “The AMC exists to equip and mobilise attendees to broaden their focus on mission. This year’s emphasis on discipleship and disciple-making clearly met and exceeded its intended purpose.” He added, “Many individuals have shared with me how impactful and well-executed the sessions were.”

When asked what they appreciated most about the AMC, attendees shared the following:

- “Truly appreciated the respectful, friendly, Christian ‘family’ atmosphere.”
- “The worship segments, devotionals, and keynote messages were spiritually refreshing and helped refocus our commitment to ministry and discipleship.”
- “The new knowledge gained, the important topics that led to positive change and the opportunity to meet new people.”
- “Sessions were mainly on time. The contents were very useful, informative, and insightful with a deep conviction to make disciples.”

One of the weekend’s standout moments was the theme song, “Disciples on Fire,” written by Heather Orr-Mullings of the Northwest Brampton Adventist Church. Its message captured the

heart of the convention, urging leaders and members alike to live passionately for Christ and to fully embrace His mission.

The Friday night speaker was Dr. Ben Maxson of Andrews University Theological Seminary. His message, “Discipleship and Mission in the End Times,” challenged attendees to “find and learn to live in the peace of His presence.” Speaking about the life of a disciple, he emphasised that “we cannot disciple others if we have not learned to walk so closely to Him that our hearts are open to God continually and we talk to Him as a friend.”

During the convention, nearly 40 presenters from different Adventist organisations led 67 workshops. These sessions, available in English, French, and Spanish, offered practical tools and innovative ideas to enhance ministry within local churches.



SCAN FOR AUDIO



Sabbath morning opened with a devotional message from Patricia Ferreira Lopez, Children's and Women's Ministries Director. She encouraged attendees to be "the flame in the frame," letting their lives reflect Christ's light in both their personal lives and their ministry. With conviction, she urged, "Speak Jesus from the mountains, speak Jesus from the streets, speak Jesus over darkness and every enemy."

James Howard, President of Adventist World Radio, led the plenary session on disciple-making. Based on the words of the Apostle Paul—"Imitate me as I imitate Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:1)—he outlined the essential aspects of discipleship: instruction, observation (example),

and participation. Pastor Howard emphasised, "This is where you truly learn; this is where you become like the Master." He pointed out that transformation cannot occur until one actively participates in what the Master is doing.

Beyond the main sessions, the convention created space for fellowship and meaningful connection. A shared meal in the Grand York Ballroom gave attendees time to build relationships, while ministry exhibits highlighted resources and initiatives that could be adapted for use in their local churches.

In his closing remarks, Pastor Jakov Bibulović, President of the



Ontario Conference, highlighted the upcoming OneVoice27 initiative in 2027, commemorating 2,000 years since the baptism of Jesus. He encouraged churches to prepare by embracing their mission as God’s ambassadors—to make disciples and to serve as agents of positive change in their communities.

The final message, delivered by Pastor Ken Norton of Voice of Prophecy, reminded attendees that they are called to be God’s voice in the world—sharing His light and leading others to Christ.

The convention concluded with the congregation singing “We Have This Hope,” a fitting reminder of the Adventist message and the promise of Christ’s return. As attendees returned home, they carried a renewed sense of purpose—to serve faithfully as disciples on fire to share the hope of Jesus with others.



■ **Pastor Edwin Martin**
*Communication & Media Ministry Director,
Ontario Conference*



ADVENTISTCAMPMEETING.CA

Regional Camp Meetings 2026

Western Ontario | May 13-16, 2026

(13-14, Virtual; 15-16, In Person)

Theme: Growing Disciples

Speakers: Dr. Mansfield Edwards, Dr. Ainsworth E. Joseph

Venue: St. Paul Congregational Church (450 Park Ave. West, Chatham, ON)

Ontario Hispanic | May 23, 2026 | 9:00 am

Theme: "Discipleship to Save" / "Discipulado para Salvar"

Speakers: John W. Taylor & Felix H. Cortez

Venue: West End Church Centre - 1344 Martin Grove Rd. Etobicoke, ON M9W 4X3

Southern Ontario | May 29-30, 2026

Theme: "Watching, Waiting, Working"

Speaker: Dr. Jakov Bibulovic

Venues: Friday at 7:00 pm – Simcoe Adventist Church (56 South Drive, Simcoe, ON)

Sabbath, May 30 at 9:30 am – Norfolk County Fairgrounds (172 South Drive, Simcoe, ON)

Metro North & South Central | June 6, 2026 | 10:00 am

Theme: "Follow"

Speakers: Dr. Jose Cortez Jr. & Shomari Blair

Venue: Catch the Fire Church (272 Attwell Dr., Etobicoke, ON)

Filipino-Canadian | June 12-14, 2026

Theme: "Together in Mission"

Speaker: Dr. Allan Martin

Venues: Friday at 7:00 pm – First Fil-Can Adventist Church (788 Sheppard Ave. West, North York, ON)

- Sabbath at 9:00 am – Canada Event Centre (300 Water St., Whitby, ON)
- Sunday at 9:00 am – Kingsway College (1200 Leland Rd, Oshawa, ON)

Metro West & West Central | July 4, 2026

Theme: "Follow Me"

Speakers: Dr. Dewaine Frazer & Pastor Adrian Wallace

Venue: Catch the Fire Church (272 Attwell Dr., Etobicoke, ON)

Eastern Ontario | July 3–4, 2026

Theme: "Healthy Families: Healthy Disciples"

Speakers: Dr. César & Carolann De León

Venues: Friday at 7:00 pm - Ottawa Adventist Church (2200 Benjamin Ave. Ottawa, ON)

- Sabbath at 10:00 am – Cornwall Civic Complex (100 Water St. East, Cornwall, ON)
- Children and Teens – St. John's Presbyterian Church (28 Second St. East, Cornwall, ON)

All African | July 11, 2026

Theme: "Rooted in Christ, Flourishing in a Foreign Land"

Venue: Ghanaian Presbyterian Church of Toronto (51 High Meadow Place, North York, ON)

Metro East | August 15, 2026

Theme: "Called. Formed. Sent" | Speaker: Dr. Calvin Watkins

Venue: Canada Christian College

(300 Water St., Whitby, ON L1N 9B6)

Northern Ontario & Near North | September 4-6, 2026

Theme: "Unleashed with Power: Returning to the Testimony to Finish the Work"

Speakers: Dr. Sung Kwon & Dr. Allan Chichester

Venue: Camp Noronto (59 Noronto Rd., French River, ON)

East Central Ontario | September 19, 2026

* All camp meetings will be livestreamed on YouTube @AdventistOntarioTV

PATHFINDER BIBLE EXPERIENCE 2026

A Journey of Dedication and Excellence



The 2026 Pathfinder Bible Experience (PBE) season showcased remarkable commitment, teamwork, and spiritual growth as Pathfinders studied God's Word, focusing on chapters 1–33 of Isaiah. Their journey through each level of the event reflected both dedication and a deepening relationship with Scripture.

At the district-level event held on February 7, an impressive 50 teams from clubs across the province gathered for friendly competition, demonstrating a shared commitment to studying God's Word. This opening event set a strong foundation, highlighting months of preparation, enthusiasm, and a collective pursuit of excellence that set the tone for an exceptional season.

Fifteen teams advanced to the conference level, held at Kingsview Village Adventist Church on March 7. At this stage, Pathfinder teams were joined by seventeen Master Guide teams, raising both the level of competition and the spirit of collaboration across AMP Ministries. Together, participants continued to refine their understanding and deepen their appreciation of God's promises.

The journey continued at the union level on March 21 at the Toronto Perth Adventist Church, where nine teams from Ontario pitted their knowledge against clubs from across Canada. Of these, eight teams—Brampton Asian Beryl Overcomers; Bronte Lynx Fast & Faithful; First Fil-Can Orion Team 3; Kitchener-Waterloo KW Hope; Mt. Zion Maharlika Messengers & Truth Squad; Nepean Crusaders; and Shelburne Jireh—earned first place, securing their advancement to the NAD PBE finals.

The North American Division PBE final event was held at

Camp Hawthorne in Hawthorne, Florida, on Sabbath, April 18. A total of 264 teams from across the NAD—including the Lake, Mid-America, North Pacific, California, SDACC, Southern, Southwestern, Atlantic, and Columbia unions, along with the British and Korean unions—gathered in a vibrant, diverse international setting. The atmosphere was both challenging and inspiring, as Pathfinders demonstrated exceptional biblical knowledge, spiritual awareness, and thorough preparation.

Under the leadership of AMP Director Pastor Selburn Fray and Executive Coordinator Chester Lewis, the eight (8) advancing teams and their supporters rose to the occasion, travelling many hours—and in some cases days—to be a part of this wonderful event. As Scripture reminds us, those who learn and walk in God's ways are strengthened and upheld.

This was evident in every participant. In a remarkable achievement, all eight teams earned first place at the division level, echoing the call found in their studies to seek understanding, live righteously, and remain steadfast in faith.

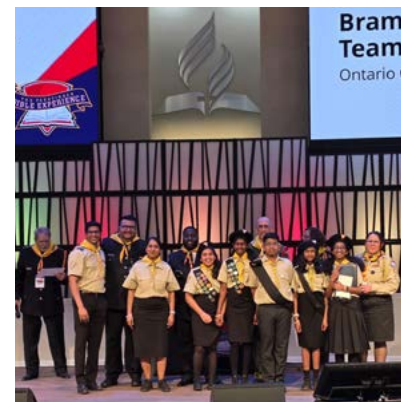
The success of the Pathfinders throughout this year's PBE journey stands as a testament to faith, discipline, and teamwork. It also serves as an encouragement to future participants to embrace the challenge of studying God's Word and striving for excellence.



Congratulations to the Pathfinders and their coaches for their hard work, perseverance, and commitment to studying God's Word! Heartfelt thanks also go to the participating families and the church community, whose unwavering support made this achievement possible.



■ **Brittany Jerry**
Chair, Ontario Conference PBE Committee



Earth Summit 2026 Comes to Ottawa



Against the backdrop of growing global concern surrounding environmental degradation, Earth Summit 2026 emerged as a powerful convergence of science, faith and community action. Held at the Ottawa Conference and Events Centre, the summit brought together a diverse group of presenters and attendees—from professors, theologians, scientists and civic leaders to students and community members—all unified in a shared commitment echoed by the theme: “Earth, Ours to Care For.”

This milestone builds on a vision born seven years ago. On April 21, 2019, the Ontario Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church hosted its first Earth Summit in Mississauga, where thousands of guests engaged with over 60 informative exhibits, each staffed by qualified presenters and workshop facilitators. Over the years, the summit's impact has blossomed beyond the International Centre, inspiring broader conversation.

Dr. Mansfield Edwards, Vice President for Evangelism, subsequently proposed to the Administration that the summit be brought to various cities across Ontario, beginning with Canada's capital of Ottawa.

Why the Earth Summit Matters

Research by the Barna Group on Christian youth, science and faith found that a significant portion of Christian youth who engaged in scientific study later begin to question their faith (Barna Group, 2011).

More recent findings (2022-2023) indicate that approximately 31% of non-practising Christians cite science as a reason for questioning their faith (Barna Group, 2023). Many of those who no longer practise Christianity attribute their struggle to a perceived conflict between their Christian values and their education.

Furthermore, research on Seventh-day Adventist millennials uncovered that nearly 50% of 18–29-year-olds believe the Adventist church is anti-science (Martin, 2014). These findings highlight that young people are seeking answers to questions about the origin of life, the nature of God, and the relationship between faith and modern knowledge.

The summit was designed to bridge the perceived divide between faith and science, reaffirming the biblical truth of God as Creator while also reaching the broader community. At its heart is a compelling mission: we must save our youth. A strong partnership between leading scientists and theologians serves as a positive influence, demonstrating that even at the highest levels of scientific qualification and quantification, one can maintain faith in God as Creator.





A Day of Impact

The opening ceremony, chaired by Pastor James Rooney and Rochelle Thomas, Administrative Assistant to Dr. Edwards, set the tone for the day. This was followed by a land acknowledgement delivered by Indigenous couple Sharon and Jamie Johns, and a beautiful musical rendition by Ms. Rennatha Bernadin.

A warm welcome and affirmation were given by Ontario Conference President Dr. Jakov Bibulovic, who reiterated the church's commitment to caring for God's creation. Among the distinguished guests was Her Excellency Marsha Coore Lobban, High Commissioner to Canada from Jamaica.

The ceremony concluded with a deeply informative, carefully researched keynote address by Dr. Keith Burton of Advent Health University (Florida campus).

Attendees were then invited to explore the various stations, including new topics such as The Gospel and Glycoprotein Folding and A Chemical Perspective of the Daniel 2 Image.





Celebrating Young Talent

The Earth Summit Poster Competition showcased creativity and insight from students across four categories: Grades 1-3, 4-6, 7-8, and 9-12. Winners were recognised and celebrated, with special thanks extended to the dedicated panel of judges.

A Few Takeaways

1. Scientific research in 1993, led by Dr. Seon Hong at the World Class Ship Research Center in South Korea, affirmed the remarkable structural design of Noah's Ark, concluding that no modern design outperforms the dimensions described in the Bible.
2. Approximately 12,000 plastic bottles are discarded every four minutes worldwide.
3. Job 26:7—"God hangs the earth on nothing"—was written about 3000 years ago, long before modern science confirmed that the earth floats in space.
4. Humans have a God-given responsibility to care for the Earth, as established in the Garden of Eden, "to dress it, and keep it" (Genesis 2:15).

Closing and Looking Ahead

As attendees sang a rendition of the classic hymn "This Is My Father's World," a steadfast call for reflection and action remained. The summit concluded with a beautiful performance by the Ottawa Adventist School Choir, followed by prizes and giveaways that added to the celebratory atmosphere.

Looking ahead, the Faith and Science Council of the General Conference has proposed a collaboration that is anticipated to flourish into an even greater impact in 2027.

A Heartfelt Thank You

Special appreciation is extended to all presenters, departmental directors, conference support staff, church leaders, members, Master Guides, and community participants whose commitment and dedicated service made Earth Summit 2026 a success.



■ **Pastor Mansfield Edwards**
Vice President for Evangelism & Earth Summit Organiser, Ontario Conference

SCAN FOR AUDIO



HOLY FOREVER

Inside ACF Ontario's Winter Empowerment Weekend

On a frozen stretch of Muskoka shoreline, where the snow sits thick and the sky opens wide enough to make anyone feel small, nearly 300 university students gathered over the Family Day weekend for something decidedly countercultural.

They came not for a music festival, nor a networking summit, nor a political rally. They came for holiness.

From February 13–16, at Muskoka Woods, students from across Ontario, with a handful joining from Andrews University, Alberta, Quebec, and the Maritimes, assembled for the Adventist Christian Fellowship (ACF) Ontario Winter Empowerment Weekend 2026 under a single, ancient word: *Kadosh*.

Rooted in Revelation 4:8—“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come”—*Kadosh* is the Hebrew word for “holy.” It was the guiding principle of the weekend. It shaped the worship, the teaching, the conversations, the tears, and ultimately, the commissioning.

The sight would have felt both familiar and startlingly new: a generation unafraid to wrestle with what it means to live set apart in a world that rarely applauds such ambition.

A Generation in Search of More

The ACF Ontario Student Association team—Chris Cardoza (President), Gege Tenerife, Larnelle Gutu, Kemunto Maranga, Alisha Sealy, Maddy Henry, and Joseph Martin—spent months preparing alongside Pastors In Pyo Hong and John Scott, supported by ACF alumni.

Their vision was clear: empower students to become missionaries

on public campuses.

Not missionaries in a colonial sense, nor culture warriors, but witnesses—intellectually engaged, spiritually anchored, and relationally present.

The result was a weekend experience that balanced reverence with relevance, scholarship with spontaneity, and deep theology with snow tubing.

The Sound of “Holy”

Keynote speaker Pastor Danielle Placide, an Ottawa native and Master of Divinity student at Andrews Theological Seminary, brought clarity to a word often misunderstood.

Holiness, she suggested, is not distance from the world but closeness to God. Not withdrawal, but alignment. Not elitism, but surrender.

Her messages were direct yet invitational. Students filled notebooks and, more tellingly, lingered in prayer long after sessions ended.

One of the weekend's most striking moments came during a live demonstration of the Old Testament sanctuary. Pastor In Pyo Hong and Joseph Martin—dressed in a full ephod—walked attendees through its elements: the altar of burnt offering, the laver, the table of showbread, the altar of incense, and the most holy place.



Alumni-led small groups followed, connecting ancient ritual to present faith. The message was clear: the sanctuary points to Christ—His sacrifice, mediation, and restoration.

For students navigating secular campuses where faith can feel abstract, the tactile experience made holiness tangible. It was not merely discussed—it was seen, traced, and almost touched.

Joy as a Form of Witness

Holiness did not exclude joy—it amplified it.

Evenings overflowed with laughter. Socials extended beyond the schedule. Snow tubing runs ended in breathless exhilaration. Snowshoeing carved temporary paths through white fields. Archery tag erupted in friendly rivalry. Zumba sessions blurred the line between cardio and celebration. Bingo drew unexpected competitiveness, while bracelet-making and memory-book crafting gave space for quieter creativity.

Rumour has it that some students stayed awake all night, for the entire weekend.

Sunday evening shifted focus to relationships. Hosted by Richard and Oratile, a panel of students and alumni—single, dating, and one married — offered candid reflections on red and green flags in both romantic and platonic dynamics.

The discussion was honest and, at times, tense. Contrasting opinions surfaced, but the conversation remained refreshingly nuanced.

Pastor Hong grounded it theologically: relationships, at their best, reflect God's character. Holiness extends beyond personal devotion into dating choices, boundaries, and emotional health.

The Passing of a Torch

The weekend's final moments were marked by tears.

Chris Cardoza, Gege Tenerife, and Larnelle Gutu announced the conclusion of their leadership terms— names that, for many, had become synonymous with stability and vision.

There was no spectacle—just gratitude, emotion, and a palpable sense of transition.

New leaders were introduced: Tyson McGann, Gideon Mehna, and incoming president Kemunto Maranga. The shift felt less like an ending and more like a succession—a reminder that campus ministry is sustained by mission, not personality.

The retreat closed in prayer. Chris Cardoza's final act as president was not administrative, but pastoral. His commissioning prayer was described by attendees as heartfelt, Spirit-imbued, and deeply personal.

He called students to live holy lives for a holy God, not in isolation, but within lecture halls, laboratories, dormitories, and student unions. To be missionaries not by title but by posture. It was not a call to retreat from culture but to engage with it, demonstrating conviction and compassion.

At a time when many faith communities in North America are measuring decline, the image of nearly 300 students voluntarily dedicating themselves to spiritual leadership tells a different story.

Why Does this Matter?

Holiness may not trend online—but in Muskoka, it moved in lives.

Students returned to Ontario's campuses not merely inspired, but equipped. They carried with them sanctuary imagery, sermon notes, inside jokes, snow-soaked boots, and a shared calling. They carried *Kadosh*.

In a culture shaped by fragmentation and performative identity, a weekend centred on being "set apart" may seem counterintuitive.

Yet perhaps that is precisely it resonates.

Holiness is not about perfection. It is about belonging to a God described in Revelation as thrice holy, yet intimately near.

As one attendee said through farewell tears: "We're not leaving the mountain. We're bringing it back with us."

If that holds true, the impact of Winter Empowerment Weekend 2026 would not be measured by attendance or impressions, but by bold acts of faithfulness across public campuses—study groups turned into prayer circles, cafeteria conversations turned into Bible studies, and friendships reflecting Christ's love. It will be visible in students who understand that to be holy is not to withdraw from the world, but to engage it—anchored, hopeful, and unafraid.

And if the snow in Muskoka could bear witness, it would testify that in the cold of February, something enduring caught fire.

Kadosh.



■ **Madeleine Henry**
Student Association,
Adventist Christian Fellowship Ontario

ROOTED IN CHRIST

Strengthening Families for Faith in a Digital Age

From February 21-23, 2026, the First Filipino Canadian Seventh-day Adventist Church hosted a meaningful Family Ministries winter retreat centred on the theme “*Rooted in Christ.*” The event, held at the scenic Fair Havens Camp & Conference Centre, brought together families, youth, and church leaders for a weekend of worship, spiritual reflection, and fellowship.

Guest presenters Dr. Allan Chichester, Ontario Conference Family Ministries Director, and Mrs. Lauren Chichester, Crawford Adventist Academy Elementary Principal, led sessions focused on strengthening family relationships and nurturing faith in today's rapidly changing digital environment.

Families of Faith in a Digital Age

During the Sabbath worship service, the Chichesters presented “When Knowledge Increases: Families of Faith in a Digital Age,” drawn from the 2026 Family Emphasis Week resource prepared by Delbert W. Baker and Susan Baker. Their study reflects on biblical passages such as Daniel 12:4, 1 Thessalonians 5:21, and Proverbs 18:15, asking an important question for modern believers: How can Adventist families remain anchored in God's Word while navigating a sea of digital change?

The message highlighted that technological advancement presents both opportunities and challenges. When used wisely, digital tools can support spiritual growth and mission. Parents may use Bible apps and digital devotionals to guide family worship, while grandparents can share spiritual values with younger generations through video calls, and youth can share their faith online.

However, attendees were reminded that technology must never replace personal spiritual practices. Strong Christian families are built through prayer, intentional discipleship, and reliance on the

Holy Spirit. Digital tools may assist, but they cannot substitute for the relational and spiritual work required to build Christ-like character.

Families were encouraged to apply the “Glory Principle” as a guide to technology use by asking: Does this bring glory to God? Does it strengthen faith and family relationships? Does it help us become more like Jesus? These questions help ensure that technology remains aligned with their spiritual priorities rather than competing with them.

Technology as a Servant, not a Master

Another key theme was keeping technology in its proper place. When managed well, it can enrich family life by enhancing Bible study through access to cross-references, historical context, and multiple translations of Scripture. Families can also enhance worship experiences with digital devotionals, Scripture songs, and short Bible video clips, and encourage spiritual habits such as journaling and prayer reminders.

Technology can also support character development and mission. Families can use digital platforms to share the message of hope, participate in ministry, and encourage others in their faith journeys. In this way, technology becomes a servant rather than a distraction.



The message concluded with an appeal to place Christ—not technology—at the centre of the home, a call warmly received by the congregation.

Strengthening Relationships Through Understanding

In an afternoon seminar titled “The Art of Understanding Yourself and Your Family Members,” Dr. Chichester explored Gary Chapman’s framework of the five love languages: words of affirmation, acts of service, receiving gifts, quality time, and physical touch. Participants identified their primary love languages and those of their family members.

Understanding these love languages helps improve communication, reduce conflict, and foster Christ-like relationships. When love is expressed in meaningful ways, the home becomes a stronger environment for spiritual growth. Through discussion and reflection, attendees gained practical tools to nurture healthier relationships and deepen family bonds.

Rooted in Christ

On Sabbath evening, Mrs. Lauren Chichester shared a devotional, “Applying the Natural Benefits of Roots to Being Rooted in Christ,” inspired by Colossians 2:7. Using the imagery of plant roots, she illustrated how spiritual depth sustains families. Just as roots

provide stability, nourishment, and growth, a life grounded in faith, prayer, and Scripture enables families to withstand challenges and flourish across generations.

She emphasised that while roots remain unseen, they determine the strength and vitality of the whole plant. Likewise, the hidden spiritual habits within the home shape its overall health and direction.

Attendees left the retreat inspired to deepen their spiritual roots and to build homes centred on Christ in an increasingly digital age.



■ **Pastor Allan Chichester**
*Family & Men’s Ministries Director,
Ontario Conference*

COMMUNICATIONS & MEDIA MINISTRY

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PUBLIC AFFAIRS & RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

The Gift of Religious Liberty, Bill C-9, and the Advent Mission

The Seventh-day Adventist Church, with a history spanning 170 years, remains deeply committed to the principles of religious freedom and individual conscience. Believing that God never compels the human will, Adventists view religious liberty—the right to believe, worship, and express faith without government pressure—as vital for peace and social well-being.

The Gift of Religious Liberty

When the Creator made human beings, He instilled in them an inalienable right to freedom and the gift of expressing it. Being created in God's image (Genesis 1: 26-28) means we share in the freedom of movement and expression that He has. It is not within anyone's right, including the government, to restrict this God-given gift and intrinsic value.

As one retired church leader aptly stated, "Religious freedom is a fundamental freedom—a basic human right, and yet, over the centuries, it has often not been practiced. True religious freedom preserves an appropriate focus on personal decisions and general well-being. Wherever it is honoured and protected, justice and peace increase. But more than this, religious liberty and freedom of conscience have biblical foundations; God created us with the freedom to choose. It's an important part of our human dignity."¹

It is important to acknowledge that the gift of freedom is not only for people of faith but also for those who choose not to have faith.

Core Concern of Bill C-9

Introduced in 2025, Bill C-9 aims to combat antisemitism, Islamophobia, and hate crimes by strengthening protections for places of worship, schools, and community centres, and explicitly condemning hate-motivated crimes.²

While the Adventist Church supports community protections, concerns have been raised about the proposed removal of the "good faith religious belief defence," which previously shielded individuals from hate speech charges for expressing religious opinions in good faith. Its removal raises questions about the effects on religious teaching and expression.

The Advent Mission

The Advent mission hinges on the proclamation of the "Three Angels' Messages" (Revelation 14), which include the call to worship the Creator and to proclaim the gospel. If legislation makes the public sharing of these messages vulnerable to legal scrutiny or charges, it could create a "chilling effect" on ministry, evangelism, and community outreach. The potential removal of these protections, combined with the removal of the requirement for Attorney General consent to prosecute hate propaganda cases, raises the risk of overzealous, inconsistent prosecutions. Notwithstanding, the Conference (leaders and members) remains committed to sharing Christ's mission as revealed in "The Angels' Messages" of love, no matter what the future holds.

Conclusion

The gift of Religious Liberty in Canada, like in many other places, faces a crossroads, even as the bill is now before the Canadian Senate. While protecting the rights of all is crucial, Bill C-9 risks



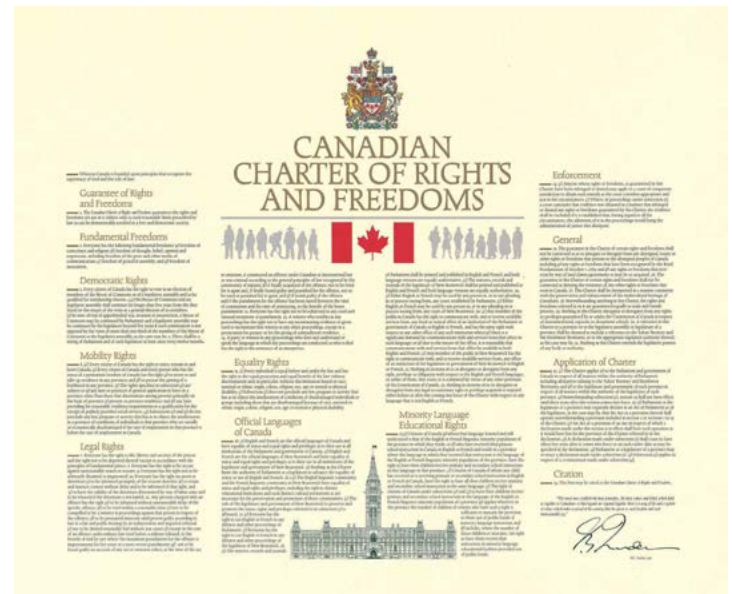
infringing on freedom of conscience and expression. The Advent mission depends on free expression in society.

Therefore, I invite you to pray and to engage in the public affairs element of PARL by appealing to your local civic representatives, while the leaders of our Church in Canada (SDACC) make representations on behalf of the Church.

Whatever the outcome, we affirm the proclamation of the gospel for the saving of souls, according to the Word of God—the Bible.



■ **Pastor Anthony Reid**
Public Affairs & Religious Liberty Director,
Ontario Conference



¹ Ted N. C. Wilson. (August 7, 2021). How Can We Promote Religious Liberty. YouTube Video Transcript. Retrieved March 3, 2026 from: <https://adventistreview.org/news/how-can-we-promote-religious-liberty/>.

² Combatting Hate Act: Proposed Legislation to Protect Communities Against Hate. Government of Canada. Retrieved March 5, 2026 from <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/csj-sjc/pl/c9/index.html>.

MEN'S MINISTRY

The INSPIRE Men's Virtual Meetings

In 2026, the INSPIRE Men's Virtual Discipleship Meetings continue to encourage and strengthen men across the Ontario Conference in their journey of disciple-making. This year's theme, *"Confronting the Giants,"* challenges men to face the spiritual, personal, and relational obstacles that often stand in the way of faithful Christian living.

The INSPIRE virtual discipleship meetings were created by Dr. Allan Chichester, Ontario Conference Director of Men's Ministries, to provide a safe and confidential space for men to gather for disciple-making—fellowship, learning, encouragement, and spiritual growth. The meetings take place virtually during the autumn, winter, and spring seasons on the third Sunday of each month from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

The biblical foundation for the INSPIRE meetings is found in 1 Thessalonians 5:11 (NIV): "Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing." In this passage, the Apostle Paul uses the Greek words *parakaleó*, meaning to encourage, comfort, or exhort, and *oikodomeó*, meaning to build up or edify. These words capture the essence of disciple-making—believers coming alongside one another to strengthen and inspire each other in their walk with God. The INSPIRE meetings seek to embody this biblical model by fostering a community where men support and build one another up in Christ.

The 2026 theme, *"Confronting the Giants,"* draws inspiration from the Old Testament, where many leaders of Israel encountered formidable challenges. These "giants" were not always literal enemies but also spiritual and moral obstacles that required courage, faith, and unwavering trust in God. Leaders such as Caleb and David were able to confront and overcome these giants because their lives were grounded in a daily relationship with the Lord.

Recognising that a strong walk with God is the foundation for confronting life's giants, the January 2026 INSPIRE meeting focused on strengthening disciples' spiritual lives. Before men can effectively face the pressures of career, family responsibilities, or personal struggles, they must cultivate a consistent and intentional relationship with God.

To address this topic, Dr. Chichester invited Dr. Robert Greaves, Lead Pastor of the Ottawa Seventh-day Adventist Church, to present on the theme *"Walking With God Through the Years."* Drawing on his diverse life experience, including his years as a senior executive at Magna Corporation, Dr. Greaves spoke about maintaining a lifelong relationship with God.

In his presentation titled *"Let Your Life Speak,"* Dr. Greaves reflected on lessons learned from his personal spiritual journey. One key lesson he shared was the importance of listening to the story of our lives. Drawing from Parker J. Palmer's book *Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation*, Dr. Greaves emphasised that our calling is often revealed not through sheer determination but through prayerful reflection on the experiences God allows in our lives. Both successes and failures can guide future decisions and deepen our relationship with God when we take time to reflect on them.

Dr. Greaves illustrated this principle with a personal story from his early professional life. As a young father determined to provide for

his family, he became increasingly focused on advancing his career. Although these ambitions were good, they gradually overshadowed his relationship with God. For a time, he stopped attending church regularly as professional goals became his primary focus.

Despite his career success, he sensed an inner unrest. Looking back, he recognized that God had never stopped working in his life. During this period, his wife remained faithful to the Lord and continually prayed for him. She gently reminded him that true peace would come only from renewing his commitment to God. Through her prayers and encouragement, Dr. Greaves eventually returned fully to the Lord.

Another insight he shared was the value of developing simple systems that support spiritual faithfulness. One example he described was creating a “words experience page,” a simple list of guiding words or principles that can inspire faithful living and provide reminders during moments of challenge or decision-making. He also shared an experience from his time at Magna Corporation when he faced the possibility of being required to work on the Sabbath while preparing for a major contract worth millions of dollars. After praying with his wife, pastor, and church leaders, the situation unexpectedly changed, and the preparation meeting was moved to another day. For him, this experience reinforced the importance of remaining faithful.

Through personal testimony, practical wisdom, and spiritual encouragement, Dr. Greaves’ presentation deeply resonated with the men attending the INSPIRE meeting and inspired them to continue in the work of disciple-making.

With warm regards,



■ **Pastor Allan Chichester**
Family & Men’s Ministries Director,
Ontario Conference



THE GREAT BELONG

An Interview with Pastor Allan Chichester and Patricia Ferreira Lopez



Loneliness is often invisible but deeply felt. Families may share space yet remain disconnected, and those in life transitions can feel unseen. In response, Kristen Maclean spoke with Patricia Ferreira Lopez, Director of Women's and Children's Ministries, and Pastor Allan Chichester, Director of Men's and Family Ministries, about The Great Belong, a 2026 Ontario Conference initiative encouraging churches to address loneliness through intentional, year-long small-group ministry.

Kristen Maclean: Patricia, where are you seeing loneliness most clearly among women and children in our churches or communities right now?

Patricia Ferreira Lopez: I see loneliness among women navigating transitions: single mothers, widows, immigrants, and those whose children have grown, as well as those stretched by work and family demands.

For children, it shows up in new environments, family stress, or lack of mentorship. Both groups long for connection and understanding.

Kristen Maclean: Pastor Allan, loneliness isn't always openly discussed among men or families. How does it show up beneath the surface?

Pastor Allan Chichester: Men's loneliness is widespread but often unspoken. It shows up as withdrawal, lack of close friendships, or constant busyness.

Cultural expectations around self-reliance, combined with fatherlessness and digital isolation, make deep connection harder to form. Silence becomes a coping strategy.

The quiet presence of so many men in our churches can itself signal this hidden struggle. The Great Belong addresses this by helping men form genuine relationships where they feel truly seen and known, fostering real belonging.

Kristen Maclean: It's clear we need to be strategic in the fight against loneliness. Patricia, we touched on the struggle amongst men. What does "belonging" specifically look like for women and children, and how is it different from simply being included?

Patricia Ferreira Lopez: Belonging is more than being invited. It's being seen, known, and valued.

For women, it may look like honest conversation and mutual support. For children, it's a safe space where they feel celebrated and accepted.

Inclusion is a starting point; belonging is where people feel truly loved.

Kristen Maclean: Imagine if every child felt fully loved and seen. Pastor Allan, how does The Great Belong help churches move beyond programs to deeper relationships?

Pastor Allan Chichester: The Great Belong focuses on building lasting community through small groups and discipleship. Its resources address real-life challenges such as immigration, divorce, and job loss, helping churches create deeper, more connected relationships.

Kristen Maclean: Patricia, what kinds of groups might a church focus on for a full year, and why does that long-term commitment matter?

Patricia Ferreira Lopez: Deep belonging requires consistency. Occasional programs aren't enough, so relationships grow through ongoing, intentional connection.

A church might run a support group for immigrant women or a confidence-building children's club. Over time, participants develop trust and lasting relationships.

Kristen Maclean: For churches that feel small, stretched, or unsure they have the “right people,” what encouragement would you give about starting a Great Belong group?

Patricia Ferreira Lopez: Size isn't the measure of impact. Even a few committed people can create meaningful connection.

God works through willing hearts. Start small, stay consistent, and trust Him to build belonging.

Kristen Maclean: Pastor Allan, how do the toolkits help churches address real needs, such as financial strain, addiction, or blended family dynamics, without starting from scratch?

Pastor Allan Chichester: The Great Belong toolkits are ready-made and designed to help churches address real-life challenges with practical, sustainable solutions. Each kit includes a clear monthly plan, spiritual resources, and fellowship strategies for diverse groups, such as children facing exclusion, blended families, single fathers, and newcomer families.

They are flexible and adaptable to different church contexts, offering simple ways to build connection, celebrate milestones, and strengthen community. Churches can download and begin using them right away.

Kristen Maclean: Thank you so much, Pastor. One final thought. Patricia, if someone reading feels lonely, what would you want them to know about God's heart for them and the church's role in reflecting that heart?

Patricia Ferreira Lopez: If you feel lonely, know that God sees you. He does not want you to walk life alone. I know it can be hard to trust, but there is someone who wants to know your story and to make sure you are safe. Ask God to reveal that person or people to you, and trust that He will guide you to them. Even small steps toward connection can open the door to real belonging and friendship.

Conclusion

At its heart, The Great Belong is not about doing more. It calls churches to notice those who feel overlooked, to slow down enough to walk alongside them, and to create spaces where people are valued and safe.

A small group of committed individuals in a year-long ministry focus brings a sense of belonging that grows through consistency and trust. As these conversations remind us, God never intended His people to walk alone. When the church reflects His heart through intentional presence and connection, isolation is replaced with the assurance that you belong here.

For more information on The Great Belong, visit adventistontario.org/the-great-belong/.



■ **Kristen Maclean**
Departmental Secretary, Ontario Conference

PRISON MINISTRY: REINTEGRATION CENTRE

A New Chapter of Hope Unfolds in Toronto

The Ministry of Compassion is now actively advancing the development of its first Reintegration Centre, located at 150 Bentworth Avenue, Toronto, ON. This initiative marks a significant step forward in supporting returning citizens as they rebuild their lives, reconnect with their communities, and step into a future filled with purpose and dignity.

The centre—construction to start soon—will provide essential services, practical resources, and compassionate support for individuals transitioning from incarceration back into society. Designed as a place of restoration, it will serve as a bridge between release and reintegration, helping individuals become productive, thriving members of their communities.

While this work is very much present and moving forward, its roots trace back to a pivotal moment in 2025.

The vision for the Reintegration Centre was first introduced during the North American Division (NAD) Cross-Reach Prison Ministry Convention held at the Sheraton Parkway North Hotel in Richmond Hill, Ontario. That historic gathering brought together delegates from across the East and West, including participants from the United States and Northern Canada.

Volunteers, pastors, prison chaplains, former inmates, social workers, and community leaders united around a shared mission: to educate, encourage, and inspire one another while renewing

their commitment to prison ministry.

From the very first session, it was clear that Cross-Reach was more than a convention—it was a catalyst. A deep sense of purpose and God's presence permeated every presentation, testimony, and workshop, sparking fresh vision and renewed passion among attendees.

Spiritual leadership played a key role throughout the event. Pastor Emile Maxi opened with a powerful devotional, followed by an uplifting message from Dr. Mansfield Edwards. Elder Alfred Johnson ushered in the Sabbath with a meaningful reflection, while the group Don't Follow Me shared a moving testimony of redemption and transformation. Dr. Bill Payne's message further strengthened and inspired those in attendance.

Additional speakers, including Pastor Andrew King and Dr. Cleveland Houser, urged delegates to broaden their understanding of prison ministry and to embrace practical, restorative approaches. Leaders from NAD offered clarity,

***"What began as a moment of inspiration
has now become a tangible reality."***



“Designed as a place of restoration, it will serve as a bridge between release and reintegration”

direction, and encouragement, emphasising the importance of cross-border collaboration to advance this vital work.

It was in this environment of shared vision and spiritual renewal that the foundation for the Toronto Reintegration Centre was laid.

What began as a moment of inspiration has now become a tangible reality.

Today, that vision is taking shape through dedicated effort, growing partnerships, and a clear sense of mission. The Reintegration Centre stands as a testament to what can happen when faith is put into action—transforming ideas into meaningful, life-changing impact.

As this initiative continues to develop, the need for support is greater than ever.

We invite you to partner with us through your prayers and financial contributions. Your support will directly impact lives, helping individuals move from incarceration to restoration, and from brokenness to wholeness.

Together, we can extend the love of Christ and be part of lasting transformation—one life at a time.



■ **Pastor Andrew King**
Compassion Ministries Director,
Ontario Conference



HOPE VISION FELLOWSHIP

A Ministry for the Visually Impaired

The Ontario Conference is proud to be the only conference in the North American Division operating a church fully dedicated to ministry for the visually impaired. Hope Vision Fellowship (HVF) exists to create a meaningful, accessible worship experience for individuals who are blind or visually impaired, offering not just a service, but a welcoming spiritual home.

Under the leadership of Director Andrew King and Coordinator Maria McClean, and as part of the Compassion Ministries portfolio, this vibrant ministry actively engages members and visitors through dynamic, inclusive monthly services. Each gathering is thoughtfully designed to encourage participation, connection, and spiritual growth.

A highlight of this ministry is its longstanding partnership with Camp Frenda. In 2024, we celebrate an incredible milestone—50 years of ministry to the blind community. This unique camp experience draws participants not only from across Ontario, but also from throughout Canada and even internationally.

Nestled in the beautiful Muskoka region, Camp Frenda offers an unforgettable outdoor experience. Campers enjoy a wide range of activities including boating, water skiing, swimming, hiking, archery, crafts, horseback riding, and meaningful spiritual programming—all within a supportive and joyful environment. It is a place where lasting friendships are formed, confidence is built, and lives are enriched.

Hope Vision Fellowship members actively participate in this camp, but it is open to all individuals who are visually impaired. Everyone is welcome to be part of this life-changing experience.

Throughout the year, Hope Vision Fellowship meets monthly at 24

Nelson Street in Scarborough, Ontario. Each service is intentionally designed to be interactive, engaging, and spiritually uplifting. Worship is followed by a warm fellowship meal and an afternoon program, creating space for connection, encouragement, and community.

Hope Vision Fellowship continues to fulfill its mission—to serve, uplift, and create belonging for a truly special community. We invite you to support this ministry with your prayers, your presence, and your partnership as we continue making a difference in the lives of those we serve.



■ **Pastor Andrew King**
*Compassion Ministries Director,
Ontario Conference*



Sunday, Aug 30, 2026

CAMP FREDA
1231 Morinus Road
Port Carling, ON
POB 1J0



For details, scan QR code
or visit: adventistontario.org



HOST



Dr. ALLAN CHICHESTER
Director, Family & Men's Ministries
Ontario Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist

PRESENTER



MARTY MILLER
Founder & President
Blueprint for Men

EARLY BIRD: \$120/Person until Friday, July 10, 2026 / REGULAR: \$150/Person until Friday, Aug 14, 2026

REGISTRATION LINK - <https://bit.ly/forgedmensretreat2026>

...



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Scan the QR CODE, or go to
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to submit your prayer request online.



prayer.adventistontario.org



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October 1-4, 2026

Registration Opens May 15th

**Sheraton Parkway
Toronto North Hotel & Suites
600 Hwy 7, Richmond Hill**

\$175* Early Bird ends July 1st
\$200* Regular ends August 30th

*transportation &
accommodations not included

Scan to Register



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ADVENTIST IN THE NEWS

Adventist Elected Canada's Representative to the Global Jamaica Diaspora Council

Leo Campbell, a devoted Seventh-day Adventist and community advocate, has been elected to serve as Canada's Representative to the Global Jamaica Diaspora Council (GJDC). In this national role, he will advise the Government of Jamaica on policies, programs, and initiatives affecting both the country and its diaspora. His election marks a significant milestone for the Jamaican-Canadian community and reflects his longstanding commitment to faith, service, and unity.



Endorsed by Trailblazers

Leo's candidacy was supported by respected trailblazers, including Garnett Manning, Brampton's first Black City Councillor, and Dr. Pamela Appelt, the first Black Canadian woman appointed as a Judge of the Court of Canadian Citizenship (Retired). Their endorsements highlighted his leadership, integrity, and readiness to represent Canada on the global stage.

Within the church, Leo has held leadership roles as a Board Member of the Ontario Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada (SDACC). These experiences have strengthened his governance, strategic planning, and collaborative leadership skills, all grounded in faith and accountability. He credits the church with providing the foundation for his leadership journey.

From a young age, Leo was actively involved in Pathfinder clubs such as Toronto Perth Betelguese and Hope Frontiers. He later served on the Ontario Conference Pathfinder Council under the mentorship of the late Russell Lambert. These early experiences helped shape his discipline, sense of responsibility, and commitment to service.

Leadership in Education, Church, and Community

Leo currently serves as a Board member of the Toronto Adventist District School Board (TADSB), where he contributes to education policy, community engagement, and student-focused initiatives across the Greater Toronto Area. His election to the GJDC expands his influence to a national and international level.

Educational Background

Leo holds a Bachelor's degree in Communications with a minor in Theology from Oakwood University. He is currently completing a Master of Education in Adult Education and Community Development at the University of Toronto, further equipping him to serve diverse communities effectively.

A Victory Rooted in Service

Leo's path to this national role is rooted in years of community involvement and advocacy. Known for his collaborative approach, he has organised community initiatives, mentored youth, and supported charitable efforts both locally and internationally. He has held senior leadership positions in several prominent organisations, including serving as the immediate past Board Chair of Caribbean African Canadian Social Services (CAFCAN) and as Executive Vice President of the Jamaican Canadian Association.

As a Christian leader, Leo emphasises servant leadership grounded in humility, compassion, and accountability. He acknowledges that he cannot accomplish anything without God and appreciates the support of his church community.

A Competitive National Process

Leo was selected through a rigorous national election process involving 16 nominees from across Canada. The strong participation reflected the depth of talent within the Jamaican-Canadian diaspora. Emerging as the successful candidate, Leo secured broad support and confidence from community members nationwide.

His mandate includes:

- Strengthening engagement between Canada and Jamaica
- Supporting diaspora-driven development initiatives
- Encouraging youth leadership and cultural pride
- Promoting collaboration among Jamaican organisations across Canada
- Representing Canada's diaspora interests globally
- Advising the Government of Jamaica on diaspora-related matters

First Initiative: A National Day of Prayer for Jamaica

One of Leo's first initiatives was to collaborate with Diplomatic Missions in Canada, the Jamaican Diaspora, and friends of Jamaica to organise an online National Day of Prayer across Canada in April 2026.

This effort will unite faith leaders and communities in prayer for Jamaica, particularly in response to the devastating hurricane that impacted the island in the fall of 2025. The initiative aims to provide spiritual support, encourage recovery, and strengthen ties between Jamaica and its diaspora.

Looking Ahead

Following his election, Leo expressed gratitude to supporters, including Toronto East, Toronto Perth, Philadelphia, Mississauga, and Hope Seventh-day Adventist churches and reaffirmed his commitment to unity and service.

"This is about collective impact," he shared. "Together, we can strengthen our connection to Jamaica while building strong, thriving communities here in Canada."

As he steps into his dual role as national representative and government advisor, many are optimistic about the impact of his leadership. With his blend of faith, education, and community experience, Leo is well-positioned to contribute meaningfully to the GJDC's mission and to Jamaica's ongoing development and recovery.

He concludes with a heartfelt acknowledgement:

"I cannot do anything without God. I thank the church and all of you for your support, and I humbly ask for your prayers as I serve in this appointment over the next three years."



■ **Leo Campbell**
Canada's Representative
to the Global Jamaica Diaspora Council

TOTAL PRAISE

Celebrating 30 Years of Black History in Ottawa

On the evening of February 21, 2026, the Ottawa Seventh-day Adventist Church resonated with song, gratitude, and a palpable sense of community as it hosted a stirring Black History Month concert under the theme “Total Praise,” honouring the legacy of renowned Black American composer Richard Smallwood (1948–2025), whose beloved song continues to inspire voices around the world.

The evening marked a significant milestone in the city's cultural calendar—part of 30 years of Black History Month celebrations in Ottawa—and brought together friends, families, civic leader Bay Ward Councillor Theresa Kavanagh, diplomatic guests from the Jamaican and Barbados High Commissions, and Pastor Nephtaly Dorzilme, Senior Pastor of the Ottawa Seventh-day Adventist Church, for a program that honoured history while celebrating the future.

The Ottawa Seventh-day Adventist church has been celebrating Black History Month for more than 20 years, using gospel music to build knowledge, share the gospel and ground an appreciation of Black history.

Musical highlights threaded through the night, beginning with a rousing rendition of the Negro National Anthem “Lift Every Voice,” which some said brought them to tears. The bright, confident voices of the Ottawa Adventist Children's Choir delivered a stellar performance that drew warm applause and reminded the audience that the legacy of Black culture is carried forward by the youngest singers. The children's contribution was further amplified by a pantomime presentation from Hands of Praise ensemble, while the Ottawa Adventist Church Choir offered a thrilling rendition of Richard Smallwood's “Trust Me.

The evening was further enriched with musical selections from the Orleans French Choir, which showcased the linguistic and cultural diversity of Ottawa's Black community, adding a distinctive and moving layer to the program. Throughout the evening, soloists and guest artists shared personal stories and powerful interpretations that kept the audience engaged and reflective.

Attendees were invited to support the Black Canada Scholarship Fund, established in 1996 to encourage academic excellence and promote community leadership by providing annual scholarships to outstanding young black students in Ottawa. Donations were raised, helping to open doors for black students pursuing post-secondary education. The Ottawa Adventist Church has been supporting the scholarship fund for nearly 10 years.

The annual concert has fostered a meaningful friendship between the Ottawa Seventh-day Adventist Church and the Fourth Avenue Baptist Church Choir, uniting them as partners in sharing the gospel and celebrating the uplifting message of Black History Month. This was the first year without the voice of the incredible and incomparable Michael Hanna; we extend our best wish to him and his wife, Rev. Cheryle Hanna, on their retirement.



Guest speaker Pauline Christine delivered a powerful, soul-stirring message, calling on attendees to embrace Black pride, lead with purpose, remain engaged, and seek allies who uplift others. She reminded the audience that we offer God our highest praise when we pursue every endeavour with excellence.

The evening concluded with warm fellowship in the lower hall, featuring an impressive display of Afro-Caribbean Canadian memorabilia, as well as a book signing and photo opportunity with the guest speaker.

Heartfelt thanks is extended to Music Director Osvaldo Paiva and his team for coordinating the program, host Janice Anderson, and the many volunteers, technical teams, and behind-the-scenes workers whose efforts made the concert possible. Special recognition goes to all the performers, musicians, and guest artists —Children's Choir, London Trio Plus, Andre Hayde, Orleans French Choir, Sharon Adams, Fourth Avenue Baptist Church Choir, Michelle Lafleur, Siblaire Louis, Hands of Praise, Divine Connection, and Ottawa Adventist Church Choir—for delivering an evening that was both spiritually uplifting and culturally resonant.

Many attendees and viewers noted it was one of the best Black History Month programs ever celebrated!

As Ottawa marks 30 years of Black History Month observances under the theme "Honouring Black Brilliance Across Generations," the "Total Praise" concert stands as a powerful reminder of the community's enduring creativity, solidarity, and hope for the future. As the legacy continues, students are encouraged to apply for scholarships through the Black Canadian Scholarship Fund. For more information contact: info@bcsf.com



■ **Andrea Spencer**
Ottawa Seventh-day Adventist Church

STRENGTH IN STRUGGLE

A Powerful Black History Month Worship Experience at Mississauga Church

“Strength in Struggle” was the theme for the 2026 Black History Month celebrations at Mississauga Seventh-day Adventist Church—a fitting reflection of the resilience, faith, and perseverance that continue to shape the Black community in Canada and beyond.

Under the spiritual leadership of Senior Pastor Royston Smith and the coordination of Youth Pastor Romario Bonnick, the congregation gathered for two consecutive weeks dedicated to recognition, reflection, and celebration. Each worship service was filled with heartfelt fellowship, spirit-filled praise and worship, and inspirational messages that honoured both the legacy of the past and the promise of the future.

Throughout the services, the church reflected on the lives and impact of trailblazers such as Viola Desmond, Greg Fergus, Pamela Appelt, and Donald McLeod—monumental leaders whose courage and commitment to justice continue to influence communities across the nation and inspire future generations.

A highlight of the celebration was the dynamic sermon delivered by guest speaker Dennis Langley of Burman University, titled “Lift Every Voice: A Call to Preserve and Build.” Langley delivered an uplifting and timely message, reminding the congregation that lifting our voices begins with lifting up the Word of God. He emphasised that preservation comes from standing firmly on God’s promises, and that in order to build in faith, family, or community, we must first rest in what God has already spoken.

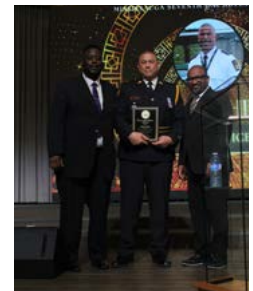
In attendance was Joel Nembhard, Director of Personal Ministries/ Sabbath School of the Ontario Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, along with his wife, Deidre Nembhard.

The worship experience also featured a special award ceremony recognising individuals whose leadership and service exemplify this year’s theme:

Community Service Award

Staff Superintendent Hubert Hiltz of Peel Regional Police was honoured for his decades of operational, investigative, and community-focused policing. A graduate of Carleton University and a senior leader within Peel Regional Police, Hiltz has demonstrated a strong commitment to youth mentorship and community engagement. A Member of the Order of Merit, he humbly remarked:

“This award belongs to all of us. Thank you for trusting in me, supporting the work we do, and reminding us every day what’s possible when our community comes together.”



Academic Excellence Award

Dr. Novan Gray was recognised for outstanding academic achievement and commitment to educational excellence.

Good Shepherd Award

Beverly Francis was celebrated for her many years of faithful hospitality and unwavering service to the Mississauga Seventh-day Adventist church family.

Dedicated Service Award

Cynthia Francis was honoured for her consistent dedication and commitment to ministry.

Trailblazer Award

Spoken word poet Matthew “Testament” Jones received recognition for his cultural and artistic impact. Appointed in November 2024 by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as Ontario’s second Poet Laureate, Testament has worked to promote art and literacy, celebrate the province’s diverse communities, and elevate the voices of poets across Ontario.

This faith-filled celebration was more than just a program; it served as a reminder that meaningful progress is founded on perseverance, unity, faith, and collective strength. “Strength in Struggle” not only honoured the achievements of today’s leaders but also reaffirmed the foundation laid by those who came before us.

Mississauga Seventh-day Adventist Church remains committed to proclaiming Christ’s love while celebrating the rich heritage and ongoing contributions of Black Canadians, standing firmly in faith and confidently building for the future.



■ **Brianna Pillay-Williams**
Mississauga Seventh-day Adventist Church

A JOYFUL WITNESS OF FAITH

Baptism at Toronto Korean Seventh-day Adventist Church

On March 14, 2026, the Toronto Korean Seventh-day Adventist Church joyfully celebrated the baptism of Sunggeum Wi and Youngsun Chae. The congregation gathered in a spirit of gratitude and rejoicing for this meaningful occasion.

Both sisters regularly attended Sabbath services and consistently studied the Bible with the senior pastor. Despite facing trials and challenges, they chose to accept Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour and commit to living a new life in faith.

The baptism took place amidst the prayers and blessings of the church family. The congregation rejoiced in God's grace and in the work He has done in the lives of these sisters, giving glory to Him. All members of the church continue to pray that Wi and Chae will grow in God's love and faith and serve as faithful witnesses, reflecting Christ's light and sharing the gospel through their daily lives.



■ **Sang-Hoon Jee**
*Lead Pastor,
Toronto Korean
Seventh-day Adventist
Church*

Newly Organised Churches and Company

Upon the recommendation of the Church Growth and Evangelism Committee and with the approval of both the Administrative Committee and the Board of Directors, the following congregations were organised as full-fledged churches, with one attaining company status:

From Company to Church:

Bolton Seventh-day Adventist Church

April 4, 2026, marks its official organisation as a full-fledged church with nearly 60 members under the leadership of Pastor Rowan Sewell. Guided by its mission of “Spreading Hope, Changing Lives,” the congregation focuses on serving Bolton, Ontario, and surrounding communities through spiritual growth, community service, and faith-based support. This includes fostering meaningful relationships, supporting local needs, and creating opportunities for worship, learning, and fellowship.



From Company to Church:

Eben-Ezer Seventh-day Adventist Church

Officially organised as a church on April 25, 2026, the congregation grew through members' active ministry under the leadership of its former pastor, Josué Manigat, whose dedication and vision were instrumental in achieving this milestone. At present, Pastor Germain Jean-Pierre serves as the church's interim pastor.

From Group to Company:

Windsor Ubuntu Seventh-day Adventist Company

The official organisation took place on March 21, 2026, with 60 charter members. Formed as a group in January 2024 under the guidance of the Windsor Adventist Church, Ubuntu experienced both spiritual and numerical growth, marked by a strong culture of prayer, evangelism, and discipleship. True to their name—Ubuntu, meaning “I am because we are”—the company remains united in its mission to reach East African immigrants and refugees throughout the Windsor-Essex region. Pastor Alex Golovenko serves the company's pastor.



Welcoming New Workers



Welcome to all new pastors joining the Ontario Conference. We are grateful for your calling and commitment to serve with faith, compassion, and purpose. As you begin this journey, know that you are part of a supportive community dedicated to uplifting and inspiring others. We look forward to the impact of your ministry.



Mario Gomes
Pastor
Portuguese Seventh-day
Adventist Church
Since January 2026



Daniel Catangay
Pastor
Barrie Seventh-day
Adventist Church
Since March 2026



Danilo Abreu
Pastor
Espaço Novo Tempo
Adventist Group & Barrie
Portuguese Group
Since April 2026



Antony V. Baugh
Pastor
Hope Seventh-day
Adventist Church
Since May 2026



Benjamin Rasool
Assistant Pastor
Immanuel Seventh-day
Adventist Church
Since March 2026



Arden Brock
Pastor
Timmins Adventist Church &
Haileybury Adventist Church
Since May 2026

WELCOME

we are glad to have you with us.

Celebrating 25+ Years of Faithful Service

On May 5, 2026, the Ontario Conference Administration recognised the following office staff members in appreciation of their faithful service spanning 25 years or more.



Margaret Mann
Reception
27 Years



Lucille Grondin
Internal Auditing
29 Years



Virene Meikle
Treasury
25 Years



Raveen Pal
Information Technology
27 Years



Tonnata Tjhatra
Internal Auditing
30 Years



Donna Brkic
Office of Education
25 Years



Juvey Puranen
Secretariat
28 Years



Alvin Ram
Planned Giving &
Trust Services
31 Years



Jason Perkins
Camp Ministries
27 Years



Lila Oliveira
Human Resources
28 Years



Vernon Langdon
Planned Giving &
Trust Services
47 Years

A LEGACY OF DEDICATION

Ruth Weidner's Retirement



After 37 years of faithful service, Ruth Weidner retired on May 1, 2026. She began her ministry with the Ontario Conference in 1977, serving until 1988, then stepped away to raise her children. Ruth returned to denominational service in 1999 at the Eastern Canada Adventist Book Centre and later served the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada. In 2010, she rejoined the Ontario Conference, where she faithfully served in numerous departments until retirement. Known for her compassion, dependability, creativity, and Christ-centred spirit, Ruth has left a lasting impact on colleagues and the conference community. We thank God for her dedicated ministry and wish her abundant blessings in retirement.

Academic Achievements



We extend our heartfelt congratulations to the following pastors on their graduation from the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University on May 1, 2026. Their dedication to scholarship, ministry, and spiritual leadership reflects a strong commitment to excellence in service and mission.

Kenneth Appiah Kubi
Degree: Master of Divinity



Dissertation:
Developing and Implementing a Course on Homiletics to Enhance the Preaching of the Seventh-day Adventist Pastors in the Western Ontario Region

Recipient of the Excellence in Scholarship Award for the Best Doctor of Ministry Dissertation of 2025

Laurentiu Andrei Prelipcian
Degree: Doctor of Ministry in Preaching

in loving memory of **Pastor Rupert Michael Gray**



Pastor Rupert Michael Gray, 76, passed away peacefully on March 31, 2026, just one day after celebrating his birthday. He was born on March 30, 1950, in Portland, Jamaica, to Mavis and Leonard Gray.

He was predeceased by his parents, his sister Claire, his youngest brother Maurice, and his oldest brother, Baltimore Grey. He leaves behind his wife, three daughters, his older brother Henry, his sister-in-law Grizelda Gray, and many nieces and nephews who will cherish his memory.

Pastor Rupert immigrated to Canada on April 10, 1970, beginning a life rooted in faith, service, and quiet generosity—a life that would touch countless people.

He pursued his calling with dedication, earning a Bachelor's degree in Theology from Canadian Union College in 1991, and his Master's of Divinity from Andrews University Theological Seminary in 1993. In 1995, he joined the pastoral staff of the Ontario Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. His ministry began as an associate pastor at the Toronto West Seventh-day Adventist Church, the very place where his calling first took root, and where his life was celebrated—coming full circle.

On April 17, 1977, Rupert married the love of his life, Pansie Joan Webster. Their journey began in church and grew into a lifelong partnership grounded in faith, love, and devotion. Together, they raised three daughters: Jannette, Lorette, and Monette, who were the pride and joy of his life.

Pastor Rupert will be remembered for his lively spirit, his ever-ready smile, and the deep, lasting impact he made on everyone he encountered. He had a special way of making people feel seen, heard, and cared for. He often anticipated the needs of others without being asked—showing up with groceries, offering support, or simply being present at just the right moment. These acts were never done for recognition but flowed naturally from his generous heart.

Outside of ministry, Pastor Rupert found joy in simple, meaningful things. He loved working with his hands, especially restoring cars and tending to his garden. He had a gift for bringing life back to things others had given up on, whether it was a struggling plant or a person in need of encouragement. That quiet patience and care defined who he was.

Pastor Rupert Michael Gray leaves behind a legacy of faith, humility, and service. He will be deeply missed by his beloved wife, his daughters, his extended family, his church community, and all who had the blessing of knowing him. His life is a gentle yet powerful reminder of how far kindness, faith, and love can reach.

■ The Gray Family

ONEVOICE27: MISSION FOR ALL

All Things New: Hope Starts Here

***OneVoice27: Mission for All* calls the global Seventh-day Adventist Church to unite in mission in September 2027, commemorating 2,000 years since Jesus' baptism.**

Pastor Erton C. Köhler, General Conference President, describes OneVoice27 as “a call for boldness in mission,” urging innovative approaches to mission in harmony with the counsel of Ellen G. White:

“Let every worker... study, plan, devise methods, to reach the people where they are. We must do something out of the common course of things. We must arrest the attention. We must be deadly in earnest. We are on the very verge of times of trouble and perplexities that are scarcely dreamed of.”
– *Evangelism*, p. 122.

Pastor Köhle explains that “OneVoice is a call to reach people where they are,” and that media makes it possible to reach people everywhere—in cities, rural areas, homes, and even closed hearts.

The Project

OneVoice27 is intended to unite Adventist leaders and members worldwide in sharing Christ's message of hope with one voice. Publicly, the initiative will use the theme: “*All Things New: Hope Starts Here.*”

The global launch is planned for September 5, 2026. From then on, Adventist institutions, local churches and individual members worldwide will be encouraged to use social media, television, radio, and other media platforms to promote *All Things New*,

leading up to September 2027 and beyond.

All media will point to Jesus Christ—the Messiah and soon-coming King.

Preparation

United in Prayer – Pray individually and corporately for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Also, participate in global prayer events that will be organised.

Reflecting Christ's Life and Example – Read *The Desire of Ages* to learn more about Jesus, whose earthly ministry and imminent return are the central message of OneVoice27. “Spend a thoughtful hour each day in contemplation of the life of Christ” – *The Desire of the Ages*, p. 83.

Study the Books of Daniel and Revelation – Reflect on these prophecies focused on Christ's first coming (Daniel) and His second coming (Revelation) with the reading of *The Great Controversy*.

Purpose

Through OneVoice27, every church member will be mobilised for service and actively engaged in disciple-making evangelism. All Adventist media initiatives will intentionally connect people to local churches, transforming every congregation into a vibrant Bible school. Young social media influencers and content creators

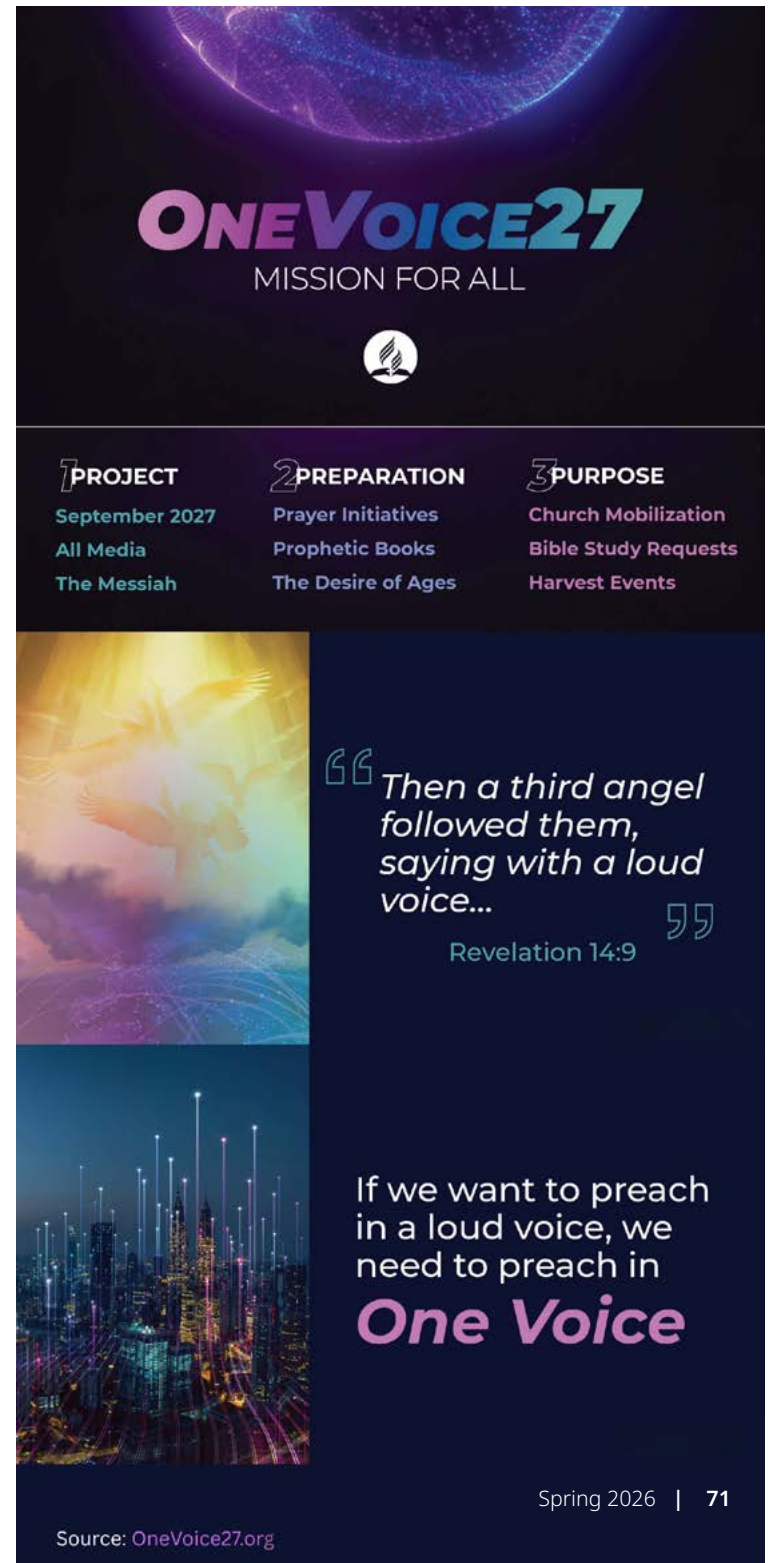
will be encouraged and equipped to create engaging, shareable content that communicates Christ in relevant ways. In addition, a centralised digital platform will be developed, enabling church members to share their creative work, inspiring collaboration, innovation, and wider participation in mission.

OneVoice27 Ontario

The Ontario Conference will participate in the global OneVoice27 movement by implementing the following strategic initiatives and preparations:

1. Strengthen the church's focus on prayer and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.
2. Reinforce Adventist identity and the importance of consistent Adventist branding.
3. Promote OneVoice27 across all regional and ethnic camp meetings.
4. Cultivate a disciple-making culture within every church and region through missional small groups.
5. Mobilise all media platforms for digital mission, moving people from viewership to discipleship.
6. Equip members to share their faith as Christ's ambassadors through personal ministries and friendship evangelism.
7. Organise multiple small-scale reaping campaigns across Ontario to support evangelistic growth and harvest efforts.

Plans are underway for major reaping evangelistic meetings to be held from August 27 to September 11, 2027, in Toronto and



The poster features a dark background with a glowing purple and blue nebula at the top. The title "ONEVOICE27" is prominently displayed in a stylized font, with "MISSION FOR ALL" underneath. A small icon of a flame inside a circle is centered below the title. The poster is divided into three columns under the heading "PROJECT", "PREPARATION", and "PURPOSE". The "PROJECT" column lists "September 2027", "All Media", and "The Messiah". The "PREPARATION" column lists "Prayer Initiatives", "Prophetic Books", and "The Desire of Ages". The "PURPOSE" column lists "Church Mobilization", "Bible Study Requests", and "Harvest Events". Below this, there are two large images: one of a city skyline at night with glowing lines connecting buildings, and another of a city skyline at night with glowing lines connecting buildings. To the right of the city skyline images, there is a quote in white text: "Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice..." followed by "Revelation 14:9". Below the quote, there is a large, bold, pink and blue text that reads "One Voice". At the bottom right, there is a small text that reads "Source: OneVoice27.org".

ONEVOICE27
MISSION FOR ALL

1 PROJECT
September 2027
All Media
The Messiah

2 PREPARATION
Prayer Initiatives
Prophetic Books
The Desire of Ages

3 PURPOSE
Church Mobilization
Bible Study Requests
Harvest Events

“Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice...”
Revelation 14:9

If we want to preach in a loud voice, we need to preach in **One Voice**

Source: OneVoice27.org



across Ontario. The General Conference (GC), Adventist World Radio (AWR), the North American Division (NAD), and the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada (SDACC) will provide significant support to the Ontario Conference in making this large-scale harvest initiative a reality. God willing, Pastor Köhler, along with other GC and NAD officers, will lead reaping campaigns during this period.

Pastor Jakov Bibulović, President of the Ontario Conference, envisions OneVoice27 as “a movement where every member is mobilised, empowered, and guided by the Holy Spirit to intentionally lead a friend into a life-transforming discipleship journey.” He further affirms, “If there is one response that honours Christ’s sacrifice, it is our wholehearted participation in His mission—to seek and save the lost by connecting people to Jesus as their personal Saviour and by walking alongside them as they grow into His disciples.”

Now is the time for every member to embrace God’s call through OneVoice27. Join in digital outreach, personal ministry,

missional small groups, Bible studies, community engagement, and friendship evangelism. Let us labour together in unity and remain fully integrated in mission. Let us commemorate the 2,000th anniversary of Jesus’ baptism in 2027 with a renewed commitment to Christ’s mission, proclaiming with one voice that in Jesus, all things are made new, and hope starts here.



■ **Pastor Edwin Martin**
***Communications and Media Ministry Director,
Ontario Conference***





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