

DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

Doctor of Ministry
Emphasis in Leadership

Adventist University of Africa

Theological Seminary

**TITLE: A STRATEGY TO EMPOWER THE LAITY FOR EFFECTIVE NURTURE
IN LANET SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH OF CENTRAL RIFT
VALLEY CONFERENCE, KENYA**

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Right from the book of Genesis in the Old Testament, God had a definite plan to commune with humanity. This is opposed to the understanding that God is not concerned with humanity and the daily affairs. After sin, face to face communication with God ceased, yet God used mediators to have this nurture experience. Later, when the Israelites were rescued from slavery in Egypt, He instructed Moses to build a sanctuary that He may dwell with humanity (Exod 25:8). This motif of God with us is repeated by Isaiah.

God is portrayed in the Old Testament as having great love for humanity. He searches for the lost by imageries such as in the book of Hosea where He is portrayed as a wounded husband. He cares for Jacob who uses the term shepherd (Gen 48:17) which later David picks and composes Psalm 23 about God being a good shepherd.

Christ, the promised Messiah, begins His ministry by bringing to mind the Old Testament theme of reliving the pain in humanity by announcing the acceptable year of the Lord (Isa 60, Luke 4:7). He lived mingling with people desiring their restoration and thereafter the apostles lived Christ's vision.

After careful study of the process of nurturing, the researcher set out to investigate to what extent Lanet SDA Church is nurturing its members. The researcher then went out to find out why there was low involvement of members in nurture and what the reasons could be. This study also considered the hindrances to nurture.

Various methods were used to intervene including seminars. The findings were evaluated and various recommendations given. After a careful study, it was discovered that the church has not developed a comprehensive program to address the issue of poverty which adversely affects effective nurture. Secondly, lay empowerment is one of the most effective tools for a healthy church.

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A dissertation

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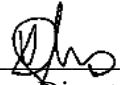
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This dissertation is dedicated to the
Almighty God and my family members who
continually held my hand till this far.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

SDA	Seventh-day Adventist
CRVC	Central Rift Valley Conference
EKUC	East Kenya Union Conference
ECD	East Central Africa Division
GC	General Conference
LGM	Log Frame matrix
MOC	Mission of the church
POB	Priesthood of All believers
SPG	Spiritual gifts
SG	Small Groups
CAC	Church and community
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Description of the Ministry Context

The Central Rift Valley Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church (SDA) is in the East Kenya Union Conference. It is situated in Nakuru town which is the capital of Nakuru County in Kenya. It is approximately 190 kilometers south west of Kenya's Capital city Nairobi. Nakuru has about 307,990 inhabitants, against an Adventists population of about 18,000 baptized members. Nakuru is the fourth largest urban Centre in the country and the largest urban Centre in the Kenyan mid-west. It lies about 1,850 m above sea level. Kenya's population has been reported as growing at about 4.1 percent per annum, one of the highest in the world.¹

Agriculture, manufacturing and tourism are the backbone of the economy of Nakuru. The area surrounding the town is known for its vast agricultural potential with numerous small farms and also vast agricultural enterprises. The main crops grown around Nakuru and marketed in the town include coffee, wheat, barley, maize, and beans. Nakuru is also an important educational center. It is the home of Egerton University, a large public university, several and Kabarak University.²

Nakuru is home to Lake Nakuru, one of the Rift Valley soda lakes, which forms part of the Lake Nakuru National Park. The park has large numbers of

¹Charles van Engen and Jude Tiersm, eds., *God so Loves the City* (Monrovia, CA: Marc, 1994), 173.

²Kondia Mwaniki Wachira, *Kenya Book of Records: Amazing Facts about Kenya* (Nairobi, Kenya: Afritell, 2013), 64.

flamingoes that can be seen foraging in the shallow lake. The park also has many wild animals that can be seen during a safari. Hyrax Hill Prehistoric Site, discovered by the Leakey's (a family in Kenya that was involved in excavating the past history of early man) in 1926, is considered a major Neolithic and Iron Age site. The adjoining museum features finds from various nearby Excavations.³

Nakuru is populated by people from the whole of Kenya and from many regions of the world. The population is predominantly African and it has a cosmopolitan feel. The town has a sizeable population of Kenyans of Indian origin and a few of the original European settler families who remained in the area. People from different regions of the country have added a unique flavor to the town. The people and their politics make Nakuru a vibrant town.

Surrounding towns include Lanet, which lies approximately 10 km from Nakuru, predominantly a residential town and home to an army base. This is where the project will be carried out. Lanet area has middle level colleges, more than 30 secondary schools, several primary schools and other learning institutions which the church targets to reach and nurture. The above population segment calls for a critical strategy. The laity who will be trained will go along way helping out in this work. Njoro lies 20 km from Nakuru and is a small agricultural town with a local university aimed at promoting agricultural development in Kenya, namely Egerton University (est. 1934).⁴

There is need for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Central Rift Valley Conference to examine the new challenges in the mission field especially the urban areas like Nakuru town. The territory has members ranging from rural dwellers to

³Wachira, 65.

⁴Ibid.

slum establishments, and high-class habitats. Purposeful mobilization through training of the laity seems to have been a neglected subject.

After the work of evangelism and have been souls won, it is painful to see the souls lost because of inadequate nurture; a thought that has prompted me to explore ways of nurturing and retaining members.

Statement of the Problem

Lanet District has inadequate nurture program. While the pastor is desirous of executing the functions of the priesthood that belongs to all believers, it is practically overwhelming. Although the pastor is trained for nurture, he may not be effective due to a large district, consequently the few members who do much of the work of nurturing and equipping of the church have no formal training to effectively do the work. There is a need to empower lay members to do effective nurture.

Statement of the Purpose

The purpose of this dissertation was to develop, implement and evaluate a training program that will empower lay members of Lanet SDA Church using biblical concepts, skills and methods. The apostle Paul after establishing a community of believers as the fruits of his labor stayed with the new believers and appointed elders to nurture the new believers in these cities where he established the gospel work (1 Thess 2:7). In this way, he provided for the nurture of the new believers. Today's church nurture and personal evangelism endeavors do not make sufficient provision for the intentional nurture of the converts.

Justification of Dissertation

While the pastor as the spiritual leader of the church is trained to nurture, the work is overwhelming due to a large district. The pastor cannot do the work of nurture

alone. It is critical that the members are trained to do nurture. This research derives its importance from the great need to empower the members.

The need to mobilize the laity to be responsible, active members is not only pragmatic but is biblical and grounded on strong theological principles. Speaking on the strategy for this century, C. Gordon Olson has discovered that “the best hope for world evangelism and transformation is to strategically plan to reach the 4-14 window (age group)”⁵ Lanet District has a large population within this age group. Olson has also discovered that “more than 80% of the people of the world who become Christians and remain so make a decision to follow Christ while in this age group.”⁶ The early church flourished through the efforts of the laity. An awakened laity made a healthy church. Central Rift valley Conference comprises of eight counties of which Nakuru is the heart where Lanet District is located. This dissertation attempts to strengthen nurture ministry as the strategy to meet the mission challenges Lanet SDA Church must follow the example of the Master in the Bible who left the ninety-nine to go and look for the one that was lost.

Delimitations

This research confines itself to Lanet SDA Church of Lanet pastoral District in Nakuru station. It further delimits itself to baptized members. The reason to which this study is delimited to Lanet SDA in Nakuru is because it is at the heart of the Central Rift Valley Conference.

⁵C. Gordon Olson, *What in the World is God Doing? The Essentials of Global Missions: An Introductory Guide* (Lynchburg, VA: Global Gospel, 2011), 461.

⁶Ibid.

Definition of Terms

Clergy: The etymology of clergy lies in Greek *Kleros*: a lot or “portion.” The word is used to describe a general ecclesiastical state noun.

Laity: This word can have more than one meaning thus: the body of religious worshipers, as distinguished from the clergy and, the people outside of a particular profession, as distinguished from those belonging to it: the medical ignorance of the laity.⁷ Laity also in Latin *laicus* and the English laity have generally been thought to be simply an adjectival form of the Greek word for people.

Minister: The spiritual leader or pastor.

Ecclesia: According to the *SDA Fundamental beliefs* the “word (*ecclesis*) means a calling out, this expression was commonly used of any assembly summoned by the practice of calling the people to meet, the Septuagint, the Greek version of the old testament popular in Jesus time, used *ecclesia* to translate the Hebrew *qahal*, which stood for gathering assembly or congregation.”⁸

District: an entity in the church structure that has several churches under a minister.

Youth: An age group between 16 – 30 years among the church members.

Methodology

In this in-ministry dissertation the theological misunderstanding of the laity’s role in ministry and low involvement in church activities is dealt with. This study will

⁷*Dictionary.com*, s.v. “Laity,” accessed April 2015, <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/laity>.

⁸General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Ministerial Association, *Seventh-day Adventists Believe: An Exposition of 27 Fundamental Doctrines*, 2nd ed. (Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 2006), 136, 137.

cover biblically-based theology, literature review and both qualitative and quantitative field research. The dissertation is divided into six chapters.

Chapter one presents an introduction to the whole dissertation and is divided into several parts: description of the ministry context, statement of the problem, statement of purpose, justification, delimitations, definitions terms, methodology and expectations.

Chapter two seeks to establish the biblical and theological foundation for the nurture of new believers. The biblical practice of the early church of community has been investigated and discovered to be the cause for numerical growth of the church (Acts 2:41 -47). The Logframe matrix has been employed to guide the process in putting in focus the core tasks. It has been ascertained as the natural nurture tool for a community of believers. The Apostle Paul's exposition of diversity of ministry in (1 Cor 12 and a brief inspection of Eph 4:11-16) has been investigated in regard to spiritual gifts. Along with it, the writings of Ellen G. White on lay empowerment have been investigated and proved insightful towards understanding the relationship between a healthy church and an awakened laity.

In chapter three or the literature review attempts to consult various literatures on the subject. The practice of the Wesleyan Methodist church has been considered as it thought to have sharpened the thought of nurture with the accountability classes. This influenced the desired ideal of nurture. The power of friendship, the role of the church to the community and power of member's understanding about the priesthood of all believers has been explained into details.

This chapter similarly undertakes the importance and role of spiritual gifts to the members and the church at large have be related in utilizing the member's potential. Functional small groups have been evaluated as an effective nurturing tool.

This method's impact in nurturing the laity and its effects in qualitative numerical increase of church membership has been stated. The contemporary Adventist approaches to church growth in the name of the General Conference of SDA's Total Member Involvement, (TMI) has been considered. Lastly training and equipping of church members and its influence has been done.

In chapter four of the program initiative, the social, economic factors that affect the church members from the selected church have been investigated. The political and religious aspects that affect the church in Kenya have been explored to determine their influence in church growth in Central Rift Valley Conference. On the basis of the foregoing theological and practical research the following actions have been carried out: a quantitative survey of selected members has been done, interviews have been considered and analyzed, a simple training curriculum has been developed that covers major Bible themes that deal with the subject of nurture. These Seminars have encouraged church members to be fully involved in nurturing one another.

Chapter five outlines on how church members were trained to help in the established small groups that have been created. The process of the strategy was monitored during and after the implementation on a continuous process to ensure total success. The data has been collected and the findings have been tabulated and examined. The results have been evaluated and ultimately were presented to the church authority in the Central Rift Valley Conference. A comprehensive report was written down indicating the process followed in the exercise and used for the dissertation. Lastly, the summary, conclusion and recommendations were made for the whole process.

Expectations

Upon successful completion of this study, the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Central Rift Valley Conference and the world in general will benefit from having a transformed approach to ministry as evidenced by the vibrancy of the New Testament church that lay strong emphasis on lay empowerment. This strategy will benefit other congregations in awakening the laity and steer the church forward. There will be a true revival which will relieve the burden of the clergy.

As a result of this study, it is envisaged that many lay members will be willing to serve and hence demonstrate their leadership abilities and spiritual gifts. This dissertation likewise should serve as an educational model tool to be used in other parts of the conference and union. The training of lay members as spiritual leaders in church administration will have a long way in leading the church to have effective leaders to help the overburdened pastors. This dissertation will help influence policy formation in the Conferences and also the entire SDA Church.

This study will enhance the church members understanding of the biblical interpretation of priesthood of all believers. The researcher will personally benefit from the study because he will be better equipped to handle big congregation which seems to be a trend as the church is experiencing numerical growth with no much expecting of corresponding incremented clergy membership ratio.

CHAPTER 2

BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION FOR EMPOWERING THE LAITY FOR NURTURE

This section of the dissertation will seek to explore the biblical and theological foundations for ministry. The significance of this section will be to find a base for building the understanding of the ideal purpose for God's church on Earth. This will form the basis for the argument for mobilizing the laity to do nurture as a means of building a healthy church.

The first section briefly and selectively deals with the issue of nurture in the Old Testament. This submits the fact that nurture was not only an explicit integral concept in God's plan, but also a purposeful continuous process in God's restoration plan. The second section relates nurture in the New Testament as the reason for a vibrant numerically growing church.

New Testament concepts that portray a vibrant nurtured church have been picked and selectively investigated. The early church's understanding of total concern for one another is thoroughly examined, bringing in the issue of the apostles' understanding of a church as a family, community, and fellowship among other explicit constituents of true nurture. The other section gives a summary of the correlation between various biblical terms for "church" and the concept of nurture. The last is an examination of Ellen G. White's writings on nurture. A summary is drawn and a brief conclusion made on the subject.

In the preface of the *Seventh-day Adventist Elder's Handbook* are these words: "In the Seventh-day Adventist Church, local elders preach more sermons, visit more

members, and give more personal counsel than do pastors. It is doubtful the church could function without them.”¹ This scenario calls for critical evaluation of the extent to which the Seventh-day Adventist Church (SDA) empowers these local leaders. Thomas O’Meara has noted that “for a long time the terms clergy and laity based on the presence or absence of the rites of ordination (or tonsure),² have divided the church in two.”³ This dichotomy the researcher presumes makes the church lean towards laying emphasis on training clergy as opposed to putting the same vigor in training the local leaders who by and large do more nurture than the clergy.

Thomas further observes that, “the origin of the distinction in the second and third century had as its intention to enhance the ministry, to give the church service to people who will work with dedication and basic commitment. The setting forth of the clergy was not first aimed at a caste nor at producing a passive people watching priesthood, but at giving reference to the sacramental presence of the spirit and at taking seriously the forms of liturgy of church life.”⁴

A majority of inactive believers in Lanet SDA Church could be more active in nurturing others if they were empowered. By some means the, ideology of a superior clergy separated from the laity has affected the members. The tendency to fear taking up church roles seem to be espoused by a section of members that leads to the saying “it is the pastor’s duty.” This atmosphere may not be convenient for effective nurture.

¹General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Ministerial Association, *Seventh-day Adventist Elder’s Handbook* (Silver Spring, MD: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1994), 9.

²The word tonsure refers to the activity of confirming a person to ministry or a kind of ceremony. Normally a placing of the hat or such ceremony.

³Thomas F. O’Meara, *Theology of Ministry* (New York: Paulist Press, 1999), 28.

⁴Ibid.

Nurture in the Old Testament

God, Adam and Eve

The *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* renders the word nurse as having a close association with nurture. “The nurse of the biblical times does not carry the connotation of medicine or of aiding recovery from illness so much as the maternal connotation of the sucking infant child caring for a growing child.”⁵ The image portrayed in the scripture seems to be of care. Further, the author states that, the essence of nursing lay in nourishment and nurture. These twin aspects are seen in Moses’s mother (Exod 2:7). In Ruth, the reference shows that nursing was not done by a mother (Ruth 4:16). Consequently, strong attachment was formed between a child and its nurse.”⁶ Other synonyms for nurture are; cultivate, encourage, cherish, foster, develop, raise, support, rear among others. This will form the ideal from where the researcher will argue the issue of nurture in relation to the believers in the church.

The Genesis account presents the Godhead as creating Adam and Eve primarily for fellowship Genesis 1:26. Gerhard Pfandl has noted that “the creation narrative points God’s people as consisting of Adam and Eve. A pure expression of God’s love and goodness, they existed for communion and service to Him and the rest of creation.”⁷ This idea is clear in God’s declaration that it is not good for man to be alone (Gen 2:16.) In Genesis 3:8, God is portrayed as coming down and walking with man in the garden. This closeness implied that man could feel the attention God gave. Adam and Eve felt the sense of a personal God.

⁵Leland Ryken, James Wilhoit, Tremper Longman III, eds., *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter Varsity Press, 1998).

⁶Ibid.

⁷Angel Manuel Rodriguez, ed., *Message Mission and Unity of the Church* (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 2013), 1.

Donald Senior has observed that “according to the new schema, biblical religion rests upon God’s willingness to deal with the complicated situation of human life, not only as formed according to its culture and values, but also as deformed by its sin, weakness, and prejudice. Religion results from God’s initiative within the preexisting part of human existence. This process by which God draws upon a people’s lifestyle, purifies and redirects it, and so enables this community to fashion under divine providence a partner of worship, morality and hopes-this process within religion we are calling” acculturation.” One biblical text in particular articulates this mysterious, immanent way of Immanuel or God with us Isaiah 55:61. God is personal and dwells with us in our culture.”

After the fall, God took the initiative of seeking Adam and eve from their hiding. The question God pauses to Adam, “where art thou?” (Gen 3:9) forms the basis and foundation of a true motive for nurture. Nurture can be simplified as a purposeful inquiry into the spiritual whereabouts and situation of a fellow believer. The immediate action God took to restore the broken relationship needs to motivate the believers to begin asking personal questions geared to restoring and retaining the members who seem to be drifting away from the fold.

Paul G, Hierbert has noted that, “in transformation, we must begin where people are and help them grow, just as God begins with us where we are but leads us into maturity and faithfulness. Conversion is to turn to follow Christ as individuals and as churches. It is the first step in spiritual growth and obedience. This transformation must be both personal and corporate. As individuals we need to be born again into new life. As a church we need o model not the ways of this world, but

the ways of the kingdom, and to challenges the evils in our societies and our cultures.”⁸

The attitude of Cain in Genesis 4:9 paints a picture of selfishness in a family setting. And the Lord said unto Cain where is Abel thy brother ... the answer Cain gives depicts an attitude of many believers who are concerned about their spiritual welfare with only in reach. ... And he said I know not: Am I my brother’s keeper? (Gen 4:9) Carelessness and indifference of members tolerates the same attitude that was in Cain. God was specifically involved in day-to-day wellbeing and safety of the first family spiritually, socially, and morally. God also provided their economic needs for the reason that food and clothing were provided. The unfortunate distance that has been created by selfishness and fear of the unknown in terms of what one will eat and wear creates a detachment that is affecting the spirit of nurture in some of our churches. God wanted to know what went on with His first family by spending the evening with them (Gen 3:8) When they hid he sought them (Gen 3:9), when one was missing he asked his brother the whereabouts (Gen 4:9). The above brief account presents God as being in touch with the family in the garden before and after the fall. In God reaching out to the first family in the garden is an ideal model for believers to reach out to those in and outside the fold.

Abraham, Father of Faith

The call of Abraham was prophetic and a purposeful journey of a personal God dealing with a far reaching plan of preserving true religion. Donald Senior holds that, “the Bible records an experience of a new call, which it interprets as a radical breakthrough: “now the Lord said to Abraham, Go from your country and your

⁸Paul G. Hiebert, *The Gospel in Human Contexts: Anthropological Explorations for Contemporary Missions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 31, 32.

kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you" (Gen 12:1) He was to be now a "parent of a unique, elect people, it was being done in such way to show the positive contribution from secular environment and preexisting "Pagan" religions."⁹

In speaking about the patriarch Abraham, Olson has pointed out that "God called Abraham (Josh 24:2; Isa 51:1-2). Abraham was not the only believer of his day. But God called him out of idolatrous Ur for a special purpose."¹⁰ God was purposely nurturing Abraham to be the agent in reaching his fellow men. Senior further notes that "a message is being flashed to us that religion is never a pure creation of God but a synthesis of the best and a new inspiration from God. Secular movements, like the extraordinary migration of people across the Fertile Crescent of the ancient near East during the twentieth and nineteenth centuries B.C.E, were to become key religious symbols because of the faith of Abraham."¹¹ God took Abraham from where he was and nurtured him to preserve the faith that endured to fulfil His purpose on earth. His provision and care assured Abraham even though it appears that he made mistakes and distrusted God at some instances(Gen 16:2).

The call of Abraham is key because the three great world religions Jews, Christians and Muslims owe their foundation from the patriarch Abraham who began the religion of monotheism. God indeed made him father of a great nation as He had promised him.

On speaking about the relationship between Abraham and God Stephen J. Binz has personalized the account of the covenant "the ritual expresses the conviction

⁹Donald Senior and Carroll Stuhlmueller, *The Biblical Foundations for Mission* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1983), 17, 18.

¹⁰Olson, 37.

¹¹Senior and Stuhlmueller, 48.

that the parties will suffer the same fate as the animals should they fail to keep the covenant (Jer 34:18) Here God represented by the flaming torch, passes between the sundered animals, making an unilateral, unconditional covenant with Abraham.”¹²

This indicates the most interesting personal account of the relationship.

Bruce Feiler agrees with Stephen in regard to covenants, he says that, “covenants were well known in the ancient Near East as formal contracts between two parties, usually involving mutual obligations sealed under oath. In the rigid forms such contracts followed, if duties were carried out, certain blessings ensured; if they were not curses followed.”¹³ God used a language and ritual that gave Abraham complete and perfect trust that He will take care of the agreement He has made with him.

Moses

Moses was born in a critical time in the history of Israel when they were under slavery (Exod 1:12). He was providentially hidden to escape the death decree that was to meet any Hebrew boy child born (Exod 1:16). John Kaltner and Steven L. MacKenzie have intimated that the “Pharaoh’s goal of reducing the Hebrew population would have been more readily accomplished through the killing of baby girls rather than boys. The order to kill the boys serves the literary purpose of setting the stage for the story of Moses’s birth.”¹⁴ God was in the picture in Moses’s life.

God’s appearing to Moses was dramatic. He called him with a rare message of being very personal and particular, and when the LORD saw that he turned aside to

¹²Stephen J. Binz, *Abraham: Father of all Believers* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos, 2011), 33.

¹³Bruce Feiler, *Abraham: A Journey to the Heart of Three Faiths* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2005), 39.

¹⁴John Kaltner and Steven L. MacKenzie, *The Old Testament, its Background, Growth, and Content* (Nashville TN: Abingdon, 2007), 110.

see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here [am] (Exod 3:4) this phrase is rarely used by God and Jesus when asserting to communicate a personal message. Jesus uses it in the New Testament a couple of times like in the case of Mary and Peter.

Moses distrusts himself by asking, “And Moses said unto God, Who [am] I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt? (Exod 3:11). The words of assurance to Moses indicates how God takes special attention and qualifies individuals that He desires to use in reaching fellow human beings and carrying out His plan on earth. And he said, certainly I will be with thee; and this [shall be] a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain (Exod3:12). It is like God is making a covenant with Moses of nurturing Him and providing everything that Moses will need for the work of deliverance.

This assurance was given to the apostles by Jesus, “Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, [even] unto the end of the world Amen” (Matt 28:19). God does not leave us alone. This is the assurance of belonging that every believer longs for from God and needs to impart to one another. The church as the physical presence of the Godhead in no wise way should abandon the new converts.

The believers need the assurance that the church will stick with them in times of joy and sorrow. This is the main factor that determines a member staying in the church or leaving. The percentage of members who leave the church because of doctrinal issues can be minimal compared to those who leave because they feel lonely and rejected.

The majority of the work forces in the time of Jesus were those who had been overruled by the society the uneducated fishermen as opposed to the learned scribes. “Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him. And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, this man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them” (Luke 15:1, 2). The Pharisee and scribes had not attracted them even if they had the right doctrines about the true God. Jesus exhibited real touch that assured the sinners that they were welcome and valued. Moses was convinced that God was going to be with him.

Commenting on God’s special care for Moses Donald Senior has observed that “Moses was endowed with the fullness of the spirit; even if the elders “prophesied,” they “did so (this one time and) no more” (Num 11:25). The pagan priest Jethro has disappeared from the scene, along with His rebuke, or paternal warning, to, Moses, wisdom and authority came directly from the Lord to Moses, and through Moses they were shared with others. Even while helping other, Moses lost nothing but instead maintained his possession of the spirit.”¹⁵ Derek Tidball has noted that “old testament scholars have long acknowledged the difficulty of categorizing Moses. Yet all agree that he stands at the center of Israeli’s formation as a nation and people of faith and that he stands head and shoulders above very other leader they had.”¹⁶

God’s Nurture of Israel

According to the *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, the name Jacob came to be Israel. “The name Israel is used in the Bible with a number of references.

¹⁵Senior and Stuhlmüller, 48.

¹⁶Derek J. Tidball, *Skillful Shepherds: An Introduction to Pastoral Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1986), 36.

Traditionally associated with the ancestor Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel after a nocturnal wrestling match with a mysterious figure perhaps God (Gen 32)¹⁷ God assured Jacob that He will be with him. “And, behold, I [am] with thee, and will keep thee in all [places] whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done [that] which I have spoken to thee of”(Gen 28:15). The life of Jacob occupies a great deal of Genesis from chapter 27 to chapter 35. Where God appeared to him many times assuring him of His protection and his descendants. Derek has noted that “When Jacob reflected on his relationship with God at the end of his eventful life he spoke of God who has been ‘my shepherd’ all my life to this day”¹⁸ (Gen 48:15).

Donald Senior argues that “from a consideration of the human environment for Gods way of salvation in the Hebrew Bible, we turn now to the spirit and goals by which God induced Israel to think and act beyond it natural strength and limited hopes. This challenge did not come principally through visions and miracles, not even through charismatic heroes like the early judges, who were remembered for their extraordinary exploits nor through transcended spiritual attitude suspicious of the flesh and earthly concerns. It will seem strange at first, but Israel’s religion was supernaturally corrected, punished and restored, so that Gods glory once again dwelt with the people (Ezek 43: 1-5) from a basis of common sense, severe honesty, an elementary concern of social justice. God’s instruments for purifying and reinvigorating Israel’s religious attitudes were the classical prophets. These individuals emerged in the person of someone as salty and earthy as Amos, whom “the lord took from following the flock” (Amos 7:15) or as timid as the young

¹⁷Ryken, Wilhoit, Longman III, 430.

¹⁸Derek, 13.

Jeremiah, who belonged to the discredited “priest ... in Ana Thoth” (Jer 1:1; 1 Kgs 2:26). The context of reefing and correcting is an ingredient of nurture here.

Lawrence O Richard and Gib Martin have noted that “ by choosing the term *Laos* to refer only to Israel God distinguishes it from all other words for people”¹⁹ Senior further notes that “as Israel transformed secular events into religious types or images, religion purified and granted new life to the secular phenomena.²⁰” It seems that in the midst of a pagan religious environment, God nurtured Israel to be the preserver of the true religion. The SDA Church uniquely stands with a distinctive message to share with the world that can preserve true religion. Sometimes those secular acts were rather insignificant and never would have made history. Liturgy imparted an enduring existence by making the rallying point for future generations and the messengers of Gods sacred hopes and goals for His people. The church today should never underestimate its power to reach outward and to remake those secular movements that may carry someone full or degrading features yet are nonetheless capable of communicating the mysterious presence of the creator.

The secular, or peripheral world was always giving signals or flashes of great importance to Israel. The visible world reserved the memory and the presence of its invincible maker, which Israel could turn into a word of Gods personal love.”²¹

Robin Routledge has argued that the Sinitic covenant is also likened to a marriage bond, and the early days in the desert became idealized as the honey moon period of the relationship between Israel and her divine husband; in Jer 2:2 “Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the LORD; I remember thee, the

¹⁹Lawrence O. Richards and Gib Martin, *A Theology of Personal Ministry, Spiritual Giftedness in the Local Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1981), 15.

²⁰Senior and Stuhlmueller, 31, 32.

²¹Ibid.

kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land [that was] not sown.”²²

This developments toward an even more elaborate temple ritual. Eventually stirred the prophets into dramatic defiance yet the evolution I religious symbolism at the Jerusalem temple turned out to be a life reserve for Israel and its religion biblical.

Donald observes that “We have observed that the earliest facets of Israel’s faith—its inspired intuition of God as compassionate toward the poor and its identification as “ migrant” or “exodus” people—were mediated through the sociological-political situation of escape from Egypt and journey through the Sinai desert. Likewise Israel new forms of life and worship in the Promised Land a fortiori would have been derived from human sources, principally from the Canaanites, but also form the larger near eastern environment. Even if this human shape of Israel’s life received a solemn divine endorsement and Gods word in the Holy Scriptures. It is important to note that the external forms were not immediately revealed by God. They implications of this fact will be crucial for any discussion of the acculturation processes in the missionary work of the church”²³ (1 Sam 8:15, Num 11: 16-17, Hos 11:18).

God, the Good Shepherd to David

The *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* points out that the word David is “mentioned a thousand times in the Bible, David is the man for all seasons, the most complex and many sided character in the scripture.”²⁴ Of the Old Testament figures

²²Robin Rutledge, *Old Testament Theology: A Thematic Approach* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 2008), 170.

²³Senior and Stuhlmueller, 46.

²⁴Ryken, Wilhoit, Longman III, 194.

he seems to have understood God. Specifically his psalms depict a deep intimate relationship with God. He wrote psalms of worship, of theology, of praise, of lament, of wisdom, of the law among other themes. The theme of a God particularly interested with an individual and nurturing is Psalm 23.

Philip Keller has asked questions that Psalm 23 answers; “the Lord! But who is the Lord? What is His character? Does he have adequate credentials to be my shepherd- my manager-my owner? In what way do I become the object of His concern and diligent care?”²⁵ Keller says that David referred to Jehovah, the Lord God of Israel as “my shepherd.” This is amidst a culture held a much transcended idea of God. The Jews even made it difficult for someone to pronounce the name of God. But here David was categorical that Yahweh was his shepherd. His statement was established by Jesus the Christ when He was God incarnate among men, he declared empathically “I am the good shepherd.”²⁶

He continues to say that “the thought alone should stir my spirit, quicken my own sense of awareness, and lend enormous dignity to myself as an individual. To think that God in Christ is deeply concerned about me as particular person immediately gives great purpose and enormous meaning to my short sojourn upon this planet.”²⁷ When David was thinking about the sheep their foolish straying, their need of direction, their thirsty, their broken legs and how he nurtured them to healing. He could apply this term of a shepherd correctly to God.

The *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* has noted that “sheep are the most frequently mentioned animals in the bible, with nearly four hundred references if we

²⁵Philip Keller, *A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1970), 15.

²⁶Ibid., 16.

²⁷Keller, *A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23*, 17.

include refines to flocks. Traditionally, the figure of the shepherd receives approximately one hundred references. This prominence grows out of two phenomena- the importance of sheep to the nomadic and agricultural life of the Hebrews, and the qualities of the sheep and the shepherd that made them particularly apt sources of metaphor for spiritual realities.²⁸

In a rejoinder, H. Ballinger Jr. has commented on the psalm and said that the book of psalm is the most read, most used of all the Old Testament books. In the psalms ancient worshipers address God; for centuries people of faith have learned how to pray from these texts. The psalm expresses every emotion- from joy to despair, from hate to love.²⁹

Bringing a similar impact, C. Hassel Bullock has intimated that “David recounts his experience with his shepherd Yahweh, who had lead him to green pastures and quite waters, and there restored him. Instead of pursuit by the psalmist enemies, the attendant of the good shepherd goodness and mercy, gently pursue him on the way to the house of the Lord Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever: the psalm traverses the distance from the shepherds field (vv. 1-4) to the house of the Lord (v.6).”³⁰ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.”

²⁸Ryken, Wilhoit, Longman III, 782.

²⁹W. H. Bellinger Jr, *Psalms: A Guide to the Psalter* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2012), 1.

³⁰C. Hassel Bullock, *Encountering the Book Psalms: A Literary and Theological Introduction* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2001), 171.

Jesus and Nurture

In an attempt to bring the concept of Jesus and nurture, Steve Barker has noted that “Jesus saw his disciple’s need for spiritual food. He concentrated his teachings on the twelve disciple and then He gave the Holy Spirit to continue teaching them so that they would continue to abide in Him and bear fruit (John 14:25, 26; 15:1-11).

Disciples for generations to come would grow as they remembered Jesus and obeyed His words.”³¹ The central motif of Jesus ministry was making disciples committed to the mission. Several concepts will be discussed below in how His life demonstrated His agenda for the salvation of humanity.

Jesus and Prayer

Christ would always retire to solitary places to commune with the Father. This is how he nurtured his relationship with the father. In the sermon on the mountain of Matthew chapter five to seven, He opened to His hearers the essential truths about the kingdom. Of particular interest was His teaching on prayer: “After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as [it is] in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread” (Matt 6:9-11). In John seventeen He prayed for His disciples to be united as a testimony to the world. “That they all may be one; as thou, Father, [art] in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me” (John 17:21). The concept of being in Him is that of unity and communion.

³¹Kurt W. Johnson, *Successful Small Groups: From Theory to Service* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2011), 80.

The Great Commission and Nurture

C. Peter Wagner has noted that in the work of the church and the great commission there are three major components of which nurture is a part. First he says “to make “disciple of” people in all nations is best fulfilled by an indigenous church in every culture. Secondly “baptizing” identifies a new believer with Christ and with the church. The result of baptizing is to plant a church to carry on the process. Lastly the process of discipling is “*ethne*”) “nations” which has three meaning; ethnic groups, Gentiles and nations. In all three the target is not individuals but groups of people. The best means of evangelizing a group of people is through a ministering assembly of saved people thus the church. The last one is “teaching” to observe all things that he commanded. Means instructing believer to obey the words of Christ (including the great commission. This command was carried out in the New Testament church by “teaching the apostle’s doctrine” (Acts 2:49) the ongoing of teaching in the church became the basis of the church’s growth and fellowship. When new areas were evangelized the result was new churches with new believers who had to be taught the words of Christ.”³²

Teaching was necessary as a means of establishing the new believers. The model needs to be upheld and amplified as the society in which we are has become complex with many distractions.

Nurture after the Resurrection

It is true that after the death of Jesus, His disciples were afraid and actually locked themselves indoor (John 20:19). This fear could have affected their ministry had Christ not appeared to assure them of His presence and power. Gordon Olson has

³²C. Peter Wagner, *Strategies to Church Growth* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1987), 146.

noted that in Gospel writer John's account "on the evening of resurrection day, the first time Christ revealed himself to his assembled apostles was in a locked home on the evening after His resurrection, as recorded in Luke 24:36-43, John 20:19-23 and possibly Mark 16:14-20. After He showed them the wounds in His hands and feet, he ate some food in their midst and said "peace be with you; as the father has sent me, I also send you" (John 20:21). Here Christ commissioned them as missionaries. Just as he left heavens "ivory places" to come into the foreign culture of sinful human existence, now He sent them out into foreign cultures as missionaries (sent ones).³³"

He further states that, "Christ then mentioned the provision of the Holy Spirit which was the necessary empowerment for the task. He adds that "there is only one imperative verb in the original language "make disciples;" the others verb forms are participles, which modify the action of the main verb. The essential command is to make disciples."³⁴ Christ had keen interest with the inner circle which He wanted to nurture. It could have been easy for Christ to reveal Himself before the crowd. But he was careful to appear to a group he had thought of nurturing.

After His resurrection He instructed Simon Peter to take care of the lambs.

So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, [son] of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, [son] of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, [son] of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep. (John 21:15-17)

³³Olson, 58.

³⁴Ibid.

Jesus the Good Shepherd

The New Testament is rich in images used by Jesus. Many of them can be grouped into images of care, images of salvation, images of humanity, savior, suffering servant, Lord among others. For this section on nurture the study will use image of a shepherd and that of care and provision and nourishment. The *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* has pointed out that “Jesus claims this image for Himself when He declared “I am the good shepherd” (John 10:14) when the chief shepherd appears (1 Pet 5:4) and revelation we hear that “the lamb at the center of the throne” a prominent Christological image in the apocalypse, “will be their shepherd” (Rev 7:17).”³⁵

In commenting on the imagery of care and nourishment the authors of the *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* have noted that “His very nature is associated with blessing and providing, a fact that richly imaged in His miraculous provision of food in His feeding of the four thousand and five thousand, in His raising of Lazarus and his healing of the lepers, the lame the deaf and the blind.”³⁶

New Testament Motifs

Church as Community

In the book successful small group’s Bervern has observed that “they devoted themselves to ... the breaking of bread.” It is likely that the breaking of bread in the early Christian church was part of the agape feast, the communal meal. In this act of fellowship with one another, believers are drawn to remember Jesus not only as he shared this feast with the apostles, but more as He gave himself for our redemption. That remembrance leads us to worship, but it also reminds us that the Giver of the

³⁵Ryken, Wilhoit, Longman III, 439.

³⁶Ibid., 440.

feast is our Nourishment for life. The communion celebrates our living savior. The breaking of bread is a means whereby together as his body we experience Gods power for abandoned life. His redeeming presence nurtures us in His gift of grace, encouraging us to live as His followers.

Communion reminds too of the common life and faith we share in Christ. Christ binds us together in His life and death, he sustains us as a community to be committed to one another, working through differences, caring for needs, struggling to understand Christ's Lordship in our life."³⁷

According to *New Bible Dictionary* the word church is derived from the Greek adjective *kyriakos* as used in some such phrase as *kyriakom doma* or *kyriake oika*, meaning the Lords house i.e. a Christian place of worship. Church in the NT however renders Greek *ekklesia* which mostly designates a local congregation of Christians and never a building.³⁸

V. Norskov Olsen has observed that the English word "church" as its equivalent *kirsches* (German), and *kirks* (Danish), is derived from the Greek *kuariakon* meaning "belonging to the Lord." The French *église* and the Spanish *iglesia* stem from the Latin *ecclesia*, which in term is a translation of the Greek *ekklesia*. The latter is the word for "church" in the Greek New Testament. It is composed of two words: the preposition *ek* meaning "out" and *kaleo* (verb from of the word) "to call."³⁹

³⁷ Johnson, 82.

³⁸Wood, D. R. W.. ed., *New Bible Dictionary* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter Varsity Press, 1996), 1996.

³⁹Olsen V. Norskov, *Myth and Truth about Church: Priesthood and Ordination* (Loma Linda, CA: Loma Linda University Press, 1990), 20.

From these definitions we can regard the church as simply people without any status called out of the world to a community of faith. Immediately after Peter's address during the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, he admonished his hearers who were from various nations to repent and be baptized. Then he said, "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, [even] as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:39).

Here, Peter uses the word (*Kaleo*) (to call) this term that Peter used indicates a promise that received its fulfillment at the time of Pentecost, but also for our time where apparently God calls His people out of the world.

The word *ekklesis* reminds us that the church is made up of those who are "called out" (remnant motif) from the world into fellowship with Christ to whom they belong (*kuriakon*). Before the Jewish council in Jerusalem the apostles James said, Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name (Acts 15:14). The apostle Peter writes that the Christian is one called "out of darkness into his marvelous light But ye [are] a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light (1 Pet 2:9).

According to Marsilus, "the truest and the most fitting" meaning of the word "church" is "the whole body of the faithful who believe in and invoke the name of Christ, and all the parts of "the whole body in any community, even the household." He points out that the word "church" was used in his time for those who preside over the church. He writes: this usage was long since brought about the church of the city of Rome, whose ministers and overseers are the Roman pope and his cardinals. Through custom they have brought it about that they are called the "church" and that

one says the “church” has done or received something when it is these men who have done or received or otherwise ordained something.

Contrary to these concept Marsilius asserts that “it is the believers of Christ who are the “church.” George H Sabine comments that “even the laity, marsilio says, are the churchmen (*viri ecclesiastici*),” an expression suggestive of martin Luther’s phrase, “the priesthood of the Christian man.”

The Church as Family

Concept of a Family

The concept of family is basic for all social groupings and therefore essential for understanding the nature of the church as a community. The family motif gives an individual church member an identity. The bond between Christians in the New Testament was so close that they treated each other as family members. Hence, the use of terms like brother, sister, or mother to address believers. This may be why Peter and Paul refer sometimes to the church as the body of Christ.

Church as Building

John Richard Dewitt has noted that:

What first of all concerns the representation of the church as house temple or building is its broad Old Testament basis. Applied to truth eschatological Israel this imagery had its point of departure primary in the prophetic promise of the gracious restoration of the people who had been given up to exile, of the reconstruction of their devastated house and walls, of theory cities and temple. The concept of up building though becomes a symbol of the gracious dealings of God with the remnant of His people, and is found in this sense in later Judaism’s expectations for the future. In this redemptive historical and eschatological sense it is applied in the whole of the New Testament and especially in Paul to the Christian church as well.⁴⁰

⁴⁰John Richard Dewitt, *Paul* (Grand Rapids, MI: William Erdmann’s, 1997), 429, 430.

The motive of the church as a building brings forth the idea of the work God is doing of building people who are broken. Dewitt has further observed that in doing so the church can be represented both in general as building, and in particular as the temple of God. The place of Old Testament temple and worship is taken, according to 1 Peter 2:5, by “the spiritual house,” into which the church is built as “living stones.” The same thought underlies Paul’s qualification of the church as the temple of God (1 Cor 3:16,17; 2 Cor 6:16; Eph 2:21), just as he speaks of the new life as the spiritual worship in which believers are to dedicate themselves to God as a living sacrifice (Rom 12:1;15:16).⁴¹The building idea brings forth the implication of members dedicating their lives as living sacrifice (temple) for the church in caring and nurturing each other. Likewise the idea specifies clearly that there is no part of the building that claim assertion of supremacy over the other, hence clergy and laity are all part of the building. All materials are bound together in what is called the church of the living God.

This type of building is living but not like a dead house where the foundation is the foundation stone. John has noted that the church is God’s building (1 Cor 3:9), the house of God the pillar and bulwark of the truth (1 Tim 3:15); believers are members of the household of God (Eph 2:19; Gal 6:10); and the apostle and elders are Gods stewards (1 Cor 4:1; 1 Titus 1:7; Eph 3:2; Col 1:25; 1 Tim 1:4).

Harmoniously, the apostle Paul uses figures and expressions that are borrowed from the building of a house, whereby the conception is not always the same, in 1 Corinthians 3:10 Paul calls himself the architect who lays the foundation on which other build (Rom 15:20). in the same context the Christian is called the foundation (1

⁴¹Dewitt, 430.

Cor 3:11; Col 2:7), and there is mentioned of the differing qualities of the structure erected on it.

The study has observed that in accordance with the redemptive historical character of the church this up building must be seen first of all as the continuing work of God with his people (Rom 14:19,20), whose temple and dwelling place it is. This continuing and consummating work consist both in the bringing in of those who till now have been without (Rom 15:20). And the inner strengthening and perfecting of all who are in Christ now belong to it (1 Cor 14:3, 1 Thess 5:11).

Those up building takes place in Christ the foundation once laid (1 Cor 3:10, 11), and the apostle and prophets ordained by Him to the end (Eph 2:20, 21; Rom 15:20).

For the sake of the up building God equipped the church with all sorts of gifts and powers that he places at its disposal, an also with various kinds of ministries that must further its up building (Eph 4:11; 2 Cor 10:8; 13:10; Rom 12:3; 1 Cor 12:4,28). The apostle devote particular attentions as well to the mutual up building of the church, whereby it is primarily a question of the right relationship of community and individual, of the induction of the individual into and his functioning in the whole, but whereby each one of them is ever to place the good of the church above his own preference and ability (1 Cor 8:1; Rom 14:15, 19, 12:3).

Biblical Basis for Nurture

Biblical Meaning of the Church

There is need for understanding the beginnings of the church organization as briefly introduced below.

Early Synagogue Meetings. Robert Logan argues that, “scripture says little about church organization. The first church, with its rampart growth, seemed to have

been structured along the familiar lines of the synagogue.”⁴² Ritva H. Williams agrees and says that “In Galilee Jesus Never went to the “church.” He grew up in Nazareth, a small Galilean peasant village with a population of two to four hundred persons spread out over about ten acres of land. Archeological surveys of Nazareth have uncovered olive and wine presses water cisterns, grain silos and grinding stones, but “no evidence for public architecture of any kind whatsoever” he continues to say, “Jesus would have worshiped together with His family and neighbors in simple fieldstone dwellings with beaten earth floors and thatched roof, frequently built around existing hillside caves”⁴³ Logan adds and says “as churches grew they shifted from house churches to more centralized entities identified with cities or geographic territories. Though we may know little about their precise structure, we have a great deal more information about their function.”⁴⁴

Ritva asks a propping question which he later answers as follows “what then should we conclude about of the gospel story of Jesus’s teaching “in the synagogue” in His home town of Nazareth (Mark 6:1 -6a, Mat 13:53, Luke 4:16) in light of archeological evidence, “synagogue” here ought to be read not as a reference to a building but to an assembly of persons. They may have gathered in a room, a courtyard, a store house, or perhaps in the village squire.”⁴⁵ This seemed common.

Ecclesia. According to the *SDA Fundamental Believes* the “word (*ecclesis*) means a calling out, this expression was commonly used of any assembly summoned by the practice of calling the people to meet, the Septuagint, the Greek version of the

⁴²Logan, 121.

⁴³Ritva H. Williams, *Stewards, Prophets, Keepers of the Word, Leadership in the Early Church* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2006), 9.

⁴⁴Logan, 121.

⁴⁵Ritva, 9.

old testament popular in Jesus time, used ecclesia to translate the Hebrew *qahal*, which stood for gathering assembly or congregation. (Deut 9:10, 18:16, 1 Sam 17:47, 1 kgs 8:14, 1 Chr 13:2) this usage was broadened in the New Testament note how it used the term church.⁴⁶

Believers assembled for worship in a specific place (1 Cor 11:18, 14:19 -28). Believers living in a certain locality (1 Cor 16:1, Gal 1 Thess 2:14). A group of believers in the home of an individual (1 Cor 16: 1:2 Col 4:15 Phlm 2). A group of congregation in a given geographic area (Acts 9:31). The whole body of believers throughout the world (Matt 16:18, 1 Cor 10:32. 12:28, Eph 4:11-16). The whole faithful creation in heaven and on Earth (Eph 1:20-22, Philippians 2:9-11).⁴⁷ The Old Testament portrays Gods people as living in a community. Russell Burrill notes that:

The first activity of the God of community upon planet earth was the creation, and especially the creation of human kind in His image on the sixth day. Human kind is created in the image of the triune God. Therefore humanity is called to live in community, as the triune God lives in perfect community. In the Old Testament this community must be taken into account in order to place the meaning of this into proper perspective.⁴⁸

Functions of the Church

Robert Logan has observed that “it is important then, to look at the biblical functions of the church first, and ask the question, “What structure is most conducive to help the church fulfil its biblical function?” If examined in this light, it is difficult to arrive at any answer other than “the cell group church.”

⁴⁶General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Ministerial Association, *Seventh-day Adventists Believe*, 136, 137.

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸Russell Burrill, *Recovering an Adventist Approach to the Life and Mission of the Local Church* (Fallbrook, CA: Hart Books, 1998), 95.

He further adds that the following passages reveal a great deal about the biblical function of a healthy church: “And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.” (Acts 2:42-47)

Functions; Teaching, fellowship, communion, prayer, miracles, commonality, pooled resources, meeting needs, spending time together, praise, evangelism, assimilation.

Be kindly affectionate one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another (Rom 12:10). Functions; commitment to fellow Christians, affirming and caring for them (Eph 4:2). With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Functions: being transparent, opportunity to exercise patience and bear with others in love, exercising kindness and compassion, forgiving others.

Galatians 6:2 Bear with one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. Functions: Listening to and sharing the problems of one another (Eph 5:21). Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God Functions: mutual submission to others' care.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. Functions: teaching, admonishing, personal life application, praising God together, (Col 3:16; 1 Thess 5:11), wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do: Functions, encouragement, edification.

Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works Functions: exhortation, personal life application, meeting together, instilling hope (Col 3:16; Jas 5:16) Confess [your] faults one to another, and pray one for another,

that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much, Functions: confession, prayer, healing. An assessment of the above selected texts reveal a great deal of the thought pattern of New Testament writers and their view of the ideal of the body of Christ.

The conclusion draws upon a number of biblical references, but chiefly upon (Exod 19:5-6.) The Christian community is said to be a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people of God's own possession. The “chosen race” The image of church as a community which is the rock and the rock was Christ the foundation on which God established his people both individually and corporately.

This imagery runs throughout the scripture. The Old Testament portrays the church as an organized congregation of Gods people. Burrell notes that “from the earliest times God fearing families in the lineage of Adam, Seth, Noah, Shem and Abraham were the guardians of his truth. This image is not one of aloneness.”⁴⁹ God longs for community, Perhaps the reason He put aside twenty four hours weekly to meet with Humanity called the Sabbath.

Harrelson notes that, “this motif seems to come from (Exod 19:5) with its reference to God bringing Israel to himself on eagle's wings.”⁵⁰ “Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth [is] mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. These [are] the words which thou shall speak unto the children of Israel” (Exod 19:5, 6). Other references to God's choice, especially in Deuteronomy chapter 7: 9 may also be operative.

⁴⁹Burrill, *Recovering an Adventist Approach to the Life and Mission of the Local Church*, 23.

⁵⁰Walter Harrelson, *From Fertility Cult to Worship* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1970), 54.

The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye [were] the fewest of all people: But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

“The whole earth belongs to God, but he has chosen Israel as his peculiar treasure.”⁵¹ The royal priesthood in the Greek equivalent of "kingdom of priests" and is a citation from Exodus, as is the reference to the Church as a holy nation. It is just as strange for the Church to be called an *ethnos* as it was for Israel to be called a *goy*. The Church is a *Laos*, as Israel is a *9am*. But in her mission to the *ethnoi* she too is to be an *ethnos*.⁵²

A Witnessing and Nurturing Community

From its very inception the church was a witnessing and a missionary community, and its activities and ministry must necessary be evaluated from the perspectives of outreach. The apostles were called “our brother’s messengers” Greek *apostoloi* of the churches a glory to Christ. In 1 Corinthians 8:23, in one sense, Paul belonged to the twelve although untimely born (1 Cor 15:8-11), and in another, to the wider group which included Barnabas, Andronicus, Junias, Silvanus, Timothy, Apollo’s and Epaphroditus. The apostles of New Testament are not officers of the congregation, but like the prophets, and the teachers, they are establishing and nurturing the congregation (1 Cor 12:28; Eph 2:20, 3:5-7, 4:11-12, 53).

⁵¹Harrelson, 47

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Norskov, 73.

Ellen G. White and Nurture

The researcher considers Ellen G. White as an author who possessed the gift of prophecy and contributed greatly in her writings in regard to church organization, evangelism, nurture, education, family, health among other subjects. The gift of prophecy is one of the gifts Paul expresses in his epistles “To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another [divers] kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues” (1 Cor 12:10). In her writings, this study will consider four sub sections namely, nurture in the family setting, duty of the church to the needy, reasons why there is backsliding and finally care for the new converts.

Nurture in the Family Setting

A close look at the writings of Ellen G. White reveal that, importance has been attached to nurture especially in a family setting. This is significant since the study has established the church as a family. She notes that:

Every child brought into the world is the property of Jesus Christ, and should be educated by precept and example to love and obey God; but by far the largest number of parents have neglected their God-given work, by failing to educate and train their children, from the first dawning of reason, to know and love Christ. By painstaking effort parents are to watch the opening, receptive mind and make everything in the home life secondary to the positive duty enjoined upon them by God—to train their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.⁵⁴

In this part her argument of every child being the property of Jesus Christ is the issue of custody. God has given the parent the child to care for Him. Every convert is but a child in the family of Christ which is the church hence, the possession

⁵⁴Ellen G. White, *Adventist Home*, Complete Published Ellen G. White Writings [CD ROM] (Silver Spring, MD: Ellen G. White Estate, 2008), 138.

of Christ. This statement points out that when the church neglects the duty of nurture it has neglected a God given duty.

Duty of the Church to the Needy

As regards needy people and their situation, Ellen G. White had to say said:

The poverty of the people to whom we are sent is not to prevent us from working for them. Christ came to this earth to walk and work among the poor and suffering. They received the greatest share of His attention. And today, in the person of His children, He visits the poor and needy, relieving woe and alleviating suffering.⁵⁵

She continues to say “they drink of the water of life. Those who have been loathed and abandoned are through faith and pardon raised to the dignity of sons and daughters of God. Lifted above the world, they sit in heavenly places in Christ. They may have no earthly treasure, but they have found the pearl of great price.”⁵⁶

Ellen White addressed the issue of dormant church members who are doing nothing in the church. A closer look at her thoughts paints a true picture in many of the churches. “Many of the members of our large churches are doing comparatively nothing. They might accomplish a good work if, instead of crowding together, they would scatter into places that have not yet been entered by the truth. Trees that are planted too thickly do not flourish.”⁵⁷ The trend today seems to be working towards big churches. A lot of funds are being directed to construction of modern expensive churches to house many members which never was the structure of the early church.

They are transplanted by the gardener that they may have room to grow and not become dwarfed and sickly. The same rule would work well for our large churches. Many of the members are dying spiritually for want of this very

⁵⁵Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Complete Published Ellen G. White Writings [CD ROM] (Silver Spring, MD: Ellen G. White Estate, 2008), 7:226.

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷Ibid., 8:244.

work. They are becoming sickly and inefficient. Transplanted, they would have room to grow strong and vigorous.⁵⁸

Many of the church members have become lethargic to the call to get out and share the good news. They feel comfortable to worship in their traditional church. The researcher has observed a scenario where members get attached to a particular church and desire to keep their Christian life journey as a treasured history. They begin to relate how they bought the land and built the temple. A similar case was at the time of Jesus: “And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to [him] for to show him the buildings of the temple” (Matt 24:1).

She adds and says:

It is not the purpose of God that His people should colonize or settle together in large communities. The disciples of Christ are His representatives upon the earth, and God designs that they shall be scattered all over the country, in the towns, cities, and villages, as lights amidst the darkness of the world. They are to be missionaries for God, by their faith and works testifying to the near approach of the coming Savior.⁵⁹

The Bible speaks of the believers scattered and spreading the word of God.

“Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word” (Acts 8:1).

"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do well unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."⁶⁰ In this case she gives direct reference to the care and nurture to be directed to those of the faith.

In a special sense, Christ has laid upon His church the duty of caring for the needy among its own members. He suffers His poor to be in the borders of every church. They are always to be among us, and He places upon the members of the

⁵⁸White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 8:244.

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰Ellen G. White, *Welfare Ministry*, Complete Published Ellen G. White Writings [CD ROM] (Silver Spring, MD: Ellen G. White Estate, 2008), 178.

church a personal responsibility to care for them.”⁶¹ As the members of a true family care for one another, ministering to the sick, supporting the weak, teaching the ignorant, training the inexperienced, so is the "household of faith" to care for its needy and helpless ones.”⁶²

Church Body Accountable for Negligence of Members. God will hold the church at responsible, as a body, for the wrong course of its members. If a selfish and un sympathizing spirit is allowed to exist in any of its members toward the unfortunate, the widow, the orphan, the blind, the lame, or those who are sick in body or mind, He will hide His face from His people until they do their duty and remove the wrong from among them. If any professing the name of Christ so far misrepresent their Savior as to be unmindful of their duty to the afflicted, or if they in any way seek to advantage themselves to the injury of the unfortunate, and thus rob them of means, the Lord holds the church accountable for the sin of its members until they have done all they can to remedy the existing evil. He will not hearken to the prayer of His people while the orphan, the fatherless, the lame, the blind, and the sick are neglected among them.⁶³

Reasons for Backsliding

Ellen White asserts that the reason why members backslide could be because they do not have a burden for souls. This burden for souls arises from a true training in love for Christ’s mission which can be summed up in Luke 19:10. Members with no burden for souls will be continually backsliding. Those who profess to believe the

⁶¹*Welfare Ministry*, 178.

⁶²Ellen G. White, *Ministry of Healing*, Complete Published Ellen G. White Writings [CD ROM] (Silver Spring, MD: Ellen G. White Estate, 2008), 201.

⁶³White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 3:517, 518.

truth, but feel no burden for the souls of others, will be continually backsliding, and it will require time and strength on the part of the minister to keep them from making shipwreck of faith, when they should be laboring with all their might to present the way of life and salvation to their friends and neighbors. Hundreds of men and women who at the present time are professedly engaged in the work of God, are not doing one-tenth that they might do if they would only improve all the powers God has given them.

Some are doing literally nothing for the truth, and by their example of indifference are bringing others into the same position of uselessness, and thus are scattering from Christ. This latter class includes by far the greater number. They are thinking and planning only for themselves. Fathers and mothers with their little ones around them make their little circle their world. Every power of their being is centered on "me and mine," and they are becoming narrower and more circumscribed every year of their lives. They do not open their hearts to the grace and love of Christ, and liberalize their nature and ennoble their being by placing themselves in sympathy with their fellow men.⁶⁴ Too many rely on their preacher to support them, when they should be ministering to others.

The people have listened to too much sermonizing; but have they been instructed as to how to labor for those for whom Christ died? Has there been a line of work devised and laid out before the people in such a way that each one saw the necessity of taking part in the work?⁶⁵

⁶⁴Ellen G. White, *Pastoral Ministry*, Complete Published Ellen G. White Writings [CD ROM] (Silver Spring, MD: Ellen G. White Estate, 2008), 146.

⁶⁵White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 6:431.

An Example to New Converts

In the book *Evangelism*, Ellen G. White exhorts,

Come Close to Hearts. Come close to your brethren; seek for them, help them; come close to their hearts as one touched with the feelings of their infirmities. Thus we may achieve victories that our small faith has not grasped. The members of these families should be given some labor to perform for the good of souls. Mutual love and confidence will give them moral force to be laborers together with God.⁶⁶

Often Make Sabbath Meeting a Bible Class. It has often been presented to me that there should be less sermonizing by ministers acting merely as local pastors of churches, and that greater personal efforts should be put forth. Our people should not be made to think that they need to listen to a sermon every Sabbath. Many who listen frequently to sermons, even though the truth be presented in clear lines, learn but little. Often it would be more profitable if the Sabbath meetings were of the nature of a Bible class study.⁶⁷

Summary

Russell Burrill, in his book on the cover page, has asked questions that can trigger the emotions of a committed believer. Perhaps they may extremely contribute to the understanding of the purpose and ideal of God's church. "Do you remember when you had to arrive early to get a seat? When the church was a beehive of happy activity? When Baptism occurred regularly? When the church seemed alive with the spirit? This and others sometimes create a memory of those who were born as members of the church and events have changed the church today.

The study has established nurture as an intentional component in the history of redemption. God nurtured individual families and Israel as a nation. The theme of a shepherd has come strong in both the old and New Testament. Jesus spoke much as the good shepherd among other terms he applied on himself.

⁶⁶Ellen G. White, *Evangelism*, Complete Published Ellen G. White Writings [CD ROM] (Silver Spring, MD: Ellen G. White Estate, 2008), 347.

⁶⁷Ibid., 348.

The term church in the New Testament seems to symbolize a caring community. This kind of community ensured healthy numerical growth. Ellen G. White has pointed out the weakness of negligence common in the church.

CHAPTER 3

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In the previous chapter, the study provided a biblical basis for nurture from both the old and new testaments. This chapter will focus on literature that directly deals with nurture. It is divided into five sections. The first part deals with God's ideal for nurture and the change that came after sin. That change saw the introduction of a mediatorial service of a priestly ministry. The second reviews a brief history of laity. In this section also, the early church's practice as recorded in Acts chapter six is investigated.

The third section thoroughly explores poverty in the church and how it adversely impacts community and effective nurture. The fourth section deals with training and different methods of nurture. Lastly the fifth section deals with hindrances to effective nurture. A summary and conclusion is thereby given.

God's Ideal for Nurture

Face to Face Communion

God's ideal for a nurturing atmosphere for his people in the Garden of Eden was face-to-face communication. Here unencumbered by sin, God's initial creation held face-to-face communion with their creator. Nothing separated Adam and Eve from intimate communion with God. They enjoyed unbroken relationship (Gen 3). They could approach God directly and have their social, physical needs among others met. After the break of the relationship this communion was not the case any longer. Instead a system of intermediaries was introduced. Chosen ones interceded on

behalf of the people since they had no longer face-to-face communion with God. Most likely, Adam could have represented his family and acted as the intermediary. As it can be noted in the Old Testament the patriarchs were more like having a communication with God on behalf of their family and finally after the exodus event came the priestly ministry. Ultimately the culmination by Christ's ministry as the New Testament Lamb of God (John 1:29)

The Need for a Mediator

From the beginning it was God's will and purpose to have a direct communication, but due to the fall this communication broke (Gen 3). After the fall not only was man sent out of the garden but that communication called for a mediator. When God had rescued the Israelites, at their demand they wanted to have this face to face communication with God, God actually allowed it and asked Moses to prepare them to meet with Him (Exod 19).

After seeing the danger they were in, they told Moses to talk with him and later tell them (Exod 19:18, 19). "And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him by a voice." This mediatory work was to continue until the promised messiah could bring it to an end (Gen 3:15). This gap that was created by sin was filled by the work of a priest.

The Priestly Ministry

As observed above, the fall came with a curse on man and the creation because of sin. Walter C. Kaiser has noted that "the story did not end with judgment

or a curse, for in Genesis 3:15 God declared that He would personally put “enmity” between the serpent - that old Dragon, the devil (Rev 12:9) and the woman, between the serpents “seed” and the woman’s “seed.” But then in a sudden turn of events, God predicted that the serpent would bruise the heel of one of the woman’s “seed” a male descendant from among her offspring.”¹ The experience of announcing the plan of salvation initiates mission in this account.

There seems to be a suggestion here that humanity was to be part of the redemption plan. Not in essence that he helps the process but that man is incorporated. The seed referred was of the “woman” Eve. Kaiser has argued that “for several millennia prior to Gods call to Abraham, God had been seeking a people who would honor his name and respond to his invitation. But the rebellion of the first couple was often repeated in the lives of others who needed first to repent and then believe the good news offered to them.”² This concept of dwelling climaxes nurture as it changes the tone bringing the transcendent immanent.

Brief Survey of the Concept of Laity

Rex D. Edwards argues that Clement of Rome was the first to use the term *layman*. About A.D. 95 concluding his brief reference to participants in liturgy with the assertion that the layman is bound by the lay ordinances.³ Edwards furthers the thought by saying that “it must be understood clement is assigning the laymen a subordinate role in liturgy reflecting the general Greek usage of the word lay and

¹C. Kaiser Jr., *Walter, Mission in the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic 2000), 2.

²*Ibid.*, 7.

³Rex Daniel Edwards, *A New Frontier: Every Believer a Minister* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1979), 35.

turning in a specifically Christian direction.”⁴ This idea suggests the source to be non-Biblical. Since this word is acknowledged worldwide regardless of its source it needs reflection.

Pre-Advent Laity Movement

Looking at the early Adventist movement, it was affected by Methodism where most of the early pioneers emanated from. Burrill says that

Wesleyan Methodism was a holiness movement and Wesley implanted a strong desire that Christians not merely accept Christ as a savior, but that they mature in the relationship to Him, he perceived that spiritual growth takes place best in a group sitting where there can be mutual support and encouragement for those pursuing the life of holiness. The content of that meeting was that: everyone was to speak as freely, plainly and consciously as he (could) the real state of his heart, with his several temptations and deliverances, since that last time of meeting. At every meeting there were five questions to be asked: 1. what known sin have you committed since our last meeting? 2. What temptation have you met with? 3. How were you delivered? 4. What have you thought, said or done, of which you doubt whether it be a sin or not? 5. Have you nothing you desire to keep secret?⁵

These kinds of questions brought about a community of trust and strengthened the church. Each person was a brother's keeper there was no clergy responsible for spiritual life but each was accountable to the other. The challenge the church faces is dependence on the clergy to do nurture. The question normally comes; how are we going to nurture these members pastor? A question suggesting that the laity want to

⁴Edwards, 35.

⁵Burrill, *Recovering an Adventist Approach to the Life and Mission of the Local Church*, 143, 144.

shift the responsibility to the pastor. Burrill continues to say that: “it was therefore agreed that the members of each class should meet together once a week, not only to collect the weekly contributions but also to give advice, reproof, or encouragement as needed. A dynamic of Christian fellowship quickly developed as members began to bear one “another’s burdens” and to “care for each other.” The openness which was engendered by the meetings led to “a more and endured affection” between the members, and they felt free to be honest with each other.”⁶

As observed above, one of the challenges now in the church at Lanet and possibly other congregations is mistrust that leads to the fear factor. The Wesleyans could share their inner struggles without feeling that the person they are going to share will not judge him or her. This fear among believers could be based on the pressure to be perfect that is created by the sermons the preachers present. It is not suggesting that the sermons present a situation where the sinner feels comfortable with their sins, but the creation of a community of saints leads to false pretense. The fact is many believers are sinners in need of Grace and our fellow sinners in the walk of faith.

After the death of Wesley these classes died. Burrill further observes that “as Adventism was beginning, the Methodist class meeting was in the process of decline, ultimately to be replaced by the prayer meetings. Yet the Methodism that sharpened the thinking of the early Adventist pioneers such as Ellen White, who came out of Methodism at this time, would have been the Methodism of the class meeting, where there were definite relational implications and accountability for their life in Christ.”⁷The philosophy of accountability slowly seems being abandoned as an ideal

⁶Burrill, *Recovering an Adventist Approach to the Life and Mission of the Local Church*, 144.

⁷Ibid., 146.

as people are becoming more individualistic and treating religion as private beliefs. It is the challenge the church faces and is prone to kill the spirit of community that is essential for nurture.

The researcher has noted that the tendency of prayer meetings has affected the kind of community. Now the members are becoming each other keeper less and less. In the typical prayer meeting in our churches today, hardly is there time for personal introspection with a mentor or fellow believer. One may be shelling up personal weaknesses in the form of asking for a silent prayer. In this way it is normally hurried up prayers where the leader gives the people five minutes which do not even come to completion but the people want to go home from prayer meetings. This is central to the loss of community. In the time of Wesley they were a means of evangelism too.

Burrill has expanded this idea by arguing that they “had all essential of relational small groups that met together regularly for mutual support and encouragement and to hold each other accountable for their life in Christ.”⁸ He observes also that in “the Methodist method there was a “return to a more biblical ecclesiology. The building of the church based more on community than on the development of large institutions.”⁹ The tendency is to have large congregations with many believers together.

Early Adventism and the Laity Movement

It seems crucial to examine the practice of the early Adventist movement to gain an insight into what motivated a strong bond of a new community. Commenting on the same issue Burrill has noted that “arising in the aftermath of the great Second Advent awakening in the middle of the 19th century; the SDA Church developed a

⁸Burrill, *Recovering an Adventist Approach to the Life and Mission of the Local Church*, 147.

⁹Ibid.

church structure that bears considerable resemblance to the first century model. The earliest Adventist believed that if they were to organize, they must do so biblically rather than simply copying existing organizational structure.¹⁰ This was a commendable ideology that could ensure being faithful to the Word. It can be said that this belief has encouraged faithfulness to the fundamental teachings of the church.

There are several important reasons as to why the SDA Church in the early stages developed the lay centered church. Highlighting the idea, Burrill has identified three main points that align themselves to the idea thus:

One, the church arose with clear mandate for mission. They quickly developed a ministry strategy for their existence. Secondly for the Adventism church to develop a ministry of the laity model was its roots in Methodism. Lastly the model was inspired by guidance of Ellen white. From its inception the Adventist Church has recognized the spiritual gift of the prophet to exist in the life and ministry of Ellen G. white.¹¹ It can be also noted that they did have an exclusive training college that could prepare their clergy.

Role of the Clergy as Itinerant Evangelists and Church Planters

John Fowler has observed that “in the early church the work of winning souls was done by the laity. In “A History of Christian Missions,” Stephen Neill notes that much of the work of the early church was done by laymen, even to the extent of establishing churches.”¹² Burrill has noted that New Testament church structure

¹⁰Burrill, *Recovering an Adventist Approach to the Life and Mission of the Local Church*, 149.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²John Fowler, “A History of Christian Missions,” accessed 15 April 2015, <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/1977/12/what-is-the-biblical-view-of-the-laity>.

relieved the apostle from the work of daily nurture of the members and they gave themselves to the preaching of the word after choosing the seven deacons.”¹³

The result was a numerical and spiritual growth because as soon as the members are actively involved in the day today ministry they will automatically grow. He notes “that the practice of the clergy becoming priests and thus destroying the New Testament concept of the priesthood of all believers began in the second century.”¹⁴ From this deduction if there was a shift from the early church then the apostles never gave to the idea of a separated clergy distinguished from the laity. A closer look at the strategies for church growth reveals that those churches that put emphasis on training the laity seem to have a higher growth Rate than those where that pastor does everything.

Yet in a rejoinder, Burrill has quoted Donald Mc Gavran who is acclaimed as the founder of church growth summarizing seven factors that must be in place for the church to grow. Here are two which are fitting in the subject under consideration: First, a well mobilized laity which has discovered, established and is using their spiritual gifts for growth, the pastor cannot be a lone ranger. He/she must be able to mobilize the laity behind the vision and enable God’s people utilize all the spiritual gifts that he has placed in the church. Secondly a philosophy of ministry that has its priorities arranged in biblical order.¹⁵

Care need be taken against drifting away from the biblical models which alone can stand a taste of time. A spirit lead and witnessing community will fulfil God’s

¹³John Fowler, “A History of Christian Missions,” accessed 15 April 2015, <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/1977/12/what-is-the-biblical-view-of-the-laity>.

¹⁴Burrill, *Recovering an Adventist Approach to the Life and Mission of the Local Church*, 127.

¹⁵Russell Burrill, *How to Grow an Adventist Church* (Fallbrook, CA: Hart Books, 2009), 35.

ideal and reduce significantly the apostasies and backsliding of new believers and fossilization of the old members.

A strongest issues here is that the church follow the Bible hence prioritize what the Bible has prioritized. Many pastors love working until they forget that the laity will not rise up to utilize their talents. Many lay people are also not cognizant of their talents and remain in church watching a few people perform for the whole church. It is a very small percentage that is willing and active in church programs.

The New Testament

Alan has advanced this line of thought by noting that

It was obvious from His teaching and action that Jesus was passionate about the plight of the poor, the sick and the helpless. He fed them, healed them and gave them hope regularly during his earthly ministry. When counseled the rich young ruler, Jesus indicated that giving to the poor would result in treasure in heaven. Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go [and] sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, would result in treasure in heaven.¹⁶

Reluctance of the church in addressing the issue of material aspect in the fear of being world minded is not healthy.

As the love of Christ is lived out in our lives, a natural result is that we love helping people, especially those who can't help themselves. We can also see this emphasis in the early church. An organized taskforce was established for collecting and administering the gifts to the poor (Acts 4:32-37, 6:1-7) and Paul was continually taking up money for the poor as he traveled from church to church (Rom 15:25-27, 2 Cor 8:9).¹⁷

This idea is amplified by Herb Mather who has argued that “in a letter to the Corinthian church, Paul developed the case for giving to assist the poor in Jerusalem.

¹⁶Gotthardt Alan, *The Eternity Portfolio* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 2003), 110.

¹⁷Ibid.

He related the offering to the gospel he said “for ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich” (2 Cor 8:9). “Church leaders often talk about giving in relationship to the needs of the church, but we rarely talk about the relationship of money to the gospel. The connection between our giving (the incarnational act) and the gospel provides a solid foundation.”¹⁸

Spiritual Nurture

The issue of nurture is broad and for that matter this section will not try to exhaust its study but will briefly mention it as it is related to a laity mobilization. Roger Dudley has discovered that there is a co relation to the number of offshoot in a church that has a mobilized membership to that that does not have. There are more members who leave the church which has not ensured that many of its members are actively involved. Thus he says if significant church growth is to take place, we must find more effective methods—both preventive and remedial—of dealing with the problem of apostasy. A member who does not apostatize contributes as much to growth as a new convert. If the number of those who apostatize is equal to those who are baptized no growth will take place.¹⁹

One central issue discussed here is that involving members ensures a healthy church. This makes the believers strive out of the love for God to seek from His word what to feed fellow church members. In the process they grow in Christ and have a fellowship with Him. This is what Christ meant in John by asking that one abide in Him to bear fruits (John 15:14).

¹⁸Mather Herb, *Don't Shoot the Horse* (Nashville, TN: Discipleship Resources, 1994), 14, 15.

¹⁹L. Roger Dudley, *Adventures in Church Growth* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1983), 135.

There are factors that Roger has revealed that will be insightful to observe. One, the number of apostasy tends to increase with the size of the church. Meaning the churches that have large number of membership will tend to have more apostasies. Two the higher the church baptism the higher the apostasies. Though he says the figure is not significant. He says that there is significant relationship to the following variables:

1. Leadership style as the pastor is more democratic and allows the members more voice in the operation of the church, apostasies go down 2. New members' involvement—as the church quickly involves the new converts in the life and ministry of the congregation rather than ignoring them apostasies tend to drop. 3. Atmosphere—where the members rate the climate in a warm church as warm and friendly apostasies decrease.”²⁰ In brief the power of a life church lies in sharing power.

In support of the idea, Russell Burrill has noted that there are reason that make visitors to come to church he says that “visitors do not want to be “made over” they don't crave public attention but they do enjoy the personal attention of members. It is this that constitutes a friendly church.”²¹

He further amplifies the thought by listing five points of which this study has made use of above three to illustrate a point of reference as they relate to the subject matter of involving the membership in church activities. The researcher agrees with his findings that failure to recognize and involve the laity in church programs will be increasing the number of apostasies.

²⁰Dudley, 136, 137.

²¹Burrill, *How to Grow an Adventist Church*, 89.

Understanding Poverty and its Influence on Nurture

Poverty has been defined as “the inability of an individual or a family to command sufficient resources to satisfy basic needs.”²² The researcher has often encountered challenges after presenting the gospel and people accept to join the church. It becomes critical for them to embrace their new found faith when they think about their social, financial and other aspects of life, knowing very well that they will not be welcome among the kinsmen from where they were formerly attached. In other words the gospel alienates people from their associations as Jesus had warned (Matt 10:34). As a church, the researcher assumes that there is a lack of an elaborate and conscious preparation for receiving and maintaining the converts who risk joining our community of faith.

A Brief Survey of the Old Testament

Dwight Nelson commenting on Isaiah 58 has noted that “God’s call to solidarity with the poor begins with the words “Your own flesh and blood” That is your own family. Or your own “Family, the poor are in our own family.”²³ Nelson furthers the idea in relation to a survey done among young people and says “they long for community and the other they are committed to the plight of the poor.” These two aspects open a window for the church to see what the most crucial needs and can be addressed by the church.

One is their deep longing for feeling of community of believers, and the other is their need to touch the community outside. Dwight points out that “in the context of

²²Augustin Fosu, Germano Mwabu, Eric Thorbecke, eds., *Poverty in Africa: Analytical and Policy Perspectives* (Nairobi, Kenya: University of Nairobi, 2009), 100.

²³Nelson, 50.

vibrant community “each person’s needs was met.”²⁴ To find an equilibrium in this generation where resources can be pooled together can be challenging with capitalism and the survival for the fittest ideology prevalent in today’s society. Yet there is a longing for community that was in the early church.

Poverty Situation in Kenya

Jane Kabubo has noted that “at the independence the government of Kenya identified poverty as one of the major problems facing Kenya. Estimates based on previous research efforts provide a fairly good account of poverty trends in the country over time. The number of poor people increased to about 52.9% of the rural population and 49.2% of the urban population in 1997 up from 46 percent for rural and 29.3 per cent for the urban in 1992. Estimates from 2000 shows that poverty had increased to 51.5% in urban and 59.6% in the rural areas.”²⁵ In the period considered the trend seemed to increase. The members of Lanet find themselves in this categories.

Gordon Olson has extended this line of thought by agreeing with Douglas’s observation who says that “the relief of suffering is so essentially a part of the practice of Christianity, that to omit it will invalidate the gospel message and make it as sounding brass and twinkling cymbals” the enormity of the physical needs can become so time and energy consuming that the spiritual need for the gospel proclamation becomes secondary or clouded out entirely.”²⁶ Analyzing this statements, Christianity can fail to make a lasting impact depending on the approach.

²⁴Nelson, 52.

²⁵Jane Kabubo Mariara, ed., *Poverty and Policy in Kenya* (Nairobi, Kenya: University of Nairobi Press, 2009), 140, 141.

²⁶Olson, 271, 272.

The Early Church and Poverty

Roman System of Inequality

The practice of the early church can provide a glimpse into the strategies employed that handled poverty to the dimension of controlling the community of believers to remain united. Susan has said that “the Roman system of inequality” the Roman Empire maintained its domination of the Mediterranean world through judicial intuitions, legislative systems, property ownership, control of labor and brute force. Like all societies, the empire developed mechanism for maintaining multifaceted inequality, and like all so called civilized societies the empire promoted justification that made the inequality seem normal or at least inevitable.”²⁷ The New Testament church does not seem to stage a warfare against this system even though there seemed to be an abhorrence towards it.

There is a disparity in the wealth system and residence of the people then and now but the underlying principle is that the ruling class had some ways of exploiting the common people strengthened by the judicial systems. Christ did not directly advocate for a confrontation to eradicate this inequality but there are texts that show he was not for this kind of exploitation.

John the Baptist and Justice

John the Baptist rebukes all kind of inequality, selfishness and injustice when he stated:

He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise. Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do? And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you. And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, and what shall we do? And he said

²⁷ Susan R. Holman, *Wealth and Poverty in Early Church and Society* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005), 18, 19.

unto them, do violence to no man, neither accuse [any] falsely; nor be content with your wages. (Luke 3:11-14)

Deaconry and Apostolic Thought on the Needy

One of the pivotal aspects is considered by Rudi Mair who has noted that “In the early church deacons were appointed to provide for widows who were being “neglected in the daily distributions” (Acts 6:1) seven men of good reputation who were full of spirit and wisdom were appointed to this important duty. They were set apart and ordained by prayer and the laying on of hands (Acts 6:6). In Acts 9, we find the story of Tabitha (Dorcas) of Joppa who was full of good works and acts of charity. When she fell sick and died, the apostle Peter came immediately knelt by the body, and commanded her in God’s name to rise.”²⁸

Croft and Bryce Butler agree that “it is a common temptation for large churches with large buildings and big budgets to have a subtle shift in focus that prioritizes the buildings and resources over the people of the church.”²⁹ This ordination was indeed an inauguration of a department to look into the basic human needs. The early church recognized the need for this special mechanism of maintaining a community. This was responsible for uniting different cultures and a combination of different nationalities that needed close and careful administration. The church felt that the social needs were as essential as their accepting the spiritual face of the Gospel of salvation.

Dwight Nelson has intimated that “it is that generosity that is the shining hallmark of the New Testament church—a community of faith that championed an

²⁸Rudi, 153.

²⁹Brian Croft and Bryce Butler, *Oversee God’s People* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006), 44.

equality of opportunity” for all her children.”³⁰ The apostle’s wisdom to urge equality through a seven member team of dedicated men was an indication of their courage to contextualize the gospel to meet the needs of the new believers.

The Bible in the book of James addresses this issue of inequality by pointing to the favoritism done in treating the rich and poor differently: “Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts? Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him? But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats? Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by they are called? (Jas 2:5-7).

A point to consider is advanced by Susan who argues that “The rhetoric of this section asserts that there are two alternatives: the system of the world and the system of the kingdom. In the synagogue of Gods kingdom, the materially poor are rich in faith and so should not be dishonored by brothers and sisters who are financially better off.”³¹ The pastor as the leader of the church needs a skill that will courageously address this delicate issue that will attack the core of human selfishness.

She continues to say that “in a second passage, James 5:1-6, we see the author’s most caustic critique of the economic system. Here James criticizes a fundamental feature of Roman system of inequality: wealthy landowners exploiting the labors who worked their fields. He adds there are two aspects to James’ critique of rich landowners, birth of which drew on the traditions of the Israelite prophets. First, James condemns the accumulation of the capital using the imagery of corrosion. Compare with Isaiah 51, especially verses 8-16. The corrosion on their precious metal

³⁰Nelson, 55.

³¹Holman, 24.

would be evidence against them in the final judgment; the corrosion will consume even their very flesh. Second, James accuses the wealthy of squandering the surplus generated by the unpaid labor of the workers (Jas 5:1-3) because the rich use that surplus for their own satisfaction, the divine warrior Israel, the Lord of hosts (*hokyrrios sabaoth*), will avenge those who oppress the poor 5:4-6, drawn explicitly on Isaiah 5, Jeremiah 12:9 and other biblical texts.³² Further she observes that the author of the book of acts “is silent on the issue of economic injustice. He does not look for institutional cause of poverty. Instead he focuses his economic policy on charity and restricts redistribution among believers to an idealized past in the Jerusalem.”³³

The author’s effort to suppress criticism of economic inequality can be seen especially in three important examples in the narrative. One example is the renunciation of private property in the early Jerusalem assemblies (Acts 2:24- 45; 4:35-37) the authors summaries of this practice are idealized rather than pragmatic, and he concludes his discussion of the practice with the story that undercuts the utopian ethos: two saints; Ananias and Saphira abuse the practice and are struck dead (Acts 5:1-11) in an extreme “one strike and you are out” sentencing policy. A second example is the care of widows in Jerusalem assemblies (Acts 6:1-7) which heightens the author’s subtle criticism of communal property. The author suggests that the attempt to end inequality was hampered by ethnic and cultural favouritism. Again the author does not deal with the root causes but treats it as an administrative problem, solved by the appointment of more administrators.”³⁴

³²Holman, 25.

³³Ibid., 26.

³⁴Holman, 27.

This seems to have been clearly a leadership problem. The leadership did not fairly distribute the central fund fairly. There was unfairness in administering the congregational needs. Could it be a problem that sufficed then and has vanished? Ronald J. Sider has noted that from the economic point of view the church shared the problems. “When one member suffered all suffered, when one rejoiced all rejoiced (1 Cor 12:23) when a person or a church experienced economic trouble, the others shared generously and when a brother or sister fell in sin others gently restored the erring person (Matt 18:15-27, 1 Cor 5:2, 2 Cor 2:5-11, Gal 6:6-13). These sisters and brothers were available to each other emotionally, financially and spiritually.”³⁵ This seems to have been the cause for fast growth of the early church and strong fellowship. It surely should be what Christ wants for His church today in this century and His passion.

Challenges to Achieving the Ideal in Care

The Need for Christian Response

The deduction of Rudi Miar has a point to consider in assessing the real situation of the current world today he says that “Most are well aware of the fast human need, we have only need to watch or read the newspaper to see the images of human suffering: emaciated bodies slowly stuffing, people mutilated and tormented by war and injustice, whole families living in bus depot, sub ways and condemned buildings, since the above mentioned social issues also bring with them ethical implications that affect us as members of the society, directly or indirectly, they should raise moral concerns and responses from individuals Christians as well as

³⁵Ronald J. Sider, *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger* (Dallas, TX: Word, 1997), 210, 211.

Christian organizations. It is the duty of the church which has a responsibility to provide a way out.

He furthers the thought by remarking through asking a pointed question; “How can we as Christians disciple this large group of people for the Lord if we do not minister to them physically as well? Jesus was touched by human need and responded to it with acts of mercy. He left us the parable of the Good Samaritan.” (Luke 10:30-37)³⁶

In a bid to understand the direction of his students, Rudi has inquired in a question posed; “on what level they see their involvement in ministry. Without fail, most of them feel prepared for the “highest one,” dealing with the spiritual truths of love, affection, righteousness, maybe even grace. These are beautiful truths of God. But I am reminded of the stuffing man who told the missionary who wanted to share the gospel with him, “I can’t hear you—I am too hungry.”³⁷ In another case, a missionary was teaching a native to recite the Lord’s Prayer and in repeating the native said “your father who hath in heaven.” Could it be that the world cannot hear us if we are interested only with their spirituality but not anything to do with their social life?

Jesus ministered to the whole person showing concern for what people feel as well as what they say. He cared for their physical and spiritual wellbeing. Mission cannot compartmentalize humanity as though ministry to be “soul” has nothing to do with the body. Medical recognition of mind body and interdependence, interaction and integration suggest that a similar relationship exist between the spiritual and

³⁶Rudi, 210, 211.

³⁷Ibid., 211.

physical aspects of a person.”³⁸ The reason why we do not interact could be because we are afraid of opening up about our material worth to invite the others to share.

The researcher has observed the efforts fail of encouraging members to share a lunch in a form of a potluck. It appears that those who can afford a descent lurch are unwilling to participate foe fear of making the other party feel guilty. Those who cannot afford may also feel ashamed to bring their best lunch. This scenario has adversely affected community in the church. There are many who do not wish to participate as a result. Yet this was the major ingredient of fellowship.

The Failure to Recognize the Basic Needs

A Check in the New Testament indicates that the needs of the person were as important as the spiritual. Rudi contrasts the current trend of only minding the spiritual need by observing that “Christians spiritual needs seem the most pressing and obvious but we can never effectively minister to spiritual needs until we have first dealt with the immediate needs, be that for food, shelter, medical care, or simple respect. When we tend to see the person only in terms of physical or spiritual needs, we minimize the full range of human need. But Christ ministered to all needs.

In separating spiritual needs from physical needs, we make a sharp distinction between evangelism and social concerns. Adventist too often see themselves as ministering in one or the other of these spheres. Preachers often limit their concern to eternal salvation. But broken, suffering, and the lost people listen to people who meet their needs.³⁹

³⁸Rodriguez, *Message, Mission and Unity of the Church*, 102.

³⁹Rudi, 212.

The Poor are also enjoined to give

Dwight Nelson has noted that “the grip of selfishness is no respect of persons rich or poor Jesus enjoins all who would follow Him a solitary passionate appeal just a few lines later: “Give to everyone who ask of you (Luke 6:30). He makes no distinctions here about economic categories or financial accumulations. For the poor or the rich or those in-between the injunction is the same: “Give to everyone who asks of you.”⁴⁰ The spirit of selfishness is a human predicament that can be seen in all, the poor are struggling to climb the ladder the rich don’t seem to be content with what they have.

Training the Laity for Nurture

John Oaks defines training from Hee Seung Lee Korean dictionary as “a practical action put into practice in order to reach a definite purpose or standard. It is considered a part of studying.”⁴¹ Essentially training is making members disciples. Dunavant has observed that “seventy two percent of the time the word “disciple” is used with a personal pronoun (e.g. His disciples) in other words, disciples have a personal attachment to Jesus, not to a denominational or to a “truth.” In this matter, it is to make people have a personal attachment to Jesus.

The Critical Purpose of Training

The process of training is to mature Christians in their walk with Christ. John Oaks has suggested that “Consider the use of the word “perfect” or “mature” (1 Cor 14:20; Eph 4:12; Col 1:28; 2 Tim 3:17) the original Greek text use two or three different words to connote this terms. When we compare Ephesians 4:12, 13 side by

⁴⁰Nelson, 44.

⁴¹John Oaks, *Called to Awaken the Laity* (Ross-shire, Scotland: Geanies House, 2006), 169.

side, it is rather easy to discern that “a mature or perfect person” is closely related to a “disciple” to prepare Gods people (*krtatismos*). Verse 12 was originally used to mean putting a bone back in its place. Accordingly, it implies the act of preparing people with appropriate qualification. “Become mature” (*teleios*, v.13) follows after it and denotes reaching the goal, or maturity.”⁴² In essence, this training is geared towards a goal of maturing the believers.

Selecting the Team for Training

The concept of selecting has been supported by Oaks has noted that “when the process has to begin the first thing to do is to choose trainees. This will determine the success or failure of the program. He suggest that one follows Jesus method “ the first principle Jesus used was selection He began His ministry by calling a few to be his disciples (John 1:35-51) he further makes a reference to the church setting and says in an established church one does not have to worry about whom to accepts as trainees for the first discipleship training. Without question, one must select elders and deacons.”⁴³

It may not only be the method because after the spiritual gift test it can be easier to use it as a criteria for selecting people to place in their respective areas of best performance. Then the pastor must continue with the principle of concentration. Oaks has said that “Jesus exemplified concentration. To stick with those who are in the course.

⁴²Oaks, 113.

⁴³Oaks, 186.

Teaching Tools

Some of the key aspects of training are the tools. However much one may wish to train the crucial agenda remains the tools. To navigate this aspect John Oaks has identified that the teaching tool was the word of God that Jesus used, he adds that the second was the role model. And lastly he used the experience of the disciples themselves. Cheryl has also proposed the following lessons to be helpful as a simple lay course; The lesson that can be taught may include subjects as the Lordship of Christ, Bible study, prayer and devotion to God, fellowship and the church, christen character, relationships witnessing, social justice.”⁴⁴ This may not be an exhaustive list.

Commenting on Bible study. He has said that “ the scriptures are the record of an ancient and ongoing “ dialogues between God and His people about what it means to be the people of God in a variety of times and conditions. As members of the family we are invited to listen in on this dialogue and to participate.”⁴⁵

Motivating Members to Join Training

It is important to have members motivated to take the training. Dunavant has suggested ways of motivating “the first one communicate how this ministry makes an eternal difference, what you hope this ministry will accomplish and your appreciation for their time and efforts. Two provide a clear job description, provide a job training, and ongoing support. Three develop mutual agreeable goals that utilize the member’s specific gift and lastly provide training according to the members learning style and

⁴⁴Cheryl Doss, ed., *Passport to Mission* (Berrien Springs, MI: Institute of World Missions, 2009), 182.

⁴⁵Doss, 1.

availability.”⁴⁶ It is possible to also give incentives like certificates of participation. People in all levels value a certificate.

Results

When the desire to train is developed, the end goal is to see that results are achieved. This ought to be clear from the onset of the process. Oaks has noted that “when the number of lay leaders increase through discipleship training and the church members continue to be nurtured through the lay leaders, an impetus for church revival is generated, the daily life of the lay people becomes the mission field. Their conversations can function as a pathway that leads to the gospel. Everything they do can be used as both direct and indirect opportunities for saving souls. From these revival and continuing evangelism can be expected in the church.”⁴⁷

The end result is building the kingdom of God as He commanded. Further the pastor can have a rest even though the congregation’s demands are great there is an army to work with. The ideal of the early church will be realized.

Resistance

Whenever there is a new idea there is a possibility of resistance. In essence people do not like a new idea and it is always seen as a disturbance. A process of bringing about change has to be carefully considered. In regard to resistance, Dunavant has pointed out that there will always arise resistance. Some of the reasons can be:

Because they don’t see the benefit of the proposed change. They fear any risks associated with the change or greater than any promised benefits. People also resist because the proposed change affects their beliefs and values, believing

⁴⁶Del Dunavant, *From Membership to Discipleship: A Practical Guide to Equipping Members for Ministry* (Lincoln, NE: Advent Source, 2006), 80.

⁴⁷Oaks, 157.

the proposed change may require them to do or give up something they don't want to do. Ultimately, all resistance is an attempt to maintain power and control. Whose will prevails—yours or the resisters?⁴⁸

Power struggle is a major hindrance to nurture in many churches as it was even a problem to the twelve disciple of Jesus.

Dunavant argues that too many members came in the church's front door and out the back door" he recounts that the reason is because he failed to train them as disciples. He argues that Adventists see themselves as members of a denomination rather than first being disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. This perception is a hindrance to nurture.

Not a Priority to a Number of Pastors

According to John Oaks a survey found out that many pastor's top priority was preaching and their most neglected ministry was teaching.⁴⁹ The specific ranking went in the following order from the highest to the lowest: preaching, pastoral care (counseling's etc.), organization, administration, and teaching."⁵⁰ Brian Croft and Bryce butler have commented that "members need training that addresses their concerns and needs."⁵¹ This scenario could contribute to spiritual decline and backsliding in the churches. The pastor would rather preach other than have a training session. John Oaks noted that Jesus principle was to equip the person first, and then give him a task this is the basic principle of discipleship. Christ's way is to put people

⁴⁸Dunavant, 72.

⁴⁹Dunavant, 179.

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹Brian Croft and Bryce Butler, *Oversee God's People* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2015), 63.

first before work and action. In other words, a strategy that assigns ministry or work to someone without prior preparation of the person is not a strategy that Jesus taught.”⁵² So training was critical before Jesus could begin His ministry so it ought to be a priority in our day.

Too Large Churches

In addition, due to natural increase in population and overcrowding in the cities, churches in some areas are suffering from quantitative obesity, which hinders further the work of forming a “quality” laity. Now is indeed the time to pay attention to the following warning once again “the continuing expansion of the churches without profound teachings will weaken the churches in the future.”⁵³

Gordon Olson has quoted Shwered Lingenfelter on his definition of contextualization as saying that it is the idea of “the idea of contextualization is to frame the gospel message in language and communication forms appropriate and meaningful to the local culture, and to focus the message upon crucial issues in the lives of the people.”⁵⁴

Loss of Personal Freedom

The generation we live is faced with so many challenges. Olson has noted that “this the day of the “uncommitted generation. Young people and “and many not o young struggle to find direction in their lives. He has also observed that more than eighty percent of the people of the world who become Christians make a decision to follow Christ while in this age group. The holistic challenges are immense to effect a

⁵²Oaks, 104.

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴Olson, 277.

transformation in lives, families, communities and nations.”⁵⁵ This lays the pressing issue the modern minister faces.

Gift Based Ministry

Getting the people into gift-based ministry is essential. It is one of the elements of a healthy church and correlates strongly with spiritual and numerical growth. I personally believe that it is impossible to restore a church to healthy and vitality without first restoring ministry to all the people of God.”⁵⁶ The main purpose of the gift discovery process should be to help people discover if they have a training gift or a ministry gift.”⁵⁷ But care needs to be exercise he noted that the point to remember is that one should not use high pressure to get people into ministry.

“When new converts or newly transferred members join the church, there must be a way that the church can immediately orient them to its basic philosophy of ministry so that thy quickly realize that all gods people are ministers one way to accomplish this for new converts is through the laying on of hands at baptism.”⁵⁸ If the church does not have the philosophy it will be difficult to impart it. So the church that believes in gift based ministry will disciple the new members.

Theological Challenges of the Adventist Church in Nurture

The chief challenge according to Rudi relates to the church’s theological understanding of the mission: The SDA Church’s mission is to make disciples of all people, communicating the everlasting gospel in the context of the Three Angles

⁵⁵Olson, 461.

⁵⁶Burrill, *How to Grow an Adventist Church*, 92.

⁵⁷Ibid., 76.

⁵⁸Ibid., 83.

Messages of Revelation 14:6-12 leading them to accept Jesus as personal savior and unite with his remnant church, discipling them to serve Him as Lord and preparing them for the soon return.”⁵⁹

Rudi has noted that “the mission reflects an emphasis on “other worldliness” de-emphasizing the cares and concerns of “this world.” As the old hymn says, this world is not my home”; am just a- passing through” this attitude seems to be hard wired into the DNA of Adventism, causing a tension between doctrinal evangelism and needs-based evangelism. Our members often see the problems of the poor as unimportant compared to their eternal life’s ignoring the practical needs and missing out on important blessings that come with service to others. This dualistic attitude means that greater emphasis is placed on spiritual needs, end time events, and a separation from “sin,” which leads to a lack of involvement with or responsibility for meeting the temporal needs of others. This attitude represents a departure from historic Adventism as exhibited by nineteenth and early twentieth century leaders.”⁶⁰

Lack of Understanding of Needs-Based Evangelism

This ecclesiastical and theological barriers are extremely restrictive on the implantation of church programs addressing poverty, homelessness, or any other social problem. Having or knowing the “truth and being “remnant” people causes us to deny the problems that exist in our own families, churches, and communities. We may feel that we are theologically superior to other Christians and, therefore, have

⁵⁹General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, *Working Policy of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists*, 2011-2012 ed. (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2012), 29.

⁶⁰Rudi, 162.

nothing to learn from them. As a result our humanitarian work is years behind in development compared to that of other denominations.”⁶¹

Emphasis on Traditional Forms of Evangelism

Maintenance of the church structure and traditional evangelism consumes most of the denomination’s resources and outreach. Assistance to the poor is often evaluated for effectiveness based on the number of Bible studies, baptisms, and souls won. The church will halt all programs sometimes three months to camp meeting to help the church prepare for camp meetings which is basically an in reach program. Even though it nurtures existing members it receives extra attention.

During planning session for outreach have a fund for the needs of the place where the meets are going to be held, reevaluate our evangelism strategies, considering the healing ministry of the churches statement that reads; healing.

“Affirming the Biblical emphasis on the wellbeing of the whole person, we make the preservation of health and the healing of the sick a priority and through our ministry to the poor and oppressed cooperate with the Creator in His compassionate work of restoration. There needs to be a decisive reconsideration on our mission approach.

Methods of Nurture

Jesus’ Method

Speaking on the effective means used by Jesus for ministry Angel Manuel states that “the importance of Jesus example is underscored by several images of mission in the gospel. Drawing on earlier prophetic hopes for Israel (Isa 2:2-3) Jesus called his disciples salt (Matt 5:13; Luke 14: 33-35) and light – like a city on a hill

⁶¹Rudi, 163.

(Matt 5:14). They were to mingle with people from all levels of society just as Jesus did and to spread the wisdom of the kingdom like the sunlight covers the earth. The community of disciples would be like a new Zion, whose glory would bring even the gentiles to know the God of the Israel's (Isa 60:1-3; 62: 1-2)⁶²

Jesus also called them "to be with Him" (Mark 3:14). The significance of this phrase is frequently overlooked. The concept of being a disciple (*mathetes*) implies learning (*mathano*) from ones master teacher and learn situation.⁶³

Paul did not work in isolation " he worked in tandem with companions like Barnabas, John, Mark, Silas and Timothy and strove to labor in harmony with other apostles (1 Cor 9:6; Col 4:10; Acts 13:2-3; 15:40) at the same time Paul (and Barnabas) ordained elders in the newly-established congregations (Acts 14:23).⁶⁴

Olson has identified that "one cannot read the New testament with an open mind without concluding that evangelism must be the number one priority of the missionary. Evangelism is at the heart of the missionary movement. Missionary work that does not include evangelism isn't missionary work at all."⁶⁵

Medical

Olson observes that "there is no question that healing was an essential part of the ministry of the Lord Jesus and the apostles. Christ's ministry on earth was full of miracles of compassion, most of them healings. Among the forty miracle in the book of acts a majority were healings. There seems to have been an immediate cessation of

⁶²Rodriguez Angel Manuel, *Mission and Unity of the Church* (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 2013), 86.

⁶³Rodriguez, 85.

⁶⁴Rodriguez, 92.

⁶⁵Olson, 420.

the gift of healing after the apostolic period (Heb 2:4) and does not seem to have played a significant part of the early missionary expansion in the Roman Empire and beyond. With the rise of modern medicine missionaries saw an opportunity to restore works of compassion to our resources.”⁶⁶

Some of the benefits of this ministry Olsen has identified are “to alleviate human suffering, to combat ignorance and superstition, in many instances the sufferings of the people stem from ignorance as much as from poverty”⁶⁷ to dispel prejudice and create good will and to demonstrate the love of God.

Prayer Ministry

Olson has noted that it was out of prayerful worship that the leaders understood the calling of the Holy Spirit for missions. Isaiah had said that God’s temple should be a house of prayer for all nations (Isa 56:7).

Team Ministry

“Such teams are not just task groups; they are holistic small groups. By turning your ministry groups into teams, you are also helping the church fulfil the other great need the church has- holistic small groups. In this groups there is accountability, nurture, and support. No likes to feel that they are alone as they work for Jesus. They need to know that other members of their ministry team are supporting them on a regular basis.”⁶⁸

⁶⁶Olson, 428.

⁶⁷Olson, 428, 429.

⁶⁸Burrill, *How to Grow an Adventist Church*, 87.

CHAPTER 4

DESCRIPTION OF THE SETTING

The previous chapter dealt with different aspects of nurture. It laid the foundation of the necessity of an effective nurture as the critical need after evangelism. It outlined diverse aspects that hinder nurture including but not limited to lack of training and prioritizing community in congregations.

This chapter is now focused on developing a strategy for training the laity as a means of empowering them for effective nurture in Lanet SDA Church. This study will use the Log frame matrix and Gantt chart together with the SPSS modules to present the strategy, analysis and activities schedules.

A Gantt chart is a type of bar chart devised by Henry Gantt in the 1910s, that illustrates a project schedule. Gantt charts illustrate the start and finish dates of the terminal elements and summary elements of a project. Terminal elements and summary elements comprise the work breakdown structure of the project. Modern Gantt charts also show the dependency (i.e., precedence network) relationships between activities. Gantt charts can be used to show current schedule status using percent-complete shadings and a vertical "TODAY."¹

This chapter will begin with the description of the ministry context whereby the macro and micro contexts will be brought forth. This section will also explain the type of research and explain why the researcher chose the particular type. Consequently the rationale for selection of the type of research will be highlighted.

¹Wachira, 64.

Likewise it will explore the appropriateness of the study and do a sampling of the participant's contributions. In this section the criteria for the choice of the sample will be explained. The instrumentation that will be used will also be discussed. The chapter will further show data that will be collected and analysis thereof. The data will be described and the findings presented to support the argument. Then the intervention will be sought and the chapter will bring the summary and give the conclusion.

The Macro Context

Political Context

Of Kenya's present-day tribes (the number depends on how you count them; 42 were named in the 1989 census, and one source mentions 45 distinct languages as opposed to dialects), some have been there for over a thousand years, perhaps much more; while others only arrived fifty years ago. Their size varies greatly: some number barely a few hundred people and are on the brink of extinction, whilst others number several million, and constitute the country's economic and political elite. Each have their own languages as well as numerous dialects, and traditionally also had their own religions, customs, rituals and ways of life, many of which have been broken down by the modernization which swept through the twentieth century.

Within this multiplicity of tribes, the main distinctions that have been made by anthropologists, and to a lesser extent by Kenyans themselves, are based on broad ethno-linguistic classifications, which use the existence of common root languages as a basis of defining cultural (and racial) differences and similarities between peoples. The logic is simple in theory, if not in practice: in the same way that Europeans make a distinction between Romance, Celtic, Latin, Nordic and Slavic tongues, and thus

peoples, so it is in Kenya that distinctions are made between Bantu, Cushitic and Nilotic-speaking Peoples.²

Adventism in Kenya

According to Nyaundi, “Christianity first came to Kenya probably at the turn of the fiftieth century. When the Portuguese explorer Vasco Dagma, on his search for a seaway to India, landed at Malindi near Mombasa in 1498. It was in 1844 that Johann Ludwig Krapf, a Germany educated at Basel was sent by the Anglican Church missionary society (CMS) to become the first protestant missionary to open a station at Rabai near Mombasa.”³

Nyaundi says that “the first SDA missionaries came to Kenya in 1906 from Britain because Kenya was then a British colony. By that time, Adventism had already landed in South Africa by American missionaries in 1886, in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) in 1894 and in the neighboring Tanganyika, (Now Tanzania) in 1903 by German missionaries, again because the country was a colony of Germany. The first two missionaries who came to Kenya were a Canadian, Arther Granville Cars Callen and Peter Nyambo an African from Nyasa land now Malawi. They opened the first station near the shores of Lake Victoria at a place called Gendia among the Luo people.”⁴

Nyaundi continues to relate the history of Adventism by saying that “beginning from Gendia, the nativity of the Adventist missionary activity, the work

²Wachira, 2.

³Nehemiah Nyaundi, *Religion and Social Change* (Lund, Sweden: Lund University Press, 1993), 86.

⁴Ibid., 89.

spread into Kisumu. The presence date of the entrance of the first missionary is not known. It is remembered that the year was in 1912, just before World War I.”⁵

Justifying the contribution of the Adventist Church, Nyaundi has indicated that “the presence of Adventism in Kenya is felt through its efforts in the provision of extra religious services such as educational and medical facilities.”⁶ He continues to say, modern Seventh-day Adventism is a branch of the worldwide movement whose operations and organization has a life of connection with world headquarters.”⁷

Kenya is divided into two unions namely East and West Kenya Unions. The East Kenya union conference is divided into four administrative units called conferences and one called a field. Field means it is not yet independent. This region covers the East of Kenya and Somalia. This is part of the East Central Africa Division (ECD) which is the regional arm of the General conference the world headquarters.

Nakuru

Nakuru, is the capital of Nakuru County in Kenya and former capital of the Rift Valley Province. It has 307,990 inhabitants making it the fourth largest urban center in the country and the largest urban center in the Kenyan mid-west with Eldoret in Uasin Gishu following closely behind. Nakuru lies about 1,850 m above sea level

The history of Nakuru can perhaps be traced to the prehistoric period due to the archeological discoveries located about 8 km from the Central Business District at the Hyrax Hill reserve. Nakuru is Kenya's 4th largest urban center with a population of 307,990. However, the modern town, as with many others in Kenya, derives its name from the Maasai speaking people of Kenya. Nakuru was established by the British as

⁵Nehemiah Nyaundi, *Adventism in Kisumu* (Kisumu Bay, Kenya: Africa Herald, 1997), 27.

⁶Nyaundi, *Religion and Social Change*, 34.

⁷*Ibid.*, 33.

part of the White highlands during the colonial era and it has continued growing into a cosmopolitan town. It received township status in 1904 and became a municipality in 1952.

Economy

Agriculture, manufacturing and tourism are the backbone of the economy of Nakuru. The area surrounding the town is known for its vast agricultural potential with numerous small farms and also vast agricultural enterprises. The main crops grown around Nakuru and marketed in the town include coffee, wheat, barley, maize, and beans. These crops are stored in massive silos at the outskirts of the town by the National Cereals and Produce Board and Lesiolo Grain Handlers Limited.

The crops provide the primary raw material for the manufacturing industries found in Nakuru and Nairobi. These industries include flour milling and grain ginneries. Dairy farming is a key economic activity and provides the inputs for various milk processing plants around the town. According to a UN study released in 2011, Nakuru is Africa's fastest growing town and the fourth in the world.

The town is also a center for various retail businesses that provide goods and services to the manufacturing and agricultural sectors. A large public market lies to the west of the town on the main thoroughfare to the capital, Nairobi. Nakuru is also an important educational center. It is the home of Egerton University, a large public university, and Kabarak University, a private university associated with former President Moi's business and religious interests. The Rift Valley Institute of Technology is also based here, as is the Kenya Industrial Training Institute (KITI). The Kenya Institute of Management (KIM) has a college branch in Nakuru. Nakuru is now becoming a center of academics with campuses for the University of Nairobi,

Kenyatta University, Jomo Kenyatta University of Science and Technology, Mount Kenya University, The Kenya Methodist University being set up in the town.

Nakuru is home to Lake Nakuru, one of the Rift Valley soda lakes, which forms part of the Lake Nakuru National Park. The park has large numbers of flamingoes that can be seen foraging in the shallow lake. The park also has many wild animals that can be seen during a safari. Apart from the animals numerous other sites of interest are accessible from Nakuru. These include Menengai Crater, a dormant volcano. Small fumaroles and steam vents can regularly be observed within the forested caldera from above. The second largest surviving volcanic crater in the world, it plunges 483 m down from the rim and the summit is accessible by foot or vehicle 8 km from the main road to Nyahururu. The wood-covered crater ground is a nature relaxing site. Hyrax Hill Prehistoric Site, discovered by the Leakey's in 1926, is considered a major Neolithic and Iron Age site. The adjoining museum features finds from various nearby excavations.

People

Nakuru is populated by people from the whole of Kenya and from many regions of the world. The population is predominantly African and it has a cosmopolitan feel. The town has a sizeable population of Kenyans of Indian origin and a few of the original settler families also remained in the area. People from different regions of the country have added a unique flavor to the town. The people and their politics make Nakuru a vibrant town.

Surrounding towns include Lanet, which lies approximately 10 km from Nakuru, predominantly a residential town and home to an army base. Njoro lies 20 km from Nakuru and is a small agricultural town with a local university aimed at

promoting agricultural development in Kenya, namely Egerton University (est. 1934).⁸

The Micro Context

The Kenya union conference comprises of 4,523 churches with membership of 716,446 in a population of 43,023,000 according to the 2014 SDA yearbook. It was organized in 1921, reorganized in 1960,1987,1995 renamed 2013 when it was subdivided into two union conferences namely eastern Kenya union and western Kenya union conferences.”⁹

Lanet SDA Church History

The church began as a company in 1983 being under Nakuru Central Church. Nakuru Central Church was the first church to be organized in the current Central Rift Valley conference. During this time the members were still worshipping in a school known as Madaraka primary school. The leader of the company was Philip Moraira. Five years later in 1987, it was organized as a full church by Pr Kyalo who had come from the central Kenya conference, the mother conference at that time.

The elder at that time was Isaac Kisui. Then elder Samuel Nyakora took over at the elder who worked with others and reinforced the members who worked together to see the church move with its missionary focus. As the converts increased the members saw a need to have a place to worship. This need was hampered by the lack of resource because the members were not able to purchase a piece of land that time

⁸Wachira, 10, 20.

⁹General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Office of Archives and Statistics, *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook 2015 (SDA Yearbook 2015)* (Silver Spring, MD: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2015), 45, 69.

because of their numbers. Land had begun to be expensive due to the growth of Nakuru town.

As the converts increased a need for a piece of land where they could make a structure for worship developed. During that time, the late elder Micah Mireri Omariba was moved to donate a one acre piece of land for the church. Elder Mireri had a heart for the work of God and a great vision to grow the mission work. The members appreciated and soon in 1994 they moved to the place and erected a temporary structure. This was the beginning of attracting more converts mainly from the Army base which is in the locality. It was a blessing to the army officers who had challenges on finding a place to worship.

Lanet SDA Church Leadership

Some of the elders who have overseen the progress and development of the church include Elder Micah Mireri, Elder Mwaura, Elder Sylvester Maina, and Elder Daniel Marindi, among others. Following the commitment of the elders, more and more people began to join the church. Still under Central Church the following have been the pastors, the late Pr Mugane, Pr David Mbwaro, Pr Wanderi, Pr Kennedy Onchana, Pr Joshua Njuguna. The first pastor who was attached to Lanet was Pr David Mbote. He was followed by Pr Dauglas Gitonga then Pr Peter Aruya and the researcher, Pr Robert Tinega. After the researcher left, Pr Philemon Odhiambo took over until he was relieved by Pr Stanley Ole Enko who is currently the church pastor.

According to elder Daniel Marindi who narrated the history, Lanet Church has done a lot of mission work in reaching the community. The church has opened the following churches, Free Area, Lion Hill which is close to the Lake Nakuru National Park. It derived its name from a hill at the park where lions love spending time. The other churches are Ndimu, Nakuru Umoja and Pipeline. It has one Sabbath school

known as Kiamunyeki. The church began an aggressive outreach program to the nearby secondary schools which has seen many young people come to the Lord.

Research Design

Several methods have been used to present the findings in a research. The researcher chose to make a combination of both the quantitative and qualitative research methods.

The Rationale for Selection

The rationale for selecting this type of design is because the participants involved are of different levels of academic understanding. This could lead to fairness in the entire membership without discrimination. Secondly other crucial information could not be quantified.

Appropriateness of the Study

There are very few members in Lanet SDA Church who are involved in nurture. The main objective is to motivate as many members as possible to identify their God-given talents. Jesus gave a parable of the talents in the book of Matthew 25. In verse 24, the servant that received one had not done anything with it; the Master concluded “Thou wicked and slothful servant.” It is a scenario to avoid when the members can put their talents into use.

Population and Sample of the Participants

This survey was conducted by randomly picking members to participate in the exercise. Care was taken in having a well-represented group. The researcher took care that there were youths, adults, women, widows, widowers and a general

representation was ensured. A total of 35 questionnaires were handed out. Sixteen were returned the researcher began to work with that group,

Criteria for Sampling Procedure and Selection

The responses were from church members who were willing to participate in the survey. The focus was on members who showed interest in participating in personal evangelism and nurture. This was evident by their readiness to participate upon request. This category was selected and were asked to return the questioner and were informed that there was to be a seminar in the afternoon of the same day. This made the researcher develop and begin a mentoring process from this particular group.

Instrumentation

The instruments that were used on one hand was questionnaire (see Appendix A) which had 23 main questions that the church members were supposed to fill and return to the researcher. On the other hand, personal interviews (See Appendix B) were conducted among six church members who were a general representation of the desired goal.

Data Analysis

The analysis of the data was done using the SPSS.¹⁰ The analysis was made according to the percentage of total scores for each questionnaires responded.

¹⁰IBM Corp. Released 2014. IBM SPSS Statistics for Windows, Version 23.0. Armonk, NY: IBM Corp.

Table 1. Composition of Membership

Church members	Number
Males—elderly	76
Females—elderly	118
Youth	115
Children	72
Total	381

Participants

The initial research involved a randomly selected group of members who first answered the questionnaire that were given out. The choice was made not akin to any criteria but care was taken that it gave a fair representation of the church. The randomness was in the case that the ladies were separated and were given freedom to choose from among them and likewise to other groups. They comprised of male, female and youth. A total of 35 copies of the questionnaire were handed out of which sixteen came back filled. These sixteen formed the focus group. From the sixteen ten were selected to be leaders of the small groups. Others were involved other methodologies used like qualitative.

The research was a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. The choice of quantitative was because it provided an avenue to have a sizable number of respondents as opposed to qualitative. For the case of qualitative, it provided in-depth information that shaped the answers outcome of the project. This is because some responses could not be quantified—for example, the general observations after the intervention.

Research Instruments

Questionnaire. The main source of information collected was a questionnaire. The participants were readily willing to participate as it appeared to some to be the first time they were involved in such an exercise. Secondly, when explained why they were participating members felt it was for the good course of ascertaining the real status of their church. The clause of maintaining their anonymity ensured free expression of their mind on the true state of the church.

A questionnaire is attached at the appendix. It was divided into four main categories. The first dealt with the participant's general information, the second inquired of the participant's involvement in the church activities. The third sought to find out if the participant had discovered their spiritual gift and how far it has been put into use in the form of outreach activities including nurture. Lastly the questionnaire dealt with the participants experience in training.

Interviews. Apart from the questionnaire an interview was done to six people to get clear information on the subject. The results could not be achieved through the questionnaire (quantitative) example the history of the church. It required the qualitative method

Data Analysis and Presentation

From the findings the majority of the respondents were male 81.3% (13 out of 16) and the remaining 18.7% were females. Further the results indicated that 68.8% (11 out of 16) were born into the Adventist family, while 31.3% (5 out of 16) were not. Again the results showed that 62.5% (10 out of 16) had no Christian Denomination before becoming Seventh-day Adventists, while 31.3% (5 out of 16) had a Christian denomination and 6.3% (1 out of 16) did not answer the question.

When the respondents were asked about their personal needs the outcome was:

Spiritual needs: 87.5% (14 out of 16) had spiritual needs while 12.5% (2 out of 16) did not have spiritual needs. Physical need: 18.8% (3 out of 16) indicated having physical needs while 81.1% (13 out of 16) had no physical needs. Emotional: the study indicated that 31.3% (5 out of 16) indicated they had emotional needs while 68.8% (11 out of 16) indicated having no emotional needs. On material needs: 18.8% (3 out of 16) indicated that they had material needs whereas 81.3% (13 out of 16) indicated they did not.

Financial needs: out of the total respondents, 25% (4 out of 16) were in need of financial support and the remaining 75% (12 out of 16) were comfortable with their current financial needs. Other needs: 62.5% (10 out of 16) respondents were satisfied that the questionnaire captured their needs in totality whereas 37.5% (6 out of 16) had six more varied needs ranging from: contributing in church's work, departmental believes, church of God and the families, teaching Christians on how to relate with the modern world without becoming part of them, another respondent needed master guide documents from Nairobi and provision of materials to share with others to Christ.

On how to address the needs of the congregation, there were 16 respondents. 37.5% (6 out of 16) did not give any suggestion, 6.3% (1 out of 16) suggested advising them on how to improve their situations, 6.3% (1 out of 16) thought that motivating and encouraging the congregation spiritually would be effective, 6.3% (1 out of 16) said that conducting sermons and crusades for them, 6.3% (1 out of 16) gave a suggestion that they congregate for Jesus 6.3% (1 out of 16) suggested that by having weekdays of fellowship and empowerment would help meet some of the congregation's needs.

Other remaining respondents too had varied wants; 6.3% (1 out of 16) still felt that the congregation should improve the church's growth, 6.3% (1 out of 16) gave the idea of teaching the members on church heritage and also be straight forward in problem solving, 6.3% (1 out of 16) wanted the church to start public and private evangelism classes, 6.3% (1 out of 16) gave the idea of teaching the word without rebuking and 6.3% (1 out of 16) suggested that the church should step down to the level of its members.

On what things best motivate the church members to get into a deeper relationship with Christ members gave the following response: Participating in a Bible study: 81.3% (13 out of 16) respondents indicated that Bible study helps them grow in Christ while 18.8% (3 out of 16) were of contrary opinion. Further some commented on this item by saying. Listening to sermons: 50% (8 out of 16) indicated that listening to sermons helped them improve their relationship with Christ whereas 50% (8 out of 16) showed that listening to sermons had no much impact in their lives.

Being visited and encouraged by church members: 37.5% (6 out of 16) indicated that by visitation and encouragement from church member helped them grow in Christ and 62.5% (10 out of 16) felt that this did not impact them much. Attending prayer meetings: 37.5% (6 out of 16) indicated that by attending prayer meetings they grew a deeper relationship with Christ and 62.5% (10 out of 16) felt that they did not grow in Christ by attending prayer meetings.

Regularly attending in small group meetings: 50% (8 out of 16) were impacted by participating in small group meetings while 50% (8 out of 16) were of a different thought. Being involved in an evangelistic activity: 31.3% (5 out of 16) felt that involvement in an evangelistic activity helped improve their relationship with Christ

and 68.8% (11 out of 16) showed that being involve in an evangelistic activity did not help them grow in Christ.

Other things that motivate them best into a deeper relationship with Christ: 50% (8 out of 16) did not add any other item, 6.3% (1 out of 16) said that being a church member helped them, 6.3% (1 out of 16) felt that giving out improved their relationship with Christ, 6.3% (1 out of 16) felt that having a personal Bible study motivated them to have a deeper relationship with Christ, 6.3% (1 out of 16) indicated that helping the needy resulted into a deeper relationship with Christ, 6.3% (1 out of 16) developed a deeper relationship with Christ after listening to Christian music, 6.3% (1 out of 16) felt that by teaching Jesus ministry on earth deepens their relationship with Christ and 6.3% (1 out of 16) felt that by visiting the needy and reclaiming the back sliding would deepen their relationship with Christ.

In ascertaining how the respondents had contributed to the growth of the congregation, three areas were explored and they were: Spiritual growth; this part attracted 81.3% (13 out of 16) respondents who responded while 18.8% (3 out of 16) did not respond. Of the total number of respondents, 53.8% (7 out of 13) indicated they were doing good in the growth of the congregation while 46.2% (6 out of 13) indicated that they had an average influence to the growth of that congregation.

In the area of witnessing: the total number of respondents was 75% (12 out of 16) while 25% (4 out of 16) did not respond. Of all those who responded, 16.7% (2 out of 12) indicated they had strongly contributed to the growth of the congregation, 33.3% (4 out of 12) showed they had a good contribution to the growth of the congregation through witnessing, 33.3% (4 out of 12) also indicated that they had an average contribution to the growth of the congregation through witnessing and 16.7%

(2 out of 12) indicated that they had poorly contributed to the growth of the congregation through witnessing.

Nurture: 75% (1 out of 16) responded to this question while 25% (4 out of 16) did not respond to this question. 8.3% (1 out of 12) indicated that they had strongly contributed to the growth of the congregation, 58.3% (7 out of 12) indicated that they had done a good job in nurturing the congregation and 16.7% (2 out of 12) for those who had average and poor scores in nurturing the congregation to growth.

When assessing if the respondents know their spiritual gifts, there were a total of 16 respondents, 81.3% (13 out of 16) had discovered their spiritual gifts while 18.8% (3 out of 16) had not yet discovered their gifts. Further still to find out how they knew their gifts, there were varied answers, 31.3% (5 out of 16) knew their gifts on their own, 18.8% (3 out of 16) knew their gifts from reading God's revelation, 12.5% (2 out of 16) knew their gifts through people pointing them out and 6.3% (1 out of 16) knew their gifts through spiritual gift inventory test. Other respondents discovered their gifts through a combination of efforts.

Only 6.3% (1 out of 16) indicated that people pointed it out and from reading God's revelation, 6.3% (1 out of 16) discovered their gifts by individual discovery and from reading God's revelation while 6.3% (1 out of 16) indicated that it was through the spiritual inventory test, people pointing it out and from reading God's revelation. However, 12.5% (2 out of 16) did not respond to this particular question.

The table below indicates the gifts that the respondents have utilized, 31.3% did not respond to this question while 6.3% (1 out of 16) was the response on the different gifts each respondent had utilized. The end result of utilizing the gifts attracted nine answers and thus 43.8% (7 out of 16) did not respond to this question and 6.3% (1 out of 16) was the response regarding the different results that were

recorded which were; church growth, good and encouraging, many souls have been won and some have become musicians, people appreciated, the church congratulated me for the work done, the church was blessed, the crowd fed from his services and through utilizing the spiritual gifts one respondent has grown spiritually.

Table 2. Utilized Spiritual Gifts

Utilized Spiritual Gifts	Frequency	Valid Percent
	5	31.3
Cooking	1	6.3
Interpreting what has been said and teaching the lesson	1	6.3
Music evangelism	1	6.3
Music, identification of spirits, teaching, healing	1	6.3
Praying	1	6.3
Reading the Bible and sharing God's word with others	1	6.3
Singing	1	6.3
Speaking God's message, knowledge and work	1	6.3
Teaching	1	6.3
Teaching and preaching	1	6.3
Teaching, hospitality, preaching, Giving	1	6.3
Total	16	100.0

The table below shows the unutilized spiritual gifts, in which 68.8% (11 out of 16) did not respond to this section of the study while 6.3% (1 out of 16) indicated that they had not utilized their gifts in teaching, evangelism, preaching, nurturing and the gift of preaching. The reason as to why the respondents have not utilized their gifts was answered by 2 people each giving a varied reason while 87.5% (14 out of 16) did not answer this question. 6.3% (1 out of 16) indicated lack of time as a reason they have not been able to utilize their gifts and 6.3% (1 out of 16) indicated that they were not courageous enough to utilize their gifts.

Table 3. Unutilized Spiritual Gifts

Unutilized Spiritual Gifts	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	11	68.8	68.8
Ability to teach	1	6.3	75.0
Evangelism-	1	6.3	81.3
Gift of preaching	1	6.3	87.5
No	1	6.3	93.8
Preaching	1	6.3	100.0
Total	16	100.0	

From the study, the researcher wanted to ascertain if the respondents have ever been to a seminar, workshop or field training program, 56.3% (9 out of 16) indicated that they have been to at least a training while 37.5% (6 out of 16) indicate that they have never been to a training and 6.3% (1 out of 16) did not respond to this question. Respondents listed the programs they have attended, and some did not bother to 6.3% (1 out of 16) indicated that they attended ambassadors congress in 2014, camporees and VBS, counseling, health and chaplaincy, leadership, youth ministry seminars, stewardship, survival skills, camp outs and camporees, stewardship and evangelism, the youth congress and training light bearers.

Table 4. Training Programs

Programs Attended	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	8	50.0	50.0
Ambassadors' congress in 2014	1	6.3	56.3
Camporees and VBS	1	6.3	62.5
Counseling, Health and Chaplaincy	1	6.3	68.8
Leadership	1	6.3	75.0
Leadership, Youth ministry seminars, stewardship, survival skills, camp outs and camporees	1	6.3	81.3
Stewardship and evangelism	1	6.3	87.5
The youth congress	1	6.3	93.8
Training light bearers	1	6.3	100.0
Total	16	100.0	

When the respondents were asked their involvement in soul winning outreach activities, 37.5% (6 out of 16) indicated that they had been involved while 56.3% (9 out of 16) indicated they had not been involved in any soul winning outreach activity and 6.3% (1 out of 16) did not respond to this question. Door to door: 6.3% (1 out of 16) indicated that they were involved during an evangelistic campaign, 6.3% (1 out of 16) participated during crusades, inviting the surrounding people, 6.3% (1 out of 16) got involved through saying a prayer and delivering a sermonette, 6.3% (1 out of 16) participated through reading scripture and opening prayer, 6.3% (1 out of 16) just responded by saying yes and the rest 68.8% (11 out of 16) did not give consideration to this question.

Literature evangelism: 6.3% (1 out of 16) responded to this question and the respondent participated by selling spiritual books and sharing his/her books while 93.7% (15 out of 16) did not respond to this question. Voice of Prophecy Bible School: 6.3% (1 out of 16) answered this question and this was by conducting and

giving out Bible study at crusade, neighbors and working mate whereas 93.7% (15 out of 16) did not respond to this question.

Vacation Bible school: 6.3% (1 out of 16) answered this question and this was through participating, organizing and teaching mate whereas 93.7% (15 out of 16) did not respond to this question. Public evangelism: 6.3% (1 out of 16) participated through being one of the preachers, 6.3% (1 out of 16) got involved through giving literature and encouraging them to continue attending, 6.3% (1 out of 16) also welcomed people and 81.3% (13 out of 16) did not an answer to this question. Global mission outreach in an un-entered area: 6.3% (1 out of 16) showed that they participated through prayer for those people and contributing and giving tithes and offerings.

At some point of the questionnaire the respondents were required to answer if they had ever attended a training by the church, the tabulated results were 75% (12 out of 16) indicated that they had attended a training by the church, 12.5% (2 out of 16) pointed out that they had not attended any church training and 12.5% (2 out of 16) did not respond to this question.

The respondents were required to indicate how they paid for their training, 50% (8 out of 16) had paid for the expenses of their training, 25% (4 out of 16) had their expenses paid by the local church, 6.3% (1 out of 16) said the conference or union paid for their expenses, 6.3% (1 out of 16) indicated that they got a sponsor to pay for their needs for that training and 12.5% (2 out of 16) did not respond to this question.

Duration of the training: 43.8% (7 out of 16) indicated that their training lasted for one week, 25% (4 out of 16) indicated that the training they had lasted for two days, 12.5% (2 out of 16) responded by saying that their training lasted for a day,

6.3% (1 out of 16) indicated that the training lasted for half a day and 12.5% (2 out of 16) did not respond to this question.

When the respondents were asked if materials were provided during the training, 75% (12 out of 16) indicated that indeed materials were provided while 12.5% (2 out of 16) indicated that materials were not provided and 12.5% (2 out of 16) did not respond to this question.

After the training, 31.3% (5 out of 16) indicated that they went for a practicum whereas 43.8% (7 out of 16) indicated that they did not go for a practicum and 12.5% (2 out of 16) did not respond to this question.

Ascertaining which areas were handled, 18.8% (3 out of 18) indicated that education was handled, 12.5% (2 out of 16) were trained on stewardship and 6.3% (1 out of 16) were taught how to evangelize. 12.5% (2 out of 16) indicated that more than two areas were handled which were evangelism, stewardship and education, 6.3% (1 out of 16) indicated that exactly two areas were handled and these were; evangelism and family life and stewardship and family life, 6.3% (1 out of 16) indicated that four areas were handled which are evangelism, stewardship, education and family life and 31.3% (5 out of 16) did not respond to this question.

The researcher aspired to know which areas were handled during the training. There was a total number of 16 questionnaires and of which 12.5% (2 out of 16) indicated that leadership was handled, 6.3% (1 out of 16) indicated that family life was handled, the same percentage indicated that family life and nurture and retention were handled while 68.8% (11 out of 16) did not respond to this question.

When respondents were asked to state the weaknesses they spotted from the trainings they had attended, 6.3% (1 out of 16) felt that the training did not have a weakness while 12.5% (2 out of 16) felt that the training was too long. 37.5% (6 out

of 16) felt the training was too short, 12.5% (2 out of 16) indicated that materials were not provided, 6.3% (1 out of 16) felt that the training was not appropriate to the locals and 25% (4 out of 16) did not respond to this question.

All the respondents 100% (16 out of 16) showed willingness to attend a training seminar so as to become a strong soul winner and to nurture.

There were more males at 33.3% (5 out of 15) who had not attended an evangelism seminar compared to 6.7% (1 out of 15) females who had not attended. 46.7% (7 out of 15) male had attended an evangelism seminar compared to 13.3% (2 out of 15) had attended a seminar. Therefore cross tabulating attracted 93.7% (15 out of 16) responses while 6.3% (1 out of 16) did not respond to this question.

Table 5. Involvement through Training Index

Case Processing Summary	Cases					
	Included		Excluded		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Involvement index * Were you born into Seventh-day Adventist family?	12	75.0%	4	25.0%	16	100.0%
Involvement index * Did you belong to a Christian denomination before becoming a Seventh-day Adventist?	12	75.0%	4	25.0%	16	100.0%
Involvement index * Have you ever attended an evangelism seminar, workshop or field training programme?	11	68.8%	5	31.2%	16	100.0%
Involvement index * Have you ever been involved in soul winning outreach activities?	12	75.0%	4	25.0%	16	100.0%
Involvement index * Have you ever attended a training by the church?	12	75.0%	4	25.0%	16	100.0%
Involvement index * Did you go out for practicum after the seminar?	11	68.8%	5	31.2%	16	100.0%

For those who were born into Seventh-day Adventist family the involvement index in nurturing was 75% (12 out of 16) and those excluded were 25% (4 out of 16). Those who belonged to a Christian denomination before becoming a Seventh-day Adventist, their involvement index was 75% (12 out of 16) and those excluded were 25% (4 out of 16). The involvement index of those who have attended a seminar, workshop or field training stood at 68.8% (11 out of 16) and those excluded were 31.2% (5 out of 16). Involvement index for soul winning outreach activities was 75% (12 out of 16) while those excluded were 25% (4 out of 16).

Involvement index for those who have ever attended a training by the church was 75% (12 out of 16) while those excluded were 25% (4 out of 16). The involvement index of those who have attended a seminar, workshop or field training and went for a practicum was 68.8% (11 out of 16) and those excluded were 31.2% (5 out of 16).

Development of the Program

After a close scrutiny of the above analysis, it was imperative to tailor programs that could address some of the weak arrears that were identified and that cause inadequate nurture. Five main focus areas were selected that would address the core issues raised.

The research made use of the logical Framework Matrix (LFM) to present its strategy and activity schedule. The LFM is described by Onongha as

A tool for planning and managing development project that helps summaries in standard format what the research is going to achieve. it also states what activities will be carried to achieve its outputs and purpose, the resources required, the potential problems which could affect the successes of investigation, and how the proses and ultimate success of the mission will be measured and verified.¹¹

¹¹Kelvin Onongha, Lecture Handouts for MSSN 741 Mission Strategy Development, Adventist University of Africa, 2015, 2.

The project aimed at empowering the laity in order to make them more active especially in nurture. There are so many topics that can be handled to address the inactivity of members, the researcher however chose to empower the believers through seminars in five main areas and mentoring as part of the small group activity.

The purpose of this dissertation was to develop, implement and evaluate a training program that will empower lay members of Lanet SDA Church using Biblical concepts, skills and methods. There has been an attack from members in Lanet Church who have been involved in extreme doctrines and have made a negative impact on the congregation. The church had been divided into sections of those who were supporting their teachings and those who did not. The researcher treated this as resulting from a lack of adequate nurture. One member had been disfellowshipped from membership due to his extreme doctrines.

Table 6. Logframe Matrix

Objectives	Measurable Indicators	Means of Verification	Important Assumptions
<p>Goal</p> <p>Lanet SDA Church becomes a vibrant healthy church as a model in the district</p>	<p>Other Churches in Lanet district and CRVC adopt the TMI model and number of involvement increased by 2.7% by June 2016</p>	<p>Lanet SDA Church membership increases substantially</p> <p>EKUC Report CRVC 2nd of 5 in Union</p>	<p>The church Administration in full support of the programs</p>
<p>Purpose</p> <p>Number of members involved in nurture increases</p>	<p>By the 4th quarter 2015 50% of members trained in involvement, 20% committed in the same.</p>	<p>Training is done and members are actively involved.</p>	<p>Members indicate high willingness to participate.</p>
<p>Out put</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Seminar on the mission of the church 2. Seminar on priesthood of all believers 3. Assessment and training in spiritual gifts 4. Seminars on nurture 5. Seminar on holistic small groups 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Five seminars conducted by 4th quarter 2015 2. Members assigned to ministries in harmony with gifts. 3. small groups leaders trained 4. nurturing begins by 4th quarter 5. 30% of members participating in the program 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Seminar materials available. 2. Seminar evaluation report 3. Interviews among members 4. Small group resource file 5. Small group attendance evidenced. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Members willing to participate 2. Members excited about their spiritual gifts 3. Selected members accept to be trained 4. Members accept to be involved
<p>Activities</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Seminars conducted 2. Assessment and training on spiritual gifts 3. Organize Lanet Church into small groups 4. Final evaluation 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teaching materials 2. Spiritual gift assessment tool 3. Working small groups 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CRVC's plan are in line with this project 2. church leadership at Lanet SDA Church willing and supportive of the activities 	

Outputs

The study depended on five main training activities to achieve the desired goal of an involved membership. By using small groups effectiveness was achieved because members were freer with each other and ultimately strengthening the fellowship.

Member's Spiritual Gifts

The other important tool that made people develop confidence in themselves was their discovery of spiritual gifts. Many members got very motivated and want to use their gifts. Before gift inventory was done, even if they knew they had this gifts they were not sure about them. For those who had never taken the spiritual gift inventory it was one of the most exciting moments.

Small Group Leaders Trained and Engaged

In chapter two the study had discussed the subject of the church being a community. Community in a large group is hard to achieve. The small group leaders were able to care for each other and familiarize themselves with the needs of their fellow believers.

Monitoring and Evaluation

It was necessary to use the log frame that provided for an evaluation on the ongoing study. There were challenges in ensuring that all the groups were doing the right thing. The groups too were put together according to their Geographical location. This in the end did not ensure they were essentially friends, but it was the superior choice following the best timing chosen for each group for easy and convenience of meetings. Due to security reason and busy schedules in their

individual work, it was essential to group them geographically so that they could meet during late hours. Monitoring helps to keep the project in track.

The Seminars

It was imperative to provide training through seminars. These seminars were meant to help the believers grasp the concept of total member involvement in church activities. Further the focus was to make the members appreciate their spiritual gifts. In order for any transformation to take place there must be constant reminder of the mission of the church.

There was a total of five seminars conducted. This highlighted the core mission of the church as espoused in the mission statement. The second was done pointing the members to their call as a priesthood of believers. The third seminar touched on spiritual gifts. This was necessary as it was to place them in their clusters. Fourthly the seminar dealt with the issue of nurture as a whole. This particular seminar of nurture included development projects to create resources within the church to take care of the needs in the congregation. Lastly the seminar was on small groups.

The materials that were of much help was the *Personal Ministry Handbook*. The other valuable materials were a compilation of the booklet by the SDA Church known as *International institute of Christian Ministries*.

Summary

In this section, the project sought to find out the situation of the church by developing a questionnaire. This study undertook a study to address the issue of nurture as the church is experiencing growth. The number of members backsliding has also been increasing. Those who leave the church complain of lack of care and

concern form the fellow members. This called for the study to determine the level of participation of the believers in Lanet SDA Church.

From the survey ministry was organized based on spiritual gift strength. The members were very glad to learn that they do best when they are put in the corresponding cluster of their best performance. The previous chapter also established that the concern for the physical needs of the new believer are normally given little thought as compared to spiritual needs.

Because of this the new believers find no warmth and love from their new believers as they were already attached to their former faiths. This makes them draw back. This research has deduced that training is necessary for the members to be active in the life of the church.

CHAPTER 5

NARATIVE OF INITIATIVE IMPLEMENTATION

The purpose of this study was to determine the cause of low involvement of members of Lanet SDA Church in church activities in particular nurture. It was also within the scope of this study to develop a working strategy to increase involvement that could ensure a total health life of the church that is spiritually and numerically growing. The previous chapter described the ministry context where the research was done and different plans and activities that were carried out to address the problem of inadequate nurture. Translating skillful effective shepherding to large congregations is a major challenge an activity that seem to overwork the pastor. The undertaking of this chapter is to describe the implementation. This chapter will further narrate how the programs and activities were effected.

In the previous chapter a log frame was used to highlight the sequence of activities. On the other hand the SPSS tool was used in presenting the outcomes of the survey. Consequently the Gantt chart in this chapter was established to display the series of activities. The Gantt chart is a tool that provides a task against its time frame. On the left of the chart is a list of the activities and along the top is suitable time scale. Each activity is represented by a bar reflects the start date, duration and ending dates for the activity.¹ These programs were intended to equip the members with skills to make them effective in nurture. Further the strategy depended chiefly on two broad

¹Onongha, 8.

activities which were: five training seminars, and organizing the church into nurture groups. The seminars conducted used Biblical concepts in focus arrears.

The arrears considered were: firstly mission of the church, objectives and duty of members, secondly the training focused on biblical concepts of priesthood of all believers, thirdly an assessment of spiritual gifts and empowerment through gift based ministry was done. Fourthly the role of the church to fellow members in community was emphasized lastly an investigation was done on successful small groups. Through the seminars the members were equipped with knowledge of the New Testament view of the church. The spiritual gifts inventory became the eye opener to the believers who had not discovered their potentiality.

Below is a Gantt chart that has outlined the process followed in order to achieve the goal. It is explained in detail in the forgoing discussion. The activities and steps are explained to certify the fulfillment of the activities translating them into tangible and realistic milestones.

Table 7. Application of the Gantt Chart

Activities	Sep 2015	Oct 2015	Nov 2015	Dec 2015	Jan 2016	Feb 2016	Mar 2016	April 2016	May 2016
Sensitizing The Church	█								
Training on Priesthood Of All Believers		█							
Carry Out Seminars		█							
Spiritual Gifts Inventory			█						
Engaging In Training And Equipping Small Group Leaders			█						
Organizing Members To Nurture Groups And Operations				█					
Monitoring Of Project						█			
Evaluation								█	
Milestones									
1.Sensitization done by end of month 1	Steps taken Step 1: main activities from Log frame identified Step 2: Broken into manageable tasks								
2.training modules devised by 2nd month	Step 3: Estimate start-up, duration & completion of tasks Step 4: milestones were defined Step 5: scheduling of main activities Step 6: Allocate tasks among team								
3.seminars on by month 3	Step 7: Define expertise required(small group team leaders) Step 8: monitoring and evaluation								
4.beginning of identifying small group by end month 4									
5.procedures finalized by end month 4									

Gantt Chart Interpretation

The chart above served as a guide in the implementation of the intervention. The chart presented a smooth sequence of activities carried out in order to achieve the desired goal. As observed, the first activity was to sensitize the church members. This was crucial because people will at most times be inquisitive of any new idea that disturbs the usual way of doing things. To secure full support that was to ensure the project succeeds the sensitization was done. It was done by a Sabbath afternoon presentation on the challenges facing the worldwide church and ultimately contextualizing it to Lanet SDA Church. This was done in the first month of the implementation.

The first training undertaken was on the mission of the church. Others were on priesthood of all believers. This was necessary because when the members realize their role as intercessors on behalf of fellow believers they are motivated to nurture others. This motivation ensured becoming part of the ultimate goal. In any endeavor, if people are made part of the goal it is a healthy participation that does not need coercion or dragging.

Several other seminars were conducted in October and November. The second was on spiritual gifts. A gift based ministry ensures maximum utilization of human resource. The third and important was on small groups. This dynamism ensured an adaptation of the model in the New Testament church whose success cannot be questioned. This was in answer to the prayer of Jesus to the Father (See John 14:16). After His ascension indeed the spirit came down and empowered the united church in (Acts 2:22- 36). In the small groups also leadership lessons were presented.

In the Gantt chart also were the milestones that were identified as guiding parameters. It indicates how the first task was to sensitize the members by the first

month. Then the training modules were identified. The module chosen was seminars. This seemed to be the best module because field trips and other means could prove expensive. Mentoring was also another effective nurture module that was identified. Then by the fourth month the small groups were identified. The chart also points to the finalization of the procedures by the end of the fifth month.

Consequently in the chart, the steps taken are noted. In the steps is the identification of the log frame activities sited. Then the breaking of the tasks into manageable tasks. The estimation of the startup date and possible completion is highlighted. The tasks of nurture are allocated to the team members who in this case are the small group leaders. The monitoring as an important activity is noted in the list of steps.

Training and Seminars

In order to bring about the desired outcome, intensive training were organized to address arrears that could encourage the members to be more active in church activities particularly nurture. After securing full support from Lanet Church leadership, the next task was to develop programs that were geared at mobilizing believers.

The Mission of the Church

The first seminar presented dealt with the mission of the church. It was necessary to begin with this lesson. There is a deep connection between a successful program and a clear vision and mission statement. Could it be the reason why many organizations have the mission statement visible to anyone who gets in contact with them? The mission statement has been the driving force for unity of members in any

given organization. Jesus began His mission by pointing to a mission (Isa 61:1). Jesus kept His mission alive and never allowed any distraction.

The east Kenya Union conference came up with a document that contained the mission of the church. In line with the General Conference quinquennial theme of “Mission Priority Reach the Word” were the three point mission statement of which the first read; “To call all people to become disciples of Jesus Christ.” With this mission comes also the quinquennial goals; Total member involvement (TMI), Christ and His righteousness and Faithfulness to Christ and His word. Then among the five strategic priorities was this, “Spiritual nurture” which encouraged the researcher to embark on a journey to nurture the Lanet Church members.

In doing this study brochures prepared by the union were of much support to the project because they summarized the entire mission of the church. The members are in possession of these well researched and written materials. They are easy to carry and can be placed in between the pages of the Bible to be a constant reminder. Apart from the materials, sermons in power point form were presented informing and reminding members of the life of missionaries who gave their lives to make Africa have the light of the Gospel. Appeals were made using examples of mission pioneers Like David Livingston and other missionaries who risked their lives to bring the Gospel to Africa. Their unsurmountable challenges were shared in sermon form. The dangers they met left an amazing impression.

This made a great impact as the members felt their call to nurture is insignificant compared to the risks the missionaries faced. The researcher has found this to be effective in appealing to the emotion before you engage rationally with the members. The connection between the message and response could be easily recognized.

Seminar on Priesthood of all Believers

Lanet Church has experienced numerical growth in the last two years, new members have been brought in due to intensive outreach programs. A quick check shows that a sizable number of converts are from other faiths. Incidentally, people do not easily give up their childhood doctrines that ultimately may be foreign to the Adventist faith. This lesson was vital in bringing the new members into a realization that before God, believers are all priests (1 Pet 2:9). Having established from chapter two of this study that the term laity is not biblical but ecclesiastical and actually a later occurrence in the church, it prepared this study to give a message that informed members that there is no dichotomy between clergy and laity in the new testament.

If then a believer will come to the realization that the call of priests was intercession, automatically intercession for fellow human beings and the backslidden becomes clear hence effective nurture. The account in the book of Deuteronomy brings the aspect of being chosen (Deut 7:6). This lesson was significant and added value to the seminars.

Jesus brought a new mission of sending and all who are disciples to witness for Him. He reorganized the old Jewish system by pointing to the world that needed harvest with few laborers. It seems the trend may remain the same as the church is experiencing numerical growth.

The above situation sets an indisputable imperative for the members to first understand their calling. In this first, seminar a total of twenty people attended which was a respectable percentage to begin with. The seminar began at nine and ended at noon giving a total of three contact hours with a break in between of ten minutes. As part of this seminar the participants were encouraged to explore for themselves the role of the priests in the Old Testament. A material on the sanctuary the researcher

had compiled was used. It was given to one of the participants who appeared to be able to teach others. This participant in reoccurrence organized training and met the other participants early in the morning using this material. Other members voluntarily attended who were not necessarily part of the select team.

The material seemed to arouse much interest in the subject. According to this elder five mornings were spent considering this material however this kind of arrangement is not part of the curriculum the researcher had planned to execute.

Spiritual Gifts Seminar

One of the most attention-grabbing part of this seminars was the spiritual gift. Foremost, it is almost impossible to speak about the early church without attesting the source of the power for the activities. In the foregoing discussion, ultimately it is the work of the Holy Spirit. Jesus promised the power of the Holy Spirit and described His coming as a source of comfort, encouragement, guidance and truth among other attributes (John 14:15). The apostle Peter who had been frightened before the Holy Spirit experience became brave after receiving power from the Holy Ghost. He was now more than ready to proclaim the risen savior because of the Holy Spirit. (See Acts 2:14)

Likewise the same spirit who distributes gifts to members according to Paul in Rom 12:3; Eph 4:11) actually Pentecost was the initiation of a new ministry giving the members gifts of courage and assurance to begin a spirit filled church. The purpose of this study was to have a gift filled vibrant church.

Therefore the researcher sought to implement the dynamic principle that propelled the church in the New Testament to fulfill the great commission. It was easier to help the believers to grasp other lessons from the experience of the Holy Spirit after ascertaining their spiritual gift. It becomes easier because the individual

believer has a rationale for building self-confidence. The Holy Spirit was the motivation for nurture.

Foremost a presentation was made on the role of the Holy Spirit before creation and during creation. Then the members were lead to appreciate the leading of the Holy Spirit in Jesus's life. Dobson has commented that "Jesus followed the leading of the spirit, relied on His power and trusted in the promises of God"²In the book of Acts the disciples were together in unity praying for the power of the Holy Spirit. The members were prepared by being encouraged to pray for the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus asked the Father and He encourages us to ask (John 14:15.16). This ecclesiological phenomena of the New Testament was discovered to be the foundation of all ministries because Paul say he is the one who distributes the gifts (1 Cor 12: 6).

Communion in the congregation was possible because of the Holy Spirit. The members who had been separated by small problems were united when the church committed to spend time in praying for the power of the Holy Spirit. The theological foundations of the Holy Spirit were taught. God gave this spiritual gift for the purpose of building the church. Not that one may feel superior to the other. A tendency that may have been picked from the clergy purporting those who are in positions of Administration have a better spiritual gift than others who are maybe in care or teaching was lectured. The discussion on spiritual gifts led the members to appreciate their God given gift even though it might look insignificant before others.

The story Jesus gave of the talents was presented in a simple manner. The foundation was built from the edifice of the sanctuary. The man was given one talent and made a beautiful golden lampstand. It was contrasted with the man who was

²Jonathan Dodson, *Gospel Centered Discipleship* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 95.

given one piece (Exod 25:31). This was contrasted with the man who was given one talent and hid it (Matt 25:14).

Finally guidance was given on how to use spiritual gifts for personal and church use. For instance if one was good in teaching the same was encouraged to use that spiritual gift to develop a career or use it to edify the church. This helped the church to develop a gift based ministry. A gift based ministry is a blessing to the church and an asset to the minister. The researcher discovered that his application of the spiritual gifts before was theoretical and not practical.

The members had been used to the pastors and elder visiting them. It was a new idea for the members to begin visiting each other. The pastor initially because of the many churches could visit possibly once a year. The leaders were given materials available for reference. After the seminar a feedback was obtained and the responses were very impressive. There seemed to be no hindrance in the inventory and the material because all were able to read. The seminar utilized three contact hours

Community a Key to Nurture

The purpose of this study was to bring an awareness of the financial aspect which is a needed aspect in ministry. This area seems neglected in Lanet Church for quite a long time. When Jesus had spent time with the multitudes out in the field he asked the disciples to give them food to eat. (See Mark 6:36, 37) the disciples thinking was, send them to go and buy themselves food, but Jesus told the disciples to give them food. Jesus often ministered to the needs of the poor. His attitude towards the poor was in sharp contrast to the attitude the Pharisee had who had a cold religious system that did not attract the outsiders. Chris's example is the hallmark of a holistic ministry.

The book of Acts presents a scenario where the needs of all the members were met. The position taken by the apostles in appointing a seven member team to oversee the needs of the new community is the reason for the numerical growth. A member is most likely to stay in the church where the needs are met.

As discussed in chapter three a look at holistic evangelism and nurture is critical. Several scenarios were highlighted in this lesson that saw the members rethink their mission approach. Poverty has deeply affected effective nurture as many families are either afraid to come and share their challenges for fear of being thought lazy or as beggars. Many believers take seriously what other people speak about them. This kind of gossips have strangled community a sure recipe for killing effective nurture.

This particular study was done encouraging members to be self-reliant. This was done through awakening in the area of being good stewards. The Lord taught that it is blessed to be faithful. Everybody loves to be visited. It appeared that even those who seem to have for their daily needs, were happy to be helped. Help always comes in the form of sickness in the family or death. The researcher has observed that members become overstretched when there are needy members in the congregation who require huge amounts of money to care for tragedies. A case in point was when two members were diagnosed with brain tumors. This stretched the members owing to huge medical bills. This kind of circumstance will always occur.

A study was done using one of the principle material in the training seminars the *Personal Ministry Handbook*. On page 27 of this book is the topic of the laws of the mind. In this Ellen G. White has said that “in order to lead souls to Jesus, there

must be a knowledge of the human nature”³ in this material is the exposition of the law of the human compassion. Ellen White has also said that “the work of Adventist is to first meet the temporal needs and then find an open avenue to the heart where they can plant good seed of virtue and religion.”⁴ There seems to be a reluctance to practice this biblical principle that was most effective in the early church.

This study made use of the Maslow’s hierarchy of needs as a study tool. The researcher discovered that even though this material has been available he has not used it before and an inquiry into members showed that they have never had any training from that material. The believers learnt that it is necessary to give attention to the physical needs which appear to be at the bottom of the pyramid. It seems that the church has been engrossed in only the spiritual needs of the members. This lesson was presented together with other materials on personal finance.

The next step was to practically begin an income generating project for the church that could serve as a means of supporting the church financially. This was done by establishing a medical clinic. This is why the researcher sought to begin a medical clinic that could help minor cases and yet bring income to relieve the needs that rise from the membership. The medical clinic serves the community on top of giving to the church income on top of the normal offering that is merger compared to the needs. When needy cases arise from the membership and the community there is possibility of help now.

³General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, *Personal Ministry Handbook* (Silver Spring, MD: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1992), 27.

⁴Ibid.

Seminar on Small Groups

The concept of small groups is not new in the SDA Church, this is because the Sabbath school action units are essentially small groups. They have been in existence for some time and have contributed greatly to spiritual growth and ultimately nurture. The church also has had small groups before and it was not the first time the researcher was implementing the idea. What was new was the approach that was employed to achieve a particular goal. There were a total of ten small groups identified for this particular study.

In his discussion of the subject of small groups, W. Kurt Johnson has noted that in spite of all the methods the church may employ to keep people coming to the church, they will not outdo their sense of feeling that they belong.⁵ Considering the number of disciples Jesus chose it seems to have been purposeful in order to give them a sense of Belonging. During the baptism of Jesus God the father confirmed to those who were there that Jesus was His own son. Although Jesus did not necessarily need to be assured for He knew He was the son of God but it served to give Him as sense of identity and belonging.

This community is hard to achieve given that there are so many things that can make people to lose this sense of unity and belonging. Some of the things that the researcher observed that have kept believers apart are: lack of trust, class struggle, family challenges, gossip and backbiting, prejudice, tribal inclinations, financial struggles, public recognition, status, ideological perceptions, spiritual pride, individual commitments among others.

The researcher sought to establish ten small groups in spite of understanding the challenges that are at stake. The leaders were first trained and given a group to

⁵Johnson, 18, 19.

lead. The material that was used chiefly was the book by W. Kurt Johnson, *Successful Small Groups*. This book provided the basic for the seminar which was given. Since the majority of the group leaders are members of the choir their meeting was easier over the week.

These groups were comprised of members who came from a particular geographical location. This criteria was the best because freedom was given to each group to choose their best timing to meet. Because some people come from the same locality and meeting in church may be far. The choice of Geography was the best. The groups were alternating houses where they could meet. It was agreed that there are no meals served during the meetings. This was so because not all members have the same financial capability to serve meals. In order to shield others who may be embarrassed it was agreed to have no meals. Many people are more willing to participate in a small group as compared to contributing their ideas in the church, these groups helped the members to voice out their fears, aspirations, concerns, suggestions that they could have not otherwise done in any setting.

The lessons the leaders received included formulating the small group agenda, step by step understanding of the group dynamics, how to secure commitments, leadership skills, activities that may strengthen the group among other lessons. The other crucial area that was dealt with was conflict resolution. Then the group looked at the reasons why small group do not succeed. In churches and some are struggling. One of which is struggling is the Sabbath school action units.

How to Give Bible Studies

It was necessary to include this subtopic because the team members were doing bible study in addition to other activities in their small groups. There are several methods of studying the bible. Among them are the relational, the topical and

devotional. A consideration was given on the subject and the pivotal aspects were discussed in brief. This has been the key to a strong group. The need for prayer and personal preparation for the one to give bible studies was stressed.

It was pointed out that the New Testament believers met together for bible study. In the discussion of the subjects individuals were given opportunity to present few minutes of a selected topic to ascertain their competence and ability to give simple bible studies. By the time the lesson was over a good number of people showed much improvement in the way they handled the bible. This was coupled with the provision of simple power point materials because the church has a projector the some members were able to enjoy simple presentations. It was clear that initiating a discussion was a way of doing bible study.

One does not need to have all answers to all the questions from a text but the sharing experience brings about a sense of growth. The inductive Bible study where the leader only facilitates became easy model that was loved by many participants. The model of the new testament of the apostle doing house to house visitation and teaching the bible served to encourage the members (Acts 5:42)

Evangelism

Any programs in the church without the aspect of evangelism will miss the mark. The lessons were prepared that outlined several reasons why the members are not involved in outreach. The material used pointed out some of the reasons why members are not fully involved in church activities. Some of the reasons that were presented were from the book *Personal Ministry Handbook*. These include and were not limited to: unrecognized potential, never been asked, never been trained, fear, never discovered the spiritual gifts, no motivation, not interest and others.

There is power in testimony. Many members have never made personal efforts to win others to the Lord. This was an opportunity for other to use their talents in reaching out the community, since sharing and community were taught the members were more willing to use their spiritual gifts.

The members were motivated to begin a branch Sabbath school. This was an initiative of the members after attending the seminars. From the group those who had discovered their gifts used them to do visitation, giving bible studies and other outreach activities. It was encouraging to see members being used by the Holy Spirit.

Nurture through Friendship

Oikos. *Oikos* evangelism (web evangelism). Statistics reveal that most new converts are brought to Christ by friends and relatives. The Greek word of *Oikos* is translated family, kindred, Household (including servants), or own. Many in the New Testament who were brought to Christ were the *oikos* of a new convert. Hence, *oikos* evangelism is when a new convert reaches friends and relatives for Christ. The Greek word *oikos* is associated with the outreach of New Testament personalities after they were saved: Lydia, Philippian jailer, Matthew the tax collector, Zacchaeus and Cornelius. Hence, the first evangelistic priority of a person after being saved is reaching relatives and friends.”⁶

George G. Cladis has argued that Christians widely assume that faith usually spread impersonally and instantly. The first assumption is reflected in the method that many Christians employ from pamphlet distribution to radio and television broadcasting to witnessing forms that primary verbalize a rehearsed formula.”⁷ He

⁶Wagner, 53, 54.

⁷George Cladis, *Leading the Team Based Church: How Pastors and Church Staffs can Grow Together into a Powerful Fellowship Leaders* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass, 199), 69.

later picks a conclusion of a survey done that indicates that persons major bring into faith through personal contact. The response indicated that of that of 47% reported as a person being their bridge. 62% reported that that person was a friend or family member.”⁸

Robert E. Logan has believes that, “most churches today are centralized rather than decentralize. They are run by a centralized bureaucracy or clergy which operates the programs. The entire origination is depended against the flow of ministry through each organizational unity. Though each may be able to focus energy well (one church may sport great Bibles preaching, another be known for its warm and caring fellowship, another be a great missionary church) it often will have a low organization endurance from chaos or change.”⁹

He further notes that, “the church is depended on narrow organization functions for survival.He gives the definition of a small group by Paul Yongicho who says “the smallest church in the world has the biggest ... because every member is part of a home. A cell group consisting of 15 families or fewer.”¹⁰

Friendship Nurture

The concept of friendship has been identified as the number one element in winning and retaining members. The church administration has come up with nurture, retention and reclamation committee in the church. This programs is laudable and makes members aware of the need to prevent the loss of members. One issue that has come forth from this laudable programs is that it becomes inadequate because the

⁸Cladis, 73.

⁹Robert E. Logan, *Beyond Church Growth* (Old Tappan, NJ: F. H. Revell, 1989) 115.

¹⁰Ibid., 115.

moment one pairs a member with someone who is not his/ her friend, it takes time to develop friendship and maybe not at all.

This concept of friendship that is also assumed to open lasting doors to effective nurture was implemented. An appraisal first highlighted the number of souls in the church population statistically who were won through friendship. It was amazing that many had come to the church through a friend as opposed to other methods the church employs like Television, Radio, literature and others. This opened the eye to members who began to appreciate friendship. This is referred to as *Oikos*.

Jesus's example of making friends was highlighted. The case of His purposeful journey through the village of Samaria was emphasized. It was specifically appealing because the church finds itself entangled in ethnic and social strata contests. This study showed that Jesus was friendly to all the people (John 4). The people we be friend become potential recruits in the cell groups and ultimately members.

It may be pointed out that people are more likely to listen to someone they trust. This trust is developed in family cycles and in work place and other social gatherings. The members were encouraged to enhance the circle of friendship with the workmates and even members.

Leadership

As noted earlier Lanet Church has a large number of army officers in its membership. This has been assumed to be the cause of yearly leadership squabbles among other reasons. This study sought to address the weakness through a leadership seminar that pointed to the servant leadership of Jesus. Leadership moreover determines the growth or decline of any institution. The lessons presented helped the members to be willing to take up roles which they were afraid of before. This lessons

also made the end of the year 2015 nominating committee have a relaxed time selecting leaders. This was observable when the people desired to be servant leaders.

Servant leadership has been highlighted as one of the most successful leadership style for the church. This contrast the leadership style by the world. The case of the sons of Zebedee was presented as an eye opener (see Mark 10:35). In order to experience true servant leadership the way Jesus dealt with the two disciples was highlighted. Leadership is more often the cause of conflicts in the church. Every group leader was encouraged to follow this style of leadership in order to harness the group dynamics.

Participation in decision making makes it easier for the members to feel part of the process as opposed to the one man show. Problem solving is one key to a successful leader. There will constantly be problem in groups. This is evidenced by what the early church faced in the administration of the central fund fairly (Acts 6:1). The wisdom the apostles took was highlighted. This was done in relation to the establishment of a community that ensures effective nurture.

Different perspectives of leadership were highlighted. The believers were able to differentiate leaders and manager. The different model of leadership were examined. The styles of Moses and other biblical figures were given and the best models were selected to be models to define leadership.

Unity

This aspect of unity was incorporated in the lesson of leadership. As mentioned the church had been divided by extremism brought by a section of members who were felt that the leadership had not taken care of their spiritual needs by allowing worldly standards to infiltrate the church. One of the issues that appeared to be a matter of contention was the SDA logo. It remains still an issue in the church,

because many of the members do not have a vast knowledge of the subject making it easy to be misled. This divided the church and the lesson of unity was essential.

To attain complete unity is a challenge in the churches given the fact that Kenya is a multi-tribal country where cultures differ. A check in Lanet Church reveals that tribal issue play in the leadership. The study on unity was very beneficial in terms of harmonizing the church. Unity is an essential ingredient to the health of the church.

Mentorship

Mentoring the Elders

In the introduction of this study, reference is made to the *Elder's Handbook* which made a statement that became one of the key statements to this project. It mentioned the fact that elders do more church administration in the local congregation than the pastor. Consequently as observed they have more contact hours with the members in comparison with the pastor. In order to contribute to their spiritual growth because they are vital to effective church nurture, the researcher sought to devise a purposeful endeavor to mentor the elders. In that particular case four elders were chosen. One elder was given personal instruction from a material prepared on the area of priesthood of all believers. This material was dealing with the sanctuary.

He was then encouraged to teach others elders. After the exercise it was quite easier for him to be willing to nurture other elders and ultimately other members. The researcher believes that having material is key in building the confidence needed in a leader of such as an elder to be able to teach and lead. Paul gives the requirements of one to leadership and lists ability to teach as an ingredient (1 Tim 3:2). Whereas it is prudent to read to the elder this verse during ordination the how question is not normally given attention in the church.

The second elder was to be assisted in the area of sermon preparation. This elder had good leadership skills but was not good at preaching. The researcher aided him to prepare sermons. This was done by visiting him at his office and encouraging him to read the spirit of prophecy book. Other books also were given from the researcher's personal library. The scenario has changed for the better. He has developed a desire to read and in his office are books and he can make a sermon that nurtures members because as the first elder during that time much was expected from him but still the how to do it was the issue. The researcher learnt that encouraging elders to buy books has not been a priority. Though quite a number have the ability the only time they are exposed to books is during the camp meeting in book promotion but the books available need to be augmented.

The third elder was selected and was to be empowered for outreach. The area that was chosen was ministering to young people. The church began a very strong ministry to the secondary school. This idea was prudent because earlier in this study a mention was made of the observation of Gordon Olson that the strategy for the century is to target the 4-14 year old as the hope of making lasting impression. The researcher purposed to go with him in the schools and present the subjects. This was done more than thrice and afterwards the elder brought over twenty young people and have been baptized in the church.

The last elder is the leader of development. He was included in this program because as discussed earlier care for the members and the financial implications need to be incorporated. For this case it was not a training in particular but it was encouragement to begin income generating project. In this case it was the medical clinic project. He was working hand in hand with the researcher in implementing the

project. The researcher brought a medical camp that opened the door for the community to begin identifying with the project.

Mentorship was a step in the right direction in training about nurture. The essence of this program cannot be overemphasized borrowing from the New Testament model of Jesus time and the apostolic period. Jesus concentrated with the twelve even if He had a large following of disciples. The apostles had learners who observed how mission was apparently done. The researcher intentionally organized mentorship for youth, adults and children. This section may not exhaustibly present all the programs but a brief survey will reveal the activities

Mentoring the Youth

As observed in Table 1, Lanet Church has a large number of youths. Of the 308 members the youth account to 115, making it the largest segment after the female's adults figure. Therefore there was need to use the trained leader to nurture the youth through mentoring. Different strategies were devised including and not limited to; Financial management, fellowship meals, social program, youth training meetings, active participation in the church services, asking a family to adopt the youth, prayer meetings, outreach participation and other methods.

In the area of financial management, the researcher observed that the church expects the youth to be available for errands and assigned tasks in the church. While it is good for the youth to be available to assist the church, there is very little or no concern about their financial struggles. Many of the youth are unemployed even though they have concluded academic training courses. Some are not in school because they lack funds. For some to get even money for a means of transportation to the church is a challenge. Therefore financial resources are an important element in nurture of the youth.

The researcher first contacted the available government resources through the youth enterprise fund. The regional director was invited who gave a talk on the programs that are available with the government. Following was an action by his advice to form a youth group to facilitate access of the fund as per the policy of the Government. A youth group was organized and registered with the appropriate registrar of societies. The youth were encouraged to give contributions to help open a bank account.

The youth then were attached to an adult member who offered his home to help the youth rear chicken. This was done. The result was the youth had funds which helped them to attend the next youth congress as the survey indicated. In the congress, the youth were nurtured. This moments of working together provided opportunities for youth to interact with the adults and learn the skill in a safe environment. This ensured effective nurture.

The other area of concern for the youth a crisis occurs when they want to have a church wedding. The researcher observed that many youth shy off from following the Adventist tradition of church wedding because they perceive it to be expensive. The result is they end up staying together which results in their dis fellowship. This discourages them and to bring the youth back after the re-baptism and bring them back to the same enthusiasm is very difficult. The reason is because they perceive the church as having passed the judged on them. Even the membership does not look at them favorably even either. The researcher encouraged members to volunteer and help youth to do affordable weddings. This was done even though it has not completely ensured that all follow the church laid down structure in the time of marriage.

The other activity that was undertaken was to help the youth secure support from the area member of parliament who donated a total of Kenya shillings ninety thousand that helped the youth to buy machines for the project of washing cars. The machines were bought. Unfortunately, the project has not taken off due to government policies. It will soon take off.

Fellowship meals were arranged every Sabbath. This was done by encouraging the youth to contribute funds and cook food together as well as eat together. This habit is being done as it was in the New Testament breaking of the bread (Acts 2:42). This ensured that they are available in the afternoon for other lessons. It was observed that there going home for lunch reduced the number of those who could come for afternoon programs. Majorly because it is easier to be distracted to do other activities like going to watch games and other things that distract the youth, this was an effective method that ensured the presence of the youth in the church.

There is no doubt that the church is seeking to involve the youth in the programs. This activity was incorporated in nurture. One of the ways was to have a good number of them in the church board to have their voice heard. Then they were attached to the elders who could take them along to branch Sabbath schools. Many secondary school were assigned youths together with an adult. This was done and the result was a vibrant youth outreach program in Lanet Church.

It may be sensible to teach the youth and have seminars, but more significant is to encourage the youth to read for themselves. This apparently leads to a greater appreciation of the truth. A valuable resource to make this succeed is availability of resources in form of materials. This deepens their discovery of truth by themselves internalizing and applying it in their own lives. The challenge has been availability of

materials. This was partly solved by the researcher encouraging a church library. Given that the modern youth are attracted by moving pictures, the researcher made use of Compact Discs that were available to watch on the church projector. These were played during the prayer rallies that were conducted. The researcher too lent his books and encouraged the youth to share with others what they have learnt.

The Church Choir

The other areas that needed strengthening was the church choir. This is a very important segment of worship. The researcher observed that when the choir is not in the church the church looked unusual. Again in the choir all members are not financially stable. The researcher encouraged the choir to have an income generating project. This was done because the choir acquired a public address system that is hired whenever the community needs. This has enabled the choir to take care of the needs of the members. Example was the time the choir made a trip to Tanzania. Part of the funds that helped purchase food was often from the choir funds. It enabled other members to participate. It still continues to be a source of supporting the needs of the members.

Nyaundi has observed that “ studying how social movements are financed, Davidson observes that if a country’s economic status is low, unemployment high and people have little money to march the expenses, movements depending on followers to survive will generally have a hard time. A good economy thereby means a society has leftovers to donate to charity and interest groups.”¹¹ This perfectly applies to the church choir an organization that as observed is vital for the vibrancy of the church at Lanet. It will be one sided to think of nurture without the aspect of financial

¹¹Nyaundi, *Religion and Social Change*, 148.

recourses. Apparently this same aspect was one of the causes for the members of the apostolic church in the new testament to have administrative challenges that were weighing the apostle to an extent of endangering their evangelistic zeal (Acts 6:7).

The church choir has tremendously impacted the community. There have been testimonies of families brought to the church because of the service of the choir to the community. Whenever there is a community function this choir has been identified. It has been instrumental to dispel the misunderstanding of the Adventist Church in the community.

Summary

The challenge was attendance at the Sunday's training. The attendance was lower due to work commitments. Some working people only have Sunday to do their homework and could not devote 100% of their time to come for the seminar.

The goal of training was to achieve at least 50 % of the selected people to be achieved. It has worked. The experience taught the researcher that people are willing to take leadership responsibility if they are trained and equipped. The other lesson was community service

Eelie in chapter three of this study, a thorough investigation was done on the impact of poverty on nurture. Lanet SDA is in-built in a gated community because the land was donated by an individual. This community has people from many different denominations; the church sought to reach them and even those surrounding the church.

A strategy was devised on intensifying community service. An assessment of the needs of the community was done and a solution was arrived that the area needed to reach through health. This was because the nearest medical clinic is more than 8

kilometers away. The one that is close by belongs to the army base that does not admit civilians to access.

The church identified people who could fund raise. This funds were to set up a clinic this was done and funds were raised. One of the rooms was furnished and turned into an outpatient clinic. The next activity was to get the community aware of the plans and the available facility.

The researcher organized a free medical camp. This attracted so many people from the community and the results were very impressive. The community responded well. People from many denominations came for the first time into the church compound. It was Muslims who had never wished to come attend the clinics. They received the medical care they needed.

This clinic now is serving the community and can be seen as an initiative of the researcher to address the issue of poverty and nurture. In turn, it is helping the church through the income to reach out to the needy. The small groups which were formed met once a week in member's home.

The purpose was to increase participation at least by five percent of the people need to feel their needs are taken into consideration. The church is looked upon by even non-Christians that the church may lend a hand. Because of maybe what they have heard about Jesus. Many do not mind violating their beliefs as long as their felt needs are met. At the times of extreme challenges example the crisis of death and sickness people will be willing to do anything.

Financial difficulties affect many of the members. Even those in the survey who answered that they do not have financial needs they tend to withdraw their full commitment for reasons of being engaged in some financial activities to supply for their needs.

It was also discovered that the yearly nominations in the church board do not necessarily ensure good results. Reasons: the nominating committee does not normally take into account spiritual gifts. They only select and nominate according to their general observations. An individual may be talented but not gifted. There are people who are talented and can multi task, but they may not necessarily be gifted to perform the task.

Again people's self-esteem matters and it contributes to the output. When someone is requested to take leadership position in the small group there significance in the group increase their willingness to spend little bit more time in church activities.

Another challenge observed is that because the pastor is seen as performing the members fear being embarrassed before the membership.

There are individuals who are influential; once they are not recognized they begin to talk bad about the church and even the pastor, even when it is not necessarily the pastor's fault. Care needs to be taken to identify the opinion leaders.

The biblical image of the church as a community served as a motivating factor to make members feel the need for care for each other. The spirit of the sons of Zebedee in the New Testament of leadership squabbles affects the church adversely especially in Lanet. Being a church with many members from the military it affects the church. The hierarchy in the army affects the church. A high ranking official does not feel comfortable to be led by a lower ranking officer. This is due to the social status one has in the society. The church member's former faith affects the members. This is why in the question of if one had a denomination was key. Many who came from the catholic background tend to place religious duties as holy that may not be done the member. The lesson of priesthood of all believers was very important.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

In this study the growth of the New Testament church was alluded to. Looking at the rate, the principles of care for one another were not just an aberration but a purposeful endeavor and daily practice. The concept of community was strong and could have been the probable cause of numerical growth. Paul not only preached the Gospel but also stayed with the people where he established churches working with them and sharing his own life. Other versions use the term “nurse” when speaking about the tender care Paul exercised on the people he preached to (1 Thess 2:6, 7). This phenomena seems to be lacking in modern efforts of nurture and outreach.

The church has been called out and given a mandate that comes with a biblical imperative to reach out and keep the believers who wait for the second coming of Jesus. God has continually had a clear plan for those whom He calls and the scripture enjoins them to look at the world in the lens of God and his ultimate goal.

Chapter one of this study described the ministry context outlining the most crucial part the statement of the problem together with the statement of the purpose. It further gave the probable reason why the study was justified and outlined the delimitations. In the same chapter the terms were defined and the methodology clearly presented that was to be used. The anticipated expectations of the dissertation were presented in a plain manner among other preliminaries.

Chapter two delved into the biblical and theological foundation of nurture. In this section, both the New and Old Testament were consulted for a biblically based theology of nurture. Further the concept of the church as a community, building, family, household and other biblical images were presented. The correlation with what the New Testament church was all about was brought forth. The writings of Ellen G. White were also reviewed in relation to the subject. In her writings the concept of nurture was established as a foremost requirement for a healthy church.

Chapter three dealt with the review of literature. In this chapter various authors were highlighted and their contributions to the subject were presented concisely. God's ideal for nurture after creation was made clear as He had face to face communication with the first family Adam and Eve. The concept of lay people was thoroughly discussed. The practice of the early Adventists was investigate and a scenario that had pastors as itinerants was discovered as the factor that gave the lay people a big share in authority to oversee the activities in the church. This scenario has been contrasted to the current where the members are thought to be passive and therefore perceive the work of the church to be belonging to the pastors. This has ultimately overburdened the pastor and nurture has become inadequate leading to backsliding and low involvement of the laity in church activities.

Subsequently, the same chapter probed the idea of poverty and the New Testament church. On this account part of the cause of dissention was the unfair distribution of the resources. This brings in the idea of scarcity and inadequacy and ultimately a scramble resulting in complaints of unfairness. Whereas the apostles were able to solve this challenge by appointing a seven member team to oversee, the fact remains today that such department does not exist at least not in any church that the researcher knows. It could be existing in the form of Adventist men organization, the

Dorcas society or the Women's Ministry but this team with the seven deacons had specific tasks of watching over the needs of the membership and ensuring fairness. Effective nurture has by far been hampered by the unwillingness of the church to consider holistic ministry where the needs are to be equally looked at as part and parcel of the mission of the church.

Chapter four brought into light the ministry context where the macro and micro contexts were expounded. The research design was set out detailing the appropriateness of the study, sampling of the population to be researched was identified. Further the instruments for conducting the survey were highlighted, the methodology identified and the data analyzed in full details. This chapter also employed the Logframe and Gantt Chart to outline the sequence of events and the activities carried out.

Chapter five dealt with the implementation of the project. In this chapter, a curriculum was devised that addressed the arrears that could empower the lay people and spur them for more involvement in church activities. Five focus areas were addressed in the seminars and training. These areas were, mission of the church, the priesthood of all believers, the church and community, the spiritual gifts and the small group ministries.

Whereas the above chapters have proposed several scenarios to the issue of inadequate nurture in Lanet Church, this chapter contains findings and recommendations on what could be done and possible solutions. The conclusions arrived at will be discussed and relevant proposals will be made.

Conclusion

The conclusions listed here will be based on the focus of the study. The researcher set out to unravel the reasons for inadequate nurture of members of Lanet SDA Church and to find out the possible remedial steps that could ensure the situation has been arrested. The first deduction arrived at is that God had and has a definite plan for nurture in both the old and new testaments. He was the shepherd for all the people He called. (Gen 48:15, Ps 23). Jesus repeats this concept (John 10:1). The early church was deeply committed to total care (Acts chapters 2 and 7). Paul cared for the new believers by remaining and being one with them (1 Thess 2:6, 7) this was a shining hallmark in their nurture.

A second conclusion is based on the fact that Ellen white had alluded to the idea of understanding the human mind as the church works for the salvation of souls. The church maybe having the right doctrines but if they do not lean towards addressing the felt needs, nurture maybe a mirage. Dwight Nelson has compared the two Greek words orthodoxy and orthopraxy, knowing the truth and showing the truth respectively. His conclusion is that during the judgment day the pendulum swings towards orthopraxy taking into consideration the pronouncement God gives to sheep and goat in see (Matt 25:31).

Thirdly it is an acceptable fact that spiritual gifts have not been taken into consideration while doing yearly nomination of church officers. The result is a church that does not have a gift based ministry. This ultimately is underutilization and a burden to the pastor who has unutilized work force while burning out. Fourthly many members do not understand their calling as Peter puts it. See (2 Pet 2:9). From this misunderstanding arises the notion of reluctance of many becoming their brother's keeper hence inadequate nurture.

Lastly the current trend of members desiring to have large multimillion churches is foreign to the New Testament. Indeed there could have been large congregation in Jerusalem but the apostle's heart was in the house churches (See 1 Cor 16:19). The apostle Paul had a missionary spirit of planting small churches that can ensure people's feeling of belonging. It is difficult to ensure adequate care for a church with so many members. The above scenario can be arrested by small groups in cases where there are large pastoral districts with many churches which is the case for Lanet. The pastoral district has many congregations some of which are over eighty kilometers apart. This requires a deliberate effort to be effected because it will not simply happen. In order for these conclusions to be effected in needs the goodwill of the church pastor and ultimately the conference of Central Rift valley.

Recommendations

Paul's words in the book of Acts are very strong while recommending to the leaders to nurture and care for the church which he believed was bought with the blood of Jesus. What seems to be neglected out in the church is the warning that some will come from within the flock. Many times the church is afraid of the threat from outside while indeed there is a possibility of danger from inside the church (See Acts 20:28). Lanet Church has had a serious threat of dissidents from within. This has made the conference to send officials severally to guard the flock from being carried away.

The researcher therefore will give practical suggestions after identifying the problem, exploring the biblical ideal for the subject, looking at other authors and finally getting the results from the survey.

1. The first recommendation could be to encourage the local church pastors to plan for the evangelistic campaigns with effective nurture in serious focus.

The current planning makes little or no major plans for the new believers. There must be set out plans that include spiritual parenting to the new members. The spirit of this kind of planning has drastically declined and is under severe attack. Part of the reasons could be attributed to evangelists who have a busy itinerary and only arrive a day to the campaign and leave a day after baptism

2. Secondly the church members should also be encouraged to develop the attitude of embracing people of other faiths. This will ensure that the metaphors Jesus used to describe the life of a believer get to be in place. The salt and the light for instance. The pastor need to do much training than sermonizing. Making and delivering a sermon could be easier than training but it ultimately leaves the pastor with the burden of untrained members. This follows suite in that the conference and the union need to allocate funds for training.
3. The adult members of the congregation need to be encouraged to nurture and mentor. Young people. The church too need to appreciate that the society in which the young people are growing is drastically changing. For instance the use of technology need to be embraced so as not to lose the young people.
4. The pastors should put much effort in small groups and prioritize training in the cell group or whichever method can work to ensure a feeling of belonging in the membership. I recommend a further study and improvement of Sabbath school units.

5. The church need to be open in partnering with the government as deemed possible in order to tap into the resources that are available since the members are part of the tax system.
6. The pastors need constant training to be sharpened to counter the emerging challenges. Spiritual giftedness in the church is an area that has not been explored and much neglected and need a constant reexamination.
Borrowing from the Jehovah's witnesses when new members come there needs to be a ceremony that will include a kind of induction into the church. The current hand of fellowship seems to be very superficial. Their spiritual giftedness must be determined immediately they join the church. A spiritual gift inventory should be conducted.
7. Evangelism should follow the example of Paul who stayed and formed very intimate relationship with the people he led to the lord (See 1 Thess 2:7, 8). He shared not only the gospel but also his life. I recommend evangelists to stay after evangelistic meetings at least for some times to orient the new members they have won.
8. I highly recommend for the establishment of lay training institutes in every conference because the training of the clergy is just a drop in the ocean as the church continue to experience numerical growth. There will be no time especially in Africa there will be a minister for every congregation. Due to the level of financial strength the sure way for a health church is to invest in lay people.

Lessons Learned

The apostle Paul was deeply committed to nurture. In 1 Corinthians 3:1, he talks about the process that takes place from the planting of the seed to watering,

weeding and harvesting. (Emphasis mine) the aspect of care for the plant is basically nurture. Therefore the researcher has learned the following lessons:

1. The researcher has learned that no matter how correct the doctrine is it may not keep the people in church unless they see love displayed. People begin churches which may have erroneous doctrines but can still keep people because they care for their material needs.
2. I have learned that until the members discover their spiritual gifts their calling is still deficient. Once they discover it seemed to me as an ordination to ministry. They see as if God has recognized their contribution because they believe the Holy Spirit has confirmed.
3. The church in general has created a distance in addressing the issue of material blessings for fear of being too much focused in the world. The emphasis has been giving, even though stewardship is taught the area of encouraging real business is lacking. This area needs further investigation.
4. The community and members have high expectations from financial help to sicknesses and other emotional needs from the church. The church need to deliver
5. Leadership is a big challenge and the need for constant training is imperative.
6. The youth are longing for trustworthy adults whom they can share with and they long to be mentored. I need to mentor young people.
7. My evangelism endeavor is one sided and not balanced because I normally have no definite plan for the souls that will join the church.

The supreme lesson here is that pastoral care is an imperative and part of Jesus command to the disciples.

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE ON LAITY TRAINING

This is a research questionnaire aimed at investigating the subject of empowering the laity in Lanet SDA. Your contribution will be highly appreciated. Confidentiality is guaranteed.

Please tick (√) your answer or write it in the available space.

- 1) Gender: Male Female
- 2) Were you born into a Seventh-day Adventist family? Yes No
- 3) Did you belong to a Christian denomination before becoming a Seventh-day Adventist?
a. Yes No
- 4) Could you please mention some personal needs that could be addressed by this congregation?
- a) Spiritual b) Physical c) Emotional d) Material
e) Financial
- f) Others (Please mention)
-

- 5) Would you please like to make suggestions on how this congregation could efficiently address some of these needs?

a. _____ b. _____
c. _____

- 6) What are the things that motivate you best into a deeper relationship with Christ?

- a) Participating in a Bible study
b) Listening to sermons
c) Being visited and encouraged by fellow church members
d) Attending prayer meetings
e) Regularly participating in small group meetings
f) Being involved in an evangelistic activity: Personal
Public
g) Others:
-

6. Global mission outreach in an unentered area :-----

15) Global mission outreach in an unentered area -----

16) Have you ever attended a training organized by the church? Yes No

17) Who paid the cost for the seminar?

- Self
- Local church
- Conference/ Union
- A sponsor

18) How long did the training last?

- Half a day
- One day
- Two days
- 1 Week

19) Were there any materials /tools provided? Yes No

20) Did you go out for practicum after the seminar? Yes No

21) Which areas were handled by the seminars?

- Evangelism
- Stewardship
- Education
- Family life
- Other _____

22) Could you identify any weaknesses observed from the training?

- Too long
- Too short
- No materials provided
- Unprepared presenters
- Not appropriate to the local church

23) Would you like to attend training seminar to help you to be a strong Christian.

- i. Yes No

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW FROM THE PARTICIPANTS

1. The mentored elders:
 - I. What was your experience before you entered into this program
 - II. How has it changed your outlook on ministry
 - III. Are you better equipped to lead and nurture than before
 - IV. What do you think is lacking in the process of preparing elders
 - V. Would you like to make a proposal for the leadership
 2. Second elder ministering to the youths
 - I. How did you begin to develop love for ministering in the schools
 - II. What was your main challenge in this ministry
 - III. How has my working with you changed your perspective
 - IV. Could you give a suggestion on how we can improve?
 3. Third elder in charge of development and strategic planning.
 - I. What has been your greatest challenge in this department
 - II. How have you been able to address the issue
 - III. What could be your suggestion
- The mentoring family of the youth
- I. What motivated you to be concerned with the youth
 - II. What challenges have you encountered in the process
 - III. What could be done to help you be better in this spiritual gift?

APPENDIX C

LESSON PLAN

- MOC 01 1. The Great commission (3 contact hours)
- A. The post resurrection charge to disciples. Mat 28:18,19
 - I. Christ's vision for an evangelized world mat 24:14
 - II. The fulfilled signs and second coming, the sure word 2 Peter 1:16
 - III. Apostolic source of power Acts 2:1
 - IV. Paul and the mission roman 1:1
 - B. EKUC Vision Pamphlet
 - I. Printed brochure
 - II. Power point.
- POB 101 2. Priesthood of all believers (3 contact hours)
- A. The old testament sanctuary
 - I. The plan of salvation revealed Genesis 3:15
 - II. The sanctuary with the Israelites Exodus 25:8
 - III. Priestly ministry in Leviticus, Deuteronomy 7:1 a chosen people
 - B. The new testament
 - I. Jesus as the mediator Hebrews 7:9
 - II. A royal priesthood 1 Peter 2:9
 - III. Romans 12:1 your body as living sacrifice.
 - IV. Revelation 1:6.
- CAC 102 3. Church and the community (3 contact hours)
- A. Jesus and the community
 - I. Jesus's mission statement Isaiah 60:1
 - II. Isaiah 58 the If and Then (Quid Pro Quo)
 - III. Church in time of Apostle Acts 2
 - B. Paul and the churches he established
 - I. The church in Thessalonica 1 Thes 2
 - II. The charge to guard the church Acts 20:28
- SPG 103 4. Spiritual gifts (3 contact hours)
- A. Spirit in the old testament
 - I. Gen 41: 38, Judges 3:10, Exo 31:36
 - II. David psalm 91
 - B. New Testament
 - I. Jesus mat 4, Luke 1:21,
 - II. Paul 1 Cor 7:7, Romans 12:6, 1 Tim 4:14, 1 Peter 4:10.
 - III. Unity in the body Ephesian 4:1, 1 Cor 12:4,9.
- SG 104 5 Small Groups (3 contact hours)
- A. Jesus and the twelve

- I. His prayer John 17:11
- II. Belonging James 5:13
- B. Functional small groups
 - I. Training
 - II. Mission
 - III. Evangelism
 - IV. House to house
 - V. Unity
 - VI. Bible study.

APPENDIX D

SPIRITUAL GIFT ASSESSMENT TOOL

BASICS OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Definition:

Spiritual gifts can be defined as special abilities and talents given by the Holy Spirit to enable each Christian to play an important part in God's plan for loving and saving humanity.

Scripture:

Ephesians 4, Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12, 1 Peter 4:10

27 Spiritual Gifts

Prophecy, Service, Teaching, Exhortation, Giving, Leadership, Mercy, Wisdom, Knowledge, Faith, Healing, Miracles, Discerning of Spirits, Tongues, Interpretation of Tongues, Apostle, Helps, Administration, Evangelist, Pastor, Celibacy, Voluntary Poverty, Martyrdom, Hospitality, Missionary, Intercession, Deliverance.

Good News

- | | |
|--|------------------------|
| • Teach us about our worth as creatures | Luke 15 |
| • Gives us a sense of belonging | 1 Corinthians 12:14-15 |
| • Teach us that we have a spiritual calling | 1 Peter 2:-10 |
| • Frees us from guilt placed on us by others | 1 Cor 12:17 |
| • Enables God to continue the incarnation | 1 Cor 12:27 |
| • Key to fulfilling our destiny in this life | 1 Cor 3:9 |

Bad News:

- Projection
- Jealousy
- Exaltation
- Exclusiveness
- Immaturity

How to Discover your Ministry Fit

1. Study all you can about Spiritual gifts
 - a) Spiritual Body Building (Kim Johnson)
 - b) Your Spiritual Gifts (Peter Wagner)
2. Take a gifts test and personality test.
3. Experiment with different ministries
4. Get feedback from people who you respect.

****NEVER FORGET THE 147/805 Rule***

The Wright brothers failed 147 times before they flew, and Edison failed 805 times before he invented the electric light.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS TODAY
THE SPIRITUAL GIFTS INVENTORY

*Duplicate for Distribution
by Age-Group Leader:*

Purpose of the inventory: The questionnaire that you are about to take is not meant to be a final determination of your spiritual gifts. However it should begin to pinpoint areas where your gift cluster can be found. Please follow these directions when filling out the inventory:

1. Begin with a prayer for the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
2. Answer each of the 90 statements on the inventory. Do not leave any statement blank
3. Please check the appropriate box: **Much, Some, Little, or Not at All**
4. When you finish filling out the inventory, please follow the directions for scoring the inventory.

SCORING THE INVENTORY

1. Place the numerical value of each answer next to the number for each statement on the Gift Cluster Chart Summary Sheet.
2. Now add up the five numbers in each row horizontally across the page on the Summary Sheet, placing the sum in the total column. Do this for each row A through R.
3. Look at the highest scores. These will pin point a cluster of gifts in which your gifts are most likely to be found.
4. Now place an X by the gift with the top three scores. Then place a check mark by the three gifts that are next highest scores.
5. Evaluate yourself in the light of this information. Does this agree with what you previously thought about your abilities? Is there a gift pin pointed that surprised you? Do you see any new possibilities for your ministry? What do you think you can best do to use your gifts?
6. Pray about this, asking God to show you how you can best develop and use your gift to help in His work.
7. Please fill out the last sheet in the section and hand it to the pastor, listing the six highest gift that were revealed on your inventory.

HOW TO DISCOVER YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFTS

1. Explore the possibilities
2. Experiment with as many as possible.
3. Examine your feelings.
4. Evaluate your effectiveness by getting feedback from people whom you request.
5. Pray much about it.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS TODAY

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PINPOINTING YOUR GIFT CLUSTER

“This statement has been satisfactorily experienced in my life,” or “I believe I have the ability for this.”:

HOW TO SCORE YOUR TEST			
Much = 3	Some = 2	Little = 1	Not At All = 0

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1 () Enjoying the responsibly for the spiritual growth of a group of Christians.</p> <p>2 () Enabling persons to learn biblical truths in detail.</p> <p>3 () Applying truth effectively in my own life.</p> <p>4 () Having the ability to discover new truths for myself.</p> <p>5 () Verbally encouraging the wavering, troubled or discouraged.</p> <p>6 () Clearly perceiving the difference between truth and error.</p> <p>7 () Managing money well in order to give liberally to the Lord's work.</p> <p>8 () Assisting key leaders to relieve them for their essential job.</p> <p>9 () Working joyfully with persons ignored by the majority.</p> <p>10 () Adapting easily in a culture different from mine.</p> <p>11 () Leading other to a decision for salvation through faith in Christ.</p> <p>12 () Providing food/lodging graciously to those in need.</p> <p>13 () Believing God will keep His promises in spite of circumstantial evidence.</p> <p>14 () Persuading others to move toward achieving biblical objectives.</p> <p>15 () Easily delegating important responsibility to others.</p> <p>16 () In the name of the Lord, curing diseases.</p> <p>17 () When praying for others, I often lose track of the time.</p> <p>18 () Enjoy being called upon to do special jobs around church.</p> <p>19 () Sacrificially giving myself for you and straying Christians.</p> <p>20 () Explaining clearly Scriptural teaching to others.</p> <p>21 () Enjoy working out solutions to complicated problems.</p> | <p>22 () Having insights of truth which bring conviction to other Christians.</p> <p>23 () Being an instrument for dislodging the complacent and redirecting the wayward to face spiritual reality.</p> <p>24 () Judging well between what is poor and what is good (or evil and good)</p> <p>25 () Giving things or money liberally to the Lord's work.</p> <p>26 () Ushering or cleaning up at a church related facility.</p> <p>27 () Aiding the undeserving.</p> <p>28 () Learning well another language in order to minister to a different people.</p> <p>29 () Sharing joyfully how Christ has brought me to Himself.</p> <p>30 () Providing a gracious have for guests.</p> <p>31 () Generally being more excited about the future than the past.</p> <p>32 () Knowing where I am going and seeing other Christians follow me.</p> <p>33 () Able to organize ideas, people, things and time more effective ministry.</p> <p>34 () In the name of the Lord, healing the emotionally disturbed.</p> <p>35 () Taking prayer requests more seriously than other Christians seem to.</p> <p>36 () Enjoy routine work at church that would bore others.</p> <p>37 () Knowing intimately and being well known by those I serve and guide.</p> <p>38 () Making difficult biblical truths understandable to others.</p> <p>39 () Choosing from several biblical alternatives an option which usually works.</p> <p>40 () Acquiring and mastering new facts and principles of Bible truth.</p> <p>41 () Verbally challenging those who seem spiritually apathetic.</p> <p>42 () Tending to look beneath the surface and question people's motives.</p> |
|--|---|

SPIRITUAL GIFTS TODAY

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|---|--|
| <p>43 () Feeling deeply moved when confronted with urgent financial needs in God's work.</p> <p>44 () Typing, filing or recording figures or minutes for the Lord's work.</p> <p>45 () Visiting in hospitals or retirement homes and being blessed.</p> <p>46 () Being able to relate well to Christians of different race, language, or culture.</p> <p>47 () Explaining clearly bible truths that point people to Jesus as Savior</p> <p>48 () Having a knack of making strangers feel at home.</p> <p>49 () Trusting in the presence and power of God for the impossible.</p> <p>50 () Influencing others toward accomplishing biblical goals.</p> <p>51 () Am able to set goals and make effect plans to reach them.</p> <p>52 () In the name of the Lord, treating successfully those who are spiritually sick.</p> <p>53 () Prayer is one of my favorite spiritual exercises.</p> <p>54 () Feeling satisfaction in doing menial tasks for God's work.</p> <p>55 () Helping needy Christian by guiding them to relevant portions of the bible and praying with them.</p> <p>56 () Communicating biblical truths to others which produce changes in knowledge, attitudes, values, or conduct.</p> <p>57 () My nominating others for positions prove to be good selections.</p> <p>58 () I study and read a great deal to learn biblical truths.</p> <p>59 () Able to counsel effectively the perplexed, guilty, or addicted.</p> <p>60 () Accurately recognizing what spiritual gift another Christian has or does not have.</p> <p>61 () Able to earn much money for giving to the Lord's work.</p> <p>62 () Distributing Gospel literature or papers in my community.</p> <p>63 () Taking shut-ins out for a drive, or assisting them in practical ways.</p> <p>64 () Enjoying life in a foreign country.</p> <p>65 () Emphasizing a message which is primarily the Gospel of Salvation.</p> <p>66 () Having a genuine graciousness and appreciation of each guest.</p> | <p>67 () Feeling sure I know God's specific will for the future growth of His work even when others are not sure.</p> <p>68 () Steering others through difficulties in the Lord's work.</p> <p>69 () Able to lead a group in making decisions together.</p> <p>70 () Praying for others so that healing occurs.</p> <p>71 () God consistently answers my prayers in a tangible way.</p> <p>72 () Willing to take orders rather than giving them.</p> <p>73 () Able to restore persons who have wandered away from their Christian community.</p> <p>74 () Training Christians to be more obedient disciples of Christ.</p> <p>75 () Feeling an unusual presence of God when important decisions need to be made.</p> <p>76 () Able to distinguish key and important facts of Scripture.</p> <p>77 () Comforting a Christian in his affliction or suffering.</p> <p>78 () Can see through a phony before his phoniness is clearly evident.</p> <p>79 () Willing to maintain a lower standard of living in order to benefit God's work.</p> <p>80 () Happy to be a teacher's aide in a bible class.</p> <p>81 () Talking cheerfully with those in prison, or the lonely shut-in person.</p> <p>82 () Having ability to learn foreign languages.</p> <p>83 () Continually seeking out unbelievers in order to win them.</p> <p>84 () Enjoying strangers in my house.</p> <p>85 () Trusting in the reliability of God when all looks dim.</p> <p>86 () Others follow me because I have knowledge which contributes to the building up of my church.</p> <p>87 () Able to recruit Christians and put them to work exercising their spiritual gifts.</p> <p>88 () Helping effectively those who are feeble-minded.</p> <p>89 () Sometimes praying when I probably should be doing other things.</p> <p>90 () Enjoying it when others express a need for my help.</p> |
|---|--|

SPIRITUAL GIFTS TODAY

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GIFT CLUSTER CHART SUMMARY SHEET

Place the numeric value of each answer next to the number of each question:

Much = 3 Some = 2 Little = 1 Not At All = 0

Now, add up the five numbers in each row, placing the sum in the total column

	Value of Answers					Total	Gift
Row A	1	19	37	55	73		Pastor
Row B	2	20	38	56	74		Teacher
Row C	3	21	39	57	75		Wisdom
Row D	4	22	40	58	76		Knowledge
Row E	5	23	41	59	77		Exhortation
Row F	6	24	42	60	78		Discernment
Row G	7	25	43	61	79		Giving
Row H	8	26	44	62	80		Helps
Row I	9	27	45	63	81		Mercy
Row J	10	28	46	64	82		Missionary
Row K	11	29	47	65	83		Evangelist
Row L	12	30	48	66	84		Hospitality
Row M	13	31	49	67	85		Faith
Row N	14	32	50	68	86		Leadership
Row O	15	33	51	69	87		Administration
Row P	16	34	52	70	88		Healing
Row Q	17	35	53	71	89		Intercession
Row R	18	36	54	72	90		Serving

SPIRITUAL GIFTS TODAY

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RESULTS OF THE SPIRITUAL GIFTS TEST

Name: _____

Please list below the six highest gifts on your Spiritual Gift Inventory Test. Also, please list the number of points scored on each gift. We need this information to divide you into groups next week.

	<u>Gift</u>	<u>Number of Points</u>
1	_____	_____
2	_____	_____
3	_____	_____
4	_____	_____
5	_____	_____
6	_____	_____

<p>My Three highest rated gifts from the Gift Cluster Chart</p> <p>1 _____</p> <p>2 _____</p> <p>3 _____</p>	<p>Gifts others feel I have</p> <p>1 _____</p> <p>2 _____</p> <p>3 _____</p>
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VITA

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BACKGROUND: I was born on 28 July, 1974 in Kisii, Kenya, and raised up in an Adventist Home with a loving and caring committed Seventh-day Adventist mother and God loving father. I was baptized into the Seventh day Adventist Church in an early age.

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EDUCATION:

2013 Student of Doctor of Ministry, AUA

1995 – 2000 BLA in Religion (minor in Biblical Languages)
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EXPERIENCE:

2017	Departmental Director CRVC	Nakuru
2014	University Chaplain	Nakuru
2013	Pastor, Lanet District	Nakuru
2011 – 2012	Pastor, Nairobi Central Church	Nairobi
2009 – 2010	Pastor, Elburgon District	Nakuru
2007 – 2008	Pastor Crater District	Nakuru
2006 – 2007	Ikutha District pastor	Ukambani
2002 – 2003	Instructor, European Bible School	Norway
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