

Mission

Shining a Beacon of Hope on Life's Stormy Sea

We believe that the South Central Conference Office exists to strengthen and support the mission and ministry of the churches in the South Central Conference. Therefore, the South Central Conference Church Ministries & Mission Development Department exists to assist pastors and their church leaders in leading their churches to become more Spirit-led and Mission-driven. We do this by providing pastors and their church leaders with ministry coaching and support in five fundamental areas of Church Development: 1) **Prayer**, 2) **Mission**, 3) **Spiritual Gifts**, 4) **Small Groups**, and 5) **Ministries**. When engaged sequentially, these become one fivefold strategy for leading churches to become more Spirit-led and Mission-driven.

Are you still writing “23” in the year column as you write out the date, or have you finally successfully transitioned to writing “24”? This yearly challenge of ours clearly reveals that by and large, we are generally creatures of habit. For example, do you usually sit in the same seat each Sabbath, and almost feel out of sorts if someone else happens to take *your* seat? Don’t worry, you’re not alone. The truth is that most people are uncomfortable with change and prefer the status quo. The reality of life, however, is that change is inevitable, and frequently quite necessary. Consider the natural cycle of human growth. The pathway from adolescent to adult is inundated with change, and regardless of how unwelcome or undesirable the changes may be, resisting them can prove to be detrimental.

As it is with human life, so it is with church life, there are times



when it is necessary to change. At first glance this might sound semi-heretical—the church needing to change? We immediately think of God’s Word, His character, His commandments, and even the quote, “I am the Lord, I change not.” We quickly conclude that since God doesn’t change, His church shouldn’t

change. Yet, deeper observation reveals that even with God there is some degree of change. During the time of the Flood all were to enter into the ark, but during the time of the Exodus all were to enter into homes with blood on the doorpost. God didn’t change His *mission*, but

Continued on page 2

THE SCC CHURCH MINISTRIES &



Leading Change, Continued from page 1

He did change His **method**. Usually we'll find that God doesn't change "**the what**," but He does frequently change "**the how**." That's why principles don't change, but practices do; that's why the message doesn't change, but the mediums do—because God doesn't change "the what," but He does frequently change "the how."

Unfortunately, when it comes to the subject of church organization, too frequently we fail to realize that organization is simply a "how" and not a "what." Therefore, we fear considering a change in organizational structures, systems, policies, or procedures, thinking that it's akin to an apostasy from the church and its mission. We don't recognize that church organization is simply a means to an end—one method among many for accomplishing the church's mission. This is illustrated by the fact that many forms of organization are seen in biblical history. God used the patriarchal system, the priesthood, the judges, the monarchy, the apostolic office, and the deaconate, making it clear that no one form is to be viewed as sacrosanct.

The important thing is the accomplishment of the mission—not the preservation of an organizational form. This means that the usefulness of a particular organizational form is measured only by its effectiveness in supporting the fulfillment of the mission. It also means that when a given organizational form is found to be ineffective relative to the fulfillment of the mission, the form—regardless



of its age or scope—needs to be "reformed" to better fulfill the mission.

Although it is appropriate to consider changing our church's organizational structure, we don't just change for the sake of change. Sometimes an assessment will reveal that it's more mission-effective not to change, and at those times we need to stay with the same. But often such is not the case with our current church organizational structure. We have many policies, practices, procedures, and fundamental philosophies that need to be changed to enable the church to better fulfill its mission. Moving to the ***Spirit-Led, Mission-Driven*** organizational model would remedy many, if not most, of our organizational challenges, including these two basic local church problems that are rooted in how we organize for ministry:

1. Our traditional local church departmental organizational model does not empower every member to serve in ministry using his or her spiritual gifts.

In our traditional organizational model we focus solely on filling offices, then, when those offices are filled, everyone else is essentially sidelined as a spectator with no real opportunity to participate in ministry. This means our system is allowing a massive reservoir of human resources to sit in our pews untapped. Not only is this a violation of the biblical concept of the priesthood of all believers, it is a gross example of poor stewardship. We cannot begin to calculate the "mission-loss" of not having all of our members engaged in some form of ministry that assists in the fulfillment of our mission. Furthermore, those who are not serving in



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MISSION DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

ministry become “religious weaklings,” while those that are serving become over-burdened, over-extended, and over-worked. Additionally, it could potentially take years for a new member to be finally put into ministry, when theologically we have been ordained for immediate service subsequent to baptism. Our current system does not empower every member to serve in ministry.

2. Our traditional local church departmental organizational model does not clearly connect ministries to the church’s mission.

We should be working to have all of our members involved in ministry, but we should also be working to ensure that the ministry has something to do with the church’s mission. Our traditional organizational system does not clearly draw connecting lines between our ministries and the church’s mission.

How does this ministry relate to the church’s mission? What aspect of the church’s mission is this ministry responsible for? These are questions that too frequently go unanswered in our present model. Additionally, the ministries are not sequentially connected according to how they impact the mission. This reduces opportunities for ministry collaboration, and increases the opportunities for ministry redundancy. Finally, because our ministries are based more on organizational tradition rather than on our church’s mission, we are prone to become like a dog chasing its tail—generating lots of activity, but accomplishing nothing of significance. Ministries are great, but unless they are connected to and driven by an overarching central mission, they can amount to little more than a potpourri of pointless programs. Our traditional system

does not clearly connect ministries to the church’s mission.

These are just two aspects of our traditional organizational model that may be hindering rather than helping your church effectively fulfill its mission. But moving from a traditional departmental organizational model to the **Spirit-Led, Mission-Driven** organizational model requires change—and change is always challenging. Therefore, in this year’s Compass, we will focus on empowering pastors and church leaders by sharing principles for leading change.



Pastor
Furman Fordham, II,
Director
SCC Church Ministries &
Mission Development
Department

WOMEN'S MINISTRIES

Women's Small Groups

Ministry in REAL-TIME

Who We Are and How We Function



Women's Small Groups—Ministry in Real-Time is a specific facet of the Women's Ministry that involves organizing small groups for women within the larger Women's Ministry community. These small groups are designed to provide a more intimate

and relational setting for women to connect with other women and encourage them to experience a relationship with Jesus (**Nurture**), grow spiritually, emotionally, and socially (**Empower**), and support one another by reconnecting with women in

the church and community (**Outreach**).

Women's Small Groups—**“Ministry in Real-Time”** exists to nurture, empower, and develop Women's Small Groups throughout the South Central Conference. Small group

Continued on page 4

ministries provide all women spiritual, emotional, and social nurturing based on Acts 2:42-47.

The goal of Women's Ministries Small Groups is to permeate the territories of South Central Conference with the Spirit-led Women's Small Groups—Ministry in Real-Time concept as a conference-wide ministry. **"Ministry in Real-Time"** is outreach and service conducted in the present moment utilizing modern technology and communications methods to connect with individuals instantaneously. It provides immedi-

ate support, guidance, or teaching to needy individuals or communities. This includes but is not limited to live streaming of religious services, online counseling or prayer sessions, instant messaging for spiritual advice, and using social media platforms to spread religious teachings and foster a sense of community.

Women's Small Groups undergird Pastors and support the church's mission through D.R.E.A.M.S. (Discipleship, Reclamation, Evangelism, Affirmation, Mentoring, and Servant-Leadership) and promote active

Women's Ministries programs in the church.

The fundamentals, dynamics, and benefits of Women's Small Groups are explored and discussed in the Women's Small Groups 101 Workshop conducted by Dr. Freddie Jenkins. Empower your Women's Ministries by scheduling a workshop. Call the SCC office for more information.

(615) 226-6500.



Dr. Freddie Williams Jenkins
SCC Women's
Ministries Leader

PRAYER MINISTRIES

Praying for Our Young Adult Children Forum

If your adult children are well behaved, spiritual, making great decisions often, financially savvy, are both emotionally, and psychologically healthy, then you, reader, may not want to read what will follow in this article. This overview of the Praying for Our Young Adult Children Forum will either give you comfort, reinforce your sense of peace and tranquility regarding your young adult children, or send you into your proverbial prayer closets along with the attendees at this conference. If you have already decided you are exempt from even reading this follow up to our session, then this writer is giving you permission to either maintain your status quo regarding your children, run some critical errands, take care of pressing chores, or simply remain at your existing task.

However, if somehow already this topic of concern resonates with you in some way or on some level, then please join us as we: 1) Share the commission and vision given to Mrs.



Jennifer Fordham; 2) Celebrate God's mercy and his goodness, and the Spirit-filled speakers as He poured forth on this gathering; and 3) Receive by proxy the very pronounced and profound blessing sent to us by the Holy Spirit at this momentous summit.

The Backstory

A few years ago, noticing that they were each experiencing the chal-



lenges of a new phase of parenting, Marsha Bardo, Jennifer Fordham, Mignon Evans, Darlene Jenkins, Meredith McCraw and Trina Ware—or "The Mommas" as they're referred to by their sons who all grew up together at Riverside Chapel in Nashville—formed a prayer group to begin praying for their young adult children. Shortly thereafter, Jennifer began writing daily prayers for "The Mommas" to pray and sharing them via text. As others became aware of Jennifer's daily prayers for young adult children, she was encouraged to distribute them more widely, and



eventually created the Praying for Our Young Adult Children Facebook Group to do so. The group blossomed and grew beyond anyone's imagination, including Jennifer's, to the point where three years later there were almost 2000 members hailing from 10 countries around the globe! Soon, the community and comradery that was growing within the Praying for Our Young Adult Children Facebook Group began craving an opportunity to come together to pray in person, and a platform was provided by South Central's Church Ministries & Mission Development Department on Sunday, December 3, 2023, at the Oakwood Academy Gymnasium in Huntsville, Alabama.

The Unseen World

If you attended from the outset, the keynote speaker, Pastor Freddie Russell's message, *The Unseen World*, ignited the room with a powerful, riveting message of hope underscoring what all had already sensed: "There are unseen forces that come against us and our children that we cannot detect with our physical eyes." This was a nod to Daniel 10:14, in which Daniel described his vision that only his eyes were able to behold.

In Pastor Russell's sermon, he transported us on over to the New Testament and landed us at *2 Cor. 10:4-6*, which says: "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty in God for pulling down



strongholds, and everything that exalts itself against God..."

How encouraging it was to hear him say, "When we engage in praying over our children and families, the power of the heavenly angels are *strengthened* to fight the forces of evil seeking ways to harm us. Finally, and ending his message with literal coals of fire attending his every word, he culminated his message by saying: "God hears our prayers the first time we pray!"

The Presenters

During the plenary sessions we were blessed with the following speakers: Dr. Roland Hill, Mrs. Evelyn Fordham, Dr. Janice Browne, and Dr. Noah Washington. Bringing up the rear were two anointed sisters who were tasked with praying down the power of the Spirit of the Almighty: Pastors/Dr. Andrea Trusty-King and Alicia Trusty Jones. The organizers had also appointed prayer warriors

who were strategically positioned throughout the facility to be on hand at all times to pray with those in attendance throughout the conference.

Declaring War on Brokenness

Who could forget Dr. Roland Hill's presentation entitled: "Dare to Declare War on Brokenness and the Spirit of Entitlement." Dr. Hill in his usual, classic, elegant and didactic manner began his segment by describing the brokenness of man in general, referencing how Job was a good and upstanding and godly man, yet God permitted him to suffer. Dr. Hill went on to explain that Job suffered poverty, financial struggles, and like all fallen men: brokenness. Satan had literally declared war on Job's finances – his money. Just like Job we are often beset with funding challenges whether it be within the church, church school, or challenges associated with our local confer-

Continued on page 6

ences. Often these challenges are manifested through a lack of money just trying to pay for tuition, rent, car payments, mortgage payments, and financing building projects, etc.

Essentially, Dr. Hill suggested that although Satan can and does launch an all-out war on our prosperity, what often goes hidden or lost is the fact that GOD still blesses his people. According to Dr. Hill, the proof of that is our children for the most part have grown up in prosperity, though many have still “...wandered off the right road and followed the footsteps of Balaam, son of Beor, who loved to earn money by doing wrong.” 2 Peter 2:15.

Do you know of any children who have grown up midst the financial blessings forged through sacrifice and toil, yet they have elected to earn money in ways that were never sanctioned by God? I know of many of these young people who have decided that they would *not* replicate the self-denial template provided by their parents, stating they did not respect the very struggle that catapulted them to where they are today; they simply did not, could not, will not appreciate how that even in the midst of monetary crises, their parents, like Job, made it through somehow.

In verity, many of us can testify that despite meager incomes, the lack of strategic investments, and perhaps making mis-judgements and mistakes along the way, God still brought us over. We were reminded, however, that even through the backdrop of most of the woes of our church school financing, we still have the second largest private school system in the world. It is the church school that has often fueled the growth of the Adventist Church. Moreover, if you look within and among the Black Adventists in particular, according to Hill, there are myriad, very successful Black Adventist professionals and entrepreneurs: “You taught us how to be blessed, but you also want us to



live with the blessing,” quipped Dr. Hill

Dr. Hill reminded his attendees that, ... “because of the Covenant Promise,—it is not God’s plan for the greatest of creation to be financially strapped. You were created in wealth, to live in wealth, and to be wealth.” Consequently, there is no place for guilt in the arena of God’s Covenant blessing upon us, furthering his premise that God-acquired wealth is never to be accompanied by our tendency to feel “unworthy” of His blessings!

Dr. Hill stressed the message that should be conveyed to our young adult children that although the *Hip Hop* model focuses on a flawed systematic display of wealth, we as parents must model an appreciation for wealth, but one that clearly see it as a gift from God. We are to teach them how to handle success and prosperity within a framework of the origin of true blessings – from the hand of the Almighty; otherwise, this can be an entrapment from the hand of the evil one aimed directly at our young adults. Dr. Hill’s presentation was capped off with a recording of,

“I Won’t Be Broke No Mo,” (Lil Durk) fraught with the idiomatic language that many young people can understand.

Purpose

Just when you thought it was safe to go out, Mrs. Evelyn Fordham delivered a very dynamic, succinct and insightful formula as to the HOW’s of determining our children’s purpose, backdropped by the guidance and wisdom Paul shared in Philippians 2:6-8 NIV:

Verse 6: Humility,—“...Who being in very nature, God did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage.”

Verse 7: Openness and Obedience,— “...Rather he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.”

Verse 8: Willingness,—“...And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death – even death on a cross.”

Gen Z’s and Their Mental and Behavioral Health

Dr. Janice Browne stunned us with her presentation of “Gen Z’s and

their Mental and Behavioral Health.” She helped us to feel less guilt about raising our young adult children by reminding us that in these last days, people (this certainly includes our children) would be lovers of selves, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, and unholy, *2 Timothy 3:2*. It was quite challenging, yet refreshing to hear Dr. Browne say that this old sinful world is “...unjust, unkind, and unfair not just for ourselves but especially for our children.” As a result, she stated that our young adults are the ‘Walking Wounded’! While it was one thing to hear this term used, it was another element entirely to hear such staggering statistics about suicide being the second leading cause of death.

Therefore, if our children were born between 1997 and 2023, they have been dubbed *Generation Z*. Along with that gruesome reality, she stated that now there is a greater awareness of mental illness. Due to social media, our young are suffering from anger and depression, sleep deprivation, anxiety, panic attacks, music fraught with dangerous and deleterious lyrics, rape and sexual abuse/incest, gender confusion and both in person and cyberspace bullying.

And just when we all thought it could not get worse – her list broadened in (just to name a few) the ab-

sence of fatherhood, grandmothers raising children, sexually-transmitted diseases, overt racism, as well as micro aggressions, pornography, rampant murders, violence, COVID, social media, and now AI (experts say this one has all the capability to destroy society as we know it).

Dr. Browne admonished us that as parents we needed to seek God first and to not shy away from seeking professional (Christian) help both for our children and ourselves. Observing Jesus’s perfect example and the example of the Father would be a non-negotiable as we try to steer our children properly. There were several notable pieces of wisdom that she shared:

a) Be patient, b) refrain from all arguments, c) set boundaries and stick to them, d) stay away from dictatorial conversations with our children, e) believe what the children are saying to us when we are dialoging with them, f) resist the temptation to be judgmental, and most of all, g) know their associates,—this will include coaches, mentors, etc., and finally, h) pray and fast with them weekly.

Where Do We Go From Here?

Praying and spilling the anointed oil from the throne room of God along the path of our journeys back to our various cities and places of abode, Pastors (Dr.) Andrea Trusty-King and Alicia Trusty-Jones prayed tag-team style sending us on our

way. This style of praying where one would begin the prayer and the other would add flavor, and spice, and finally a dash of Holy Ghost dynamite, creating an environment of intense prayers and pleadings for our young adult children. We then posted their names on a very public board for all to see and for all to petition for prayer for our young adult children. According to *1 John 5:15*, a *petition* is a formal written request addressed to a sovereign superior for a particular right or grace.

God, in Isaiah 49:25 promised to contend with those that contended with us and against us. In ending with this very poignant exercise, I would imagine that it was Jennifer’s plan primarily to serve Satan notice that we were going to be relentless, ruthless and remorseless in getting our prayers through to the Almighty. Why? Because we claimed the promise of *1 John 5:14* which states, “And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us, and if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.



Dr. Gazetta Holt-Roberts
is a member of
*Riverside Chapel in
Nashville, Tennessee*

HEALTH EVANGELISM MINISTRIES



Health in Forgiveness

Understand two of the benefits experienced when we forgive others, and discover the detriments when we maintain an unforgiving spirit.

WATCH NOW!



(<https://iamsouthcentral.org>)



Local Church Officers Training (Virtual)

Calling all leaders of the following ministries – Adventist Youth, Adventurers, Children’s Ministries, Clerks, Communications, Community Service, Deacons, Education Ministries, Elders, Health Ministries, Media Ministries, Men’s Ministries, Pathfinders, Prayer Ministries, Prison Ministries, Public Affairs and Religious Liberty Ministries, Prison Ministries, Treasury Ministries, Women’s Ministries, Young Adult Ministries!

Date: February 24, 2024

Time: 3:00 pm Central / 4:00 pm Eastern

Doors open at 2:30 pm Central / 3:30 pm Eastern

Duration: 3 hours

This virtual training is a valuable opportunity for local church officers to enhance their skills and knowledge in their respective ministries. This training will provide insights and practical tools for your role in ministry.