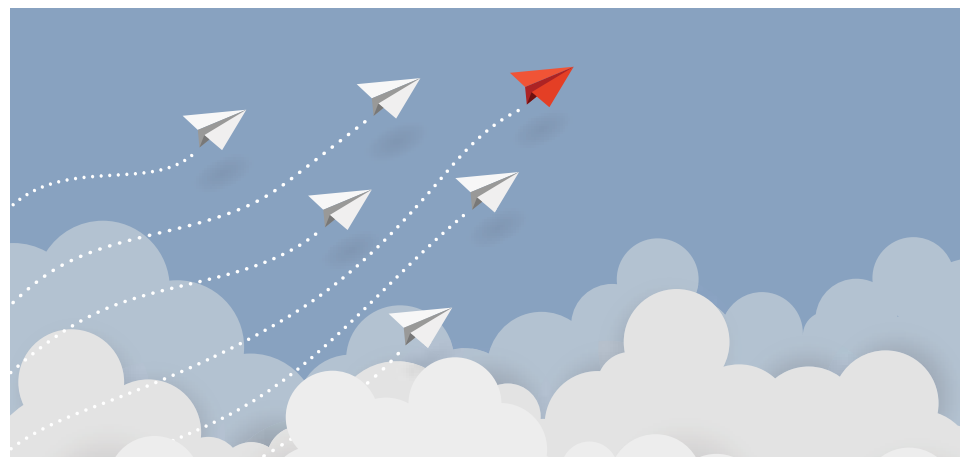


MISSION

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.

Leading Change: Phase #1

In the last edition of the Compass, we acknowledged that moving a church from a traditional departmental ministry paradigm to a Spirit-Led, Mission-Driven paradigm involves significant change—and change is generally uncomfortable. However, we also acknowledged that the fulfillment of the church’s God-given mission is much more important than the personal comfort and preferences of its parishioners. If the church’s mission-effectiveness requires that we change, then as church leaders, it is our responsibility to move the congregation forward wisely and sensitively, yet steadily and uncompromisingly. To assist pastors and church leaders in this endeavor, we will present four principles, which function as four phases, for leading congregational change. This article begins with the first phase: *SEE IT*.



See It

The fundamental role of Christian leadership is to lead people from where they are to where they are to be. It is about moving people from one place in their experience to another, whether it be spiritually, doctrinally, relationally, financially, evangelistically, or organizational-

ly. Christian leadership, then, is all about leading change. But before one begins diving out headfirst into the deep seas of congregational change, it is imperative to know where you are going—it is imperative that you, as the leader, *SEE IT*.

The goal of the first phase of lead-

Continued on page 2

THE SCC CHURCH MINISTRIES &



Leading Change: Phase #1, Continued from page 1

ing change is clarity. However, for a congregation to be clear about where the church is headed, the leader must be clear about where the church is headed. My old homiletics professor, Dr. Benjamin Reaves, used to say, “If it’s a mist in the pulpit, it’s a fog in the pew!” Leadership needs to SEE IT. ‘Seeing it’ is about having a clear picture of the preferred future in mind. There is no haziness or fuzziness or guesswork; instead, there’s clarity, certainty, and conviction. Seeing it is about knowing where the church needs to go and how it needs to get there. A word frequently used to describe this is vision.

So how do you ‘see it’? How do you get a vision of where the church needs to go and how the church needs to get there?

Vision Comes from God

The first step toward ‘seeing it’ is to understand that vision comes from God. It was God who told Noah to build an ark in preparation for the flood—that was not Noah’s idea. It was God who directed Abraham to leave Ur of the Chaldees and promised to make of him a great nation—that was not Abraham’s idea. It was God who revealed the battle plan for the battle of Jericho to Joshua—that was not Joshua’s idea. It was God who promised the apostles that He would pour out the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost—that was not the apostles’ idea. Unlike business strategists and corporate CEO’s who look to human ambition and ability to plot and plan the future, spiritual leaders



recognize that Christ is the Head of the church, and they look to Him for direction and guidance and vision.

Just like with Noah, Abraham, Joshua, the apostles, and all the other spiritual leaders whose stories are chronicled in God’s Word, there is also something specific that God has in mind for you and your church at this particular point in time, and the first step toward “seeing it” is knowing the Source from which it comes. In the King James Version Proverbs 29:18 reads, “Where there is no vision, the people perish.” However, in the New King James Version the word ‘revelation’ is used in the place of the word ‘vision,’ which highlights the divine origin of the enterprise. In other words, vision comes from God as a revelation from God.

This means that the spiritual leader’s initial task is to look to God

to reveal His vision. This will involve seeking and searching, and seasons of fasting and prayer. It will include looking for God’s leading, listening for God’s voice, and waiting for God’s word. Begin a Bible study or preaching series on God’s mission and vision for the church. Call the congregation together for periods of discussion and prayer. But remember, your job is not to create or generate a vision. Vision comes from God. Rick Warren likens the task to surfing. It is not about working to create new waves—it is about seeing the wave God is creating and learning to hop on!

Assess the Situation

To assist in discerning where God wants a congregation to go, it is often helpful to spend time assessing where the congregation currently is. For example, Moses knew where



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MISSION DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

the Children of Israel were when God spoke to him from the burning bush about leading them into the land of Canaan—they were withering in slavery in Egypt. Accordingly, Samuel knew where the nation was when God told him to anoint David as the next king of Israel—they were being governed by a king whom the LORD had already rejected. In both situations God’s vision for leadership was for them to lead the people from where they were to where He wanted them to be.

The salient point is, what God wants to do and where He wants to go, is frequently in relationship to where His people currently are. Therefore, assessing the situation, considering where your congregation currently is—in spiritual apathy, in works-oriented legalism, in debt, in divorce, in addiction, in a food desert, in a community with an exceedingly high recidivism rate and an exceedingly low literacy rate—may begin sensitizing you to where God wants your congregation to be.

There are various tools to aid church leaders in assessing their congregation and their community. For church assessments, we highly

recommend the North American Division Evangelism Institute’s (NADEI) Natural Church Development Survey. It processes a congregation according to eight key areas of church health and provides a profile report describing the church’s strengths and areas of growth. More information may be accessed at: <https://www.nadei.org/nadequipping/natural-church-development>. For community assessments, our Church Ministries and Mission Development Associate Director, Pastor Jeffery Watson, is available to assist church leaders in using the MissionInsite demographic mapping database. Pastor Watson can be reached at jwatson@scc-sda.org or at 615.226.6500.

Define the Vision

As you spend time in prayer, study God’s Word, and assess your situation, we are confident that God will begin revealing His plan—because that is what He has promised to do! (See Psalm 32:8; Proverbs 3:5–6; Isaiah 30:21; Jeremiah 29:11; Joel 2:28-29; Amos 3:7; Matthew 7:7–11; James 1:5.) And when He does, the Bible says, “Write the vision and make it plain on tablets, that he may run who reads it” (Habakkuk 2:2,

NKJV). In other words, spell it out. Document what God has put on your heart. Write it down. Clarify exactly where you believe God is calling the congregation to go. Define the vision.

God may be calling your congregation to start a school, or to plant a church, or to engage every member in ministry according to their spiritual gifts. At first the revelation of God’s vision might be as general as “I sense God is calling us to focus on the needs in our community.” But over time it may become as specific as “I am convicted that God is calling our church to build a daycare—and to subsidize the cost, so that free daycare can be provided for the single mothers in our zip code. Whatever God’s vision is, Christian leadership is about leading people from where they are to where God wants them to be, and it begins with the leader being clear about it—you need to ‘see it.’



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

HEALTH EVANGELISM MINISTRIES



Spotlight Cataract Surgery

Discover some amazing history concerning cataract surgery and the African American

WATCH NOW!



How comfortable are we? Right now, in your community, a mother must tell her child that they have nothing to eat. How comfortable are we? Right now, a war veteran is homeless in the very country for which he was willing to die. How comfortable are we? Right now, millions of children in the United States are living in poverty, in substandard housing, without enough to eat, wearing dirty clothes, sleeping on couches or on the floor or outside. How comfortable are we? Right now, there are elderly men and women who do not have enough to eat. They have no money to cool their homes in the summer nor heat them in the winter. They have no money for prescriptions and no way to get to the clinic. How comfortable are we? All around us, in our very communities, there are people who are poverty stricken and poorly educated.

How comfortable are we? Well, I hope we are uncomfortable; uncomfortable with our comfort; uncomfortable living in our nice homes while someone in our community has to sleep on the streets or in a

home that should be condemned; uncomfortable with the food we throw out because we don't like the way it tastes or because we got too much on our plates; uncomfortable with our closets full of clothes and shoes and all our accessories; uncomfortable because day after day we pass by people who fit the Bible's description of "the least of these." People who play life's game with the hand they are dealt. People who could do better if they just had a chance. People who are caught in a vicious cycle of poverty, drugs, poor education, unemployment, broken homes, and broken dreams. How comfortable are we? I hope, uncomfortable.

The Community Engagement Team is uncomfortable. We are uncomfortable with having only limited resources to help those less fortunate. We are uncomfortable with having to turn needy people away. We are uncomfortable with not being able to make a difference in a marked way. Individually, our churches do not always have but our lack does not remove the need. We suspect that other churches in our communities are in

a similar predicament.

Fortunately, there is a simple solution. Pool your resources (financial and human) with other churches or agencies who are already meeting the needs of the disadvantaged. In this world gone wrong, with its mixed-up value system of self-first all others last, we as an Adventist community cannot buy in to that philosophy. We cannot ignore the poor, the hungry, the uneducated, and the homeless of this world. They are Jesus's children too. If we are to impact the world for Christ, we must not just love in word but in deeds of compassion for those in need. Through seeking community partnerships, we can have what is needed to minister effectively.

One suggestion I have is to partner with your local Salvation Army. In past years, I have had the wonderful privilege of getting to know the leadership of the Salvation Army and saw firsthand its impressive social ministry. The Salvation Army is all about meeting the needs of those less fortunate. Since the late 1800's the Salvation Army has been on the front lines of ministering to those in need. They have not become comfortable.

Salvation is always the goal of every church (or should be); however, the Salvation Army understands that the homeless do not care how much they know until they know how much they care. They understand that it is hard to hear a sermon when a person is hungry. Therefore, your church might consider partnering with the Salvation Army. They serve well and for years they have been "doing the most good" (their ministry slogan). As a partner, we too can "do the most good."



Pastor Troy Brand, Co-Leader, Community Engagement Ministry



Everything Men's Ministries

Isn't it interesting what God does in your life when you think you are at a disadvantage? Many men have had comparable stories of fatherless homes or fathers in homes who did not seem to be engaged in the lives of their children. Statistics show that because of this, many result in living very risky, incomplete, and unsatisfied lives. Yes, many take a vow to not be that same kind of dad and thus have influence. The truth is, even as men, we desire to have someone to look up to; that is, at least once ego is removed. I do believe however, that these life experiences help men to be the best participants, contributors, and even leaders in Men's Ministry. They are men who realize the need for the type of fellowship that only one man can bring to another. You know, the relationship in which brothers can be 100% vulnerable and hold each other accountable. Imagine having an enthusiast who is yet an instruc-

tor; a supporter and a director; a competitor but always a teammate; a brother like him who wants to follow God and is willing to take the walk because he knows the struggle is real and does not dare to leave his brother behind. Men's Ministry is the platform that allows brothers to know they can have the aforementioned and more.

Greetings, my name is DaRon Barfield, leader of Men's Ministry at the Orchard Park Church (OPC) in Chattanooga, TN. Here, at OPC we have developed ways to invite men to participate in ministry through online events, in-person fellowship, and even Sabbath study. Our mission is:

"To keep God's priestly plan in our homes, churches, communities, and marketplace; fostering relationships and extending knowledge to the generations to come until Christ's return."

A small group it may be, but it is tightly woven through relation-

ships, communication, activity, and most importantly, prayer. We try to concentrate on the things that matter in the daily lives of men, such as religion, family, finance, protection, and provision. We have found that the most intriguing and inclusive way to break down walls is through testimony. Through this vehicle men realize how many of our lives are either the same or have been the same at some point or another, thus realizing we have been on many of the same journeys. The lives of others now become relative. We are seeking to touch the lives of men, not just for a season, but for a lifetime. Doing so allows us to create memories, and more importantly, to disciple one another in love and strength to be prepared for Christ's soon return. It is our goal to break the stereotype that men only get together for food, fun, and games. Although that is part of our platform here at OPC, we see the need for spiritual uplifting and support as well, not just to hold on to, but to share and pass along to our young adult men and teenage men as well.

Men's Ministries requires heart, commitment, time, relationship, and especially prayer. We know every man will not see the value of this ministry, but we are extremely optimistic that the Holy Spirit will guide men to another male figure in their life, one who is serious about God and his soul salvation as a friend or mentor. It is our goal that no man feels the pain of dying alone – without Jesus. We have determined to be about our Father's business. Not just doing Men's Ministry but being Everything Men's Ministry!

"Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity" (Psalm 133:1).

DaRon Barfield
*Men's Ministry Leader,
Orchard Park SDA Church*



Teaching The Importance of Prayer



Sabbath, February 23rd, 2024, the South Central Conference had its virtual Officers' Training on zoom, and it was a blessing. There were several hundred people online to experience just what the Lord would do for each department. The breakout rooms were provided so that each department could present their presentations in training the members.

With excitement and anticipation, Prayer Ministry was one of the training sessions and God truly blessed. The members who attended had questions concerning prayer, its functions, and just how to pray. The emphasis was on the importance of prayer, having every church in the conference as a "house of prayer" and the role of the Prayer Coordinator.

The Prayer Ministry presentation shared the importance of prayer and how it strengthens your relationship with God and with one another. From the book *Spirit Baptism and Prayer*, the author writes,

"Prayer is as essential to our Christian lives and the work of God on earth, as breathing is to everyday living. If one refuses or is unable to breathe, his life ceases. If one refuses to pray for himself, he will be very weak spiritually and ultimately cease to be a Christian. If believers neglect to pray for the lost, their efforts to win them

to Jesus Christ will be of no avail. It requires prayer to breathe spiritual life into our souls and to those who are spiritually dead. Prayer is required to sustain spiritual life and advance God's kingdom."

Prayer is the most important work in the kingdom of God. It is a labor for which there is no substitute in the kingdom of God. The psalmist writes in Psalm 100:4,

"Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him and bless his name."

One of the elements of prayer is "praise." It is honoring and giving God all the honor and all the glory. God rejoices in our praise. We praise God for who He is and what He has done! Psalm 34:1 declares,

"I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth."

We praise God because He deserves our praises. What is the greatest thing God can give us? More of Himself! What we all want is more of Jesus in our lives!

Christ actually meant for prayer to be the great power by which His church should do its work. Because of the church's indifference to prayer and power, the church has learned to do work without the Holy Spirit's presence and the lack of prayer.

In the Prayer Ministry session, we

discussed the job descriptions of a Prayer Coordinator. We asked the question, "Is this just something I want to do? Or is this something God is calling me to do?" Being a Prayer Coordinator is a calling from God because everyone is not called for this office! A person must have a strong personal prayer life, must have spiritual maturity, must be able to organize, encourage and give leadership for a prayer emphasis.

Truly God blessed in the prayer session of the officers' meeting. It was highly informative, and a great deal of information was given out. The objective of this session was not to think of prayer ministry as just another office or another department! Prayer is the engine that makes the entire church move and grow! Prayer is something that every Christian should do without exception! Prayer was ordained by God so that we might be able to commune with Him. Since prayer is ordained by God, we should do everything we can to commune with Him every moment of every day.



Curtis Hall
SCC Prayer Ministry
Leader

PRISON MINISTRY



Let me begin this article expressing our gratitude for the service of Pastor Ricky Wade for his leadership as our Prison Ministries Leader. On behalf of Pastor Furman Fordham, myself, and the rest of our team we wish Pastor Wade and his family God's richest blessings as they transition from SCC.

Now, as I take the leadership role, I want to help facilitate a process that helps with making sure that our prison ministries throughout our territory cover the gamut of possibilities for the diversity of needs for those who are incarcerated. It is my goal to work with pastors, leaders, and churches to formulate and maintain productive prison ministries.

What should prison ministry look like?

Prison ministry is largely about evangelism and discipleship, and it provides many opportunities to show (and experience) God's love. What are some common areas of prison ministry?

1. In-Prison Ministry
2. Supporting the Families of Prisoners
3. Working with Victims of Crime
4. Helping Prisoners Re-enter the Community
5. Prison Reform
6. Prayer

1. IN-PRISON MINISTRY

Prison-time can be a period of great despair, idleness, and anxiety. Fueling this is loss of freedom, separation from family and friends, and living among potentially dangerous people. During imprisonment, many come to accept the reality of their sin.

- Visitation: Some ministries involve Christians regularly visiting the prisons and forming friendships. For some prisoners these

are the only visitors they get. This is especially true when the family wants to sever the relationship.

- Providing church services and/or Bible studies: Some ministries organize regular in-prison church services. Others organize or facilitate Bible studies among the prisoners.
- Mentoring
- Teaching skills and preparing the prisoner for re-entry into society
- Letter Writing: Some ministries facilitate letter writing between prisoners and Christians on the 'outside.' One convert wrote "I didn't get letters from the bartenders, the hoodlums and all the wise guys I hung around with. I got letters from Christians I didn't even know"
- Equipping and encouraging prisoners to do outreach to other prisoners. The best evangelists to prisoners are fellow prisoners (or ex-prisoners)
- Humanitarian Aid - In some parts of the world, Christians are providing clothes, bedding, and other necessities to improve the quality of prison life.

2. SUPPORTING the FAMILIES of the INCARCERATED

The family (and friends) of prisoners also suffer. Spouses, partners, or other relatives may be left to take the extra responsibility and financial stress of raising the prisoner's children.

The children themselves must deal with potentially tragic disruptions to their lives – adjusting to a new living environment, being separated from their Mom or Dad, and living with the stigma of having a parent in prison. It is well known that children of prisoners are more likely to engage in criminal behavior further down the track.

Ministries with the families of prisoners may include –

- Family visitation and support
- Organizing camps for the children
- Providing mentorship for teens and young adults.

3. WORKING With VICTIMS of CRIME

If you have ever been a victim of crime or a harsh injustice, you will appreciate the importance of loving and supporting the victims. This is an area that is mainly untapped when considering potential opportunities for ministry.

4. HELPING PRISONERS RE-ENTER the COMMUNITY

Many former prisoners cannot adjust to life on the outside and return to prison after a few years. Their problems include:

- Difficulties finding work
- Financial struggles
- Being unwelcomed by family/friends
- The temptation to mix with bad influencers.

We can help by – 'adopting' them into our church community, helping them find work, mentoring, visitation, helping them re-establish and perhaps re-invent themselves.

5. PRISON REFORM

The Bible says to "Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute" (Proverbs 31:8).

As Seventh-day Adventist Christians, we can partner with other Christian organizations in assuring that our fellow human beings are treated fairly.

6. PRAYER

It is essential that all the above ministries are held up in prayer. All prison ministries need more prayer warriors.

These are just a few areas that we can focus on in developing prison ministries in our territory. All of our prison ministries should not look the same. There are unlimited possibilities for churches of all sizes to carve out just the right niche.



Pastor
Jeffery L. Watson, MDiv.
Assoc. Director, Church Ministries and Mission Development

South Central Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

Women's Ministries

Serving: Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi,
Northwest Florida



MISSION STATEMENT

Women's Ministries exists to nurture, empower, and develop Women's Small Groups throughout South Central Conference and provide:

- Spiritual, emotional, and social nurturing to all women
- Leadership training and development
- Mentoring for young women, girls, and teens
- Resources for Women's Ministries leaders of the local churches

MOTTO

Prayer, Praise, Perseverance

GOAL

To build God's kingdom through **D.R.E.A.M.S.** (Discipleship, Reclamation, Evangelism, Affirmation, Mentoring, and Servant-Leadership) undergird our Pastors and support the mission of the local church through new member small group retention ministry.

South Central Conference Women's Ministries State Directors

Mrs. Judy Harris ~ Kentucky ~ Tennessee ~
Mrs. Shondolyn Richardson ~ Central Alabama
Mrs. Estefania Howell ~ North Alabama
Elder Dorothy Jones ~ South Alabama
Elder Barbara J. Walker ~ Mississippi
Elder Marilyn Wallace ~ NW Florida

Women's Small Groups ~ Ministry in Real-Time