

GENERAL CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

THREE STRATEGIC ISSUES

A WORLD SURVEY

A Report Prepared for the
Strategic Planning Commission
General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

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GENERAL CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

OBJECTIVES OF THE FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

A WORLD SURVEY

The General Conference has developed a five-year strategic plan for 2001-2005. The Strategic Plan Committee, formed to monitor this plan, has set out a number of goals under three main headings: (1) Quality of Personal and Church Life, (2) Unity in the World Church, and (3) Growth of the Church. Each of these three areas is supported by a number of behavioral objectives.

In order to determine if these objectives are being met, it is necessary to collect pertinent data. To accomplish this task the planners commissioned a research team at Andrews University to collect, analyze, and evaluate the data that would determine the extent to which the goals and objectives are being reached. This team is centered in the Institute of Church Ministry, a component of the Seventh-day Theological Seminary, with consultants from the university Behavioral Sciences Department and the Institute of World Missions. To avoid awkwardness, this report will employ the term ICM each time the research team is mentioned.

The Survey Instrument

To collect the necessary information it was necessary to construct a questionnaire. This was accomplished by first examining the goals and objectives as follows:

1. Wholeness as a quality of church life demonstrated by:

- a. Members whose lives demonstrate joy of salvation and anticipation of the next world
- b. Weekly group Bible study for all ages with appropriate curriculum
- c. Weekly corporate worship
- d. Personal, family, and group prayer life
- e. Training for discipleship, witnessing, and involvement in local church activity
- f. Awareness of and participation in the world-wide work of the church
- g. Nurturing members of all ages according to their diverse talents and needs
- h. Adventists who are seen as model citizens in their communities and whose mental, physical, and spiritual life values are coupled with compassion

2. Unity as a quality of life demonstrated by:

- a. Cohesiveness of doctrine: world church approval of Bible-based, Christ-centered, fundamental beliefs
- b. Togetherness of believers: creation and preservation of community which embraces culture and ethnic diversity
- c. Cohesiveness of organization: distinct local and global identity arising from the world church system of structure and organization

3. Growth as a consequence of rootedness in Christ demonstrated by:

- a. Members with rich spiritual experience and commitment to active witness
- b. Increasing accession and retention rates in local churches
- c. A positive impact of the Adventist presence within a community
- d. The number of churches established in unentered areas
- e. Transmission of Adventist legacy and mission to succeeding generations

The next task was to construct questions that would measure these objectives. The research team at ICM met with chair Mike Ryan of the Strategy Committee for a day. Going over the objectives one by one, they wrote sample questions. These questions then went through a number of drafts with each team member, Ryan, and even Jan Paulsen, President of the General Conference, making suggestions. The final form of the survey contains 97 questions, organized under the three main goals with a few extra demographic questions. The final draft was approved by the General Conference and translated into French, Korean, Russian, and Spanish. Each of the five language versions was professionally printed in color-coded copies. A copy of the survey is given on pages 17 to 20.

The Research Design

It was decided that the data would be collected through the union conferences/missions throughout the world field. It would be necessary to have a liaison person in each union who would receive, distribute, collect, and return the surveys to ICM. This task was assigned to the secretary of each union and placed under the general supervision of Matthew Bediako, Secretary of the General Conference. In October of 2001, Elder Bediako wrote to each union secretary giving a general description of the assignment and informing that official that instructions in how to proceed would be coming from ICM. A copy of the letter can be found on page 21. He also informed all division secretaries so that they would be familiar with the proceedings.

ICM assigned the huge task of communicating with the union secretaries to graduate Ph.D. assistant, Petr Cincala. The first step was to send a letter to each secretary. Whenever possible, ICM has communicated by e-mail. The secretaries were asked to send a list of all the ministers currently pastoring churches in their unions. A copy of the letter from November 2001

can be found on page 22. All but three of the unions eventually sent in lists of names—some after repeated contacts.

From these lists ICM randomly selected 3333 names in a manner that would make the number chosen for each union follow the same proportion as the number of names submitted by each union was to the total of all names submitted. For each pastor a packet was prepared. It contained three copies of the questionnaire in the language requested and a letter of instructions and endorsement by Elder Bedialo. The letter was sent on General Conference stationery. A copy is given on page 23.

ICM then prepared boxes for each of the liaison secretaries of the world union conferences/missions. The boxes each contained a letter of instructions and the packets for each pastor in that field. The boxes were shipped in February and March of 2002 by airmail using the United States Postal Service. The union secretary was requested to distribute the packets to the pastors whose names were written on the envelopes, either by mail or through another contact such as a local conference/mission leader. A copy of this letter is given on page 24.

The pastor, upon receiving the packet found the letter of endorsement and the three questionnaires in the envelope. The pastor was asked to fill out one of the surveys personally and give the other two, one each, to the most prominent male leader and the most prominent female leader in the congregation. Where a pastor had more than one congregation, he/she was asked to select the largest one for distributing the two surveys to the lay leaders but to generalize his/her personal answers to all of the congregations in the district. The pastor was instructed to collect the surveys from the two lay members and return all three questionnaires to the contact person from whom they had been received. The contact person returned these to the union conference/mission executive secretary who was responsible for shipping all surveys back to the Institute of Church Ministry for processing and analyses.

Processing Returns

A total of 9999 surveys were mailed (including both pastors and lay leaders). Many e-mail reminders were sent, both by ICM and the Office of Strategic Planning at the General Conference (a sample letter may be found on page 25). Numerous individual problems have been dealt with, including surveys not arriving to the designated place. By October 1, 2002, 3646 usable questionnaires had been received—a rate of about 36 percent. The returned questionnaires were coded for union conference/mission and entered into a Microsoft Excel computer data file.

Appropriate analyses of the file were performed using the Statistical Packages for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Most of the questions called for percentages to be given. For these, means (average scores) have been calculated. A smaller group of questions asked the respondent to choose an option out of four or five possibilities or to tell how many times in a year certain

events had been held. For these frequencies in both raw numbers and in percentages have been supplied. The tables on pages 26 to 30 list either frequencies or means for all questions in the order that they appear in the survey form

However, the purpose of this study is to determine how well the questions relate to a specific objective. To accomplish this, ICM matched each of the objectives of the Strategic Issues Plan with question items which seem to measure that objective. This output is given on pages 11 to 16. For comparison purposes, this report will also list the grand means of the questions for each objective and underneath these the means of the items comprising that objective in descending order. Means of percentages can vary from 0 to 100 percent. Respondents were asked to estimate the percentage of the members in their congregations who do certain activities or who would agree with certain statements.

Note that these are subjective perceptions rather than actual measurements of individual members which would be impossible in some of these areas. Nevertheless, the data is valuable, especially when coming from across the world field, in comparing the strengths of the respective objectives. Thus, the relative accomplishment of each strategic objective can be quickly seen. Some questions are used to measure more than one objective.

For ease of reading and interpretation, pages 5 to 10 list the means for each objective by descending order within the area to which they belong. Here, all percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole percent. The items which were selected for each objective are also included, but to avoid cluttering the page with numbers, the means for the individual items are not listed there. The interested reader can find all these in the tables on pages 11 to 16. In all cases the questionnaire items have been abbreviated to fit into the space on the tables. The full wording of the questions (which are identified by question number in the tables) can be found by consulting the copy of the actual questionnaire located on pages 17 to 20.

Unfortunately, there is a problem with questions 68 to 76 in the data. The directions for that section are: "How many times a year are the following items included in your church schedule?" This seems clear, but because the respondent had been answering all the previous questions by inserting a percentage, some continued to write in percentages on these questions also. While it is evident that this is the case, it was not possible to determine exactly how many of each type were given. Therefore, ICM has not used this section to measure the objectives as shown in the attached analysis. However, ICM has created a mean which combines both percentages and real numbers. These means are useful only to estimate the relative strength of questions 68 to 76 with each other and not with other questions in the survey.

Measuring the Quality of Personal and Church Life

Members whose lives demonstrate and illustrate the joy of salvation, restoration, and anticipation of the world to come

Mean = 72%

Items = Assurance of salvation; Happy marriages; Apply Christian values to all areas of life; Salvation through Jesus alone

Weekly corporate worship

Mean = 57%

Items = Sabbath worship attendance; Other Adventist religious meetings
Also 37% incorporate diversity of worship services for different groups most of the time or almost always

Weekly group Bible study for all ages

Mean = 51%

Items = Attend Sabbath school regularly; Participate in weekly group Bible study

Model Citizens in the community whose mental, physical, and spiritual life values are coupled with compassion and service

Mean = 46%

Items = Social life outside the church; Happy marriages; Abstain from alcohol, drugs, and tobacco; Practice vegetarianism; Exercise on a regular basis; Hold political office

Development of personal, family, and group prayer life

Mean = 45%

Items = Daily personal devotions; Family worship; Read Bible regularly; Read Ellen White at least monthly; Attended family seminars in last two years; Attended health seminars in last two years

Nurturing members of all ages according to their diverse talents and needs

Mean = 37%

Items = Serve the church according to their spiritual gifts; Help with church meetings or social events aimed at young adults; Help with church meetings or social events aimed at unmarried people

Regular training for discipleship, witnessing, and involvement in local church activity

Mean = 37%

Items = Have taken witnessing training course in last two years; Actively witness to non-members; Help with meetings or social events aimed at young adults; Hold an office or service position in the church; Give a faithful tithe; Support local congregation with offerings; Helped with Community Services Center; Worked in centers to feed the hungry; Helped with health seminars; Helped with family-type seminars; Invited a non-member to church; Helped with evangelistic meetings or Bible seminars; Gave Bible studies

Awareness of and participation in the world wide work of the church

Mean = 34%

Items = Contribute to various mission projects; Participation in mission programs outside of own union; Agree that Adventist church has a special message to proclaim God's last message to the world

Members of the world church seem to be doing the best in their subjective experience of Christian life and the joy of salvation. They also are near the median position in corporate Sabbath worship. But then the percentages begin to trail off. They report only about a third are involved in spiritual gifts, nurturing other members, active witnessing, or participating in the world-wide work of the church.

Unity in the World Church

Cohesiveness in doctrine

Mean = 91%

Items = Seventh-day Sabbath; Six-day creation several thousand years ago; Nearness of literal Second Advent; Death as a sleep; Authority of Ellen White's writings; Sanctuary and judgment in 1844; Salvation through Christ alone

Cohesiveness of organization

Mean = 75%

Items = Tithe to local conference—offerings as able; Fair financial structure to support world-wide work; World church organization inspired by God; Flexibility in church standards by world divisions

Togetherness of believers in all-inclusive community

Mean = 45%

Items = Weekly group Bible study; Exercise of spiritual gifts; Faithful tithing; Support congregation with regular offerings; Read *Adventist Review*, Read union or division paper

Also, the percentages that report that the practice occurs in their congregation most of the time or almost always

62% Making people from minority groups feel welcome

55 % Sermons that emphasize love for all peoples, even “enemies”

54% Including people of different backgrounds in congregational leadership

There is strong support for fundamental Adventist doctrines. About three-fourths also affirm the structure, polity, and financial policies of the church. But only about half seem to be active in building all-inclusive community.

Growth as a Consequence of Rootedness in Christ

Increasing accession and retention rates in local churches

Mean = 63%

Items = Reasons why people might want to join your local church (Location, Friendly church, Quality of meetings, Programs for youth, Programs for unmarried and young adults, Adventist doctrines, Presenting assurance of salvation in Christ)

8% Attendance decreased by 10% or more
7% Attendance decreased by 5% to 9%
27% Attendance stable (-5% to +5%)
28% Attendance increased by 5% to 9%
29% Attendance increased by 10% or more

Transmission of the church's legacy and mission to succeeding generations

Mean = 42%

Items = Help with meetings and social events for young adults; Worked with teens in the church, Worked with young adults in the church, Percentage of youth 18 years or under who: Attend church weekly, Attend Sabbath school regularly, Attend other religious meetings regularly, Participate in outreach, Hold church office or service position, Are enrolled in Adventist schools, Are members of Pathfinders or other youth group, Attended a church-sponsored youth camp, Are happy with Adventist church, Raise questions about Adventist teachings, Will probably stay in church as adults

33% operate a church school

Members who have a rich spiritual experience and a commitment to active witness

Mean = 36%

Items = Have daily personal devotions; Have assurance of salvation; Helped with Community Services Center; Worked in centers to feed the hungry; Helped with health seminars; Helped with family type seminars; Invited a non-member to church; Helped with evangelistic meetings or Bible seminars; Gave Bible studies; Work with teens in the church; Work with young adults

A positive impact of the Seventh-day Adventist presence in the community

Mean =30%

Items = Helped with Community Services Center; Worked in centers to feed the hungry; Helped with health seminars; Helped with family type seminars; Invited a non-member to church; Helped with evangelistic meetings or Bible seminars; Gave Bible studies

The number of churches established in unentered areas

This figure could not be ascertained by survey research. However, the General Conference Office of Global Mission reports that in 2001 2,099 new churches and 2,702 new companies were established in previously unentered areas.

Churches are apparently growing in membership and attendance—57% report increases in attendance in the previous two years. About 42% have programs to help retain the youth and young adults in the church. But only about a third are active in witnessing and are making a positive impact in the community.

Conclusions

In its strategic planning process for the present quinquennium, the General Conference has focused on three major areas, subdivided into sixteen specific objectives. The purpose of this research project is to determine the extent to which the world church is presently meeting these objectives. Thus the results reveal to what degree church leaders need to focus on the various areas and specific objectives. These data also supply a baseline that can be compared with future studies to ascertain the degree of improvement or lack of it for each goal.

There is room for improvement on nearly all of the objectives. The strongest area is in unity of doctrine where over 90% of those reporting are firmly committed to Adventist teachings that are Bible-based and Christ-centered. However, it should be noted that while 81% accept the authority of Ellen White's writings, about half see a need for reinterpretation of them for today's world, and about a third believe that there may be more than one interpretation of the sanctuary doctrine.

Two other areas scored comparatively high where approximately three-fourths of the findings showed agreement with the church's organizational structure and that our members live joyful lives with assurance of salvation. This still presents the challenge that about a fourth of our members do not agree with church structure, or that they do not experience the joy of salvation.

Over 60% were positive about factors that would lead non-members to want to join their congregations. Winning converts is obviously one of the key objectives in the Strategic Plan. Here the focus was on attendance because actual membership statistics can be obtained more accurately through official records rather than through surveys. It is encouraging to note that 57% of the congregations increased their attendance by at least 5% in the last two years. But 16% decreased by at least 5% in the same time period, and another 27% remained stable.

A major concern must be that only 57% attend weekly corporate worship on a regular basis, and only about half take part in any group Bible study, including Sabbath school.

Less than half are currently involved in the other objectives. In the 40% range are objectives such as being model citizens in the community, having personal and family worship, forming an all-inclusive community to support the local congregation, and transmission of the church's legacy and mission to succeeding generations—an ominous sign for the future of Adventism.

Even further down in the 30% range are items such as nurturing members of all ages according to their diverse talents and needs; training for discipleship, witnessing, and involvement in local church activity; participation in the world-wide work of the church; having a commitment to participation in active witnessing and outreach activities in the community; and making a positive impact of the Seventh-day Adventist presence in the community by participating in social services, evangelistic activities, or felt-needs seminars.

How is the church doing comparatively in the three major areas addressed by the Strategic Plan? If the means of each item under each of the areas are averaged, relative success can be determined.

First of all is the area of Unity in the World Church (mean = 71.5%).

Next in order is Growth as a Consequence of Rootedness in Christ (mean = 45.9%)

In last place is Quality of Life—Personal and Church (mean = 45.1%)

What overall themes seem to be the most cause for concern? Different people might find diverse areas that particularly impact on their fields of labor. ICM notes three areas that especially beg for attention:

1. Individual Bible study and prayer where the somewhat lower average contrasts with the high rating for salvation and assurance.

2. Training for witnessing and discipleship where only a minority of members are active.

3. Making an impact of Adventism on the community where only slightly over a fourth of members are engaged.

Church leaders at all levels who give careful study to this report will find abundant challenges and ample directions for work in accomplishing the goals of the Strategic Plan for 2000 to 2005.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Strategic Issue #1: Quality of Life–Personal and Church

1. Members whose lives demonstrate and illustrate the joy of salvation, restoration, and anticipation of the world to come

		Mean
FA1.1	total 11,23,28,44	71.60
Q44	Salvation only in Christ	94.65
Q11	Assurance of salvation	69.19
Q23	Happy marriage	62.57
Q28	Apply Christian values	57.82

2. Weekly group Bible study for all ages with appropriate curriculum

		Mean
FA1.2	total 4,6	50.93
Q4	Sabbath school	66.91
Q6	Group Bible study	32.71

3. Weekly corporate worship

		Mean
FA1.3	total 3,5	57.47
Q3	Sabbath worship	75.93
Q5	Other meetings	37.28

Q80	Diversity worship	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
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Valid	never	494	13.5	14.4	14.4
	occasionally	1062	29.1	31.0	45.4
	about half the time	627	17.2	18.3	63.6
	most of the time	679	18.6	19.8	83.4
	almost always	568	15.6	16.6	100.0
	Total	3430	94.1	100.0	
Missing	System	216	5.9		
Total		3646	100.0		

4. Development of personal, family, and group prayer life

		Mean
FA1.4	total 1,2,7,8,14,15	45.32
Q7	Read Bible weekly	59.36
Q1	Daily devotions	55.12
Q2	Family worship	46.32
Q8	Read Ellen White	41.09
Q15	Attend health seminar	34.77
Q14	Attend family seminar	33.47

5. Regular training for discipleship, witnessing, and involvement in local church activity

		Mean
FA1.5	total 9,10,16,18,19,20,48,49 ,50,51,52,53,54	37.13
Q19	Faithful tithing	60.71
Q20	Local offerings	57.65
Q18	Hold office/position	43.89
Q10	Active witnessing	40.95
Q53	Help evangelism	38.67
Q52	Invited non-member	38.08
Q16	Help with meetings	36.03
Q9	Witness training	30.00
Q48	Community service	30.33
Q54	Gave bible studies	28.39
Q50	Help health seminars	24.01
Q51	Help family seminars	23.68
Q49	Feed the hungry	20.81

6. Awareness of and participation in the worldwide work of the church

		Mean
FA1.6	total 21,22,38	34.33
Q38	Adventist special	90.43
Q21	Support missions	43.50
Q22	Participate mission projects	20.72

7. Nurturing members of all ages according to their diverse talents and needs

		Mean
FA1.7	total 13,16,17	37.73
Q13	Gift-oriented service	47.88
Q16	Help with meetings	36.03
Q17	Help singles ministry	25.57

8. Seventh-day Adventists who are and are perceived to be model citizens in the community and whose mental, physical, and spiritual life values are coupled with compassion and service

		Mean
FA1.8	total 12,23,25,26,27,29	46.40
Q25	Abstinence	80.53
Q23	Happy marriage	62.57
Q12	Socialize non-members	49.99
Q26	Vegetarianism	34.52
Q27	Exercise regularly	32.74
Q29	Hold political office	6.67

Strategic Issue #2: Unity in the World-wide Church

1. Cohesiveness in doctrine

		Mean
FA2.1	total 30,31,32,33,34,44	91.04
Q30	Sabbath	96.21
Q44	Salvation only in Christ	94.65
Q33	Death a sleep	93.32
Q32	Second advent	93.14
Q31	Creation in 6 days	92.83
Q36	Sanctuary and 1844	85.79
Q34	EGW authority	81.07

2. Togetherness of believers

		Mean
FA2.2	total 6,13,19,20,45,46	44.93
Q19	Faithful tithing	60.71
Q20	Local offerings	57.65

Q13	Gift-oriented service	47.88
Q46	Read union papers	33.36
Q45	Adventist review	33.17
Q6	Group Bible study	32.71

Q77	Sermons on love for all	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	never	37	1.0	1.0	1.1
	occasionally	779	21.4	21.6	22.7
	about half the time	790	21.7	21.9	46.0
	most of the time	1054	28.9	29.3	75.6
	almost always	940	25.8	26.1	100.0
	Total	3600	98.7	100.0	
Missing	System	46	1.3		
Total		3646	100.0		

Q78	Minority welcome	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	never	110	3.0	3.1	3.5
	occasionally	671	18.4	18.9	22.4
	about half the time	508	13.9	14.3	37.5
	most of the time	944	25.9	26.6	64.3
	almost always	1313	36.0	37.0	100.0
	Total	3546	97.3	100.0	
Missing	System	100	2.7		
Total		3646	100.0		

Q79	Diversity leadership	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	never	290	8.0	8.4	8.8
	occasionally	685	18.8	19.8	27.8
	about half the time	504	13.8	14.6	42.4
	most of the time	766	21.0	22.2	64.9
	almost always	1211	33.2	35.0	100.0
	Total	3457	94.8	100.0	
Missing	System	189	5.2		
Total		3646	100.0		

3. Cohesiveness of organization

		Mean
FA2.3	total 39,40,41,43	75.45
Q41	Inspired organization	86.54
Q39	Should tithe/offerings	80.84
Q40	Fair financial system	79.45

Q43 Flexibility of standards 49.54

Strategic Issue #3: Growth as a Consequence of Rootedness in Christ

1. Members who have a rich spiritual experience and commitment to active witness

		Mean
FA3.1	total	35.55
	48,49,50,51,52,53,54,55,56	
Q11	Assurance of salvation	69.19
Q1	Daily devotions	55.12
Q53	Help evangelism	38.67
Q52	Invited non-member	38.08
Q48	Community service	30.33
Q54	Gave bible studies	28.39
Q55	Work with youth	26.79
Q56	Work with young adults	25.21
Q50	Help health seminars	24.01
Q51	Help family seminars	23.68
Q49	Feed the hungry	20.81

2. Increasing accession and retention rates in local churches

		Mean
FA3.2	total	63.19
	81,82,83,84,85,86,87	
Q87	Join assurance of salvation	80.92
Q86	Join doctrines	72.31
Q83	Join meeting quality	70.48
Q82	Join atmosphere	65.18
Q81	Join location	55.96
Q84	Join youth programs	54.77
Q85	Join young adults	39.89

Q93	Church growth	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	10% decrease	283	7.8	8.3	8.3
	5-9% decrease	251	6.9	7.3	15.6
	about the same	936	25.7	27.3	42.9
	5-9% increase	954	26.2	27.9	70.8
	10% increase	999	27.4	29.2	100.0
	Total	3423	93.9	100.0	
Missing	System	223	6.1		
Total		3646	100.0		

3. A positive impact of the Seventh-day Adventist presence within a community

		Mean
FA3.3	total	29.65
	48,49,50,51,52,53,54	
Q53	Help evangelism	38.67
Q52	Invited non-member	38.08
Q48	Community service	30.33
Q54	Gave bible studies	28.39
Q50	Help health seminars	24.01
Q51	Help family seminars	23.68
Q49	Feed the hungry	20.81

4. The number of churches established in unentered areas

2,099 new churches and 2,702 new companies world-wide

601 new churches minus 122 churches closed equals 479 established in the 10/40 window

5. The transmission of the Church's legacy and mission to succeeding generations

		Mean
FA3.5	total	41.77
	16,55,56,57,58,59,60,61,62,63,64,65,66,67	
Q57	Youth at worship	67.28
Q65	Youth happy Adventists	65.87
Q58	Youth Sabbath school	63.02
Q67	Youth retention	60.99
Q64	Youth church camps	42.41
Q63	Pathfinders	38.22
Q16	Help with meetings	36.03
Q59	Youth meetings	35.86
Q60	Youth outreach	33.82
Q61	Youth positions	28.63
Q66	Youth questions	28.28
Q62	Youth SDA schools	27.90
Q55	Work with youth	26.79
Q56	Work with young adults	25.21

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Q97	Church school				
Valid	yes	1200	32.9	34.3	34.3
	no	2301	63.1	65.7	100.0
	Total	3501	96.0	100.0	
Missing	System	145	4.0		
Total		3646	100.0		

GENERAL CONFERENCE STRATEGIC PLAN

EVALUATION OF THREE MAJOR OUTCOMES

A number of the following questions will ask for percentages. For example, the first question asks you to estimate the number of members in your congregation who “have daily personal devotions.” Following that is a space for a percentage number. If you believe that half of your members have daily personal devotions, place “50” in the answer space. If you think that three-fourths have daily personal devotion, place a “75” in the answer space. A zero (0) would indicate that no one does that activity or has that belief; a “100” would indicate that everyone does that activity or has that belief. If the activity or material is not available in your area, place NA.

QUALITY OF PERSONAL AND CHURCH LIFE

Approximately what percentage of the members of your congregation would you estimate do the following activities? Please put a number between 0 and 100, or an “NA” if “NOT AVAILABLE” as described above. In some of the items below it may be necessary to check with another leader, such as the treasurer or personal ministries leader.

1. Have daily personal devotions _____
2. Have family worship in their home _____
3. Attend Sabbath worship services nearly every week _____
4. Attend Sabbath school nearly every week _____
5. Attend other Adventist religious meetings (e.g., prayer meeting)
nearly every week _____
6. Participate in some type of weekly group Bible study (church or homes) _____
7. Read the Bible at least a few times a week _____
8. Read the writings of Ellen G. White at least monthly _____
9. Have taken some type of witnessing training course in the last two years _____
10. Actively witness their faith to non-members (talk to, give out literature, etc) _____
11. Have assurance of salvation _____
12. Have extensive social life outside the church _____
13. Are serving in the church according to their special spiritual gifts _____
14. Attended a family seminar (marriage, parenting, etc.) in the last two years _____
15. Attended a health seminar (e.g., stress, nutrition) in the last two years _____
16. Help with church meetings (e.g., Master Guide, Sabbath school classes)
or social events aimed at young adults (20+ years) _____
17. Help with church meetings or social events aimed at unmarried people _____
18. Hold an office or some other service position in the church _____

- 19. Give a faithful tithe
- 20. Support the local congregational program with regular offerings
- 21. Contribute to various mission projects
- 22. Have participated in church mission programs outside of your own union (e.g., can range from evangelism to construction)
- 23. Have happy marriages (of those who are married)
- 24. Have been divorced while an Adventist member within the last two years
- 25. Abstain from alcohol, drugs and tobacco
- 26. Practice vegetarianism
- 27. Exercise on a regular basis (at least 3-4 times a week)
- 28. Successfully apply Christian values and ethics to other areas of their lives
- 29. Hold political offices

UNITY IN THE WORLD CHURCH

Approximately what percentage of the members of your congregation would agree to the following statements?

- 30. The seventh-day Sabbath is the true day of worship
- 31. The creation took place in six literal days several thousand years ago
- 32. The literal Second Advent of Christ will be in the near future
- 33. The dead are in a state of unconsciousness until the resurrection
- 34. The writings of Ellen White are an authority for the Adventist Church today
- 35. Ellen White's writings need to be reinterpreted for today's world
- 36. There is a sanctuary in heaven where the pre-Advent judgment began in 1844
- 37. There may be more than one interpretation to the sanctuary doctrine
- 38. The Adventist Church has a special mission to proclaim God's last message to the world
- 39. Members have a responsibility to give 10% tithe to the local conference and additional offerings as able
- 40. The Adventist church financial structure is a fair and proper way to support the world work of the church
- 41. The Adventist world church organization was inspired by God
- 42. Church unity means uniformity in doctrinal belief
- 43. Different world divisions should be allowed to have different church standards in order to meet differing needs.....
- 44. Salvation is by Jesus Christ alone.....

What percentage of your church members would you estimate:

- 45. Either get the *Adventist Review* or can read someone else's copy?.....

- 46. Read the division or union conference/mission official papers?.....
- 47. Read literature from critics of the Church (e.g., *Our Firm Foundation*)?

GROWTH OF THE CHURCH

Within the last two years, what percentage of your congregation participated in the following?

- 48. Helped with the Community Services Center.....
- 49. Worked in centers to feed the hungry
- 50. Helped with health seminars (e.g., nutrition, weight-control, smoking or drug cessation).....
- 51. Helped with family-type seminars (e.g., marriage, parenting).....
- 52. Invited a non-member to church
- 53. Helped with evangelistic meetings or Bible seminars
- 54. Gave Bible studies
- 55. Worked with the youth (teens) of the church
- 56. Worked with young adults (20 - 30 years of age) or unmarried members

What percentage of your youth who are 18 years or younger would you estimate:

- 57. Attend Sabbath worship services nearly every week
- 58. Attend Sabbath school nearly every week
- 59. Attend other religious meetings (e.g., prayer meeting) nearly every week
- 60. Participate in outreach activities
- 61. Hold a church office or other service position
- 62. Are enrolled in Adventist schools
- 63. Are members of Pathfinders or a similar church-sponsored youth group
- 64. Ever attended a church-sponsored youth camp
- 65. Seem happy or content with the Adventist church
- 66. Have serious questions about one or more of Adventist doctrines
- 67. Will probably stay in the Adventist church as adults

How many times a year are the following items included in your church schedule?

- 68. Stories, sermons, or other reports that promote world missions
- 69. Sermons that give information about other areas of the world
- 70. Family type seminars (marriage, parenting)
- 71. Health seminars (e.g., nutrition, stress, weight control, smoking)

- 72. Spiritual gifts seminars_____
- 73. Programs or features on radio or television_____
- 74. Placing positive articles or news items in the local press_____
- 75. Meetings (spiritual or social) aimed at the young adult (20+ years) members_____
- 76. Meetings (spiritual or social) aimed at the unmarried members_____

How regular are the following practiced in your congregation? Please place a number between 1 and 5 as follows:

1 = never, 2 = occasionally, 3 = about half the time, 4 = most of the time, 5 = almost always

- 77. Sermons that emphasize love for all peoples, including “enemies”_____
- 78. Make people from minority groups feel welcome in our church_____
- 79. Include people of different backgrounds (racial, social, cultural, gender, etc.)
in your congregational leadership_____
- 80. Have a diversity of worship services to appeal to different groups_____

On a scale of “0-100” (zero= no reason; 100 = every possible reason) rate the following reasons people might want to join your local church:

- 81. Location of the church_____
- 82. Social atmosphere (the church is friendly and has numerous social programs)_____
- 83. Quality of the religious meetings_____
- 84. Programs for youth_____
- 85. Programs for unmarried members and young adults_____
- 86. The doctrines of the Adventist church_____
- 87. The clear presentation of the assurance of salvation in Christ_____

In your role as a pastor or church leader what percentage of your church-related time is spent in the following activities?

- 88. Preparing for or giving sermons, presentations, or other talks_____
- 89. Working with church social activities_____
- 90. Working with church outreach activities_____
- 91. Counseling others on spiritual, family, or personal matters_____
- 92. Working with the youth of the church_____

93. Check the one below which best describes your church in the past two years:

- _____ Church attendance decreased by 10% or more
- _____ Church attendance decreased by 5 % to 9%
- _____ Church attendance about the same (less than 5% up or down)
- _____ Church attendance increased by 5% to 9%

_____ Church attendance increased by 10% or more

94. What is your title (check one): Pastor _____ Lay member _____
95. What is your gender (check one): Male _____ Female _____
96. How many members does your church have?
(Check one) _____ 1. Fewer than 100
_____ 2. 100 to 250
_____ 3. 251 to 600
_____ 4. Over 600
97. Does your church have a church school associated with it? Yes _____ No _____

October 2001

Dear (name of union conference/mission secretary):

As you know, the General Conference has voted a five-year strategic plan encompassing (1) Quality of Personal Church Life, (2) Unity in the World Church, and (3) Growth of the Church. In order to assess the progress of this plan, some type of measurement is needed. The General Conference has commissioned the Institute of Church Ministry at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary of Andrews University to conduct a world-wide survey and report the results at the General Conference Executive Meeting of 2002. The research will be repeated in 2004 to measure any progress that has been made.

The plan is to select a number of pastors from each of the 91 union conference/missions in the world field proportional to the number of pastors in the world field. Each selected pastor will receive a packet containing a questionnaire for him/herself and two questionnaires to be filled out by selected lay members. We are requesting the union secretaries to act as liaison persons between the pastors and the Institute of Church Ministry.

Your job will be to compile an alphabetical list of all the pastors (not administrators) in your union and to send that list to the Institute of Church Ministry. The Institute will select random numbers from your list and identify which pastors will be invited to participate. Then the Institute will prepare the packets and send them to you. You will need to arrange for their distribution to the pastors, no doubt using officials from the conferences/missions in which the pastors serve. The distributors will collect the completed surveys and return them to you so that you can ship them back to the Institute of Church Ministry for processing. All information will be held completely confidential and never identified with a particular pastor or church.

While the packets will not be mailed until next March or April, we need to get your list of pastors as soon as possible so the packets can be prepared. You will hear directly from the

Institute of Church Ministry detailing the collection process. We all pray that the Strategic Plan and the research supporting it will hasten the finishing of the work and the coming of Jesus.

Yours in the blessed hope,

Matthew Bediako

The Institute of Church Ministry
Andrews University
Berrien Springs, MI 49104

Dear [name of union conference/mission secretary]

You recently received a letter from Elder Bediako, Secretary of the General Conference, informing you of the plans to collect data for evaluating the five-year strategic plan voted at Annual Council. The General Conference has employed the Institute of Church Ministry to collect and analyze this data and authorized us to deal directly with you.

As noted in Elder Bediako's letter, we will be surveying a representative sample of pastors from your field and two of each of their leading lay members. Elder Bediako has requested you to serve as a liaison person between these pastors and the Institute of Church Ministry.

Your first task is to compile a list of all the pastors serving in your union and send it to us so that we can randomly select the names of the pastors to be surveyed. Hopefully, such a list already exists or can be easily created from local conference/mission lists. Please keep several things in mind:

1. The list should include only those who are currently pastoring a church or churches. Please eliminate the names of any administrators, departmental directors, teachers, or other non-pastoring individuals.
2. Please separate the names by local conference/mission and identify the field for each of these groups.
3. The survey will be available in English, French, Korean, Russian, and Spanish. Please indicate the preferred language for those chosen from each local conference/ mission. Please include a statement like this: **We request that the questionnaires for _____ Conference/Mission be in the _____ language.**

4. If possible send us the list by E-mail. Our researcher assigned to collect these lists is Petr Cincala. His E-mail address is petrcin@andrews.edu. You can correspond with him there if you have any questions. If you do not have access to E-mail, you may send a hard copy by airmail to The Institute of Church Ministry, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI 49104, USA.

There will be other tasks to do in getting the surveys to the chosen pastors, but we will give you more details on that after we get your list. Thank you for participating in this important project to help our church carry forth its mission.

Sincerely in His service,

Roger L. Dudley, Director

February/March 2002

Dear Pastor:

You have received this packet with three envelopes from the executive secretary of your union conference/mission by whatever agents the secretary has chosen to deliver it to you. You are one of over 3000 pastors from the entire world field who has been chosen randomly to be part of this study.

The General Conference has adopted a Strategic Plan for this five-year period between General Conference sessions. It consists of three main areas: (1) Quality of Personal and Church Life, (2) Unity in the World Church, and (3) Growth of the Church. Under each of these areas, a number of specific objectives have been listed.

Because the General Conference would like to get a picture of where the church stands on these objectives, they have commissioned the Institute of Church Ministry at Andrews University to collect information from a world-wide sample of pastors and lay members. That includes you.

Your job is quite simple. Each envelope contains a brief survey. Fill out one survey yourself, give one to the most prominent male lay member in your congregation, and give the other to the most prominent female lay member. Ask them to fill out the surveys, seal them back in the envelopes and return them to you. Put all three envelopes, including yours, in the larger envelope in which they came and return this envelope to the person who gave it to you. Where you have more than one congregation, select the largest one of them for choosing the two lay members but generalize your personal answers to all the congregations in your district. It is very important to get back all three surveys. Thanks for helping finish the work.

Yours in the blessed hope,

Matthew Bediako

February-March 2002

Executive Secretary of World Union Conferences/Missions

Dear Secretary:

As you will remember, under the direction of Elder Bediako and Elder Ryan the General Conference is collecting data from the world field to assess the status of the five-year Strategic Plan voted at the autumn executive council. The General Conference has hired the Institute of Church Ministry at Andrews University to collect and process these data.

The first step was to ask you for a list of all the pastors in your union conference/mission. This you have sent to us a little while back. THANK YOU! We randomly drew names from that list and determined the pastors and churches to represent your field. Now we are sending you the surveys to distribute.

Please, distribute the tan 7x10 envelopes to the pastors whose names are on the front. You can use any method of distribution that works best in your field. For example, mail them, have the local conference/mission where each pastor works distribute them, give them out at workers' meetings, or any other efficient method that you choose. Included in each tan envelope is a letter with instructions for pastors and three white envelopes containing surveys. (For your information we enclose a copy of the instructions for the pastors and a survey to you as well.) Once the questionnaires are completed, collect them through the same channels by which they were distributed. Then ship them back to the Institute of Ministry at the above address.

It is crucial to this study that you persuade all the pastors to participate. Thank you again.

Sincerely in His service,

Roger L. Dudley

January 8, 2002
Union Conference/Mission Secretaries

Dear Fellow Worker:

Back in December you received a letter from Elder Bediako telling you that union secretaries have been asked by the General Conference to serve as the liaison persons for collecting data to evaluate the Strategic Plan voted for this quinquennium. He also informed you that the General Conference had employed the Institute of Church Ministry at Andrews University to collect and analyze the information. Then we sent you an e-mail message giving more specific details as to what we need right away.

This first step involved your giving us a list of all the pastors (not institutional workers) in your union. From these we will randomly select the names of the pastors in your union who will be surveyed. You were asked to send the list by e-mail to our research assistant Petr Cincala at petrcin@andrews.edu.

Sorry to say, we have not yet heard back from you. We realize that the Christmas holidays may have delayed things a bit. But we are on a very tight schedule. We must choose the pastors, prepare and ship the materials, collect all the surveys, analyze the data, and write the report by early September in preparation for presenting it at the Annual Conference of the Executive Committee.

So please respond right away. If you do not have our first collection letter with more complete details, reply and tell us, and we will immediately send you another copy. Thanks so much.

Yours for the finishing of the work,
Roger L. Dudley, Director
The Institute of Church Ministry

GCSP: Expected Outcomes

By questionnaire item

Descriptive Statistics

		Mean
Q1	Daily devotions	55.12
Q2	Family worship	46.32
Q3	Sabbath worship	75.93
Q4	Sabbath school	66.91
Q5	Other meetings	37.28
Q6	Group Bible study	32.71
Q7	Read Bible weekly	59.36
Q8	Read Ellen White	41.09
Q9	Witness training	30.00
Q10	Active witnessing	40.95
Q11	Assurance of salvation	69.19
Q12	Socialize non-members	49.99
Q13	Gift-oriented service	47.88
Q14	Attend family seminar	33.47
Q15	Attend health seminar	34.77
Q16	Help with meetings	36.03
Q17	Help singles ministry	25.57
Q18	Hold office/position	43.89
Q19	Faithful tithing	60.71
Q20	Local offerings	57.65
Q21	Support missions	43.50
Q22	Participate mission projects	20.72
Q23	Happy marriage	62.57
Q24	Divorced	5.47
Q25	Abstinence	80.53
Q26	Vegetarianism	34.52
Q27	Exercise regularly	32.74
Q28	Apply Christian values	57.82
Q29	Hold political office	6.67
Q30	Sabbath	96.21
Q31	Creation in 6 days	92.83
Q32	Second advent	93.14
Q33	Death a sleep	93.32
Q34	EGW authority	81.07
Q35	EGW reinterpretation	49.74
Q36	Sanctuary and 1844	85.79
Q37	More interpretations	35.12
Q38	Adventist special mission	90.43
Q39	Should tithe/offerings	80.84
Q40	Fair financial system	79.45
Q41	Inspired organization	86.54
Q42	Unity vs. uniformity	79.75
Q43	Flexibility of standards	49.54

Q44	Salvation only in Christ	94.65
Q45	Adventist review	33.17
Q46	Read union papers	33.36
Q47	Read critics	13.36
Q48	Community service	30.33
Q49	Feed the hungry	20.81
Q50	Help health seminars	24.01
Q51	Help family seminars	23.68
Q52	Invited non-member	38.08
Q53	Help evangelism	38.67
Q54	Gave bible studies	28.39
Q55	Work with youth	26.79
Q56	Work with young adults	25.21
Q57	Youth at worship	67.28
Q58	Youth Sabbath school	63.02
Q59	Youth meetings	35.86
Q60	Youth outreach	33.82
Q61	Youth positions	28.63
Q62	Youth SDA schools	27.90
Q63	Pathfinders	38.22
Q64	Youth church camps	42.41
Q65	Youth happy Adventists	65.87
Q66	Youth questions	28.28
Q67	Youth retention	60.99
Q81	Join location	55.96
Q82	Join atmosphere	65.18
Q83	Join meeting quality	70.48
Q84	Join youth programs	54.77
Q85	Join young adults	39.89
Q86	Join doctrines	72.31
Q87	Join assurance of salvation	80.92
Q88	Preparing for sermons	44.25
Q89	Work social activities	36.57
Q90	Work church outreach	41.27
Q91	Counseling	38.71
Q92	Work with youth	34.95

Q77 Sermons on love for all

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	never	37	1.0	1.0	1.0
	occasionally	779	21.4	21.6	22.7
	about half the time	790	21.7	21.9	44.6
	most of the time	1054	28.9	29.3	73.9
	almost always	940	25.8	26.1	100.0
	Total	3600	98.7	100.0	
Missing	System	40	1.3		
Total		3640	100.0		

Q78		Minority welcome		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	never			110	3.0	3.1	3.1
	occasionally			671	18.4	18.9	22.0
	about half the time			508	13.9	14.3	36.4
	most of the time			944	25.9	26.6	63.0
	almost always			1313	36.0	37.0	100.0
	Total			3546	97.3	100.0	
Missing	System			100	2.7		
Total				3646	100.0		

Q79		Diversity leadership		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	never			290	8.0	8.4	8.4
	occasionally			685	18.8	19.8	28.2
	about half the time			504	13.8	14.6	42.8
	most of the time			766	21.0	22.2	65.0
	almost always			1211	33.2	35.0	100.0
	Total			3457	94.8	100.0	
Missing	System			189	5.2		
Total				3646	100.0		

Q80		Diversity worship		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	never			494	13.5	14.4	14.4
	occasionally			1062	29.1	31.0	45.4
	about half the time			627	17.2	18.3	63.6
	most of the time			679	18.6	19.8	83.4
	almost always			568	15.6	16.6	100.0
	Total			3430	94.1	100.0	
Missing	System			216	5.9		
Total				3646	100.0		

Q93		Church growth		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	10% decrease			283	7.8	8.3	8.3
	5-9% decrease			251	6.9	7.3	15.6
	about the same			936	25.7	27.3	42.9
	5-9% increase			954	26.2	27.9	70.8
	10% increase			999	27.4	29.2	100.0
	Total			3423	93.9	100.0	
Missing	System			223	6.1		
Total				3646	100.0		

Q94 Title		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Pastor	1278	35.1	36.3	36.3
	Lay member	2245	61.6	63.7	100.0
	Total	3523	96.6	100.0	
Missing	System	123	3.4		
Total		3646	100.0		

Q95 Gender		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	2223	61.0	62.3	62.3
	Female	1343	36.8	37.7	100.0
	Total	3566	97.8	100.0	
Missing	System	80	2.2		
Total		3646	100.0		

Q96 Church size		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Fewer than 100	1349	37	38.6	38.6
	100 to 250	1094	30	31.3	69.9
	251 to 600	638	17.5	18.3	88.2
	Over 600	413	11.3	11.8	100.0
	Total	3494	95.8	100.0	
Missing	System	152	4.2		
Total		3646	100.0		

Q97 Church school		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	1200	32.9	34.3	34.3
	no	2301	63.1	65.7	100.0
	Total	3501	96.0	100.0	
Missing	System	145	4.0		
Total		3646	100.0		

LANGUAGE		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	English	2004	55.0	55.0	55.0
	Spanish	599	16.4	16.4	71.5
	French	546	15.0	15.0	86.5
	Russian	249	6.8	6.8	93.3
	Korean	244	6.7	6.7	100.0
	Total	3642	99.9	100.0	
Missing	System	4	0.1		
Total		3646	100.0		

SUMMARY OF MEANS OF 15 MAIN OBJECTIVES

		Mear
FA1.1	Joyful Christian life	71.60
FA1.2	Weekly group Bible study	50.90
FA1.3	Weekly corporate worship	57.47
FA1.4	Personal, family, group prayer life	45.32
FA1.5	Training for local church ministry	37.10
FA1.6	Participation in world-wide mission	34.30
FA1.7	Nurturing members of all ages	37.70
FA1.8	Model citizens in the community	46.40
FA2.1	Cohesiveness in doctrines	91.04
FA2.2	Believers in all-inclusive community	44.90
FA2.3	Cohesiveness in organization	75.40
FA3.1	Commitment to active witness	35.50
FA3.2	Accession and retention in the church	63.10
FA3.3	Impact of Adventists in society	29.60
FA3.5	Transmission of values to youth	41.77
	Quality	45.11
	Growth	45.90
	Unity	71.47

		Mear
Q68	Promote world missions	40.80
Q69	Mission sermons	25.34
Q70	Family seminars	17.90
Q71	Health seminars	17.92
Q72	Spiritual gifts seminars	16.50
Q73	Radio/TV outreach	14.60
Q74	Items in local press	8.80
Q75	Meetings for young adults	22.90
Q76	Meetings for singles	15.90