

A window of information for Seventh-day Adventists in Alberta

Passing the Torch: Valuegenesis Ten Years Later

Grant Misseghers

A decade ago the Seventh-day Adventist Church was reeling under the impact of a newly released study called Valuegenesis. The study confirmed the fears of many; that youth were leaving the church in a massive exodus, but more importantly, it sought to uncover the reasons for our failure to pass the torch on to the next generation.

I was a student at CUC at the time. I remember sitting in the College Heights Church as the pastor shared overhead after overhead of charts and graphs. I listened as church leaders expressed shock and concern. I listened as people asked the question, "What can be done?"

It is ten years later now. Most people I talk to have not even heard of Valuegenesis. Have things changed?

To answer that question it is necessary to understand the problems Valuegenesis uncovered. The major issues involved are related to the area of Faith Development; the way in which we as a church pass on the values which we hold to the next generation. The goal of our churches, schools and families is to build a mature Christian faith in our youth. The evidences of a mature Christian faith include:

1. The young person trusts in God's saving grace and believes firmly in the humanity and divinity of Christ.
2. Experiences a sense of personal well-being, security and peace.
3. Integrates faith and life, seeing work, family, social relationships, and political choices as part of one's religious life.
4. Seeks spiritual growth through study, reflection, prayer, and discussion with others.
5. Seeks to be part of a community of believers in which people give witness to their faith which supports and nourishes one another.
6. Holds life affirming values, including commitment to racial and gender equality.
7. Advocates social and global change to bring about greater social justice.
8. Serves humanity, consistently and passionately, through acts of love and justice.

The horrific reality that Valuegenesis uncovered was that young people were trapped in a pit of works-oriented salvation. This was revealed in a series of questions such as:

- I know that God loves me no matter what I do
(1% disagree, 95% agree)
- I am loved by God even when I sin.
(2% disagree, 94% agree)
- There is nothing I can do to earn salvation
(58% disagree, 29% agree)



SEVENTH-DAY
ADVENTIST
CHURCH

*It has been ten years
since Valuegenesis.
Have things changed?*

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Young people are unanimous in affirming their belief that God's love is unconditional and that nothing can change God's gracious intentions toward them BUT when it comes to following through to the logical outcome of that belief – that their salvation is totally in God's hands – most could not make the steps.

Dr. Roger Dudley, professor at Andrews University and the driving force behind Valuegenesis commented, "Not surprisingly, our adolescents showed difficulties in resolving the perpetual tension between 'saved by grace' and 'judged by our works.' Their general tendency was to support both law and grace as a means of salvation. As they struggled to affirm both streams of thought imbibed from their Christian nurture, they exhibited split personalities, unable to harmonize logical opposites."

"The overwhelming evidence of research is that attempts to control youth by rules and regulations inclines some youth to reject the values being forced upon them."

Where do teenagers get this kind of belief? From our schools? From our churches? From their parents? Is it possible that we have focused too much on the rules for right living rather than on the grace of Jesus and His power to change lives?

Merton Strommen, founder of the *Search Institute* which facilitated the Valuegenesis study, outlined a need for a "Grace Orientation." He comments, "I'm speaking about a focus on the love, promise and presence of Jesus Christ that inspires youth to internalize the values and lifestyles associated with a Christian life. The overwhelming evidence of research is that attempts to *control* youth by rules and regulations, that is a restrictive approach, inclines some youth to reject the values being forced upon them."

"Our data on this is conclusive," Dudley says. "Youth of overly strict homes and schools tend to become moral rebels, rejecting the very values adults are trying to impose on them."

By way of contrast, adults who emphasize commitment to Christ, His love, His promise, His empowering presence and forgiveness will find a larger number of their youth:

- accepting the faith of the church
- evidencing higher self-esteem
- showing a more caring spirit
- becoming involved in service
- being hopeful about the future
- excelling academically

Historically, we could look at the struggle of the 1888 General Conference Session. Leaders of the denomination, good and faithful men, were afraid the new emphasis on righteousness by faith would blur the distinctiveness of the unique Adventist message. And in spite of Waggoner, Jones, Ellen White, *The Desire of Ages*, and more than a century of study, preaching, and publication, we haven't gotten it all straight yet.

Have things changed in the last decade? This past fall at the North American Division Teacher's Convention in Dallas, Texas, Bailey Gillespie shared preliminary findings from the upcoming Valuegenesis 2 report. He concludes that many students are still caught in a works-based religion. Until the final report comes out, the best measurement we have is with ourselves. Ask yourself:

"Do young people experience grace through me?"

"Am I a grace-full person?"

"Do I emphasize love and salvation through Jesus Christ?"

"Do I use the Bible or the Spirit of Prophecy to start discussions or to end them?"

"Do I extend the hand of fellowship to young people even when they don't conform to church standards?"



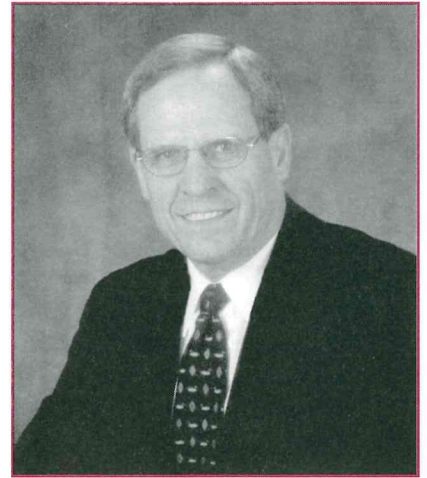
CUC Inauguration Makes TV News

Lynn Neumann McDowell



Reo Ganson conducting CUC band soon after his graduation

On January 18, Dr. Reo Ganson, CUC's 22nd president, was inaugurated in the College Heights Church. The event was covered not only by local papers but also by RDTV. Ganson, a CUC graduate who served as president of CUC from 1987-1991, went on to serve as Associate Director of Education at the General Conference and co-ordinated the church's accreditation of 102 of its schools worldwide. In 1997, Ganson accepted the position of president of the BC conference, which he held until accepting the presidency of CUC shortly after the GC session this summer.



CUC/PAA Homecoming

Canadian University College and Parkview Adventist Academy will be celebrating Homecoming 2001 from June 7-10, 2001. Plan now to attend a spirit-filled reunion with former classmates and acquaintances. Honor Classes are: 1996, 1991, 1986, 1981, 1976, 1971, 1966, 1961, 1956, 1951, 1946, 1941, 1936, 1931. Individuals from classes adjacent to the honor classes are invited to attend as well as all graduates prior to 1950. RSVP by May 1. For more information contact the Alumni Office at (403) 782-3381 ext 4010; fax at (403) 782-5675; e-mail at alumni@cauc.ab.ca. Come to the hilltop. We look forward to seeing you!

DATELINE

- February 17 NW Leadership Seminar, Grande Prairie, 3 pm
- Feb. 23-25 Pathfinder Winter Retreat, Foothills Camp
- March 2-4 Men's Ministry Convention, Foothills Camp
- March 8 Alberta Adventist News Deadline, April issue
- March 10 Calgary Leadership Seminar, Garden Road, 3 pm
- March 17 Central Leadership Seminar, location unknown, 3 pm
- March 23-25 Women's Ministry Retreat, Sylvan Lake
- April 6-8 Marriage Encounter
- April 13-15 Calgary Youth Rally, Garden Road
- April 17 Edmonton Leadership Seminar, Southside, 3 pm

First Canadian SDA Science Olympics for Grades 7-12 to be Held at CUC

Lynn Neumann McDowell

School science fairs and olympics are exciting events for students, often sparking creativity and enthusiasm about a subject that can benefit them greatly in college and later careers. Unfortunately, these events are held on Sabbath, thus Seventh-day Adventist students generally do not have the opportunity to participate. At the suggestion of Mike Adams (Coralwood Academy) and with the support of the Alberta Conference Education Department, CUC is pleased to host a weekday opportunity for Adventist students to experience the fun and learning that take place at science olympic meets. The event will take place April 29 and 30 on the campus of Canadian University College.

Who can participate and what can they win? All Adventist schools are invited to send teams of four to five students from the junior high level and from the senior high levels. Points will be awarded for each event, and individuals in the top three placing teams will receive CUC scholarships (\$250, \$100 and \$50 for first, second and third place). Their schools will also receive cash awards in the same amount to be used for the school's science program. Are you interested? For more information on the event and possible mileage subsidy for participating teachers, please call Lorraine Wombold at (403) 782-3381 ext. 4006 or Lynn McDowell at ext. 4126.

Thirty Baptized as a Result of Way of the Cross Crusade

Michael T. Sylvan



The West Edmonton Seventh-day Adventist Church hosted a series of Bible presentations entitled "The Way of the Cross," from October 20 through November 15, 2000. Pastor Thomas Bryan, a native of Jamaica and graduate of Northern Caribbean University in Jamaica and Andrews University in Michigan, presented topics through dynamic preaching, down-to-earth illustrations and humorous yet poignant anecdotes on such topics as "The Signs of Christ's Second Coming," "The Cross and Baptism," "The Joke that Made God Laugh," and "When God says 'Remember.'"

As a result of this crusade, a total of thirty souls were added to the Lord's remnant church when they took a stand for Jesus and were baptized.

Calgary Southside Company Becomes a Church

Ron Windels



On July 22, 2000 Elder Frank Tochtermann, President of the Alberta Conference, along with Norman Yergen, Executive Secretary, officiated at a Church Induction Ceremony to upgrade Calgary Southside Company to the status of "church." Elder Tochtermann preached a spirit-filled sermon and later presented the new church with a communion set to commemorate the event.

Also in attendance were Pastor John Adams and Pastor Kelly Schultz who were instrumental in the early development of the company.

Following the service, a fellowship meal was held to commemorate this milestone.

Lethbridge

November 4th was a day of celebration and praise to God as five precious souls took their stand for the Lord and were baptized into membership of the Lethbridge Seventh-day Adventist Church. Shown (from right to left) are: Pastor Mike Lemon, Jerick Arceo, Michael Bowes, Erin Roth, Gwen Dietzen and Ruby Nakamura.



Paramedics Honored

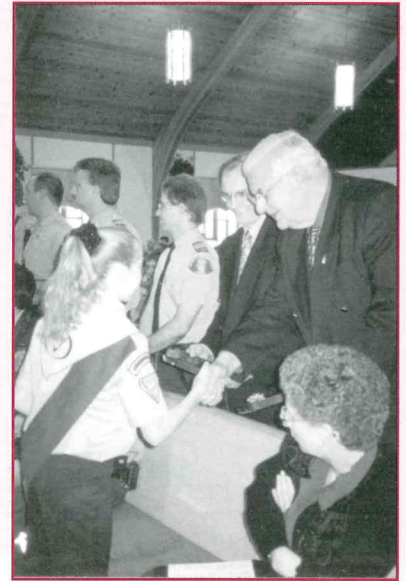
Carmen Manweiler

Ten paramedics from the Medicine Hat Hospital were honored at the worship service of the Medicine Hat Seventh-day Adventist Church on November 18, 2000. John Bukstein and Tom Siemmans of the Palliser Health Authority were also in attendance.

Pastor Gary Hodder introduced Chief Howard Snodgrass, who in turn introduced the other paramedics. Doreen Cazes thanked them for the services their family has received on behalf of son Doug. Sharon Batsel thanked them for their assistance in Craig and Kyle's accident when Craig lost his life by electrocution almost three years ago. Albert Boller thanked them for taking him to the hospital by ambulance when he became ill in church recently. Each of these families presented the paramedics with a teddy bear to carry in the ambulance to comfort children when they are being transported to the hospital. All twelve of the gentlemen received "Chicken Soup for the Soul" books and a rose.

After Pastor Hodder's sermon, he presented a plaque to Howard Snodgrass expressing appreciation for excellent service to the community by the paramedics. In his response, Snodgrass told how moved and touched they were by being honored in this way. No one had ever prayed for them in their job as Pastor Gary had, and this was the first time a church had ever recognized them for their services. They were deeply moved and appreciative of the recognition given them.

A number of the paramedics stayed to visit and share in the fellowship meal which followed the service.



Sedgewick Christmas Program



The Sedgewick Seventh-day Adventist Church children's chime choir performed at the Christmas program under the direction of Gabriela Pohle. Following the program an offering was received for ADRA.

February, 2001

Men's Retreat

When: March 2-4, 2001
Guest Speaker: Richard O'Fill
Theme: Stand Firm
Location: Foothills Camp
Registration deadline: February 20, 2001
Call: Brian Townsend (403) 782-4070 or
(403) 302-1419

Women's Retreat

When: March 23-25, 2001
Location: Sunnyside Christian Retreat Centre,
Sylvan Lake
Registration deadline: February 25, 2001
Call: Nicole Sydenham (403) 782-1440 evenings

LEGAL NOTICE - THE ALBERTA CONFERENCE OF THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

Notice is hereby given that the 47th Session of the Alberta Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church will be held at the College Heights Christian School, College Heights, Alberta, May 6, 2001. The regular business meeting of the Session will be called at 9:30 a.m., Sunday, May 6. There will be a meeting of the Organizing Committee at 7:30 a.m., on Sunday, May 6.

The purpose of the meeting is to consider reports and financial statements, elect officers and members of the Executive Committee of the Conference for the ensuing triennial period, to consider any proposed changes to the By-laws, and for the transaction of any other business that may properly come before the Session.

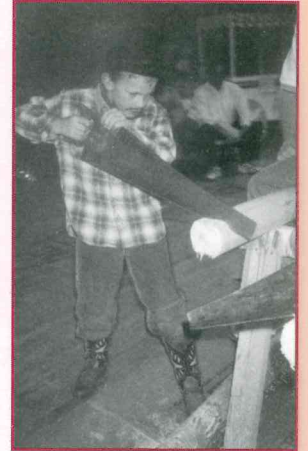
The By-laws provides for representatives from each church in the Alberta Conference as follows: one delegate per church without regard to membership, and one additional delegate for every thirty-five members or major fraction thereof.

Frank Tochterman, President
Norman Yergen, Secretary

Beiseker - Level Land

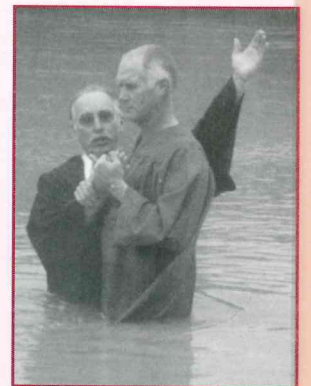
A Fall Festival FundRaiser was held October 28, 2000 to raise funds for students from the Beiseker area attending Parkview Adventist Academy. The festival included numerous skill testing activity booths and a silent auction bake sale. Those attending wore pioneer-style costumes.

The photo to the right shows Keldyn Lang in the Log Sawing Competition.



A Country Christmas Market was held on November 12, 2000 to raise funds for ADRA. Baked goodies and crafts were sold at the Level Land Community Hall which included a lunch counter featuring homemade soup, buns, and pies. Nearly \$900.00 was raised and the church anticipates making this an annual event. The photo above shows Pat Grabo and her daughter Kerry Sackett.

Baptism. It was a joyous day when Frank Andrews was baptized by Pastor Werner Seidel in the Red Deer River on September 9, 2000. A picnic lunch and fellowship accompanied the meaningful occasion. Frank and his wife Lynn (previously baptized December 18, 1999) have really enjoyed experiencing what it means to be part of God's family.



Anniversary

Retired Pastor Bill and Mable Wigley celebrated their 60th Wedding Anniversary November 17, 2000.

