

2014

# A Strategy to Train Local Church Elders for Effective Assimilation and Nurture of New Converts

Enock Chifamba

*Andrews University*

This research is a product of the graduate program in [Doctor of Ministry DMin](#) at Andrews University. [Find out more](#) about the program.

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/dmin>



Part of the [Missions and World Christianity Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

Chifamba, Enock, "A Strategy to Train Local Church Elders for Effective Assimilation and Nurture of New Converts" (2014). *Project Documents*. 262.

<https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/dmin/262>

This Project Report is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate Research at Digital Commons @ Andrews University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Project Documents by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Andrews University. For more information, please contact [repository@andrews.edu](mailto:repository@andrews.edu).



Seek Knowledge. Affirm Faith. Change the World.

Thank you for your interest in the

**Andrews University Digital Library  
of Dissertations and Theses.**

*Please honor the copyright of this document by  
not duplicating or distributing additional copies  
in any form without the author's express written  
permission. Thanks for your cooperation.*

ABSTRACT

A STRATEGY TO TRAIN LOCAL CHURCH ELDERS FOR  
EFFECTIVE ASSIMILATION AND NURTURE  
OF NEW CONVERTS

by

Enock Chifamba

Adviser: Bruce L. Bauer

## ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Dissertation

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: A STRATEGY TO TRAIN LOCAL CHURCH ELDERS FOR EFFECTIVE  
ASSIMILATION AND NURTURE OF NEW CONVERTS

Name of researcher: Enock Chifamba

Name and degree of faculty adviser: Bruce L. Bauer, DMiss

Date completed: October 2014

### Problem

In most multi-church districts the pastoral burden rests with the local church elders. However, these elders receive little or no training concerning the important pastoral duty of assimilation and nurture of new converts into a local church fellowship. Thus, new converts often feel isolated and neglected and some either backslide or remain inactive in their new-found faith. In the East Zimbabwe Conference 18,349 new members were added in 2010 bringing its membership to 247,935 with only 56 district pastors. The conference needs a cost effective strategy to nurture new members.

## Method

The role of elders as pastoral care givers in the local church was established by examining Old and New Testament texts, E. G. White writings, and other Christian authors. This material was used in seminars to train and equip elders for effective assimilation and nurture of new converts. A logframe and a Gantt chart were employed to plan and monitor this project.

## Results

The results of the final questionnaires to new converts and elders indicate an improvement in the involvement of elders in nurturing new converts after the intervention. There was also a greater involvement of new converts in witnessing and participation in other church programs. The percentage of new converts who owned Bibles, hymnbooks, manuals for Bible doctrines, and Sabbath School study guides also increased by the end of the program.

## Conclusions

Local church elders, when rightly trained, can bridge the pastoral gap created by pastors having too many churches in a district and the rapid church growth in Africa that often leaves new converts with little or no post-baptismal care.

Andrews University  
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

A STRATEGY TO TRAIN LOCAL CHURCH ELDERS FOR  
EFFECTIVE ASSIMILATION AND NURTURE  
OF NEW CONVERTS

A Dissertation  
Presented in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Ministry

by  
Enock Chifamba  
October 2014

© Copyright by Enoch Chifamba 2014  
All Rights Reserved

A STRATEGY TO TRAIN LOCAL CHURCH ELDERS FOR  
EFFECTIVE ASSIMILATION AND NURTURE  
OF NEW CONVERTS

A dissertation  
presented in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree  
Doctor of Ministry

by

Enock Chifamba

APPROVAL BY THE COMMITTEE:

---

Adviser,  
Bruce L. Bauer

---

Director, DMin Program  
Skip Bell

---

Nancy Vyhmeister

---

Dean, SDA Theological Seminary  
Jifí Moskala

---

Boubakar Sanou

---

Date approved



I dedicate this dissertation to my Lord and Master Jesus Christ  
who called me into the ministry and to my beloved wife Constance  
who encouraged me to join the Doctor of Ministry program.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS .....	vii
LIST OF TABLES .....	viii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....	ix
Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
Statement of the Problem.....	1
Statement of Task .....	2
Justification for the Project .....	2
Delimitations.....	3
Personal Basis for Ministry.....	3
Introduction.....	3
General Background .....	4
Specific Personal Assessments .....	8
Conversion and Assurance of Salvation .....	8
Time and Resources.....	9
Spiritual Path.....	10
Worldview.....	13
Temperament .....	14
Damage Factor .....	15
Assessments in Relation to Others.....	17
Spiritual Gifts.....	17
Leadership/Interaction Styles.....	18
Task Type Preferences .....	18
Conclusion .....	19
Overview of the Paper .....	21
2. A THEOLOGY OF PASTORAL CARE BY LOCAL CHURCH ELDERS .....	22
Principles From the Old Testament .....	23
Heathen Kings.....	23
The Leadership of Moses.....	26
The Analogy of a Shepherd for Spiritual Leaders .....	31
Principles From the New Testament.....	34

Roman Government .....	34
The Ministry of Jesus .....	35
Elders in the Ministry of Paul .....	40
Elders in the Ministry of the Apostle Peter.....	48
Conclusion .....	51
3. THE POLITICAL, CULTURAL, AND RELIGIOUS ANALYSIS OF EAST ZIMBABWE CONFERENCE	
Introduction.....	54
Description of the Project Context.....	54
Geographic Description .....	54
History and Political Context.....	56
Colonialism.....	57
Independent Zimbabwe.....	58
Demography.....	60
Socio-Cultural Context .....	62
Culture.....	62
Kinship and Marriage .....	63
Urbanization and Globalization .....	64
Religions Context.....	65
Seventh-day Adventist Church in East Zimbabwe Conference.....	67
History.....	67
Growth Patterns .....	68
Conclusion .....	70
4. A STRATEGY TO TRAIN LOCAL CHURCH ELDERS FOR EFFECTIVE ASSIMILATION AND NURTURE OF NEW CONVERTS .....	71
Introduction.....	71
General Methodology: Logical Framework Analysis and Gantt Chart.	72
The Logical Framework.....	72
Goal.....	73
Purpose.....	73
Outputs.....	73
Activities .....	73
Inputs.....	74
Measurable Indicators .....	74
Means of Verification .....	74
Important Assumptions .....	74
Gantt Chart.....	75
Description of Mission Strategy: Application of Logframe .....	76
Overall Goal.....	77
Purpose.....	77
Outputs.....	80

Measurable Indicators .....	81
Means of Verification .....	81
Important Assumptions.....	81
Implementation of Strategy.....	82
Activities and Resource Schedules (Gantt Chart).....	82
Monitoring and Evaluation .....	83
Conclusion .....	83
5. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION, SUMMARY, AND CONCLUSION .....	87
Introduction.....	87
Strategy Implemented .....	87
Biblical Role of Elders Established .....	87
Survey Tools Developed.....	88
Seminars Prepared and Conducted .....	94
Nurturing Skills Applied.....	96
Results of the Intervention.....	97
Lessons Learned.....	103
Conclusion and Recommendations.....	105
Appendix	
1. LETTERS .....	109
2. FOCUS GROUP SCHEDULE.....	111
3. QUESTIONNAIRES.....	112
REFERENCE LIST .....	116
VITA.....	123

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

1. Map of Zimbabwe.....	55
2. Logical Framework Sample.....	72
3. Gantt Chart Sample.....	75
4. Logframe for Strategy to Retain New Members.....	79
5. Gantt Chart (Year One).....	85
6. Gantt Chart (Years Two and Three) .....	86
7. A Comparison of Books Owned by New Converts in 2011 and 2013 .....	99
8. A Comparison of New Converts Involvement in 2011 and 2013.....	100
9. A Comparison of Elders' Responses to Questions 1-4 in 2011 and 2013.....	101
10. A Comparison of Elders' Responses to Question 5 in 2011 and 2013.....	102

## LIST OF TABLES

1.	East Zimbabwe Conference Yearly Statistics 2003-2013 .....	69
2.	Mafara District Membership 2009-2013 .....	69
3.	New Converts Responses to Question 2 in 2011 .....	89
4.	New Converts Responses to Question 3 in 2011 .....	89
5.	Elders' Responses to Questions 1-4 in 2011.....	93
6.	Elders' Responses to Question 5 in 2011 .....	94
7.	Elders' Responses to Questions 6, 7, and 8 .....	103

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my sincere thanks to all my professors in this DMin cohort, Nancy Vyhmeister, Jon Dybdahl, Gorden Doss, Wagner Kuhn, Emmanuel Takyi, and Bruce Bauer, for their guidance, patience, and support to bring this project to completion. This project would not have been accomplished without the support of my classmates and the patient editing of Linda Bauer. Thank you friends!

My gratitude also goes to Dr. Robert Muzira and Pastor Kilson Muchoko for the help and support they gave me as I carried out the project.

Finally I would want to thank my family and friends for their prayers and encouragement.

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The mission of the church is not completed at the baptism of new converts. After baptism the church still has a responsibility to nurture them. However, in most cases the zeal to work for the new believers wanes soon after they have been baptized and the numbers reported. This project seeks to address the issue of assimilation and nurture of new converts into the church. While the pastor plays a key role in nurturing members, the strategy developed and implemented in this project focuses on the involvement of elders in the process.

In his farewell speech to the local elders of Ephesus, the apostle Paul charged them to “take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood” (Acts 20:28). Pastoral responsibilities rest not only on the pastor but also on the elders.

#### **Statement of the Problem**

In most multi-church districts the pastoral burden rests with the local church elders. However, these elders receive little or no training concerning the important pastoral duty of assimilation and nurture of new converts into the local church fellowship. Thus, new converts often feel isolated and neglected and some either backslide or remain



inactive in their new-found faith. In the East Zimbabwe Conference 18,349 new members were added in 2010, bringing its membership to 247,935, with only 56 district pastors.

The conference needs a cost effective strategy to nurture new members.

### **Statement of Task**

The task of this project is to develop and implement a training program that will increase the effectiveness of local church elders in nurturing new converts.

### **Justification for the Project**

The rapid membership growth in the East Zimbabwe Conference keeps widening the gap between the district pastor and the pastoral care that he can give. Training local elders will help bridge this gap.

Numerical growth is not always proportional to financial growth in the African context, thus employing additional workers will remain a challenge in the East Zimbabwe Conference. This project seeks to present a cost effective way of assimilating and nurturing new converts by engaging local church elders.

There are churches that see their mission accomplished after taking a person from evangelism to baptism. Training elders in assimilation and nurture will help them to view evangelism and nurture as sides of the same coin of discipleship.

The effective assimilation and nurture of new converts will help in reducing the apostasy rate and the number of missing members in the East Zimbabwe Conference.

Some elders are not content with their current routine duties in the local church. This project aims at assisting them to have a meaningful and satisfying ministry in their churches while alleviating the district pastor of some of his duties to the local church.

There is a need for contextualized elders' material in Africa. The training material that will be developed will help to meet this need.

### **Delimitations**

This project was implemented in two African urban churches in Harare in the East Zimbabwe Conference. While most principles of nurturing new converts are universal, this project placed emphasis on nurturing new converts from an animistic worldview.

### **Personal Basis for Ministry**

#### **Introduction**

In this section I will discuss the major events and some ordinary routine things in my life that have helped to shape my ministry. Self-knowledge and self-assessment are crucial and have biblical support as a basis for ministry (McNeal, 2006, pp. 10-11).

In the Bible David, Paul, and Jesus are examples of leaders that had self-awareness. David, right up to his death often referred to himself as one anointed by God. "Now these are the last words of David. Thus says David the son of Jesse; Thus says the man raised up on high, The anointed of the God of Jacob, And the sweet psalmist of Israel" (2 Sam 23:1-2).

The apostle Paul was not oblivious of his Jewish roots and his unique calling. Speaking of his origin he says "circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless" (Phil 3:5-6). When faced with a crisis in his life he would remind himself of his call. "Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision" (Acts 26:19).

Jesus also had self-knowledge; he knew where he was coming from and where he was going. “I came forth from the Father and have come into the world. Again, I leave the world and go to the Father” (John 16:28-29). This self-knowledge sustained him in Gethsemane and on the cross.

This process of self-awareness is not easy but it is important. “Gaining insight into who we are and how we became ourselves requires some serious digging and inspection” (McNeal, 2006, p. 14). Below I list some of the things and events that have shaped me for ministry.

### General Background

I have been married for 27 years to a God-fearing wife, Constance. God blessed us with four boys, Daniel, Timothy, and Emmanuel, who are in university, and Blessing who is in secondary school. My family is a source of inspiration to my ministry.

My theological training started at the age of eighteen at Bethel College (South Africa, 1979-1980), then Solusi University (Zimbabwe, 1982-1983) and Andrews University extension campus at Spicer Memorial College for a Masters degree (India, 1997-1999). I also studied for a Bachelor of Science degree at Baraton (Kenya, 1984-1987).

My pastoral and teaching ministry has exposed me to different roles in the Lord’s work. I was a district pastor in Harare (1981, and later 1994-1996); teacher and chaplain in secondary schools (1988-1993); chaplain and lecturer Solusi University (1999-2002); a missionary to Eritrea as president of the mission field (2002-2003); Field Secretary in the Southern Africa Indian Ocean Division (2004-2005); Dean of the Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies, Solusi University (2006-2008); President of the East Zimbabwe

Conference (2009-2012); and currently I am the Executive Secretary of the Zimbabwe Union Conference.

In his book, *A Work of Heart*, Reggie McNeal gives six major subplots that God uses to shape the leader's heart throughout the leader's life. "They are culture, call, community, communion, conflict and the commonplace" (McNeal, 2000, p. 71).

God designed that I be born in the Shona culture. The Shona people believe in the supernatural and in God. One of the names of God is *musikavanhu* meaning the Creator of human beings. I did not have to struggle with evolution or denying the supernatural as I grew up. However, the Shonas also believe that God is approached through ancestral spirits and that deceased relative can talk and guide the living. God spared me the pain of struggling against this belief by raising me up in an Adventist pastor's home.

My calling to the ministry was a long journey. When I was a small boy in 1967 my father took me to a river for a nature walk. After playing on the banks of the river he prayed for me and my brother. In his prayer he asked God to use me as a pastor in God's vineyard.

When I started primary school I was not doing well in my class work. I prayed that if God would open my mind I would serve Him. God answered my prayer and I became a very good student. In my "O" level examinations I passed with a first class pass and against the wish of my teachers and friends I joined theological training at the age of eighteen.

Before my father passed away he spent some time with me and explained some of the background as to how I was born. When my mother was expecting me she had a dream in which she was told that she was going to have a baby boy and that she should

call his name Enoch! I was called by that name before I was born.

The community also plays an important role in shaping leaders. “Leaders are not shaped in isolation. Leaders are shaped in community. And they are shaped by community” (McNeal, 2000, p. 115). Growing up on a mission station with missionaries also helped to shape me. One man who stands out in that community and who helped me was the president of our field, Pastor O. D. Muza. He would come to our home and ask my parents if he could itinerate with me. I was only seven years old and before he would preach he would put me on a table or a drum for me to recite memory verses and to sing songs.

My parents have been a great support for me. I knew that every day they would be praying for me. I also thank God for my wife and children and the support they are to me in ministry in praying for me and going to places I have been called to serve even when there were no job openings for my wife. “God also shapes leaders’ hearts through their current family situations. The home remains the chief laboratory and schoolhouse for human relationships and character development” (McNeal, 2000, p. 121).

Many of us who are in leadership can become very lonely when facing a crisis like Jesus did in the Garden of Gethsemane or when Paul stood before Caesar. “At my first defense no one stood with me, but all forsook me. May it not be charged against them. But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, so that the message might be preached fully through me, and that all the Gentiles might hear. Also I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion” (2 Tim 4:17). Even if friends may at times betray us it is important to develop a community of friends that can help to nurture us.

“Christian leaders do well to intentionally pursue friendships that can be nurturing. The development of friends can reduce some pressure placed on spousal relationships in clergy marriages” (McNeal, 2000, p. 127). God has helped me with friends in the ministry and even laity, with whom I can get together and pray. At times we phone each other early in the morning or at night to pray if we cannot find the time to be physically together.

“While community serves many functions in the spiritual life, one of the most crucial is that it gives us the incentive and courage to grow and keep journeying in our divine quest as we meet with fellow travelers on the spiritual way” (Dybdahl, 2008, pp. 78-79). Community lifts us up as we meet and share our trials and joys and pray for each other.

Communion with God is at the very center of a leader’s heart shaping process. “Devoid of a growing, personal, dynamic relationship with God, spiritual leaders become casualties. . . . Through communion, the leader secures the relationship with the Heart Maker and Heart Shaper” (McNeal, 2000, p. 139). From my childhood my parents taught me that family worship was not enough but that I needed personal devotion in the early morning hours. This habit has been a blessing in my ministry. I thank God for the many private prayers that He has answered.

Spiritual leaders cannot escape conflict. “Sometimes leaders encounter conflict precisely because they are doing the right thing. . . . Spiritual leaders must welcome conflict as a heart-shaping tool of God” (McNeal, 2000, p. 156). Times of conflict have been the most difficult times in my ministry but reading the Bible, praying and forgiveness have been a wonderful tonic to me.

The commonplace is also used by God to shape leaders. Through common decisions and interactions leaders develop “kind, caring, generous, servant hearts through the commonplace of life and their response to it” (McNeal, 2000, p. 176). When my family accepted the call to go and serve in Eritrea many friends counseled us not to go as it was an obscure place. Our then division president, Dr. Pardon Mwansa encouraged us by saying, “Sometimes God calls Elisha only to pour water on the hands of Elijah.” That commonplace task lifted Elisha from being a farmer to a prophet with a double measure of Elijah’s spirit! Although Eritrea had its challenges it drew us very close to God. As a family there is no place that we have ever worked that enriched us more than in Eritrea.

### Specific Personal Assessments

#### **Conversion and Assurance of Salvation**

When I passed my primary grade seven examinations my father bought me a present of a book that was to change my life. It was a beautiful small copy of the *Desire of Ages* with nice pictures. I still have the book today. I started reading the book before I went to Solusi Mission for secondary school. That book taught me to love Jesus. During the very first week of prayer that was held at Solusi in 1975 I gave my heart to Jesus and was later baptized.

I have never regretted my conversion. There are times I have been at low ebb in my relationship with Jesus and like David have had to cry out, “Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him For the help of His countenance” (Ps 42:5). God has always restored my joy in the Lord.

## **Time and Resources**

Richard A. Swenson observes that “virtually everyone I know is time desperate” (Swenson, 2004, p. 114). I am no exception especially in the post that I now hold as union executive secretary. When I was working as a Dean of Theology at Solusi University my time was well structured. I could take time for nature walks with my family, but when I came to the conference there are so many things to divert you from the planned program. My family is always crying for more time with me. “When appropriately undertaken, work is biblically required and an absolute necessity for healthy living. Many, however, are so driven by their work that they can never take a day off or enjoy a quiet walk in the woods” (p. 117). That is what my life is like.

I need to intentionally set aside time for my family and prayer retreats. It is important to learn to say “No” and say it kindly. The culture in my country dictates to us that it is not polite to say “No” and the demands on leaders are great because many requests are not just work related but are also related to the extended family! “Saying No is not just a good idea—it has now become a mathematical necessity. Without the two-letter word, I doubt that regaining margin is possible” (Swenson, p. 122). So I will have to learn to say no.

In a world of technology we need to at times disconnect ourselves from computers and smart phones for they can become major time killers. “Remembering that technology is responsible for much of our time famine, it is good to go on strike occasionally. Try disconnecting from clocks, watches, alarms, beepers, telephones, and e-mails for a day, a week-end, or a week” (p. 125). Indeed, there are times I need to stop and smell the roses with my family. As Swenson puts it, “Life is a journey, but not a race.



Do yourself a favor and slow down” (Swenson, 2004, p. 129).

Many people think that to gain margin in our resources we need to make more money but this is only a mirage. “Nothing in Scripture and in the chosen lifestyle of Christ could be clearer: Wealth is not a primary objective of the spiritual life” (p. 136). My parents taught me from childhood to put God first in my finances through tithe and offerings. They also taught me to shun debt. Debt is a big culprit in causing people to lack of financial margin, “the ‘buy now, pay later’ mentality too often corrupts into ‘binge now, pain later.’ The debt trap set for us has a sudden spring, one that cuts off financial margin at the neck” (p. 134).

When I worked at our division office as a Stewardship Director it helped to reinforce my financial discipline as I had to live what I taught. The greatest blessing, however, is that I married a wife who shares the same values with me that “godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content” (1 Tim 6:6-8). The economic collapse in our country a few years ago taught people that relationships are more important than money. People were more kind to each other and shared the food that they found. It also taught us to rely upon God, not on the power of the dollar.

### **Spiritual Path**

We do not experience God in the same way. “What powerfully impacts me may leave you unmoved. You may enjoy meditation while I may struggle with it. Preferred worship styles differ widely.” (Dybdahl, 2008, p. 110) There are different paths or styles that help people encounter God. The doctrinal spiritual style which focuses on truth and

doctrine is the one that appeals most to me when I want to experience God. The other two that cluster with this one to provide an environment that draws me to God is the Scripture driven spiritual style and the sharing spiritual style. In the Scripture driven mode I focus on Bible study and discipleship. While in the sharing one the focus is on evangelism and service.

Due to my spiritual styles, I enjoy activities in the church where doctrine is taught. Preparing camp lessons that are linked to doctrine is a real pleasure for me. I also feel very fulfilled when I teach a baptismal class. This meets not only my doctrinal style but also my Scripture driven style that focuses on Bible study and discipleship. The sharing spiritual style has seen me conducting many evangelistic meetings even outside my country. Even when I am in administration I try to make it a point that at least once a year I run an evangelistic series.

The apostle Peter calls upon Christians to “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.” (2 Pet 3:18). “The Bible uses the metaphor of *biological* growth to describe the Christian life. Growth implies a gradual change, not an instantaneous and complete transformation” (Dybdahl, 2008, p. 125).

The psychiatrist M. Scott Peck gives four stages of development that are helpful for us to understand growth on our spiritual journey. They are:

1. *The chaotic, antisocial stage*, or, as Peck called it in his lecture, the ‘Hells Angel’ phase.
2. *The formal, institutional stage* in which people desire and appreciate structure.
3. *The skeptical, individualization stage*, or what we could call the agnostic stage.
4. The communal/mystical stage. (p. 127)

As I look back at my life it is apparent I did not go through stage one and three in a dramatic way. Professor Dybdahl states that “children growing up in relatively stable

and loving homes often do not go through stage 1 in a rebellious, way but naturally become socialized into the faith of their parents” (Dybdahl, 2008, p. 127). I dwelt on stage two, the institutional stage, for a long time attached to the structure and forms of my church. I believe I am now at the fourth stage where I am beginning to connect what I have learned and experienced in new ways and at deeper levels than I have previously recognized (p. 128).

It is important to note that God can save people at any stage in their lives and sometimes we might relapse into the lower stages again. “Salvation is not based on stages of development, and I expect to see some from all levels in God’s kingdom. God’s plan for us, however, is that we continue to grow, and we are most happy and fulfilled if we do” (p. 129).

A personal devotional life is a key factor to spiritual growth and to having an intimate relationship with God. The Christian life can become dry and a mere routine if we do not give priority to time with God. “Time, meditation, and personal application are necessary to allow the Holy Spirit to make Christ real in your life” (Blackaby, Blackaby, & King, 2007, p. 10).

I find that waking up early in the morning gives me a better devotional time without interruptions. My inspiration for this habit was the Lord Jesus Christ. “Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed” (Mark 1:35). Martin Luther, the great Protestant Reformer, used to spend two to three hours daily in prayer; while “Wesley’s devotion to Jesus led him to spend two hours a day in prayer that usually began at 4.00 a.m.” (Dybdahl, 2008, p. 16).

The length of time taken in devotion cannot be a measure of the effectiveness of the devotion. However, if we love the Lord we will take time with Him. My daily devotional time normally starts around 4:30 a.m. with quiet time, then prayer, and the reading of God's Word. This time with the Lord was much easier for me to maintain when I was working in a school setting. Now I travel a lot and sleep in unfamiliar places and at times I am thrown out of rhythm with my usual waking up time. I keep an audio Bible in my car and as I travel I listen to it and meditate on the Scripture.

There are a few ideas I would like to implement in my devotional life. One of them is to listen to God in prayer so that prayer is not just downloading to God my burdens but also a time to hear His voice. Journaling is another idea I want to put into practice, being an extrovert, it is difficult, but important. "When God speaks, it is important to write down what He says. You may want to keep a notebook for recording your spiritual journey" (Blackaby, Backaby, & King, 2007, p. 13).

## **Worldview**

Worldview is like a pair of glasses through which we see the world. It can be defined as "the deep, underlying, usually unconscious concept structures of a people or culture that is the source for their values, beliefs, and actions" (Dybdahl, 2008, p. 101). It is clear that our worldview can either interfere with or enhance our spiritual life and the way we experience God. In his book *Hunger*, Dybdahl discusses five major worldviews:

1. The Atheistic/Agnostic view where the adherents accept only the human empirical scientific method and God is nonexistent.
2. Deists believe God is the Creator and Maker of the laws of the universe but rarely intervenes.

3. The magical view which is the art of controlling or manipulating events by supernatural power.

4. Medieval/mystical view that sees all disease or physical problems as related to God or other spiritual powers and they question the physical sciences.

5. Christian theists, which believe that true divine-human interchange takes place and that God created an orderly world in which we are expected to live responsibly (Dybdahl, 2008, pp. 102-109).

I have interacted with all these worldviews. I grew up in an Adventist Christian pastor's home where a Christian Theist worldview was held, yet I was surrounded with animists who had the magical and medieval worldview. I took a degree in Zoology and chemistry and most of the textbook were written by atheists. Since I studied at a Christian university some of my lecturers held a passive deistic worldview. However, I have seen demons being cast away in the name of Jesus and people who medically had been declared dead raised in the name of Jesus. I am a Christian Theist; God does intervene in human affairs even today.

### **Temperament**

One aspect that is critical to our self-knowledge is personal temperament. The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) test is a widely used temperament test in Christian circles. "The theory behind the MBTI is that all of us are born with innate preferences. They affect the way we perceive that world around us, take in information, process it, and develop our responses to it" (Dybdahl, 2008, p. 112).

I am an ESTJ according to the MBTI test that I took. E means that I am an "extrovert." I gain energy by being with people. However, on a negative note it has been

observed that extroverts find prayer and silent meditation difficult. S is for sensing. Sensing people like working with facts and details; they like to do things for God. T is for Thinker. Thinkers base their decisions on analysis, logic, and principles of justice or integrity. Their religious practice is mainly cognitive. J is for Judging. These types prefer a planned orderly way of life. They find it easy to schedule and follow a regular devotional time (Dybdahl, 2008, pp. 112-14). Knowing one's temperament also leads to an understanding of how to relate to people of different temperaments.

### **Damage Factor**

Almost all of us have memories that cause pain. "Whether through our own fallen temperament, willful disobedience, or as victims of hurtful actions of others, many of us struggle with crippling emotions, among them perfectionism, depression, low self-worth. The pain is often present with us even though the incidents and relationships that caused it may be long past" (Seamands, 1981, p. 142).

My damage factor came when I was already in the ministry through the hurtful actions of fellow ministers and administrators. There was a union wide-seminar for all pastors and their wives. The presenters, a couple from the United States, put great stress on the idea of a mother taking care of her own children. Our first born son was only two years old. My wife decided to stop work and take care of our son as had been advised. It was then that all hell broke loose. I was told that it was impossible because she had been sponsored by the church and that I was behaving like a typical African husband who does not want women to progress. I was called names, but it was not my decision, she decided, and I stood by her side because the seminar presentations were very clear. What is the use

of calling people for a seminar if you do not want them to put into practice what they have learned?

We had thought that the church leaders were going to be pleased but there was fierce opposition. Finally, they cut my salary by 50% because they charged my wife's bursary debt to my personal account. This economic pressure was meant to pressure my wife to abandon her decision and go back to work. Although we had not read *Healing for Damaged Emotions* by David A. Seamands, God helped us to go through that time using the very principles that are in this book.

We prayed that God would help us to forgive. "There is no forgiveness from God unless you freely forgive your brother from your heart" (Seamands, 1981, p. 30). Failure to forgive would have led us to depression. "You may be depressed because you hold on to anger and refuse to forgive people who have authority over you. Granted, they may have misused their authority. They may have done wrong. But you need to forgive those whom God in His providence has allowed to have authority over you" (1981, p. 126).

Ephesians 4:32 became our favorite memory text, for it says "be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you." We also took comfort in singing hymns. The song by Luther, "A might fortress is our God," gave us courage to maintain our decision. We finally finished paying her bursary debt and God helped us to be cheerful through it all. I must say this was the time that my faith was greatly shaken. Even though I had evidence of God calling me to the ministry, I almost left the ministry because of this damage factor.

## Assessments in Relation to Others

### **Spiritual Gifts**

The Bible clearly states that God has given all believers different spiritual gifts for the building up of the body of Christ. It is therefore important that we discover our personal spiritual gifts. The Spiritual Gifts Inventory, by Dan R. Dick and Barbara A. Dick, “helps individuals to identify their God-given gifts for living faithfully as Christian disciples day by day and to find meaningful ways to use their gifts in connection with others through the community of faith” (2001, p. 12).

In the Spiritual Gift Inventory my highest score was the gift of miracles. Three gifts came in second place; faith, shepherding, and teaching. The gift of miracles is “the gift of an ability to operate at a spiritual level that recognizes the miraculous work of God in the world. Miracle workers invoke God’s power to accomplish that which appears impossible or impractical by worldly standards. . . . This gift is not about performing miracles as it is about acknowledging the miraculous power of God in the church and the world” (Dick & Dick, 2001, p. 42).

Those with the gift of faith have “the exceptional ability to hold fast to the truth of God in Jesus Christ in spite of pressures, problems, and obstacles to faithfulness” (p. 40). The gift of shepherding is “the gift of guidance. Shepherds nurture others in the Christian faith and provide a mentoring relationship to those who are new to the faith” (p. 42). The other gift that I have is that of teaching. This is “the gift of bringing scriptural and spiritual truth to others. . . . Teachers are revealers. They shine the light of understanding into the darkness of doubt and ignorance” (p. 43).



## **Leadership/Interaction Styles**

Effective leaders seek to know their strengths and weaknesses so that they are able to maximize their strengths and find ways to compensate for their weaknesses. According to Dick and Dick “every leader operates out of four primary leadership styles” (2001, p. 57). The four leadership styles are Director, Pleaser, Dreamers, and Thinkers. Directors are who tend to be task oriented and focus on results and getting the job done. They are also highly opinionated and decisive people. Dreamers, tend to be people-oriented and sociable. They focus on the big picture and often ignore details. Pleasers are also people-oriented and try to keep everyone happy. They are easy to get along with. Thinkers take work seriously. They keep documentation and follow formal procedures (pp. 58-60).

My leadership style is a Director. I am task oriented and like structured programs. However, when I am under stress I move first to the Pleaser mode then to the Thinker and finally to the Dreamer style. My Director Leadership style has potential negatives. There is a tendency to neglect relationship building while wanting to complete a task. Directors also tend to be poor listener. If they are many in a group they often move in many different directions and little is accomplished (p. 65).

## **Task Type Preferences**

People have different preferences in the way they want to work to accomplish a task. “Task Type Preferences describes four different ways that people choose to work together to perform a wide variety of jobs” (Dick & Dick, 2001, p. 12). It has been observed that “when the groups in which we work are structured in ways we enjoy, we are happier and more effective” (p. 87). The four Task Type Preferences are: (a) *Project*,

these people enjoy focused, short term ministries but are likely frustrated by committees; (b) *Work*, these enjoy hands-on missions but can be also frustrated by boards, councils, and committees; (c) *Process*, these people enjoy boards, councils, and committees but are frustrated by hands-on missions; and (d) *Fellowship*, these enjoy social ministry but are frustrated by boards, councils, and committees (Dick & Dick, 2001,p. 89).

My Task Type Preference is Project. “People who prefer the Project type of task like to see programs, ministries, or events through from start to finish—planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating all aspects of a project” (p. 90). My Task Type Preference will be an advantage in my project but my project deals with nurturing and it is the Fellowship Task Type that is well suited for this. “Nurturing congregations tend to prefer Fellowship. Outreaching congregations lean toward Work tasks. Witnessing congregations prefer Project tasks. Organizing churches lean toward Project and Process tasks” (p. 91).

### **Conclusion**

As I look back at my life there are things that will impact positively and negatively on my project. My work experience in Eritrea, where it was difficult to win people to Christ since the country was 50% Moslem, has caused me to place a higher value on souls than before. This will help me in my project to assist the elders to have a burden and value for souls so that new converts will be nurtured and not lost through the back door.

My growing up in a pastor’s home will also have a positive impact on this project. My father’s strength in the ministry was visitation of members and our conference realized, so for two years he was assigned to the Voice of Prophecy to follow up interests

in Harare without any district. Nurturing new converts requires visitation and follow up, things I grew up observing and participating in.

One of my great challenges in doing this project is a lack of time due to my responsibilities as an administrator. Also, having studied zoology and chemistry as my second degree, I was brought me in contact with the Western worldview which tends to be individualistic. Nurture requires fellowship and if I am not careful the Western individualism that is partially in me may interfere with this project.

According to the Myers-Biggs Type Indicator test that I took, I am an extrovert. Extroverts gain energy by being around people; thus, this will be an added advantage as I have to work with people it will not wear me out. However, on a sad note extroverts find prayer and meditation difficult (Dybdahl, 2008, pp. 112-14). This project is not only an academic exercise but a spiritual one too. I will need to be very deliberate to have time to pray and meditate while carrying out my research.

I am glad that in the Spiritual Gift Inventory that, although my highest score was miracles, shepherding and teaching came in second place. New converts cannot be nurtured without shepherding and teaching. "Shepherds nurture others in the Christian faith and provide a mentoring relationship to those who are new to the faith" (Dick & Dick, 2001, p. 42).

My primary leadership style is Director, which should help me see this project through. Nurturing requires a people oriented leadership style. I think the Dreamer or Pleaser type of leader would better guide elders in nurturing new converts. Another weakness that I have in doing this project is my Task Type Preference which is Project. The church is used to seeing programs come and go. I would not like this to be just

another program but one that will have a ripple effect throughout our union in effectively closing the back door so that new converts are won to stay. I pray that God might use me in spite of my weaknesses.

### **Overview of the Paper**

This chapter presents a statement of the problem, the justification of the project, and my personal basis for ministry, which examined the things that have shaped me. Chapter 2 will discuss a theology of pastoral care for local church elders. The political, cultural, and religious contexts of the East Zimbabwe Conference where the project will be carried out are discussed in Chapter 3. In Chapter 4 a strategy to train local church elders for effective assimilation and nurture of new converts is formulated using a logframe and a Gantt chart. Finally Chapter 5 will discuss the project implementation, results, and conclusions.

## CHAPTER 2

### A THEOLOGY OF PASTORAL CARE BY LOCAL CHURCH ELDERS

The Bible is an indispensable base for the task of pastoral care by local elders. Practice in the church should never be divorced from theology. The Bible should always inform our practice. Russell Burrill (1993) states that “correct theology will result in correct practice. Wrong theology will result in a distorted practice” (p. 31).

Derek J. Tidball (1986) observes that “the divorce we have created between theology and practice has led to major problems within the church which few can handle and only some can contain” (pp. 25-26). Thus we need to ask ourselves some important questions as we examine the biblical foundations for the local elders’ task. “What is the nature and goal of pastoral work? Do the Scriptures and theology give any insights into how that pastoral task is to be conducted?” (p. 24). In addition to these questions we also need to find out from Scripture if the work of pastoral care is limited to the clergy alone.

The concept of elders as care givers in the local church is embedded in the Old and New Testaments: it is implicit in the Old and explicit in the New. In doing theology Ray S. Anderson (1997, pp. 21-24) suggests the use of the rule of the theological antecedent. By this, he means we are to look for some aspects of God’s earlier ministry that can be used as a basis for new ways of doing ministry today. The question can now be raised, do we have a biblical antecedent for local elders as pastoral care givers in the

Old and New Testaments. This chapter will examine principles from heathen kings both in the Old and New Testaments and will look at principles from the Israelites and from the early New Testament church. As this biblical basis is established, what Christian authors have to say on this concept will also be examined.

### **Principles From the Old Testament**

The term elder was not only used in Israel but also among the heathen. Lake (1976) observes that “according to OT terminology, the elder was a rather loosely defined term designating the religious and political leaders, esp. of Israel. Biblical references show that other nations such as Egypt and Moab possessed such leaders (cf., Gen 50:7; Num 22:7)” (p. 266). Heathen kings also worked with elders and advisors in running their kingdoms.

#### Heathen Kings

God, through general revelation, gave some heathen kings concepts of management from which we can draw useful principles for local church administration. We shall only sample a few of these kings. The Pharaohs of Egypt were not only heads of state but also priests of their gods, yet in their work they were not alone. Alexander & Baker (2003) state:

Several important things about pharaoh’s position as king of Egypt are known. Most prominent of these is the centrality of the pharaoh in Egyptian society. Pharaoh was lawgiver, judge and, in theory at least, the only true priest to the gods, despite the fact that he delegated the actual duties of the various temples to others. (p. 632)

Pharaoh as priest and king delegated his responsibilities to others. He also had a team of officials that assisted him in running the government. “Now it came to pass in the morning that his spirit was troubled, and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt

and all its wise men. And Pharaoh told them his dreams, but there was no one who could interpret them for Pharaoh” (Gen 41:8).

In Pharaoh’s contest with Moses and Aaron he depended on his team of advisers. “But Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers; so the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments. For every man threw down his rod, and they became serpents. But Aaron’s rod swallowed up their rods” (Exod 7:11).

In the book of Daniel the principle of delegation and team spirit is also quite pronounced. Nebuchadnezzar had a deliberate program of training those who assisted him in government. Those who would serve in the king’s palace had a three-year training. Speaking of the captives from Judah that the king selected for this program the Bible says, “And the king appointed for them a daily provision of the king’s delicacies and of the wine which he drank, and three years of training for them, so that at the end of that time they might serve before the king” (Dan 1:5). Churches also need to take great care in selecting elders. “Great care should be exercised in selecting officers for the new churches. Let them be men and women who are thoroughly converted. Let those be chosen who are best qualified to give instruction, those who can minister both in word and in deed” (White, 1925, p. 61).

We also find Darius the Mede using the principle of delegation in running his vast empire. “It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom one hundred and twenty satraps, to be over the whole kingdom; and over these, three governors, of whom Daniel was one, that the satraps might give account to them, so that the king would suffer no loss” (Dan 6:1-3).

Three principles emerge from our examination of heathen kings in the Old

Testament. The first one is that of delegation. George and Logon (1987) indicate that delegation is “the process of identifying your work responsibilities and assigning portions of your work to others, so that the workers become fulfilled and the work is accomplished” (p. 117). Now if heathen kings could delegate responsibilities with the limited divine light which they had, how much more should pastors in multi-church districts delegate their duties? “Pastoral leadership in such settings requires special skills in delegation, training, and administration” (*Seventh-day Adventist Minister’s Handbook*, 2009, p. 113).

Even in our day non-religious organizations exhort managers to delegate. “There has been for years a great deal said about ‘delegation’ in management. Every manager whatever the organization—business, government, university, or armed service—has been exhorted to be a better ‘delegator’” (Druker, 2006, p. 37). The pastor as a leader is no exception to the principle of delegation if he is to be effective in the large district where he provides pastoral care. According to Orr (1994), “D. L. Moody once stated that he would prefer to have ten men do the work, rather than trying to do the work of ten men” (p. 177).

The second principle is that of training. Nebuchadnezzar had a three year training program for his wise men. This project focuses on training elders concerning their role in the nurture and assimilation of new converts. “In laboring where there are already some in the faith, the minister should at first seek not so much to convert unbelievers, as to train the church members for acceptable co-operation” (White, 1946, p. 110).

The third principle is that of team work. When Pharaoh or Nebuchadnezzar was confronted with a problem, they gathered their think tank people together and looked at



the problem as a team. Cladis (1999) states that “the church has known the power of God working through collaborative groups long before the postmodern management and business world discovered the power of even secular teamwork. Yet . . . we let it slip away” (p. 91).

Pue (2005) reminds us that “today Christian leaders have to function with the mind-set of a team. Working with others in a collaborative relationship is central for any leader, but the next step is to work with a team. That is when we can really accomplish the vision” (p. 148). Having evidences from the secular and the spiritual realms of the power of teamwork, the pastor in a multi-church district must therefore delegate, train, and have team work with the local elders.

### The Leadership of Moses

Old Testament scholars agree that Moses “stands at the center of Israel’s formation as a nation and people of faith and that he stands head and shoulders above every other leader they had” (Tidball, 1986, p. 36). At the very inception of his call God wanted Moses to work with the elders of Israel. When God appeared to him at the burning bush and before God assigned Aaron to assist him, God told Moses to go and address the elders. “Go and gather the elders of Israel together, and say to them, ‘The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared to me, saying, I have surely visited you and seen what is done to you in Egypt’” (Exod 3:16).

After addressing the elders, Moses was told not to go alone to Pharaoh but to go with the elders. “Then they will heed your voice; and you shall come, you and the elders of Israel, to the king of Egypt” (Exod 3:18). Although elders in the Old Testament, who played more of a civic role in a theocracy, are not equivalent to elders in the New

Testament, the point is still clear that Moses, synonymous to a district pastor, was to work with elders. The term elder in the Old Testament is derived from the Hebrew verb *zaqen* which means “to become old.” However, “the qualifications to be an elder were more than age. If it were simply age, all the old persons in the community would have been considered elders” (Alexander & Baker, 2003, p. 515).

When Moses kept on giving excuses to God about not being fit for the assignment, he was given Aaron to be his spokesman. “So he shall be your spokesman to the people. And he himself shall be as a mouth for you, and you shall be to him as God. And you shall take this rod in your hand, with which you shall do the signs” (Exod 4:16-17). Later in the New Testament Jesus also send His disciples out in twos.

When Moses and Aaron arrived in Egypt, Moses first called the elders of the Israelites and addressed them as he had been instructed at the burning bush. “Then Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders of the children of Israel. And Aaron spoke all the words which the Lord had spoken to Moses. Then he did the signs in the sight of the people” (Exod 4:29-30).

It seems that somewhere along the way Moses let God’s concept of working with the elders and Aaron slip away. We find him in Exodus 18 single-handedly handling the task of judging Israel. God had to use Jethro to remind him of the need to work with others. When Jethro arrived he ate bread with the elders and Aaron. “Then Jethro, Moses’ father-in-law, took a burnt offering and other sacrifices to offer to God. And Aaron came with all the elders of Israel to eat bread with Moses’ father-in-law before God” (Exod 18:12).

The next day however, in spite of all the man power available, he observed his

son-in-law judging alone without delegating his responsibilities. Dybdahl (1994) observes that “Moses may have been called by God, but according to this story he is a rather inept administrator. He is trying to do everything himself. Jethro gives him great advice, which he says, in fact, is God’s command (18:23)” (p. 154).

Jethro gently rebuked Moses. “So Moses’ father-in-law said to him, ‘The thing that you do is not good. Both you and these people who are with you will surely wear yourselves out. For this thing is too much for you; you are not able to perform it by yourself’” (Exod 18:17-18). Jethro then suggested a method of delegating responsibilities to men of integrity and wisdom.

Listen now to my voice; I will give you counsel, and God will be with you: Stand before God for the people, so that you may bring the difficulties to God. And you shall teach them the statutes and the laws, and show them the way in which they must walk and the work they must do. Moreover you shall select from all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them to be rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. And let them judge the people at all times. Then it will be that every great matter they shall bring to you, but every small matter they themselves shall judge. So it will be easier for you, for they will bear the burden with you. If you do this thing, and God so commands you, then you will be able to endure, and all this people will also go to their place in peace. (Exod 18:19-24)

Commenting on Jethro’s counsel to Moses, Dybdahl (1994) says,

Note carefully the counsel Jethro gives. First, he critiques the old system and tells Moses it will wear him out. He cannot handle everything alone. Actually, Jethro uses plural when he tells who will be worn out. The implication is that both Moses *and* the people will be unable to handle stress for long. (p. 159)

Moses accepted this counsel and it brought him relief and also “resulted in establishing more perfect order among the people” (White, 1890, p. 300). Jethro, according to Reggie McNeal (2000), “gave Moses some good management advice about establishing a legal system. Moses had created a huge bottleneck of justice by trying to

handle all of the disputes on his own. Jethro's fatherly advice kept the Exodus from stalling early on" (McNeal, 2000, p. 10).

To pastors in multi-church districts the advice of Jethro is indispensable if they are to be effective and not a bottleneck for the nurturing of new converts. Tidball (1986) says, "Perhaps the church today needs modern Jethros in order to learn how to off-load the burdens of administration so that the primary tasks to which the pastor is called do not suffer" (pp. 39-40).

The pastor must lead elders to assist him in doing ministry in the church. George and Logan (1987) state, "When we examine growth potential in a congregation, we discover that when a pastor primarily *does ministry* in the congregation, *rather than leading others to do ministry*, growth potential remains small" (p. 15). When the pastor delegates responsibilities to elders, the church will grow even if he cannot visit it on a regular basis.

Those who are known to be men of well-balanced minds, who have the love and fear of God before them, should be appointed as elders and deacons; and through the exercise of the ability God has given them, they may grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. They may plan wisely, and educate the individual members of the church to act their part in trading with their Lord's talents. By a right use of their talents they may increase their efficiency in the cause of God. The church may be visited only occasionally by a minister, and yet be a growing church; for Jesus is our minister, and we are never to think that we are left alone. Jesus never forsakes the flock of His pasture. "This man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood." (White, 1995, p. 226)

As outlined by Jethro the people to be given responsibilities were to be of good character. "God's assignments are always based on character—the greater the character the greater the assignment" (Blackaby & Blackaby, 2001, p. 55). Even in secular management, delegation is not done haphazardly. Anthony D'Souza (1994) writes, "Effective leaders carefully choose the people to whom they delegate work. . . . They

pick the right personnel based on individual readiness in terms of knowledge, experience, competency, motivation, and availability” (D’Souza, 1994, p. 480).

Jethro suggested something more than mere competency and that was spirituality. Moses was not running a secular business but was leading God’s people. “Moreover you shall select from all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them to be rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens” (Exod 18:21-22). Those that fear God, speak the truth, and hate covetousness are indeed spiritual men. These are men whom the Holy Spirit can use.

Later God pours his Spirit on the leaders that assisted Moses.

So Moses went out and told the people the words of the Lord, and he gathered the seventy men of the elders of the people and placed them around the tabernacle. Then the Lord came down in the cloud, and spoke to him, and took of the Spirit that was upon him, and placed the same upon the seventy elders; and it happened, when the Spirit rested upon them, that they prophesied, although they never did so again. But two men had remained in the camp: the name of one was Eldad, and the name of the other Medad. And the Spirit rested upon them. Now they were among those listed, but who had not gone out to the tabernacle; yet they prophesied in the camp. And a young man ran and told Moses, and said, “Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp.’ So Joshua the son of Nun, Moses’ assistant, one of his choice men, answered and said, ‘Moses my lord, forbid them!’” Then Moses said to him, “Are you zealous for my sake? Oh, that all the Lord's people were prophets and that the Lord would put His Spirit upon them!” And Moses returned to the camp, he and the elders of Israel. (Num 11:24-30)

Moses shows in this passage a maturity that all multi-church district pastors should have. He did not want to monopolize the Spirit of God. Moses wished that not only should the elders prophesy, but that all the people should also be filled with the Spirit of God. As pastors we should not overrate our importance and “conclude that far too many things can only be done by ourselves” (Drucker, 2006, p. 40).

Moses built a team of leaders whom he trained and to whom he delegated

responsibilities, just as the heathen kings discussed above also did. The main difference between them is that Moses added the spiritual element. He chose people who feared God and who could be filled with the Spirit of God. This dimension is important to pastors. Pastors are not to be only interested in getting the job done and sending good reports to the conference. They are to help people to have a better relationship with God. “God is far more concerned with your walking with Him than He is interested in getting a job done for Him. You can complete an assignment but never experience God” (Blackaby, Blackaby, & King, 2007, p. 145).

### **The Analogy of a Shepherd for Spiritual Leaders**

Both the Old and New Testaments use the analogy of a shepherd to represent spiritual leaders. Tidball (1986) says, “Underlying all the specific forms of leadership in Israel lay, in Thomas Oden’s words, the ‘pivotal analogy’ of the shepherd. It is important to examine this analogy carefully if a full understanding of the nature of biblical pastoral leadership is to be gained” (p. 45).

The great leaders of Israel were shepherds: the patriarchs Jacob, Moses, and David. There must be some lessons from shepherding that are important for spiritual leaders. When Moses was about to die he pleaded with God to give the children of Israel a shepherd. In the choice of this shepherd the quality that God looked for was spirituality and Joshua was appointed because he had the Spirit of God.

Then Moses spoke to the Lord, saying: “Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation, who may go out before them and go in before them, who may lead them out and bring them in, that the congregation of the Lord may not be like sheep which have no shepherd.” And the Lord said to Moses: “Take Joshua the son of Nun with you, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay your hand on him.” (Num 27:15-18)

While many lessons can be learned about the shepherding motif from the Old Testament leaders of Israel, the greatest concepts come from studying this motif as applied to God.

All subsequent understanding of ministry takes its starting point from the ministry of God to his people. Human ministry can never be more than a pale and partial reflection of that divine ministry. God the shepherd defines the relationship and function of the pastor to his flock. (Tidball, 1986, p. 33)

The people of Israel are referred to as the sheep and God as their shepherd.

“Know that the Lord, He is God; It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; We are His people and the sheep of His pasture” (Ps 100:3). In another psalm the Psalmist says, “Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, You who lead Joseph like a flock; You who dwell between the cherubim, shine forth!” (Ps 80:1). It is important for us to examine the attributes of God as a shepherd so that the local elder as an under-shepherd can follow God’s model of shepherding.

David, who was a shepherd himself, wrote one of the most beloved psalms, the twenty-third psalm, where he portrays God as his shepherd.

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name’s sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the Lord Forever. (Ps 23:1-6)

In this psalm, God, the Shepherd, provides for His sheep, leads, protects, and heals. Anointing a sheep with oil was a symbol of healing. The story of the Good Samaritan brings out this picture of the use of oil, “So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine” (Luke 10:34). David knew the role of the shepherd as a

protector of the sheep. When he spoke to Saul he pointed out what he had done to protect his father's sheep.

But David said to Saul, "Your servant used to keep his father's sheep, and when a lion or a bear came and took a lamb out of the flock, I went out after it and struck it, and delivered the lamb from its mouth; and when it arose against me, I caught it by its beard, and struck and killed it." (1 Sam 17:34-35)

The book of Isaiah brings out another quality of God as a Shepherd and that is compassion for the young. God carries the lambs in his bosom! "He will feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs with His arm, And carry them in His bosom, And gently lead those who are with young" (Isa 40:11).

The patriarch Jacob exhibited the same attitude of compassion for the young and weak when he met with his brother Esau. Esau wanted them to travel together quickly, but Jacob had compassion like a good shepherd over his animals:

But Jacob said to him, "My lord knows that the children are weak, and the flocks and herds which are nursing are with me. And if the men should drive them hard one day, all the flock will die. Please let my lord go on ahead before his servant. I will lead on slowly at a pace which the livestock that go before me, and the children, are able to endure, until I come to my lord in Seir. (Gen 33:13-14)

The new converts are the lambs of the congregation and elders need to lead and teach them gently. Another important aspect of shepherding is that of looking for the lost. The book of Ezekiel clearly shows that this is what the heavenly shepherd does:

For thus says the Lord God: "Indeed I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out. As a shepherd seeks out his flock on the day he is among his scattered sheep, so will I seek out My sheep and deliver them from all the places where they were scattered on a cloudy and dark day. And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land; I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, in the valleys and in all the inhabited places of the country. I will feed them in good pasture, and their fold shall be on the high mountains of Israel. There they shall lie down in a good fold and feed in rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. I will feed My flock, and I will make them lie down," says the Lord God. "I will seek what was lost and bring back what was driven away, bind



up the broken and strengthen what was sick; but I will destroy the fat and the strong, and feed them in judgment.” (Ezek 34:11-16)

It is also important to note that when a shepherd loses his sheep he goes immediately and seeks it. The Lord, as a Shepherd, feeds, searches for the lost, and heals the sick according to this passage.

## **Principles From the New Testament**

### Roman Government

During the life and times of the New Testament the world was under Roman rule. The Caesars, although worshiped and revered as gods also, delegated their authority. The Roman Emperor Octavian had the senate and the governors to assist him in running the vast Roman Empire. Octavian “provided the Senate with considerable authority, consulted it on important issues, allowed it to retain control over Italy and half the provinces, and gave it the legislative functions of the nearly defunct Tribal Assembly” (Wallbank, Taylor, & Bailkey, 1975, p. 75).

The New Testament bears record of Roman power delegated to governors: “Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene” (Luke 3:1-2). When the apostle Paul stood before the governor Porcius Festus, who succeeded Felix, he said, “I stand at Caesar’s judgment seat, where I ought to be judged. To the Jews I have done no wrong, as you very well know” (Acts 25:10). To stand before the governor was to stand before Caesar’s judgment seat because of delegated authority.

The army was also divided into legions for easy administration. The pastor needs

to learn from the secular world the importance of delegating his pastoral duties.

### The Ministry of Jesus

When Jesus came to our world he could have worked alone but he chose twelve disciples to work with him. The Godhead—Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit—work as a team. Therefore it is not strange that when Jesus came to earth he chose these 12 men to work with him. “From eternity past, Jesus had done his work in community. He decided to do his work in time and space on earth in community. He called twelve men to himself” (McNeal, 2000, p. 60). Ellen White (1911) observes:

These men He purposed to train and educate as the leaders of His church. They in turn were to educate others and send them out with the gospel message. That they might have success in their work they were to be given the power of the Holy Spirit. Not by human might or human wisdom was the gospel to be proclaimed, but by the power of God.

For three years and a half the disciples were under the instruction of the greatest Teacher the world has ever known. By personal contact and association, Christ trained them for His service. (p. 17)

Just as Jesus took time to train his disciples the pastor should take time to train his elders for the nurture of new converts. “Weary pastors, exhausted with the solo ministry syndrome, could be restored by cultivating the lay leadership subsystem” (Stevens & Collins, 1993, p. 88). Ellen White says,

Sometimes ministers do too much; they seek to embrace the whole work in their arms. It absorbs and dwarfs them; yet they continue to grasp it all. They seem to think that they alone are to work in the cause of God, while the members of the church stand idle. This is not God’s order at all. (1946, p. 113)

George and Logan (1987) give this advice to pastors, “focus your time and energy to equip current leaders and develop future leaders” (p. 106). The importance of training laity is also echoed by White.

Just as soon as a church is organized, let the minister set the members at work. They will need to be taught how to labor successfully. Let the minister devote more of his time to educating than to preaching. Let him teach the people how to give to others the knowledge they have received. (White, 1948, p. 20)

It was because of the training obtained by the disciples that “the Jesus movement survived its martyred leader” (Agasto, 2005, p. 23). Training of elders should be a prime work of the district pastor although the local conference can also assist. “While the pastor has the primary responsibility for training elders, conferences are encouraged to schedule periodic meetings for their training. In order to support a pastor-elder team relationship, pastors also should attend these meetings” (*Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual*, 2010, p. 167).

In training the Twelve, Jesus taught them the value of team work, he sent them in twos. “After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go” (Luke 10:1).

Calling the twelve about Him, Jesus bade them go out two and two through the towns and villages. None were sent forth alone, but brother was associated with brother, friend with friend. Thus they could help and encourage each other, counseling and praying together, each one's strength supplementing the other's weakness. In the same manner He afterward sent forth the seventy. It was the Saviour's purpose that the messengers of the gospel should be associated in this way. In our own time evangelistic work would be far more successful if this example were more closely followed. (White, 1898, p. 350)

Russell C. Burrill (1998) notes that “the early church practiced team ministry. There were no solo workers in the first century because evangelism was done in community” (p. 111). According to Harris W. Lee the modern church is awakening to team ministry:

While most church professionals were trained to be ‘lone rangers’ in ministry, the emphasis on team leadership in our generation has prompted the church to reconsider

some basic ideas, including insights from the Scripture, about team ministry. In the Scripture, interestingly enough, team ministry is often implied, if not forthrightly urged, in expressions of collegiality and mutual ministry. (Lee, 2003, p. 112)

Jesus applied the shepherd motif to His work. When Jesus saw the crowd, “He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd” (Matt 9:36). The disciples were to pray for laborers to harvest the fields. If the multitude were like sheep without a shepherd then one of the responsibilities of the laborers would be to shepherd the flock of God. “Shepherding is synonymous with pastoral care: It is the practical, individual, and spiritual care of Christ’s people as His lambs and sheep” (Prime & Begg, 2004, p. 150). The elders are part of the laborers in God’s harvest and as such they must provide pastoral care so that the multitude will not be sheep without a shepherd.

In the book of John, Jesus calls himself the good shepherd. “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep” (John 10:11). This passage is full of insights for how spiritual leaders are to render pastoral care. “The sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out” (John 10:3). There is a relationship with the sheep. The shepherd knows them by name and they know his voice. Elders should endeavor to know the new converts by name and give them a sense of belonging “especially in some large, urban parishes new members may feel isolated, cut off from those who appear to be the old, stable members” (Constien, 1986, p. 67).

Jesus visited people in their homes. He told Zacchaeus to “make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house” (Luke 19:5). He visited Simon Peter’s mother in-law when she was sick. “Now as soon as they had come out of the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. But Simon’s wife’s

mother lay sick with a fever, and they told Him about her at once” (Mark 1:29-30).

Jesus sent his 12 disciples and later the 70 to visit people in their homes. The work of visitation was not left to the leader alone but was also done by his associates. James A. Cress writes, “Teach your members that a visit from their assigned elder constitutes a pastoral visit” (2005, p. 94). The members are also to be encouraged to visit each other and those in trouble. In the parable of the sheep and the goats those that are welcomed in the kingdom of God are those that participated in visitation. “I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me” (Matt 25:36).

The aim of pastoral visits is to meet the felt needs of the members. “Approaching people on the felt needs is at the very core of the caring church model” (Dudley & Cummings, 1983, p. 80). “Christ’s method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, ‘Follow Me’” (White, 1905, p. 143).

One other principle that local elders need to learn from the Chief Shepherd is the importance of keeping in touch with heaven. Jesus taught His disciples by precept and example the need to spend much time in communication with the Father. “Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, ‘Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples’” (Luke 11:1). The pastor needs to train elders on the importance of guarding their own spiritual life. “Somebody said, ‘Beware of the barrenness of a busy life’” (Huston, 1996, p. 177).

The good shepherd’s task is also to protect and defend his sheep. It is “a hireling,

he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep” (John 10:12-13).

In the parables of Jesus, the shepherd is pictured as seeking the lost. The shepherd does not only begin to panic when half the flock has been lost. He is worried and cannot sleep when one out of a hundred is lost. “What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he finds it? And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing” (Luke 15:4-5).

The prophets “specified Christ’s attributes. They foretold Him as a gentle Shepherd, who would carry the lambs in His bosom” (White, 1957, p. 915). Taking care of new converts is synonymous with carry the lambs in one’s bosom. Pastors and elders who follow the example of the good shepherd are concerned even if a small percentage of the new converts go out through the back door.

The book of Hebrews identifies Jesus as the great shepherd:

Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen. (Heb 13:20-21)

Peter on the other hand calls him the Chief Shepherd and notes that “when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away” (1 Pet 5:4). “Christ is certainly presented as a model to believers of how they should care for one another (Rom 15:7; Gal 6:1) as well as engage in mutual instruction and work of harmony in the congregation (Col 3:15-16)” (Banks, 1993, p. 133). The only way for

local elders to take good care of God's flock is to learn from the Chief Shepherd.

### Elders in the Ministry of Paul

The concept of elders as care givers of local churches comes out more clearly in Paul than in any other writer of the New Testament. However, the apostle Paul was only building on what he had found in the early church. When Paul came on the scene of ministry, the church had already chosen deacons and there were elders in the church in Jerusalem. The reason for choosing deacons was that the apostles were overwhelmed with the cares of the young church. The Hellenists complained that their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution of bread. "Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, 'It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word'" (Acts 6:2-4).

The idea of delegation comes out in this passage. The delegation was done to spiritual men. "Seven men were therefore appointed to take charge of the work, and were installed by the laying on of hands. It is noteworthy that spiritual qualifications were sought in men appointed to such tasks within the Church" (Marshall, 1980, p. 125).

Delegation produced positive results for the church. "Luke describes the effect of the new appointment in terms of an increased Christian witness" (p. 127). "Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith" (Acts 6:7). Even today if the pastor delegates, similar results will follow. John R. W. Stott (1990), observes that many pastors

instead of concentrating on the ministry of the word (which will include preaching to the congregation, counseling individuals and training groups), they become overwhelmed with administration. Sometimes it is the pastor's fault (he wants to keep all the reins in his own hands), and sometimes the people's (they want him to be a general factotum). In either case the consequences are disastrous. The standards of preaching and teaching decline, since the pastor has little time to study or pray. And the lay people do not exercise their God-given roles, since the pastor does everything himself. For both reasons the congregation is inhibited from growing into maturity in Christ. (Stott, 1990, p. 123)

When Paul started his ministry he used a team approach. Just as Jesus had sent the disciples two by two, the Holy Spirit directed that Paul should go with Barnabas on the first missionary journey. "As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, 'Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.' Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away" (Acts 13:2-3). McNeal says, "Although he was not always with the same team every time, from the commissioning at Antioch forward, Paul was almost always in the company of ministry colleagues. His journeys and itinerant preaching efforts not only planted and nurtured churches but also created phenomenal team ministry" (McNeal, 2000, p. 48).

Paul also developed a team ministry with local coworkers since he was an itinerant church planter. McNeal observes that Paul's "letters contain warm references to his coworkers, both the ones with him as he traveled and the ones in the congregation to whom he wrote" (McNeal, 2000, p. 48). Most of the local team members were no doubt the elders of the local churches.

It is interesting to note what Lake (1976) says about how the office of elder first appears in the early church:

In the Lukan apostolic history, the office appears without explanation as to its origin for the first time in Acts 11:30. The reference here is to the elders in the church in Judea for whom a collection had been taken in Antioch. We may assume that this unexplained appearance in contrast to the selection of the seven in Acts 6 implies a



rather natural transition from the synagogue structure of Judaism to the organization of the Early Church (cf. Acts 2:46). (Lake, 1976. p. 267)

Thus the early church might have just adopted this office from the way the synagogue was administered. In the first century “the office of elder was a regular position in the Jewish synagogue. In the tractate Sanhedrin of the Mishna, the duties of this office are clearly outlined. The council of elders was responsible for the government of the Jewish community” (Lake, 1976, p. 267). Norman Hillyer (1992) says,

With many first believers coming from a background of Judaism, it would be natural for the early churches to be organized the well-established found in the Diaspora, Jewish settlements scattered abroad. This was the Sanhedrin, a council of elders under a president, who together looked after the corporate life of Jewish community. (p. 138)

The Qumran community also sheds light on the office of the elder. “The discoveries at Qumran have revealed a covenant community in which the office of elder also functioned in much the same sense as that office in Judaism, and there is general agreement that the Qumran community did have rather significant connections with early Christianity” (Lake, 1976, p. 267).

Early in his missionary endeavors the apostle Paul realized that he could not always be with the new believers so he appointed elders to shepherd local congregations. On his return trip from the first missionary journey he passed through the cities he had established new congregations,

strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, “We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.’ So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed” (Acts 14:22-23).

Paul and Barnabas appointed elders in every church. According to Stott (1990), This arrangement was made from the first missionary journey onwards, and became universal. Although no fixed ministerial order is laid down in the New Testament,

some form of pastoral oversight (*episkope*), doubtless adapted to local needs, is regarded as indispensable to the welfare of the church. (Stott, 1990, p. 236)

In his pastoral epistle to Titus, Paul also instructs him to appoint elders in every city in Crete. “For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you” (Titus 1:5). Elders played an important role in the nurture of the New Testament church.

When Paul was returning from his third missionary journey he called the elders of the church from Ephesus and gave them a farewell speech that was full of pastoral insights. Using his own pastoral example he taught them publicly and from house to house, again stressing that visiting members in their homes is important for local elders. “When an Elder visits in the homes of his zone he creates a learning, teaching, and nurturing situation. His overall purpose for personal contacts with fellow Christians is to become sensitive to the issues and plights they encounter as God’s people” (Constien, 1986, p. 40).

Charles Prestwood (1972) observes that “the traditional role to the clergy, as any minister well knows, includes a high priority on house-to-house visitation” (p. 41). The apostle Paul modeled house-to-house visitation for the elders. So, the pastor must participate in visitation while training local elders to do the same. When discussing visitations to newcomers and people in the community in general Callahan (1983) says,

These visits would be made by the pastor and a range of key laypersons in the congregation. It would not be appropriate for the pastor to assume full responsibility for visitation; nor would it be appropriate for the pastor to train laypersons to do visitation and participate only minimally. (p. 11)

The work of the pastor as a true shepherd is described by White (1911) as follows:

The spirit of the true shepherd is one of self-forgetfulness. He loses sight of self in order that he may work the works of God. By the preaching of the word and by personal ministry in the homes of the people, he learns their needs, their sorrows, their trials; and, co-operating with the great Burden Bearer, he shares their afflictions, comforts their distresses, relieves their soul hunger, and wins their hearts to God. (White, 1911, p. 527)

Engaging elders in visitation corrects the wrong notion that many people have about ministry. In a survey of 29 urban congregations it was found that 70 percent of the members defined the ministry of the laity as doing things at church only (Stevens & Collins, 1993, p. 126). The apostle Paul wanted the elders to emulate him in his house-to-house work. Visitations build relationships which will allow the elder or the pastor to be able to minister effectively in a time of crisis

when some sudden emergency, sorrow, fear or shame shall arise. The pastor who is known at the fireside for a Christian and a friend will then move into a place already prepared, from which he can minister at the need as no stranger could ever do.” (R. White, 1976, p. 39)

The need to nurture new converts is stressed by Ellen White:

Again, after individuals have been converted to the truth, they need to be looked after. The zeal of many ministers seems to fail as soon as a measure of success attends their efforts. They do not realize that these newly converted ones need nursing--watchful attention, help, and encouragement. These should not be left alone, a prey to Satan's most powerful temptations; they need to be educated in regard to their duties, to be kindly dealt with, to be led along, and to be visited and prayed with. These souls need the meat apportioned to every man in due season. (1881, p. 68)

The apostle Paul then turned from his own example and gave direct counsel on the duties of an elder.

Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears. (Acts 20:28-31)

According to Marshall (1980), the duties of the elders were

to pay attention to their own spiritual condition (cf. 1 Tim 4:16) as well as to that of the church; it is only as the leaders themselves remain faithful to God that they can expect the church to do likewise. The church is described as a *flock*, a familiar Old Testament metaphor for God's people (Ps 100:3; Is 40:11; Je 13:17; Ezk 34) which was taken up by Jesus (Lk 12:32; 15:3-7; 19:10; John 10: 1-30). The picture is applied to the church and its leaders in John 21:15-17 and 1 Peter 5:2. (p. 333)

“On those elders, then, lay a weighty responsibility. The Holy Spirit had entrusted them with the charge of the people of God in Ephesus; they had to care for them as shepherds cared for their flock” (Bruce, 1988, p. 392). In Acts 20, the apostle Paul uses three terms that refer to a local church office. “The word elders in verse 28 is *presbuteros*, and the word overseers in verse 28 is *episkopos* (bishop). The term pastor is from *poimen*, and signifies literally a herdsman, shepherd, especially a pastor, a teacher, a spiritual guide of a particular church” (Burrill, 1998, p. 153). Thus elder and bishop refer to the same office in the local church whose function is to shepherd or pastor the members of that church.

Obviously we can immediately dispense with the idea that a ‘bishop’ or ‘*episkopos*’ in the New Testament had authority over a number of churches. There were an unspecified number in the Ephesian church alone. Also we may safely conclude the ‘elders’ (*presbuteros*) were, in fact, ‘overseers’ (*episkopos*) of the local church. Really the first word is a title; the second is what they had to do. (Lacey, 1985, p. 62)

These elders were the primary care givers to the church. “Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood” (Acts 20: 28). “To shepherd” is translated from a present-tense infinitive which “means to shepherd continually and in this context also indicates the purpose of being an overseer” (Bock, 2007, p. 630). The work of shepherding by the local elders is a continual assignment not an erratic duty.

The early Adventist Church according to Burrill (1998) followed this model:

It was deliberately organized without settled pastors. This was done in an attempt to create a biblical organization similar to the New Testament. All clergy were itinerant preachers whose work was to raise up new churches or administer the affairs of the church. The local church was expected to care for itself. It might receive an occasional visit from a clergy person, but none was assigned over the local church as a primary care giver. Churches established were immediately indigenous, without an outside leader appointed over the church. As a result, the local elders were expected to preside over the local churches in the same way as the pastors do today. (p. 155)

In the Pastoral Epistles the apostle Paul spends most of his time discussing the qualities of elders rather than their duties. “Ultimately, leadership is more about ‘being’ than about ‘doing’” (Blackaby & Blackaby, 2001, p. 54). According to Lake (1976), “The pastoral epistles refer to only two offices; pastors or elders and deacons. In 1 Timothy 3:1-13 the text uses *episkopos* and *diakonos*; whereas Titus 1:5-9 seems to use the terms *episkopos* and *presbuteros* almost interchangeably” (p. 267). Lake goes on to state:

It has already been noted that by the time the pastoral epistles were written, the terms ‘bishop and ‘elder’ were used interchangeably (cf. 1 Tim 3; Titus 1). But even earlier in Paul’s ministry (cf. Acts 20: 17-38) when he met with the elders of the Ephesian church, he seems to relate the three terms together—elder, bishop or overseer and pastor. The idea of the elders serving as shepherds of the flock and overseeing the administration of the church helped distinguish the *title* of the office from its practical *functions*. In other words, the term elder originally designated those who were both naturally as well as spiritually older or more mature. Note that Paul makes specific mention of the fact that no one is to be admitted to the office of elder or bishop who is a ‘recent convert’ or novice (cf. 1 Tim 3:6). (p. 268)

Ellen White (1881) in the formative years of the Adventist Church made the following observation about recent converts being made elders:

In many places we meet men who have been hurried into responsible positions as elders of the church when they are not qualified for such a position. They have not proper government over themselves. Their influence is not good. The church is in trouble continually in consequence of the defective character of the leader. Hands have been laid too suddenly upon these men. (p. 406)

To his fellow itinerant co-workers, Timothy and Titus, Paul outlines the

qualifications of an elder. “A Christian leader must exemplify the principles of his profession if he would convince others of the worthiness of his message. A stream flows no higher than its source, and a congregation will not usually rise higher than its leadership” (Nicol, 1980, vol. 7, p. 297). The Apostle Paul writing to Timothy says,

This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence 5 (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?); not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil. Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. (1 Tim 3:1-7)

Davies (1983) points out,

In the book of common order of the Church of Scotland the duties of elders in the second sense are listed as follows: ‘to set the example of a virtuous and godly life, and of regular attendance at public worship; to take part with the minister in administering the care and discipline of the parish. (p. 175)

Commenting on verse one, Charles E. Bradford (1994) says “the emphasis is on the service rather than the position. In Paul’s view, to aspire to this kind of noble service is legitimate. Persons with gifts of leadership are to be encouraged to develop their gifts” (p. 61). Bradford also highlights the importance of the character in spiritual leaders. He says:

Paul has little to say about the skills of the elder. Only two items fall into the category of a job description: The ability to teach (vs. 2) and management/people skills (vss. 4, 5). The emphasis is more on the character qualifications that the spiritual leader should possess. (1994, p. 63)

The list of qualifications of elders in the epistle to Titus corresponds very closely to the one in 1 Timothy 3:

For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you if a man is blameless,

the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination. For a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled, holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict. (Titus 1:5-9)

It seems that the apostle Paul and Titus had evangelized Crete; Paul then had to leave before appointing elders. Paul left Titus to complete this task because he knew “in order that congregational life in various cities of Crete may flourish, well-qualified elders must be appointed” (Hendriksen & Kistemaker, 2007, p. 344). “The plan of organization calls for the appointment of elders to lead the congregations. The church was desperate for leadership, but as in Ephesus, these leaders must not be rushed into office” (Bradford, 1994, p. 162). The apostle Paul gave both Timothy and Titus the required qualifications for one to assume this ministry.

In Paul’s day there were itinerant preachers like the apostles and their fellow workers, while the local leaders were deacons and elders. “When Wayne Meeks summarizes the ‘governance’ patterns of Pauline churches, he divides the types of Pauline leaders into three: apostles, fellow workers, and local leaders” (Agasto, 2005, p. 122). The apostles were not to work alone nor just team up with their fellow workers. They appointed local leaders who were under their guidance to pastor local congregations. So should it be in our day. “The pastor should not assume all lines of responsibility, but should share these with elders and other officers” (*SDA Church Manual*, 2010, p. 72).

### Elders in the Ministry of the Apostle Peter

Peter also discusses the role of local church elders in his first letter. His exposition

is no doubt based on what happened during his restoration after his fall.

So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?” He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.” He said to him, “Feed My lambs.” He said to him again a second time, “Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?” He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.” He said to him, “Tend My sheep.” He said to him the third time, “Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?” Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, “Do you love Me?” And he said to Him, “Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You.” Jesus said to him, “Feed My sheep.” (John 21:15-17)

When Jesus restored Peter he charged him to feed first his lambs then his sheep.

Feeding the lambs implies that special care should be given to those who are young in the faith:

Those who have newly come to the faith should be patiently and tenderly dealt with, and it is the duty of the older members of the church to devise ways and means to provide help and sympathy and instruction for those who have conscientiously withdrawn from other churches for the truth's sake, and thus cut themselves off from the pastoral labor to which they have been accustomed. The church has a special responsibility laid upon her to attend to these souls who have followed the first rays of light they have received; and if the members of the church neglect this duty, they will be unfaithful to the trust that God has given them. (White, 1946, p. 351)

Jesus asked Peter if he loved him before he charged him to feed the lambs and the sheep. The love of Christ should be the driving force for shepherding the flock of God.

The Apostle Paul wrote, “For the love of Christ compels us” (2 Cor 5:15).

Christ mentioned to Peter only one condition of service--“Lovest thou Me?” This is the essential qualification. Though Peter might possess every other, yet without the love of Christ he could not be a faithful shepherd over the flock of God. Knowledge, benevolence, eloquence, zeal--all are essential in the good work; but without the love of Christ in the heart, the work of the Christian minister is a failure. (White, 1911, p. 515)

The only motive that should guide a shepherd of the flock of God is love for Christ and not love of money. Robert M. Johnston (1995) adds “Likewise their motive is not to be love of power and authority; they are to lead by example more than overbearing command” (p. 111). Campbell McAlpine (n.d.) also stresses the need of love in



leadership by saying, “leadership without love does not profit” (McAlpine, n.d., p. 23).

The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away. (1 Pet 5:1-4)

It is interesting to note that in this passage Peter is not seeking to be the greatest in the way the disciples sought positions during their ministry with Jesus. Johnston (1995) says, “Peter makes his appeal to the holders of this office ‘as a fellow elder,’ . . . Peter does not pull rank on them, though he is an apostle. He appeals to them as a brother” (p. 110). Just like his master humbled himself and took the form of a servant, Peter puts himself on the level of local elders who he wants to admonish.

The apostle Peter’s job description for elders is to shepherd the flock of God. This agrees with Paul’s last speech to the elders of Ephesus, in which he said, “Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood” (Acts 20:28). Both Paul and Peter understood the work of the local elder as that of shepherding the flock.

Peter adds the element of Christ the chief shepherd appearing at his second coming. The local elders are to look at the example of the chief shepherd and also know that he will hold them accountable at his appearing. Paul J. Achtemeier (1996) points out that Christ is the chief shepherd. This “implies that the elders who shepherd God’s flock are continuing, in part at least, Christ’s ministry” (p. 329).

There is a danger for those in authority to abuse the authority delegated to them by the chief shepherd.

Christians are not the subjects of the elders, as is the case in the secular realm with leaders and subjects, but rather all Christians belong to God, and so the presbyters must carry out their duties as servants of God, not as lords of the Christians under their care. Arrogance toward other Christians and arbitrary exercise of power have no place in the leadership of the church, since those leaders also stand under God's opposition to the arrogant but his graciousness to the humble (v. 5b). (Achte-meier, 1996, p. 329)

### **Conclusion**

As the Scriptures have been examined it has become clear that the work of pastoral care is not limited to the clergy alone. The laity have a role to play, particularly the elders of the local church. Principles of delegation have been used even by heathen kings and also in the ministries of Moses, Jesus, Paul, and Peter. The major role of local elders as shepherds of the flock is seen in both the Old and New Testaments. Moses prayed,

Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation, who may go out before them and go in before them, who may lead them out and bring them in, that the congregation of the Lord may not be like sheep which have no shepherd. (Num 27:16-17)

Paul told the Ephesian elders to take care of God's flock. "Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood" (Acts 20:28). Peter echoes the same sentiment. "Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly" (1 Pet 5:2).

In taking care of the sheep, priority is to be given to the young, both in age and in conversion. The prophet Isaiah pictures the Messiah giving special care to the lambs. "He will feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs with His arm, And carry

them in His bosom, And gently lead those who are with young” (Isa 40:11). In the restoration of Peter the first charge he was given was to feed the lambs! “So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, ‘Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?’ He said to Him, ‘Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.’ He said to him, ‘Feed My lambs’” (John 21:15).

The aim of this project is to train local elders for the nurture and assimilation of new converts, and as indicated above there is a biblical basis for it. The Christian authors interacted with throughout this chapter testify also that the pastor cannot do it alone. “God’s Spirit convicts sinners of the truth, and He places them in the arms of the church. The ministers may do their part, but they can never perform the work that the church should do” (White, 1881, p. 69).

Lay members are to be involved in nurturing new converts. The Bible teaches about the priesthood of all believers, but that does not mean that the church can do without local elders. There is a need to train the elders for this responsibility so they can help the local churches assume this role.

The special ministries, such as pastor, evangelist and teacher, are to assist the laity, and not vice versa, as we have usually presumed. This concept of the ministry of the laity in no sense eliminates the need for the offices manned by full-time workers ordained to equip church members for service. If every church is to be a training school there must be a staff qualified to instruct. There must be on-the-job training by which new members are apprenticed to experienced workers. More than theoretical instruction must be provided. Actual practice is a necessity. (Knowles, 1981, pp. 153-154)

The pastor is to empower members starting with the elders to minister to new converts according to their spiritual gifts. “Lay leaders, too, are called to be servant leaders and are urged to see their service as ministry. . . . Lay leaders, too, serve according to their gifts and in accord with their particular assignments” (Lee, 2003,

p. 103). District pastors need to rely on and equip the laity. V. T. Waters (2008) sums it up this way, “When properly equipped and empowered, churches in the district situation do not need to wait for a pastor to do God’s work” (p. 10).

Having established the theological foundation for elders as pastoral care givers in the local church, it is imperative that the cultural, political, and religious context of the geographic location of the study be examined. Chapter 3 of this project looks at these contexts because ministry is not done in a vacuum.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE POLITICAL, CULTURAL, AND RELIGIOUS ANALYSIS OF EAST ZIMBABWE CONFERENCE

#### **Introduction**

The local church does not exist in a vacuum. It exists and carries out its mission in a political, cultural and religious context. As I will train elders to nurture new converts in Mabvuku, East Zimbabwe Conference, it is important for me to analyze the political, cultural and religious aspects of that society. These affect the way that people understand the gospel and how they relate to each other.

#### **Description of the Project Context**

##### Geographic Description

Zimbabwe is a landlocked country in southern Africa. It is located between two rivers, the Limpopo in the south and Zambezi in the north. The Limpopo forms the border with Zimbabwe's southern neighbor, South Africa, while the Zambezi forms the border with Zambia in the north. The other two neighbors of Zimbabwe are Botswana in the west and Mozambique in the east (see figure 1). Zimbabwe encompasses an area of 390,750 sq. km but only 7% of the land is under cultivation (Students of the world, 2006, under "Zimbabwe: Geography").

Zimbabwe is a plateau with four main regions: the Eastern highlands, Highveld,

Middleveld, and the Lowveld. The Eastern highlands are a belt of mountains along the Mozambique border where the highest mountain in Zimbabwe, Nyanga, is located. This mountain's peak is 8,503 ft/2,592 m above sea level. The Highveld lies "above 4,000 ft (1,219 m), crosses the country from southwest to northeast. On each side of it lies the middleveld, 3,000 to 4,000 ft (914-1,219 m) high, and beyond it the lowveld, at elevations below 3,000 ft (914 m)." (Infoplease, 2000-2013, under "Zimbabwe, Land and people")



Figure 1. Map of Zimbabwe. Taken from Infoplease.com, 2000-2013.

The country also “has an extensive national park system, including Hwange and Victoria Falls, both in the west. Rainfall varies from about 70 in. (178 cm) in the Highlands to less than 25 in. (64 cm) in the south” (Infoplease, 2000-2013, under “Zimbabwe, Land and People”).

Mabvuku, where the study will take place, is in Harare which is on the Highveld and enjoys good rainfall and mild temperatures. Due to the mild temperature there is no malaria in Harare. Mabvuku is in the outskirts of Harare and the people there do “illegal” peri-urban farming.

### History and Political Context

Zimbabwe has a rich history. “The name Zimbabwe is derived from the Shona, *dzimba dzemabwe*, meaning houses of stone or stone buildings, today symbolized by the Great Zimbabwe Ruins near the present day town of Masvingo” (Zimbabwe Government, 2013, under “The History of Zimbabwe”). However, the San hunters are said to have been the first to settle in Zimbabwe.

San (Bushmen) hunters are believed to have been the earliest inhabitants of the area that is now Zimbabwe. When Bantu-speaking peoples migrated from the north at the end of the second century, the San moved on or were absorbed rapidly into the farming and cattle-herding culture of the Bantu groups. Little is known about those early Bantu groups, but the present-day Shona can be traced to a group that moved into the area around 1200 C.E. (Everyculture, 2013, under “Zimbabwe, History and Ethnic Relations”)

The Bantus set up great empires in pre-colonial Zimbabwe. The earliest was the Great Zimbabwe State, which had trade with China, India, and the Middle East. The “Great Zimbabwe was a majestic ancient stone city that flourished near the modern town of Masvingo from about 1290 to 1450 on the strength of a powerful and organised society” (Zimbabwe Government, 2013, under “The History of Zimbabwe”).

The Great Zimbabwe State was followed by the Mutapa State and the Rozwi State. “By the mid-19th century the descendants of the Nguni and Zulu, the Ndebele, had established a powerful warrior kingdom.” (Infoplease, 2000-2013, under “Zimbabwe, History”). The British came and colonized Zimbabwe when the second king of this kingdom, Lobengula, was in power.

### **Colonialism**

Zimbabwe was colonized by the British. “The first British explorers, colonists, and missionaries arrived in the 1850s, and the massive influx of foreigners led to the establishment of the territory Rhodesia, named after Cecil Rhodes of the British South Africa Company” (Infoplease, 2000-2013, under “Zimbabwe, History”). The colonization of Zimbabwe affected the way Zimbabweans viewed Christianity.

While they introduced some positive developments like western medicine, a stop to persecutions for alleged witchcraft and such practices as forced marriages and child-pledging, missionaries were the earliest representatives of the imperial world that eventually violently conquered the Shona and the Ndebele. They aimed at reconstructing the African world in name of God and Europe civilisation, but in the process facilitating the colonisation of Zimbabwe. Christian teaching stressed individual accountability to God above, thus undermining African religions ideologies that guided Africa political, judicial and religions powers. Missionaries were consistent and persistent in denigrating and castigating African cultural and religious beliefs/practices as pagan, demonic and evil. It is not surprising that some missionaries like John Moffat abused Lobengula’s trust and confidence by conniving with concession seekers. In the face of such ambiguities, African response to Christianity remained ambivalent. (Zimbabwe Government, 2013, under “The History of Zimbabwe”)

As soon as the Whites gained control of Zimbabwe they introduced racism, taxes, forced labor, and land restrictions on the black majority. This led Africans to resist White rule with the help of Spirit Mediums. This was a blow to Christianity which was seen to



condone colonial practices because some of the White missionaries were also benefiting from the system.

Organized resistance to white supremacy began in the 1920s, and in the absence of meaningful reform, radical active resistance started in the 1940s. By the early 1960s the two groups that were to lead the country to independence, the Zimbabwe African People's Union and the Zimbabwe African National Union, had been established. When Great Britain demanded that Rhodesia guarantee racial equality and put in place a plan for majority rule or face economic sanctions, the government declared a Unilateral Declaration of Independence in 1965. A guerrilla war followed that was characterized by political differences between resistance groups and among the white minority. It also was characterized by a close relationship between the guerrillas and spirit mediums. Embodying the ancestors, the spirit mediums represented a common past, untainted by colonialism, that could be drawn on to shape and legitimize a new national identity. (Everyculture, 2013, under “Zimbabwe, History and Ethnic Relations”)

The guerrilla war included many atrocities that “culminated in all the contestants in the struggle agreeing on the peace modalities at the Lancaster House Conference in 1979, which in turn resulted in the February 1980 general elections that ultimately led to independence on 18 April 1980” (Zimbabwe Government, 2013, under “The History of Zimbabwe”).

### **Independent Zimbabwe**

In the 1980 election, the ZANU PF, led by Robert Mugabe, had a landslide victory and a one-party socialist state was eventually established. It is noteworthy that in spite of the government’s communist leaning, freedom of worship was allowed in Zimbabwe. However by 1990 Mugabe “had instituted multiparty elections and in 1991 deleted all references to Marxism-Leninism and scientific socialism from the constitution” (Infoplease, 2013, under “Zimbabwe, History”).

Zimbabwe currently is a parliamentary democracy headed by a president. Although the president is elected by direct vote in advance of party elections and holds

office for six years, the term during which a party can control the government is five years. Representative structures consist of a House of Assembly and a cabinet appointed by the president; at the rural district level, there are elected councils. Each district is made of a number of wards, and wards are subdivided into villages. Each ward and village has a development committee that is responsible for promoting and supporting local development initiatives. Ten chiefs, traditional representatives elected by their peers, sit in the House of Assembly. Alongside the representative structure is the civil service (the administrative structure), the police, the military, permanent secretaries and other ministry staff, and provincial and district administration staff (Everyculture, 2013, under “Zimbabwe, Political life”).

In 2002 commercial farms were invaded by war veterans. These land takeovers, supported by the government, resulted in foreign sanctions against the country. The economy of Zimbabwe slowly declined with the worst period being 2007 and 2008. However, the land takeovers took place “in an effort to reclaim land taken under British colonization—one-third of Zimbabwe’s arable land was owned by 4,000 whites” (Infoplease, 2013, under “Zimbabwe, History”).

After the disputed elections of March 2008, the opposition leader,

Tsvangirai agreed in January 2009 to enter into a power-sharing government with Mugabe, and he was sworn in as prime minister in February. Tsvangirai’s Movement for Democratic Change assumed control 13 of the 31 ministries in the new government, while Mugabe’s Zanu-PF was allocated 15. The parties share responsibility for the contested home-affairs ministry, which oversees the police. The relationship between Mugabe and Tsvangirai failed to improve, and they squabbled more than they governed. Mugabe didn’t conceal his antipathy toward the power-sharing deal, and Tsvangirai accused Mugabe of thwarting any attempts at governing and for of inciting violence against his supporters. (Infoplease, 2013, under “Zimbabwe, History”)

Elections were held on 31 July 2013. Zimbabweans were hoping for a peaceful

election and an environment that would restore the fortunes of the early years of independence. No one can dispute the facts of improved lifestyle for the majority after the end of colonial rule. For example, the first 15 years of independence saw “incredible strides in school expansion, teacher training, and resource improvement. As a result, Zimbabwe continues to experience the highest literacy rate in sub-Saharan Africa and sends the fifth largest number of students from Africa to the United States” (U.S. Embassy, 2008, Zimbabwe, under “Education Profile).

### Demography

The population of Zimbabwe is estimated to be 12,619,600, close to 13 million. The population estimate takes into account the high mortality rate caused by AIDS. It is interesting to note that 40.6% of the population is between 0-14 years of age. Those that are between the ages 15-24 make up 22.5% of the population, thus 63.1% of the population is below 24 years of age (Countries of the World, 2013, under “Zimbabwe People, Age Structure).

Programs to nurture the church must therefore have a special appeal to the young children. Vibrant programs such as Adventurers, Pathfinders, Vacation Bible School, and Senior Youth activities should be encouraged in all our churches. In most churches in Africa the young are left to find their own entertainment while the elders are engaged in Bible study. The young ones below the age of 12 years, who give themselves to Christ during evangelistic campaigns, are often ignored. It is needful that special baptismal classes be established for them.

When Jesus restored Simon Peter, the first command he gave Peter was to first feed the lambs. “So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, ‘Simon,

son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?’ He said to Him, ‘Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.’ He said to him, ‘Feed My lambs’” (John 21:15). The elder as the under shepherd should take interest in the programs that nurture the young. In the seminars that will be conducted this element will receive emphasis in a country that has a young population.

The ethnic composition of Zimbabwe’s population is “African 98% (Shona 82%, Ndebele 14%, other 2%), mixed and Asian 1%, white less than 1%” (Countries of the World, 2013, under “Zimbabwe People, ethnic groups”). Although Harare is in Mashonaland and most people living there are of Shona origin, the study will take place in Mabvuku, that has a high concentration of people of Malawian origin. The majority of them came before independence seeking greener pastures. An understanding of their customs and religion is important if they are to be nurtured effectively. However most of the young were born in Zimbabwe and have to a great extent adopted the Shona culture.

Mabvuku, where I am doing my project, is a high density suburb which forms part of Greater Harare, which has a total population of 2.1 million (City of Harare, 2013, under “Key Statistics”). “The population of Mabvuku is 46 881, composed of 52.8% males and 47.2% females. The total number of households is 10,599 with an average size of 4.4 persons per household” (Adeanet, n.d., p. 3).

Most of the people who live in Mabvuku are in the low-income bracket. This suburb, was established in 1952, to provide “accommodation for cooks and gardeners for the whites in the Greendale and Highlands suburbs during the colonial era. However,

other people employed in commerce and industry and the public sector in Harare now also reside there” (Adeanet, n.d., p. 3).

It is the oldest municipality residence in Harare. The “first municipal houses were occupied in 1952 in Mabvuku, Mufakose 1959, Dzivarasekwa and Tafara 1961 and Marimba—high income 1961” (City of Harare, 2013, under “key statistics”). The population of Mabvuku reflects the national population composition where 67% are under the age of 24 years, as noted above.

## Socio-Cultural Context

### **Culture**

Culture is difficult to define. One of the most comprehensive definitions of culture was given by Paul Hiebert.

There are many anthropological definitions of culture. Here we will define it as the more or less integrated system of beliefs, feelings, and values created and shared by a group of people that enable them to live together socially and that are communicated by means of their systems of symbols and rituals, patterns of behavior, and the material products they make. (2009, p. 150)

Culture is constructed in a community while people are living together. “Humans are social creatures and depend on one another for survival and meaningful existence. They need care during their childhood and in their old age. They find their greatest joy and fulfillment in the company of others” (Hiebert, 2009, p. 150).

Closely linked to the concept of culture is the idea of worldview, which “is the most encompassing view of reality we share with other people in a common culture” (Hiebert, 2009, p. 150). It is “the deep, underlying, usually unconscious concept structures of a people or culture that is the source for their values, beliefs, and actions” (Dybdahl, 2008, p. 101). According to Howell and Paris (2011), culture “is the total way

of life of a group of people that is learned, adaptive, shared, and integrated” (Howell & Paris, 2011,p. 36).

In order to win and nurture people in the church one needs to understand their culture and worldview. The people of Mabvuku are mainly the Shonas and those of Malawian decent. Although they have some differences in their cultures they share many of the same animistic values and assumptions that form their worldview.

In the Western worldview, which divides reality into the natural and the supernatural, human beings are in the natural realm and “have little contact with spiritual beings or forces. Few, if any, spiritual beings and impersonal forces are thought to exist in the natural world” (Van Rheezen, 1991, p. 54). Africans, however, emphasize the role of spiritual beings, ancestors, magic, and impersonal forces in their worldview. Any programs that will effectively nurture a person in the African culture must address these cultural issues.

### **Kinship and Marriage**

There are customary and civil marriages in Zimbabwe. Although both are recognized by the law, both have potential problems for new converts. “Customary marriages are potentially polygamous and legal for black Zimbabweans only and usually are dissolved only by death (divorce is rare). Civil marriages are monogamous and can be dissolved by death or divorce” (Everyculture, 2013, under “Zimbabwe: Marriage, Family, and Kinship”). Since customary marriages are potentially polygamous, there is a possibility of the gospel encountering people in a polygamous relationship and special nurturing is required for them. “Polygyny is still widespread, although it is declining as land constraints and lower incomes are encouraging smaller households.” (Everyculture,

2013, under “Zimbabwe: Marriage, Family, and Kinship”)

Civil marriages today carry the challenge of rising divorce rates even, though women who are divorced face social stigma. “Marriage gives women status and access to land, and unmarried men and women are rare” (Everyculture, 2013, under “Zimbabwe: Marriage, Family, and Kinship”). Some stay in the marriage although they are practically divorced for fear of being stigmatized and losing property. New converts in this situation also require special nurturing.

### **Urbanization and Globalization**

More than 38% of Zimbabwe now live in an urban setting and the annual rate of urbanization is 3.4% (Countries of the World, 2013, under “People, Urbanization”). The impact of globalization is most felt in towns. Due to globalization the African culture in an urban setting is to some extent diluted. Globalization “shapes how people around the world live, think and act. In other words, globalization changes cultures. New technologies in communication and travel make the exchange of people, commodities, and information easier than ever before” (Howell & Paris, 2011, p. 204).

Munyaradzi Madambi (2009) writes of a cultural onslaught on independent Zimbabwe:

This cultural onslaught is aggravated by Western information and epistemic systems which encapsulate the internet and satellite television. The Zimbabwean child is faced with an identity crisis, torn between Afro-centrism and Euro-centrism (modernity). The current wave of warped ‘pan-Africanism’ (or indigenisation) which is characterised by greed and violence cannot be ignored as a major force in culture adulteration. The culture of greed and violence can also be traced back to colonialism. Zimbabwe is in a situation that can best be described as a state of ‘culture wars’ (Shor, 1986: 273), with various sub-cultures competing for supremacy. (Madambi, 2009, para. 4)

The global elite or Western nations shape the culture of smaller nations through

media which has become increasingly difficult to regulate. Mass media does not only bring advertisements to Africa but also entertainment that in most cases is contrary to Christian values.

New converts are to be taught that “those who would not fall a prey to Satan's devices, must guard well the avenues of the soul; they must avoid reading, seeing, or hearing that which will suggest impure thoughts” (White, 1911, p. 518). The apostle Paul reminds believers that “whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things” (Phil 4:8). There is also a great need to provide new converts with Bibles and good Christian literature so that their thoughts are filled with the right material.

### Religions Context

Religion is difficult to define but it can be regarded as “a form of social interaction among believers and their ‘unseen beings’. This is important since the existence of the entities postulated by adherents cannot be settled by empirically testable evidence” (Chitando, 2009, para 5). Although many Zimbabweans claim to be Christians the majority are actually syncretistic, mixing Christianity with African traditional beliefs. The religious profile of Zimbabwe is “syncretic (part Christian, part indigenous beliefs) 50%, Christian 25%, indigenous beliefs 24%, Muslim and other 1%” (Countries of the World, 2013, under “Zimbabwe: People Religions”).

The African indigenous Christian churches, such as the Apostolic Church, tend to be more syncretistic. “The Apostolic Church is the largest independent church. Independent churches tend to interpret the Bible more in accordance with traditional



values, and faith healing and savings organizations (for example, burial societies) feature strongly in their activities” (Everyculture, 2013, under “Zimbabwe: Religion”).

One of the reasons why these syncretistic indigenous Christian churches took root in Zimbabwe is that Christianity “came in the spirit of imperialism. It worked side by side with the state and marginalized the black converts. By going along with the policy of racial segregation, the church alienated itself from itself” (Chimuka, 2009, para. 17). However, even after independence these churches continue to grow because they appeal to the African mind by having elements of the African traditional religion in them.

Syncretism presents a problem for nurturing new converts, as African traditional religion teaches that “the spirit of a deceased person returns to the community and the deceased heads of extended families (the ancestors), have a powerful influence on family life” (Everyculture, 2013, under “Zimbabwe: Religion”). This is contrary to the teaching of the scripture that the dead do not know anything and cannot return to their homes. The Bible states: “As the cloud disappears and vanishes away, So he who goes down to the grave does not come up. He shall never return to his house, Nor shall his place know him anymore” (Job 7:9-10).

Many Christians backslide during times of illness, as it is believed that “illness may have been inflicted by angry spirits (justifiably or through witchcraft). Therefore, treatment for a serious illness may include a consultation with a *n’anga*” (Everyculture, 2013, under “Zimbabwe: Medicine and Health Care”). A *n’anga* is a witchdoctor.

Another challenge to new converts occurs when there is death in the family.

A diviner may be consulted to determine the cause of death and prescribe a ritual action; this is followed by ceremonies to settle the spirit and mark the end of mourning. After one year a final ceremony is held at which the spirit becomes a spirit

guardian of the family. These ceremonies generally combine traditional and Christian practices. (Everyculture, 2013, under “Zimbabwe: Religion”)

In order to nurture new converts, elders themselves need to be grounded in their biblical understanding of the state of the dead and the work of good and evil angels. The baptismal manual that the East Zimbabwe conference provides for newly baptized members discusses these topics.

### **Seventh-day Adventist Church in East Zimbabwe Conference**

#### **History**

The history of the church in Zimbabwe begins with the founding of Solusi Mission in 1894, on a 12,000 acre piece of land near Bulawayo, granted by Cecil Rhodes (Schwarz, 1979, p. 225). Rhodes was the chairman of the British South African Charter Company that controlled land in the then Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe. News of this gift of land to the Adventist Church “was received with mixed feelings at the headquarters in Battle Creek” (Robinson, 1979, p. 22). Some leaders felt that receiving it would violate the Adventist principle of separation of church and state.

This issue was settled by a letter from Ellen White which admonished “them not to ‘withdraw themselves from the help that God has moved men to give, for the advancement of His cause’” (Schwarz, 1979, p. 225). The early missionaries at Solusi met with many setbacks in quick succession, a tribal revolt, famine, rinderpest that destroyed mission cattle, and a malaria epidemic that took its toll among the missionaries. (p. 226). In spite of all these setbacks the missionaries did not give up. It was from Solusi that the work was to expand to the rest to Zimbabwe and beyond.

After five and half years of waiting and praying Elder Mead baptized the first

convert, Jim Mayinza, and twelve others on December 1, 1900 (Robinson, 1979, p. 92). On June 25, 1902 twelve candidates were baptized by Elder Sturdevant. “That same afternoon the first Solusi church was organized with a membership of twenty-nine. . . . Eight years had passed since the arrival of the first missionaries, and these were the first fruits of their work for God” (p. 92).

Solusi Mission gave birth to the work in East Zimbabwe Conference. “In 1910 the Sturdevants moved to a new mission, Inyazura, in eastern Rhodesia” (p. 96). Nyazura Mission, started by Elder Melvin Sturdevant, became the hub of the work in the then Mashonaland field, now East Zimbabwe Conference, from 1910 to the late 1970s when the offices were moved to Harare.

#### Growth Patterns

From the baptism of one in 1900, today the Zimbabwe Union Conference has a total membership of 747,277. The growth of the work in the East Zimbabwe Conference in the past ten years, as shown in Table 1, is of interest for this paper. Not only will the focus be on baptisms but also the number of dropped and missing members will be taken seriously.

It is exciting to note that in past ten years a total of 158,045 people were baptized. This suggests that the number of pastors needs to be increased in order to effectively nurture new converts. The conference could save money by training local elders to nurture new converts. While so many people were baptized it is worrying that 21,934 people were either dropped or went missing in the past ten years. That is almost 14% of those baptized. There is indeed a need for a program to nurture converts.

Table 1

*East Zimbabwe Conference Yearly Statistics 2003-2012*

Year	Membership	Baptisms	Dropped	Missing	Total: Dropped & Missing
2003	142,379	9,328	170	598	768
2004	167,887	25,962	407	614	1,021
2005	180,491	14,064	448	720	1,168
2006	191,335	12,541	691	769	1,460
2007	202,169	12,382	139	1,176	1,315
2008	219,598	17,984	145	748	893
2009	234,393	17,807	616	2,194	2,810
2010	247,945	18,349	692	3,327	4,019
2011	259,893	16,693	797	3,443	4,240
2012	272,095	12,935	661	3,579	4,240
Total		158,045	4,766	17,168	2,1934

*Note.* Data taken from <http://www.adventiststatistics.org>

Table 2

*Mafara District Membership 2009-2012*

Year	Membership	Baptisms	Dropped	Missing	Total: Dropped & Missing
2009	4,890	273	19	109	128
2010	4,015	201	3	634	637
2011	4,112	275	3	166	169
2012	4,317	197	4	0	4
Total		946	29	909	938

*Note.* From East Zimbabwe Conference Secretariat, 27 Sept 2013.

The data from the Mafara district, where the nurturing program is to be implemented is shocking, as shown in Table 2. According to Table 2, in the past four years the Mafara district baptized 946 people and those that were dropped or went missing were 938! That is 99% of those that were baptized. The membership of the district is 4,317 being pastored by only one pastor. The local church elders can assist the pastor if they are trained to nurture new converts. It is the aim of this project to train elders to nurture new converts.

### **Conclusion**

In this chapter the political, cultural, and religious context of Mabvuku, Harare, has been discussed. The people to be nurtured come from an urban, low-income, and animistic setting. The majority of them will be young people, as 67% of the population of Zimbabwe is below the age of 24. In Chapter 4 a strategy will be developed using the logframe and the Gantt chart to train local church elders from Mabvuku to nurture new converts.

## CHAPTER 4

### A STRATEGY TO TRAIN LOCAL CHURCH ELDERS FOR EFFECTIVE ASSIMILATION AND NURTURE OF NEW CONVERTS

#### **Introduction**

Chapter 3 dealt with the political, cultural, and religious contexts not only of Zimbabwe in general but of Mabvuku, Harare where the project will be implemented. The new converts who will need nurturing come from an urban, low income, and animistic community. The pastoral district is large having seven churches and three companies, presenting a challenge for the pastor to effectively nurture new members. However, if elders are trained and engaged in the nurture and assimilation of new converts it is possible to alleviate the pastoral burden.

It is important that soon after baptism concrete steps be taken to assimilate the new converts because if they are neglected in the first year after joining the church, they may have great difficulty ever feeling at home in the church (Constien, 1986, p. 68). This project seeks to train local church elders in the effective assimilation and nurture of new converts as soon as they are baptized. A project is “defined as a means of moving from a problem to a solution via a series of planned activities” (Project management, n.d., p. 1). The Logical Framework Approach (LFA) will be used in the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of this project.

## **General Methodology: Logical Framework Analysis and Gantt Chart**

### The Logical Framework

The Logical Framework originated as a planning tool for military purposes and was further developed by NASA to plan space programs. Today it has become an integral part of project management by most development agencies (Harley, 2005, pp. 29-30).

It “is a tool to present an intervention strategy in a logical and transparent way. It provides all information to understand an operation and to enable a follow-up of an intervention. It sets out its objectives in a systematic and logical way” (ECHO, 2005, p. 7).

The Logical Framework presents a picture of how a program works by stating its theory and underlying assumptions. This becomes a roadmap for the program, “highlighting how it is expected to work, what activities need to come before others, and how desired outcomes are achieved” (W. K. Kellogg Foundation, 1998, p. 35).

The Logical Framework Matrix is a chart with four horizontal rows and four vertical columns.

<b>Narrative Summary</b>	<b>Measurable Indicators</b>	<b>Means of Verification</b>	<b>Important Assumptions</b>
<b>Overall Goal</b>			
<b>Purpose</b>			
<b>Outputs</b>			
<b>Activities</b>			

*Figure 2.* Logical framework sample. Adapted from Nancholas, 1998, p. 190.

The first column in the table, entitled the narrative summary, sets out the overall goal, the purpose/objective, which ensures that the projects meets the goal, and the outputs, which are the immediate results of the activities that help meet the purpose/objective. There is an “if-then” vertical logic in this column, for if the activities are achieved then the objectives will be met, then the overall goal will be realized (Everitt & Hamilton, 2003, p. 6).

### **Goal**

The main overall objective that the project is meant to contribute to in the long run is called the goal. Normally, the goal is achieved by a number of related projects or processes and not by a single project (NORAD, 1999, p. 59). The important question to ask when formulating a goal is: “What issue or problem is the project trying to address?” (BOND, 2003, p. 5).

### **Purpose**

While the goal is the long-term overall objective, the purpose is the operational objective (Aune, 2000, p. 688). The purpose must significantly contribute to the fulfillment of the overall goal (BOND, 2003, p. 62).

### **Outputs**

Outputs are “specific results and tangible products/services produced by undertaking a series of tasks/activities using the project inputs” (EPU, 2010, p. 24).

### **Activities**

Activities summarize what will be done during the project (ECHO, 2005, p. 19), and include the “tasks and operations carried out by project personnel to transform



project inputs into outputs” (EPU, 2010, p. 24).

### **Inputs**

Inputs are resources such as funds, equipment, materials, and personnel required to perform the project activities. “Many Logical Framework users combine Activities with Inputs” (EPU, 2010, p. 24).

### **Measurable Indicators**

Measurable indicators are in the second column of the table and show to what extent the purpose and the goal have been realized by undertaking the project activities. “Indicators are established in response to the question: ‘How do I know whether or not what has been planned is actually happening or has happened?’” (AusGuideline, 2005, p. 20). Indicators define the performance standard to be reached in order to achieve the objectives. They are to be “specific in terms of quantity, quality, time, location and target group” (NORAD, 1999, pp. 71-72).

### **Means of Verification**

The third column, means of verification, lists the things that will show that something has been accomplished (Everitt & Hamilton, 2003, p. 7). These are needed to support indicators. They include documents, reports, and surveys that provide data to verify the indicators.

### **Important Assumptions**

Assumptions are in the fourth column of the table. They are events, conditions or decisions which are necessary for project success, but which are largely or completely

beyond the control of the project management (NORAD, 1999, p. 97).

### Gantt Chart

The Gantt chart is basically a timeline for the project (Steinitz, 2009, p. 62). It is a method of presenting information graphically (ECHO, 2005, p. 21). A Gantt chart will be used for scheduling activities in my project. It “was invented in the early 1900s by Henry L. Gantt, an American engineer and social scientist” (Grover, 2002, p. 2). The Gantt chart “looks at the activities on the left hand side, and then draws a horizontal bar that indicates the start, end and duration of each activity that is listed” (Worldbank, n.d., p. 1).

It is constructed by listing the various activities on the vertical axis and the horizontal axis is used to represent time. Activities antecedent to others are taken into account by starting a horizontal bar to represent the next activity at an appropriate point after its preceding activities (Project Management, n.d., p. 9). A different color is used to indicate sub-activities or tasks. Figure 3 shows an example of two activities that are scheduled to take nine weeks. Activity 1 has three sub-activities.

ACTIVITIES	WEEKS								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
<b>Activity 1 Prepare survey instruments</b>									
1.1 Focus Group schedule									
1.2 Questionnaires									
1.3 Ethnic board approval									
<b>Activity 2 Administer surveys instruments</b>									

Figure 3. Gantt chart sample.

Activity 2 in the Gantt chart above requires that Activity 1 be completed before it can begin, thus it comes in week nine. A Gantt chart provides a summary of the project as a whole and can be a means of assessing the progress of the project. “At any date, the project manager can draw a dateline through the Gantt chart and see which activities are on-time, which are behind schedule and generally record project status against plan” (Project Management, n.d., p. 9).

There is a need for constant monitoring and evaluation to determine whether or not a project is moving in the direction envisioned during the planning phase, “and to take necessary action when the unexpected happens, or when assumptions are shown to be false” (Middleton, 2005, p. 47). The Gantt chart will be used for easy monitoring of my project.

Monitoring, an on-going process during the implementation of the project, focuses mainly on the timely execution of project activities and the extent to which outputs are being realized. Evaluation on the other hand occurs periodically, usually midterm and at the end of project implementation. It focuses “on progress towards realizing a project’s purpose and goal” (Bishop, 2001, p. 81).

Although the Logical Framework and the Gantt chart are important instruments, they “should be used to provide structure and purpose to project planning and budgeting without being perceived as an inflexible and constraining blueprint” (European Commission, 1999, p. 22). They can be revised as the project is being implemented to address changing circumstances.

### **Description of Mission Strategy: Application of Logframe**

The phenomenal growth of church membership in the East Zimbabwe Conference

is not being matched with the training of pastors to shepherd the new members. For this reason it is important to design a program to train local church elders how to nurture and assimilate new converts. This section will describe a biblical model that will engage elders in the pastoral care of new members. The activities that will be carried out will be discussed as summarized in the logframe and Gantt chart below.

### Overall Goal

The overall goal of this project is to train local church elders in pastoral care so that new converts are well nurtured and assimilated into church fellowship. Callahan points out that when people come to church they are searching for community which is a search for roots, place, and belonging (1983, p. 24). If these are not provided early in their experience they may backslide and it will be harder to win them again. When elders are trained to give pastoral care to new converts, new members will have a sense of belonging in the new community of believers.

### Purpose

The purpose of this project is to increase the effectiveness of local church elders in nurturing new converts. This will in turn increase membership retention because although many people are baptized each year only a few remain in the church. The church records may show a large number of members but the actual number of people attending church every Sabbath is far less. If local church elders are trained to effectively nurture new converts then membership retention will increase.

Nurturing can best be done in small groups. Hirsch says, “Ecclesial units can be small but missionally effective” (2006, p. 270). In this project each elder will be assigned

a territory or zone to take care of new converts. The small group concept is to a great extent responsible for the growth of the Christianity in China. Christians were “not allowed to gather in groups of more than fifteen people, and when they grew beyond that they had to split and start a new church” (Hirsch, 2006, p. 189). It is also easier for new converts to start participating in church activities when they are in a small group rather than in a large church full of people.

<b>Narrative Summary</b>	<b>Measurable Indicators</b>	<b>Means of Verification</b>	<b>Important Assumptions</b>
<p><b>Overall Goal:</b></p> <p>New converts are well nurtured and assimilated into church fellowship</p>	<p>New converts retention is increased</p>	<p>Church and Conference statistical reports</p>	<p>Local district pastor is supportive of the project</p>
<p><b>Purpose:</b></p> <p>To increase the effectiveness of church elders in nurturing new converts</p>	<p>80% of the elders are involved in nurturing programs for new converts</p>	<p>Survey results</p>	<p>Elders participate in elders seminar for nurturing new converts</p>
<p><b>Outputs:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The biblical role of local church elders established</li> <li>2. Survey instruments developed</li> <li>3. Seminars on elders' role in assimilation and nurture conducted</li> <li>4. Nurturing program implemented in assigned territories</li> <li>5. Program evaluated</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 presentation papers prepared</li> <li>• One focus group schedule and 2 questionnaires prepared</li> <li>• Four seminars conducted by end of 1st quarter 2012</li> <li>• 70% of newly baptized involved in witnessing, church or small group programs and are visited by elders</li> <li>• Survey to 40 new converts and 10 elders</li> <li>• Quarterly and annual evaluation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation notes and chapter 2 of DMin project</li> <li>• Letter of approval from ethical board</li> <li>• Seminar material and attendance records.</li> <li>• Seminar evaluation</li> <li>• Elders file records, map of territory, and a survey to new members</li> <li>• Survey results</li> <li>• Quarterly and annual reports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The church leaders support the program</li> <li>• AUA ethical board approves</li> <li>• Elders attend seminar</li> <li>• Churches buy into the idea of territorial assignment</li> </ul>

<b>Narrative Summary</b>	<b>Measurable Indicators</b>	<b>Means of Verification</b>	<b>Important Assumptions</b>
<b>ACTIVITIES:</b> 1.1 Study the role of elders in the OT and NT 1.2 Examine E. G. White's writings 1.3 Examine other Christian authors 2.1 Prepare survey instruments 2.2 Administer survey 2.3 Seek permission to implement program 3.1 Prepare seminar materials 3.2 Conduct seminar 4.1 Obtain map of territory 4.2 Elders assigned territories 4.3 Elders apply skills to nurture new members 5.0 Monitoring and evaluation	<b>INPUTS</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget</li> <li>• Ministerial secretary</li> <li>• District pastor</li> <li>• External evaluator</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conference approves the program</li> </ul>

Figure 4. Logframe for strategy to retain new members.

### Outputs

To achieve the overall goal and purpose of this project there are several outputs that need to be realized. The most important output is to establish the biblical role of local church elders. Adventists are known as people of the Bible and whatever strategy is used must be biblically based. The second output is to develop three sets of questionnaires, one for the focus group, one for the new converts, and another for the elders.

The third output will be to conduct seminars on nurturing and assimilation of new converts for the elders. The fourth output is a nurturing program by local elders. After four seminars have been presented the elders will then implement what they have learned in their assigned territories for a period of one year. The fifth output is monitoring and evaluation of the project.

#### Measurable Indicators

An important measurable indicator will be that 70% of the newly baptized members are involved in witnessing, church, or small group activities, and they have been visited by an elder. Another indicator is that 80% of the elders are actively involved in nurturing new converts. The surveys at the end of the project should register an increase in the number of new members that own Bibles, baptismal manuals, Sabbath School study guides, and hymnals.

#### Means of Verification

The means of verification for the outputs of this project include conference quarterly and annual statistical reports and results from the survey. The focus group schedule and the questionnaires will be administered at the beginning of the project, half way through the project, and at the end of the project.

#### Important Assumptions

It is assumed that the elders will be willing to have a paradigm shift from “a pastor do it all position” to elders as active assistants in pastoral care. Again it is assumed that the political environment will remain stable for the project to be carried to completion.



## **Implementation of Strategy**

According to the online *BusinessDictionary* a strategy is “a method or plan chosen to bring about a desired future, such as achievement of a goal or solution to a problem” (n.d., under “Strategy”). Simply put, a strategy is an action plan. In coming up with a logframe for this project the plan for achieving the overall goal has been outlined. However to implement it effectively a timeline is required for all the activities in the logframe. This has been done by placing the activities in a Gantt chart (see Figure 4 & 5).

### **Activities and Resource Schedules (Gantt Chart)**

The outputs and their corresponding activities in the logframe are transferred to the “Activities and Resources Schedule” or Gantt chart. In the Gantt chart time-lengths are attached to the activities and their sub-divisions. This makes it easy to monitor the progress of the project (see Figure 4 & 5 for years 1-3).

During the first year, as indicated in the Gantt chart, the project activities of the first two outputs, establishing the biblical role of elders and developing survey tools will be completed. The questionnaires and focus group schedule will not only be approved by the university’s ethical board but will be administered to the new converts and elders in the Mafara district. The aim of administering them at this early stage is to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the church’s nurturing program and to ascertain the involvement of the elders in that program. The questionnaire for elders will also have a section that deals with the elder’s personal spirituality. Elders and pastors cannot effectively retain members if they are not spiritual.

The third output will only be partially completed in the first year. Permission for doing the project will have been obtained from the conference and the local church.

However, although the seminars will start in the first year they will be carried over into the second year of the project. Once the seminars have been conducted, the fourth output of having the elders implement their nurturing skills will start in the second year and be completed in the third year.

### Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation, the fifth output, will start in the second year and will be conducted throughout and again at the end of the project. “Monitoring and evaluation enable you to assess the quality and impact of your work, against your action plans and your strategic plan” (Shapiro, n.d., p. 1). Monitoring will be done throughout the project while the final evaluation will be done at the end. Thus, monitoring can be considered as formative, taking place during the life of the project. Evaluation on the other hand is summative taking place at the end of the project (p. 3).

Both monitoring and evaluation are important for the success of the project. In this project this will be done by looking at the quarterly and annual conference statistical reports. At the end of the project the initial questionnaires and focus group schedule will be administered again to see if the project has had an impact on the nurturing of new converts.

### Conclusion

The Logframe and the Gantt Chart have been employed to make it easy to plan and monitor this project. The Logical Framework and the Gantt chart are important instruments; however, they “should be used to provide structure and purpose to project planning and budgeting without being perceived as an inflexible and constraining

blueprint” (European Commission, 1999, p. 22). If it is necessary to address changing circumstances during the course of implementation I may change some elements in this project. In the next chapter the results of the strategy implementation, its successes and shortcomings will be discussed.

ACTIVITIES	Year 1											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
<b>Output 1 Biblical role of elders established</b>												
Activity 1.1 Biblical concepts						■	■	■	■	■	■	■
1.1.1 Exegete OT passages						■	■	■	■			
1.1.2 Exegete NT passages						■	■			■	■	■
Activity 1.2 Examine White's writings						■	■	■	■			
Activity 1.3 Other Christian authors											■	■
<b>Output 2 Survey tools developed</b>												
Activity 2.1 Prepare survey Instruments						■	■	■				
2.1.1 Focus group schedule						■	■	■				
2.1.2 Questionnaires						■	■	■				
2.1.3 Ethnic board approval						■	■	■				
Activity 2.2 Administer survey instruments											■	■
2.2.1 New converts											■	■
2.2.2 Elders											■	■
<b>Output 3 Seminars prepared &amp; conducted</b>												
Activity 3.1 Seek permission to run seminar						■	■	■	■	■		
3.1.1 Conference committee						■	■	■	■			
3.1.2 Church board						■	■	■	■			
Activity 3.2 Develop and conduct seminar						■	■	■	■	■	■	■
3.2.1 Prepare seminar material						■	■	■	■	■	■	■
3.2.2 Conduct seminars						■	■	■	■	■	■	■
<b>Output 4 Nurturing implemented</b>												
Activity 4.1 Obtain map of territory						■	■					
Activity 4.2 Elders assigned						■	■					
Activity 4.3 Elders apply nurturing skills						■	■					
<b>Output 5 Monitoring and evaluation</b>												
Activity 5.1 Monitoring						■	■					
5.1.1 Quarterly reports						■	■					
5.1.2 Annual reports						■	■					
5.1.3 External evaluation						■	■					
Activity 5.2 Surveys						■	■					
5.2.1 Elders						■	■					
5.2.2 New members						■	■					

Figure 5. Gantt chart (year one).

ACTIVITIES	Year 2				Year 3				Responsibility			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	A	B	C	D
<b>Output 1 Biblical role of elders</b>												
Activity 1.1 Biblical concepts												
1.1.1 Exegete OT verses												
1.1.2 Exegete NT verses												
Activity 1.2 Examine White's writings												
Activity 1.3 Other Christian authors												
<b>Output 2 Survey tools</b>												
Activity 2.1 Prepare survey instruments												
2.1.1 Focus group schedule												
2.1.2 Questionnaires												
2.1.3 Ethnic board approval												
Activity 2.2 Administer surveys												
2.2.1 New converts												
2.2.2 Elders												
<b>Output 3 Seminars prepared &amp; conducted</b>												
Activity 3.1 Seek permission												
3.1.1 Conf. committee												
3.1.2 Church board												
Activity 3.2 Develop and conduct seminar												
3.2.1 Prepare materials												
3.2.2 Conduct seminars												
<b>Output 4 Nurturing implemented</b>												
Activity 4.1 Obtain map of the area												
Activity 4.2 Elders assigned												
Activity 4.3 Skills applied												
<b>Output 5 Evaluation</b>												
Activity 5.1 Monitoring												
5.1.1 Quarterly reports												
5.1.2 Annual reports												
5.1.3 External evaluation												
Activity 5.2 Surveys												
5.2.1 Elders												
5.2.2 New members												
5.2.2 Prep. final report												

**Key:** A = Researcher, B = District Pastor, C = Elders, D = External evaluator

Figure 6. Gantt Chart (year two and three).

## CHAPTER 5

### PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION, SUMMARY, AND CONCLUSION

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this project was to develop and implement a training program that will increase the effectiveness of local church elders in nurturing new converts. In Chapter 4 a roadmap for the intervention strategy using a logframe and Gantt chart was discussed. The timeline in the Gantt chart was followed in implementing the activities outlined in the logframe. In this chapter a description of how the strategy was implemented will be given. The lessons learned, and recommendations for future studies will also be discussed.

#### **Strategy Implemented**

##### Biblical Role of Elders Established

Chapter 2 of this project, a theology of pastoral care by the local church elder, established the biblical role of elders. Work on this chapter was started during the June and July 2011 session of the Doctor of Ministry classes, and was completed and sent to Jon Dybdahl in September 2012. As the Old and New Testaments texts were examined and Christian authors interacted with, it was evident that the task of pastoral care was not limited to the clergy alone. The laity, especially elders, had a role to play in nurturing new converts. Moses was advised by Jethro to delegate responsibilities and as a result

Israel was administered by a system of elders, later known as the Sanhedrin.

Jesus trained twelve disciples to assist him in his work. In the early church the apostles delegated the distribution of food to the deacons. The apostle Paul appointed elders in the churches he founded. “So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed” (Acts 14:23).

Paul instructed Timothy and Titus to appoint elders and he outlined the qualities required for one to be appointed as an elder. In the early church the local elders did pastoral work and occasionally received visits or letters from the apostles. The apostle Peter appeals to local elders to “be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve” (1 Pet 5:2). Thus this intervention was biblically based.

### Survey Tools Developed

In order to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the church’s nurturing program and to ascertain the involvement of elders, a focus group interview schedule and two questionnaires were developed. The focus group interview was for new converts, while one questionnaire was for elders and the other for new converts. These survey tools were also used to evaluate the effectiveness of the program after its implementation. On 23 June 2011 the questionnaires and the focus group interview schedule were approved by the Adventist University of Africa ethics review board.

The initial questionnaire was administered to new converts on 26 November, 2011. It was given to randomly selected new members who had been in the church for a

period of six months or less. There were 32 females and 15 males, making a total of 47. It was interesting to note that 38 of the respondents, that is 80%, were 30 years of age and below. Since most of them were young, reading was not a problem. All participants except one said they felt warmly welcome in their churches. The results for questions two and three of the questionnaire are indicated in Tables 3 and 4.

Table 3

*New Converts Responses to Question 2 in 2011*

Spiritual Books Owned	Yes	%	No	%
Bible	20	44	26	56
Hymnbook	8	17	39	83
Manual of Bible Doctrines	19	40	28	60
Sabbath School Study Guide	4	8	43	92

Table 4

*New Converts Responses to Question 3 in 2011*

Have You ...	Yes	%	No	%
Actively participated in a church program	24	51	23	49
Attended a post-baptismal class for a month or more	35	75	12	25
Been visited by an elder	17	36	30	64
Been invited for a meal by an elder's family	3	6	44	94
Witnessed to a non-Adventist	33	70	14	30



The results indicated that in the area of literature required for nurturing, the church was doing poorly. The importance of new converts having Bibles cannot be overstated. It is the study of the Bible that grounds people in the faith. “As a rule, those who are converted to the truth we preach have not previously been diligent students of the Scriptures; for in the popular churches there is little real study of the Word of God” (White, 1946, p. 367).

The hymnbook is another important book for nurturing new believers since songs help to instill Christian beliefs deep into the heart. Songs also encourage new converts when they are going through difficult times. Paul and Silas found comfort in singing hymns when they were put in prison, “but at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them” (Acts 16:25). Knowing the power of songs Paul advised the Ephesians to be spirit filled, “speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord” (Eph 5:19).

The manual of Bible beliefs prepared by the East Zimbabwe Conference has 52 doctrinal lessons. When these lessons are studied they help new converts to be able to give a reason for their faith. Many of the friends and relatives of new converts will be asking them why they have joined a new faith. This manual helps them answer the questions they will face.

Yet fewer than 50% of the respondents said they had these basic books for nurturing. Providing spiritual literature to new converts therefore is one of the required emphases in the training program. It must also be noted that the church was doing well in the area of new converts staying in a post-baptismal class; the score was 75%.

Again on 26 November 2011, two focus group interviews were conducted, one at the Mabvuku Main church and the other at the Mabvuku South church. Each group consisted of six converts who had been members of the church for six months or less; three were female, and three male. So as to involve all age groups in each focal group, two were under the age of 20, two were between 21-40 years old, and two were 41 and above.

The groups were asked, “What do you think your church could do to improve the nurturing of new converts?” The answers included the need of spiritual books, home visitation, attendance register for the post-baptismal class, and follow up for those missing church. They also observed that there must be a rapid response at the first absence from church as this will communicate to the new members that they are important. It was suggested that when elders visit a new member who has been absent they should go with another new member with whom the person can easily identify.

The focus groups also mentioned the need for new converts to participate in church programs and the need for elders to be well read so as to answer doctrinal questions new members have. During the week, as the new members interact with friends and relatives, they are asked questions that they often do not know how to answer. When they then come to the post-baptismal class on Sabbath they will be expecting the elder to answer the questions so they can go back home and give the answer to the friends.

Another important question in the focus group interview was, “What could be the possible reasons for some who were baptized with you leaving the church?” They observed that hurried baptisms before converts are grounded, the strength of African traditional beliefs, pressure from parents and relatives to abandon the new faith, and bad

examples from older members were some of the main reasons why people left the church. One other reason was that some new converts expected to get answers to all of their problems, including finances, when they joined the church. When the church fails to assist them they leave. These observations helped to focus the seminars to meet the actual felt needs of the new converts.

In the training program elders were given areas they needed to concentrate on when teaching the post-baptismal class in an African context. African traditional beliefs continue to haunt many new converts after baptism; therefore, lessons on the state of the dead, witchcraft, the work of good and evil angels, fear, and divine protection need to be constantly taught in the post-baptismal class.

Nine elders from the two churches responded to the elders' questionnaire on 26 November 2011. In this questionnaire, questions one to four were administrative questions about the local church. Issues picked up from these questions were to be addressed at a corporate level.

The results of the responses showed that territorial assignment, providing spiritual literature, post-baptismal attendance register, and following up new converts absent from church were weak areas in the churches as shown in Table 5.

Table 5

*Elders' Responses to Questions 1-4 in 2011*

Administrative Questions	Yes	%	No	%
1. Do you have an assigned territory to nurture members?	1	11	8	89
2. Is there a budget to provide literature for new converts?	1	11	7	89
3. Is there post-baptismal class attendance register?	3	33	6	67
4. Is there a regular follow up program for those who miss the post-baptismal class?	2	22	7	78

Question five of the elders' questionnaire addressed activities that elders needed do in order to nurture new converts. The responses, as shown in Table 6, indicated that generally the elders were doing well in the activities outlined. The weakest area was inviting new members for a meal. In the New Testament spiritual fellowship was often sealed with eating together. "So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart" (Acts 2:46).

A meal does not need to be complex since it is the fellowship during the meal that is important and that gives new converts a sense of belonging. Mabvuku is a low-income suburb as noted in Chapter 3, so there may be some new members who come to church without eating and an invitation to a simple meal would mean a lot for them. The aspect of inviting new members for a meal therefore needed to be emphasized in the training program.

Table 6

*Elders' Responses to Question 5 in 2011*

In the past three months have you:	Yes	%	No	%
a. Prayed for a specific new member	7	78	2	22
b. Visited a new member	5	56	4	44
c. Invited a new member for a meal	2	22	7	78
d. Provided Bibles for new converts	3	33	6	67
e. Involved new converts in a church program	5	56	4	44
f. Helped a new member who was facing a crisis	4	50	4	50

Seminars Prepared and Conducted

Permission to conduct my doctor of ministry research in Mabvuku, which is part of the Mafara district, was requested in writing from the executive secretary of the conference and the Mafara district pastor on 26 October 2011. The East Zimbabwe Conference action EZC11-230 approved the request on 1 November 2011. The district pastor gave me verbal approval and said he would take the issue to the district committee later. The district committee approved my research on 15 February 2012, after I had already started some of the early activities.

Five seminar topics were prepared, each requiring an average of two hours for their presentation:

1. *A theology of pastoral care by local church elders.* This topic basically covered the material in Chapter 2 of this project.

2. *Tips for nurturing new converts.* The role of the elder in equipping the saints, the need to provide literature, how to involve new converts in church and zonal small groups, and elders' visitation. These were the topics of this meeting.

3. *Post-baptismal class areas of emphasis in an African context.* This topic covered faith in a world of fear, and lessons that are already in the *Manual of Christian Beliefs* prepared by the East Zimbabwe Conference. The selected lessons are: Marriage and the Christian home, The State of the Dead, The resurrection, The Work of Evil angels, Witchcraft and the Ministry of Good Angels. These lessons are meant to address the weak points or threats that face new converts who have an African worldview. Marriage and the Christian home addresses the issue of polygamy and the rest of the lessons address African traditional beliefs.

4. *The role of the laity in witnessing.* Some concepts discussed are that everyone has a spiritual gift, the biblical command to witness is for all, witnessing brings joy and contributes to one's spiritual life.

5. *Let's go fishing: involving new converts in soul winning.* The topic gives examples of the woman at the well and the demoniac of Mark 5 who while, still very new in the faith, went witnessing.

I requested pastor K. Muchoko to present the last two topics since he had excellent material on the topics. Getting the pastor on board was a great blessing; he not only attended and presented but also promised to train elders in the other churches.

A preliminary training of the elders was done for two hours on the afternoon of the day the first questionnaires were given, 26 November 2011. During this training session the importance of nurture and retention was explained and an overview of the training of the elders was given. The questions in the two questionnaires were discussed and their relation to nurturing new converts was pointed out.

It is not enough for the church to win and baptize new converts; it also needs to

close the back door. In the parable of the lost sheep the shepherd had concern for only the one sheep that was lost. “What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he finds it?” (Luke 15:4).

The church pastor alone cannot follow up every new member that misses church. The Mabvuku Main Church alone has a membership of about seven hundred! Elders were challenged to assist the pastor in nurturing new members. Like the good shepherd in the parable, elders needed to have a concern for those that are baptized and disappear from the church.

In order for elders to be able to nurture new members it was necessary for them to be spiritual role models. Personal Bible study and daily family worship were emphasized. The elders accepted the challenge of the nurturing program and the session ended with a season of prayer.

Due to the delay in approval by the district committee, the actual seminars for nurture and retention were conducted on the 12th and 13th of May, 2012. I covered three topics and the district pastor presented two. There were church elections in the two churches in October and early November. In order for the implementation of the program not to be derailed, because there were some new elders who had come in, there was a second training on 29 December 2012.

### Nurturing Skills Applied

The district pastor was excited about this project. This was good because my responsibilities as an administrator made it difficult for me to monitor the day-to-day running of the program. The pastor assigned the elders their territories soon after the

seminar and they started to work from May 2012 to April 2013. The only difficulty we had was that church elections changed some of the elders when the program was already up and running. However, as stated earlier, we scheduled another day for training for the new elders. The seminar was done in December 2012.

### Results of the Intervention

On 13 April 2013 the final questionnaire for new converts was administered to 27 new members who were present. These had been in the church for six months or less. In order to determine the effectiveness of the program, percentages will be used to compare variables at the beginning and at the end of the intervention. This is because in 2011 there were 47 new converts present whereas in 2013 there were 27 who were present.

The respondents in 2013 were 12 female and 14 male and one did not indicate gender making the total participants 27. Those 30 years old and below were 19, or 70% of the total, again showing that the converts are relatively young. This is a good indication as it is an indicator that the church has a future in Africa. When only elderly members in a society are being baptized that is a sign of an aging church, and an aging church, will die with that generation. It is important in evangelism that all age groups be reached with the message.

On question one of the questionnaires, just as at the initial stage in November 2011, all except one said they felt warmly welcomed in their church. This was very encouraging, especially coming from new converts because most city churches are not warm and welcoming.

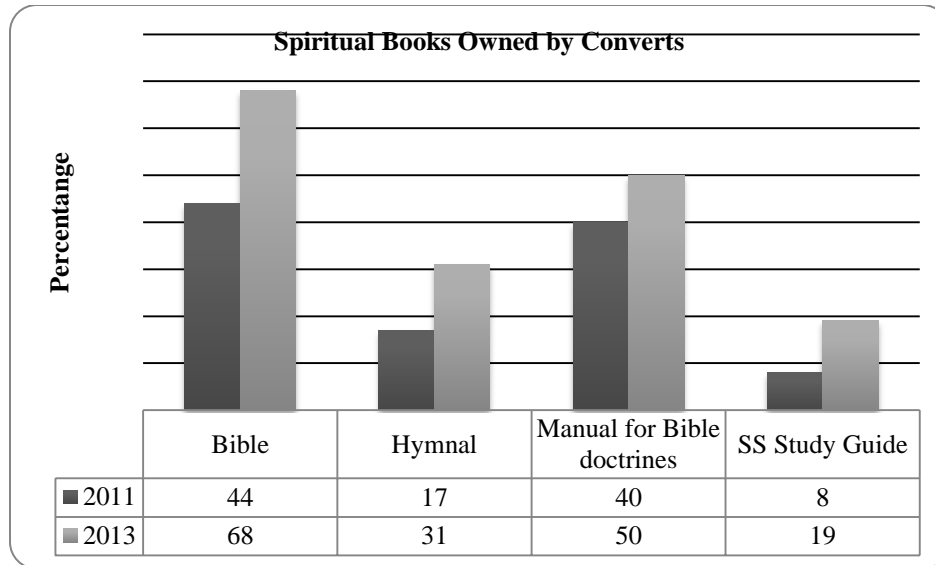
When the responses to question 2 in 2011 are compared to 2013, as shown in Figure 7, there is an increase in the percentage of new converts who own basic nurturing



spiritual books. However, the levels are not that pleasing. Only 68% owned a Bible and the rest of the books were at 50% and below. The Sabbath School study guide was the lowest at 19% a little more than double what it was in 2011. The reason for this could be that in the post-baptism class the *Manual of Christian Beliefs* is used for study and not the Sabbath School study guide. Perhaps elders who teach this class need to start by giving a summary of the week's Sabbath School lesson so that new converts can get into the habit of buying and studying lesson booklet.

The majority of the new believers were 30 years and below. This age group is interested in reading. If a literature vacuum is created because of a lack of good spiritual books the enemy will fill it up by supplying bad literature. There are already break away movements that are bringing a lot of free literature to Africa. As a church we need to be proactive and assist new members to acquire good literature.

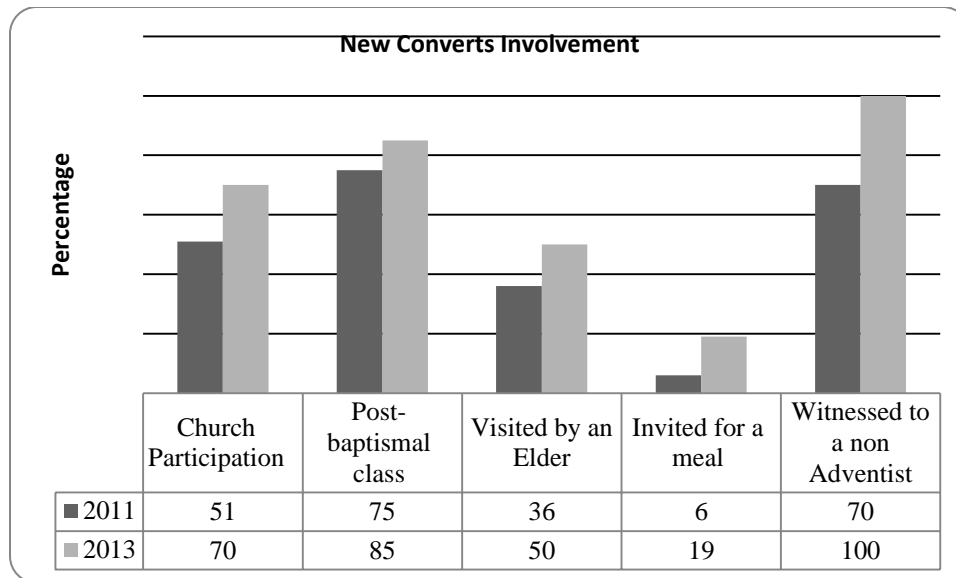
It is actually surprising that only 50% owned a *Manual of Christian Beliefs* because the East Zimbabwe Conference, in order to assist in the nurturing of new converts, provides this book free of charge to all who are baptized. This is in the conference budget and the pastor only needs to go to the conference with the names of those baptized to collect the books for them. I would therefore have expected all the new converts to have this manual.



*Figure 7.* A comparison of books owned by new converts in 2011 and 2013.

An analysis of the results of question 3 also showed an improvement after the intervention in 2013 as compared to 2011. This can be seen in Figure 8. One hundred percent said they had been involved in witnessing to non-Adventists. The aim of the fishers of men concept that was taught to the elders was to engage new converts in witnessing as soon after their baptism as possible.

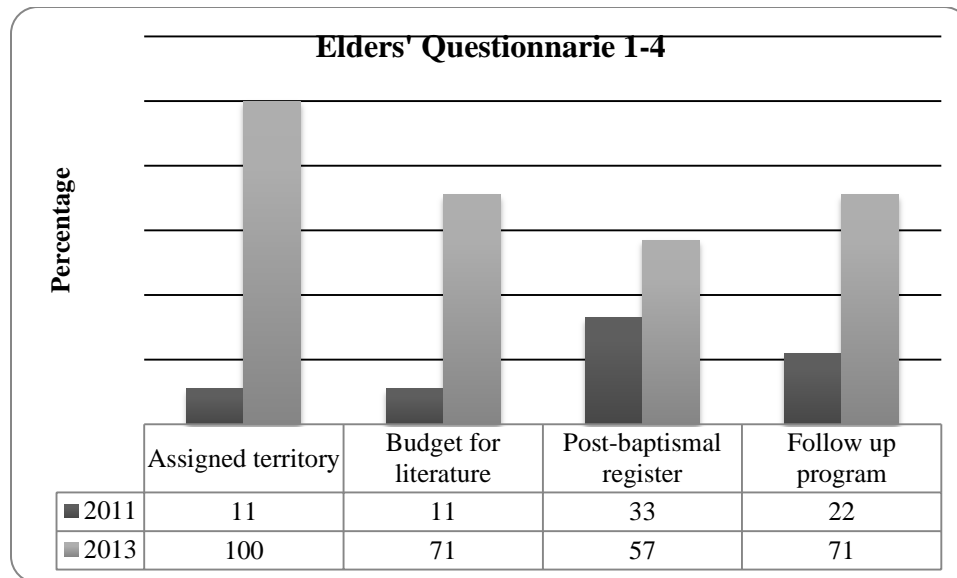
However, the areas of visitation by elders and being invited for a meal were still 50% and below, even though there was some increase. In the biblical foundation that was presented to the elders, visiting new members was stressed. The example of Jesus visiting Zacchaeus, a new convert, was given. The Apostle Paul’s speech to the Ephesian elders where he said “how I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house” (Acts 20:20) was also stressed. Paul not only taught the elders publicly but visited and taught from house to house. Most elders only want to teach publicly and neglect home visitations.



*Figure 8.* A comparison of new converts' involvement in 2011 and 2013.

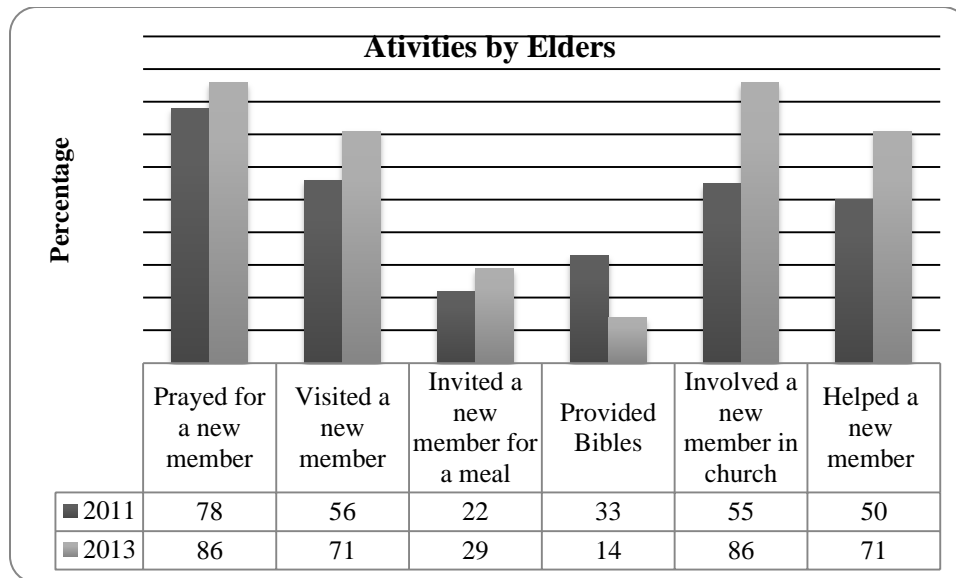
The responses to the elders' questionnaire, questions, 1 to 4 in Figure 9 presented me with a challenge in analyzing the responses except for the question on territorial assignment which was a 100%. One would think that since these questions deal with the church's administrative arrangement, elders from the same church would have the same answer. If, perhaps there was more than one post-baptismal class in each church, one could have a register while the other would not. However, the concept of territorial assignment did work. While it was almost zero when we started the program in 2011, now all the elders had assigned territories to minister to new converts.

The idea of territorial assignment is so that elders can nurture the members. It is meant to make it easy for elders to visit members and also help new members participate in zonal or small group meetings. In the final focus group interview a need for elders to visit new members was also stressed. They even pointed out that most of those that had left the church would come back to church if they were visited.



*Figure 9.* A comparison of elders' responses to questions 1-4 in 2011 and 2013.

There was an improvement in the activities done by elders in nurturing new believers (see Figure 10). The only area that did not improve was that of providing Bibles. In 2011, 33% of the elders provided Bibles to new converts and in 2013 it was only 14%. There was a marked improvement in elders' involving new members in church program, which in 2011 it was 56% while in 2013 it rose to 86%.



*Figure 10.* A comparison of elders’ responses to question 5 in 2011 and 2013.

The elder’s questionnaire had questions on evaluating the spiritual condition of the elder (question 6), the church’s nurturing condition (question 7), and the condition of the post-baptismal class (question 8). A simple yes or no answer would have limited the respondent so a multi indicator scale from 1 to 5 was used for this section. The key was 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = fair; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

The results from all respondents were computed and an average score was obtained for each question. The highest possible score was a five, meaning very good and the lowest being a one, very poor. There was no significant difference before and after the intervention. The church was slightly above three in 2011 and 2013, that is, between fair and good on the scale that was used (see Table 7).

Table 7

*Elders' Responses to Questions 6, 7, and 8*

Item rated	2011	2013
6. Elder's self- rating of personal spirituality	3.5	3.4
7. Elder's rating of the church's nurturing program	3.4	3.4
8. Elder's rating of post-baptismal class condition	3.5	4.0

The statistics provided by the East Zimbabwe Conference secretariat office show that the whole district improved in retention after the program. In 2011 the district baptized 275 and those dropped or who went missing were 169, which is 62% of those that were baptized. In 2013 they baptized 213 people and those that were dropped or went missing were 50, which is 24% of those baptized. This is still painfully high and shows the need of constant instruction in nurture and retention if we the church is to shift the current focus of the church on baptisms without nurture.

### **Lessons Learned**

I learned many lessons during the implementation of this strategy to train elders for effective nurture and assimilation of new converts. In the focus group interview, both before and after the intervention, it was clear that those that leave the church do not do so because they question the doctrines of the church, but because of relationships. It is mainly because of pressure from the relatives and friends that new converts leave. It was also mentioned that while they are facing pressure at home, they fail to find support in the church. The new converts also find cliques in the church and members mixing only with those they are used to.

If the church is to successfully nurture new members, it should go beyond doctrinal purity to become a caring church. This is why in this program visitation and inviting new members home for a meal were emphasized. It is while eating with new members that their needs are discovered and plans can be made to help them in their areas of need.

The appeal of African Traditional Religion and some syncretistic false prophets who draw members away from Adventist churches is that they promise to meet the day-to-day needs of people. The book of Acts is full of examples of Christians meeting the felt needs of believers. The church provided food for widows, healed the sick, and in the case of Tabitha provided clothes for the poor, to mention a few of the caring attributes of the early church. This I discovered to be a missing component in our nurturing program.

Another lesson I learned was that it was important to involve the district pastor in the intervention. He interacts with the members every day and can monitor how the program is progressing. However, I think I over-delegated; because I did not get the results that I had anticipated. I should have been more hands-on rather than phoning to discuss the program with the pastor. There was need for me to go and attend the post-baptismal classes to see if the lessons were being taught properly.

The limited success in this program has caused me to do some serious reflection on how it was conducted. I am now seeing that the training was more theoretical than practical. It would have produced better results if I had had hands-on training with the elders. By this I mean, going with them for visitation and also demonstrating how to teach the difficult areas that need emphasis in an African context in the post-baptismal

class. Jesus taught by example. He said, “For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you” (John 13:15).

One of the reasons why the success of the program did not reach my expectations could have been the high member-to-elder ratio. When the program started the Mabvuku Main Church had a membership of 737 and only seven elders, a ratio of one elder to 105 members. The Mabvuku South Church had a membership of 174 and three elders, a ratio of one elder to 58 members. The elders have other responsibilities besides the nurture of new members; thus, if there had been more elders in the churches the results could have been better.

When one is running an intervention program one needs to be able to respond to surprises during the intervention. In my Gantt chart the training was to be done in the first quarter of 2012 and then the program was to be run for a year. However, the 2012 local church elections changed some of the elders and I was also transferred to work 440 km away from my project. That necessitated a second training of elders if the program was to succeed. The lesson I learned was that one has to be flexible in executing a strategy. The logframe and Gantt chart are not cast in stone so they can be changed.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

The purpose of this project was to develop and implement a training program that would increase the effectiveness of local church elders in nurturing new converts. Evangelism and nurture are sides of the same coin called discipleship; you cannot have one without the other. To stress one at the expense of the other is to have a lopsided church.

For many years as a church we have placed great emphasis on baptisms and little



or no emphasis at all on nurturing new converts. The apostasy rate and the number of missing members are alarming. From 2003 to 2012 The East Zimbabwe Conference baptized 158, 045 people. While so many people were baptized it is worrying that 21, 934 people were either dropped or went missing during the same period.

The pastors alone cannot handle the issue of nurture and retention. They are already overwhelmed with the number of churches and companies under their care. Elders of the local churches, when rightly trained, can bridge the gap of pastoral care. That is the reason why this program was designed and implemented. The results indicate that the program was a success, although not to the levels the researcher had anticipated.

I recommend that for future studies the elder membership ratio be reduced in order for the program to be more effective. According to the Jethro principle there were to be even rulers over ten. “So Moses heeded the voice of his father-in-law and did all that he had said. And Moses chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people: rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens” (Exod 18:24-25). The smaller the group under an elder the more effective the pastoral care given.

Another recommendation is that the training should not only be theoretical but also practical. The facilitator should show the elders in a practical way how to implement the concepts presented. This was the model of Jesus used in training the twelve. The disciples observed him pray, teach, preach, and heal the sick, then he sent them two-by-two to do the same. If funds were available it would be better for the researcher to spend the entire year of the program implementation with the elders that he/she is training.

While a few areas such as teaching the post-baptismal class are limited to the

elders, most of the other discipling training should be done for to the whole church. Nurturing new believers is not the role of the pastor and the elders alone, but is the responsibility of the entire church. In the great commission the command to make disciples (which involves nurturing) is for all believers. Even new members can assist in nurturing other new members. In the focus group interview the new members actually requested that when elders visit a new member who has been absent from church they should take another new member along.

Both the Old and the New Testaments place priority on the elder's spirituality. Jethro told Moses to choose as leaders people with high spiritual qualities, "Moreover you shall select from all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them to be rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens" (Exod 18:21). The Lord also told Moses to "take Joshua the son of Nun with you, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay your hand on him" (Num 27:18).

When choosing the seven deacons the apostles advised the church, "Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business" (Acts 6:3). In the Pastoral Epistles, Paul lists spiritual qualities expected in the elders. Nurture and retention of members is a spiritual business and those who do it must be spiritual. Thus, the spiritual formation of elders should be given priority in any program that will successfully nurture new converts.

A spiritual elder will look after the new converts and have compassion on them like the Chief Shepherd, who "when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with

compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd” (Matt 9:36). The elder’s calling is to be an under shepherd at the local church, one who feeds and protects the sheep under his care, particularly the lambs, who are young in the faith. In order to accomplish this task the elder must be spiritual. It was the aim of this project to train elders for the effective nurture and assimilation of new converts. The results of this intervention indicate a measure of success of the program. Perhaps the results would have been much greater if I had put more emphasis on the spiritual formation of the local church elders in the training.





## **EAST ZIMBABWE CONFERENCE**

P.O. BOX W19, Waterfalls, Harare, Zimbabwe  
Tel: (263 772)124 941-4 Fax: (263 772)124 945  
Email: ezcsecretariat@gmail.com

*Secretariat*

November 2, 2011

Dear Pastor Chifamba:

**Ref: APPROVAL OF RESEARCH STUDY**

This letter serves to inform you that the East Zimbabwe Conference Available members committee meeting sat on November 1, 2011 and took the following action:

**VOTED** to approve the request from Pastor Enock Chifamba to carry out a research for his DMin studies in Mafara District effective November 2011 – April 2013. The topic of his research is "A Strategy to Train Local Church Elders for Effective Assimilation and Nurture of New Converts."  
(EZC11-230)

May the Lord bless you as you continue to labour in vineyard.

Yours Sincerely,

**Robert Muzira**  
**EXECUTIVE SECRETARY**

RM/cpm

*cc. EZC Officers*

## APPENDIX 2

### FOCUS GROUP SCHEDULE

**Project title:** A Strategy to Train Local Church Elders for Effective Assimilation and Nurture of New Converts

**Purpose :** 1. To determine the strengths and weaknesses of the church's nurturing program and to ascertain the involvement of the elders in that program.  
2. To evaluate the effectiveness of the program after its implementation.

#### **Focus Group Schedule**

Two focus groups chosen randomly from converts baptized six months ago will be organized in two separate locations consisting of six people each: 3 males and 3 females divided into age groupings with 2 being under the age of 20, 2 being between 21-40 years old, and 2 being older than 41.

Discussion Questions:

1. What things are being done well by your church to welcome and nurture new converts?
2. Are your church elders involved in these activities?
3. What do you think your church could do to improve the nurturing of new converts?
4. You might know some people who were baptized together with you who are no longer coming to church. What do you think could be possible reasons for them leaving?
5. What do you think could be done to bring them back?

APPENDIX 3  
QUESTIONNAIRES

Questionnaire #1 to be applied to 40 randomly selected new members who have been in the church for a year or less in 2 churches. This will be done at the beginning and at the end of the program.

Please do not write your name.

**Section I**

Answer the following questions by circling **Yes** or **No**

1. Do you feel warmly welcome in your church **Yes** or **No**
2. Do you own the following items:
  - I. A Bible **Yes** or **No**
  - II. A Hymnbook **Yes** or **No**
  - III. A Manual for Bible Doctrines **Yes** or **No**
  - IV. A Sabbath School Lesson Study Guide **Yes** or **No**
3. Have you ...
  - I. Actively participated in a church program **Yes** or **No**
  - II. Attended a post-baptismal class for more than a month **Yes** or **No**
  - III. Been visited by a church elder **Yes** or **No**
  - IV. Been invited for a meal by an elder's family **Yes** or **No**
  - V. Witnessed to a non-Adventist **Yes** or **No**
4. What is your gender? A = Female and B = Male
5. What is your age range?
  - I. A = 15 and below
  - II. B = 16 – 20
  - III. C = 21 – 30
  - IV. D = 31 – 40
  - V. E = 41 – 50
  - VI. F = 51 and above

## Questionnaire 2

To be given to 10 elders from two local churches at the beginning and at the end of the program.

Please do not write your name.

### Section I

Answer the following questions by circling **Yes** or **No**

1. Do you have an assigned territory to care for new converts **Yes** or **No**
2. Does your church have a budget to provide literature to nurture new converts **Yes** or **No**
3. Does your church have an attendance register for the post-baptismal class **Yes** or **No**
4. Is there a regular follow up program for those who miss the post-baptismal class **Yes** or **No**
5. In the past three months have you:
  - a. Prayed for a specific new church member **Yes** or **No**
  - b. Visited a new member **Yes** or **No**
  - c. Invited a new member for a meal **Yes** or **No**
  - d. Provided Bibles for new converts who could not afford them **Yes** or **No**
  - e. Involved new converts in a program you were leading out in church **Yes** or **No**
  - f. Helped a new member who was facing a crisis **Yes** or **No**
6. Circle the number which describes where you fall on a scale from 1 - 5 using the following key: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = fair; 4 = good; 5 = very good



- a. Welcoming new converts 1 2 3 4 5
  - b. The training you have received to nurture new converts 1 2 3 4 5
  - c. Following up backsliders 1 2 3 4 5
  - d. Daily personal Bible study 1 2 3 4 5
  - e. Daily family worship 1 2 3 4 5
  - f. Conducting a small group Bible study 1 2 3 4 5
  - g. Study of Spirit of Prophecy books 1 2 3 4 5
  - h. Returning tithes and offerings 1 2 3 4 5
7. Circle the number which describes where your church falls on a scale from 1 - 5 using the following key: 1= very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = fair; 4 = good; 5 = very good
- a. Discussing retention of members in the church board 1 2 3 4 5
  - b. Providing materials to nurture new converts who cannot afford them 1 2 3 4 5
  - c. Spiritual guardianship program for newly baptized 1 2 3 4 5
  - d. Giving new members opportunity to share testimonies after baptism 1 2 3 4 5
  - e. Allowing new church members to be involved in fellowship and church activities 1 2 3 4 5
8. Circle your answer in the following questions
- a. How many months do new members stay in a post-baptismal class? 1; 2; 3; 4; 5 or more

- b. Approximately what percentage of new members stay in the class for the full allocated time? 1 = 20 or less; 2 = 21 – 40; 3 = 41- 60; 4 = 61- 80; 5 = 81 - 100
- c. Approximately what percentage of members in the post- baptismal class have a Bible? 1 = 20 or less; 2 = 21 – 40; 3 = 41- 60; 4 = 61- 80; 5 = 81 - 100
- d. Approximately what percentage of new members in the class have Manual for Bible Doctrines? 1 = 20 or less; 2 = 21 – 40; 3 = 41- 60; 4 = 61- 80; 5 = 81 - 100

## **Section II**

1. Circle the letter which shows how many years you have been a Seventh-day Adventist

**A** = 1 – 5;   **B** = 6 – 10;   **C** = 11+

2. Circle your age range

**A** = 20 and below; **B** = 21 – 30; **C** = 31 – 40; **D** = 41 – 50; **E** = 51-60; **F** = 61 and above

## REFERENCE LIST

- Achtemeier, P. J. (1996). *1 Peter: A commentary on first Peter*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press.
- Adeanet. (n.d.). Skills training project for disadvantaged youth from Mabvuku and Tafara high density suburbs. Retrieved 21 July 2013, from [http://www.adeanet.org/adeaPortal/adea/programs/pstr99/pstr99\\_zimbabwe2.pdf](http://www.adeanet.org/adeaPortal/adea/programs/pstr99/pstr99_zimbabwe2.pdf)
- Agasto, E. (2005). *Servant leadership: Jesus and Paul*. St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press.
- Alexander, D. T., & Baker, D. W. (Ed.). (2003). *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity.
- Anderson, R. S. (1997). *The soul of ministry*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press.
- Aune, J. B. (2000). Logical framework approach and PRA: Mutually exclusive or complementary tools for project planning? *Development in Practice*, 10(5), 687-690. doi:10.1080/09614520020008850
- AusGuideline. (2005). *The logical framework approach*. Australia: AusAID. Retrieved 18 July 2011, from <http://www.ausaid.gov.au/ausguide/pdf/ausguideline3.3.pdf>
- Banks, R. (1993). Church order and government. In *Dictionary of Paul and his letters*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity.
- Bishop, C. (2001). *Project cycle management technical guide*. Rome, Italy: FAO. Retrieved 18 July 2011, from <http://www.fao.org/sd/seaga/downloads/En/projecten.pdf>
- Blackaby, H. T., & Blackaby, R. (2001). *Spiritual leadership: Moving people on to God's agenda*. Nashville, TN: Broadman.
- Blackaby, H. T., Blackaby, R., & King, C. V. (2007). *Experiencing God: Knowing and doing the will of God*. Nashville, TN: LifeWay.
- Bock, D. L. (2007). *Acts*. Baker exegetical commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker.

- BOND. (2003). *Logical framework analysis*. London, UK: BOND.
- Bradford, C. E. (1994). *Timothy and Titus*. The abundant life Bible amplifier. Boise, ID: Pacific Press.
- Bruce, F. F. (1988). *The book of acts*. The new international commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.
- Burrill, R. C. (1993). *Revolution in the church: Unleashing the awesome power of lay ministry*. Fallbrook, CA: Hart.
- Burrill, R. C. (1998). *Recovering an Adventist approach to the life and mission of the local church*. Fallbrook, CA: Hart.
- BusinessDictionary*. (n.d.). Strategy. In *BusinessDictionary Online*. Retrieved 23 June 2013, [http://www .Businessdictionary.com/definition/strategy.html](http://www.Businessdictionary.com/definition/strategy.html)
- Callahan, K. L. (1983). *Twelve keys to an effective church: Strategic planning for mission*. San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row.
- Chimuka, A. T. (2009). Why the church failed to live with itself in Zimbabwe. In D. Kaulemu (Ed.), *The struggles after the struggles: Zimbabwe philosophical study* (vol. 1, chap. 6). Retrieved 24 July 2013, from <http://www.crvp.org/book/Series02/II-12/chapter-6-.htm>
- Chitando, E. (2009). Religion and the struggle for peace in Zimbabwe. In D. Kaulemu (Ed.), *The struggles after the struggles: Zimbabwe philosophical study* (vol. 1, chap. 3). Retrieved 24 July 2013, from <http://www.crvp.org/book/Series02/II-12//chapter-3-.htm>
- City of Harare. (2013). Key statistics. Retrieved 23 July 2013, from [http://www .hararecity.co.zw/index.php/component/content/article/16-about-usu/106-key-statistics](http://www.hararecity.co.zw/index.php/component/content/article/16-about-usu/106-key-statistics)
- Cladis, G. (1999). *Leading the team-based church: How pastors and staff can grow together into a powerful fellowship of leaders*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Constien, V. A. (1986). *The caring elder: A training manual for serving*. St. Louis, MO: Concordia.
- Countries of the World. (2013). Zimbabwe: People. Retrieved 22 July 2013, from [http://www.theodora.com/wfbcurrent/Zimbabwe/zimbabwe\\_people.html](http://www.theodora.com/wfbcurrent/Zimbabwe/zimbabwe_people.html)
- Cress, J. A. (2005). *More common sense ministry*. Nampa, ID: Pacific Press.

- D'Souza, A. (1994). *Leadership: Trilogy on leadership and effective management*. Nairobi, Kenya: Pauline Publishers Africa.
- Davies, J. G. (1983). Elder. In *The Westminster dictionary of Christian theology*. Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press.
- Dick, D. R., & Dick, B. A. *Equipped for every good work: Building a gifts-based church*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock.
- Drucker, P. F. (2006). *The effective executive: The definitive guide to getting the right things done*. New York, NY: HarperCollins.
- Dudley, R. L., & Cummings, D., Jr. (1983). *Adventures in church growth*. Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald.
- Dybdahl, J. L. (1994). *Exodus. The abundant life Bible amplifier*. Boise, ID: Pacific Press.
- Dybdahl, J. L. (2008). *Hunger: Satisfying the longing of your soul*. Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald.
- ECHO. (2005). *Manual project cycle management*. Freiburg, Germany: Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid. Retrieved 10 July 2011, from [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/about/actorsproject\\_cycle\\_mngmt\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/about/actorsproject_cycle_mngmt_en.pdf)
- Economic Planning Unit (EPU). (2010). *Handbook for logical framework analysis*. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: Economic Planning Unit Prime Minister's Department.
- European Commission. (1999). *Project cycle management handbook*. West Sussex, UK: ITAD.
- Everitt, A., & Hamilton, R. (2003). *Arts, health and community: A study of five arts in community health projects. Final Report of the Arts in Health National Evaluation Programme*. Retrieved 3 July 2011, from <https://www.dur.ac.uk/resources/cahnm/reports/Arts%20Health%20%26%20Community.pdf>
- Everyculture. (2013). Zimbabwe. In *Countries and their cultures*. Retrieved 21 July 2013, from <http://www.everyculture.com/To-Z/Zimbabwe.html>
- George, C. F., & Logan, R. E. (1987). *Leading and managing your church*. Old Toppan, NJ: Fleming.
- Grover, D. (2002). *Graphical project planning techniques: An overview of Gantt, PERT, and CPM charts*. Retrieved 15 July 2011, from <http://www.soton.ac.uk/~jps7/Aircraft%20Design%20Resources/project%20management/gantt1.pdf>

- Harley, K. (2005). Learning from logframes: Reflections on three educational development projects in East and Southern Africa. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative Education*, 35(1), 27-42. doi:10.1080/03057920500033514
- Hendriksen, W., & Kistemaker, S. J. (2007). *Exposition of Thessalonians, The pastorals, and Hebrews*. New Testament commentary. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.
- Hiebert, P. G. (2009). *The gospel in human contexts: Anthropological explorations for contemporary missions*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.
- Hillyer, N. (1992). 1 and 2 Peter, Jude. In *New international biblical commentary* (Vol. 16). Peabody, MA: Hendrickson.
- Howell, B. M., & Paris, J. W. (2011). *Introducing cultural Anthropology: A Christian Perspective*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.
- Huston S. W. (1996). *Crusade evangelism and the local church*. Minneapolis, MN: World Wide.
- Infoplease. (2000-2013a). Zimbabwe: History. Retrieved 23 July 2013, from <http://www.infoplease.com/country/zimbabwe.html>
- Infoplease. (2000-2013b). Zimbabwe: Land and people. Retrieved 18 July 2013, from <http://www.infoplease.com/encyclopedia/world/zimbabwe-country-africa-land-people.html>
- Johnston, R. M. (1995). *Peter and Jude*. The abundant life Bible amplifier. Boise, ID: Pacific Press.
- Knowles, G. E. (1981). *How to help your church grow*. Washington, DC: Review and Herald.
- Lacey, N. (1985). *God's plan for the local church*. London, UK: Grace.
- Lake, D. (1976). Elder in the NT. In *The Zondervan pictorial encyclopedia of the Bible* (Vol. 2, pp. 266-268). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.
- Lee, H. W. (2003). *Effective church leadership: A practical sourcebook*. Silver Spring, MD: Ministerial Association of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.
- Madambi, M. (2009). Education at cultural crossroads: A struggle for meaningful education in Zimbabwe. In D. Kaulemu (Ed.), *The struggles after the struggles: Zimbabwe philosophical study* (Vol. 1, chap. 8). Retrieved 24 July 2013, from <http://www.crvp.org/book/Series02/II-12//chapter-8-.htm>

- Marshall, I. H. (1980). *The acts of the apostles*. Tyndale New Testament commentaries. Nottingham, England: Inter-Varsity.
- McAlpine, C. (n.d.). *The leadership of Jesus: The ultimate example exceptional leadership*. Kent, England: Sovereign World.
- McNeal, R. (2000). *A work of heart: Understanding how God shapes spiritual leaders*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- McNeal, R. (2006). *Practicing greatness: 7 disciplines of extraordinary spiritual leaders*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Middleton, A. (2005). Logical framework analysis: A planning tool for government agencies, international development organizations, and undergraduate students. *Undercurrent*, 2(2), 41-47.
- Nancholas, S. (1998, February 13). How to do (or not do) ... A logical framework. *Health Policy and Planning*, 13(2), 189-193. Retrieved 3 July 2011, from <http://heapoloxfordjournal.org/content/13/2/189.full.pdf>
- Nichol, F. D. (Ed.). (1980). 1 Timothy. *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible commentary* (Vol. 7, pp. 285-322) Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald.
- NORAD (Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation). (1999). *The logical framework approach: Handbook for objective-oriented planning*. Retrieved 10 July 2011, from <http://www.ccop.or.th/ppm/document/home/LFA%20by%20NORAD%20Handbook.pdf>
- Orr, R. A. (1994). *The essentials for effective Christian leadership development*. Linden, AB: Leadership Essentials Press.
- Prestwood, C. (1972). *The new breed of clergy*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.
- Prime, D., & Begg, A. (2004). *On being a pastor: Understanding our calling and work*. Chicago, IL: Moody.
- Project Management. (n.d.). Retrieved 15 July 2011, from [http://members.tripod.com/humphrey\\_doc/teacher/bused/PM\\_Text.pdf](http://members.tripod.com/humphrey_doc/teacher/bused/PM_Text.pdf)
- Pue, C. (2005). *Mentoring leaders: Wisdom for developing character, calling, and competency*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker.
- Robinson, V. (1979). *The Solusi story: Times of peace, times of peril*. Washington, DC: Review and Herald.
- Schwarz, R. W. (1979). *Light bearers to the remnant*. Boise, ID: Pacific Press.

- Seamands, D. A. (1981). *Healing for damaged emotions*. Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook.
- Seventh-day Adventist church manual*. (2010). Silver Spring, MD: The Secretariat, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.
- Seventh-day Adventist minister's handbook*. (2009). Silver Spring, MD: Ministerial Association of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.
- Shapiro, J. (n.d.). Monitoring and evaluation. Retrieved 24 June 2013, from <http://www.civicus.org/new/media/Monitoring%20and%20Evaluation.pdf>
- Steinitz, L. Y. (2009). *The way we care*. Research Triangle Park, NC: Family Health International.
- Stevens, P. R., & Collins, P. (1993). *The equipping pastor: A systems approach to congregational leadership*. Bethesda, MD: Alban.
- Stott, J. R. W. (1990). *The message of Acts*. The Bible speaks today. Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity.
- Students of the World. (2006). Zimbabwe. Retrieved 18 July 2013, from [http://www.studentsoftheworld.info/country\\_information.php?Pays=ZIM](http://www.studentsoftheworld.info/country_information.php?Pays=ZIM)
- Swenson, R. A. (2004). *Margin: Restoring emotional, physical, financial, and time reserves to overloaded lives*. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress.
- Tayki, E. (2011). What is a logframe? [Class notes]. MSSN 741 Seminar in Mission Strategy Development. Nairobi, Kenya.
- Tidball, D. J. (1986). *Skillful shepherds: An introduction to pastoral theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.
- U.S. Embassy, Zimbabwe. (2008). *Zimbabwe educational profile*. Retrieved 21 July 2013, from [http://harare.usembassy.gov/zimbabwe\\_educational\\_profile.html](http://harare.usembassy.gov/zimbabwe_educational_profile.html)
- Van Rheenen, G. (1991). *Communicating Christ in animistic contexts*. Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library.
- W. K. Kellogg Foundation. (1998). *Evaluation Handbook*. Battle Creek, MI: W. K. Kellogg Foundation.
- Wallbank, W. T., Taylor, A. M., & Bailkey, N. M. (1975). *Civilization: Past and present*. Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman and Company.



- Waters, V. T. (2008). A balancing act. *Ministry: International Journal for Pastors*, 80(8), 9-11.
- White, E. G. (1881). *Testimonies for the church* (Vols. 1-9). Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press.
- White, E. G. (1890). *Patriarchs and prophets*. Washington, DC: Review and Herald.
- White, E. G. (1898). *The desire of ages*. Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press.
- White, E. G. (1905). *The ministry of healing*. Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press.
- White, E. G. (1911). *The acts of the apostles*. Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press.
- White, E. G. (1925). *Christian service*. Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald.
- White, E. G. (1946). *Evangelism*. Washington, DC: Review and Herald.
- White, E. G. (1948). *Testimonies for the church* (Vol. 7). Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press.
- White, E. G. (1957). *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible commentary supplement: Ellen G. White comments from volumes 1-7*. Washington, DC: Review and Herald.
- White, E. G. (1995). *Pastoral ministry*. Silver Spring, MD: General Conference Ministerial Association.
- White, R. E. O. (1976). *A guide to pastoral care: A practical primer of pastoral theology*. London, UK: Pickering & Inglis.
- Worldbank. (n.d.). *Summary notes about Gantt charts*. Retrieved 11 July 2011, from [http://gametlibrar.worldbank.org/FILES/225\\_Introduction%20to%20GANTT%20charts.pdf](http://gametlibrar.worldbank.org/FILES/225_Introduction%20to%20GANTT%20charts.pdf)
- Zimbabwe Government. (2013). *The history of Zimbabwe* [Online]. Retrieved 18 July 2013, from <http://www.gta.gov.zw/index.php/zimbabwe-in-brief/history-of-zimbabwe>

## VITA

### Enock Chifamba

Citizenship: Zimbabwean  
Date of Birth: 28.11.1960  
Marital Status: Married  
Spouse's Name: Constance (Chirikuutsi) Chifamba  
Spouse Education: Bsc, MA  
Children: 4 boys

#### **Education**

2011 – 2014: DMin in Global Mission Leadership, Andrews University, Kenya Cohort

1997 – 1999: MA in Religion (NT emphasis), Spicer Memorial College, India

1984 – 1987: Bsc Major Zoology, Minor Chemistry, University of Eastern Africa, Kenya

1982 – 1983: Theology IV Solusi College, Zimbabwe

1979 - 1980: Theology II Bethel College, South Africa

#### **Professional Qualification**

1993 – Certificate of Ordination to the gospel ministry issued by the East Zimbabwe Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

#### **Employment History**

2013 – Executive Secretary Zimbabwe Union Conference

2009 – 2012: President East Zimbabwe Conference

2006 – 2008: Dean Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies Solusi University

2003 – 2005: Field Secretary and Stewardship Director SID

2002 – 2003: President (inter-Union Missionary) Eritrea Mission Field

1999 – 2002: Lecturer and Chaplain, Solusi University

1996 – 1997: Ministerial Secretary, Youth and Family Life Director, East Zim. Conf.

1988 – 1996: Teacher and District Pastor, East Zimbabwe. Conference.

1983 – 1984: Bible Teacher, Nyazura Adventist Secondary school.