2014

A Strategy to Create a More Meaningful Worship Experience in the Sony Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Ranen Conference

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Andrews University

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ABSTRACT

A STRATEGY TO CREATE A MORE MEANINGFUL WORSHIP
EXPERIENCE IN THE SONY SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST
CHURCH IN THE RANEN CONFERENCE

by

Duncan Odhiambo Mumbo

Adviser: Bruce L. Bauer

ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Dissertation

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: A STRATEGY TO CREATE A MORE MEANINGFUL WORSHIP
         EXPERIENCE IN THE SONY SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH IN
         THE RANEN CONFERENCE

Name of researcher: Duncan Odhiambo Mumbo

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Date completed: October 2014

Problem

    Some members of the Sony Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Ranen

Conference skip worship services claiming that the services are boring and do not meet

their spiritual needs. They claim that the services are always the same and too traditional,

hence their reason for not attending regularly. At times some members attend Pentecostal

services on Sundays to experience more meaningful worship. This study was to develop

and implement a program for a more meaningful worship experience during the worship

services in the Sony Adventist Church of the Ranen Conference so as to encourage

members to attend worship services regularly.

Method

This project included a survey of current literature, including books, periodicals, and articles written on how to make worship more meaningful. The traditional ways of worship were examined, paying attention to worship format, length, and content.

Theological reflection focusing on the elements of worship and how they were used to impact worship services positively was done. An initial survey was conducted to determine how many members skip worship services and their reasons for doing so. A program to make worship more meaningful was developed and tested.

In the middle and towards the end of the project, a survey was conducted again to assess any changes in attendance and participation in church services. Church elders as well as worship leaders who were mostly in charge of the worship programs went through trainings on how to use the developed worship program materials. The worship program developed was then implemented in the Sony Adventist Church.

Results

The project's overall goal of creating a meaningful worship experience with most members attending worship services regularly in the Sony Adventist Church was achieved with amazing results being witnessed. Members who had been skipping the worship services claiming that the services were too traditional or boring or did not meet their needs came back to the church and brought others with them. This may perhaps partially explain the baptism of 347 new members in two years of the project implementation in the Sony Adventist Church.

Worship attendance in the Sony Adventist Church also grew from an average of 500 members in 2010 to 980 in 2012, an increase of 480 members. During holidays when

schools were closed the worship attendance peaked at over 1,000 members attending regularly.

There was also a massive increase in church finances. The Sony Adventist Church was struggling financially before the start of the project. In 2010 total offerings stood at Kshs. 2,318,913.00, but at the close of the year 2013, when the project had been implemented, the total offerings stood at Kshs. 7,078,298.40, an increase of Kshs. 4,759,385.40. The gross increase stood at 205.24%. The church infrastructure also improved considerably, with a modern camp site constructed, the church building was refurbished, and air conditioning installed, along with new seats purchased. The Adventist Church in Sony came alive with the implementation of a more meaningful worship service.

Conclusions

The strategy to create a meaningful worship experience in the Sony Adventist Church was developed and implemented. The project did achieve its overall objective of helping members attend worship services regularly. Most members felt that their worship needs were met; hence, they stopped attending other Pentecostal churches on Sundays to "feel good," but now they found they could get the same experience in a balanced manner in their own church.

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

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Presented in Partial Fulfillment

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                                          Jiří Moskala

_____   _____
David Penno   Date approved

I dedicate this research dissertation to my dear wife

Dr. Rodah Adoyo Odhiambo,

to our children

Job Ochieng Odhiambo,

Jane Awuor Odhiambo,

and Jabez Mumbo Odhiambo,

who are my source of inspiration.

I always thank God for bringing you into my life.

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companionship. To all my classmates, Jack Olango, Moses Sena, and Samson Keraka for their moral support and friendship, I also express my deepest gratitude.

I am grateful to my parents, who instilled in me the incalculable value of hard work, perseverance, and integrity in noble enterprises. To the Ranen Conference committee, for their sponsorship, I offer my thanks. I am also grateful to my children, brothers and sisters, and to the church members in the Sony Adventist Church for their prayers and moral support.

Last but not least, I thank God, the Master Teacher, the fountain of true wisdom and knowledge, "in whom are hidden the all the treasures of wisdom and Knowledge" Col 2:3). He has graciously sustained me in this whole endeavor. May this study contribute to a better and more meaningful way to worship Him.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Ellen G. White noted as early as 1889 in her book *Testimonies for the Church,*
that "an enemy has been at work to destroy our faith in the sacredness of Christian
worship" (1948, vol. 5, p. 496). She urged the Seventh-day Adventist Church to realize
that it was its duty to restore true, more meaningful worship in our churches (pp. 491-
500).

This urge to restore more meaningful worship services in our churches spurred in
me a desire to help create a more meaningful worship experience in the Sony Adventist
Church, to help reduce the number of members skipping worship services claiming that
the services are too traditional and do not meet their worship needs.

Statement of the Problem

Some members of the Sony Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Ranen
Conference skip worship services claiming that they are boring and do not meet their
spiritual needs. They claim that the services are always the same and too traditional,
hence their reason for not attending regularly. At times some members attend Pentecostal
services on Sundays to experience more meaningful worship.

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project is to develop and implement a more meaningful worship experience during the worship services in the Sony Adventist Church of the Ranen Conference so as to encourage members to attend worship services regularly.

Significance of the Project

Worship is at the core of Adventist spiritual formation. It should be meaningful for all who attend any worship service. This project seeks ways of making worship more meaningful for those attending church meetings in the Sony Adventist Church. When members attend church services regularly, their spirituality is enhanced and they usually have a higher participation rate in church activities. Therefore, a meaningful worship experience has many benefits. This project is significant for at least three reasons.

First, this project will develop an attractive worship service which is both biblically sound as well as enriching to the spirituality of the church members. This will result in reducing the number of members who backslide, increasing attendance during worship services, and encouraging the reading of the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy books by the members.

Second, this project will furnish me with the opportunity to train other worship leaders within the Sony Adventist Church in particular and the Seventh-day Adventist Church in general.

Lastly, this project will help me become a better worship leader, researcher, and implementer. I will be able to replicate this project in the Ranen Conference and other Adventists churches as the need arises.

Limitation of the Study

This project is limited to the study and the development of strategies to help

create a meaningful worship experience for the church members in the Sony Adventist

Church. It is also limited to the development and piloting of a balanced worship program

in the Sony Adventist Church. Last, the study will be limited to the implementation of the

project in the Sony Adventist Church and elsewhere in the Seventh-day Adventist

Church. The study will briefly look at some of the researcher's personal life as they affect

his ministry and the project.

Personal Basis for Ministry

Introduction

Self-knowledge and self-assessment are crucial and biblical as a basis for

ministry. Self-awareness touches all other disciplines because it is foundational to every

other element of greatness, asserts Reggie McNeal in his powerful book, *Practicing*

Greatness: 7 Disciplines of Extraordinary Spiritual Leaders (2006). He adds that it is

also the capstone of a leader's journey. At the end of the road, great leaders are intimately

acquainted with themselves (p. 11). Understanding who I am is critical to my project for

it will help me understand how my worldview, gifts, and preferences will affect my

ministry.

I will briefly explore some segments of my life by describing my general

background, specific personal assessments of my life, general assessment in relation to

others, and end with a conclusion, which will stipulate how self-assessment will affect

my project.

General Background of My Personal life

In this section I will highlight my family background, education, and ministry experience as they relate to the six subplots as found in an excellent book, *A Work of Heart: Understanding How God Shapes Spiritual Leaders* (2000) by McNeal. The six subplots are: culture, call, community, communion, conflict, and commonplace.

Family, Education, and Ministry Experience

Family Background

I was the last born in a family of nine siblings (four brothers, and five sisters). My late father (Helekiah Mumbo Otieno), who was a military officer, died in 2005, and my loving mother (Elisabeth Awuor Mumbo) who though very old, taught family discipline as the most important to all her children. I am married to my lovely and loving wife, Rodah Adoyo Odhiambo (April 28, 1996), who is a PhD holder and a principal at a public high school. We have three children—Job Odhiambo (1997), Jane Odhiambo (1998), and Jabez Odhiambo (2002).

Educational Background

I did my undergraduate degree with two majors (B.Th. & HPR) at the Adventist University of the Philippines, situated at Cavite, Philippines, graduating with top honors (Summa Cum Laude) in 1992. I also graduated with honors (Magna Cum Laude) in 1994 with a Master's Degree in Religion at the prestigious Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies in Silang Cavite, Philippines. Currently I am a doctoral student with Andrews University, where I hope to graduate in 2014.

Ministerial Experience

I started my ministerial assignment as a district pastor in the Ranjira District, Awendo, in the Ranen Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in 1987. I have also served in various capacities as the Homa-Bay Station Director (1994-1995), as a chaplain and senior pastor of Kamagambo Adventist College (1995-2000), as president of the Ranen Field, now a Conference (2000-2005), as president of the Kenya Lake Field, now a Conference (2005-2010), as the Magina Marabu district pastor (2010-2011), as the church pastor of Sony Church (2012-2013), and currently as the district pastor of the Sare Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Ranen Conference.

Ordination to the Gospel Ministry

I was ordained to the gospel ministry on July 14, 1997, in the Ranen Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and have served as an administrator, a teacher, and preacher for the Lord. He has used me to bring thousands of people to the Kingdom of God. I have also organized several churches, done a lot of evangelistic campaigns, and conducted numerous weddings.

Heart-Shaping Activities for My Ministry

Heart-shaping activities involve both a divine and human endeavor. God does not unilaterally mold and sculpt passive human beings who exercise no role in scripting their life development. A marvelous and mysterious crossing point of divine and human choices conspire and contend in designing a life and shaping the heart that lies at the center of this process. I will briefly list the six subplots as outlined by McNeal (2000) to show how they have shaped my ministry.

Culture

Culture, which is one of the six subplots, denotes the times and the environment in which a leader is raised, and plays a pivotal role in one's life and ministry. I was born and raised in Kenya, but went to school in Asia (Philippines), and have also spent time in the global north. All these exposures have impacted my worldview and given me a more balanced view of various cultures and people that I encounter or minister to. I easily mingle with people of various cultural backgrounds without suffering culture shock.

Call

Call refers to one's call by God to mission. My call to ministry and mission, which began by my relentless study of the Scriptures and meditation on the Word of God, led me to the discovery of God as a personal savior, as well as the Sabbath truth. These discoveries were the turning point in my life as I left medical school to become a full-time minister of God. I am convinced beyond any trace of doubt that God actually called me to serve Him by His grace, and I want to be faithful to this call to the very end. And like Paul, "I have not been disobedient unto the heavenly vision" (Acts 26:19), but will serve God in all situations (1 Cor 6:1-10).

Community

Community refers to the people who nurture and sustain a leader or an individual. I have been blessed by a loving family that provides much needed support in my ministry. I have also benefitted greatly from teachers, professors, colleagues, and friends. God sculpts our souls through friends that we encounter, contends McNeal (2000, p. 127). He goes on to add that friends afford us the chance to hear the voice of God's

encouragement, feel the warmth of God's embrace, experience the intensity of listening, understand the wonder of His life by receiving the love of people who, though they know us, love us anyway. Three friends have especially impacted my life positively: my loving wife Rodah Odhiambo, my colleague Tom Ogal, and my ardent friend Elder Moses Sena. They form part of the community that has been instrumental in shaping me for ministry.

Communion

Communion refers to one's personal relationship with God. This, perhaps, is the most important subplot after my call. I have learned to spend quality time with my God through prayer, meditation, study of the Bible, and sharing with church members. This has enhanced an intimate relationship between me and God that has been instrumental in keeping my faith and ministry despite numerous challenges that have confronted me.

Conflict

Conflict refers to one's engagement with destructive forces in life and ministry. God has allowed numerous conflicts in my life to shape me for ministry. I have been able to overcome those conflicts and have seen the hand of God leading me through it all, to make me humble and teachable. This refining process has continued to make me into a better minister of God. God has not allowed the conflicts to overwhelm me, but to emerge out of the conflicts as a conqueror, by the grace of God.

Commonplace

Commonplace pertains to the daily choices of living that people make. McNeal aptly points out that through the commonplace, everyday experiences, and how the leader responds to them, the piers of spiritual character are formed (2000, p. 129). This

foundation determines the kind of ministry superstructure that the leader can build. I have listened to God's voice, knowing that it is in the commonplace, routine, pedestrian arena that God's shaping activity takes place.

<center>Specific Personal Assessments</center>

I have highlighted in the general background section above what has helped to shape me for ministry. I will now turn my attention to specific personal assessments that are more revealing of my personhood. I will explore my conversion and assurance of salvation, time and resources, spiritual path, worldview, temperament, and the damage factor in my life.

Conversion and Assurance of Salvation

I want to thank God that I must answer the question, Where do I stand in the critical issue of conversion and assurance? I want to thank the Lord for His continual revelation to me. I have opened my heart to Him and I have the assurance that Jesus is my Savior and Redeemer. He is the One who "hath saved us [*me*], and called us [*me*] with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began" (2 Tim 1:9).

I have the assurance that Christ is my Savior and Lord, the One who called me and counted me faithful, thus putting me in His ministry. I promise to serve Him faithfully to the end. I know that there have been many occasions in my life when I let my God down, but there is no circumstance when He has not been by my side, accepting me just as I am. I place my trembling hand in His steady hand as we journey along to eternity.

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Spiritual Path

I tend to be oriented to the *doctrinal path* and to think correctly about God, as well as the *Scripture-driven path*, where I apply the Word of God to all situations. This path tends to cause me to look down on those who abuse the Holy Scripture and at times makes me critical of others, a weakness that I commit to God daily in prayers so that I can overcome it by the grace of God.

I covenant to spend regular time in prayer and meditation as well as study of the Scriptures to deepen my relationship with God and to make me a better person in His similitude. I will continually create time to be alone with my God, to lead my family members in deepening their spirituality with God.

Worldview

The worldview that I espouse is the *Christian Theist view* that believes that God and the laws of the universe both exist at the top level. I also accept that divine-human interchange takes place, and that God has made an orderly world in which He expects us to live responsibly (Dybdahl, 2008, p. 105).

I believe that God works in my life in all spheres without limitation at all times and in all places. This worldview accounts for God's intervention in history, present and the future as well, and is in complete agreement with the Bible.

Temperament

According to the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator test for temperaments done in class, I am an ESTJ. ESTJs are leaders. They have those qualities which can make them the hero of the match. They believe in practical matters and want to be guided by

practical knowledge. They are great observers of things happening in the practical world and collect information from the same. A major feature which dominates ESTJs is judging. An ESTJ usually makes decisions logically and by usage of objective considerations; they are concerned with principles, truth, and justice but are known to be critical and analytical, tend to find flaws in different situations, and are generally known for taking an objective approach.

I am therefore classified as an extravert, sensing, thinking, and judging person. The jobs that an ESTJ can do better include: initiator of enterprises, negotiator, conciliator, diplomat, outstanding entrepreneurs, and itinerant administrators. My strengths as an ESTJ person include being able to use logical perspectives for life organization, being decisive, just, and fair, being able to comfortably deal with and resolve conflict, and being able to take impersonal approaches and focus more on the system and needs of organizations than the feelings of individuals.

My weaknesses as an ESTJ include the following: I tend to focus on the present tasks at the expense of larger interpersonal issues; when criticized sometimes I just ignore the criticism; I have a tendency to ignore real facts, a failure to encourage others for experimenting or innovating, and I may not pay enough attention to the values and feelings of others. These weaknesses are points that keep me on my knees for power to overcome them and the ability to execute appropriately my strengths as an ESTJ in ministry.

Damage Factor

David Seamands in his best seller, *Healing for Damaged Emotions,* points out that many have deeply buried scars of pain that have been kept for so long and which are

causing hurt and rage that are enigmatic. These scars are often not touched by conversion and sanctifying grace or by the ordinary benefits of prayer (Seamands, 1991, p. 11). These are the damage factors that are like the baggage we all carry.

I must confess that as a young person growing up, there were some areas of my life that were damaged by my siblings, as well as events later in life that have damaged me. I want to thank God for allowing me to read this book because it has brought healing to my soul and given me the opportunity to forgive myself and others who have damaged my life. I am now also trying very hard in my ministry to share with church members who are also hurting from damaged emotions that there is hope and healing in the Lord and that we can all forgive and let go and let God restore us.

Assessments in Relation to Others

In the above section I dealt with specific personal assessments. In this section, I will look briefly at my spiritual gifts, my leadership/interaction style, and task type preference.

Spiritual Gifts

According to Dan and Barbara Dick in their book, *Equipped for Every Good Work: Building a Gifts-Based Church* (1989), the 20 spiritual gifts are grouped into four distinct categories of giftedness as follows: First, *nurturing gifts* include the gifts of wisdom, shepherding, exhortation, helping, discernment, faith, and compassion. This cluster of spiritual gifts primarily benefits the church by building fellowship, visitation, small groups, and member care. The second cluster of gifts, the *outreaching gifts* include apostleship, evangelism, miracles, compassion, healing, servanthood, and prophecy. This

group is missional in nature, serving the church community in a variety of ways, reaching out to the people in the area, and promoting peace, harmony, equality, and justice in the church. *Witnessing gifts* include knowledge, faith, prophecy, teaching, evangelism, exhortation, and healing. Members with witnessing gifts tend to emphasize worship, Christian education, and church growth, with a strong message for the masses.

The sharing of faith is also central in this group as well as increasing the numbers of Christian disciples. The fourth cluster of spiritual gifts is *organizing gifts*. Chief among the spiritual gifts in this cluster are knowledge, administration, giving, leadership, helping, teaching, and wisdom. Members with the organizing gifts have a propensity to be highly structured, well-organized, and program-rich. Their focus is on the institution and the mission of making disciples reflects a desire to get people more involved in leadership. They are also good in financial management, offering strong leadership, and in conducting programs and services (Dick & Dick, 1989, pp. 28-30).

The Spiritual Gifts Inventory Test which can be retrieved from <www.equipped foreverygoodwork.org> helped me identify my spiritual gifts. They include the gift of administration and faith at the top. The gift of administration enables me to help organize human and material resources for the work of Christ, including the ability to plan and work with people, delegate responsibilities, track progress, and evaluate the effectiveness of procedures. The gift of faith equipped me with an exceptional ability to hold fast to the truth of God in Jesus Christ in spite of pressures, problems, and obstacles to faithfulness in my ministry.

My other spiritual gifts, ranked in order of predominance are the gifts of wisdom and prophecy. The gift of wisdom is described as that of translating life experiences into

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spiritual truth and the application of scriptural truth to daily life, while the gift of prophecy is the gift of speaking the Word of God clearly and faithfully. All these qualities have been manifested in my personal life and I am praying that God will continue to shape me for His ministry.

Finally, the other spiritual gift manifested in my life that I want to mention, and which ranks after wisdom and prophecy is that of exhortation. This gift gives one an exceptional encouragement in times of crisis. Exhorters see the silver lining in every cloud, offer deep and inspiring hope, and look for and commend the best in others.

In the clusters of the spiritual gifts as explained above, I fit in the organizing gifts cluster, which allows me, among other things, to provide leadership to the church and work at ease with committees. The weakness that springs from this cluster is to get engrossed with programs, committees, and church projects at the expense of the peoples' needs. Truly, I can identify with all these gifts as outlined.

Leadership/Interaction Styles

Dick and Dick stipulate that while the Spiritual Gifts Inventory names the spiritual dimension of our relationships, the Leadership/Interaction Styles tool points to the way we behave with one another (1989, p. 53). They further point out that it is in our interactions that our gifts are seen, known, and cherished—or blocked and ignored. The Leadership/Interaction Styles tool helps to reveal why we work as we do and to further our ability to truly recognize and understand one another as multidimensional and valuable in the sight of God (p. 53).

Four classifications of leadership/interaction styles are highlighted in the book: *directors* tend to be task oriented, focused on results, and getting the job done. *Dreamers*

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are predisposed to being social and people oriented. Dreamers are devoted to having a good time, and they often seem unfocussed or disorganized. The third classification is the *Pleaser*. They are people-oriented, often more concerned with others than themselves. They are good listeners and problem solvers, as well as flexible, adaptive, and open to new ideas. Lastly, the *thinkers* are inclined to taking their work seriously. A thinker will do whatever it takes to get the job done and are highly organized. They are usually quiet and laid back, often withholding opinions or comments (Dick & Dick, 1989, pp. 58-60).

My leadership/interaction style is identified as that of a *Director*. This leadership interaction style has both positive as well as negative traits. The positive traits include the ability to easily form a vision, getting things done well, not being side tracked when performing chores, sharing the formulation of vision well, having good management skills, easily delegating responsibility to others, self-supervision (no need to be supervised), good in keeping promises and meeting deadlines, completing tasks on time, staying focused, attending to details, and great in chairing committees and designing processes.

There are also four negative traits many directors have, such as too task oriented, with a tendency of losing people on the way, having a propensity to neglect relationships when there is job to be done, poor at listening, and often not working well with others, especially where there are many *directors* in one place, as everyone wants to lead.

While I agree with the positive traits, I am working hard and spending time on my knees so that God can help me overcome the weaknesses, especially that I might be a good listener.

Task Type Preferences

According to Dick and Dick, spiritual gifts and spirituality types focus on our connection with God and our spiritual relation to one another. Leadership/Interaction Styles help us see how our behavior influences those relationships, while Task Type Preferences explore ways to do the work for which we are equipped by God.

Task Type Preferences are presented by Dick and Dick in four task types, namely, *project*, *work, process*, and *fellowship* types. People who prefer the *project* task type see programs, ministries, or events from start to finish; that is, planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating all aspects of a project. The second task type, *work* type, is for those who have a preference to do hands-on work, without having to hassle with the preplanning and organizing. This group wants to be active in the front line. The third task type is that of *process*. These are people who get pleasure from doing the brain-work around the committee table with pen, paper, and planning. This group hands work tasks off to those who prefer them. The last task type is the *fellowship* type. This group takes pleasure in working together with a sense of community and common purpose. The work done is viewed as secondary to the sense of connection and sharing of experience (1989, pp. 87-91).

My task type preference is that of *Work*, where I am predisposed to do hands-on work, without bothering with the planning and organization. I enjoy working on the frontline as well. My challenge is that I get frustrated by having to work with committees, boards, and councils that are at times bureaucratic.

Conclusion

In this section, I will first describe how self-assessment will affect positively and

negatively my strategy of creating a more meaningful worship experience in the Sony Seventh-day Adventist Church and then conclude with a summary.

Influence of Self-Assessment on the Project

Self-assessment is "the capstone of a leader's journey. At the end the road, great leaders are intimately acquainted with themselves," asserts McNeal. He adds conclusively that "they are at home with themselves" (2000, p. 11). Understanding who I am is critical to my project for it will help me understand how my worldview, gifts, and educational training will affect my ministry. This self-revelation and being at home with myself, is crucial to the project that is being conducted, for it will influence the outcome of the project both positively and negatively.

Positive Influences of Self-Assessment on the Project

My worldview and my educational training have equipped me with the necessary knowledge and tools for doing research and the novelty required to conduct a research project. My upbringing and cultural background furnished me with an understanding of the culture of the community in which I will conduct and implement the research, so that I will carry out the study in a culturally accepted way. Paul G. Hiebert, Daniel Shaw, and Tite Tienou affirm this view in their book, *Understanding Folk Religion: A Christian Response to Popular Beliefs and Practices*, when they observe that mission is about people, and not programs. "It is not projects to be accomplished through human engineering and action. It begins with learning to understand people deeply, identifying with them, and building relationships of love and trust" (1999, p. 11). They continue, "It is to communicate the gospel to them in ways they understand that can help them to

critique their old religious ways, and to think biblically in their everyday lives" (Hiebert, Shaw, & Tienou, p. 11).

Ellen G. White agrees with the above concept when she affirmed that the method used by Christ to reach the people with the gospel truth in her book, *Ministry of Healing*. "Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The savior mingled with men as one who desired their good." She further points out that "He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence," before bidding them, 'Follow Me'" (1942, p. 143). Therefore, my being a Luo and my cultural upbringing in this culture, as well as my educational training will help me to develop a strategy of worship that is both biblically sound and culturally appropriate.

Negative Influences of Self-Assessment on the Project

According to McNeal, hidden addictions and compulsion such as problems with drugs or alcohol, sex addiction, lust for power, compulsive eating, adrenaline addiction, being a workaholic, and craving approval often stem from family-of-origin backgrounds (2000, p. 19). It is a known fact that "the sins of the fathers" are often handed on down the generational chain. Addictive environments spawn people prone to addiction, though the object of addiction may change. McNeal further points out that the issues of leaders revolves around the degree to which they have assessed these family dynamics, examining them for symptoms of trying to overcompensate in ways that contribute to "unhealthy life patterns that can lead to failure (p. 19).

I can reveal that even though I have no addiction with drugs or alcohol, sex addiction, lust for power, or compulsive eating, I have some challenge with being a workaholic and adrenaline addiction that may push me to overwork and become

irrational; thus, impairing my health. I also tend to value work over people and since worship is all about people worshipping God together, I may be tempted to major in the program of making worship experience more meaningful and yet ignore the very people that I minister to in the Sony Church.

Summary

Chapter 1 provided some background information for the project, problem of the study, significance of the project, and the significance of the study. It further explored some segments of my life by describing my general background, specific personal assessments of my life, general assessment in relation to others, and ended with a conclusion which stipulated how self-assessment affects my project both positively and negatively.

In the next chapter, I will turn my attention to providing the study with a biblical and theological basis for making worship experience more meaningful in the Sony Adventist Church. I will also survey some Seventh-day Adventist and other Christian writers who have contributed in the area of worship renewal.

Overview of the Project

This project will include a series of current literature, including books, periodicals, and articles written on how to make worship more meaningful. The traditional ways of worship will be examined, while paying attention to worship format, length, and content.

Theological reflection will focus on the elements of worship and how they can be used to impact worship services positively. An initial survey will be conducted to

determine how many members skip worship services in the Sony Adventist Church and their reasons for doing so. A program to make worship more meaningful will be developed and tested in the Sony Adventist Church.

In the middle and towards the end of the project, a survey will be conducted again to assess any changes in attendance and participation in church services. Church elders as well as worship leaders who are mostly in charge of the worship programs will also undergo training in how to use the developed worship program materials. The worship program developed will then be implemented in the Sony Adventist Church in particular and in other churches as the need may arise.

Resources will be used to develop the worship program, conduct surveys, train the elders and worship leaders, and to purchase the required materials. Finally, the project report will include a summary, conclusion, and recommendations.

CHAPTER 2

BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL BASIS FOR MAKING WORSHIP

MORE MEANINGFUL IN THE SONY ADVENTIST CHURCH

Introduction

The Bible is a book for worship and doing theology. Any intervention in making

the worship experience more meaningful must take note of its biblical backings in the

Old Testament as well as in the New Testament. This chapter will discuss the biblical and

theological basis for making the worship experience more meaningful. It will also look

into the writings of Ellen G. White, Adventist writers, as well as other Christian writers

who have made significant contributions in the area of worship.

**Biblical and Theological Basis for Making Worship
Experience More Meaningful**

In this section I will discuss briefly the definition of worship, before presenting

biblical principles of worship that will be used to make the worship experience more

meaningful in the Sony Adventist Church. These principles are (a) participation in

worship, (b) theocentric worship, (c) Christocentric worship, and (d) a balanced worship

approach.

Definition of Worship

Exclusive worship and total allegiance to God permeate the Bible, and these God

zealously guards for Himself. "Worship is simply giving God His worth: unreserved praise, unconditional, and absolute gratitude," observes John M. Fowler, in the *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology* (2000, p. 236). In worship God allows no competition: "You shall have no other gods before me" (Exod 20:3; see also Nichol, 1978, vol. 1, pp. 591, 602). We worship God for He alone is the Creator and hence deserves our worship. God planned for Adam and Eve, who were created in the divine image and their progeny, a twofold destiny. Foremost, acknowledging God as sovereign of the universe, they would render to Him alone their total allegiance and worship. The eternal command of God has always been, "Fear God and give Him glory . . . and worship him who made [created] heaven and earth" (Rev 14:7).

To acknowledge God as the supreme sovereign and the only object of worship demands that self be stripped of pride, pretension, and deviation. A deliberate and radical rejection of self's desire to be its own god is the basis of the only proper and adequate relationship of humanity with God. It was Eden's model and Jesus' prescription of true worship: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment" (Matt 22:37, 38). To put God first in all that we think and do, to see everything from His perspective and to do nothing without reference to Him, to absorb His priorities as our own and to devote all we are to fulfill those priorities, to put aside everything that comes between self and God and to choose His will at any cost is the great and first biblical commandment. Anything that deviates from that is contrary to God's design for authentic biblical worship.

Jon L. Dybdahl in his book *Hunger: Satisfying the Longing of Your Soul* observes that when one takes a closer look at the first four commandments one sees it reveals that

they all deal with worship. They safeguard the worship of Israel's God. Not only that, but the preface in Exod 20:2 gives the basis for true worship—"Yahweh God is the one who has delivered Israel from Egyptian slavery. All calls to true worship stems from the convicting power of that truth about God's redemption" (Dybdahl, 2008, p. 23).

According to the *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, the word "worship" is derived from the Hebrew word *shachah,* which generally means, "bowing down," "serving," "bend over," "bow down," "kneel down," "bow oneself down," and "worship" (Van Gemeron, 1997, vol. 5, p. 214). The *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Dictionary* agrees, but adds the Greek root words, *latreou* which means, "to serve," especially with respect to the outside forms of worship and *proskuneō*, "to do obeisance," "to prostrate oneself," "to reverence." This term refers to the attitude of humility, reverence, honor, devotion, and adoration that properly mark the relationship of created beings to their Creator, especially in His presence (Horn, 1979, p. 1184).

Kevin J. Vanttoozer adds an interesting definition of the English word "worship," to denote a public gathering of people to perform religious activities. For Christians, this will mean the regular assembly of the church, done day by day or week by week, meeting to directly engage the triune God, and with each other in God's name (2005, p. 856). It can be concluded that worship involves humanity that are paying homage to their Creator God, which includes external acts such as bowing down, kneeling, and prostrating oneself, as well as internal attitudes, matters of the heart and mind in obedience to the revealed Word of God. Thus, "worship is both an attitude and an act" (Van Gemeron, 1997, p. 857).

Participatory Worship Approaches

Worship involves both external and internal acts. In this section I will emphasize both the external and internal forms of worship, which I have termed participatory worship. I will discuss three major areas: small groups and worship, music in worship, and clapping and dancing in worship.

Small Groups and Worship

A survey of the Bible reveals that an emphasis on small group fellowship seems to have a solid scriptural basis. In worship, before the fall, at creation, one of the fundamental privileges that Adam and Eve enjoyed, was a close fellowship with heavenly beings, together with periodic visits from God Himself (Gen 3:8; Job 38:7). God gave Himself to the pair. He was their companion in the Garden of Eden. The relationship was close; the fellowship sweet. The worship was highly personal and friendly (Pease, 1967, pp. 11-12).

Later, the worship of God was seen as a family enterprise. The church in heaven and on earth are considered a family (Eph 3:15). Two metaphors are used to describe how people join this family: adoption (Rom 8:14-16; Eph 1:4-6) and the new birth (John 3:8). Through faith in Christ, those who are newly baptized are no longer slaves, but children of the heavenly Father (Gal 3:26-27), who live on the basis of the new covenant. They belong to the "household of God" (Eph 2:19) and the "household of faith" (Gal 6:10). Members of His family address God as "Father" (Gal 4:6) and relate to one another as brother and sister (Jas 2:15; 1 Cor 8:11; Rom 16:1). Worship involves a genuine fellowship with God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (1 John 1:3; 1 Cor 1:9; 2 Cor 13:14, RSV), as well as with believers (1 John 1:3, 7; see also Damsteegt, 1988, p. 140).

The metaphor of the church as a family emphasizes a caring church (Damsteegt, 1988, p. 139). Charles E. Bradford proposes that in a caring church "people are loved, respected, and recognized as somebody; a place where people acknowledge that they need each other. Where talents are developed. Where people grow. Where everybody is fulfilled" (1986, p. 15). A family also implies accountability, respect for spiritual parents, and caring for spiritual brothers and sisters. And finally, a family means that each member will have toward each other "a love that engenders a deep loyalty that undergirds and strengthens" (Damsteegt, 1988, p. 140) fellowship among the family of God.

Membership in a church family enables individuals who vary greatly in nature and disposition to enjoy and support one another. Church family members should learn to live in unity while not losing their individuality (Mumbo, 1994, p. 102).

In the New Testament (NT), Jesus chose a group of 12 and spent most of His time in ministry with them. He often taught in private homes (Matt 13:36; 17:25; Mark 9:33; 10:10). "The New Testament church centered its activities on small groups, in fellowship, study, sharing, praying, and eating together" (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists [GC], 1992, p. 163). The early Christians had no church buildings; they turned their homes into churches of intimate fellowship and sharing. "No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had" (Acts 4:32). "There was no needy person among them. For from time to time those who owned lands or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales . . . and it was distributed to anyone as he had need" (vv. 34-35). The result was a marked increase in their numbers (5:42; 6:1).

Ellen White emphasizes that "the formation of small companies [groups] as a

basis of Christian effort is a plan that has been presented before me by one who cannot

err" (White, 1946, p. 15). She does not only point to its divine origin, but also observes,

"If there is a large number in the church, let the members be formed into small

companies, to work not only for the church members but for unbelievers also" (p. 15).

In view of the counsel of Scripture, small groups are important for the life of the

church and have theological implications for any church: First, fellowship groups allow

for the full participation of all the members in the cell. Just like the life of the body is in

its cells, so is the small group to the church. When the cells multiply, the body grows. A

study of church movements shows that "every major revival has been influenced by a

ready access to the Bible and the gathering of believers in small intimate groups" (GC,

1992, p. 163).

Second, cell groups act as a substitute family. Today's society is characterized by

mobility and relocation. People are uprooted or uproot themselves from families and

friends when they move to distant places. Loneliness is a catch word of the age. The

small group becomes a substitute family, and it meets a highly specialized need.

"Strangers are accepted regardless of cultural, ethical, or religious background. They are

loved regardless of sin or skin" (p. 163). Small groups seem to help break down and

remove barriers that tend to inhibit intimacy and church growth (Dudley, 1993, pp. 6-8).

Third, small groups aim to both revive members and attract non-members. They

provide an excellent means of reclaiming inactive members. Research shows that most

people attend not so much for doctrinal reasons, but because church attendance offers

them a Christian support system. Conversely, most people stop attending church, not

because they disbelieve the church's doctrines, but because they do not find in that

church the support they need (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1992, pp. 163-164).

Fourth is an emphasis on fellowship. A strong emphasis on small groups was the foundation of worship in the Early Church (Acts 4:42-47). Both the small size and the home setting were conducive to fellowship. The same is true today. Even those not ready to identify with a church feel comfortable in the non-threatening atmosphere of a home group (Fowler, 1994, pp. 14-17).

Fifth, fellowship groups give every member the opportunity to develop and use their spiritual gifts. The Holy Spirit gives gifts to every member and urges people to find a ministry where the gift can be used to serve others and attract them to Christ. "Under this plan there is no hierarchy" (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1992, p. 111). Everyone is a minister performing some ministry for which they have been especially gifted. How then, do we solve the tension between "Laity" and "Clergy"? Is it not the purpose of the clergy to do all the work while the laity should sit and be ministered to?

The biblical word *laos*, from which the word "laity" comes has nothing to do with any distinction between clergy and laity, asserts Robert E. Webber (1985, pp. 59-84). Rather, it includes the entire people of God. Both Old and New Testaments include the clergy among God's people. There is no distinction between clergy (religious) and people (secular). H. Strathmann in Gerhard Kittel's *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, after a thorough survey of the usage of the word *laos*, concluded that in the NT "the figurative meaning of *laos* [people] = the Christian community (1975, vol. 4, p. 54).

Hence, it can be concluded that the Bible teaches that every Christian believer is a "priest" (Rev 1:6; 1 Pet 2:5, 9), because every member is equipped with spiritual gifts "for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ" (Eph 4:12, RSV). Each member has the responsibility of living in fellowship with Jesus and sharing Him with others. The laity is not spiritually mediocre in comparison to the clergy. The clergy is part of God's people and subject to the same divine commands. Given the same covenant relationship with Christ and empowered by the same divine Spirit, all Disciples of Christ—clergy (pastors) and church members—are to use their various spiritual gifts to win others to Him (Gane, 1994, p. 30). Ellen White affirmed the same position, when she noted that "not upon the ordained [clergy] only rest the responsibility of going forth to fulfill this commission. Everyone who has received Christ is called to work for the salvation of his fellow men" (1911, p. 110).

She added that the work of God on this earth can never be finished until "men and women comprising our church membership rally to the work, and unite their efforts with those of ministers and church officers" (White, 1924, pp. 67-68). She warned that "it is a fatal mistake to suppose that the work of soul-saving depends alone upon the ministry. . . . Those who stand as leaders in the church of God are to realize that the Savior's commission is given to all who believe in his name (p. 68).

Therefore, a small group fellowship gives every member an opportunity to exercise their God-given spiritual gifts. Small groups not only equip believers for all the work of ministry, for the edification of the body of Christ, and to mature people in the faith, to prevent them from being "tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine" (Eph 4:14). There is a marked growth in love, for every member is joined both

to Christ who is the head of the whole body, as well as his fellow believers, this union

"makes bodily growth and up builds itself in love" (Eph 4:16, RSV). Here, perhaps, lies

the secret of the success of small groups in worship services and the reclamation of

church members, as they participate actively in worshipping God with music.

Music in Worship

Music is found in nearly every part of the Bible as a part of worship, but music is

especially mentioned in the book of Psalms, which is simply a collection of sacred

hymns. In Hebrew the book is called *Tehillim*, which denote "praises," from *hallal* "to

praise"; and in Greek it is called *Psalmoi*, "songs of praise," or "psalms," a translation of

the plural of the Hebrew *mizmor*, "a song with instrumental accompaniment," from

zamar, "to sing with instrumental accompaniment," or simply "to sing" or "to praise"

(Horn, 1979, p. 910).

The book of Psalms has served Hebrews and Christians with equal effectiveness

for both public and private worship and devotion. The chanting of Psalms by antiphonal

choirs, or by a choir and the congregation, was a conspicuous part of worship in the

ancient temple service where many of the psalms came to be associated with great

national festivals. Psalms 113-118 and 135 were used at Passover time; Psalms 118 at

Pentecost, the Feast of Tabernacles, and the Feast of Dedication; Psalms 120-134 on the

first night of the Feast of Tabernacles; Psalms 81 at the New moon; and Psalms 29 with

the evening sacrifice at the New Moon; and Psalm 150 to be sung with dancing.

At creation, the angels burst forth in songs of praise and shouts of joy (Job 38:7).

Moses and Miriam led the Israelites in singing to celebrate the crossing of the Red Sea

(Exod 15). King David not only composed songs, but also led the Israelites in songs of

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celebration and active participation as the ark was being transferred to Jerusalem (2 Sam 6).

Music was an established part of the temple worship (2 Chr 25). The prophet Zephaniah, talking of the future redeemed Jerusalem revealed that "the Lord your God . . . will rejoice over you with singing" (Zeph 3:17). During the triumphal entry of Jesus to Jerusalem, "the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices" (Luke 19:37). When the Pharisees endeavored to silence them, Christ Himself intervened, saying, "I tell you . . . 'if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out'" (Luke 19:40).

Ellen White reveals that Jesus Christ as a youth frequently "expressed the gladness of His heart by singing psalms and heavenly songs. Often the dwellers in Nazareth heard His voice raised in praise and thanksgiving to God. Christ held communion with heaven in songs" (1940, pp. 73-74). White points out further that Christ's singing often elevated the weary listeners to heaven. "As His companions complained of weariness from labor, they were cheered by the sweet melody from His lips. His praise seemed to banish evil angels, and, like incense fill their lives with fragrance. The minds of His hearers were carried away from their earthly exile to the heavenly home" (pp. 73-74).

Paul urged the church at Ephesus to "speak to one another with Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord" (Eph 5:19). John gives a glimpse of the heavenly worship full of singing (see Rev 4 and 5). Thus, a brief survey of the Bible reveals that music is an important element where all members— clergy and laity—join together in active participation in praises to God. Since music is found in the entire Bible, the question that needs to be addressed is: What are some of the

theological underpinnings of music which need to be observed as music is used in our worship services?

Adventist worship needs to encompass an enormous cultural and stylistic variety. There is need to go multicultural much more than is done, because of the global orientation, where people of different nationalities, races, and culture are all included (Holmes, 1984, pp. 117-153). To this insight the church needs to accommodate age and personality differences that exist within it.

Donald P. Hustad, in the book *Jubilate! Church Music in the Evangelical Tradition* (1981, pp. 38-39), offers some useful approaches that help us understand the appropriate usage of music in worship services. First, both the text and the music must express the gospel in ways that are understandable and culturally appropriate. This does not, however, mean that culture will dictate the type of music so that culture overrides biblical principles. But, it does mean that music should take into account the differences in culture and attempt to present a musical message in a way that is palatable to that particular culture.

Music is not an end in itself, but exists for the people of the church to express their faith in God and to glorify Him in worship. James F. White might have been right when he noted that in worship, music ought to be judged in terms of people, not people in terms of music (1971, pp. 128-129).

Second, the music used in worship must be our best. It should be offered in love, humility, gratitude, and grace, without arrogance or shame when comparing it with the music of others of either the same or different cultures. This comparison will in turn

attempt to minimize the danger of emphasizing the performance or allowing music to simply become entertainment.

Third, music should express and enhance the best Christian theology. Of the 287 Old Testament quotations in the New Testament, 116 come from the Psalms, the ancient hymnbook of the ancient people of God (Anderson, 1986, p. 32). Martin Luther wrote, "Music is the handmaid of theology," while his enemies said, "our people are singing their way into Luther's theology" (as cited in Anderson, 1986, p. 32). Hence, our music needs to be socially suitable, ethically unquestionable, and theologically appropriate as we look for ways of making worship more meaningful to the church. Music should be employed to portray the doctrinal truth or be such that it does not contradict the church's biblically-based teachings (Holmes, 1984, p. 98).

Fourth, music should express and support the best Christian activities related to the group's beliefs—worship, fellowship, and outreach, with due contemplation of the needs of each in a timely and appropriate way.

Fifth, music should speak from the whole person to the whole person, carefully balancing the physical, intellectual, and emotional aspects of the human being involved in worship. This may be achieved by balancing the singing of hymns with spiritual songs. The songs should include the great hymns of the past as well as the new contemporary songs, carefully blended together. Holmes suggests that "a new people with a new life and a new hope singing a new song, ought to sing it in a new language" (1984, p. 153). The *Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal* committee reveals that sometimes it was necessary for them to alter the text of the hymns to eliminate theological aberrations or awkward, jarring expressions. They also replaced archaic and exclusive language whenever that

could be done, without doing violence to historical appropriateness. In short they made attempts to make the old hymns speak contemporary language, while at the same time maintaining their historical integrity (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Hymnal Committee, 1985, pp. 6-7). Musically, the hymnal was improved with the addition of a number of "American folk hymns and Negro spirituals as well as German chorales and old psaltery tunes. The hymnal includes a few modern gospel songs along with several striking new works by Adventist authors and composers" (p. 7).

Sixth, music should be genuinely creative, shunning the "hackneyed and trite as well as the elitist and abstruse" (Hustad, 1981, p. 39). Those talented and gifted in music should employ their gifts and talents in music to the glory of God (1 Cor 10:31). Solomon urged that "whatever your hands find to do, do it with all your might" (Eccl 9:10). Paul speaking in the context of music also appeals to believers to "let the world of Christ dwell in you richly . . . and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Col 3:16-17).

Seventh, in addition to the above six ways suggested by Hustad, musical instruments should be skillfully handled. "Let the singing be accompanied with music instruments skillfully handled. We are not to oppose the use of instrumental music in our work" (E. White, 1946, p. 507). Therefore, while we are not to oppose the use of instruments in music, they should be carefully handled so that they do not overshadow the music that they are accompanying. This is worship in Psalms at its best.

In conclusion, a book by Byang H. Kato, *African Cultural Revolution and the Christian Faith,* says that observation appears to be an appropriate direction to take when

approaching the tension existing over the use of certain musical instruments. He points

out that various musical instruments were used in the worship of God. He observes

further that, in the NT, there is no ruling on what instruments were appropriate to use or

not to use for the worship of God. People are simply directed to give God glory in

psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs (Eph 5:19; Col 3:16-17). He adds that since the mode

of musical expression is not inspired, therefore, the mode of expression should

accommodate the situation where the gospel is presented. Relevance in this respect

should be aimed at (Kato, 1975, pp. 50-51).

Lyell V. Heise has said it correctly:

> The important thing for worship music leaders, musicians, and . . . congregations to
> remember is that no instrument, of itself, is holy or unholy. So an approach to
> instrumental music that values inclusiveness rather than exclusiveness, worship rather
> than performance, and consensus rather than mere dogmatism, will in the end be the
> most rewarding for musicians and congregations. (n.d., p. 23)

Another area of participation in worship, which will conclude our study in this

section will be clapping and dancing in worship.

Clapping and Dancing in Worship

In the study of Davidic worship, that is, the worship style that King David used

when he was transferring the ark to Jerusalem, there is evidence that it was characterized

by joyous instrumental singing, dancing, and shouting (2 Sam 6:5-6, 14-16). One also

finds that dancing was used on some occasions in the Bible to praise God as a part of

worship. The author of the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* on 2 Samuel points

out that in Davidic worship, there was dancing and leaping before the Lord (2 Sam 6:5,

14, 16). David led the house of Israel in dancing and leaping before the Lord. David's

dancing was an act of solemn joy before the Lord. "To an Oriental of that day such an

activity [David's dancing] was a natural mode of expression, however strange it may appear today. By this means David expressed his grateful praise and thus gave honor and glory to God's holy name" (Nichol, 1976, vol. 2, p. 627). Ellen White notes that David's dancing before the Lord was an act of "reverent joy before the Lord" (1958, p. 707).

There appears to be no disapproval from the Scriptures regarding dance in worship. Miriam the prophetess, led the Israelites in instrumental music and dancing (Exod 15:20). David danced before the Lord mightily; Solomon points out that there is "a time to mourn and a time to dance" (Eccl 3:4). The psalmist says, "Let them praise his name with dancing and make music to him with tambourine and harp" (Ps 149:3) and "praise him with tambourine and dancing" (Ps 150:4).

In the temple services, praise and dancing were practiced. Ellen White remarks that "at evening when the lamps were lighted, the court was a scene of great rejoicing. Gray-haired men, the priests of the temple and the rulers of the people, united in the festive dances to the sound of instrumental music and the chants of the Levites" (1940, p. 463). These practices were also part of celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles, even when Jesus Himself was present (p. 463). If this is true, then, the temple and the festivals were joyous occasions of celebration and also indicate that dancing was carried out in NT times.

In fact, there is even a school of thought, proposing that the singing referred to in Eph 5:15-20 and Col 3:16-17, were occasions of "rejoices and smiles and dances" asserts Andrew T. Lincoln in the *Word Biblical Commentary* (1990, vol. 42, p. 337). He gives a detailed explanation why he thinks that there was dancing, chief among them was the usage of the "Psalms," "hymns," and "spiritual songs," in Eph 5:19, which he suggests

that the "Psalms" may refer to Christian odes patterned on the OT Psalter; from hymns, to

longer compositions, part of which are actually cited in the NT; and "spiritual songs" to

snatches of spontaneous praise and dancing prompted by the spirit (Lincoln, 1990, pp.

337-349).

Therefore, should dancing be part of our worship service? Since the Bible does

not prohibit dancing in worship, but includes occasions of worshipful dancing in praise

for the Lord, perhaps David J. Newman's observation may be appropriate here:

> I find it fascinating to observe that we condemn what the Bible expressly commands
> as part of worship. We associate dancing with immorality and worldliness, forgetting
> that it has had good and even spiritual connotations. While there are evil types of
> dancing, there are also types that express the emotions and creativity of the mind and
> body. (1990, p. 26)

No one, then, should be pejorative here, but allow those who want to dance in

worship to do so as well as those who do not want to dance to express their worship in

ways that is culturally appropriate to them.

In evaluating clapping of hands in worship, it is also true that a least one verse in

the Bible mentions the practice, "Clap your hands, all you nations; Shout to God with

cries of joy" (Ps 47:1). Even though it may appear to be inappropriate to base the

theology of clapping on one verse, the Bible does not condemn it; hence, there is need to

deal with it, as suggested in dealing with dancing in worship above.

Theocentric and Christocentric Worship

The central element in any Christian worship is God. Fernando Canale agrees by

pointing out in his book, *Basic Elements of Christian Theology: Scripture Replacing*

Tradition that "God is the center of all theological systems. The way theologians

understand the nature of God's reality determines their understanding of His actions." He

furthers observes that "the first element of Christian theology is the reality of God" (Canale, 2005, p. 41). He continues by suggesting that technically, the word used for theology comes from the Greek word *Zeos,* meaning God and *logos* which mean study. Thus, "theology" literally means "the study of God" (p. 41).

In this section I will limit the biblical survey of a theocentric worship approach to Rev 4 and 5, and draw theological implications that can be used to enrich worship services in the church, by making them more meaningful as we experience God in worship. Worship is a fundamental issue in the book of Revelation. The theme occurs in various places culminating in the Apocalypse's vision of the satanic trinity—the dragon, the beast, and the false prophets—that are engaged in war against God's people (Rev 12-14). There the conflict is about worshipping God or the dragon, the beast, and its image. The Apocalypse mentions among others, prostration (Rev 4:10; 5:8, 14; 7:11; 19:14, prayers (Rev 4:5; 8:5), and singing of hymns. Seven hymns are found in the seal vision (Rev 4:1-8:1), five of them in Rev 4 and 5 (Mueller, 2012, p. 1). I will now concentrate in these five hymns and look at their implications to theocentric worship as well as later to Christocentric worship.

The first hymn is presented by the four heavenly beings around the throne. They are singing: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come" (Rev 4:8, NIV). The second hymn, sung by the 24 elders in their worship of God, says: "You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their beings" (Rev 4:11). These two songs point directly to God, who sits at the center of the throne and truly is the Object of true worship in heaven.

The third hymn is no longer addressed to God the Father, but to the Lamb, Jesus Christ. It is called a new hymn and is sung by the 24 elders, maybe also by the cherubim:

> You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth. (Rev 5:9-10)

The group of those who praise the Lamb increases. Myriads of angels turn toward the lamb and sing with a loud voice, the fourth hymn to Jesus Christ the lamb: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength, and honor, and glory and praise!" (Rev 5:12).

The fifth song of worship in Revelation is sung by the entire creation and is directed towards God the Father and the Son: "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, forever and ever!" (Rev 5:13). It is worth noting that the five songs are divided equally between God the Father and the Son: the first two songs are intended for the praise of God the Father (Rev 4:8; 4:11), all are found in chapter 4; while the other two songs are intended solely to Jesus Christ, the Lamb (Rev 5:9-10; 5:12), all are songs found in chapter 5.

A tremendous crescendo is noticeable as one progress from one hymn to the next. A heavenly quartet is followed by a chamber choir consisting of 24 persons. Probably, both groups unite, forming a large choir, and they present the longest praise among the five hymns. Next the choir of the heavenly host, consisting of millions of angelic singers, begins to sing the perfect praise of the Lamb.

Finally, the entire creation participates: "Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing: 'To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever

and ever!'" (Rev 5:13, NIV). All beings in all spheres of creation glorify God and the

Lamb. What else could be done than to respond "Amen," to prostrate before the Lord,

and to worship God: "The four living creatures said 'Amen,' and the elders fell down and

worshiped" (v. 14).

These hymns together with their context furnish a number of interesting

theological details on worship. Principles of worship can be derived from this passage

(Rev 4 and 5), which will not only be applied in the church in general, but will be useful

in making worship more meaningful in the Sony Adventist Church. Ekkehardt Mueller,

in the Biblical Research Institute of the General Conference of the Seventh-day

Adventists newsletter, *Reflections*, identifies ten important theological insights that are

worth noting (2012, pp. 1-6).

True Worship Is Theocentric

The worship scenes in Rev 4-5 are clearly focusing on God, his majesty and

sovereignty. Although other beings are mentioned in these chapters, attention is not given

to them. The center of worship is God. In addition, the language of Rev 4 may have

political overtones, stressing that not the Roman emperor but only God is Lord. In the

Bible and in Revelation, worship is only due to God. Even angels may not be

worshipped. When twice John mistakenly tries to worship an angel, the heavenly

messenger exclaims: "Do not do it! Worship God!" (Rev 19:10; 22:8-9). Especially in

chapters 12-14, the great conflict centers on the issue of worship.

The issue in worship is not primarily whether created beings feel good about it

and benefit from what they are doing, whether they are blessed with a memorable

experience or are entertained. Worship takes place for God's sake and must be directed to

God only. Otherwise it becomes some sort of idolatry.

It is true that the hymns in Revelation chapters 4-5 do not include elements such

as petitions, intercessions, and confession. These are important, even though they are not

included in this specific act of worship. To some extent, they may be reflected in the

prayers of the saints (Rev 4:8), which are lifted before the throne of God. But no matter

what, true worship is Theocentric. When the heavenly beings praise the Almighty as the

Lord of the universe and fall down before him, laying their crowns before the throne (Rev

4:9-10), they provide an example for humans to emulate.

Paul Hiebert, R. Daniel Shaw, and Tite Tienou add that Theocentric and

Christocentric worship is the antidote to androcentrism and selfishness. He alludes to the

fact that one of the most difficult worldview themes to deal with is the androcentrism of

religions created by humans. Where people see themselves as the center of the world they

think that everything revolves around them and their lives. This malady is treated by a

Theocentric and Christocentric worship approach, where God the Father and the Son are

at the center, and not androcentrism and selfishness. "Christianity challenges this

androcentrism, and calls believers to a Theocentric view of reality" (1999, p. 379).

Hiebert concludes by pointing out that "the gospel rejects an ego-centered religion and a

magical mentality. The center of its message is God and what he does. It calls humans to

submit themselves to God and what he does" (p. 371).

True Worship Is Christocentric

The five hymns consist of three groups. The first two are addressed to God the

Father, the next two to the lamb, and the last one to God as well as the Lamb. There are

some similarities between the hymns. Especially the second hymn is similar to the third. Both start the same way: "Worthy are you." In addition, the same attributes are assigned to the Father and Son. It is worth noting that the worship of Jesus leads to the worship of God and the Lamb together (Rev 5:13).

John does not wish to present Jesus as an alternative object of worship alongside God, but one who shares in the glory due to God. Rev 5 presents the Lamb as an object of worship along with the Father and the Holy Spirit. This kind of worship turns our attention to the salvific acts of the Lamb. It lessens confidence in self and anchors confidence in Christ. Worship that is not Christocentic, will most likely result in self-centeredness that can be devastating to the congregation. It may leads to authoritarian leadership, competition, divisions, and spiritual pride. "Christ-centeredness leads to humility, a desire for the unity of the church, and a willingness to hear as well as speak (Hiebert et al., 1999, p. 379; see also Rom 15:1-2; 1 Cor 10:12).

In conclusion it can be noted that the Apocalypse contains an important theology of worship. Major elements are found in the hymns of Rev 4 and 5 and their context. Much more can be said. But it would be well for believers to remember the following crucial elements. True worship is Theocentric and Christocentric. True worship is Trinitarian for it involves the worship of God the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. True worship maintains the tension between God's immanence and his transcendence. True worship extols the character and nature of God to humanity and the heavenly hosts. True worship praises the work of God. True worship is objective, not only subjective. True worship is universal and all-encompassing. True worship provides a new viewpoint to life on earth. And true worship is continuous and unending. May God's people learn truly

to worship the Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ the Lamb that was slaughtered and has

redeemed them, the Holy Spirit, speaking to Christ's universal church (Rev 2:7, 11, 17,

29; 3:6, 13, 22).This will lead to a worship experience that is balanced and fulfilling.

A Balanced Worship Approach

At creation God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, so God

created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he

created them" (Gen 1:26, 27). God created man both with the mind (intellect) and the

heart (the seat of emotions), to be used to the glory of God in worship (White, 1947,

pp. 20-23).

Paul recognized that people are created as whole persons, with different faculties,

which must nonetheless be used in a balanced way in worshipping God. "May your

whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ"

(1 Thess 5:23; cf. 3 John 2). When Jesus was giving the greatest commandment of love

he commanded us to "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul

and with all your mind" (Matt 22:37, NIV). Hence, our worship, which is a love response

to God, needs to be with the "heart" as well as the "mind." In other words people need to

worship God both emotionally and intellectually.

Christ Himself directed that true worship was to be done in spirit and truth: "Yet a

time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in

spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and

his worshipers must worship in spirit and truth" (John 4:23, 24, NIV). Here, Jesus was

setting a balanced-approach principle of worship for all times. The *Seventh-day Adventist*

Bible Commentary on John 4:23, 24 stipulates that "in all sincerity, with the highest

faculties of the mind and emotions, applying the principles of the truth to the heart. . . .

This is genuine worship, Jesus says; all else is false" (Nichol, 1980, vol. 5, p. 940). Even in the place of worship, Christ implies that worship can take place in Samaria, Jerusalem, or elsewhere. "It is not *where*, but *how*, one worships that counts" (p. 940). If this advice is followed, then, there should not be any tension between those who major in the mind (intellect) in their worship service and those who put emphasis in the heart (emotions) in their worship services as well. The balanced approach to worship avoids any extreme position and the divides that at times are experienced in the church. When this tension is minimized by the members in the Sony Adventist Church, then worshipers will worship together happily thus enhancing a more meaningful worship experience to all.

The tension that is occasionally experienced in Adventist churches may be due to two major reasons. The first is the distinction placed between the mind (intellect) and the emotions. Greek thought held that the mind was always superior. This distinction has been made from the time of Plato until the present and has greatly influenced Western thought. Samuel Enoch Stumpf, in the book *Socrates to Sartre* pointed out that "so powerful was Plato's comprehensive treatment of knowledge [through the mind] that his philosophy became the most influential strand in the history of the Western thought" (1982, p. 44).

The same influence was passed on to Western culture from the Greek philosophers and by extension through missionaries from the Global North to other countries. Since the Adventist Church began in North America and from there spread to all parts of the world, the American missionaries' culture has often been combined with

religion and exported to these regions. Holmes asserts that "Americanism and worship are often indistinguishable. Most missionaries have come to the Eastern part of the world from Europe or America" (1984, p. 146). He adds that through the missionaries' influence, there has been "a Westernizing and/or Americanizing of church life along with Christianizing of peoples" (p. 146).

Kato also observes that some missionaries who came to Africa did try to impose their culture on the Africans. "It is sad, but nevertheless true, that some white people have given the impression that their culture is superior to any other. Therefore, their culture being superior, it must be imposed upon the rest of the world" (1975, p. 36). He adds that all culture has been tainted with sin and hence, there is no superior culture and that every culture is judged by the Bible (pp. 36-39).

Phil Brown explains that Greek thought has been passed into Adventist traditional worship by "the Anglo-Saxon heritage many of us share, and our culturally ingrained reserve and disdain of emotional expression." He adds further, that the fear of emotional expression and the danger of extremism "translate into a very passive worship. But others, especially our youth, may interpret this mode of worship as dull and boring" (n.d., p. 27).

On the other hand, there is another approach to worship which does not place an emphasis on both the mind and the emotions but on the whole person. It is what Eoin Giller calls, "Hebrew in its expression rather than Greek" (1990, p. 18). In the Hebrew culture, religion was a part of daily life rather than a separate entity. Work, play, family, and nation were all taken religiously. There was no distinction between the sacred and the secular as is often made today. To the Hebrew religion was spontaneous, and so were

rituals. "Religion was also more social than individualistic, more corporate and community-centered than private" (Holmes, 1984, pp. 143-144).

How then, should we as Adventist worshippers relate to the wider diversity in culture? Should we expect everyone everywhere to conform to the same worship expressions and pattern?

Hyveth Williams suggests that there is "need to move from our primarily Eurocentric, human-centered style . . . to a God-centered style that is inclusive or at least reflective of the many cultures, customs, and peoples who embrace Adventism" (1992, p. 9). While Bryan Craig recommends that worship is an expression of the whole being and not just an intellectual expression alone, "to reduce Christianity to a purely mental exercise is to devalue it" (n.d., p. 22).

Could it be, perhaps, that Paul's advice to the Corinthians could be applicable here? Though the body has many parts, doing different functions, yet each part is contented with its duty, while at the same time functioning as a unit. In short, unity is achieved in diversity. "The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its part are many, they form one body, so it is with Christ" (1 Cor 12:22). Hence, the need to develop a more meaningful worship experience that meets the want of a culturally-diverse membership yet remains rooted in the Bible.

The next reason why there appears to be a tension in the church during the worship services, has to do with "emotionalism." Ellen White points out that "others go to the opposite extreme, making religious emotions prominent, and on special occasions manifesting intense zeal. Their religion seems to be more of the nature of a stimulus rather than an abiding faith in Christ" (1946, p. 502).

Christ also warned His disciples to beware of counterfeits just before the Second Advent. "Watch out that no one deceives you. For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Christ'" (Matt 24:4, 5). The primary reason for "watching" was to avoid being deceived, or led astray. In one form or another, Jesus Christ repeated this warning again and again (see Matt 24:4-6, 11, 23-26, 36, 42-46).

Counterfeits are not limited only to false christs, but also cover the area of revival and emotion. This could, perhaps, explain why, when the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples, "some, however, made fun of them and said, 'they have had too much wine'" (Acts 2:13). Peter defended the disciples, stating that they were not drunk but filled by the Holy Spirit as a fulfillment of the promise of prophet Joel (Acts 2:14-41, cf. Joel 2:28-32).

The same manner of abusing that which is good was also done in the church at Corinth, where the gifts of prophecy and tongues were grossly abused (see Hasel, 1991, pp. 17-108, for an exhaustive discussion on speaking in tongues). This compelled Paul to admonish that everything should be done in order, "For God is not a God of disorder but of peace" (1 Cor 14:33).

Hence, there must be balance in the use of emotion in worship, for emotionalism can create confusion in worship services. Such confusion occasionally leads to emotionalism and fanaticism. However, the fear of emotionalism can also bring another danger, that of extreme coldness. Ellen White poignantly observed concerning this danger when she wrote that "we have found in our experience that if Satan cannot keep souls bound in *the ice of indifference* he will try to push them into the *fire of fanaticism*" (1948, 5:644, emphasis supplied).

Perhaps there are good reasons for the suggestion that we must first have patience enough to ask ourselves whether our protest over the use of emotions in the worship service come from a biblical or cultural base. For, as David Newman points out, "Too many Adventists worship God only with their intellect and wall off their emotions" (1990, p. 27). He adds that we are so afraid of the charismatic renewal that we swing to the opposite extreme and deny our emotions altogether. While we should avoid emotionalism, we need to express emotion—passion, feeling, fervor—in our worship of God (p. 27).

Perhaps, therefore, what is needed is balance between fanaticism and indifference to emotional expression (Webber, 1991, pp. 37-38). In line with Christ's advice, we should "worship in Spirit and truth" (John 4:24, NASB).

While this study recommends a holistic approach to worship that takes care of the whole person (intellectually and emotionally), there is, perhaps, a need to keep a balance so that the worship service will not be focused on emotionalism. However, the traditional method could probably stand a little more innovation so that the other extreme of coldness and indifference can be avoided. Perhaps Ellen White's observation in her book *The Voice in Speech and Song*, may serve as a conclusion:

> God would have all move calmly, considerately, choosing our words in harmony with the solid truth for this time, which requires to be presented to the mind as free from that which is emotional as possible, while still bearing the intensity and solemnity that is proper it should bear. We must guard against creating extremes, guard against encouraging those who would either be in the fire or in the water. (1988, p. 292)

Summary and Conclusion

In this chapter I have presented the biblical and theological basis for making the

worship experience more meaningful in the Sony Adventist church. These include the participatory approach to worship where members are actively involved in the worship service through small groups, music, and where members are free to respond to the worship service by appropriate dancing and clapping of hands. I also surveyed and recommended a Theocentric and Christocentric worship patterned after the heavenly worship format as found in Rev 4 and 5. Finally, I presented a balanced worship approach that is biblically sound, culturally appropriate, and that involves the whole person. Among those who called for a more dynamic yet balanced worship experience are Ellen G. White, Norval F. Pease, Raymond Holmes, Eoin Giller, and Jon Dybdahl.

In conclusion, Eoin Giller's view could be adopted here. A worship done with a balanced emphasis "the spirit as well as in truth; involving man's [woman's] effective domain as well as his [her] rational thought." He concludes thus, "Worship that will bring new life to the church requires something that touches the spirit of a man or woman and is rational-emotive in experience" (n.d., p. 18).

CHAPTER 3

POLITICAL, CULTURAL, AND RELIGIOUS ANALYSIS

OF THE SONY CHURCH

Introduction

Chapter 2 dealt with the principles of worship that will be used as the theological

basis to create a more meaningful worship experience in the Seventh-day Adventist

Church—South Nyanza Sugar (Sony). This chapter will evaluate the socio-political,

cultural and religious context of the Sony church to provide not only graphic picture of

the environment for the project, but to a larger extent, to proffer the needed understanding

for the development of a more meaningful worship experience in the Sony Church.

Some members of the Sony Church skip worship services, claiming that the

services are boring and do not meet their spiritual needs. They claim that the services are

always the same and too traditional; hence, their reason for not attending regularly. At

times some members attend Pentecostal services on Sundays to experience a more

meaningful worship.

The task of this project is to develop and implement a more meaningful worship

experience during the worship services in the Sony Church of the Ranen Conference so

as to encourage members to attend and participate in worship programs regularly. Robert

E. Webber observes that there is an unfolding trend of a renewed interest in the history,

theology, and practice of worship. He writes that "we are living in a time when almost

every major denomination has been affected by renewed interest in the history, theology, and practice of worship" (Webber, 1982, p. 11).

Change does not take place in a vacuity. It always takes place within a context which must be well understood by the transformation agent. This thought is vividly portrayed by Paul G. Hiebert when he confirms that in a rapidly globalizing world, it is important that all of us give attention to human contexts and ways these shape humanity. Humans need to learn how to live in a multi-context world, to build bridges of understanding and relationship between different contexts, and to judge between them. He observes that "this is true for social, cultural, linguistic, religious, and historical contexts" (Hiebert, 2009, p. 18; see also McNeal, 2000, p. 74; Mumbo, 1994, p. 24). I will look briefly at the geographical, historical, and socio-religious factors that can influence the worship practices of the Sony Church community.

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Description of the Project Context

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The description of the project will entail an overview of the geographic description of the Sony Adventist Church, a brief history of the Sony Adventist Church, demographics of the Sony Adventist Church community, the political milieu of the Sony Church community, the socio-cultural environment of the Sony Adventist church community, as well as the religious perspective of the Sony community. This section will also survey the progress of the Seventh-day Adventist church in the Ranen Conference.

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Geographic Description of the Sony Adventist Church

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Sony Church is located in the Western Kenya region, in the Migori County. It is situated along the Kisii-Migori road just about a kilometer off the main road. The church

building is visible from the main road and is within the premises of the South Nyanza

Sugar Company, one of the leading sugar factories in Western Kenya. The church is

located in the sugar belt region, and thus enjoys abundant rainfall throughout the year.

Being in the equatorial, the temperatures do not vary much all through the year and

sunshine is guaranteed on a daily basis. Weather patterns are easily predictable, with two

main periods of heavy rainfall (April-June and September-November) that at times flood

the region and make communication cumbersome. The map in Figure 1 indicates all the

47 counties of Kenya, including Migori County where Sony Church is located.
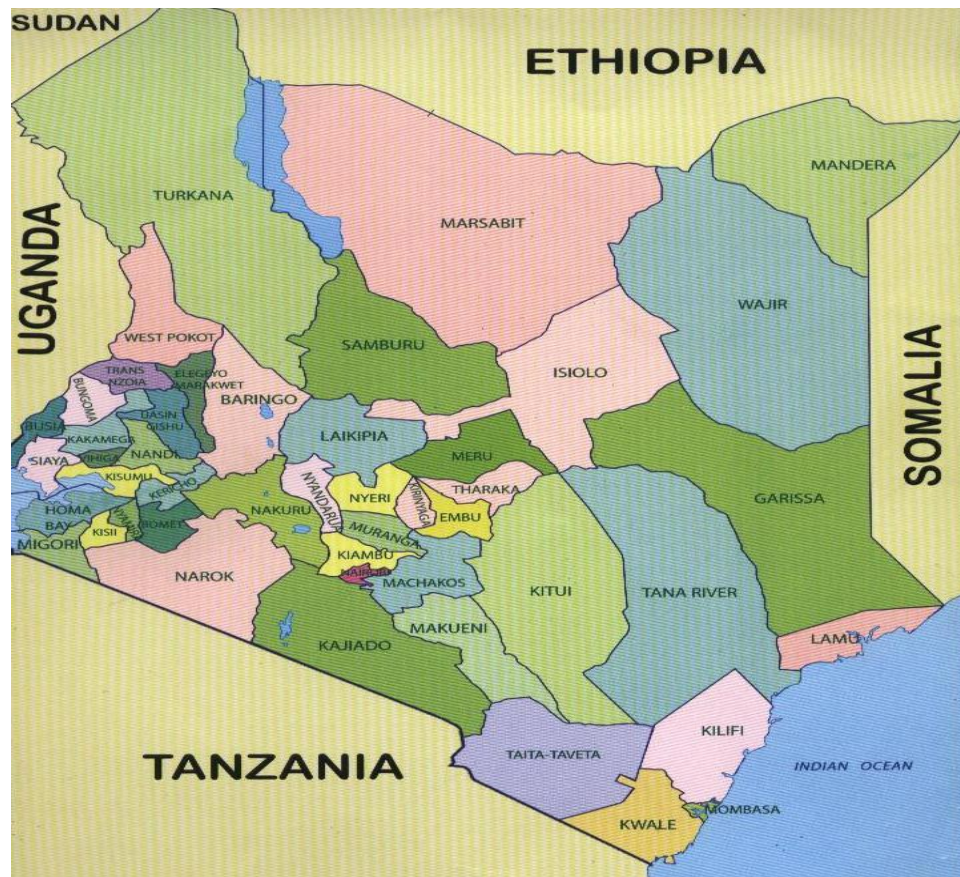
Figure 1. Political map of Kenya containing all the 47 counties. Taken
July 22, 2013, from http://www.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://www
.guide2kenya.com/uploads/content/Kenya-County-Map.jpg&imgrefur1
=http/

History of the Sony Adventist Church

This section will trace the origin of the Sony Church up to the present time. With the coming of South Nyanza Sugar Company, and its factory being established in the Awendo area in 1976, Adventist church members came from all over Kenya to work in the sugar factory. This group of Adventist Christians found it tiresome to commute to the nearest Seventh-day Adventist which was located some three kilometers away in Awendo town. This need necessitated the starting of a branch Sabbath school on the company premises in 1978.

Demographics of the Sony Adventist Church Community

The church is comprised mainly of the Luo tribe, with some pockets of the Abagusii Community, Luhya Community, Kikuyu community, and Maasai Community that are working at the sugar factory. There are some few members who are not working in the sugar factory, but who come from the surrounding Luo community.

The map of Migori County, as found in Figure 2, highlights most details of the county including Awendo-Sare region, where the church is physically located, as well as the neighboring counties of Homabay to the north and Kisii to the west The county also borders the Republic of Tanzania on its south-eastern boarder and the Republic of Uganda on its south-western border.

This rich mix at the borders brings in people of different tribe groups within the county of Migori from Tanzania and Uganda as well as the surrounding county of Kisii that bring in the Abagusii community and the Indian people living in the same county but do business with all the neighboring counties.

Figure 2. Map of Migori County. Taken July 21, 2013,
from http://www.flickr.com/photos/albertkenyaniinima/
6046066056/lightbox/

Political Context of the Sony Adventist Church Community

The main political party in the Migori County is the Orange Democratic Party

(ODM). This is the dominant political party in the whole of Nyanza province of Kenya.

Other political parties are in the minority, with diminutive political influence in the

region. One such party is the Party of National Unity (PNU). These political differences

occasionally filter into the church, and bring tensions especially during elections in the

country. The sugar company also houses workers according to their grades (A, B, C, D,

E, F, Super F, and Labor Camp), yet when we meet in the church, we are now expected

to be equal as the Bible requires. This is also a source of some tensions in the Sony

Church.

Socio-Cultural Context of the Sony Adventist
Church Community

In this section I will discuss the socio-cultural context of the Sony Adventist

community as they affect worship services in the Sony Adventist Church. The following

socio-cultural concepts will be discussed briefly: Concept of culture, languages used,

social structures, gender and sexuality, kinship and marriage, production and exchange,

authority and power, globalization effects, urbanization trends, and cultural traditions that

influence worship in the Sony Adventist Church community.

Concept of Culture of the Sony
Adventist Church Community

Culture and religion institute an inseparable dyad in every human system. They

provide the footing as well as the bearing needed to identify, maintain, sustain, and

project every society's uniqueness (Takyi, 2010, p. 59). There are many anthropological

definitions of culture. Here I will use the definition provided by Paul G. Hiebert in the

book, *The Gospel in Human Contexts: Anthropological Explorations for Contemporary*

Missions, where culture is defined 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 of their systems of symbols and rituals, patterns of behavior, and the
> material products they make. (2009, p. 150)

In biological terms culture and religion are like the *genetic materials* that shape

society or the nerve centers that sense, direct, and influence, consciously or

unconsciously, the actions and reactions of the corporate body and hence the individuals

within their boundaries. Charles H. Kraft, defines culture as "the total life of people, the

social legacy the individual acquires from his group" (2006, p. 39).

Reggie McNeal adds a new twist when he observes that humans are not born in a vacuum. They enter the world into a rivulet of the human family and human experience. Language, race, geography, demography, and economic standing all influence and shape the world we live in and define our connectedness to it and our distinctiveness from it. We depend on culture to give us a commencement point in understanding ourselves.

Culture also delivers to us the necessary ingredients for life development, which embraces language, history, intellectual and philosophical predispositions, worldviews, as well as prejudices, varying levels of xenophobia, and difficulties in communicating with other cultures (2000, p. 73). McNeal reckons that "we breathe the culture through our minds and psyches, as we breathe the air through our lungs" (p. 73). Consequently, culture affects how one community relates to worship, which this project aims to enhance in the Sony church.

Languages in the Sony Adventist Church Community

Language is a fundamental element of human life (Howell & Paris, 2011, p. 45). Language is defined as "a system of verbal and nonverbal symbols used to communicate" (p. 46). Language involves the components of *historical* and *descriptive linguistics. Historical linguistics* is the study of how languages develop and changes over time and how different languages are related to one another while *descriptive linguistics* are the study of specific features of individual languages, such as patterns of grammar and sounds (p. 46).

In the Sony church community the major languages used for communication are *Luo, Kiswahili,* and *English*. The *Luo* language is the common language used by the Luo

tribe that is found in the Sony region. It is used in the markets, homes, and also in the local churches. *Kiswahili* is mostly used when conducting business, since it is the national language. Finally, *English* is used mostly in schools and at the factory since it is the language of the elite. It is also the official language of the Republic of Kenya.

In the Sony church, English and Kiswahili are mostly used since there are several tribes that have come to work in the Sony Sugar Factory. During the study of the lesson in classes, members are free to use any language they choose use in their classes.

Throughout Scripture, language and images of language are central to how God reveals truth and moves in the world. Jesus is called the "Word" (*logos*). "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made, without him nothing was made that has been made" (John 1:1-3). At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit appeared as "tongues of fire," enabling the apostles to speak in the multiple languages of the people assembled in Jerusalem (Acts 2:1-12). Therefore, language is central in enhancing the vibrancy of the worship services in the Sony church.

**Social Structures in the Sony Adventist
Church Community**

Social structure, which can also be referred to as *social organization* or *social order,* denotes the way people synchronize their lives in relation to one another at the level of society (Howell & Paris, 2011, p. 66). Like culture, social structure is often challenging to comprehend and fathom. Hiebert agrees by asserting that "human social systems are complex" (2009, p. 138).

Race, class, gender, religion, language, dialect, and citizenship are just a few

elements of social structure that influence an individual's chances. Anthropology acknowledges the importance of individual motivation, effort, and limitations in how easily a person can accomplish set goals (Hiebert, 2009, p. 66). McNeal verifies this thought when he points out that "every leader experiences failure at some level. Great leaders, however, refuse to accept failure as a destination. They recast failure into an opportunity for self-development" (2006, p. 62).

Anthropologists at the same time, bring out the understanding of social structure by highlighting ways through which individuals find themselves—through birth, their own choices, or the choices of others—with immense advantages and disadvantages in life. In this way, social inequality does not just refer to how much someone has, that makes one to be considered rich or poor, but it refers to deferential access to valuable resources (Howell & Paris, 2011, pp. 66-67).

As noted earlier, in the Sony community, there are different social structures. We have those who work in the factory and earn a monthly salary and enjoy the prestige that comes with a regular income. There are also large and small scale farmers, who occasionally receive huge payments from the company when their cane is harvested. It is sad, but true, that some of these huge payments are wasted in lavish spending and do not enrich some farmers in the long run. Then, there are also traders in sugar and other commodities who have money on a daily basis, which makes them enjoy a higher status in the community. Lastly, we have casual laborers and house maids who are paid less and live on less than one dollar a day.

Sony Adventist Church, being situated within the company premises, has all the above classes of people that meet in the church as worshipers. This obviously brings

some tension as some people would want their status to be recognized in the church settings. The church has struggled to put in place a worship service that meets the taste of all the various groups that attend worship services in the Sony church. In the Sony church we seek to embrace Paul's admonition to the Galatians that "there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all in Chris Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Gal 3:28-29), hence, all people are treated equally regardless of their gender or sexuality.

Gender and Sexuality in the Sony
Adventist Church Community

Anthropologists view sex and gender as distinct concepts. To them *sex* refers to biological maleness or femaleness, known as sexual dimorphism, usually given at birth. *Gender* on the other hand, describes what it means to be male or female in a particular culture (Howell & Paris, 2011, p. 88).

In daily conversation, sex and gender are often used interchangeably to refer to various aspects of maleness and femaleness. This usage is now being challenged on a number of levels. In various cultural contexts, men and women are challenging the gender roles and expectations associated with their biological sex (Howell & Paris, 2011, p. 87). Some work to change gender-related social inequalities.

Sexuality and gender are some of the most challenging issues facing Christians today. Local churches and entire denominations are fraught with conflicts over the proper roles of women, the morality of homosexuality, same-sex marriages, and ordination of gay ministers and women. Many of these issues are at the forefront of the anthropological

researches as well as the effects of globalization. The Adventist Church has not been left out on these thorny and emotive issues.

In the Sony Church, all people are treated equally regardless of sex or gender, in all areas of church leadership and programs. Women, men, youth, children, and people with disabilities are all involved in finding meaningful ways of making the worship experience in the Sony Church captivating and uplifting as we live in a globalized world, with its urbanization trends.

Globalization Concepts in the Sony
Adventist Church Community

Globalization is defined as the integration of local, regional, and/or national production, exchange, and culture into a global system. According to Howell & Paris, anthropologists makes economic life part of their analysis, but they are also interested in the ways these processes intersect with cultural meanings and forms in specific places (2011, p. 205).

Contemporary globalization is distinct, however, in its scope, rapid rate of development, and subsequent cultural consequences. Unlike ancient trade that served the privileged, today people in every stratum of society regularly use products, hear information, and consume foods from far places. Nearly everyone is influenced by the decisions, preferences, or thoughts of people living on other continents. Globalization today shapes how people around the world live, think, and act. In other words globalization changes cultures.

Studies conducted by Paul Hiebert shows that despite globalization and its effects, local and regional identities play crucial roles in the lives of most people. In response to

this, the term *glocal* has been introduced to refer to the fact that people live locally, but participate to varying degrees in the emerging global network of goods, services and information among others (Hiebert, 2009, pp. 118-119).

In the Sony Church we all experience the corroding effects of globalization. However we are attempting as a church to make use of the positive effects of globalization by developing an ecclesiology and missiology that enables us to bear bold witness in a glocal world with its global powers, regional loyalties, and local identities. We offer contemporary yet biblical worship services that are able to make members connect positively with God and one another in a holistic manner.

<div align="center">Religious Context of the Sony Community</div>

Malcolm Potts indicates that the roots of Adventist worship lie deeply embedded within history and theology. He reminds us that "the practice of worship cannot be considered in isolation from the long line of events, practices, and concepts that have helped to shape its present form" (n.d., p. 13). In this section, I will briefly examine the religious affiliation in Kenya, with special attention to the Migori County.

Christianity in Kenya

The vast majority of Kenyans are Christians, and the Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches are the most established Christian denominations. Other well established African religions and denominations include the African Inland Church (AIC), Seventh-day Adventists (SDA), and the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA). In addition, there are a number of Evangelical Churches and Independent

African Christian Churches. In the Western region, especially in the Migori County, the Seventh-day Adventists are the majority.

Islam in Kenya

Islam is another major religion in Kenya. Followers include both Sunni and Shi'ite Muslims. The largest numbers of Muslims in Kenya are found in Mombasa and the neighboring coastal regions, as well as the northeastern regions of Kenya. Nairobi also has numerous mosques and a notable Muslim following. In Migori County and Awendo community Islam is slowly making inroads into the area. Muslims have built several mosques within the county.

African Traditional Religions (ATR)

Many of the African Traditional Religions (ATR) are no longer widely practiced. Some of the denominations considered as indigenous religions combine aspects of Christianity with traditional religious beliefs, thus plasticizing dual/split religion. Though modernity has dwarfed its membership and modified it, ATR is still practiced in different circles in the country and surfaces in dramatic ways including cognizance of the Creator God (the Supreme Being), His spirit intermediaries, and human priests. Many Christians still occasionally consult God through these intermediaries, especially during tragedy or calamity. One such denomination is *Dini ya Msambwa*, found mostly in Kenya's Western province, as well as in the Migori County.

Other Religious Affiliation

The few Kenyans who adhere to Hinduism and Sikhism are mostly Indians. They reside in most major towns and cities across Kenya. In the Migori County, they are only

found in Migori and Awendo town, with pockets of adherents who are largely of Indian descent. Table 1 provides general percentages of the religious affiliation in Kenya.

Table 1

Religious Affiliation in Kenya

	Religious Affiliation	National Percentages
1.	Protestants	45%
2.	Catholics	33%
3.	Islam	10%
4.	ATR	10%
5.	Others	2%

Note. Taken July 23, 2013, from Kenya Information Guide, http://www .kenya-information-guide.com/kenya-religion.html

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Ranen Conference

History of the Adventist Church in the Ranen Conference

The first Seventh-day Adventist missionary to Kenya was Elder Cascarlen, who founded the first mission station in 1906 at Gendia Mission Station (now Kenya Lake Conference). Thereafter, the work was extended to Kanyadoto Mission Station in the Kenya Lake Field in 1911. Ranen was organized in 1918 into a Mission Field; it was reorganized in 1961 as Ranen Field, before being organized as a conference in 2010.

Ranen Conference church membership and organized churches have continued to grow steadily from a membership of 86,560 members and 582 churches in the year 2007, to a membership of 117,364 with 680 organized churches, as indicated in Table 2.

Table 2

Ranen Conference, Church Membership and Organized Churches

	Number of Churches	Church Membership
2013	680	117,364
2012	669	110,534
2011	662	103,850
2010	631	97,811
2009	622	92,024
2008	607	88,135
2007	582	86,580

Note. Taken July 23, 2013, from General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventists (2013). *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook*. http://www=RANF& Year=2007&Search= membership& #Search

**Growth Patterns and Finances
of the Sony Church**

As already indicated above, the Sony church was birthed to create a place for worship and fellowship nearby, for the Adventist workers at the Sony Sugar Company. This need was supplied when a Sabbath School was organized within the company premises in 1982, under the leadership of Pastor Erick Aketch. In 1998, the Sony Sabbath School was organized into a church, under the watch of the late Pastor Henry Obat. Sony became a one-church district in 2003, with Pastor Philip Gai as its first pastor, under the leadership of Pastor Duncan Mumbo, who was at that time the president of the then Ranen Field.

The following pastors have served Sony Church as District Leaders: Kenneth Maena (2004), Bernard Oguta (2005-2006), Dan Nyalele (2007), Bernard Okoko (2008-

2009), Matthews Kwasi (2010-2011), and Duncan Mumbo (2012-2013). Table 3

summarizes church membership and finances of Sony church for the past six years.

Table 3

Church Membership and Finances of Sony Church

Year	Membership	Tithes	Camp	Conference Advance	Church Budget	Totals
2013	1001	3,953,543.40	762,359.50	390,741.75	1,971,653.75	7,078,298.40
2012	806	3,752,681.20	613,996.30	417,824.25	1,502,678.75	6,287,180.50
2011	654	1,936,130.60	356,970.50	336,929.90	494,110.15	3,124,141.15
2010	633	1,454,346.95	205,953.80	287,257.05	371,355.85	2,318,913.65
2009	658	1,438,431.80	195,656.50	304,738.80	335,599.00	2,274,425.60
2008	591	1,384,171.65	165,965.00	299,999.70	329,420.55	2,180,057.00
Totals		11,880,584.10	1,728,226.60	1,860,407.45	3,576,340.65	19,045,558.80

Felt Needs of Sony Church

Worship is pivotal to Sony Church life. It is one thing that keeps members coming

to church every Sabbath, and keep them involved in all church activities. The members

need a meaningful worship experience that will glue them to the church and increase their

participation and attendance in all church services. This is the overarching goal of this

project. This section concludes with a summary of the chapter that will bring out

significant issues raised therein.

<div align="center">

Summary

</div>

On the whole, the above section established the fact that if worship has to be

made meaningful to the worshippers at Sony Church and their attendance to church

services be enhanced, it needs to take into account the cultural, social, and religious factors that may heighten or hamper the church's ministry and mission. It has also revealed that there is direct correlation between worship attendance and the way worship services are conducted.

The analysis of the cultural, social, and religious contexts in the Migori County has thus revealed potential challenges and opportunities for making worship more meaningful to the populace of the Sony community. This calls for the development and implementation of the best strategies that will help to make worship more meaningful and boost members' attendance to church services and involvement in church related activities. This will be the focus of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4

STRATEGY TO CREATE A MORE MEANINGFUL
WORSHIP EXPERIENCE IN THE SONY
SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST
CHURCH

Introduction

The previous chapter dealt with the socio-political, cultural, and religious

contexts of the Sony Seventh-day Adventist Church. That endeavor provided not just a

vivid picture of the environment for the project, but also offered the needed

understanding for the development of a suitable strategy that will help worship to be

more meaningful in the Sony Church. I believe worship can be made to be more

meaningful to worshipers (Mumbo, 1994).

This chapter is concerned with developing a strategy for creating a more

meaningful worship experience in the Sony Seventh-day Adventist Church, in the Ranen

Conference. This project will use the Logical Framework Matrix (LFM) or logframe and

the Gantt chart to present its stratagem and activities schedule (Sanou, 2010, p. 77).

General Methodology: Logical Framework Analysis and Gantt Chart

Logical Framework Analysis

Among the many tools designed for planning and managing development projects

the Logical Framework approach or analysis has been proven to be outstanding because

of its logical basis, robust and coherent structure, flexible nature, and comprehensive outlook (Takyi, 2010, p. 100; for detailed information on the logframe see European Commission, 2001; Hubbard, 2001; McLean, 1988; Grove & Zwi, 2008). Using the tabular framework known as the logframe, it analytically presents data about the key modules of a project—goal (overall objective), purpose (outcomes), performance indicators, outputs, activities, inputs, as well as assumptions—"in a clear, concise, logical, and systematic way" (NORAD's Working Group, 1990, p. 7). It does it in such a way that while taking care of substantial risks and issues that impact the project, it does not miss out on important activities necessary for the success of the project (Takyi, 2010, p. 101). It also takes note of what activities will be carried out to achieve its outputs and purpose, the requisite resources (World Health Organization, 2010, p. 22), the potential coercions which could affect the success of the project, and how the process and ultimate accomplishment of the project will be measured and verified (Podolskiy, 2011).

Gantt Chart

The Gantt chart is a graphical demonstration of the duration of activities against the progression of time (Sanou, 2010, p. 77). It is a valuable tool for planning and scheduling projects and monitoring their progress (Gantt Chart, n.d., p. 1; see also Clark, 1952; Matthies, 1974; Deakin University, 1999; & Federal Emergency Management Agency, 1982). Both the logframe and Gantt chart will be useful to my study. It is important to note that both can be misused as pointed out by Hubbard in "Shooting the Messenger: Logframe Abuse and Need for Better Planning" (2001). The following are some of the ways that the researcher will apply these tools in the project.

Description of Mission Strategy

The Seventh-day Adventist Church utilizes worship to disciple and ground church members into Adventism. Yet some members of the Sony Seventh-day Adventist Church feel that Adventist worship styles are sometimes too traditional and hence do not meet some of their spiritual needs. Some even attend Pentecostal services on Sundays so that their unmet worship needs can be fulfilled.

This project therefore seeks to create ways and means by which worship services in the Sony Church will be made more meaningful to the members and consequently enhance their participation and attendance of church services.

Application of Logframe

The Overall Goal

This project has as its over-arching goal to create worship services that will be meaningful to all the church members of the Sony church, yet at the same time call all to "worship him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water" (Rev 14:7). The goal is to make worship both Theocentric as well as Christocentric (Holmes, 1984, p. 2).

Purpose

The purpose of this project is to formulate and effect a strategy that will create a more meaningful worship experience in the Sony Church, which will then be replicated in Seventh-day Adventist churches in the Ranen Conference, as well as in any other church as the need may arise.

This purpose will be achieved when church members are trained and motivated to

become involved in worship activities. Such training will equip church elders and worship leaders in conducting a meaningful worship service that is participatory and meaningful to all the church members (Goldstein, 2011, p. 21).

The result of such a worship service will discourage members from skipping worship services as they experience a more meaningful worship service in the Sony Church. The tabular representations of the logical flow of the components of the project are shown in Figure 3.

Objectives	Measurable Indicators	Means of Verification	Important Assumption
GOAL: Meaningful worship experience with most members attending worship services regularly in the Sony Adventist Church	Attendance during worship services increased by at least 10% in the Sony Adventist Church by March, 2014	Church attendance record	Ranen Conference administration supports the project
PURPOSE: A strategy to create a meaningful worship experience developed and effected in the Sony Adventist Church	Attendance of church members increased by 20% in the Sony Adventist Church by March, 2014	Church attendance record	Members of the Sony Church will cooperate with me
OUTPUTS: 1. Survey conducted to ascertain church members' worship needs 2. Program to enrich worship services developed and piloted 3. Seminars to train elders and worship leaders developed and conducted 4. Monitoring and evaluation of project activities	• Focus group interviewed by March, 2012 • Program to enhance worship service developed and piloted by Dec. 2012 • Elders and worship leaders trained in conducting meaningful worship program by Dec, 2013 • Elder and worship leaders taken through the program on how to make worship meaningful by Dec. 2013 • Attendance of church worship service increased by 20% in the Sony Adventist Church by March 2014	• Findings of the Focus group • Developed program on conducting meaningful worship Service • List of trained elders and worship leaders of the Sony Adventist Church • List of the 10 trained elders and worship leaders • Church attendance record	• Focus group members will cooperate with me • Finances will be available for program development • Church elders and worship leaders willing to be trained • Church elders and worship leaders willing to be involved in the pilot program .

ACTIVITIES:			
1. Develop & administer survey tool 1.1. Conduct survey on obstacles to meaningful worship 1.2. Conduct survey on why members skip worship services 1.3. Do survey on elements of worship that needs special attention **2. Develop & pilot worship program** 2.1 Develop program on worship enrichment 2.2 Select pilot preaching team 2.3 Train pilot preaching team 2.4 Conduct pilot preaching **3. Seminars to effect worship program** 3.1 Conduct seminars for the church elders on a meaningful worship service 3.1.1 Worship in OT 3.1.2 Worship in NT 3.1.3 E. G. White on worship 3.1.4 Worship that is balanced 3.2 Train worship leaders to effect meaningful worship program 3.2.1 Worship content 3.2.2 Worship format 3.2.3 Participatory worship style 3.3 Effect meaningful worship program 3.4 Replicate worship program in other churches **4. Monitor and evaluate the project** 4.1 Do mid-term evaluation of the project 4.2 Do final evaluation	• Results of the focus group survey • Data collected and analyzed • Budget • Elders/Worship leaders	• A pool of trained elders and worship leaders in the Sony Adventist Church	• Conference administration will not interfere with the project implementation program • Church elders & worship leaders willing to be involved in project activities

Figure 3. Application of the logframe. A strategy of creating meaningful worship in the Sony Church.

Outputs

This project hinges on four main undertakings for its accomplishment as listed in the Logical Framework Matrix: (a) surveying of church members' worship needs, (b) developing and piloting a program to enrich worship services, (c) conducting of seminars to train elders and worship leaders, and (d) monitoring and evaluation of project activities.

Through the planned activities this project strives to achieve four major results: survey of church members' worship needs conducted, program to enrich worship services developed and piloted, seminars to train elders and worship leaders developed and conducted, and project activities monitored and evaluated.

Measurable Indicators

The measurable indicators for the outputs will be focus group interviewed by March 2012, program to enhance worship service developed and piloted by December 2012, church elders and worship leaders trained in conducting meaningful worship program by June 2013, participation in church activities increased by 20% by March 2014, and attendance of church worship services increased by 20% by March 2014.

The overall goal of this project will be achieved when the worship services of the Sony Church are enriched and members attend services regularly and participate fully in church activities.

Means of Verification

The means of verification for the outputs will be the program to enrich worship services developed and conducted in the Sony Church. Verification can be accomplished

by consulting the program material file, list of trained elders and worship leaders, or by conducting interviews among the members. The project tenacity will be achieved when planned training on how to make worship more meaningful is completed and church members regularly attend church services. This project goal will be realized when the church attendance records and statistics show that there is a considerable increase in attendance at the worship services of the Sony Church.

Important Assumptions

Several assumptions need to be taken into consideration for this type of project to be successful. The support of the key stakeholders is important for the effective implementation of this project. Church members must be willing to cooperate with me by actively taking part in the surveys and in the formation of the focus group. It is assumed that the Ranen Conference will provide finances for the program development. It is also assumed that church elders and worship leaders will be willing to be trained and participate actively in the seminars that will be conducted. The project purpose will be reached when the Sony Adventist church members are willing to participate in an enriched worship program. The project overall goal will be attained if the Ranen Conference administration is supportive of the project.

A well-planned strategy serves several purposes. It provides a planner with direction towards the future and it enables participants to concentrate all their resources that are indispensable for the completion of the task. It facilitates the building of a new vision, and helps in determining what will be done.

Activities	YEAR 1											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Output 1: Administer survey												
Activity1: Prepare and conduct survey	█	█	█	█	█							
1.1 Prepare survey material	▓	▓										
1.2 Administer survey tool			▓	▓	▓							
Output 2: Program on worship developed												
Activity 1: Develop worship program								█	█	█		
2.1 Do research on worship								▓	▓			
2.2 Develop worship program									▓	▓		
Activity 2: Pilot the worship program										█	█	█
2.3 Select pilot worship team										▓		
2.4 Train pilot worship team											▓	
2.5 Conduct pilot worship program												▓
Output 3: Seminars to effect worship program												
Activity 1: Conduct Seminars												
3.1 Prepare seminar materials												
3.2 Conduct seminar to elders												
3.3 Conduct seminar to worship leaders												
Activity 2: Effect the worship program												
3.4 Train the worship leaders												
3.5 Effect the worship program												
Activity 3: Replicate the worship program												
3.6 Organize the elders												
3.7 Assign elders to churches												
3.8 Replicate program to other churches												
Output 4: Monitoring and evaluation												
Activity 1: Monitoring												
4.1 Quarterly review of the project												
4.2 Annual review of the project												
Activity 2: Evaluations												
4.3 Midterm evaluations												
4.4 Final evaluations of the project												

Figure 4. Gantt chart for year one.

Activities and Resource Schedules (Gantt Chart)

The information concerning the implementation of the project is summarized in the Activities Resource Schedules or Gantt chart in Figure 4 (above) and Figure 5 (below).

Activities	Year 2				Year 3				Person Responsible			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	A	B	C	D
Output 1: Administer survey									▓			
Activity1: Prepare and conduct survey									▓			
1.1 Prepare survey material									▓			
1.2 Administer survey tool									▓			
Output 2: Program on worship developed									▓			
Activity 1: Develop worship program									▓			
2.1 Do research on worship									▓			
2.2 Develop worship program									▓			
Activity 2: Pilot the worship program									▓			
2.3 Select pilot worship team									▓			
2.4 Train pilot worship team									▓			
2.5 Conduct pilot worship program									▓	▓	▓	
Output 3: Seminars to effect worship program												
Activity 1: Conduct Seminars		■	■	■					▓			
3.1 Prepare seminar materials		▓							▓			
3.2 Conduct seminar to elders			▓						▓			
3.3 Conduct seminar to worship leaders				▓					▓			
Activity 2: Effect the worship program			■	■					▓	▓	▓	
3.4 Train the worship leaders			▓						▓			
3.5 Effect the worship program				▓					▓	▓	▓	
Activity 3: Replicate the worship program				■	■	■			▓	▓	▓	
3.6 Organize the elders				▓					▓			
3.7 Assign elders to churches				▓					▓			
3.8 Replicate program to other churches					▓	▓	▓		▓	▓	▓	
Output 4: Monitoring and evaluation												
Activity 1: Monitoring					■	■	■		▓			
4.1 Quarterly review of the project					▓	▓	▓		▓			
4.2 Annual review of the project								▓	▓			
Activity 2: Evaluations									▓			
4.3 Midterm evaluations						▓			▓	▓	▓	
4.4 Final evaluations of the project								▓	▓			▓
Key: A = Researcher: B = Church Elders; C = Worship Leaders; D = Evaluator												

Figure 5. Gantt chart for year two and three.

Final Evaluation of Project

Importance

It is important to evaluate throughout the project implementation period. Critical questions to be addressed in the evaluation of this project, but not limited to the following include: Are the goals of this project achieved? Did the activities lead to the achievement of the goals? What are some of the factors that helped or hindered the accomplishment of the goals?

Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation criteria in this project involves the relevance in motivating church members in the Sony Church to experience a meaningful worship experience, the logic of program development, the effectiveness of the program, the impact of the enriched worship program, and the sustainability of the project for continued meaningful worship services to encourage most members to attend worship services regularly in the Sony Adventist Church.

Scope of Work

The logframe clearly outlines the scope of this project. This project's scope starts with the conducting of a survey to ascertain the church member's worship needs. Other steps include developing and effecting a program to enrich worship services, developing training materials and using the same to train church elders and worship leaders on how to make worship more meaningful, training and equipping a focus group at the Sony Adventist Church, establishing an enriched meaningful worship experience, and finally monitoring and evaluating the project activities.

The implementation of this project will motivate members for increased church attendance and active involvement in church activities. The measurable indicators for the effective implementation of the scope of this project are for all elders, worship leaders, and focus group members in the Sony Adventist Church to be equipped with ways of making worship more meaningful to the membership of the Sony Adventist Church, and weekly church attendance to increase by 20 percent.

Stakeholders

Stakeholders in this project include, but are not limited to church elders, worship leaders, collaborating agencies, and others with an interest in the program effectiveness. There are five major groups of stakeholders for this project. The Ranen Conference of the Seventh-day Adventists Church with its concern for the churches' spiritual, numerical, and financial growth as it strives to maintain the conference status; the Sony church officers, especially the church elders, who normally assume administrative and pastoral responsibilities while the project director is away for studies, the worship leaders who implement the enriched worship programs in the church, the church members-at-large for their concern about the general well-being of the church, and all the pastors including the project director who will benefit from a new way of doing worship that attracts church members and enhances church attendance.

Evaluation Team and External Evaluator

The evaluation team plays a crucial role in implementing, monitoring, and evaluation of the project. It helps keep the project on track and ensures that it is

fulfilling its purpose. For the sake of credibility and a successful implementation of the strategy, the task of evaluating this project will not reside with the researcher only. The evaluation team will be comprised of the researcher, the head elder, the worship leader, the focus group members, and the personal ministries leader.

The first evaluation of this project will be a mid-term evaluation which will allow the project management to review progress and propose desired alterations to the project design during the remaining period of implementation. A final evaluation will be carried out upon the completion of the project to provide the project management with information on the results of the project.

It is imperative that the project be evaluated on its own merits by an external, impartial evaluator. The Ranen Conference Executive Secretary and my fellow researcher Pastor Tom Eli Ogal will be invited to assess and evaluate the project.

Monitoring and Reporting Progress

Monitoring and evaluating the project will help ensure that it is carried out in a timely manner and progress is maintained. All the project activities will be monitored and evaluated in order to determine their success and for improving future planning and decision making.

Ample monitoring of this project's activities is of primary importance to ensure that its overall goal is met and more specifically that the project actually achieves its main objectives as detailed in the Logical Framework Matrix. This will consist of quarterly data gathering and annual report summaries through reports on activities and achievements. The project management will do this monitoring to measure the overall performance of the project activities to see what is being done and how well activities

are being carried out to realize the project's goal.

Linkage to the Logical
Framework Matrix

The project evaluation follows the hierarchical objective structure of the project

design. By adopting this systematic approach all aspects of the project's achievements

are evaluated. The Logical Framework therefore serves as a measuring stick for the

whole evaluation process. The planned activities in the Logical Framework can

indicate whether or not there will be any delays or significant progress and what effect

this will have on the outputs. The analysis of the results in the Logical Framework

demonstrates how the activities were transformed into the desired outputs. The output

of the project will be evaluated to determine whether they have been carried out

according to plan.

The evaluation team should assess whether or not the Sony Adventist church

members' worship experience has been enriched and attendance of worship services

has increased as a result of the different seminars set out to enhance their worship

experience in keeping with the overall goal of the project.

From the indicators as listed in the Logical Framework Matrix, Ranen

Conference administrators, the church elders, the focus group, and the worship leaders

all contribute to the success of the strategy.

Summary

Finding methods of making worship more meaningful in the Sony Adventist

Church is the overarching purpose of this project. Though delicate, four interconnected

outputs were identified as the key components for the achievement of the purpose. The

first has to do with conducting a survey on obstacles to meaningful worship, why members skip worship services, and elements of worship that need special attention. This is followed by developing an enriched worship program that will be used in the Sony Adventist Church. Next, seminars to effect a more meaningful worship program will be conducted for the church elders, focus group, and worship leaders, gleaning elements of worship as found in the OT and NT. Ellen G. White writings will also be scrutinized to find areas that will not only make worship more meaningful, but to also keep the spiritual tone of worship in harmony with the Spirit of Prophecy counsel. Worship styles, worship format, and participatory worship will all be investigated to come up with a more meaningful worship service in the Sony Adventist Church. Lastly, monitoring and evaluation of the project will be done by both internal and external evaluators to ascertain the achievement of the overall goal of the project.

To make the running of the project easy the entire plan has been summarized in the Logical Framework Matrix. It is further broken down by means of a Gantt chart into a discrete but detailed task-time-personnel schedule which coordinates resources and activities needed to reach the objective of making worship more meaningful for the church members.

The strategy is carefully intertwined into the academic calendar of the school year to safeguard effectiveness and relevance. Dependence on God together with personal expertise and research will inform and direct the planning and implementation of the project.

The purpose of all the project-related activities is to create a meaningful worship experience with most members attending worship services regularly in the

Sony Adventist Church. In the next chapter the study will report on what the implementation of this project has so far accomplished. The researcher will also describe the important lessons learned from the project and, finally, make some recommendations regarding future strategic planning.

CHAPTER 5

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION, SUMMARY,

AND CONCLUSION

Introduction

Chapter 4 described a strategy for creating a more meaningful worship experience in the Sony Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Ranen Conference. The researcher used the Logical Framework Matrix or logframe and the Gantt chart to present his stratagem and activities schedule (see Figures 3, 4, & 5).

Four interrelated outputs were identified as the key components for the achievement of the purpose. The first had to do with conducting a survey on obstacles to meaningful worship, why members skip worship services, and elements of worship that need special attention. This was followed by developing an enriched worship program that was piloted and effected in the Sony Adventist Church.

Next, seminars to effect a more meaningful worship program were conducted for the church elders, focus group, and worship leaders, gleaning elements of worship as found in the OT and NT. Ellen G. White writings were also scrutinized to help find areas that were not only able to make worship more meaningful, but to also help maintain the spiritual tone of worship in harmony with Spirit of Prophecy guidelines. Worship styles, worship format, and participatory worship panache were investigated to come up with a more meaningful worship service for the church.

Lastly, monitoring and evaluation of the project was done by both internal and external evaluators to ascertain the achievement of the overall goal of the project of creating a worship service that is meaningful to the members of Sony Adventist Church. Creating a meaningful worship experience did in turn discourage members from skipping worship services.

This chapter is concerned with the outcome of the project. The project implementation report follows which will highlight what has been accomplished by the research. It will also note any part of the strategy that might not have been done as anticipated.

The report will also include lessons learned both by the researcher and the members of the Sony Adventist Church. It will also take to account any adjustments made during the implementation process. The study will detail how to replicate the project of creating a more meaningful experience within the Ranen Conference and beyond.

The project outcome will end with conclusions and recommendations to me as the planner, to someone who would implement a similar project in future, and to my stakeholders.

<div align="center">Project Implementation</div>

The researcher endeavored to create a biblical understanding of worship which involved exegetical as well as hermeneutical analysis of the word worship. The study formed a major part of the researcher's theological consideration discussed in Chapter 2. I will briefly present what has been accomplished and what has not been achieved during the project implementation.

What Has Been Accomplished

In Chapter 2 I presented the biblical and theological basis for making the worship experience more meaningful in the Sony Adventist Church. These include the participatory approach to worship where members are actively involved in the worship service through small groups, music, and where members are free to respond to the worship service by appropriate dancing and clapping of hands. I also surveyed and recommended a Theocentric and Christocentric worship patterned after the heavenly worship format as found in Rev 4 and 5.

Finally, I presented a balanced worship approach that is biblically sound, culturally appropriate, and that involves the whole person. Among those who called for a more dynamic yet balanced worship experience are Ellen G. White, Norval F. Pease, Raymond Holmes, Eoin Giller, and Jon Dybdahl whose views were noted as well as their immense contribution in the area of making worship more meaningful and yet balanced in its approach.

A focus group comprising some of the leadership and membership of the Sony Adventist Church were selected and interviewed to ascertain the church members' worship needs by March 2012 (see Appendix A). Programs to enrich worship services were developed and piloted by December 2012 (see the researcher's files). Elders and the worship leader of the Sony Adventist Church were trained on how to conduct a meaningful worship program by March 2013.

The researcher, elders, worship leader, and the personal ministries leader were all involved in the program implementation and conducted quarterly monitoring and evaluation of the project. The final evaluation of the project was done by December 2013

instead of March 2014 as earlier anticipated due to the transfer of the researcher to a new work station (Sare District within Ranen Conference).

The overarching goal of the project was met and as the indicators show in Tables 4, 5, and 6, the goals were surpassed and many other areas in the Sony Adventist Church improved as well.

Table 4

Church Membership and Finances of the Sony Church Analysis

Year	Membership	Tithes	Camp	Conference Advance	Church Budget	Totals
%Increase (2012/2013)	**24.2**	**5.4**	**24.2**	**-6.5**	**31.2**	**12.6**
2013	1001	3,953,543.4	762,359.5	390741.7	1,971,653.7	7,078,298.4
%Increase (2011/2012)	**18.9**	**48.4**	**41.9**	**19.4**	**67.1**	**50.3**
2012	806	3,752,681.2	613,996.3	417,824.2	1,502,678.7	6,287,180.5
%Increase (2010/2011)	**3.3**	**33.1**	**73.3**	**17.3**	**33.1**	**34.7**
2011	654	1,936,130.6	356,970.5	336,929.9	494,110.1	3,124,141.1
%Increase (2009/2010)	**-3.9**	**11**	**5.0**	**-6.1**	**9.6**	**1.9**
2010	633	1,454,346.9	205,953.8	287,257.0	371,355.8	2,318,913.6
%Increase (2008/2009)	**11.3**	**3.9**	**17.9**	**1.6**	**1.9**	**4.3**
2009	658	1,438,431.8	195,656.5	304,738.8	335,599.0	2,274,425.6
2008	591	1,384,171.7	165,965.0	299,999.7	329,420.5	2,180,057.0
Totals		11,880,584.1	1,728,226.6	1,860,407.4	3,576,340.6	19,045,558.0

Note. Taken from the church clerk's and the treasurer's records of the Sony Church.

From the analysis presented in Table 4 above, it is clear that the highlighted percentages demonstrate a marked increase in the membership of the Sony Adventist Church all throughout the program implementation period, from 633 members in 2010 to 1,001 members in 2013. A total of 368 new members were added to the church during the implementation period (see Table 4).

The attendance at the worship services also increased considerably from an average of 400 members attending in 2008 to 980 members regularly attending worship services by yearend 2013. The project goal of increasing the worship attendance by 20% by December 2013 was surpassed (see Table 5).

Table 5

Membership and Church Attendance in Sony Church Analysis

Year	Membership	Attendance
2009-2008		12.50%
2008	591	400
2010-2009		11.11%
2009	658	450
2011-2010		30.00%
2010	633	500
2012-2011		23.08%
2011	654	650
2013-2012		22.5%
2012	806	800
2013	1001	980

*Note.* Taken from church clerk's record of the Sony Church.
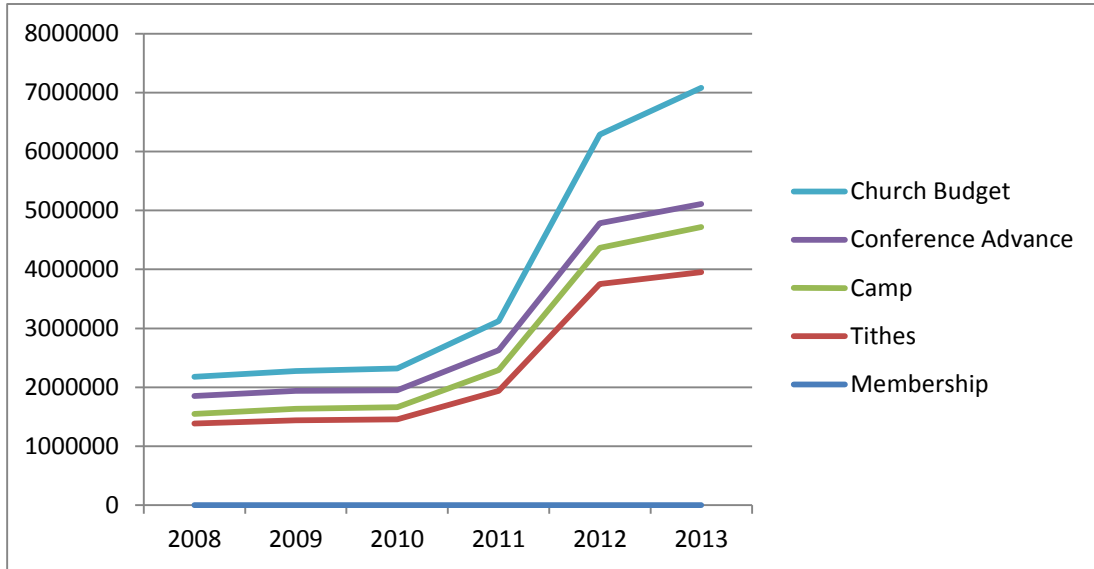
Figure 6. Church membership and finances of Sony Church line graph. The line graph above depicts an upward trend in church membership and church finances, with church membership growing the most.

Seminars were conducted on the following topics for the church elders and worship leaders that helped to enrich the worship services of the Sony Adventist Church:

- Worship, its definition

- Worship in the Old Testament

- Worship in the New Testament

- E. G. White on worship

- Other writers on worship

- Worship content

- Worship format and timing

- Worship style

- Music and worship

- Participatory worship

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These topics were coverd with the elders and worship leader for three months and then effected in the Sony Church. When I added the practice of starting our worship services on time and ending on time with about 15 minutes of singing before the divine service, worship attendance increased to an average of 980 members attending weekly.

What Has Not Been Accomplished

The mid-term evaluation process by the external assessors was delayed by one month due to budgetary constraints. The quarterly evaluation was found to be more beneficial to the project and covered for the delayed mid-term evaluation by the external assessors. The final evaluation process that was scheduled for March 2014 was brought forward to December 2013, to allow the researcher to report on the project early since all the components of the program had been implemented and the researcher moved to a new station of work as has already been mentioned.

Elders' training was critical for the implementation of the project; yet one elder out of the ten did not attend all the training sessions as he was away during the period of training doing errands for his employer.

Lessons Learned

The lessons learned from both the project planning and strategy implementation are colossal and multidimensional. However, I will limit myself to two: lessons learned both by the researcher and the lessons learned by the membership of the Sony Adventist Church.

Lessons Learned by the Researcher

Personally I have learned that a major key to having church members attend worship service regularly hinges on worship that is biblically sound, theocentric and Christocentric in its focus, participatory in nature, and balanced; involving both the mind and the emotions. I discovered also that there is need to be innovative in our approaches to the worship services especially if we want to keep our youth in the church.

This project has improved my ability to lead in worship renewal seminars in the Sony Church and elsewhere in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Another important lesson I learned is that of preparation. My life has been enriched mentally, socially, psychologically, and spiritually because of the research, and in the preliminaries involved in strategizing to help make worship more meaningful to the worshippers in the Sony Adventist Church. Now I am better equipped to do research in other areas as well.

**Lessons Learned by the Members
of the Sony Adventist Church**

The researcher also observed that the study contributed significantly in enabling the membership of the Sony Adventist Church to conduct worship services that are more meaningful for them. This has assisted in helping the church members who have been skipping church services to attend regularly. The church members' attendance during worship services increased in addition to their active participation in church related activities. The church membership also learned that when their worship services are enhanced, then general church life is improved as well—membership, church attendance, and finances increased significantly.

The church elders and the worship leaders have also been trained in the ways that can be used to make worship services more meaningful. If the advice offered by the Apostle Paul to Timothy be heeded, then the elders and the worship leaders will also be qualified to teach others. "And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses *entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others*" (2 Tim 2:2, NIV, emphasis added). The Sony Adventist Church now has a pool of trained worship leaders and elders able to make worship services more meaningful.

Future Impacts

The project has various future impacts that can be applied and replicated in many areas. In this section I will only highlight two areas: How to replicate the project outside the Sony Adventist Church, and the contributions of the project to the overall goal.

Replication of the Project

The strategy to create a meaningful worship experience in the Sony Adventist Church was developed and implemented. The project did achieve its overall objective of helping members attend worship services regularly. Most members felt that their worship needs were met hence they stopped attending other Pentecostal churches on Sundays to "feel good" but could get the same experience in a balanced manner in their own church.

The same process that was followed in the Sony Church could also be replicated in other churches within the Ronen Conference and even beyond. The process is the same: a survey must be conducted to ascertain church members' worship needs—this could be done through a survey or using a focus group; next, the already prepared seminar materials can be used for training the elders and worship leaders; this can be

followed by a quarterly review of the progress of the project to give room for any

adjustment that can be made; finally the project needs to be evaluated with external

assessor to ascertain its success. Here the researcher will offer his expertise gained from

the implementation of this project.

Contributions of the Project
to the Overall Goal

The project' overall goal of creating a meaningful worship experience with most

members attending worship services regularly in the Sony Adventist Church was

achieved with amazing results being witnessed. Members who had been skipping the

worship services claiming that the services were too traditional or boring and that they

did not meet their worship needs, came back to the church and brought others with them.

This may perhaps partially explain the baptism of 347 new members in two years of the

project implementation in the Sony Adventist Church (see Table 5).

Worship attendance in the Sony Adventist Church also grew from an average of

500 members in 2010 to 980 in 2012, an increase of 480 members (see Table 5). During

holidays when schools were closed the worship attendance peaked at over 1,000

members attending regularly.

Another significant contribution of the project was that there was a massive

increase in church finances. The Sony Adventist Church was struggling financially before

the start of the project. In 2010 total offerings stood at Kshs. 2,318,913.00, but at the

close of the year 2013, when the project had been implemented, the total offerings stood

at Kshs. 7,078,298.40, an increase of Kshs. 4,759,385.40. The gross increase stood at

205.24% (for more details see Table 4). The church infrastructure also improved

considerably, with a modern camp site constructed. The church building was refurbished, and air conditioning installed, along with new seats purchased. The Adventist Church in Sony came alive with the implementation of a more meaningful worship service.

Recommendations

This section will suggest some recommendations which are vital to the growth of the church in general. The recommendations are submitted to the planner, future implementers, and the stakeholders.

To the planner, I recommend that he continues to study more on worship and to replicate the project in other churches within the Ranen Conference and beyond. He should train his fellow colleagues in the ministry on how to enrich Adventist worship services.

To future implementers, I recommend proper planning, setting of clear goals, and the readiness to adjust and modify project activities to fit the various cultural settings.

To the stakeholders, I recommend the need of a more balanced approach towards worship in Adventism. This approach should be contemporary and relevant, meeting the needs of the members, and yet one which does not simply disregard what has been done in the past.

Finally, I recommend that Adventist worship should not be allowed to degenerate into a fixed format that is changeless, and which is highly predictable. There should be room for "healthy" change. Woodrow Whidden (1993) affirmed this idea by asserting that

Adventism has always lived with a tension between the "pillars" of "present truth" and "new light." There is an essential conservatism in Adventist theological formation that has always pulled back when "new light" has been proposed, but there

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has also been a clear understanding that "we have many lessens to learn, and many, many to unlearn." So while we have things to conserve, we also have things to let go of and new things to pick up on. If we get too tight and too specific, we may frustrate the work of the Holy Spirit in bringing forth fresh insight from the word of God. (Whidden, 1993, p. 6)

Adventist worship should endeavor to accommodate all the cultures that form the world church. This should be done without violating any biblical principles and the writings of Ellen G. White. Such a worship experience will keep church members attending the worship services regularly and help them be more involved in church activities.

Conclusions

The project demonstrated the need of having a meaningful worship experience which in turn encouraged church members to regularly attend worship services and to be involved more fully in church functions and activities. At any rate, I should conclude this study by pointing to the worship in heaven as recorded in Rev 19:4: "The twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God, who was seated on the throne. And they cried: 'Amen, Hallelujah!'" This is the true focus of worship.

FOCUS GROUP

The Composition of the Focus Group

The focus group comprised of the following persons from the Sony Adventist Church

Two church elders (head elder and one additional elder chosen by the elder's council)

1. Two women leaders (chosen by the women themselves)

2. Two youths (one male, and one female chosen by the youth)

3. One worship leader (there is only one per church)

4. One Sabbath School Superintendent

5. One Personal Ministries Leader

The Purpose of the Focus Group

Introduction: The purpose of this project is to develop and implement a more meaningful worship experience during the worship services in the Sony Adventist Church of the Ranen Conference so as to encourage members to attend worship services regularly.

Questions that were discussed:

1. Why do you think church members skip worship services?

2. What can be done to keep church members attending services regularly?

3. What are some obstacles to meaningful worship?

4. What elements of worship need special attention or improvement?

5. What modifications of the worship format would you recommend?

6. How long should a worship service take?

7. Should members participate in leading worship services? If so, how?

8. What role should the preacher or the worship leader play in the service?

9. How can the implementation of a meaningful worship be done?

Responses from the Focus Group (summarized)

Responses to question 1 included:

- Services too boring

- A lot of time being wasted in long laborious announcements

- Youths not comfortable with language used—Luo and Kiswahili

- Sermons not meeting the spiritual needs of most members

- Only a few dominate the worship services

Responses to question 2 were:

- Relook at the worship services again with a view of making it relevant

- Train the elders and worship leaders

- Make an all-inclusive worship program

- Sermons to be relevant and tailored to meet spiritual needs of the members

  Responses to question 3 included:

- Untrained worship leader and elders

- Inappropriate worship program

- Sermons topics not balanced

  Responses to question 4 included the following worship elements to be

given special attention:

- Music in worship

- Worship form and format

- Participation in worship

- Sermon delivery

- Sermon content (use of Bible, E. G. White's writings and other sources).

Responses to question 5 dealing with the modification of the worship format touched on the following areas:

- Inclusion of congregational singing from the *Seventh-day Adventists Hymnal*

- Singing of choruses

- Choirs and choral groups be alloted time as well

- Altar prayers for the needs of the members

- Consideration be given to the length and character of the announcements and departmental promotions during Sabbath services

Responses to question 6 dealing with the length of the worship service included:

- Mid-week and Friday Vesper worship programs not to take more than 45 minutes

- Sabbath school program not to take more than two hours

- Divine service not to take more than one hour

- Sabbath afternoon programs not exceed two hours to allow for fellowship and visitations

Responses to question 7 dealing with members' participation highlighted the following areas:

- Congregational singing

- Presentation of special items like choral groups, youth presentations, etc.

- Public reading of the Scriptures during the worship services

- Responsive readings

- Giving of testimonies

- Leading in Bible studies and visitations

Responses to question 8 concerning the role of the preacher in the worship services touched on the following areas:

- Preach biblically

- Preach balanced discourses

- Preach within the time limits of not more than 30 minutes

- Dress appropriately

- Sermons to meet the spiritual needs of the members

Responses to question 9 on the implementation of a meaningful worship program in the Sony Adventist Church were:

- Training of the worship leader and church elders on the details of the worship package

- Involving all church members in the worship program

- Preparing a worship manual with guidelines for the worship program

FOCUS GROUP MEMBERS

The focus group comprised of the following persons from the Sony Adventist Church:

- Two church elders (head elder and one additional elder chosen by the elder's council)

- Two women leaders (chosen by the women themselves)

- Two youths (one male, and one female chosen by the youth)

- One worship leader (there is only one per church)

- One Sabbath School Superintendent

- One Personal Ministries Leader

  The members are as follows:

- First elder, Dr. Ismael Gafna

- Elder, Leonard Otieno

- Youth female, Beldin Omenda

- Youth male, Collins Chek

- Worship Leader, Kenneth Tolo

- Sabbath school superintendent, Joan Moti

- Personal Ministries Leader, Ann Otieno

APPENDIX C

WORSHIP FORMAT

The General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, in the book, *Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual*, asserts that: "The worship service is the most important church meeting (2010, p. 117). The book suggests that skill, study, and planning are required when conducting the worship service (p. 116-117). The book then suggests longer order of worship as well as a shorter one as indicated here below:

Longer Order of Worship

- Music prelude

- Announcements

- Service participants enter

- Doxology

- Invocation (prayer)

- Scripture reading

- Hymn of praise

- Prayer

- Anthem or special music

- Offerings

- Hymn of consecration

- Sermon

- Hymn

- Benediction

- Congregation standing or seated for a few moments of silent prayer

- Music prelude

Shorter Order of Worship

- Announcements

- Hymn

- Prayer

- Offering

- Hymn or special music

- Sermon

- Hymn

- Benediction

- Congregation standing or seated for silent prayer

Adopted Order of Service at Sony Adventist Church

- Call to worship (Reading appropriate portions of Scripture)

- Congregational singing (from Hymnal, Psalms, choruses, and various

  groups)

- Doxology

- Invocation

- Worship through giving

- Children Corner (ministry to the young)

- Worship through special selected music (group or church choir/youth choir)

- Prayer for those with special needs

- Worship through the written Word

- Music

- Worship through the spoken word.

- Prayer of blessings

- Music prelude as members leave

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