Assimilating Muslim Background Believers In House Churches In London, England

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ABSTRACT

ASSIMILATING MUSLIM BACKGROUND BELIEVERS
IN HOUSE CHURCHES IN LONDON, ENGLAND

by

Petras Bahadur

Adviser: Bruce L. Bauer
ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Project Document

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: ASSIMILATING MUSLIM BACKGROUND BELIEVERS IN HOUSE CHURCHES IN LONDON, ENGLAND

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Problem

The Seventh-day Adventist Church’s evangelism among Muslims in London, England is growing. However the integration/assimilation of these new believers within Adventist churches is a serious challenge because most Adventist churches are not Muslim-friendly, and Muslim Background Believers (MBBs) fear being ostracized by their families since apostasy in Islam is a serious crime. Another contributing factor is that Seventh-day Adventist church members do not provide a social network of support for the seekers or MBBs. Therefore, there must be a better solution for integrating or assimilating members and for preparing Adventist churches in London for mission to Muslims.
Method

Some of the MBBs of the South England Conference in London, England were encouraged to develop and implement a model for house churches to assimilate and nurture new MBBs and attract interested Muslims in a friendly, non-threatening environment. Steps for the development and implementation of such a model were put in place and research was conducted on the model and attendees to determine the effectiveness of the model.

Results

Two house churches were started. One house church operated for a couple of months and was discontinued. Rahmani began this house church in the home of a family who had personal family issues. The house church of Habibi, which began with one or two people, grew as more people were added to it. Personal spirituality was emphasized as an important component of the teaching from the start. This model resulted in six baptisms within the first year and several others are also ready for baptism. It has also shown that the house church model minimizes the security threat to MBBs and avoids the stigma of attending a traditional church. Within this model, hospitality, love, and care are key components. Rahmani is now ready to start her house church and Habibi is ready to start a second house church.

Conclusions

This study demonstrates that a house church organized and run by MBBs with spirituality, hospitality, and care as the basis of its operation results in minimizing the stigma of MBBs joining a church and reduces the threat for Muslims becoming followers
of Jesus. As a result, the South England Conference is now more open to the use of house churches in Muslim ministries.
Andrews University
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

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A Project Document
Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
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CHAPTER 1

THE NEED FOR ASSIMILATION MODEL FOR MUSLIM BACKGROUND BELIEVERS

Description of the Ministry Context

Christianity came to the United Kingdom almost two thousand years ago, however, the hundred-year report (Messenger, 1992) showed that the Seventh-day Adventist work began in 1878 with John Loughborough, a missionary from America (Staples, 1999, p. 27). In 1892, the Adventist Church in Britain (United Kingdom) was organized with 80 members and Boyle (2011, p. 23) reported that by the mid-1950s, there were 7,500 Adventist members in the British Isles, with only a handful of indigenous members. Osindo (2005, p. 69) reminded us that Adventists from the West Indies arrived in the 1950s for the availability of jobs, and a report shows (Messenger, 1992) that the African Caribbeans came to the UK in 1948 with the arrival of Empire Windrush. It was not until the turn of the century around 2000 when African and South Asian members began to come to the United Kingdom in large numbers; they were followed by European immigrants since the European Union (EU) opened its doors to new countries in the EU membership. Though most of the members of the Adventist Church in the United Kingdom still consist of Black Caribbeans, the Africans, East Europeans, and South Asians are steadily increasing. The present-day ethnic make-up of the Adventist Church
membership consists of 80% immigrants and their descendants in the United Kingdom (Schantz, 2011, p. 43).

The Adventist headquarters in Watford, called the British Union Conference, is comprised of the Irish Mission, Scottish Mission, Welsh Mission, North England Conference, and South England Conference. As of December 2012, Adventist membership in the UK stood at 34,048. This paper will be focusing mainly on the work in the South England Conference, with its headquarters also in Watford. The South England Conference membership as of July 2012 was 22,596 (BUC Archives, Appendix C). This study is focused in London, specifically in the Borough of Newham.

The strategy for the Adventist work among Muslims in England officially started in 2002 under the leadership of Oscar Osindo. For six years, through seminars usually done on Sabbaths during the divine service and an afternoon training on how to reach Muslims, the awareness for Muslim mission was created in the South England Conference. Though relationships were being developed and friendships with Muslims continued, yet Muslim converts were not being added to the church.

In 2008, a more aggressive presentation of the Adventist identity rather than Christian framework began to be used, and the work in South England began to move ahead. The Muslim world has concerns about the Christian framework because of the baggage it carries from history (the Crusades, Colonialism, Imperialism, and the Western Culture of the so called Christian nations). In 2008, the Adventist Muslim Relations (AMR) leader and a volunteer began to develop new interests and friendships with Muslims and to initiate Qur’an/Bible studies.

By 2011, baptisms among those first contacts began to take place. In the spring
of 2012, a contact was baptized who was to take the work to another level through his 
commitment, passion, and his understanding of the Muslim mindset. The newly baptized 
Muslim Background Believers (MBBs) were first introduced to traditional churches 
where they did not feel comfortable. Then they were introduced to the Asian church in 
London, a church that was precisely planted for Asian background believers (and 
Muslims) by the AMR leader. Hindu background believers had already been baptized 
and so were other Christians from Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Mauritius. 
Since then, this church has played an important role in integrating the MBBs. There are 
some Muslims who still regularly attend this Asian church whilst continuing to do Bible 
studies. The church was originally started by a group of Pakistani Adventists who were 
interested in worshipping in the Urdu/Hindi language, but after seven years, the church 
now has nine nationalities and the worship service is in English. Though hymns and 
Christian contemporary songs are sung, South Asian songs also continue to be sung with 
Tabla (drums) and Baja (harmonium) which church members of other nationalities 
appreciate, as well. Though the church has attracted other nationalities, the mission- 
focus mainly continues to be on the Asian population, which lives around the church.

Description of the Problem

The Seventh-day Adventist Church’s evangelism to the Muslims in London, 
England is growing. However, the integration/assimilation of these new believers within 
Adventist churches has serious challenges, since most Adventist churches are not 
Muslim-friendly. Prospective members are hindered from joining the church, and MBBs 
who have already embraced the Adventist faith face the challenge of being ostracized by 
their Muslim families for converting, based on the law of apostasy that “whoever
changed his Islamic religion, then kill him” (Sahih al-Bukhari, Vol. 9, p. 45). This threat prevents most MBBs from joining established organizations or entering church buildings. Another contributing factor is that Seventh-day Adventist church members do not provide a social network of support for the MBBs or their seeker friends.

Although, initially, MBBs were integrated in this Asian church, yet looking at the future of Muslim mission in London and sustaining a growth and security of the newly baptized, it was proposed that these individuals be sustained and nurtured in house churches in order to evangelize their family and friends better.

In Newham, East London, approximately one-fourth of the population is Muslim, so every church in that area should have a ministry to their Muslim community. Unfortunately, it has taken almost ten years to get churches to realize that ministry to Muslims is important. Recently, with the support of the president of the Conference, Sam Davis, some churches within SEC are engaged in this ministry and have appointed AMR leader at their church. Even then, out of seven churches located in Newham, only three churches have appointed an AMR coordinator.

There are three ministries that can play an important role in this community: Adventist Muslim Relations Departments, Community Ministries Departments, and Health Departments. Recent studies (“Newham key Statistics,” 2011, p. 4) indicate that Newham has a very low employment rate, the lowest of any London borough (56.2%), and most of the immigrants are the ones that are unemployed. Therefore, it becomes imperative for our churches to tap into this need in the community and reach out to the disadvantaged.

Studies done on British schools (“British Muslims and Education,” 2005) show
that three fourths of UK children of Bangladeshi and Pakistani origin live in households earning less than half the average income for the UK and one half of these households receive income support. Therefore, the Community Ministries department of the local Adventist churches could play an important part in meeting the needs of the community. Moreover, Waters (2008, p. 30) noted that because of their lower socio-economic status, Bangladeshis have bad health outcomes. Therefore, the health department of the local Adventist churches could do a lot for their community because of these huge health needs.

There are seven Adventist churches within the Newham borough in the East of London. East Ham, Plaistow, and Stratford churches are the only ones with significant Caribbean membership. London Ghana, London Asian, East Portuguese, and Beckton Maranatha, are churches that have ethnic membership. The total membership of these churches is 1,348 and the population of the Newham area is over 310,500. An important question is how the Adventist membership is going to impact its wider community.

Attendance in Church seems very important for most churches, but it has not been easy to get them to realize their mission to the Muslims and Asians in the community. Only three churches out of seven have AMR coordinators who are envisioning work for Muslims or Asians by their churches in their surrounding communities. The health and community ministries departments are not yet focused on relieving the needs of the immigrant community in this area.

Muslim Demographics

Winkler (2006, p. 24) estimated that of the Muslim immigrants to the UK, about half of the Muslim population of the United Kingdom was born in the country, 10% was
born in Africa, and the remainder in Asia, with the largest immigrant Muslim groups originating from Pakistan and Bangladesh.

The Muslim population in Britain is younger than the average UK population as revealed by a recent study ("British Muslims and Education," 2005, p. 106) and 52% of Muslims in Britain are under the age of 25, compared to 31% of the UK population as a whole. The average age of Muslims when compared to the UK national average is 13 years younger at 28 years, with one third of the Muslim population in Britain being under the age of 16 ("Newham key Statistics," 2011, p. 3). The report also shows that about 30% of Newham’s population consists of children and young people under the age of 20.

The question that has been asked within the Western setting is how well these Muslim immigrant communities are adjusting to their host culture and whether they are integrating into the society they have adopted. The Muslims in Europe have different views of the West and of their own integration into Western society.

BBC News reports (2008; Census 2001 and 2011 statistics) regarding ethnicity in the United Kingdom as follows (see Table 1):

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>91.3</td>
<td>86.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed/Multiple ethnic</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Asian British</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/African/Caribbean</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Ethnic group/Chinese</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The research ("Newham key Statistics," 2011, p. 2) shows that the Greater London Authority (GLA) 2008 population projections for main ethnic groups indicate that 70% of its population is non-white and of these, 15.8% are Black African, 11.8% are Indian, 10.8% are Pakistani, and 10.7% are Bangladeshi.

In a study done on British schools, it was noticed that there is a diversity of ethnic backgrounds from which Muslims come. Studies on British schools ("British Muslims and Education," 2005, p. 110) show that more than 40% of Muslim children are of Pakistani origin, 20% are of Bangladeshi origin, 15% are of Indian or other Asian origin, 10% are from Turkish or Turkish Cypriot origin, 4% being of mixed ethnic origin, and the rest come from the Middle East, East Asia, Africa, or the Caribbean.

In a report ("Focus on London", 2009), it was mentioned that in 2007, Newham had the highest proportion of births in London to overseas-born women (74.8%). Also in a study ("Newham key Statistics," 2011, p. 1), it was reported that in 2010, Newham’s population was estimated to be 270,000. However, the 2011 census ("Newham Labour Market Profile," 2011) reported that the population of Newham had risen to 310,500.

According to the 2011 Census, Newham Borough has the second highest percentage of Muslims in Britain, 32% (see Appendix O) and lowest white British population.

Economic Situation

About 42% of Muslim children live in over-crowded accommodation compared to 12% of the general population of the UK. Studies ("British Muslims and Education," 2005, p. 112) show that 75% of UK children of Bangladeshi and Pakistani origin live in households earning less than half the average income for the UK and 54% of Pakistani
and Bangladeshi homes receive income support, which is three times as many as other households in the UK.

Recent studies (“Newham key Statistics,” 2011, p. 4) report that in 2008-09 Newham had a very low employment rate at just 56.2%, the lowest of any London borough and significantly below the average rate for London of 62.7%. The employment rates for women and ethnic minorities were particularly low. In 2009-10, the unemployment rate for ethnic minority residents (14.5%) was more than double that of the White population (6.7%). In 2008-09 more than one-third of the working age population was economically inactive, and for women, the figure was almost half.

From the statistics above, it becomes obvious that unemployment in Newham is almost twice as high (13.2%) compared to the national average (7.9%). This is why the economic problems of the immigrant communities are more than any other borough of London.

**Description of the Task**

From this study of the ministry and community context, it becomes evident that we have a ministry that needs to be done in this part of London, especially in East London.

From our ministry context, it is clear that we have many ministries that are going on in our Adventist churches in the Newham area, in the East of London. There are many departments of the South England Conference that operate in our churches and that is very good. However, assessing the needs of the community, we seem to be missing the opportunity of providing that which is the most important for the community.

The task of this project is to engage some of the members of the South England
Conference of Seventh-day Adventist Churches in London, England to develop and implement a model of house churches that will assimilate and nurture new MBBs and attract interested Muslims in a friendly, non-threatening environment.

Adventist Muslim Relations

From this study, it is evident that the Muslim population is growing in Newham and is the second largest minority anywhere in the United Kingdom, only 2% lower than Tower Hamlets (See appendix O). Considering that Newham’s population has grown and that now over 32% of the entire population of this borough is Muslim, our ministry should focus on this people group.

As noted earlier, only three of seven Adventist churches in the Newham borough have an AMR coordinator appointed to lead the work of reaching the Muslim community around them. This is clearly a misaligned priority for some of those churches. Considering that there are economic, educational, and health needs in this community, our churches need to address those needs in the Muslim community and in the process, establish the relationships that will enable them to share the love of Jesus.

Community Ministries

From the statistics we have also noted that this borough has the least qualified population of all the other boroughs (see appendix R). It is evident that there are many immigrants who do not speak English or who do not have work skills. The churches in the Newham area can get involved with meeting these needs through their community ministries department. Considering that many people are unemployed, we could be
meeting their needs by providing food parcels or meeting them in their homes, asking what can be done for them.

**Health Ministries**

From the statistics above, it was noted that the health concerns of this borough are very high; therefore, there is a lot that our health departments can do in this area. Health expos can be organized to impact the community. In Matthew 9:35, it clearly states that “then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.” White (1900, p. 288) wrote, “Again and again I have been instructed that the medical missionary work is to bear the same relation to the work of the third angel’s message that the arm and hand bear to the body.” From these statements, it becomes clear that health work is going to be the key for doing evangelism work.

White (1990, p. 134) wrote that “the work of health reform is to be bound up with the gospel. These cannot be separated; for God has united them. When these parts of the work are carried forward on correct lines, the third angel’s message will be given in accordance with God’s purpose.” This gives a clear perspective. We cannot do evangelism without health. Especially in this community which has so many people who do not know anything about the gospel, health is going to be the entering wedge.

The health department of our seven churches in Newham should be involved, and so should the Adventist Muslim Relations department and the community ministries department. These ministries can take care of the needs of the community, but can utilize their skills in reaching out to the Muslim community.
Sometimes, the churches are concerned with spreading the gospel, but do not have any concern for people’s health needs or other immediate needs. At other times, needs are provided and health expos are done, without knowing how to share the gospel since the cultural background of the community is different than that of the church community. Health and Community Ministries Departments should be used as an entering wedge by providing for the needs of people; through the skills acquired in AMR training, ministry to the Newham population, especially to Muslims, should be carried on.

**Delimitations**

This project will not be dealing with how to prepare Adventist churches for Muslim evangelism by developing a “prejudice reduction” curriculum to be taught in churches, although awareness weekend programs are already in place. The scope of this study is not the local churches; rather it is the assimilation problem of the MBBs who are becoming followers of Jesus. The assimilation of these MBBs within traditional churches has been two sided: first, the unwillingness of traditional churches to embrace these MBBs with care programs; and second, the fear among the MBBs to join traditional churches because of the possibility of being ostracized by their families and the Muslim community.

Research has been limited to the success of the house church model and its effectiveness in assimilating MBBs through spirituality and social care. Research was, therefore, focused on the observation and results of the implementation of the model. This research did not include individuals being assessed; therefore no questionnaire instrument has been utilized.
Justification for the Project

This project seeks to contribute to the development of Seventh-day Adventist models for evangelizing Muslims within a Western context, specifically in London, England.

MBBs continue to have difficulty making the necessary transition without a model for Muslim ministry and assimilation into a nurturing fellowship. Therefore, this project seeks to develop such a model.

Even though the immigrant population of Muslims in London is growing, evangelism to Muslims is often hindered due to the difficulty in their transition from living in a Muslim community to interacting with other MBBs. This model intends to provide encouragement to churches in London for evangelism to the Muslims.

This project seeks to challenge Adventist churches to engage in Muslim outreach, especially if they are located in a Muslim neighborhood.

Study house church models of other denominations and learn from them.

Description of the Project Process

In order to develop a theological basis for forming a church model for Muslims in London, the following areas will be explored. First, a biblical mandate of evangelism to Muslims will be examined by exploring the biblical foundations for doing cross-cultural evangelism. Second, the Old and New Testament mandate for evangelism to the Children of Ishmael will be studied. Third, the New Testament House Church model will be explored.

Current literature will also be reviewed. This will include books and articles on Islamic growth and conversion statistics in light of the Islamic law of apostasy, the
history of evangelism to Muslims and different methods of outreach, and models of integration of MBBs and house church models.

Demographic data of the Muslim population and immigration in London will be collected.

Models of assimilation of MBBs will be examined.

A strategy for forming a house church model for assimilating MBBs will be developed and implemented within London in the South England Conference, UK. The number of MBBs who join the house church and the effectiveness of their nurturing through a spiritual progression will be used to evaluate the success of the house church model. The stories and narrative of what happens as the house church grows and develops will be shared.

The project will be completed by September 30, 2014.

**Expectations From the Project**

This project will advance the kingdom growth and transform the church growth vision of the South England Conference through the development of a strategy of house churches for assimilating Muslims in London, England. This project will also encourage Adventist members in London to witness to their Muslim friends and will provide a non-threatening environment for MBBs and interested Muslims through nurturing and discipleship. It is also hoped that this project will encourage the Adventist Church to see that the task of reaching Muslims is possible.

**Outline of the Project**

Chapter 1 gives an introduction to the project and includes a statement of the
problem, statement of the task, description of the project process, justifications for the project, and expectations from the project.

Chapter 2 offers a theological foundation for the project by looking at the biblical foundations for doing cross-cultural evangelism, by looking at the Old and New Testament mandate for evangelism to the Children of Ishmael, and by developing a New Testament House Church model.

Chapter 3 consists of a literature review on the growth of Islam and conversion of Muslims in light of the Islamic law of apostasy, reviews the history of evangelism to Muslims and different methods of outreach, and reviews the house church model for evangelism and integration of Muslims and alternative assimilation models.

Chapter 4 describes the development and implementation methodology for the project, while Chapter 5 offers a narrative of the project implementation. Chapter 6 lists the outcomes, shares the evaluation of the project, offers the conclusions, and makes recommendations.

**Definition of the Terms**

This study contains only a small number of technical terms. Although each is defined in its context, attention to the meaning of these terms here may prove helpful to the reader.

First among these terms is *MBB*. This term is an acronym for Muslim Background Believer. This term has been used in the study as *MBBs*, which is a plural of the same term, and is read as Muslim Background Believers. Another term that has been used is *AMR*, which stands for Adventist Muslim Relations. This is a department established by the South England Conference to find meaningful ways of interacting and
bridge-building with the Muslim community in London. Another term worth elaborating on is assimilation (of Muslims). This term relates to MBBS or those baptized Muslims who would like to be associated with the followers of Jesus. However, how and where they worship is the intention behind this term, whether they worship in the traditional way like all Adventists worship or whether they come to a traditional Adventist church, to an ethnic South Asian church, to a house church, or even not at all in countries where their movements (logistics) are monitored.
CHAPTER 2

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR MUSLIM MISSION

In this chapter we are going to be looking at the theological foundations for evangelizing Muslims and assimilating Muslim Background Believers in house churches in London, England. This will be done by exploring three areas of theological foundation: first, biblical foundations for cross-cultural ministry (including Muslims) will be studied; second, Old and New Testament mandates for mission to the children of the East or Children of Ishmael will be reviewed; finally, the New Testament house church model will be explored.

**Biblical Foundations for Cross-Cultural Ministry**

The fact that the gospel needs to be proclaimed in all the world is clearly a biblically-based principle that was not only taught by Jesus and His disciples, but was prevalent throughout the Scriptures, thus showing God’s desire that all should come to repentance. God the Father was engaged in reaching the world as it states in John 3:16: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” Keeping the Gospel to oneself is not taught anywhere in the scriptures. The good news has to be shared: the good news of our great God and the good news of the Savior who came into this world, died, and rose again.
Mission of God

If there is one Christian duty that often causes members to tremble in their boots, it is none other than the call to do missions (reach out to others). It is even believed by some that this is a terrible burden that has been laid on the church. Others feel that not everyone in the church is supposed to be involved in mission as they do not have the spiritual gifts to do that and everyone does not have those gifts. Sermons are preached and seminars are conducted to rouse the members in the church to engage in mission, but it seems like the rallying cry goes unheard. Wright (2006, p. 62) asked a serious question: Whose mission is it anyway? Referring to several texts such as “Salvation belongs to our God” (Rev 7:10) and Rev 4-7, where it elaborates that he has brought his salvation to the whole cosmos, Wright affirmed that “mission belongs to our God” and therefore concludes that “mission was not made for the church; the church was made for the mission—God’s mission” (p. 62). Bosch (1991, pp. 389-93) explained that the commonly-used term missio Dei, mission of God, was developed over a period of time. Wright (2006, p. 62) was of the opinion that the term goes back to the German missiologist Karl Hartenstein, who coined it to summarize Karl Barth’s teaching on mission and the Trinity. Since it is the mission of God, Wright (2006, p. 65) concluded that God’s mission is described in four spheres: humanity with a mission, Israel with a mission, Jesus with a mission, and finally the church with a mission.

From the foregoing discussion, it becomes evident that when the church is asked to engage in mission, they engage in the entire purpose of God. God is involved with the mission, His Son is sent into the world to fulfill the mission, and the Holy Spirit is sent
into the world to accomplish the mission. Not only the Godhead, but humanity was entrusted with the mission; Israel was chosen to fulfill the mission, and the Church is to carry out that mission of God in the world in preparation for the Second Coming of Jesus and the final judgment. When the church does not recognize or engage in the mission of God, then the church falls out of harmony with God’s great purpose for which the entire plan of salvation and all the agencies that God appointed are involved. Whether we cooperate with God or not in His mission, he will accomplish the mission that he has embarked on, but he invites us to join with him as privileged co-workers. Stott (1992, p. 335) described this interaction: “Mission arises from the heart of God himself and is communicated from His heart to ours. Mission is the global outreach of the global people of a global God.”

**Mission to the Whole World**

There is a story in Mark 5 where Jesus meets a demon-possessed man. This man was not only demon-possessed, but was hurting and cutting himself with stones and was a threat to the community. Jesus healed this demon-possessed man who came back to his senses. When Jesus was leaving the region, the man wanted to go with Jesus but it says in Mark 5:1-20, however, Jesus did not permit him, but said to him, “Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He has had compassion on you.” He departed and began to proclaim in Decapolis all that Jesus had done for him; and all marveled. Jesus intends that every child of God who has been saved from the snare of the devil should to share the message with others. Even though it would have been a good thing for the healed man to stay with Jesus and accompany Him wherever He went, Jesus did not permit that. Instead, he asked the man to go and tell
others what the Lord had done for him. Mark 5:20 elaborates that not only did the man
tell his family, but he also went to proclaim the message in ten cities. Jesus later returned
to this region of the Decapolis as recorded in Mark 7:31: “Again, departing from the
region of Tyre and Sidon, He came through the midst of the region of Decapolis to the
Sea of Galilee.” In Mark 8:9, it says that four thousand people came to listen to Jesus and
were miraculously fed from seven loaves and a few fish.

From this story, it is evident that when people are saved by Jesus, they go and tell
others of what He has done for them. In Matthew 24:14, Jesus taught that the gospel of
the kingdom would be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations and then
the end would come. It is very clear from this verse that the message must cross cultural
barriers to reach all countries and the entire world. That means humans have an
important part to play in the mission of God. Ott (2013) believed that the phrase “ends of
the earth” underlines the comprehensiveness of the mission and alludes to Isaiah 49:6,
which describes the Servant of the Lord: “I will also make you a light for the nations, to
be my salvation to the ends of the earth.”

Cross-Cultural Mission

Just before Jesus left this world, he gave us the Great Commission in Matthew
28:19-20: “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name
of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” Based on this command of Jesus, it
is evident that we cannot limit our work to one particular mission field. Rather, it is his
desire that we reach all the nations of the world. Ott (2013) believed that Jesus sent
disciples on a mission into the world in the same way that he himself was sent by the
imperative, a mandate. So it also presupposes an authority behind that imperative” (p. 51).

Jesus’ command was further elaborated in Acts 1:8 where he told his disciples how they would witness for him starting from where they were and then moving cross culturally to the ends of the earth. Ott (2013) believed that the sending specifically referred to the crossing of ethnic barriers as the gospel is taken from the house of Israel to the Samaritans who had some Israelite lineage, but then they were to move on to diverse ethnic groups that were very different culturally from Israel. Not only did ethnic barriers have to be crossed, but even religious barriers were crossed as the gospel moved from the Israelites, to the Samaritans, who had a form of Old Testament faith, and then on to the Gentiles who adhered to a variety of religious beliefs.

The gospel had to be contextualized, which meant that it was to be presented in the cultural setting of people in order that it could be understood correctly. Saal (1993, p. 146) believed that “the nature of the gospel requires contextualization. The gospel is God’s message to all mankind, calling for repentance and faith, a total commitment to Christ … but which preserve intact the original meanings our Lord intended to convey.”

Wright (2006, p. 48) believed that the biblical foundation for doing cross-cultural ministry is contained in the writings of the Bible for they witness to the “ultimate mission of God.” The Bible text comes out of the events and struggles of God’s people in trying to live as the people of God by constantly changing and articulating their understanding of God in the world that they were living in.

Paul’s mission of reaching out to the Gentile world was a cross-cultural mission. His writings describe the struggle of getting Jews and the Gentiles to accept one another
in Christ. 1 Corinthians 9:19-22 is about Paul’s intention to reach the Jews, the Gentiles, and everyone by “becoming like them” so that he can “win them to Christ.” The entire Bible explores the overtones of mission—in the Old Testament, the children of Israel were constantly engaging with the surrounding world, and the New Testament Israel was now engaging with the Gentile world by sharing the good news of Jesus. These are the scenarios from which the written text of the Bible was born.

Jesus was involved in cross-cultural ministry not only to the Jewish people, but to the whole world. He, who had only a divine nature, became incarnate, taking on also a human nature and became like us. Elmer (2006, p. 13) reminded us that “Jesus came into our human context, adjusted to the Jewish culture and lived among us so that when the time was right he would accomplish the redemption of all who would believe.” Parshall (2003, p. 117) believed that no scripture deals so clearly with the incarnational ministry of Jesus as does Phil 2:5-8. Incarnational ministry means adopting the ways of the people you are trying to reach. Jesus was obviously trying to reach us to he became incarnate. The text points to having the mind of Christ [having the same attitude as Christ] who, though he was separate from humanity, was compelled by love for humanity and took on a human nature. First and foremost, love impelled the incarnation. Second, humility made him choose the stable rather than the palace of Herod and the carpenter’s shop rather than a high political office. Kraft (1979, p. 175) believed that Jesus mingled with human culture to such a great degree that most people did not even think that he could have been from somewhere else. Love and humility drove him to this remarkable cross-cultural ministry (in our world) and he showed us the greatest example of incarnational ministry. He laid aside His divine privileges, became a man, and went to the cross.
Parshall (2003, p. 118) stated that “never has cross cultural identification been so complete or so costly.” For today’s missionary doing cross cultural ministry, we have to bear the cross for Christ, though it may not be as great as what Jesus bore. Sometimes, that may simply mean forsaking comfortable housing, Western dress, familiar food, and personal privacy. How much are we willing to become incarnate for mission to the Muslims?

Mission Even for Muslims

Today, there are approximately 1.7 billion Muslims worldwide, which is 23% of the world’s population. If almost one-fourth of the world’s population is Muslim, is one-fourth of all mission resources spent in reaching Muslims? Referring to the mission especially to the Muslim people, Morin and Arana (2009, p. 2) pointed out that “God yearns for the hearts of the Muslim people, but for centuries the Christian Church has ignored the spiritual plight of Muslims. It was far more expedient to write them off as cursed of God, impossible to reach, and unworthy of Christian sweat, tears, and sacrifice.” Houssney (2010, p. 13) rightly stated that “it isn’t an easy task, and we must be honest about the challenges. The worldwide church has struggled to impact Islam and Muslims.” Because mission to the Muslims has not only been hard, but dangerous, it has mainly been left undone. That mission has simply been ignored.

Adventism: A Last day Mission Movement

The above texts present a clear commission of the Lord, yet for Adventists there is a further biblical reason for reaching all nations. The prophetic description found in Rev 14:6 adds urgency to presenting the everlasting gospel “to every nation, tribe,
tongue, and people” just before the second coming of Jesus and before the judgment. This urgent message includes the right worship of God and preparation for the imminent judgment.

When Jesus went back to heaven after His first advent, his Great Commission was given so that the message would be preached to “all the nations,” but Rev 14:6 states that before his Second Coming, the message must be preached “to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people.” Not only is the message to be preached to the nations of the world, but to every tribe, in every tongue, and to every people group in the world. If Adventists believe that they have been entrusted with the proclamation of this eternal message according to Rev 14:6, then the urgent message should be proclaimed since the judgment is near. Just maintaining churches and meeting the needs of existing members is not the only work of the church. The church must cross boundaries and reach cross-culturally to every nation, to every tribe, to every tongue, and to all the people of the world. This is the great responsibility that has been placed on the shoulders of God’s last-day movement.

**Old Testament and New Testament Mandate for Evangelism to the Children of the East**

From the moment humanity fell into sin, God himself initiated a mandate for evangelism. Gen 3:9 states, “Then the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, ‘Where are you?’” This question was an evangelistic question; a question for Adam to ponder. Leading Adam to realize his fallen state, God continued to ask him a series of questions. God could have been angry with Adam and Eve and left them alone. God could have pronounced his judgment, since he had already warned them in Gen 3:3 saying, “You
shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.” Instead, God reached out to them by coming in the cool of the day and looking for them. Even though God had warned them, yet he decided to reach out to them and provide them with a solution to their fallen state. God took the initiative, he provided the solution, to be fulfilled in his own time. God allowed them to live, but sacrificed a lamb in order to atone for the sin of Adam and Eve and also to provide them covering from their physical shame. Though the lamb was slain, which represented the solution that God intended to provide, one day God did provide the actual sacrifice which shocked the overlooking heavenly beings. All that humans were to do was to accept the solution that God had provided and not rely on their own efforts. From the very onset of sin, God stepped in and provided the solution for humanity’s fallen state. If God provided the solution for all of humanity, he will also share his message of salvation with everyone in every age. This Good News will be proclaimed throughout the world, across the nations, cross-culturally, among all religions, even proclaimed to all Muslims.

However, in order to accomplish this plan of salvation, God chose one family, the family of Abraham. Abraham was called by God from the Ur of the Chaldees (Gen 11:31) to go and live in a cross-cultural situation in the land of Canaan. Gen 12:4 tells us that Abraham did as the Lord had commanded him to do and went to the place that God had asked him to go. God promised Abraham that He would be with him (Gen 12:1-3), would give him descendants (make him a great nation), would give him land (the land that He will show him), and would bless him. God promised Abram in Gen 13:16, “And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, then your descendants also could be numbered,” but interestingly
enough, in Gen 15:2 it states that Abram, who had no children said, “Lord God, what will You give me, seeing I go childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?”

Sarai and Abram knew the promise of God, but did not wait for his promise to be fulfilled in God’s way, so Abram went to Hagar, Sarai’s Egyptian maid-servant (Gen 16:3-4), and she bore him a son called Ishmael (Gen 16:15). When Abraham was 99 years old, God promised him in Gen 17:20-21, “And as for Ishmael, I have heard you. Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall beget twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation. But My covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this set time next year.” God promised that the line of Ishmael would continue to be blessed, but the promised Messiah would come through the line of Isaac.

God used an example to teach Abraham about his plan of salvation. God asked Abraham to take his only son, the one whom he loved, and sacrifice him on a mountain, (Gen 22:2). Abraham obeyed the Lord and was ready to sacrifice his son (Isaac) on the altar when God intervened and provided a ram (Gen 22:12-13). That sacrifice took place in the “land of Moriah” on “one of the mountains” (Gen 22:2). Solomon’s temple in Jerusalem was erected in the same area on Mount Moriah as recorded in 2 Chronicles 3:1 and Jewish tradition places it on the same mountain where Abraham was asked to sacrifice his son. The Muslim Dome of the Rock mosque is built on this site today.

Children of Ishmael in Prophecy

There is a prophecy found in Isa 60:7 from which it becomes clear that God has a plan of salvation for the children of Ishmael who will come into the house of God, and then God will pronounce, “I glorify the House of My Glory.” In Isa 60:6-7, God refers to
the other children of Abraham through his other wives. “Herds of camels will cover your land, young camels of Midian and Ephah, and all from Sheba will come, bearing gold and incense and proclaiming the praise of the Lord. All Kedar’s flocks will be gathered to you, the rams of Nebaioth will serve you; they will be accepted as offerings on my altar, and I will adorn my glorious temple” (NIV).

Abraham had three wives (Sarah, Hagar, and Keturah) and he had children from all three. Gen 25:1 refers to Keturah as Abraham’s wife. Some Christians do not consider Hagar to be the wife of Abraham, but only a maid-servant or a concubine but Gen 16:3 states that “Sarah took her handmaid, Hagar and gave to her husband Abraham, to be his wife.”

From Sarah, Abraham begot Isaac, and through Hagar, Ishmael was born to him. However from Keturah he had six more sons as recorded in Gen 25:2: “And she bore him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak and Shuah.”

According to the prophecy of Isa 60:6, it is clear that the children of Keturah will come to the land of Israel bringing gifts of gold and incense and proclaiming the praises of God. This verse was fulfilled at the first coming of Jesus as recorded in Matt 2:1-2: the “wise men from the Eastern lands arrived in Jerusalem.” They brought gifts of gold and incense and declared they were there “to worship the newborn king of the Jews.” At the first coming of Jesus, whether physically or symbolically, Abraham’s children, through Keturah, were present.

However, according to Isa 60:7, the children of Ishmael (or Abraham’s children / grandchildren through Hagar) will come into the House of God. The names of Kedar and Nebaioth that are mentioned refer to Ishmael’s children as recorded in Gen 25:13.
Interestingly enough, the children of Keturah came into the land of Israel, but the children of Ishmael come into the house of God as recorded in Isa 60:7. The children of Keturah came at the first coming of Jesus; the children of Hagar (and Ishmael) will come before the Second Coming of Jesus.

Who are considered the Children of Ishmael today? Muslims have always claimed that they were the children of Ishmael since Muhammad, the prophet of Islam was a descendant from Ishmael. As far as we know, Muslims have not come in great numbers into the Christian Church. Statistically, Islam is the fastest growing religion in the world. However, from Isa 60:7, it is clear that the children of Ishmael (or children of Hagar), who symbolically or genealogically are the Muslims of Arabia, will come and worship God in the house of God.

If the Muslims are to come into the house of God, Adventists have a part to play. Which house of God are they coming into? The Jewish house (Temple) does not exist and if they are coming into the house of God to worship him, then the worship (as stated in Rev 14:7) will be done on the day that God instituted at creation for worship. Since Adventists believe in the Sabbath, then they have a special part to usher in the children of Ishmael to participate in the true Sabbath rest.

Prophetic Role of the Seventh-day Adventists in Mission to the Children of the East

Based on Rev 14:6-7, there is a summary of those verses that revolves around one main message: “Fear God and give him glory.” This fear of God and giving glory to him is displayed by preparing for the coming of the Day of the Lord (the judgment) and by worshiping him who created the Day of the Lord (Gen 2:1-3) and who wanted people to
remember to worship on that day as a reminder of his creation (Exod 20:8-11). In the world today, many live as if there will be no judgment and many do not worship the Creator on the day that he declared holy and blessed (Gen 2:2-3).

This is the eternal message entrusted to Seventh-day Adventists. They are to tell the world to “fear God and give him glory” for the hour of his judgment has come. They are to call all people to worship Him who made heaven and earth. This is a prophetic calling entrusted by God to his last day movement to proclaim the everlasting gospel. In Rev 14:12, it says that “here are those who keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus.” Adventists are proclaiming the faith of Jesus (which focuses on his soon return) and upholding the commandments of God (including the one related to his worship). These are the two specific things mentioned in the last eternal message to be proclaimed (Rev 14:6-7) and it is precisely what Adventists are proclaiming. In fact, these two elements are in the very name of this last day movement: “Seventh-day” indicates worship on the day that He rested from creation and “Adventist” places a focus on the message of his soon return and day of judgment. These two important truths are proclaimed in the very name of Seventh-day Adventists, a last-day movement entrusted to share God’s eternal gospel “to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people.”

However, many Adventists are reluctant to share this beautiful truth with their Muslim friends. Why is that so? On the other hand, those who are sharing are not sharing the truth within the Adventist framework, but from the framework of Christianity, a framework which according to Islam is corrupted. When Muslims observe Christians and are also told by Christians that eating pork and drinking wine is permitted, and notice that others within Christianity bow down to images and statues of saints, then they
perceive that Christianity is a corrupted religion. However, true followers of Jesus, the People of the Book have always stood for the right. In the Qur’an, Surah al-Imran 3, verse 110 and 113, it states, “not all of the People of the Book (Christians) are the same, some are faithful . . . but most of them have gone astray.”

The Qur’an positively affirms the teaching found in the Bible (Torah, Psalms, and Gospels) and states in Qur’an, Surah Al-Maidah 5.44 that the Torah is guidance and light. Qur’an, Surah Al-Baqara 2.87 states that God “gave Moses the Book, then Jesus,” and in Qur’an, Surah Al-Nisa 4.163, that God “gave Zaboor [Psalms] and inspired all Prophets [Old Testament prophets],” and finally in Qur’an, Surah Al-Maidah 5.46, Jesus confirms the Torah and was given the Gospel.

In Qur’an, Surah Al-Ankubbat 29:46, it states that “dispute ye not with the People of the Book.” Finally, Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) is commanded in Qur’an, Surah Al-Younis 10:94 that “if in doubt, ask those who are reading the Book from before” (People of the Book). According to the above verses in the Qur’an, it is clear that the Bible is the Word of God and is for guidance for all people. On the other hand, Qur’an declares that many from the People of the Book do not live up to its guidance and rather misinterpret it by lifting passages out of context (Qur’an, Surah Al-Nisa 4.46 and Surah Al-Baqara 2.75), enjoy listening to lies (Surah Al-Maidah 5.13), and a group of them interpret passages differently (Surah Al-Maidah 5.41).

According to Qur’an Surah Al-Imran 3:110, some of the people of the Book (Christians) are faithful, while many have gone astray from the truth, and Adventists agree with that. The true and faithful ones who have always been submissive to God throughout the ages and now, in the last days, are called Seventh-day Adventists, because
they are proclaiming the same everlasting gospel which has been proclaimed by the
faithful, for centuries. Adventists have a God-given mandate and a role to play in
ushering Muslims into the kingdom of God.

**New Testament House Church Model**

Before Jesus went to heaven, the apostles and an early group of 120 believers
were commanded to stay in Jerusalem until they had been baptized by the Holy Spirit
(Acts 1:4, 5). Then, they were to be His witnesses when the power of the Holy Spirit had
come upon them (Acts 1:8), first in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and then to the
ends of the earth. When the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost, the disciples began to
witness. Peter preached a sermon that day and three thousand received his word and
were baptized (Acts 2:41). This was the start of the early church. The method by which
they continued is outlined in Acts 2:42-47. It states that (a) they continued in the
apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, (b) broke bread together, (c) prayed, (d) experienced
many signs and wonders, (e) had all things in common, (f) sold their possessions and
goods and helped whoever needed help, and (g) and met together in one accord by
praising God. The Lord added to the church daily. The church began to grow at a rapid
pace as these principles were followed. When persecution came from Jewish leaders and
later, from the Romans, these believers were able to stand and pray together and the Lord
continued to add to them those who were faithful. When difficulties came, Acts 4:32
tells us that all the believers were of one heart and one soul, and all the things they had
were in common and no one said that the things he possessed were his. With such love
and care, no one among them lacked anything as proceeds from the sale of land and
houses were brought and laid at the apostles’ feet (Acts 4:34, 35).
The Gospel remained largely in Jewish communities until in Acts 10; God pushed Peter out of his comfort zone and had him preach the Gospel to Cornelius who was not a Jew. When the brethren heard that the Gentiles had heard the word of God from Peter, they contended with him as to why he preached to the uncircumcised (Acts 11:1, 2). Soon the apostles and the brethren were convinced that the Gospel must also be preached to the Gentiles. Therefore, Barnabas and Saul were chosen and sent to Antioch where the disciples of Jesus Christ began to be called Christians (Acts 11:26). Later Barnabas and Saul were officially released from their responsibilities and sent by the Holy Spirit on God’s mission to the Gentiles (Acts 13:2-3).

As they began to go from one place to another, just as Peter had established the house fellowship at Cornelius’ house, so Barnabas and Saul (who dropped his Jewish name and adopted a Roman name, Paul) began to establish similar house churches. Not only do we have an indication of a house fellowship of the Philippian jailer and his household (Acts 16:34) and fellowship at Jason’s house (Acts 17:5), but the house churches continued in the house of Mary, the mother of John Mark (Acts 12:12); the house of Lydia (Acts 16:40); the house of Justus (Acts 18:7); the household of Crispus (Acts 18:8); house to house (Acts 20:20); the house of Philip (Acts 21:8); a church in the house of Priscilla and Aquilla (Rom 16:3-5, 1 Cor 16:19); the household of Aristobulus (Rom 16:10); the household of Narcissus (Rom 16:11); brethren with Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas and Hermes (Rom 16:14); saints with Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas (Rom 16:15); Nymphas and the church that is in his house (Col 4:15); the household of Onesiphorus (2 Tim 4:19); and Apphia, Archippus, and the church in their house (Phlm 1:2).
This seems to indicate that the early followers of Jesus did not have a highly structured or institutionalized church, but a witnessing church emanating out of households of faith meeting in homes. Petersen (1992, p. 81) stated that the apostolic team and the local believers were interdependent on each other and co-labored together.

After the apostles were thrown out of synagogues, they would take with them the new converts (who listened to their message) and “resorted to the homes of their converts, where they continued to teach” (Petersen, 1992, p. 79). The homes became the focal point for religious activities and everyone became like a giant family, since everyone helped each other in whatever needed to be done.

Petersen (1992, p. 94) believed that it was the institutional church that began a downward spiral of monopolizing religion. Church Fathers such as Augustine, for whom Christendom has great respect, believed “that the visible institution of the Catholic church . . . was the Body of Christ and that outside it there was no salvation.” Clergy ruled; they exerted power on the believers in every area of life and were the ones who held the keys to heaven and hell. Petersen (1992, p. 94) concludes “The average believer was encircled by the institutional church.” Radmacher (1972, p. 43) reminded us of another church father, Cyprian, who stated, “You cannot have God for your father unless you have the Church for your mother.”

The main issue that needs to be addressed is how Muslims can be integrated into the body of Christ. If they accept Jesus but are rejected by their community or family, then they can be culturally and socially ostracized. Medearis (2008, p. 135) believed that “a Muslim’s identity is major. If he becomes a ‘Christian,’ the rejection will be immediate and final. If he can retain his cultural identity and yet follow Jesus without
having to convert his religious title to Christianity, he benefits in that he can keep his family and his normal healthy relationships. He can also begin … ‘an insider movement toward Jesus as Christ.’”

When the Jews were expelled from the synagogues, they began following the teachings of Jesus by using a house church model. As mentioned above, the church grew rapidly because everyone loved and shared with each other. However, when the church became institutionalized, the growth of the church became stagnant.

Considering the example of Jews, how will Muslims who accept Jesus worship when they leave the mosques. In traditional churches, they have had issues of identity, being looked at with suspicion, culturally displaced, and ignored. Therefore worshiping in house churches, just as the early Jewish converts had to do when leaving Judaism, is for Muslim followers of Jesus a way forward for mission to this religion.

Summary

In this chapter, we laid out the theological foundations for evangelizing and assimilating Muslims within Adventism. First, the biblical foundation for cross-cultural mission was explored under five sub-headings: mission of God, mission to the whole world, cross-cultural mission, mission even to Muslims, and Adventism as the last day mission movement. Then, the Old and New Testaments were explored to discover the mandates for mission to the children of the East under two sections: the children of Ishmael in prophecy and the prophetic role of Seventh-day Adventists and the mission to the children of the East. Finally, we looked at the New Testament house church model.
In the next chapter, we will review the literature that deals with evangelism among and integration or assimilation of Muslims (especially the Muslim Background Believers).
CHAPTER 3

EVANGELISM AMONG AND INTEGRATION OF MUSLIMS: A LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature relating to evangelism among Muslims and their integration into a Christian church system is not that diverse. Muslim evangelism is not like general evangelism, and therefore evangelism among Muslims is considered difficult and, therefore, often avoided. For centuries, not much happened, but in the last century, the church woke up to the idea of “teaching all nations” which included Islam. Therefore, the literature for evangelism and integration among Muslims is not abundant, but there is enough to begin to strategize a way forward. A full literature review related to the topic would be unproductive. The topic of evangelism and integration of Muslims has been discussed in Christian mission journals and a few books can be found on this topic. Therefore, this literature review will mainly be based on journal articles and online databases.

The works reviewed are divided into the following three categories: First, Muslim growth and conversion statistics will be analyzed to understand better the challenge to apostasy in Islam. Second, the history of evangelism among Muslims and methods used worldwide will be reviewed. Third, integration strategies that different Christians have used will be reviewed.
Islam’s Growth and Presence in the West

For almost 1,400 years, Islam was a distant religion with little impact on the West. However, with recent migration, the situation is far different today. Wikipedia (2012) reported that “as of 2011, it is predicted that the world’s Muslim population will grow twice as fast as non-Muslims over the next 20 years.” Osindo (2005, pp. 53-54) reminded us that Muslims first began to come into Britain in 1869 when laborers were needed to build the Suez Canal. However, until 1951, the population of Muslims was only 23,000, reaching 82,000 in just ten years, and then escalating to 369,000 by 1971. The growth was predominantly possible due to the Immigration Act of 1962 which allowed Muslim men in Britain to bring their families over and due to the Africanization policy in Kenya and Malawi which brought an influx of Asian Muslims from East Africa.

Looking at the present situation, Michaels (2009, p. 1, para. 3) affirmed that in the last 30 years, the population of Muslims in Europe has more than doubled and by 2015 it will double again. Moreover, in Brussels, it was recently recorded that the top seven names for boys were Mohamed, Adam, Rayan, Ayoub, Mehdi, Amine, and Hamza. Archick (2011) reported that studies have shown that the largest proportion of Muslims is in Belgium and France (6% and 8%), then Denmark, the United Kingdom, Sweden, Germany, the Netherlands, Austria, and Switzerland (each with 4% to 5%).

Ahmed (2005, p. 1) stated that “it’s agreed upon unanimously that Islam is the fastest growing religion in the world, specially in the west, Europe, etc.” Today, Islam has been intertwined in the very fabric of Western society. A statistical portrait of 18 December 2008 reporting on Muslim migration to North America stated, “Native Muslim
Americans are well integrated into American society, while many newcomers are just beginning to adapt to American life” (Muslims in America, 2008).

This indicates that Islam is no longer a religion far away in the Arab world, but very much a part of Western society. In addition, many Westerners are converted to Islam as well. A report from Swansea University in the UK has reported that the number of people converting to Islam has risen from about 60,000 in 2001 to about 100,000 in 2010, including successful white women (Rahman, 2011, par. 1). Carter (2010) reported about the conversion of former Prime Minister Tony Blair’s sister-in-law to Islam: The “journalist and broadcaster Lauren Booth, 43 who is sister of Cherie Blair, now wears a hijab whenever she leaves her home.” In fact, Bauer (2005, p. 41) quoting Woodberry, stated that one of the main reasons Islam has been growing in the West (especially America) among Black Americans is because they are taught that “Christianity was a religion of the White man and that Islam was the religion of the Blacks.” This is also a strategy that is being used by Muslims in the UK to convert Black Caribbean young people.

Muslim Conversion to Christianity

There is no doubt that Islam is growing statistically. It is important to find out is if this growth is just biological or by conversion. Dunlap (2008) has done some studies of Muslim conversions worldwide and believes that this is an untold story. He contends that Muslim families in many countries, especially Western Europe, have a high birthrate, giving the appearance that Islam is growing. He cited a USA Today report that Muslims, for the first time, outnumbered Roman Catholics 19.2% to 17.4% as a percentage of world population, but argued that Islam as a religion, when measured by conversion
increase, is not growing, but rather decreasing, since millions of Muslims living in the Middle East, Africa, and Western Europe have already left Islam. This may be just the beginning of a mass exodus from Islam. Reynolds (2011) further cited the al Jazeera Network, where al Qataani stated that alarming numbers of Muslims are turning to Christ and estimated that every year, six million Muslims convert to Christianity (Dunlap, 2008). Greenlee (2012, p. 205) stated, “That Muslims in significant numbers are coming to Christ to faith in Jesus Christ—in a biblical sense—is no secret.”

Though it had always been considered difficult for Muslims to come to Christ, yet Sookhdeo (2010) believed that today worldwide there are more Muslims becoming Christians than at any time in history. They are coming through national evangelists, friendships, the media, the internet, visions, dreams, healings, and acts of God. McCurry (1976) reported the same thing four decades ago, saying that many missionaries and national Church leaders testify to an increasing openness among Muslims to talk seriously about the claims of Christ that have resulted in an increasing number of actual converts seeking baptism.

How do these conversions take place? Greenlee (2012, p. 219) referred to the contribution of Woodberry in pointing out five trends that are significant in the growth in numbers of Muslim coming to Jesus. These include politics (Islamic resurgence with attractive Christian witness), catastrophes (an opportunity to relieve their suffering), migration (receptivity of migrants), blessing and power (ministering in healing and power), and ethnic and cultural resurgence (the gospel translated into various cultural forms). Referring to the Adventist mission to Muslims, Whitehouse (1999, p. 189) lamented that since the focus of the church has been minority groups, Muslim
populations have been untouched by Adventists, and whilst the Christian mission to Muslims happened during 1850 to 1950, Adventists realized this mission even later than that.

**Conversion of Muslims and the Law of Apostasy**

As noted above, there is agreement from both Christian and Muslim sources that conversion of Muslims to Christianity is increasing, yet there would probably be even more if the law of apostasy did not exist. Reynolds (2001) reported how Mohammed Hegazy became a Christian in his native Egypt. However, his petition to change his religious identity was rejected in February 2008 by the Egyptian government (which routinely recognizes conversions from Christianity to Islam). Through this process, Hegazy’s conversion became public news in Egypt. He has since received numerous death threats and now lives in hiding.

Reynolds (2011) clarified the perspective of Islamic jurisprudence, saying that converts to Christianity are not Christians of Muslim background. They are Muslim apostates and all the major traditional Islamic schools of law agree that the punishment for apostasy is death. Sayings attributed to the Prophet Muhammad, which constitute the second source of Islamic jurisprudence, recommend execution. Yet, in the modern period, many Muslim scholars have argued that Islam does not demand death for someone who leaves the faith. Vigilante attacks are sometimes justified by Muslim religious leaders by citing the Islamic principle of “forbidding evil” (see Qur’an 3:104), which they take to mean that individual Muslims should play a role in enforcing Islamic law. In this way, the Saudi author Salih Ibn Abdallah insists that shedding an apostate’s blood is still licit, even if the state does not impose the death penalty. With similar logic,
the well-known Egyptian scholar Muhammad al-Ghazali defended the assassins of Farag Foda, a human-rights activist killed in 1992 after being accused of apostasy for his irreligious writings (Reynolds, 2011, para. 11).

How does Islam define apostasy? Mir (1987), in *A Dictionary of Qur’anic Terms and Concepts*, declared that the Arabic word for apostasy is “irtidad.” Traditional Islamic law prescribes the penalty of death for a Muslim who commits apostasy. The advocates and the opponents of that penalty have, in their attempt to find Qur’anic support for their views, appealed to certain Qur’anic verses, but the fact is that none of the arguments offered do full justice to the Qur’anic context.

Sharkey (2004) argued that the task of winning Muslims to Christ is far from easy, despite the committed efforts of Christian evangelists. Muslim converts faced stiff social sanctions from families and communities, including assault and kidnapping, the prospect of disinheriting, divorce, ostracism, and even the possibility of death through “honor killings.” Sharkey (2004) reported that missionaries in the late 19th and early 20th centuries lamented that these threats deterred most Muslims from Christian conversion. Contrary to the missionaries’ hopes, therefore, conversion out of Islam never became a mass movement, even in the first quarter of the 20th century when the social, political, and economic climate of colonialism was most conducive to Christian evangelism.

*BBC News* (2008) reported, “Last week, British teacher Daud Hassan Ali, 64, was shot dead in Somalia. His widow, Margaret Ali, said her husband was targeted by Islamists who ‘believe it is ok to kill any man who was born into Islam and left the faith’.”
Based on such reports all around the world, there seems to be a fear in the hearts of many Muslims to convert. Medearis (2008, p. 133) stated that “the most serious heresy for a Muslim is to leave Islam. Those who do are often abandoned, ostracized, cut off, and in some places, executed. To leave the path of God for anything is to invoke his wrath, and Muslims live in fear of this.” What are the teachings of the Qur’an and what is the official position of Islam on conversion (Muslims converting)?

In the Qur’an chapter 3 verse 110, it states that Muslims and the Islamic religion is the best for mankind.

Ye are the best of peoples, evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in Allah. If only the People of the Book had faith, it were best for them: among them are some who have faith, but most of them are perverted transgressors.

In another Qur’anic passage, it is emphasized that one does not need to seek another religion when he or she already has Islam. In Qur’an chapter 3, verse 83, it states, “Do they seek for other than the Religion of Allah? while all creatures in the heavens and on earth have, willing or unwilling, bowed to His Will (Accepted Islam), and to Him shall they all be brought back.”

In Qur’an chapter 60, verse 10, it states that if the wife of a Muslim is, or becomes, an unbeliever, the marriage can be discontinued and the dowries paid for them can be demanded back.

O ye who believe! When there come to you believing women refugees, examine (and test) them: Allah knows best as to their Faith: if ye ascertain that they are Believers, then send them not back to the Unbelievers. They are not lawful (wives) for the Unbelievers, nor are the (Unbelievers) lawful (husbands) for them. But pay the Unbelievers what they have spent (on their dower), and there will be no blame on you if ye marry them on payment of their dower to them. But hold not to the guardianship of unbelieving women: ask for what ye have spent on their dowers, and let the (Unbelievers) ask for what they have spent (on the dowers of women who come over to you). Such is the command of Allah: He judges (with justice) between you. And
Allah is Full of Knowledge and Wisdom.

Maududi (1994), a 20th century Islamic scholar, whose teaching and opinions have become greatly emphasized in the world today, wrote to clarify any doubts about this doctrine of Islam by saying that to everyone acquainted with Islamic law it is no secret that according to Islam the punishment for a Muslim who turns to kufr (infidelity, blasphemy) is execution. Doubt about this matter first arose among Muslims during the final portion of the nineteenth century as a result of speculation. Otherwise, for the full twelve centuries before that time the total Muslim community remained unanimous about it. (p. 17)

However, Nickel (1999, p. 51) noted that some modern western Muslim scholars such as Rahman “argue that this Law of Apostasy is not consistent with their faith,” yet “most ordinary Muslims believe their faith indeed prescribes the death penalty for leaving Islam.” While the teaching on apostasy is consistently understood by Muslim scholars and presented by the Qur’an, however it states in Qur’an 2:256, “let there be no compulsion in religion: Truth stands out clear from error: whoever rejects evil and believes in Allah hath grasped the most trustworthy hand-hold, that never breaks. And Allah heareth and knoweth all things.”

Based on this Qur’anic verse, one can assume that in Islam there is no pressure on a person whether he stays in the religion or leaves the religion, meaning there should be no compulsion on a person’s choice. However, this does not seem to be the case in actual life. Perhaps the reaction to and contempt of the unbeliever may be derived from the following further Qur’anic teaching. The Qur’an contains instructions and examples of how to meet and treat unbelievers. The Qur’an states that Muslims have to be careful about having non-believers as friends, advisors, consultants, or protectors (Qur’an 3:118 and 4:144). Rather, it states in Qur’an 8:39, “Fight them on until there is no more tumult
or oppression, and there prevail justice and faith in Allah altogether and everywhere; but if they cease, verily Allah doth see all that they do.” Also in Qur’an 5:51 it states, “O ye who believe! take not the Jews and the Christians for your friends and protectors: They are but friends and protectors to each other. And he amongst you that turns to them (for friendship) is of them. Verily. Allah guideth not a people unjust.” Continuing in Qur’an 9:5, it states,

But when the forbidden months are past, then fight and slay the Pagans wherever ye find them, an seize them, beleaguer them, and lie in wait for them in every stratagem (of war); but if they repent, and establish regular prayers and practice regular charity, then open the way for them: for Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.

In Qur’an 9:12, it states, “But if they violate their oaths after their covenant, and taunt you for your Faith, fight ye the chiefs of Unfaith: for their oaths are nothing to them: that thus they may be restrained.” Furthermore in Qur’an 9:29, it states,

Fight those who believe not in Allah nor the Last Day, nor hold that forbidden which hath been forbidden by Allah and His Messenger, nor acknowledge the religion of Truth, (even if they are) of the People of the Book, until they pay the Jizya with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued.

Teachings about Unbelievers in the Hadith
(Traditions)

In the Hadiths there is further explanation of these commands to struggle against the unbelievers (infidels). In the Hadith of Sahih Muslim (1:33), the Messenger of Allah said, “I have been commanded to fight against people till they testify that there is no god but Allah, that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah, and they establish prayer and pay zakat.”
In most references of the Qur’an, Christians have not been clear enemies to Islam but in the Hadith, the view of Christians is quite different. In the Hadith of Sahih Muslim (19:4294), it states,

When you meet your enemies who are polytheists (which includes Christians), invite them to three courses of action. If they respond to any one of these, you also accept it and withhold yourself from doing them any harm. Invite them to (accept) Islam; if they respond to you, accept it from them and desist from fighting against them ... If they refuse to accept Islam, demand from them the Jizya. If they agree to pay, accept it from them and hold off your hands. If they refuse to pay the tax, seek Allah’s help and fight them.

Based on the following Hadiths, it becomes evident that no religion or system of worship will be tolerated except Islam. In the Hadith of Sahih Bukhari (8:37), it states,

Allah’s Apostle said, “I have been ordered to fight the people till they say: ‘None has the right to be worshipped but Allah.’ And if they say so, pray like our prayers, face our Qibla and slaughter as we slaughter, then their blood and property will be sacred to us and we will not interfere with them except legally and their reckoning will be with Allah.”

Also in the Hadith of Sahih Bukhari (53:392), it states,

While we were in the Mosque, the Prophet came out and said, “Let us go to the Jews.” We went out till we reached Bait-ul-Midras. He said to them, “If you embrace Islam, you will be safe. You should know that the earth belongs to Allah and His Apostle, and I want to expel you from this land. So, if anyone amongst you owns some property, he is permitted to sell it, otherwise you should know that the Earth belongs to Allah and His Apostle.”

Further in Sahih Bukhari (2:24), it states,

Allah’s Apostle said, “I have been ordered (by Allah) to fight against the people until they testify that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah and that Muhammad is Allah’s Apostle, and offer the prayers perfectly and give the obligatory charity, so if they perform that, then they save their lives and property from me except for Islamic laws and then their reckoning (accounts) will be done by Allah.”

In explaining the verse in the Qur’an found in Surat al Imran, chapter 3, verse 110, Bukhari (1997) stated in 60:80 that the prophet said, “The Verse:--‘You (true Muslims) are the best of peoples ever raised up for mankind’ means, the best of peoples
for the people, as you bring them with chains on their necks till they embrace Islam.”

Furthermore, in explaining Qur’an 8:39 and Qur’an 2:193, Sahih Bukhari (1997) (60:40) went on to say that the verse which states, “And fight them till there is no more affliction (i.e. no more worshiping of others along with Allah).” “Affliction” of Muslims is explicitly defined here as a condition in which others worship a different god other than Allah. Muslims are commanded to use violence to “rectify” the situation. Sahih Bukhari (59:643) stated that the prophet of Allah said, “Testify that none has the right to be worshipped except Allah, or else I will chop off your neck!”

In the book on the life of the prophet by Ibn Ishaq/ Hisham (p. 959), it states,

Then the apostle sent Khalid bin Walid . . . to the Banu al-Harith and ordered him to invite them to Islam three days before he attacked them. If they accepted then he was to accept it from them, and if they declined he was to fight them. So Khalid set out and came to them, and sent out riders in all directions inviting the people to Islam, saying, “If you accept Islam you will be safe.”

Thus, the men accepted Islam as they were invited. The text goes on to say that Khalid taught the al-Harith about Islam after their “conversion,” proving that it was based on fear of slaughter, rather than as a free and intelligent decision.

The most famous hadith about conversion is probably found in Hadith of Sahih Bukhari (9:57) where it states, “Whoever changes his Islamic religion, kill him.” This is why conversion from Islam is very difficult due to such fears.

Evangelism to Muslims

Evangelism to Muslims is a path that is laden with failures and discouragements. After Islam’s birth in the seventh century and its apparent growth by converting (or taking over) Christian lands, Christians all over the world have endeavored to reach out
with the gospel to the Muslims, but with very little success throughout most of history. Even up to the 20th century, the Christian church as a whole appeared to consider this an insurmountable mountain. Henry Martyn was probably the first modern missionary to Islam who went to Calcutta in 1806 and was not able to serve more than six years since he died in 1812 (Werff, 1977, p. 31). D’Souza (2001) recalled how the Henry Martyn School in Lahore was founded in the early 20th century as part of a Christian missionary effort to provide men and women with a thorough preparation for engagement with “non-Christians.” The two main roots of the school were the missionaries to Moslems League and the All-India Association founded in 1912 by Rev. John Tackle and the Department of Islamic Studies at Bareilly Theological Seminary, established by Dr. Murray Titus in 1925 and directed for its brief five-year existence by John A. Subhan.

It was the energy and charisma of the American missionary Samuel Zwemer that was chiefly responsible for catalyzing the early Indian initiatives. Not surprisingly, it was also Zwemer who persuaded British missionary societies to accept a proposal for a united center of work among Muslims. Reynolds (2011) also believed that Samuel Zwemer, a Dutch Reformed missionary from Michigan, was known as the Apostle to Islam for his long career of mission work among Muslims in Yemen (1890-1913) and Egypt (1913-1929), but he is not known for winning many converts. The first chapter of his 1924 work, The Law of Apostasy in Islam, ponders the question, “Why So Few Converts in Islam?” Zwemer reported that in his day, 438 missionaries in Egypt together won no more than 150 converts. These disappointing numbers, he concluded, were due to the menace that potential converts faced from their society. Whitehouse (1999, p. 189) commented that since Adventism comes garbed as Western mission, for Muslims this is
just an extension of crusades by the blasphemers. After years of dedication to the Muslim mission by Erich Bethmann, Robert Darnell, Kenneth Oster, and others, by communicating the Advent message effectively, Whitehouse (1999, pp. 189-190) rejoiced that these efforts have begun to bear fruit during the past decade as Adventist missionaries have experimented with sympathetic approaches towards Muslims, and reported that several contextual ministries were being established.

Methods of Evangelizing Muslims

Bourne (2009) believed that it was Phil Parshall’s 1980 book that brought an explosion of new ideas and new approaches. While the creative ideas in the book are to be welcomed, they have also raised a good deal of controversy. The controversy involves some fundamental questions about what the gospel really implies. What is salvation? What are we saved from and what is the basis of our hope? In addition, what is the Church and what does it mean to be a member of the Church? Although the book presented new ideas and approaches, there has also been criticism of these “new paths,” which mainly came from that section of the Church that would label themselves as Reformed and Evangelical (in the traditional sense of the word). They stress the teaching of Scripture as the basis for the Church. On the other hand, Bourne (2009) reported that those branches of the Church have generated many of the new approaches that portray themselves as more open to the Spirit of God. They are the “out of the box” people who feel they resonate with contemporary (Western) culture more than tradition. This is evangelicalism.

Allen (2008) believed that certain patterns emerge in places where Jesus-centered communities blossom. Some methods are more effective than others. These “Fruitful
Practices” include principles and activities, which have resulted in Jesus-centered communities. Allen listed three types of fruitful practices: ways to communicate a culturally relevant biblical message in the heart language of the people, sharing the gospel in story form in oral societies, and developing leaders with methods that fit the local context.

Bourne (2009) also listed successful methods being used for Muslim evangelism to Messianic Muslims: use of appropriate vocabulary, the Camel Training Method, storytelling, the Seven Signs, the Emerging Church movement, and the Fuzzy Set Theory.

Ahmed (2005) who is a Muslim scholar studied which strategies were employed by Christians to evangelize Muslims. He listed these Muslim outreach methods as follows;

**Confrontational**

In the 18th and 19th centuries some missionaries—Henry Martyn, Karl Pfander, and St. Clair Tisdall, for example—tried to win Muslims by public debate. These scholars preached in the bazaars and produced apologetic and polemical literature in English and the vernacular languages. Their approach was never very successful in terms of converts, and often produced increased Muslim antipathy toward Christianity. Henry Martyn who had an attractive personality but was drawn into the “controversy with Islam” or public debate, later said, “I have now lost all hope of ever convincing Mohammadans by argument. . . . I know not what to do but to pray for them” (Werff, 1977, p. 34).
Traditional Evangelical Model

Samuel Zwemer (1867-1952), the “apostle to the Muslims,” was the pioneer of this method. During his early years (1890-1916), he tended toward confrontation. In his books, *The Disintegration of Islam* (1916) and *Mohammed or Christ* (1916), he called for “radical displacement,” a complete rejection of Islam by its adherents. However, later in his career, he followed a more anthropological and Christocentric approach. Wilson (1952, p. 13) said that it was Zwemer who called the Church to preach the Gospel to Muslims “more than any other man.”

Institutional Model

Several denominational missions have used an institutional model. For example, Presbyterians and Congregationalists tried to win Muslims through hospitals, schools, and orphanages.

Dialogical Model

The dialogical approach was pioneered by Temple Gairdner (1873-1928) and developed more fully by Kenneth Cragg. Dialogue is motivated by a sincere love that seeks to reconcile Muslims and Christians.

Contextualization Model

In this approach missionaries try by every possible way to become like Muslims so they can present the gospel in religious and cultural forms that Muslims can identify with.

Other Methods
Ahmed analyzed these methods mentioned above, but Christian evangelists elaborate the contextual approach in detail. One approach that is widely used is the Camel Method. Walker (2010) described how the method explores a Qur’an passage describing the Virgin Birth, miracles, and the resurrection of Isa al-Masih (Arabic for “Jesus the Messiah”) in order to use the passages as a bridge to the New Testament. The method was detailed in a book, *Camel Training Manual* by Kevin Greeson, who observed Muslim-background converts in Asia who used that method successfully.

Shaw (1990) believed that those who have the least cultural distance from the receptors should do the most effective witnessing. Put another way, the best communication should take place when there is the least cultural distance to bridge between a communicator and the intended audience, i.e., when there is the least amount of “noise” in the communication process.

Commenting on the confrontation approach, Wilson (1971, p. 40) recalled that “this approach to Islam in times past came to be known as ‘The Great Moslem Controversy’.” He remembers the “historical examples of Christian protagonists confounding the learned men of Islam, but this did not usually result in the latter’s accepting Christ.” Addison (1942, p. 287) believed the foremost obstacle to the proclamation of the Gospel is the *claims* of Islam. Even if the confrontation approach can win converts, they will be intellectual Christians whose devotional and spiritual life will be neglected (p. 292) and therefore, it suggests that Christ’s divinity can only be learned through contact with Christ and when the person changes from inside (p. 295).

Whitehouse (1999, pp. 192-194) suggested that for Adventist mission, following a six-step approach should be used to reach Muslims. First, establish credibility with the
Muslims as a fellow believer through social and spiritual interaction; second, engage in discussion of personal spiritual concerns through using the Holy Books; third, engage in serious inquiry to know Allah better and receive his blessings through trust in Jesus as mediator and miracle worker; fourth, move to a belief for a personal assurance of salvation through belief in the sacrifice, death, and resurrection of Jesus; fifth, express personal belief through your own religious life including tithing, Sabbath, and healthy practices; and sixth, fellowship fully with Allah’s last-day people through baptism and participation in the Adventist church fellowship. Osindo (2005, p. 69) encouraged that “Christians should view the presence of Muslims in the West as a God-given blessing . . . if Christians cannot reach a Muslim Pakistani, given the freedoms allowed in Britain, how will they ever be able to reach one in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan?”

**Integration of Muslims**

**Insider Movements**

How and where the Muslim background believers (MBBs) will be integrated and assimilated is a question that has been debated most of the 20th century among Muslim evangelists. The most common method has been the extraction method or integrating the convert to the traditional church. For a few converts, this strategy worked very well, but bringing in people movements of Muslims to Jesus has caused geographical, structural, and ethical problems. This is why evangelists have been looking at other methods of integration.

Around the turn of the 19th to the 20th century, the possibilities for integration apparently provided nothing other than the traditional church. Zwemer who was probably one of the first missionaries to the Muslim lands was discouraged due to the
lack of converts. Little did anyone know that at that time, but Parshall now (2012, pp. 221-222) records that Sadrach, an MBB in Indonesia born in 1835 and died in 1928, established a church that was faithful to Scriptures while keeping its Javanese expression of culture and rituals. At the end of his ministry, 7500 MBBs were in his church membership. Parshall (2012, p. 224) recalled how there was no mention of Zwemer leading any Muslim to Christ, whereas Sadrach, by employing contextual approach, had so much success.

The term *insider movements* have been used within Christian circles to describe one of the methods of integration or assimilation of Muslim background believers (MBBs) into an environment, which is familiar. Higgins (2009) described them as movements of faith in Christ that remain integrated with or inside people’s natural community. They have two distinct elements: a) the gospel takes root within pre-existing communities or social networks, which becomes the main expression of a church in that context; b) believers retain their identity as members of their social-religious community while living under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the authority of the Bible. Bourne (2009) felt that *insider movements* are of more recent origin. Higgins further explained how these *insider movements* function states: “A growing number of families, individuals, clans and/or friendship-webs becoming faithful disciples of Jesus within the culture of their people group, including their religious culture.” Smith (2009) referred to an insider definition used by John Travis: “One who embraces Jesus, yet remains as a light in his ‘oikos’ (household) so that as many as possible might be saved.” Although the term is new, the core idea goes back to Phil Parshall (1980). Lewis (2007, p. 75) defined an “insider movement” as movement to faith in Christ where a) the gospel flows
through pre-existing communities and social networks and where b) believing families, as valid expressions of the Body of Christ, remain inside their socio-religious communities, retaining their identity as members of that community while living under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the authority of the Bible.

Reynolds (2011) felt that the most popular, controversial, and recent idea in Muslim evangelism involves building insider communities (C5 and C6 on Travis’ scale) that in some way maintain their Muslim identity and form their own communities within Islam through the CAMEL method, a name taken from the title of a book by missionary Kevin Greeson (2004).

Contextualization

In 1 Cor 9:19-22, Paul demonstrates how biblical contextualization for cross-cultural ministry is to be done. He explains how he will behave in different cross-cultural situations in order to communicate the gospel by building bridges and disarming objections. Whitfield (2012) stated, “Contextualization is adapting communication of the gospel to the forms and expression of another culture so that mundane obstacles to the gospel may be overcome. Contextualization must happen so the gospel is not seen as foreign to a culture. However, the content of the gospel must not be changed in this process.” Taber (1979, p. 146) defined contextualization as “the effort to understand and take seriously the specific context of each human group and person on its own terms and in all its dimensions—cultural, religious, social, political, economic – and to discern what the Gospel says to people in that context.” Bauer (2005, p. 19) defined it simply by saying “contextualization is the presentation of the eternal truths of Scripture within the cultural setting of a group of people.” Osindo (2005, p. 70) recalled that
contextualization has had a very heated debate within Christianity for some time now because many fear that contextualization leads to syncretism, but stated that Hiebert, therefore, called for critical contextualization, where beliefs and practices of the target culture are evaluated against the scripture (1985, p. 186).

Reynolds (2011) recalled that in recent missiological literature, the contextualization of the evangelism of Muslims is described with a scale (see Table 2)—originally developed in 1998 by a person using the pseudonym of John Travis, he

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C1</th>
<th>C2</th>
<th>C3</th>
<th>C4</th>
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<tr>
<td>Traditional church using non-indigenous language. Christian churches in Muslim Countries entirely removed from the culture. Christians exist as an ethnic/religious minority.</td>
<td>Traditional Church using indigenous language. The cultural forms are still far removed from the broader Islamic culture.</td>
<td>Contextualized Christ-centred communities using Muslims’ language and non-religiously indigenous cultural forms. Style of worship, dress, etc., are loosely from the indigenous culture. Local rituals and traditions, if used are purged of religious elements. May meet in a church or a more religiously neutral location. The majority of the congregation is of Muslim background and call themselves Christians.</td>
<td>Contextualized Christ-centred communities using Muslims’ language and Biblically permissible cultural and Islamic forms. Similar to C3 except believers worship looks like Muslim worship, they keep the fast; avoid pork and alcohol, use Islamic terms and dress. Community is almost entirely of Muslim background. Believers are not seen as Muslims by the Muslim community. They call themselves “followers of Isa Al-Masih, Jesus The Messiah”.</td>
<td>Christ-centred communities of “Messianic Muslims” who have accepted Jesus as Lord and Savior. Believers remain within the Islamic community. Aspects of Islam incompatible with the Bible are rejected or if possible, reinterpreted. Believers may remain active in the mosque. Unsaved Muslims may view C5 believers as deviant and may expel them from the Islamic community. If sufficient numbers permit, a C5 mosque may be</td>
<td>Small Christ-centred communities of secret/underground believers. These can be individuals or small groups isolated by extreme hostility. Openly sharing faith is typically not attempted.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
published this spectrum as a “practical tool for defining six types of Christ-centered communities.” Nikides (2006) described the contextualization scale, developed from Travis (1998, pp. 407, 408), as follows:

Dixon (2009) suggested that when the C1-C6 Spectrum made its appearance around 1990 in the Sundanese Muslim situation of West Java, Indonesia, it was promoted as a contextual model even though it had few of the traits normally expected of a contextual model.

Dixon (2009) felt that there seems to be some uncertainty as to what the scale actually measures. Advocates of the scale such as Parshall (1998) argue that it measures the degree to which a community is contextualized. Dixon (2009) suggested the term *template* would be more accurate. Travis (2000) himself has described it as a simple chart. Interestingly enough, those who have adopted the insider approach betray the same confusion. Gray (2009) believed that there is a considerable degree of confusion about what the C-scale was seeking to measure. Sleeman (2012, p. 502), for ease of clarity but with recognition for these diverse opinions, preferred to treat the terms as broadly equivalent to each other. The biggest debate within Christianity has been on the C5 model.

Daniels (2011) encouraged MBBs (Muslim Background Believers) to think of the bazaars as their mission frontier. He felt that we are placing significant, strategic mission power within the grasp of fledgling local churches. It does not require large amounts of foreign funding for these brothers and sisters to visit the local bazaar; they already do so for their regular shopping. In order to engage this mission field, the local church needs very little foreign help. What they need is exposure to the vision and perhaps some
coaching in areas where their ministry skills might be weak, such as cross-cultural awareness or other particulars relating to the people group to which the bazaars belong. This is a strategic niche that we foreign missionaries can easily fill, and by so doing, empower the local church to fulfill its destiny.

Woodberry (2007) a professor of Islamic Studies at Fuller Seminary in California has been studying missionary outreach in the Muslim world for thirty years. The number one reason Muslim converts listed for their decision to follow Christ was the lifestyle of Christians living among them.

Reynolds (2011) felt that Christian missionaries, especially evangelical Protestants, developed radically different strategies of evangelization due to the difficulties encountered by Christian converts from Islam in recent years. In the 19th and most of the 20th century, “Western missionaries sought to build churches that celebrated baptisms publicly and taught the locals to pray like German Lutherans or American Methodists. In most of the Islamic world, however, these efforts failed miserably” (para. 18). He also believed that because the Protestant missionaries struggled in the Islamic world, it has led today, to a trend to contextualize the evangelism of Muslims. The person behind that trend who argued that gospel of Jesus Christ should be presented in the context of given group of people and the philosophy of mission was developed in part by Parshall (2003). There are others who believe, like Parshall, that contextualization is important to reach Muslims. Reynolds (2011) informs that some evangelical missionaries today prefer to design churches that look like mosques where shoes are removed when entering and where the Bible is displayed on a stand typically used for the Qur’an. Finally, Brislen (1996, p. 355) believed contextualization should not just include
developing a church in Muslim context by adapting the worship forms, but “the needs of believers must be met by the church in this context of Muslim culture.”

Obstacles to Muslim Integration

McCurry (1976) offered two reasons that lead Muslims to shy from identifying with the Christian movement. First, most Christians forms are patterned after Western models. Western missionaries established churches in Muslim countries on the pattern of their sending churches, whereas the opposition of the Muslim world against the West is well known. The other reason is the fact that in India, these churches won people from the lowest classes of Hinduism; they still bear the stigma of caste system. From the perspective of South Asian Muslims, such Christians are considered socially inferior.

These Western-styled churches are a hindrance to the Muslim people not only in the West, but also in the east. Bauer (2008, p. 99) recognized that a Muslim inquirer may come into a church, but may find that the Bible (the Word of God) is placed on the floor. This is very offensive for a Muslim. Even a Muslim who has been converted may feel uncomfortable in a Western-styled church. He may be shocked at the lack of modesty among women attendees and may feel that it hinders his spiritual experience because of this. This issue is no different within Adventist churches, which apparently teach modesty of dress and promote conservative lifestyle practices. Due to this phenomenon, Bauer (2008, p. 99) concluded, “Adventist churches are not conservative enough to be bridges to the Muslim community.” Bauer (2005, p. 50) believed that in order for the members to make the gospel relevant to their community, such as Black Americans, “the church must acknowledge and educate its members concerning the contributions that
people of African descent made within the Bible and also in Church History.”

An increasing number of actual converts are coming forward and seeking baptism. However, they are not willing to be incorporated into existing churches. This poses the question: can a culturally acceptable model be designed for receiving these Muslim converts? Osindo (2005, p. 69) recognized the main difference between the UK community of Muslims and Adventists, both of which are mainly immigrant communities; Adventists are more individualistic, whilst Muslims are more community-oriented. This is why Muslim converts would “find nothing in Adventism that could replace the close-knit community they are leaving.” He suggested that the solution to this dilemma can be in developing small groups or cell churches. However, Cragg (1959) believed that any model must be church-oriented and “no man comes into a churchless Christ.”

In his dissertation, Roth (1983) stated that the reason why some Muslims refuse to become or remain Christians once they are baptized is that they are not attracted to or welcomed by the churches with which they are acquainted. He argued that in some areas of the Middle East, there are older churches whose members can trace their history back to apostolic times and who, for various cultural, ethnic, or political reasons, do not feel friendly toward Muslims; they do not desire Muslim converts to attend their church services. McCurry (1976) agreed that “the Church has lost its evangelistic concern for Muslim evangelism. Today, its outreach is mere tokenism. And when a Muslim convert does seek to identify with the Church, he is resisted and made to feel unwelcome.”

House Churches

Once Muslims accept Jesus, where they will fellowship is a fundamental issue.
Livingstone (2003, p. 179) suggested that they have three options: (a) remain as Jesus Muslims in the mosque; (b) join a traditional church with the consequences of being alienated from the family, and possible death and lack of support from the existing church; and (c) join a Muslim converts group that maintains some of the Muslim worship forms. Though traditional churches would wish to have Muslim background believers join them in their worship, this has seldom worked. Bauer (2008, pp. 99-101) agreed with this problem and suggested that the members of the Adventist churches would be willing to be incarnational if evangelism to Muslims has to be a reality and questions whether all the churches would be willing to take on the very conservative ways of the Muslim community? If the intention of the Adventist churches is to assimilate Muslim background believers, then radical adjustments would have to be made. He shows the difference between the Adventist way of doing church and Muslim understanding. For example, Muslims have a high regard for their Scriptures while many Adventist would put the Bible on the floor in churches. They respectfully refer to the prophets, whereas Adventist would mention Jesus as a buddy. They would separate male and female while sitting in a religious gathering and they emphasize that modesty for women is important in worship, whereas in an Adventist church, women may come with short skirts or low necklines. Bauer (2008, p. 101) argued that since Adventist churches are liberal, as compared to Muslim religious values and practice, “this leaves us with the challenge of finding an alternative way to witness to Muslims without the expectation that they would be easily assimilated into the existing Adventist communities.”

Travis (2000) reported that some Muslims have converted to Christianity and worship at local traditional denominational churches, or in small home fellowships with
other Muslim background believers (MBBs). Others worship secretly because of fear of persecution. Still others, often called “Messianic Muslims,” follow Christ but remain within the Muslim community. Bauer (2008, p. 101) advocated “no group of people should be forced to become liberal in lifestyle issues in order to hear the gospel.” To those who say that contextualization is not godly (nor Biblical), Paulien (2005, p. 220) argued that “the Bible offers significant examples of contextualization.” He believes that “contextualization is not limited to the human authors of Scripture, God even adjusted the content of visions in order to more effectively communicate his message to the inspired prophets.” For him the best example of contextualization is the incarnation of Jesus himself. Bauer (2005, p. 260) informed that “in countries with predominantly Muslim populations, the Adventist Church has experimented with a contextualized ministry approach that encourages faith development from within the Muslim community.”

Parshall (2003, p. 160) proposed “serious consideration should be given to the establishment of a homogenous church, that is, a church made up of recent converts to Christianity from Islam.”

Bartlotti (2001) stated that the exciting reality is this: in Central Asia and Southern Asia, in parts of the Middle East and Southeast Asia, as well as in countries of the West, there are now a growing number of MBBS or Muslim followers of Jesus meeting in cell groups, churches, and Christ-centered communities. One of the best supports for a house-church model is found in the example of Chinese Christians, who because of persecution worshipped secretly in houses. The reason why we are exploring alternative methods of assimilation of the Muslim background believers is because the risks are too great from the local culture and Muslim society. China is a good example in
this scenario of how people are assimilated in non-traditional (out of the box approach) structures to join the body of Christ. China has no choice but to use the house church model in order to continue to worship without being closed down. Word of Life (in China) has itinerant evangelists who began to establish house churches in Henan province in the 1970s. They continued to grow in the 1980s and 1990s not only in Henan, but even in other provinces. Today, Word of Life is the largest house church model in China, having over 20 million affiliated believers (Xin, 2008, p. 158).

Iran is another good example where the underground house-church model was developed because an open church was not possible. Rosenberg (2008) reported that there were only 500 Christians in Iran in 1979, but more than one million Iranians believe in Jesus Christ today, most of whom meet in underground house churches. Garrison (2004) also indicated that many Muslim “churches meet in homes, not dedicated church buildings.”

However, the house church movement is now growing all over the world. The house church model is not only good for countries where Christianity cannot be openly practiced, but even in America, Christians are looking at this model for their unchurched friends. Spreeman (2013) reported that in 2003, there were 1,600 house churches based in the U.S. that have official websites online. Those sites are estimated to have quadrupled. He also states that according to George Barna, by 2009, as many as 30,000 house churches were established where estimated six to twelve million Americans attend them. Adams (2009) reports that Barna today believes that 70 million meet outside church walls. Commenting on the house church movement that is growing in America, Bremmer (2012) believed that there are five things that they are doing wrong: meeting in
houses does not necessarily solve the problem that being institutional allegedly creates; house churches are inwardly focused; they are not really making disciples; they are not evangelizing, but mainly socializing and they have the arrogance of doing church the biblical way. Another view is that since people in early Christianity did assemble in houses, does that mean that the house church model is the norm? It has been argued that the assertion that ‘house church’ was God’s deliberate intention for the church comes without biblical evidence except that early Christians did assemble in houses. (House church movement: A study of denominations).

Several house church models are being used in the Western church setting. Adams (2009, pp. 71-73) presented two house church models used in the Western setting. The Southern Baptist Convention is probably the leader in using the house church paradigm. For them, a house church is based on five to six individuals who covenant with one another to be a house church which is self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating. The second house church model was developed within the Adventist denomination by Elder Bill Levin and is being used in North America. This model consists of two stages (2009, p. 171): a pre-house church (called a “Group”) and a house church (called a “Mission Group”). However, this model has not grown substantially.

In the Western world, a house church model, called a “Simple Church,” is based on the house church movement that began with the “Brethren” movement, and even much earlier with the Waldenses and is used in the USA and UK. Adams (2009) did a project utilizing the simple church principles by establishing his own version of a “simple church” that is being used in North America and some other western countries. His “simple church” operates out of a decentralized paradigm that is faithful to the Adventist
mission and uses a CORE4 group (a group of four Adventists who start a Simple Church).
CHAPTER 4

DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I will examine the methodology of the strategic development and implementation of a house church model in London, England. My research method is based on qualitative research generated by observation and evaluation of the model. This is in partial fulfillment of the project report, “Assimilating Muslim background believers into house churches in London, England.” Where a Muslim background believer (MBB) worships or is assimilated into has been debated within the Adventist Church for a few decades now. MBBs have a choice either to continue in their Islamic framework by changing the meanings of the worship, be assimilated into the existing Adventist church, or find an alternative form of worship by which he/she can continue to worship and practice his/her spirituality. Irwin (1996, p. 22) pointed out that “unfortunately, the Church is not always ready to receive and nurture them. The fear of false motives and the open hostility and persecution of the Muslim community are two reasons Christian churches have not welcomed Muslim converts.” Parshall (1980, p. 237) recognized that “traditional churches sometimes make such unreasonable cultural demands on the inquirer that all but a hardy few will totally reject them.”

Methods of Assimilation

This project report, “Assimilating Muslim Background Believers into House
Churches in London, England” presents a house-church model as a method of assimilating Muslim Background Believers (MBBs) into the body of Christ. This chapter will outline the directions for developing and implementing the above task of a house-church model and will explain in detail how it will function in the implementation stage. Love (2000, p. 208) believed that “New Testament churches were house churches, often centered around one family.” Examples of such churches include the church in the house of Aquila and Priscilla (Rom 16:5; 1 Cor 16:19), the church in the house of Nympha (Col 4:15), and the church in Philemon’s house (Phlm 2). People ate together, they sang, taught each other, prayed, made decisions, admonished others, and referred to each other as brothers and sisters. Barrett (1986, pp. 20-21) was also convinced that the “earliest Christian churches met in homes . . . These churches continued meeting in houses through at least the second century . . . Archaeological excavations show houses that were used for worship and later remodeled for larger assemblies of the church.”

Barrett (1986, pp. 22-24) recalled that though big sanctuaries that looked like Roman basilicas in the late third century replaced the house church model, yet renewal movements down through the ages have rediscovered the house church model. The monastic movements, Martin Luther in the early years of the reformation, the Radical Reformers of the sixteenth century, Quakers in England, Pietists in Europe, and Methodists in the eighteenth century under John Wesley, all advocated for house church meetings.

**Traditional Method of Assimilating Muslim Background Believers**

Within the traditional method of assimilating MBBs, the procedure has been
almost the same for centuries. Someone shares the gospel truth with a Muslim friend; over a period of time, the person accepts the message and desires to be baptized. The person is baptized in a regular church service and becomes part of the local church. The person goes and informs his family of his newfound faith, hoping to be able to witness to them. Instead, the family becomes deeply hurt and upset by the apostasy of one of their own kin. Simson (2001, p. 5) recalled the humorous sevenfold strategy of evangelism of the Willow Creek Community Church as follows: a. Spend time with non-Christians. b. Protect them from the church. c. Witness to those new friends about Jesus Christ. d. Protect them from the church. e. Lead them to Christ. f. Protect them from the church. g. When they have matured a bit and are ready for a culture shock, introduce them to the church for the first time.

This is very important to understand in Muslim evangelism. If Willow Creek Community Church recognizes this for North American people, how much more is this true for Muslims who are completely from another cultural, geographical, and spiritual background? Coming into a traditional church (especially in a Western setting) for a Muslim background believer can produce culture shock, but to a newcomer who is not a believer yet, but only an inquirer, a typical church service is often very offensive. If that inquirer continues in the Church and becomes a believer, for most, it is a miracle. Most Muslims believe they could never worship with Christians, as they are unclean because they eat pork or drink wine. Within most traditional churches, modesty in dress is not observed, people talk during the service, and members often place the Word of God (Bible) on the floor. These things are very offensive to the newcomer or even an MBB (Bauer, 2008, p. 99).
Furthermore, when a person is assimilated into a local church, her relationship with her family is severed and there is a great risk to their security (and life). Maududi (1994, p. 17) reminded us that “to everyone acquainted with Islamic law it is no secret that according to Islam the punishment for a Muslim who turns to kufr (infidelity, blasphemy) is execution.”

At other times for safety reasons, the person is transferred to another geographical location. This is called extraction. Advising about one area of Muslim evangelism, Parshall (1980, p. 230) emphasized that “believers should be encouraged to be discreet in sharing their faith openly until they have brought several others from among their friends and relatives to Christ. ‘Extraction’ must stop. The believers must remain in their culture.”

The traditional church has made it difficult for MBBs to share and fellowship together. Barrett (1986, p. 22) reminded us that when Christians moved away from the house church model in the late third century to sanctuaries like the Roman basilicas, then everyone had to come to the bishop and hear him speak and receive sacraments from him. This helped to accommodate numbers of believers worshiping together, but also made the house church model obsolete. Thurman (1982, p. 13) said that the “house church movement was [an] anticlerical movement.” Simson (2001, p. 58) reported that it was in AD 380 when two bishops Theodosius and Gratian ordered that all should be part of the state-recognized orthodox church and all other meeting places, including house churches, were forbidden. In fact Jesus came to free us from buildings, sacrifices, priesthood, and laws. Birkey (1988, p. 132) lamented that the institutionalized churches that try to reinstate a liturgical system which revolves around a professional priesthood was
completely demolished by Christ. Adams (2009, p. 4) recalled that Constantine made three specific changes: “(1) Sabbath to Sunday, (2) lay-led to professionalized priests/clergy, and (3) homes to public basilicas/cathedrals/churches. This worship in churches is referred to as “church houses after Constantine” (a term different from house churches) (Simson 2001, p. 58). Krupp (1993, p. 55, 57) declared that Jesus never erected buildings, nor did he instruct his followers to do so.

A Contextualized Church in a Muslim Setting

Another approach is to encourage MBBs to remain culturally Muslim in order to witness to others and remain safe in their old community. This approach has been under discussion within the Adventist Church. Parshall (1980, p. 160) suggested that “serious consideration should be given to the establishment of a homogenous church, that is, a church made up of recent converts to Christianity from Islam. This church would not be a competition with the established body of believers, but rather would be a parallel structure.” Schantz (1993, p. 339) suggested that “if we encourage converts to develop their own churches, we must do everything in our power to avoid giving the impression that the Muslim is not welcome in existing churches, or that he is a ‘second-class’ believer. Some way must be found for established churches and convert churches to extend the right hand of fellowship to each other, if only on certain special occasions.”

House Church Model

Considering the immense problems with the extraction approach that includes isolation from community and society, assimilating an MBB into an existing church may be an easy solution, but as noted above, there are other implications and hindrances.
Developing convert churches in the community or allowing secret believers to continue in the mosque isolates new MBBs from Christian fellowship and in some cases the MBBs may not even realize they belong to the same faith as other Adventists in their community. Convert churches also have certain security issues and hinder witness to the wider community in a credible way. Therefore, this project suggests a house church model for assimilating MBBs that allows spiritual growth within a known environment of one’s family and home. Parshall (1980, p. 229) reminded us that homes in Muslim communities are already used as a centre of social activity and “can be readily accepted as a church. They provide privacy and require no additional financial expenditure. The expansion process is feasible through new converts’ opening up their homes. They must be brought to see this as their responsibility.” Nickel (1999, p. 55) suggested that “the church in Muslim contexts need to be a new family for young converts from Islam.”

Unlike a small group, which sometimes serves as a preparation for moving into the main church, the house church is the main church. It is a church which is comfortable and informal (Love, 2000, p. 208). Anderson (1975, p. 33) declares that what sets a house church apart from a small group experience is that house church members make a commitment to love and care for one another in God’s name. Garrison (2004, pp. 191, 192) believed that churches meet in homes, not dedicated church buildings and this keeps gatherings “small enough … for a layperson to lead without leaving their secular employment.”

Barrett (1986, p. 20, 23) reminded his readers that house churches were the modus operandi for the earliest Christians. It was not until the late third century that Christians began to build sanctuaries of worship like the Roman basilicas.
This rest of this chapter will elaborate on the methodology that will be used to
develop and implement a house church model and will detail how that will function. The
first section will discuss the pre-implementation stage, followed by the implementation
stage.

**Development of House Churches**

Before a house church model can be implemented, there is a lot of ground work
that needs to be done to prepare for such an approach. The activities that are
accomplished before the house church begins to function are vitally important and will
determine the success of the implementation phase. I guided the pioneers that were
selected to do the witnessing and worked at the pre-implementation stage myself. I
developed a framework of how to guide the pioneers, which included a lot of mentoring
not only through the pre-implementation and later the implementation phase of the house
church model, but mentoring them in their personal lives to prepare them to be the kind
of person that would have an impact to the spirituality and nurturing of other potential
MBBs. I continued to give Bible studies to both pioneers even after they were baptized to
instil in them a passion for following God themselves, and stressed that before they could
witness to others they themselves needed to be spiritual people. Even though their heart
was in the right place, Habibi especially had certain habits that needed to be overcome
and through our personal encounters and Bible studies, he began to come closer to Jesus
and made a strong commitment to follow Him. Rahmani on the other hand simply
needed to have more knowledge of the Word of God and learn the mechanics of the steps
for pre-implementation and then implementation of the house church. I intentionally
mentored both pioneers in this process. Even after the house churches were finally
established, and even today, I continue to mentor them and challenge them. Following are some activities that the pioneer will be involved with before the house church is implemented.

Witness Begins in an Unreached Territory

There are two individuals (also MBBs) who were baptized a couple of years ago who had been attending existing traditional Seventh-day Adventist churches. Upon my request and guidance, both agreed to begin to witness in their geographical regions (in London) in order to establish house churches as the pioneers of this house church model. At this stage, the pioneer will begin to witness in an unreached area, which is chosen carefully based on the growth of the Muslim population. Many Adventist churches are in the Muslim neighborhood, but very few are involved in any ministry to Muslims, let alone their neighborhood. The main reason for this lack of initiation has been the fear that reaching Muslims is very difficult.

Actually, not only reaching Muslims, but also assimilating them within the Christian framework is not an easy task. There are many hindrances to reaching Muslims with the gospel and Cloute (2002) highlighted some of them as follows; teachings of Islam, misinformation about Christianity, family and culture. The pioneers will begin to interact in a new territory though they may already have some contacts and connections.

Contacts and Friendships are Developed

In order to move the Muslim ministry forward in a new area, contacts need to be established which will turn into friendships. Marsh (1975, p. 60) emphasized that in the initial stage, we should “take every opportunity of being friendly with Muslim neighbors,
shopkeepers, or others. Show them that you love them in practical ways. Do not try to preach at them. Be a good listener.” Taber (2004, p. 33) believed that no matter which faith you are witnessing to, you must always approach those of other faiths with love.

The pioneer will spend more time with one particular friend in order to remain focused on his intentions. This friend who would be an influential person may become the person of peace in this new territory. The pioneer is not to develop casual friendships and limit his contacts on an acquaintance level only. The pioneer will take these friendships seriously, but focus on one or two relationships and be willing to spend time with his newfound friend. Taber (2004, p. 122) agreed that Muslims need to know that he is their genuine friend and is willing to spend time with them. Palmer (n.d., p. 130) stated that “no matter how true the preaching is or how beautifully it is expressed, the missionary must establish a warm, loving relationship with the people he wants to reach. And it takes time.” Cloute (2002) reiterated that by stressing the fact that in order to reach out to Muslims with the gospel, we need to be true friends, especially when the Muslim is living in a western culture outside of his community because that is when he feels alone. This is why Palmer (n.d., p. 133) also believed that “apart from love nothing can be done to spread the gospel as Christ commanded.” Many MBBs have been interviewed to determine what brought them to Jesus and Nickel (1999, p. 45) noted that several MBBs agreed that “the love and kindness of Christian friends has been most attractive to Muslims” and others have testified “they came to Christ when Christians showed concern for them and valued them for who they were.” Marsh (1975, p. 60) recommended that you “invite the Muslim to have coffee with you in your home, and always accept an invitation to have coffee with him, especially in his home. In the early
days it is wise not to attempt to speak about spiritual topics with your friend in the presence of others. He will be embarrassed and forced into a defense of his own faith.”

Although we are encouraged to develop friendships with individuals, yet it would be better to work with households if possible. In one part of Europe, a Muslim person was baptized and after one year, his wife and children have still not attended church. Unlike women, when a Muslim man decides to grow spiritually and even accepts the truth, his wife (and household) should be involved in this process so that the entire household is won. Birkey (1988, p. 60) confirmed that Paul’s missionary strategy of starting work in a new territory was to win a household first which became the nucleus and the center of the advancement of the gospel in their area.

In this stage the pioneer will develop contacts in his area and focus more seriously with one or two friendships to take them further. The reason why we say one or two is because they can spend time together and find the person of peace. The pioneer will have many friends but should pursue one or two relationships more seriously. Taber (2004, p. 97) encouraged us that “Muslims are looking for friendship and will sense your genuine interest in them.”

Using the Qur’an as a transitional tool

Christians have always tried to use the Bible to explain the fundamentals to Muslims, but with little success. In recent times, the allegations that the Bible is corrupted have been presented. If the seeker/inquirer were willing to study from the Bible, there would be no problem in presenting the truths from the Word of God. However majority of the Muslim seekers/inquirers are certain that the Bible is changed by the Christians, therefore the pioneer would initially encourage the Muslim friend to
study his Qur’an and thus challenge him on key areas of Biblical truth. This should be done on a one-to-one basis, for security reasons, but also since “personal evangelism rather than public preaching is the method which produces results” (Wilson, 1950, p. 97). While the pioneer encourages his Muslim friend to study the Qur’an, he will also question his friend on what he knows about all the holy books of Allah (heavenly scriptures). The pioneer will present this truth very confidently by beginning to inquire why they say that they believe in four holy books (Tawrat, Zabur, Injil, and the Qur’an) and it suffices to read just the Qur’an. These questions will pave the way for the first Qur’an study, which is what the Qur’an says about the Bible (Tawrat, Zabur, and Injil)? The pioneer begins his first study about the Holy Scriptures by using the Qur’anic text. He then moves into studying the basic fundamentals of faith and the salvation story using the Qur’an itself.

Though Adventists would hope to have their Muslim friends study the Bible, the reality is that most Muslims are not very eager to do that. Many Christians do not want to touch the Qur’an because they have a negative opinion about it. Whitehouse (1993, p. 253) clarified that “most of the questions surrounding the issue have resulted from a simple lack of adequate field experience in the matter.” We have noticed that the Qur’an can help us clarify many misunderstandings of our Muslim friends. It can be used to challenge the understanding that our Muslim friends have about Jesus, the Bible, and even God. Nickel (1999, p. 44) noted that an MBB said that he “challenges his friends to face the questions which the Qur’an itself poses about the character of God and boldly concludes, ‘the creator-God and Jesus are one and the same being’.”

The Qur’an can be used as a bridge to the Bible. Since Muslims have been told
that Bible is no longer the Word of God after the Qur’an has come, they will not readily 
be willing to touch the Bible. Therefore, we have to move from the known to the 
unknown. Using the Qur’an, the pioneer will study about the validity of the Bible in the 
Qur’an, Jesus’ mission and his sacrifice, Jesus’ divinity and his status (more than a 
prophet). A study (Christian witness among Muslims, 1971, p. 10) showed that we 
should “go from the known to the unknown. Start with the things that Muslims already 
know about: such as one God; Jesus as prophet, teacher, healer; the last judgment; prayer; 
morality. Lead on from there.”

Transition to the Bible

Here the pioneer will introduce his Muslim friend to the Bible (having shown the 
validity of the Bible using the Qur’an). At this time, the pioneer can provide some 
materials that the Muslim friend can read that give a description of the Christian faith for 
the inquirer. Saal (1993) provides a list of some resources (see Appendix 1).

Miller (1976, p. 140) said there is no fixed pattern by which to share the good 
news to Muslims since each individual is different; therefore, each individual should be 
approached in the way that is appropriate for him or her.

The pioneer continues to encourage his friend to read the Bible privately for his 
devotional, but also continues to have Bible studies with the Muslim friend on a weekly 
basis. Who Jesus is and his teachings (fundamental beliefs) will be emphasized in these 
studies so that the person can be prepared for baptism.

Introduction to a House Church

At this stage, if the Muslim friend is willing, he can be assimilated into the house-
church to continue to grow spiritually in a worship setting. In the beginning, the pioneer may have only one or two Muslim friends in the house church, but as he continues this ministry in that new region, the numbers will grow. He can begin the house-church at his own home or the homes of one of the other Muslim friends. If the friend has a family, then the entire family (the household) can join in worship within the house church. As the pioneer continues to witness to other Muslim friends, he/she brings his Muslim friend to the house church so that the friend can grow spiritually with other MBBs. It is also good for the Muslim friend to meet others in order that his trust will grow and he will be confident to take the next step knowing that others have done it, as well. Olson (1976, p. 60) called this a human potential method where the process is trust building and giving and receiving of love.

We propose a house-church model because families and individuals can be introduced to the house church in order to grow spiritually. This is why it is important to begin with strong Muslim friends (especially a family) who are convinced about Jesus' teachings. Waters (2000, p. 174) wrote, “We know in our hearts that a solid church is not made up of few struggling individual believers, but that to grow and reproduce, it must be founded on strong families.” This is why a house church model can assimilate entire families, not just individuals. This is the kind of environment in which members are willing to invite their friends and family members.

This becomes a model of hospitality and socializing. Birkey (1988, p. 40) reminded us that it is the model of the house church that gives us insight about the way early Christianity functioned and serves as a sociological model too. There were houses churches in Jerusalem, Philippi, Corinth, Ephesus, Colossae, Laodicea, Troas, and even
in Rome. These house churches were experiential, defining church as a family and household of God and the embodiment of Christian hospitality. Not only does Jesus expect his church to enjoy hospitality, but Jesus loved to mingle with all and loved hospitality, such as when he asked Zaccheaus to eat at his home that day.

Baptism

After studying in the Bible, with references in the Qur’an, about the sacrificial death of Jesus and his free gift of eternal life with the Muslim friend, the pioneer will continue to study the Adventist fundamentals (the teachings of Jesus). At an appropriate time, the pioneer would take the opportunity to invite the person to be baptized to seal his commitment. This will be done on the day that the pioneer studies the importance of baptism in the New Testament. However, there is no hard or fast rule for this since every individual case is different. Addison (1942, p. 300) suggested that “what a Moslem should be required to know and believe before he is baptized depends on what he is capable of understanding and what his particular guide regards as indispensable.”

The problem, however, is that we may emphasize the knowledge of doctrines as the test of orthodoxy, but the new believer’s experience with Jesus and his lordship will help him to be faithful. Addison (1942, p. 300) recognized this and therefore concluded that “personal faith is far more important than intellectual acceptance of dogmas.” Johnsson (1993, p. 152) emphasized that when a candidate is ready for baptism, he accepts Jesus as Lord but renounces all other claims of lordship. This is important to clarify as diminishing the lordship of prophet Muhammad can take a long time. Glasser (1979, p. 133) also points out that Christ’s authority and lordship are crucial.
Nurse in the House Church

Discipling a new believer in the house church is very important. Barrett (1986, p. 88) believed that making disciples is a process that not only begins with evangelism to the nonbeliever, but also continues even after baptism.

The new believer is encouraged to become a faithful disciple by reading the Word of God and praying regularly. The believers can also be introduced to material that will assist them to explore the basics of their new life in Christ and understand the practical implications of the faith. For discipling new believers, a Survival Kit written by Ralph Neighbor is available from MECO Literature and Video (see Appendix B). Nickel (1999, p. 48) suggested “following a profession of faith in Christ, the disciple maker should lead the convert in a period of individual instruction in all the fundamental truths of the New Testament.” We do need to emphasize here that not only should we teach the truths from the New Testament, but also from the Old Testament, since the new believer needs to take both the Old Testament and the New Testament as the Word of God.

Marsh (1975, p. 88) reported, “Galatians is an ideal book for Muslim converts. The new convert must be able to explain his faith to others and to meet their objections from the New Testament.” Addison (1942, pp. 297-298) believed that the new believer must be taught the distinct Christian teachings such as incarnation, atonement, trinity and the kingdom of God, but his experience with Christ is of greater importance than the theories about Christ. Nickel (1999, p. 49) believed that the most important thing the pioneer needs to emphasize to the new believer “is to present Jesus as the new source of authority and as the example for daily behavior . . . help new converts from Islam through a transfer of lordship.” Anderson (1975) stated that “formulating theology is a secondary
enterprise for religion. The primary task of religion is to introduce man to God and man
to his neighbor, to provide an opportunity for growing a relationship which real and
seminal.” This is why, though the above doctrinal knowledge and cognitive
understanding is important for the new believer, the most important aspect of growing in
faith is to experience the love of God made operational in the lives of the members, the
good news. Anderson (1975, p. 33) believed that one way of experiencing this good
news is through the house church because “love is what the house church is all about:
love made real in the lives of men and women; love not only verbalized but also
actualized; love incarnate, made flesh, an authentic part of human relationships.”

Here in the house church, individuals begin to trust each other mutually and the
members begin to open up to each other. Anderson (1975) stated that when people
become transparent about their feelings, others love them and trust grows. The irony is
that people long to belong, yet hesitate to trust others. Barrett (1986, pp. 92-93) said that
discipling a person could mean even confronting him or her when the person does
something wrong (based on Jesus’ principle of Matthew 18), because it is a process of
helping each other to be molded in the image of Christ. He suggested that one area of
making this possible is to be faithful friends by being accountability partners where they
share personal and spiritual lives together. Adams (2011, p. 125) reported that in their
survey, 88% MBBs considered accountability to be important, whilst 84% considered
that confronting sin with discipline was important. Addison (1942, p. 300) suggested that
the emphasis should be “on the expression of faith in moral conduct, on the readiness to
witness to that faith, and on the need to nurture the spiritual life by Bible study and
prayer.” Adams (2011, p. 116) found that of the MBBs that they surveyed, 99% felt that using the Bible as central source of life, growth and mission was important.

Invitation to Worship With Other House Churches

Just as the Muslim friend is introduced to the house church in order that he can meet with other MBBs from his background, the house church can also meet with other house churches at some points during the year. Nickel (1999, p. 57) realized that being part of the Ummah, the worldwide Islamic community, gives a special identity for a Muslim. Therefore, when a person leaves his Muslim community, his identity as an MBB is challenged. Though the pioneer is the initial point of contact for a new community (and identity) for the MBB, Dehqani-Tafti (1982, pp. 79-80) noted that no individual, however saintly, shows the love of God in Christ fully. Its interpretation needs the community of the faithful – the people of God. The church where two or three are gathered together in His name – this is the core of the matter. What a tremendous role is theirs, not least when their gathering together is in the midst of a world where for centuries Islam has prevailed.

This is why the Muslim friend is introduced to the house church, but Jansen (2000, p. 193) believed that even the house churches (of MBBs) “can meet together occasionally with other house churches for celebration services, if possible.” It would also be appropriate that the members of the house churches (MBBs) be introduced to the wider Adventist body of believers if and where the security situation allows for it. They should know that their identity is the same as the wider Adventist movement and the only reason that they are not in the traditional church is for the reasons mentioned in this study.

Implementation of a House Church
First and foremost, it is very important that we chose the right person to run the house church model. The qualifications and job description of a house leader is given in appendix V. During the implementation stage, the functions of the house church will be noted. Though in the previous section, the inquirer or an MBB could be introduced to the house church, it is within the functions of the house church that the implementation process is seen in action.

The implementation stage determines how the house church will function. This is a step-by-step guide of how the house church will be conducted in order that nurturing will be best accomplished. The purpose of this paper is to show the methodology, which shows the development of the house church (pre-implementation activities) and functions of the house church (implementation activities). The activities that are performed to provide spiritual nurturing within the house church are as follows:

Begin Sabbath Fellowship

Considering that we have not experimented having a house church in England for the MBBs, it is being suggested that the first house church that the pioneers will set up begin by having a fortnightly meeting (worship). Moreover, it is suggested that the meeting be scheduled for Sabbath afternoon. The pioneer may like to attend a local traditional church for his or her own spiritual growth; therefore, immediate transfer to a house church on a weekly basis may not be feasible. Jansen (2000, p. 193) believed that the house churches that meet regularly represent a good model, not necessarily which day or what time they meet.

After meeting fortnightly for some time, the pioneer, with permission from the Muslim attendees, can regularize their meeting every week. This is the ideal to which the
house church needs to move, but it may not be possible to begin with this regularity. Zdero (2004, p. 93), however, recommends that the house church should meet one to three times per week.

It is also important to address the issue of leadership here. Leadership within the house church needs a person who knows the group he or she is dealing with and is helpful to them by loving and trusting them. Anderson (1975) was convinced that “although the knowledge, the skills, and the personal qualities which are necessary for excellent house church leadership are considerable, we do not believe that only ordained clergy can become house church leaders. Committed Christian lay persons may become very good house church leaders. Many have.” Simson (2001, p. 94) believed that these leaders must be elders.

What is a house church anyway? Barrett (1986, p. 18) said, “A house church is a group of people small enough to meet face-to-face, who have covenanted with God and each other to be the church under the authority of Christ and the guidance of the Spirit.” Zdero (2004, p. 94) also believed the size of this church can be six to twelve people. Banks (1998, p. 29) concurred that the church in the house had twelve to fifteen, whereas the whole church has sixty to eighty members.

Do not wait for the church to have more people before being a church. Barrett (1986, p. 162) suggested, “Begin right away with being the Church. Worship. Share with each other. Pray together. Have fun together. Eat together.”

Importance of Fellowship and Hospitality

The house church model is ideal not only for spiritual growth, but also to socialize with each other. It is not only a great place for the individuals to be introduced but also
the families can be brought into this network. Waters (2000, p. 181) continued to propose “one possible church model that may help strengthen the MBBs’ relationships with their family and friends is that of house churches. The focus in such churches is typically less on the form or structure of the service and more on the relationships and community among the believers.” However, before anyone can be introduced to the house church, they should have been invited to the pioneer’s home first. Socializing with a meal is important and Adams (2011, p. 118) surveyed MBBs, 90% of whom believed that sharing meals and practicing hospitality was important.

Hospitality is very important in this friendship. Love (2000) believed that hospitality is an important function of the house church as it was an important component of early Christianity. Therefore, “women can significantly spread the gospel through involvement in hospitality” (p. 209). Simson (2001, p. 102) wrote, based on his confidence in what David Yonggi Cho said, “If you want to build the church, use women.” Krupp (1993, p. 84) recalled that in the first three centuries many house churches met in the homes of women (they were leaders). Waters (2000, p. 176), referring to a married Muslim woman wrote, “If a married woman is open to the gospel, perhaps a team couple could invite her and her husband to a meal or a social event as a way to get to know the husband and reach out on a couple-to-couple level.”

Importance of Building Community

Once everyone has mingled together by socializing and eating together, then it is that worship follows. The pioneer (or the leader) inquires from all about their personal life, especially any concerns about their present situation and testimonies. Although the meal is an icebreaker, this time gives everyone a chance to know the struggles they are
having and testimonies of how they are being blessed. Love (2000, p. 208) defined a house church as a place where there is “a high degree of informality. While meetings are religious, they are also genuinely social occasions.” This time is not necessarily spiritual, but a social interaction.

The house church is like a family and sharing the events of the week, whether positive or negative experiences, is important. Barrett (1986, pp. 77-78) related that his church usually allows thirty minutes for this activity followed by prayer. Going around the circle is not necessary as people should be allowed to share as they feel comfortable.

One area in which the new believer may face challenges is financial dependency. It has been noticed that many times, the new believer suddenly becomes financially paralyzed due to sanctions placed on him by his family and community or due to a broken relationship with his family and community. Wilson (1950, p. 106) believed that the convert not only faces social ostracism, but economic consequences as well. Addison (1942, p. 301) recognized that “the economic care of the convert has long since been a missionary problem—the problem of how to help him without hurting him.” First of all, financial instability is a major issue of the converts, but how to provide the help or who to help is a concern of the church. The new convert has been cut off from his family and community and has been sanctioned or barred from the privileges he once enjoyed; he now feels lonely and despised. Unfortunate as it may sound, Addison (1942, p. 302) reminded that “in these circumstances it is all too probable that he will count the missionary who has guided him as his only friend and will attach himself solely to that one source of support and comfort.” The two pioneers who are presently working in London have both regularly been of financial support and comfort to the inquirers and
new believers. Traditional churches in which these converts attend usually do not support them or see this as their responsibility; therefore, the pioneer (because of his genuine friendship and concern for the mission) willingly steps in and helps the individual. Addison (1942, p. 303) believed this apathy for the needs of others in traditional churches is due to the lack of evangelism to the unreached. He believed that if churches have a clear evangelistic intention, their love for other people by caring for those who attend in the house church will also be there. Based on his house church experience, Barrett (1986, p. 80) informed that when the need arises, economic sharing is done spontaneously; however, a mutual aid fund should be established for economic sharing. Mennonite churches are good for this kind of support. Barrett (1986, p. 80) shared that some churches have a special collection for emergency or one-time needs, other churches have monthly stipends for individuals, others have paid interest on student loans, and in London (UK), the Mennonite Fellowship has a koinonia fund, which is 10% of the offerings to help people with needs.

Importance of Praying for Personal Needs

Time is spent together praying for the needs of the individuals who have shared their concerns and their situations and to thank God for those who have positive testimonies about their lives. Individuals can be assigned to pray for other individuals. However, caution should be used here. Do not ask the newcomers to pray until they are comfortable with praying in public. They should be prayed for, but they do not have to be embarrassed when asked to pray, as this will be new for them.

Importance of Careful Selection of Songs
A few songs of praise, adoration, and worship to the Creator are sung together. Since the London house church is initially going to consist of South Asian individuals, Urdu or Punjabi songs or Zaburs (Psalms of David) should be sung. Very limited English songs will be used initially, but even in the future, English songs (hymns and contemporary songs) should be carefully chosen to avoid lyrics that may give a confused message. Songs with the usual Christian wording such as “blood,” “lamb,” “soldier,” and “cross” should be avoided in a house church setting as newcomers may not be able to comprehend the deeper meaning and instead, may get the wrong message.

The emphasis of the songs that are chosen should be on the glory and greatness of God (which the Zaburs in Punjabi language are excellent for).

Intercessory Prayer

One individual will be chosen to do the main intercessory prayer for the people, the house church, the world at large, and the Word of God that will be explored that day. Prayer should not be done haphazardly. Rather, it should be approached with great reverence and sincerity. People should feel the presence of God through the prayer that is offered. In this prayer it is also important to mention that we cannot reach Muslims in our strength. Therefore, as Challen (1988, p. 61) suggested, we need to pray for the Holy Spirit to open the eyes of our Muslim friends and also help us overcome the problems of misunderstanding between Christians and Muslims.

Using God’s Word

Initially, the pioneer will be the one to explore the Word of God through topical studies. However, as time goes on, other members can be asked to lead the study, but
with great caution. Kreider (1995, p. 102) suggested that this time of teaching should not be more fifteen minutes, although we are proposing that there be discussion, not just teaching. The Word of God (the Bible) can be opened and some references from the Qur’an can be explored to give the newcomers the confidence that the Qur’an is part of the study. The Word of God is explored topically to help the members discover God’s will for the group. This will not be a sermon; rather, it is a set of questions for the group to study the Word together.

The biblical text is explored here with a few references from the Qur’an, as well. It can be evangelistic in nature, though presented in a discussion format. It is different than a presentation style from the stage, which Krupp (1993, p. 59) called a religious production and which Jesus never intended. Saal (1993, pp. 162-164) recommended that we use the book of Luke (and Isaiah) in nine sessions to explore the true Jesus.

Within a house church, Love (2000, p. 208) believed “every believer is expected to contribute, even when it comes time to study and discuss the Word.” Birkey (1988, p. 121) objected that the New Testament documents reveal that the Word of God was presented first to allow God to speak and then, worship followed. He believed that genuine worship will take place once a person knows God’s revelation. However, for this house church model, it is being proposed that the Word of God will follow singing, although, at the end of the study of God’s Word, a dedicatory song can be sung. Tenny-Brittian (2004, pp. 17-20) concurred that praise, (worship in songs), should precede prayer and Scripture.

Applying God’s Word
At the end of the discussion of the Word of God, a question should be presented that makes an appeal to the members for commitment. There is no use hearing the Word of God without any specific lesson to take home. Moreover, this is a time when the newcomer has the opportunity to grapple with the new information (knowledge) that he has been introduced to from the Word of God. Getting an opportunity to react is important to seal the commitment or enforce the commitment.

Prayer of Dedication

Once members have reacted to the question for commitment, the person who does the closing prayer will need to remember that this is a dedicatory prayer, rather than a general prayer. The commitment that has been made by members must be presented to the Lord for the guidance of the Holy Spirit and its leading.

Topics of Study

At the end of the house church worship, the members are presented with the topic for the next study. Initially, the pioneer should be pro-active in presenting the topic of the next study, but as the members become regular, then the pioneer may want to give them the opportunity to suggest a topic to be discussed in the following meeting.

Conclusion

Though this study has been done primarily to look at the methodology of developing a house church and its functions (pre-implementation and implementation stage), the area we have not been able to deal with exhaustively is the area of management (and leadership) of the house churches. This not only includes leadership of
the house church in the way the leader manages, but the activities of discipling, decision making, accountability, and so on.

This study has explored the development and function of a house church. As Banks (1998, p. 71) pointed out, the house church “forms of church life appear and reappear as central to God’s design from the first century through the twentieth, in different parts of the world, under various social and political conditions.” In conclusion, in order to explain what a house church does, Simson (2001, pp. 82-89) presented four elements that stand out. Meeting (they meet to eat); teaching each other how to obey (helping people to obey and serve God); sharing material and spiritual blessings (they shared material blessings but also shared the Word of God, a hymn, or instruction); and finally, praying together (they devoted themselves to prayer).

Within the development and function of the house church, as Simson (2001, p. 273) did, five organic stages are suggested for this study: conception (when the pioneer goes into an unreached area), pre-natal phase (the pioneer develops contacts into genuine friendships and begins to lead a person to spiritual matters including the study of the Word), delivery (the time when the newcomer is introduced to a house church or when the household is encouraged to start a house church in their home), visible growth phase (worship takes place in a house church and newcomers and MBBs are introduced into the house church and the church grows), and multiplication (as members begin to increase, the MBBs from different geographical locations are encouraged to begin a house church in their home and are freed from attending their original church in order to multiply).

Collecting offering and giving to the wider Adventist church will need to be integrated at some point. Zdero (2011, p. 155) suggested that house churches must be
neither selfish nor stingy, but ask where God wants them to give. We have not provided any guidelines for children, but agree with Adams (2009, p. 103) that children and their spiritual development should be among our top priorities as we progress.
CHAPTER 5

NARRATIVE OF PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

In chapter 4, the methodology was outlined in two sections: the development (pre-implementation steps) of the house church model and the functions of the house church (the implementation steps) of the house church model. Before the development of the house church it is important that the AMR leader of the conference or even the AMR leader of the house church choose a pioneer who will lead the house church. The qualifications and job description of such a pioneer are listed in appendix V. This will help in choosing the right person. The development of the house church included the following steps and these are also listed in appendix U: pioneer begins to witness in an unreached territory; develops contacts and friendships (finds the person of peace); one-to-one Qur’an study is encouraged; transition into the Bible to study about Jesus and his teachings; introduction of the inquirer into the house-church; the person is baptized at the appropriate time; the new believer is nurtured in the house church; and they have worship together with other churches. The functions of the house church (the implementation stage) included the following steps: the pioneer begins Sabbath fellowship at a seeker’s home; since hospitality is paramount to house church fellowship we will begin with a meal or refreshments; testimonies and challenges of personal life; pray for each other; worship in songs; main prayer; the Word of God is studied for guidance; appeal for commitment; dedicatory prayer; next worship topic is planned.
In this chapter, the narrative of how the implementation of each of the steps was carried on will be elaborated to explain the process. We will also explain here why some of the steps were not applied or adjusted. In the final part of this chapter, we will write the narrative of the people who went through the process to determine what their opinion and feedback was about the experience of the house church. We will also be able to address the key issues of integration or assimilation into traditional churches, extraction and other issues, and determine how this project was able to deal with such issues. We will also give the narrative of how relationships developed to solve the problem of separation.

**Introduction**

I have been the leader of the department of Adventist Muslim Relations in the South England Conference since 2006. The department was established in 2002 by my predecessor, Oscar Osindo, under the vision of the Conference to reach out to the growing Muslim community in England. It was a strategic move within the West where no other conference at that time had a department or an office for Adventist Muslim Relations. However, after nearly ten years of ministry, we had still not seen any baptisms.

Then Muslims began to be baptized in 2011, so we initially integrated them into traditional churches. Seeing the great difficulty or even unwillingness of local traditional churches to adjust and change in order to accommodate the Muslim (and even Asian) visitors, we planted an Asian church, composed of members from the South Asian region. The intention of planting this church was that the visitors would feel welcome and when Muslims knew the full truth of Jesus and the Bible, we would assimilate them into this
culturally-friendly church. This church for the South Asians (Pakistanis, Indians, and Bangladeshis) was of immense necessity since over half of the UK Muslims are from Pakistan. It really worked. Every time we took a Muslim inquirer/seeker, and later, Muslim Background Believers (MBBs) to this church, they felt welcomed and were happy to see people who were culturally like them. Based on the principles of generosity, hospitality and love, the visitors never went without Indian food, which was appreciated by members and visitors alike.

Muslims were excited to join this culturally friendly Asian church. However, as Asian Christian members began to increase in number and became entrenched in the traditional Adventist format of church service and moved away from my initial vision after I was no longer pastor of the Church, the love and care for these new members began to become an issue. Rahmani (MBB) was part of this Asian church while Habibi (MBB) was regularly going to a traditional Adventist church. Rahmani began to sense the lack of care and attention from the members. Habibi had been feeling this from the time he was baptized and joined the other traditional church, but continued to be faithful, although he would attend the Asian church at least once a month (bringing his Muslim inquirers there as well).

Looking at these care-issues in the culturally-friendly Asian church and more so in the traditional church, I began to think about those inquirers and future MBBs who would need to be assimilated into the Kingdom of God. I spoke to these two MBBs and asked them if they would consider beginning a house church model to assimilate our future MBBs (and inquirers) for spiritual growth and discipleship. Before I asked the pioneers to begin their house churches, I had already been mentoring both of them for
some time. However, Rahmani and Habibi continued to meet me for encouragement and spiritual mentoring. Both agreed, but still wanted to continue to attend the regular Adventist church. However, they began to think about who would come to their house church. They needed to witness and reach out or find a family to study with. Rahmani knew a family (inquirers) who had come to the church and were willing to be baptized, but they often missed church since they had six small children and had to travel by public transport, something that was difficult in winter and rainy weather. Rahmani decided to begin a house church at their home, which they readily agreed to, but Habibi had to find his inquirers and a house church.

**Development of the House Church**
*(Pre-implementation Steps)*

Pioneer Witnesses in an Unreached Territory

After carefully selecting the pioneers and mentoring them concerning witnessing and steps to starting a house church, two pioneers, Habibi and Rahmani, began to witness in unreached areas of London. The area was carefully chosen because a lot of Muslims lived there. Reaching Muslims has been very difficult in the South England Conference (SEC) and in the United Kingdom for years, but there had not been any concerted effort by the Church anyway. We applaud SEC for initiating the Department for Muslim Relations in order to make the gospel relevant to Muslims. Not only has reaching Muslims been difficult for years, but assimilating them into Adventist churches has also been a great problem in our Adventist Church worldwide. With clear intentions, pioneers Habibi and Rahmani (pseudonyms) were chosen to interact in a new area. Their
intentions were to begin to interact with Muslims in this area and eventually establish a house church.

Before Habibi was baptized, he wanted to serve God as his desire for worldly things was diminishing. He had prayed from the time the truth started becoming clear to him that God would help him to reach out to his Muslims friends who did not know the things that he himself was discovering from the Qur’an and the Bible. He was eager to share this with others, as well. As his eyes were being opened, he wondered how Muslims are kept away from the truth, especially on the issues of Jesus and the Holy Books (which includes the Bible). The teachers (Imams) would not entertain questions on such topics or would divert by saying that Jesus is just a prophet like other prophets or that the Bible was now corrupted and should not be read. However, Habibi had the privilege of going through the Madarassah and learning the Qur’an for many years and grew up in a Muslim family; therefore, not only did he know all the customs of the faith, but all the teachings of Islam, as well, (having studied it more than an average Muslim). Rahmani had not had such a deep experience with Islam, but had always been a devout Muslim, though she searched for more. Through God’s providence, both came to know the Adventist truth and were baptized.

Habibi began to witness in the areas of London, but Rahmani began to organize the start of her church since she already had a family of eight to start with. This initiative was strategically begun in June 2012 towards the establishment of a house church model under my supervision.

Develops Contacts and Friendships
(Finds the Person of Peace)
Habibi established contacts with many people across the board. He would strike up a conversation in the trains or at the shop or with new people whom he met while visiting his other friends. People would have all kinds of needs and Habibi would not hesitate to help them as much as he could. He would be a genuine friend to them, whether it was a shopkeeper, neighbor, or other friends he had only recently met. He would make the initial contact, but develop it into a relationship. Speaking the Urdu/Hindi language really helped. These people immediately connected with Habibi because they could feel the warmth and friendship, but in addition, his Muslim background projected his Muslim identity, and he capitalized on that. When asked, he would identify himself as an Adventist, true people of the Book, rather than Christian.

When I interviewed Habibi for the purpose of this paper, he told me that he felt that the best way to build friendship with Muslims in western world was to spend time with them and be willing to help them if they needed something. The majority of Muslims in UK are immigrants and many of them are students who are away from their home and family. They experience loneliness and need some kind of support; it can be financial, it can be filling out documents, or just giving moral support. Habibi does not miss any opportunity to connect and develop friendships, but he does this through the leading of the Holy Spirit who guides him to discern what help to offer. Once he was travelling in a train and a young Asian man was sitting front of him, talking to someone on his mobile phone. He was asking for help to apply for a security job and acquire a license. This conversation was in Urdu with a few words in English. Habibi could see that this person needed a license to work as a security guard. When the person finished his phone conversation, Habibi approached him to greet him with *Aslaam wa Laikum* and
inquired from him in Urdu where he was from. He told him that he was from Pakistan. Habibi asked him if he wanted to apply for a security job license and offered to help him with this. They alighted from the train at the next station and went to an internet café to download the application for the license and spent the rest of the day filling it out to send it to the Security Industry Authority. The man was very delighted and as they parted, they exchanged phone numbers with each other. The following day Habibi visited that area and invited him for lunch and learned more about the person. That little help paved the way to form a genuine friendship with this individual that has continued since and has resulted in Bible study.

The Qur’an Used as a Transitional Tool

As the friendship develops, the pioneer challenges the inquirer’s belief system using the Qur’an as a transitional tool to lead them to the Bible. The Qur’an is used to mainly establish the credibility of the Bible (Old and New Testament) by examining Qur’anic verses. The study from the Qur’an should be on a one-to-one basis, rather than group study for security reasons, but also to help the person to think for himself, rather than be influenced by his friend’s negative perceptions. Habibi remembers that when he was not a believer, a group study would not have attracted him for egotistic reasons. He now notices that the Muslims he studies with never feel convinced in a group setting. They may see the truth clearly, but will not be ready to accept it because the other person is present.

Talking about the person he met in the train, Habibi recalled that the person asked him what he did for living. Habibi responded that he was spending time learning about Holy books. The person inquired, “You mean the Qur’an?” Habibi responded, “Yes, but
more than the Qur’an. Four Holy Books: Torah, Zabur, Injil, and Qur’an.” Habibi asked him, “Would you like to see what the Qur’an says about these Holy Books?” The Qur’an study on a one-to-one basis began. Habibi has done over two dozen Qur’an studies like this with different people in less than two years. Habibi also studied with them about Jesus in the Qur’an, which really opened their eyes. Most individuals could not believe what they discovered in the Qur’an since they are taught differently from their childhood. Their respect for the Bible and Jesus grows tremendously through these initial studies.

Transition Into the Bible to Study About Jesus and his Teaching

At this stage, Habibi asks his Muslim friends if they would be interested in studying the Holy Bible, which is the Word of God. This is where the transition into the Bible takes place. They notice that the main theme within the Bible study is Jesus and his teachings (the Adventist beliefs). Initially, the Gospels are studied to learn more about the story of Jesus and who he really was, then the fundamentals of faith are emphasized using the SDA Fundamental Beliefs book (which outlines 28 fundamentals beliefs).

At the end of every study, Habibi asks them a deep question and encourages them to ponder upon it until next meeting. This question is prepared before Habibi begins his study. In order for Habibi to be confident about the contents of the study, he does his research and preparation. However, Habibi noted that sometimes, though he was prepared for the study, the conversation was on another topic that he did not plan, but the Holy Spirit helped him to answer his inquirer adequately. Therefore, Habibi believes that asking the help of the Holy Spirit to lead in the study and asking God for discernment is very important. The emotional state of the inquirer needs to be discerned as well as his
willingness to do the study, since he may be entangled with some other pressing situations in his life and may not concentrate on the study anyway.

Once Habibi went to do a study with one of his inquirers: Upon reaching his home and sitting down, Habibi realized that the man was very stressed and upset about something. Therefore, instead of having Bible study, he took him to an ice-cream parlour and had a good time just chatting. Habibi was also able to help him with his situation and upon returning home, the inquirer insisted that Habibi should have the study, which lasted for two hours.

Introducing the Inquirer Into the House Church

When Habibi feels that the person is convinced about Jesus and the Bible, he introduces them to the house church, which is being conducted in his own home. The person continues to grow spiritually and be discipled in this setting with other like-minded Muslim inquirers who have also reached this stage. Habibi cautions that as new inquirers are introduced to the house church, the time for study should not be limited, as the Holy Spirit may linger longer with the inquirer than we expect and he may want more time to discuss or clarify, to which we should be amenable.

Baptizing the Person at the Appropriate Time

After Habibi studies with his Muslim friend (inquirer) in the Bible, with references in the Qur’an, especially about the sacrificial death of Jesus and his free gift of eternal life, he continues the study about the Adventist fundamentals (the teachings of Jesus). At an appropriate time, I am introduced to the inquirer and I would take the opportunity to invite the person to be baptized to seal his commitment after seeing his
conviction. However, every individual case is different and different people may make decisions at different times based on dissimilar circumstances. Several people have been baptized by now.

The relationship with the person whom Habibi met in the train has developed into a good friendship and he showed his desire to learn more. Now he has accepted Christ and we are looking forward to his baptism. He has actually introduced Habibi to some of his own friends with whom studies have begun and they have been baptized.

Nurturing the new Believer Within the House Church

Habibi has realized that discipling the new believer within a house church setting is very important not only before baptism, but even after. The new believer is encouraged to become a faithful disciple by reading the Word of God and praying regularly. Some individuals are introduced to the Discovery lessons, an Adventist correspondence school which specializes in Bible study, prophecy study, health, and other topics.

Habibi encourages those who have accepted their new faith in Christ Jesus to share the good news with others, as well. Habibi asked one Muslim inquirer who has been attending the house church how he felt about learning new things from the Bible and about Jesus. He responded by saying that he was very happy about what he has learned and was now confident about his eternal life in Jesus. Habibi asked him if he would be willing to share this with others in the house church, to which he readily agreed. After this experience, he introduced Habibi to one of his Muslim friend with whom the initial friendship developed and Habibi has moved on to studying Quran with him.
Worshiping Together With Other Churches

Though Habibi believes that new inquirers and especially MBBs should spiritually grow and be discipled in a house church, yet they should know there are Adventists in other house churches and if possible meet believers from traditional church as well. In certain places it may not be possible as it will cause security risks. The person needs to know that he belongs to a bigger family or community (*ummah*).

Habibi, being an MBB himself, recognizes how lonely he felt when he came to attend with the Adventists, so he understands when his Muslim friends make this transition. Therefore just worshipping in one house church without ever meeting or interacting with other believers is not ideal. However, there may be places where this is not possible to do with the traditional church, however, the meeting between different house churches can be encouraged where possible.

**Function of the House Church**
*(Implementation Stage)*

In the previous section, we noticed how Habibi introduces the inquirer or an MBB to the house church. In this section we would like to see how the implementation of the house church happens. In other words, how does a house church function in real terms?

**Begin Sabbath Fellowship**

Since Habibi has already been attending a traditional Adventist church where he receives spiritual growth, it was perceived that worship at the house church that he plans to run should be on a fortnightly basis. Since he himself was attending a traditional church in the morning, an afternoon time was suggested for house church meetings. Fortnightly worship continued for some time due to this limitation, however, the house
church has recently begun having weekly worship since the interest of the members has grown, they are sincere about the Sabbath doctrine, and most of them have stopped working on Sabbath.

Hospitality Paramount to House Church Fellowship

At Habibi’s house church, the MBBs and inquirers have an opportunity to meet other MBBs who are more mature and are encouraged to know that others have gone this way before them and that they are not alone. The house church has also given them the opportunity to build friendships with others as a community of believers.

One key way by which Habibi makes the atmosphere within the church more informal and accommodating is through hospitality. This is very important for Muslims who come from the eastern cultures of hospitality. Habibi, being the leader of this house church, always makes sure to start their meeting with a fellowship meal. He believes that socializing with a meal is not just to begin the meeting at the house church, but it is a great opportunity to extend the love of Jesus and become a genuine friend to others.

Hospitality does not have to be shown in a house church only. All through the time of interaction and later, through study with the inquirer, Habibi uses that opportunity to eat with them, usually paying for the meal himself.

Habibi told me that two new inquirers joined the house church last week, but they had twice previously been invited to have a meal with him at his house.

Testimonies and Challenges of Personal Life

Once everyone has mingled together by socializing and eating together which gets them to know each other and open up, then only worship follows. When I interviewed
Habibi, he told me that he has not been doing this part in the worship time, but rather, he inquires about their personal life and circumstances and any testimonies while they are at the dinner table. He listens to their testimonials at the table and speaks to each one, inquiring about their lives.

It was apparent to us that this part of the conversation should not be done at the dinner table. Inquiring about each other at the dinner table is still fine, but there needs to be a separate time when worship begins that they sit on comfortable seats and the leader needs to let them share. They can talk about their successes, challenges, joys, and failures. They may have testimonies to share at this time or they may ask others to pray for them. We should not go around the circle asking everyone to speak as it may be embarrassing for those who do not have much to say, but let people share as they feel comfortable.

Habibi has noted that finances are one area in which the MBBs face challenges. It has been noticed that many times the new believer suddenly becomes financially paralyzed due to sanctions placed on them by their family and community or due to broken relationships with their family and community.

Habibi tells the experience of a new MBB who was recently baptized. He was so excited about his new-found faith that on the day of his baptism, he called his family and informed them of his decision although he was previously advised not to do so. Since that day, his family has disowned him and in fact, threatened to kill him. He was living in London with his Muslim friends. He began going to the traditional church and one day, a friend saw him entering church on Sabbath. That friend told other friends who lived in the same house. His Muslim friends threw him out of the house and he did not
know where to go. He contacted Habibi and informed him about his situation. Habibi not only organized a place for him to stay and provided some financial assistance, but also asked him to join the house church where he can be nurtured.

Praying for Each Other

This part was not being followed by Habibi in his house church, but he recognizes that time spent together praying for each other is important. Praying for the needs of the individuals who have shared their concerns and their situations and thanking God for those who have positive testimonies about their lives helps them realize that they can rely upon God.

I asked Habibi to begin this practice and he informed me that he has already implemented this. Individuals are assigned to pray for others. However, I have cautioned him about asking the new inquirer to pray unless they themselves opt to pray for others.

Worship in Songs

Habibi has not implemented this aspect. He did not know which songs these new inquirers would be comfortable with and which may be problematic. He has kept away from singing as he has been more interested in the main study. I have asked him to try with simple songs about God that do not cause any problem for the newcomer and have given him a few songs to sing. I have also offered to attend the next house church myself, where I will help them with this.
Main Prayer

Habibi’s housemate, who is a devout Adventist, has been leading in the main intercessory prayer for the house church. James prays for the members of the house church, for the world at large, and for the Word of God that will be explored at the day of worship.

James prays with all sincerity and people feel the presence of God through his prayer. In this prayer, he emphasizes the need to reach Muslims and the power of the Holy Spirit to open the eyes of Muslim friends with whom they are interacting and with many who have yet to hear.

The Word of God is Explored for Guidance

Initially, Habibi used to explore the Word of God through topical studies. Some weeks, James, who is also an AMR pioneer, leads the study of the Word of God. Habibi feels that the suggested time of teaching cannot be limited to 15 minutes. This is a time when people discuss and ask questions; therefore, it should not be too limited.

Habibi recalled that the last week’s study was from the Bible about Adam and Eve and the Garden of Eden. At the end of the study, he asked the members to discuss what they understood from the study and there was a good discussion. Whenever there is a new inquirer in the house church, Habibi makes sure that he explores the Qur’an along with the Bible in order to gain his confidence.

Habibi purposely asks the members to read the verses from the Bible during their study so that they will be encouraged to read God’s Word. Habibi told me about a new inquirer in the house church who likes to volunteer to read passages from the Bible during the study of the Word.
Appeal for Commitment

At the end of the discussion of the Word of God, Habibi presents a question that makes an appeal to the members for commitment. This makes inquirers and MBBs really think deeply about what was discussed. Sometimes there is a short discussion about what has been studied that day and most people like to share what they have learned.

Dedicatory Prayer

Habibi has been leading this dedicatory prayer. This is a dedicatory prayer rather than a general prayer, especially because of the commitment that has been made by members after what they learned from the Word of God. They are presented to the Lord for the guidance of the Holy Spirit and his leading.

Next Worship Topic is Planned

Habibi always gives a printout of the study so that the members can take it to their homes after the fellowship and be prepared to discuss it when they come to the next fellowship. He has not solicited their suggestions for topics as he wants to be leading a planned study so that the new inquirers can be prepared for baptism.

Suggestions and Comments

Habibi feels that they need to have assistance in renting a new house where any members who are having financial difficulties or accommodation problems can be temporarily assisted. This can also become the next house church.
As has been discussed in this chapter, the house church model is addressing the key issues of integration or assimilation, which has been a great problem within the traditional churches. The house church model as seen above deals with the issue of separation from their family since the new believers together become part of a family that cater to each other’s needs and hear each other’s problems and as a community, meet the needs of each other.
CHAPTER 6

OUTCOMES, EVALUATION, RECOMMENDATIONS
AND CONCLUSION

In the previous chapter, the narrative of the implementation model was described. This chapter summarizes and systematically describes the outcomes. This has been based on the qualitative research generated by the observations that are described in this chapter. After the outcomes are presented and evaluated, I list several recommendations and offer my conclusions.

Outcomes and Evaluation

Two house churches were begun in London; both had very different outcomes. Following are the specific outcomes and evaluation of the implementation of the house church model in London, in the South England Conference.

Outcome 1 was the expectation for the participants of the house church to grow spiritually.

Evaluation: There were two house churches that were started at the very beginning. One house church only operated for a couple of months and then was discontinued. The family in whose house Rahmani began the house church had a personal family issue due to which they could not carry on. The husband and wife separated and the house church had to be discontinued. In the process, the children
suffered, as they were really keen on learning and growing. Honesty and faithfulness in relationships with each other and to the Lord should be emphasized. The house church of Habibi began with one or two people and grew as more people were added to it. From the very beginning, personal spirituality was emphasized as an important component of the teaching. Apart from this outcome, the rest of this chapter will focus on the one house church, which continued to meet and grow.

Outcome 2 had the expectation that a house church model would be effective for the integration of MBBs or inquirers and that this model would reduce security threats and avoid the stigma attached to attending a traditional church, while providing a caring/loving environment for worship.

Evaluation: MBBs face a very real threat to their personal lives when they convert and attend traditional churches. A house church model takes away that fear since the MBB or inquirer is not going into a “church,” but to a house. It was observed that the MBBs and even the inquirers felt comfortable coming to the house church as the fear factor was reduced. Firstly, they did not have to wear special attire that would cause doubt to their family or friends. Secondly, they looked forward to meeting others who were in the similar situation. The MBBs who went to traditional churches, were often met by church members who were reluctant to engage with Muslims. Moreover, bigger churches usually do not have a personal care system, and therefore a house church became a very important place to be in fellowship with brothers and sisters from similar backgrounds.

Outcome 3 had the expectation that a house church would provide the hospitality and interaction so important to helping Muslims grow in faith in Jesus.
Evaluation: Spending time with the contacts and being willing to support them as friends was important. Helping them does not mean giving them financial assistance only, but in supporting them in other areas, such as assisting them in filling out government documents and going with them to certain government agencies—this is the type of help they never forget. However, the most important way of spending time and growing relationships was through hospitality, especially eating together. Within a house church, hospitality is the ice breaker and a time of interaction and friendship. It is a time when love and care is shown in a practical way in the house church, especially for those individuals who are single and lonely. Those who do not have families and who live alone as students also eagerly look forward to the Sabbath meal together with the other house church members.

Outcome 4 had an expectation that the Holy Spirit would open doors that seemed completely impossible and closed.

Evaluation: The pioneers recognized the need for reliance on the Holy Spirit’s leading. This was felt to be necessary not only in being led to the contacts, but in discernment as to who the right contacts were, and also for guidance during the time the Qur’an/Bible study was taking place. Habibi recalls that most of the time, the Holy Spirit guided him in what to say or how to answer a question about which he had never thought about before. Moreover, the entire house church implementation process was done under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and each stage was usually not orchestrated in order to allow the Holy Spirit to develop a natural process based on the needs and growth of the participants in the house church.
Outcome 5 had the expectation that reference to the Qur’an in casual conversation could lead to Qur’an/Bible studies.

Evaluation: Using the Qur’an in the beginning stages of interaction built credibility for the pioneer that resulted in the discussion about spiritual matters. However, the Qur’an is only used as a transitional tool to examine key biblical themes initially using the Qur’an. The Bible then becomes the source of study and nurture.

Outcome 6 had the expectation that nurturing prospective believers or new believers in a house church was a necessary step for their spiritual growth.

Evaluation: When the inquirers or new believers were welcomed into a house church, they were excited to see other people like them. When Pakistanis saw other Pakistanis, their spiritual growth and transition became much easier. They learned from each other and asked each other questions they did not want to ask in the wider group (though they were generally very open).

Outcome 7 had the expectation of developing a worship model for the house church.

Evaluation: The worship program format was not always adhered to. For instance, the testimonies were to be done as the beginning of worship, but the house church leader/pioneer felt it was necessary to hear the testimonies at the dinner table. However, the leader/pioneer now feels that to inquire about the believer at the dinner table is fine, but testimonies of what the Lord has done and the needs should be presented at the beginning of worship, followed by prayers. Songs have not been used in the worship service. It was felt that the new inquirers may have a problem singing in worship as that has not been a Muslim practice. However, the leader/pioneer felt that
introducing songs to the older members would be ideal. Another aspect of worship that has not been practiced in this house church was collecting tithes and offerings because most of the participants were students and a couple of them were out of jobs. However, that has been noted by the leader/ pioneer and he will try to find an appropriate way to introduce it in the future. He intends to present tithes and offerings as something that demonstrates ones faithfulness to God.

New believers or inquirers have also been reluctant to pray in public. This issue is being addressed as well. However, the new inquirers are very interested to read passages of Scripture publicly. This is because they have always heard about the Bible, but now they can read it themselves.

**Recommendations**

After describing the outcomes and evaluating these outcomes, some recommendations are offered below.

**Concerning House Church Activities**

After observing the project through its development and implementation stages for more than two years, I offer the following recommendations:

First, the house church model needs to be started prayerfully, but with an intentional plan for the personal growth of the individuals who join and with an emphasis on spiritual and moral integrity. It has been observed that instead of providing head knowledge, emphasis should be placed on the spiritual growth of individuals. They should not only grow in knowledge, but in character as well.
Second, the house church should not become a church plant for regular Adventist members to attend since their traditional mode of worship and their long time practices will influence the worship of the house church and make it more traditional rather than contextual. The circle of individuals attending the house church must be carefully guarded.

Third, care-related issues must continue to be given priority, as it is when individuals find personal fulfillment not only spiritually, but also physically or socially that they feel part of the group. Since most of the inquirers or MBBs are immigrants, their families are far away from them in their country of origin, which creates a lot of loneliness. Being intentional about inquiring into their personal life and situation and providing a circle of friends can address this. One MBB requested me if he can talk to me once a week as he does not have a lot of friends to share his burdens with.

Fourth, even though the house church model is not an insider type of model or fully contextualized in its setting, yet for individual safety and protection, information concerning the participants should not be shared with others, nor should reports of the house church include names or pictures.

Fifth, an Adventist identity should be utilized in the description of one’s affiliation to the house church, rather than a Christian identity. Since Islam generally, and family and friends specifically, have a problem with Christianity or a Christian identity, the MBBs and inquirers must capitalize on an Adventist identity. Since Islam concentrates on right actions, and Adventist lifestyle qualifies them as the People of Book for following the Bible, this Adventist identity as spiritual people should continue to be the key to witness and introduction to biblical faith.
Sixth, the leader/ pioneer of the house church must endeavor to train and mentor new house church leaders for continuity and growth. The leader of the house church must aim to train others to continue to lead the house church while he moves on to other house churches where his leadership would provide direction and support.

For the Conference/ Union and Local Churches

After this research and project study, I would like to make some recommendations to the local churches that are in the Muslim majority areas of London and the South England Conference and the British Union.

First, the house church model for assimilating MBBs should be encouraged and used by churches and pastors in ministering to Muslims within London and the British Union. Due to extraction methods in the past, not only did individuals, but even churches and pastors face persecution, but the house church model provides a buffer zone for helping the transition in a safe environment. Bringing Muslims into traditional churches has faced prejudice from the members or created security issues for the local church, but a house church monitored and supported by the mother church can be more effective in Muslim outreach in the British Union setting.

Second, members of local SDA churches in London and the South England Conference but also within the British Union must be encouraged to realize that reaching Muslims is possible. This should give hope and encouragement to the members within the conference and the Union that their relatives or friends who are Muslims should not be ignored.

Third, pastors within the South England Conference should be encouraged to approach the Adventist Muslim Relations department for advice and support when they
encounter an inquirer or seeker from a Muslim background. AMR department can support pastors in their initial Bible studies to Muslim inquirers, and then followed up with regular Bible studies. Muslim seekers have different training and understanding about Christian terms and doctrines, thus the AMR department or leader who have the understanding can be a support to the pastor’s ministry.

Fourth, local churches and the conference should collaborate through the Health, Community Ministries, and Adventist Muslim Relations Departments to address the communities where Muslims live in order to develop friendships, meet needs, win confidence, and then bid them to follow Jesus. These departments can collaborate to bring in the social, physical, and spiritual contents of witness. This model should then be replicated if possible within the British Union.

Fifth, churches within an area dominated by Muslims such as East London or South London must collectively aim to address reaching Muslims in their area by training and combined witnessing efforts by all the churches concerned.

Sixth, local churches must be required to have an AMR office to coordinate Muslim outreach when the church is within a Muslim-dominated community. This will help to address the challenges of the community and to better utilize specific strategies, rather than doing a general form of evangelism. Similar recommendations are presented for other conferences within the British Union as well.

Seventh, all churches must be encouraged by the conference to do at least two community-related projects, such as a health expo, to meet the needs of the community. From the study, it was observed that East London’s Muslims have certain social issues; they receive income support and job seekers allowance, house benefits, and other
benefits. Their income is lower than the national average. Furthermore, Muslim families have larger families, thus making it difficult to meet the needs of their families. As stated before, the Community, Health, and AMR Ministries can work jointly at meeting the needs of the Muslims in the community.

Conclusions

In this study I aimed to address the issue of assimilation of Muslims within the South England Conference of SDA. It was observed that historically, MBBs have suffered persecution and many challenges because of the extraction method, which took them away from their community and family due to the stigma of Christianity. Introducing MBBs into traditional Adventist churches that did not have an immigrant culture also caused MBBs to feel out of place. Therefore, a culturally-relevant Asian church was planted in order to provide an environment of acceptance for the MBBs. That was successful as long as the leader was present who initiated the project since he knew the paradigm of operation and had the vision for this work.

Considering all these challenges, it was proposed in this study to begin a house church in London to assimilate MBBs so that the hindrances of assimilation could be avoided. Two house churches were begun in the later part of 2012 by Habibi and Rahmani. Rahmani’s house church was discontinued a few months later because the family, in whose home the church was conducted, separated. Habibi’s house church has continued and several outcomes have been observed and evaluations and recommendations given.

The house church model that Habibi has been operating has become a successful model of assimilation of MBBs and inquirers. Fellowship is a vital part of the success of
this house church as seen through their network of friends and the hospitality and social care the members give to each other. The dangers that MBBs experience through extraction no longer exist. The house church has provided six baptisms in the last year and now these six have also begun to witness and share along with Habibi.
APPENDIX A

AREA OF NEWHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL,
WITHIN THE MAP OF LONDON
APPENDIX B

MATERIALS TO GIVE TO MUSLIM FRIENDS

Saal lists the following material that can used to give to your Muslim friend:

*The Way of Jesus* written by Bruce Farnham is available from Lion Publishing plc - it is a serious treatment of Jesus in the Gospels, with particular attention to concerns of Muslim readers.

*People of God* available from People of God - is a correspondence course in four booklets, from the Old Testament to the coming of Jesus

*Beliefs and practices of Christians* is written by William Miller and is available from MIK - it explains what Christians believe in a way that makes sense to Muslims

*The torn veil* written by E. Gulshan and T. Sangster is available from STL Distributors - it is a testimony of a young Pakistani woman who found life and healing in Jesus

*Into the Light* written by S. Masood and available from STL Distributors - is a search of an Ahmadiyya for the truth and shows the difficulties of breaking free from Islam.

Lion Publishing plc
Icknield Way, Tring Road
Hertfordshire HP23 4LE
United Kingdom

People of God
P.O. Box 16406
Nairobi
Kenya

MIK
36 Ferozpur
Lahore 16
Pakistan

STL Distributors
P.O. Box 48, 6 Sherman Road
Bromley, Kent BR1 3JH
United Kingdom

MECO Literature & Video
P.O. Box 662
Larnaca
Cyprus
## APPENDIX C

MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS FOR BRITISH UNION OF SDA

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Source: British Union Archives, December 2012
APPENDIX D

MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS FOR CONFERENCES AND MISSIONS OF BRITISH UNION OF SDA FOR YEARS 2006-2012

Source: British Union Archives, December 2012
APPENDIX E

MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS FOR SOUTH ENGLAND CONFERENCE FOR YEARS 2006-2012

Source: South England Conference Secretariat Office
APPENDIX F

MEMBERSHIP FOR AREA 6C, LONDON BOROUGH
OF NEWHAM – YEAR 2012

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Source: South England Conference, Secretariat Office
APPENDIX G

THE TITHES AND OFFERINGS REPORT FOR SOUTH ENGLAND CONFERENCE FROM 2006 TO 2012

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Source: Treasury Department, South England Conference
APPENDIX H

THE TITHES AND OFFERINGS REPORT FOR SOUTH ENGLAND CONFERENCE FROM 2006 TO 2012

Source: Treasury Department, South England Conference
APPENDIX I

THE TITHES AND OFFERINGS REPORT FOR CHURCHES
IN NEWHAM FROM 2006 TO 2012

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<td>128726</td>
<td>60947</td>
<td>117201</td>
<td>113449</td>
<td>135071</td>
<td>150009</td>
<td>136442</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portuguese</td>
<td>29452</td>
<td>25539</td>
<td>64794</td>
<td>43738</td>
<td>33778</td>
<td>37134</td>
<td>37670</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London Asian</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>5934</td>
<td>14575</td>
<td>14415</td>
<td>22620</td>
<td>17702</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Treasury Department, South England Conference
# APPENDIX J

**DEPARTMENTS OF THE SOUTH ENGLAND CONFERENCE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>Departments and Ministries of the South England Conference</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Pathfinders Ministry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Teens Ministry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Family Ministry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Children’s Ministry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Women’s Ministry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Youth Ministry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Communication and Media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Community Ministries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Health Ministry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Personal Ministries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Sabbath School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Disability Ministry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Church Growth and Adventist Mission Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Education Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Counseling Ministry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Stewardship Ministry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Prison Ministry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Men’s Ministry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Adventist Muslim Relations Ministry</td>
</tr>
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</table>
### APPENDIX K

**PERCEPTIONS OF MUSLIMS IN SIX EU MEMBER STATES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceptions of Muslims</th>
<th>They want to remain distinct (per cent)</th>
<th>They have an increasing sense of identity (per cent)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Pew Global Attitudes Project, Public Opinion Survey – May 2005 report*
APPENDIX L

VIEWS OF MUSLIMS IN SIX EU MEMBER STATES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Views of Muslims</th>
<th>Favourable (per cent agreeing)</th>
<th>Unfavourable (per cent disagreeing)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

APPENDIX M

CONCERN ABOUT ISLAMIC EXTREMISM IN SIX EU MEMBER STATES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concerned about Islamic Extremism – in your country</th>
<th>Very Concerned Per cent agreeing</th>
<th>Somewhat Concerned Per cent agreeing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

APPENDIX N

STATISTICS REGARDING ETHNICITY IN THE UNITED KINGDOM FOR 2001 AND 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic group</th>
<th>Percentage 2001</th>
<th>Percentage 2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>91.3</td>
<td>86.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed/Multiple ethnic</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Asian British</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/African/Caribbean</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other ethnic group/Chinese</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

APPENDIX O

LOCAL AUTHORITIES WITH THE HIGHEST PROPORTIONS OF MAIN MINORITY RELIGIOUS GROUPS,
2011 ENGLAND AND WALES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Borough</th>
<th>Percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>Tower Hamlets</td>
<td>34.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Newham</td>
<td>32.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Blackburn with Darwen</td>
<td>27.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>24.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Luton</td>
<td>24.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindu</td>
<td>Harrow</td>
<td>25.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brent</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leicester</td>
<td>15.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Redbridge</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hounslow</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikh</td>
<td>Slough</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wolverhampton</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hounslow</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sandwell</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ealing</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish</td>
<td>Barnet</td>
<td>15.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hertsmere</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hackney</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bury</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Camden</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buddhist</td>
<td>Rushmoor</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Greenwich</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kensington and Chelsea</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Westminster</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hounslow</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census 2011, Office for National Statistics
APPENDIX P

LONDON BOROUGH WITH HIGHEST PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Local Authority</th>
<th>SDI Score</th>
<th>% of Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Newham</td>
<td>9.27</td>
<td>54.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Brent</td>
<td>8.68</td>
<td>51.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Ealing</td>
<td>6.44</td>
<td>37.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Redbridge</td>
<td>5.69</td>
<td>33.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Waltham Forest</td>
<td>5.61</td>
<td>33.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Hackney</td>
<td>5.44</td>
<td>32.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Harrow</td>
<td>5.27</td>
<td>31.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2011 Census
**APPENDIX Q**

**EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT STATISTICS**  
FROM JANUARY 2012 – DECEMBER 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Newham (Numbers)</th>
<th>Newham %</th>
<th>London %</th>
<th>Great Britain %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>All People</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economically active +</td>
<td>112,300</td>
<td>70.7</td>
<td>75.8</td>
<td>76.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In employment +</td>
<td>96,300</td>
<td>60.5</td>
<td>68.9</td>
<td>70.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees +</td>
<td>81,400</td>
<td>51.4</td>
<td>56.5</td>
<td>60.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self employed +</td>
<td>13,700</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed *</td>
<td>14,700</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Males</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economically active +</td>
<td>69,800</td>
<td>84.6</td>
<td>83.7</td>
<td>83.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In employment +</td>
<td>59,100</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>76.2</td>
<td>76.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees +</td>
<td>47,300</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td>59.3</td>
<td>62.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self employed +</td>
<td>11,100</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed *</td>
<td>10,700</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Females</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economically active +</td>
<td>42,400</td>
<td>55.7</td>
<td>67.8</td>
<td>70.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In employment +</td>
<td>37,200</td>
<td>48.8</td>
<td>61.4</td>
<td>65.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees +</td>
<td>34,100</td>
<td>44.8</td>
<td>53.5</td>
<td>59.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self employed +</td>
<td>2,600</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed *</td>
<td>5,300</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ONS annual population survey

+ numbers are for those aged 16 and over, % are for those aged 16-64  
* numbers and % are for those aged 16 and over. % is a proportion of economically active
APPENDIX R

QUALIFICATIONS OF NEWHAM COMPARED WITH LONDON AND UK 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification Level</th>
<th>Newham (numbers)</th>
<th>Newham (%)</th>
<th>London (%)</th>
<th>Great Britain (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NVQ4 and above</td>
<td>61,300</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td>34.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NVQ3 and above</td>
<td>80,500</td>
<td>51.9</td>
<td>63.2</td>
<td>55.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NVQ2 and above</td>
<td>98,700</td>
<td>63.6</td>
<td>75.1</td>
<td>71.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NVQ1 and above</td>
<td>107,900</td>
<td>69.5</td>
<td>83.6</td>
<td>84.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other qualifications</td>
<td>23,600</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No qualifications</td>
<td>23,700</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ONS annual population survey

Notes: For an explanation of the qualification levels see the definitions section.
Numbers and % are for those of aged 16-64
% is a proportion of resident population of area aged 16-64
APPENDIX S
OUT OF WORK BENEFITS OF NEWHAM COMPARED
WITH LONDON AND UK MARCH 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Newham (numbers)</th>
<th>Newham (%)</th>
<th>London (%)</th>
<th>Great Britain (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All people</td>
<td>11,279</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>6,764</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>4,515</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ONS claimant count with rates and proportions

Note: % is a proportion of resident population of area aged 16-64 and gender
## APPENDIX T

### KEY BENEFITS CLAIMANTS OF NEWHAM COMPARED WITH LONDON AND UK AUGUST 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Newham (numbers)</th>
<th>Newham (%)</th>
<th>London (%)</th>
<th>Great Britain (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total claimants</strong></td>
<td>33,920</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>By statistical group</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job seekers</td>
<td>10,690</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESA and incapacity benefits</td>
<td>13,190</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lone parents</td>
<td>3,930</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carers</td>
<td>2,900</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others on income related benefits</td>
<td>920</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disabled</td>
<td>1,980</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bereaved</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key out-of-work benefits†</td>
<td>28,730</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: DWP benefit claimants - working age client group

† Key out-of-work benefits includes the groups: job seekers, ESA and incapacity benefits, lone parents and others on income related benefits.

Note: % is a proportion of resident population of area aged 16-64
APPENDIX U

DEVELOPMENT STAGE OF THE HOUSE CHURCH
(PRE-IMPLEMENTATION OF HOUSE CHURCH)

1. AMR leader of the conference of local church chooses a spiritual pioneer to witness and start a house church with the understanding that the AMR leader will visit the house church at least in a quarter, and have monthly meeting with the pioneer to support and encourage the process.
2. Pioneer begins to witness in an unreached area.
3. Develops contacts/ friendships with Muslims and hopes to find a Person of Peace.
4. Study of God’s holy books is encouraged initially using the Qur’an as a transitional tool. Bible’s validity and the salvation story explored in the Qur’an.
5. The pioneer transitions the seeker into the Bible to study about Jesus and his teachings.
6. At this point introduce the seeker into the house church for fellowship and Bible study.
7. The seeker is baptized at the appropriate time.
8. The new MBB believer continues to be nurtured in the house church.
9. House churches occasionally meet together for fellowship and cooperation.
10. Inviting the house church to meet with other house churches. The MBB is introduced to the Adventist brotherhood to create a relationship between the house church fellowship and the wider Adventist Church movement.

FUNCTIONS OF THE HOUSE CHURCH
(IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HOUSE CHURCH)

1. Sabbath worship in a house church begins with the pioneer leading at a seeker’s home, preferably the Person of Peace (the bridge to other contacts).
2. Since hospitality is paramount in a house church fellowship, the meal will be served at the beginning of the meeting.
3. Testimonies and personal experiences are shared for support and encouragement.
4. Prayer for the challenges and life-situations is offered.
5. Worship begins with songs appropriately chosen.
6. The pioneer offers main intercessory prayer.
7. The Word of God is studied guidance focusing on topics of nurture.
8. Asking what they have learned from the Bible study makes an appeal for commitment.
9. At this stage a dedicatory prayer is offered.
10. Topic for the next worship is chosen and planned.
APPENDIX V

MBBs House Church Leader
Qualifications and Job Description

Qualifications
1. Been a Baptized Adventist believer in regular standing for not less than three years
2. Be prayerful
3. Have a clear vision of the mission among Muslims
4. Be patient and friendly
5. Have demonstrated leadership skills
6. Be respectful and tolerant to other cultures and religions
7. Preferable should be a Muslim Background Believer (MBB) or someone exposed to the Islamic cultural practices with enough experience to operate among Muslims.
8. Good knowledge of the Qur’an and the Bible
9. Have good interpersonal relationship skills
10. Be loyal to the church leadership
11. Be able to coordinate well
12. Have been trained on how to operate a small group
13. Be married if possible
14. Be a good planner
15. Have the zeal to carry out Da’awa/evangelism among Muslims
16. Have good knowledge of Arabic and the local Language of the people group
17. Have been trained on how to work in context
18. Have a teachable spirit
20. Can work with minimal supervision

Job description
1. Serves as the chair to the group
2. Ensures the delegation of various responsibilities to sub leaders
3. Coordinates the activities of the group
4. Conducts scriptural studies to the group
5. Organizes and conducts fellowship and worship
6. Gets involved in visitation of believers in homes for spiritual revival
7. Organizes and conducts spiritual convention or fellowship annually
8. Carries out one on one Bible/Qur’anic study to the contacts or friends
9. Leads believers in spiritual activities of the community that are in line with the Bible like fasting
10. Identifies and establishes community based projects for the community members
11. Encourages and promotes faithfulness in matters of stewardship
12. Coordinates and carry out community service activities with the members
13. Organizes baptism of new believers in liaison with the AMR Director
14. Maintains a positive relationship between him and the Muslim leaders in the community
15. Organizes community activities
16. Reports monthly to the Union through an appointed Muslim Home church overall coordinator
REFERENCE LIST


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EDUCATION
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2003 – 2007  MA Theology (Systematic Theology), University of Wales
2000 – 2003  Diploma in Community Development, University of Westminster
1990 – 1993  MBA, De La Salle University, Manila, Philippines
1987 – 1990  BSC (Accountancy), Adventist University of the Philippines

WORK HISTORY
2010 – Present  Associate Director, Global Center for Adventist Muslim Relations, General Conference Mission Department
2006 – 2013  Director, Adventist Muslim Relations, South England Conference
2006 – 2012  Senior Pastor of London Asian Church
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2004 – 2006  Lecturer, Christian Muslim Studies, Newbold College
2003 – 2007  Lecturer in Department of Business, Newbold College
1999 – 2003  Administrator and Accounts Controller, Bgirl Ltd (UK)
1993 – 1998  Lecturer and Chair of Business Studies, Pakistan Adventist Seminary, Pakistan
1982 – 1987  Accountant, Pakistan Union of SDA

ORDINATION
1988  Ordained to the Seventh-day Adventist Gospel Ministry

PUBLICATIONS
“I was hungry…” Adventist World (August 2001)
“Children of Ishmael” Communicator, Victorian Conference, Australia (January 2012)
Several articles in Messenger, British Union paper and Communicator, South England Conference 2006-2013