



DYNAMIC Steward

living • submitting • abiding • giving

April-June, 2010

Global
Stewardship

Alongside
one another in
His service
around the
World

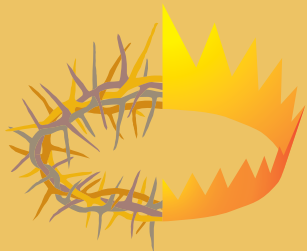


Celebrating GC
Session 2010

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DYNAMIC Steward

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Exploring partnership with God

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inside ds

Images displaying talent, determination, skill, persistence, stamina, team partnership as well as cultural diversity and beauty were evidenced during the recent Winter Olympic Games. All of the Olympic contestants whether individually or as teams were motivated by a common goal: to win an Olympic medal!

Supporting every world-class athlete is a coach or a team of trainers, family and sponsors. Success is truly a team effort, demonstrating the value that each distinct member affords to the dreams and visions of triumph.

On the topic of ministry and teamwork the Apostle Paul states, “Just as there are many parts to our bodies, so it is with Christ’s body. We are all parts of it, and it takes every one of us to make it complete, for we each have different work to do. So we belong to each other, and each needs all the others” (Rom. 12: 4-5 TLB). Discipleship Pastor Greg Ogden states, “Jesus continues to live out his life on earth through his corporate body, the church. The ‘body of Christ’ is not just a figure of speech but conveys the reality that Christ lives through his people. Together God’s people extend the life of Jesus to the world” (*Discipleship Essentials*, p.175).

The call and work of stewardship education could not occur in our global church without the “part” of every local church, conference, union and division stewardship director or leader. From my vantage point it is with utmost admiration that fosters inspiration that I observe the countless hours of travel, preparation, resourcing, and

dedication to the task of all of our leaders and their support teams.

This special 2010 General Conference Session issue of the *Dynamic Steward* is spotlighting each of our world divisions as each division stewardship director shares his own unique contribution. Thus, portraying the significance of serving alongside one an-



Jean-Luc Lézeau • Maria Ovando-Gibson • Erika Puni

other in His service around the world.

“The word service captures the spirit in which our gifts are offered to the body of Christ. Paul makes it clear that the purpose of the gifts is not to attract attention to ourselves but to build up the community.... As much as the gifts help us know our value, their purpose is to serve others” (Ibid, 190).

Pictured above are my team partners, and I know that I can express myself also in their behalf as I say, thank you for allowing us to partner and serve alongside you. Be encouraged, and remember your valuable gift and ‘part’ in our world ‘church.’

“Use what talents you possess; the woods would be very silent if no birds sang except those that sang best” (Henry van Dyke).

Alongside you in His service,

Maria Ovando-Gibson

Welcome to the Euro-Africa Division

We are happy for the opportunity to receive your visit in this space allocated to us, hoping that one day you can come and visit us in our widespread geographical territory which includes countries from Europe, North Africa and the Middle-East representing a wide variety of cultures and peoples.

Our purpose

We are fully persuaded that our stay in this world is not just a time for us to enjoy His most abundant blessings; it is also an opportunity to help people around us to overcome, by God's grace and power, the terrible effects of sin in their lives. As we help those around us in achieving this purpose we help ourselves.

Stewardship in a nutshell

Stewardship first began when God created Adam and Eve in His own image. They were supposed to share intimacy with Him and to act as His representatives managing His affairs on this earth. The more they shared intimacy with God, recognizing His Lordship and laboring according to His directions, the closer they would grow to Him, reflecting His image more and more clearly.

Sin, however, broke that intimacy and seriously distorted the image of

God in humankind, who became self-centered. God didn't give up. He put at work a plan to rescue humanity from the bondage of sin and its effects.

Sin is essentially selfishness. There is no better way of overcoming a self-centered lifestyle than to contemplate His unfathomable grace and generosity. We love Him because He first loved us.



When His love penetrates our souls we will naturally reciprocate it by loving Him above all things and also those around us as ourselves—with all we have and with all we are. In this way we become committed disciples, reproducing His unselfish love through a fully dedicated life and ministry.

Our mission

The Euro-Africa Division is committed to supporting all of the countries within its territory with materials, training programs and advice so that they can train and motivate faithful stewards.



The expression of love and care

Nature, with all its bounties, is one of the many ways God manifests His love and care towards us. Our pictures are meant to be a gift for you and a token of God's care and love as manifested through some sceneries of our (the Euro-Africa Division) territory.



Màrio Brito

Stewardship Director



Against the Tide

Since its organization as the youngest division in 2002, East-Central Africa Division has been striving to move forward amidst very great challenges. Our experience has been like an African canoe striving to sail upstream against the tide. If it were not for the conviction that God is with us, we would have been paralyzed, shackled with the fetters of fear and raised our hands in defeat. However, we have struggled to move ahead, with the calm assurance of God's presence with us. We declare with Paul, *"If God be with us, who can be against us?"* God's presence has not removed obstacles and challenges, but has strengthened us to meet our challenges headlong.

The impeding tides

The following are some of the tides we have been sailing against:

- Millions of lost souls in vast unentered global mission areas.
- Approximately 2.5 million church members in dire need of being nurtured and equipped for ministry.
- A small underpaid workforce that urgently needs resources and relevant training to minister effectively.
- A great need for decent houses of worship to cater for an ever growing membership.
- Contextualized literature to ground our members in the truth in their major languages.

Kigundu Ndwiga
Stewardship Director



- Spearheading unity and overcoming negative ethnicity among the hundreds of ethnic groups across the division.

The "stewardship tide"

The challenges mentioned above highlight and underscore a great need—the need to become self-supporting. We dream and envision a time when we will completely finance our mission and boldly seize the greater blessing—the blessing of generously contributing and giving of our human and financial resources to the world field! That dream, our fondest dream, is based on the conviction that we have not been called to manage man's scarcity but God's abundance! It is informed by the wisdom of an unknown Talmudic philosopher: "The noblest charity is to prevent a man from accepting charity; and the best alms is to show and enable a man to dispense with alms."

The vision of becoming a self-supporting and generous division may look like a mirage in a desert or sound like mere wishful thinking in a division where the strong adverse tides of civil wars, homeless displaced refugees, abject poverty, environmental degradation, climate changes, the droughts, the starving millions, the reduced life expectancy due to tropical diseases and the dreaded AIDS, the high levels of unemployment, the high birth rate and the resultant overpopulation, and the frantic scramble for scarce economic resources seem like an insurmountable Tsunami!

Misplaced confidence

A casual look at the circumstances within and without ECD could be discouraging! However a deeper look will reveal two very strong compelling reasons for our calm confidence in the fulfilment of our vision—the all sufficient grace of God who helps the weak and the united resolve of our people. The priority given to stewardship education, the appointment of stewardship departmental directors at every organizational level, the division-wide weeks of prayers, the stewardship camp-meetings and conferences, the intra and inter-country stewardship preaching initiatives, the flooding of stewardship material and the frequent visits to ECD by the GC stewardship directors are seeds that are bearing fruit.

Signs of progress

The annual average increase of 20% in the returning of tithe in times of an economic meltdown and serious droughts are harbingers of the fulfilment of that vision. The words of the ECD President, Elder Mbwana, in an email to me, sum it all: "...we have had an increase in tithe every succeeding year since we started. This is a direct result of God's leading...I have even noticed we are close to achieving our strategic goal of tripling tithe in eight years...." With an all resourceful God on our side, we will continue to make tremendous headway upstream against the tide!

Seventh-day Adventists in Russia

Many of you may not know much about the Seventh-day Adventists in Russia, and I am delighted to have this opportunity and this reserved spot to tell you a little about us. Russia is a part of the Euro-Asia Division where we have 1,978 churches with a membership of 136,900 people. The total population in the territory is 278,885,000 people.

The first seeds of Adventist teachings penetrated into Russia in the second half of the 19th century through printed literature that was sent from the United States to Mennonite immigrants and their relatives living on the border regions of Russia on the banks of the Dnieper and the Crimea, the Volga and the Caucasus. The first Adventist congregation was founded



Andrey Arfanidi
Stewardship Director

by Louis Conradi in 1886 in the town of Berdebulat in the Crimea. It consisted mainly of German colonists.

The first Russian community of Seventh-day Adventists was established in 1890 in Stavropol by the active involvement of a former deacon of the Orthodox Church, Theophilus Babienko. Babienko was exiled to the Caucasus from the Kiev because he created the "society of admirers of the Bible." The



activities of the Seventh-day Adventist Church during the early period was accompanied by certain difficulties associated with the then current legislation on non-Orthodox denominations. However, with the proclamation of Religious Freedom on April 17, 1905, the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Russia was recognized by the tsarist government as legitimate and official.



Photos are from the Follow the Bible tour.

After 1917, the activities of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Russia increased noticeably through publications such as *Evangelism* and the *Voice of Truth* magazines. In 1926 and 1927, Adventists and the Baptist Church together with the state publishing houses in Leningrad and Kiev published the Bible. Adventists organized agricultural communes, opened a clinic near Saratov, and were ac-

tive in many missionary activities. However, repression in the thirties did not spare the members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Almost all the ministers of the church were repressed as the restructuring charges were hung labeling them "agents of Germany and the United States." The situation changed very little in the '50s and '60s when many houses of worship were closed. In 1960 church services were disbanded after the war, creating the All-Union Council of Seventh-day Adventists.

Thanks to the democratic transformation of society and the attainment of freedom of religious believers, restoration of the church organization and the normalization of the church became possible after 80 years of struggle.



Stewardship Ministry in Inter-America

During the fiftieth General Conference Session, held in Detroit, Michigan, in 1966, a vote was taken to turn the Church Development Service into the Church Development Department. Pastor Walter M. Starks was elected as director of this department, a position that he held from 1966 to 1978. The Spring Council of 1967 made official the name of Stewardship and Development Department.

From its beginning in the Southeastern Union in the United States in 1957, the Church Development Service was used only in North-America, and it was dedicated to help churches know how to finance church and school construction projects.

After becoming a church department, with a worldwide action range, emphasis was given to the need to promote the stewardship program within the revival and reform realm and give the church the orientation and professional assessment needed for projects involving construction and development.

History

The Inter-American Division was one of the first world divisions to name a stewardship director. Pastor Glen Smith was assigned to the position. The division voted on November 12, 1967, to appoint stewardship leaders in all the different levels of the church, including the local church, and the reaction from the local fields and churches was positive.

Subsequently, a stewardship program for the church member was established following the systematic benevolence principles. Thereafter, a stewardship program for the local church was envisioned under the concept of a combined budget, and the stewardship program for the conference/mission was structured with the concept of the development plan. The mission/conference development plan is a program that organizes the spiritual as well as the financial resources of a local field.

The program was consolidated in Inter-America during the decades 1970-1990. On May 12, 1994, the Inter-American Division held a stewardship Summit Conference in Miami, Florida. The division committee approved the personal giving plan consisting of a Global Offering as the official program for the whole division.

This plan would then improve and replace the combined budget plan previously used in the entire division since 1969. Three unions started with the new plan on January 1995, followed by five more in 1996. The remaining unions adopted the plan within the following two years.

Our leaders

Since its inception, the Stewardship Department has had leaders who have promoted the principles and programs prepared in coordination with the world field. For this reason, training of stewardship directors is very important.

In the Inter-American Division stewardship leaders on all levels (division, union, conference, and mission) are encouraged to support the mission of the church and provide leadership that: 1) demonstrates dedication to the stewardship principles; 2) teaches that stewardship is a very high spiritual experience; 3) instructs workers as well as members on the biblical concept of total stewardship; 4) motivates and educates the entire membership on the Adventist system of personal giving plan; 5) leads them to put this plan into practice; 6) provides a stewardship curriculum for the certification program, and 7) coordinates an annual training program for stewardship di-



Mário Niño
Stewardship Director

rectors, ministers, elders and lay leaders for the purpose of providing local churches with biblical and dynamic church leadership.

Our mission

Our mission is to glorify God, and under the influence of the Holy Spirit, lead every convert to experience a personal and transforming relationship with Christ, enabling the believer to become a disciple in sharing the Everlasting Gospel with everyone.

The principal task of the church is permanent evangelization and total participation. The growth programs include a consolidation plan by the church. It is to win new members, to retain and prepare them for the kingdom of God.

Faithful stewards

Since 1995 the focus of the Inter-American Division is the theology of stewardship.

The tithe—10% of income—is God's portion that is used to support the ministry and to proclaim the gospel in this conference/mission and in all the world. This should be set aside first.

“The giving of tithe and offering each Sabbath is an act of gratitude to God for Seventh-day Adventists, and is also an expression of faith in the church’s financial system. Thanks to that faith, the church has managed to blossom throughout the world for 150 years.” —Mário Niño

Faith and Finance: Financial Planning with a Faith Factor

The North American Division is pleased to announce the completion of the new *Faith and Finance* stewardship resource.

Faith and Finance is a 12 lesson practical study on the Biblical principles of money management. The material has already proven to be life-changing for those who read and study the material. It has been prepared for personal or small group study and contains helpful forms and Bible study application worksheets at the end of each lesson. A small group Leader's Guide is available and sold separately.

The Leader's Guide has helps for each lesson to assist in outlining the primary principles for each lesson and to focus attention on each lesson's highlights. It presents discussion questions that will facilitate the small group study. A CD is included in each Leader's Guide containing PowerPoint illustrations for each lesson. *Faith and Finance* is currently available in both English and Spanish editions from AdventSource and the Adventist Book Centers. The price is \$12.99.

This book has been prepared in response to the request of families who wanted information that was biblically based and yet had the practical information needed to manage family finances in our changing world. The full cross-section of personal finance is covered from getting an education to making end-of-life decisions. Titles include, Why Money Management is Important to the Christian; Planning for the Cycle of Life; Giving: Tithes, Offerings, Helping Others; Dealing with Debt; Making a Budget; Training Children, Money and Marriage, Money and Singles; Major Purchases: Housing, Automobiles; Honesty, Integrity, and Work; Planning for Retirement; Saving and Investing; Inheritance and Estate Planning, and The Rewards of Financial Faithfulness.

Those who study and follow this material will: 1) learn to organize their finances in a way that is simple and easy to understand; 2) systematically pay off their existing debt; 3) learn to live within their income; 4) learn to save and invest; 5) become faithful with their tithes and offerings; 6) experience the joy of giving, and 7) plan their estates to return to God the excess of their assets.

Pastors and local church stewardship directors are encouraged to order a Leader's Guide and the study book for presentation to the local church leaders and to use in promoting its use in small group study.

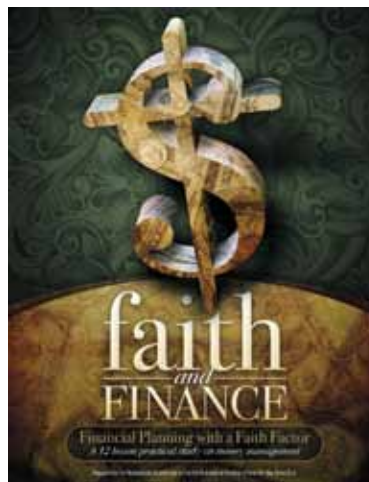
Readers will appreciate the strong biblical foundation that is evident in the book and will benefit greatly by following the practical principles for daily living. Many individuals in the church today do not have a good training in managing money. No matter your current age or background you will benefit from this book. The stress associated with economic downturns and crisis will be minimized. Preliminary feedback has all been very positive from the cover design to the up-to-date content.

G. Edward Reid
Stewardship Director

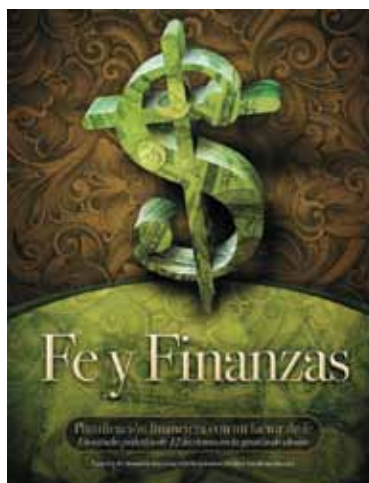


The contributors to this study are Gordon Botting, Dick Hanson, Ben Maxson, and G. Edward Reid. They have all been stewardship directors and financial counselors and have worked together to prepare this material.

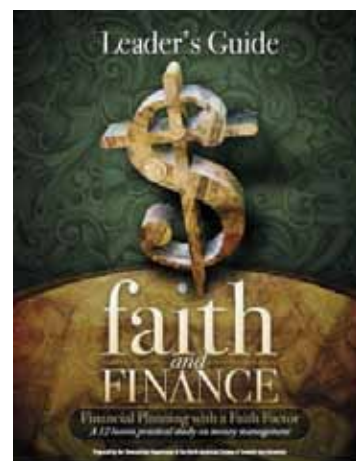
The small group Leader's Guide was created and designed by Maria Ovando-Gibson who with many years of academic and ministry experience in discipleship and small groups is presently assistant director of the General Conference Stewardship Department.



English Edition



Spanish Edition



Leader's Guide (available in English and Spanish)

From a Crown of Thorns to a Crown of Glory: a Symbolism

Crowns have been symbols of authority, power and honor and in some instances expressions of victory throughout the history of humankind. When I look at the special pin produced by the Stewardship department it reminds me of a crown of suffering and the crown of glory. Why does this idea come to mind? Because the crown of thorns that was put on Jesus makes me think of His suffering and sacrifice on the cross. Looking at the other half of the pin, it is possible to imagine Jesus as Lord and King coming in glory as it is portrayed in the book of Revelation.

According to the Scriptures, crowns were placed on the head of the high priest at the consecration. One important function of the high priest was his ministry during the day of expiation in which sins were removed from the tabernacle through the symbolism of the sacrifices and the manipulation of blood and confession of sins (Lev 16).

Beside the priesthood, crowns were also used for royalty to symbolize authority, a practice performed in the history of the kings of Israel and Judah. Thus, royal crowns were used for kings' consecration. For example, a crown was put on the head of Joash to show that he was established as king of Judah (2 Kings 11:12; cf. 2 Chron 23:11). Figuratively, the word crown was used in reference to humanity and life. Humanity was created by God as the crown of creation. Thus, crowns literary and figuratively are mentioned in the Scriptures to symbolize authority, consecration, love and compassion as well as suffering.

The crown of thorns in the Gospels

The crown of thorns points out the sacrifice of Jesus as the Son of Man who "did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45).

In this context, the crown of thorns came to symbolize His suffering and death as expiation for sinners. As the suffering servant of Isaiah 53, Jesus understood His mission as savior and redeemer.

In synthesis, the crown of thorns, a mockery of Jesus' Kingdom, came to symbolize His sacrifice in behalf of humanity (2 Cor 5:21) and after Jesus' resurrection and ascension to Heaven (Acts 1:9-11) the crown now symbolizes Jesus as our Lord and King.

The crown of glory

In contrast to the crown of thorns, the epistles and the book of Revelation teach the literal and figurative crown of glory. In the middle of the book of Revelation in the section that focuses on the judgment, John looked at Jesus "like a son of man" with a crown of gold on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand (Rev 14:14). That description now mentions Jesus as King and Judge who is coming to give a final reward to His people.

In the last section of the book of Revelation the coming of the Lord is portrayed as Jesus coming with many crowns (Rev 19:11-13). This is the one who is called KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS (Rev 19:16). Jesus is seen now as wearing a crown of glory at the climactic fulfillment of the promise to establish the kingdom of God (Mark 1:15). Those who wait for the blessed hope will also participate in that crown of glory which will be a crown of victory.



Miguel Luna
Stewardship Director

So, it is the apostle Paul who compares the final outcome of the Christian life with an athletic race by which figuratively the runners will get the crown of victory "that will last forever" (1 Cor 9:24-26). Paul also wants Timothy to understand that those who trust in the Lord and His righteousness will get the crown of righteousness. "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day. . . ." (2 Tim 4:7-9).

The symbolism from the crown of thorns to a crown of glory shows us the two important phases of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, first a sacrifice for sinners and second as King in His coming to reward His people in the final judgment. The fact that crowns were put on the heads of priests and kings also suggests the ministry of Jesus as High Priest and King (Hebrews 1, 7). In that particular dimension the crown of glory typify His ministry as High Priest and King. In this second dimension of His ministry Jesus promises a crown of eternal life for the people of His covenant, for those who are faithful Jesus will give the "crown of life" (Rev 2:10). The pin distributed by the Stewardship Department, through a combination of a crown of thorns and glory, brings light to the ministry of Jesus for salvation of humanity and for a commitment of Jesus' disciples to accept Him as Savior and Lord of their lives.

To read the full article go to www.AdventistStewardship.com.

www.AdventistStewardship.com

Consecrate Yourself

Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do amazing things among you.” Joshua 3:5

The Lord commanded the new leader directly to convey this order to the people. The command was fulfilled, and the miracles and wonders were seen in Joshua’s leadership. Motivated by this subject and other teachings of this nature, the Stewardship Ministry of the SAD, has directed its emphasis towards morning devotionals. Last year’s results have shown the validity of the same principle in our territory.

Spiritual Enrichment Seminar

The main tools used are: SES—Spiritual Enrichment Seminar, Financial/Spiritual Diagnosis, and Week of Prayer.

The SES has been the mainspring of the ministry. The basis of the movement is the promotion of daily intimacy with God, and its goal is to develop and consolidate the habit of searching God first thing every morning. In each seminar, two phases are employed: one aimed at developing the habit over 40 days, and the other aimed at consolidating it in 180 days.

In the entire process, different materials are used: a handbook for the preparatory seminar (7-8 hours), another for the practical 40 day journey, and the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy for the 180 days. Every two years

Miguel Costa Pinheiro Stewardship Director



Spiritual Enrichment Seminar II “Better Living with Better Health” held in Cochabamba, Bolivia, August, 2009.

the emphasis evolves depending on the feedback, but the basis is also maintained. More than one million people participate actively in this movement and have routinely put their lives at Jesus’ feet before any other task at the beginning of each day.

The financial/spiritual assessment comes immediately after the SES. After acclimating to searching for God as a lifestyle, comes the process of education and commitment with the maintenance of the Great Commission, from the local church. The process is very simple. The finance committee meets and analyzes the frequency (not numbers) with which each member that has income has given tithes and offerings.

After this analysis, objectives, goals, and strategies are established to reach the desired future. Within the vision of the SES, the member is taught that infidelity in tithes and offerings is not a financial problem, but a spiritual one. Thus, the whole process is conducted within the vision of salvation and the redemption of the spiritually sick brother.

Week of prayer

The week of prayer is another relevant element in the work program. The difference of this week, besides the preaching, is the use of testimonies from within the entire territory of SAD. This is an outstanding event, and it is anticipated with joy by the church.

Other work fronts

Besides, in the other work fronts, one looks for doing a Christian stewardship aimed at the usual intimacy with God. It is very difficult to measure spirituality, but it is possible to know the degree of rising trust in God and in the leadership of the church through the growth of tithes and offerings over the last few years, according to what is seen below:

- Growth of tithe from 2005 to 2009: 116.33%;
- Offerings from 2005 to 2009: 128.71%.

When faith is daily exercised and developed, fidelity will be something natural, for the converted person will do everything the Lord asks them.

Connecting With God and Growing

Two very real uncompromising tensions exist in the South Pacific Division: 1) that everything happens as a result of something tangible or must have a reasonable explanation to it, and 2) that life is mysterious and anything is possible including supernatural miracles. The tension is real and relentless in many circumstances.

From the sophisticated cities of Australia and New Zealand to the primitive mountain hamlets of the Highlands of Papua New Guinea, the message has been to make God real from deep within instead of an outward show or display. True religion has to do with the heart more than the outward body. Hence a relational stewardship emphasis has been made across the division to help people understand this. The following brief captions show some of the things that we have been inspired to do and are doing as we come to terms with this reality.



Joseph Talipuan
Stewardship Director

Papua New Guinea Union Mission

In PNGUM there were two major discipleship events. We had the first largest stewardship event ever held at Keya Camp. There were 10,000 to 15,000 people present. Dr. Erika Puni from the GC and I were the main presenters. The meetings were mixed with stewardship and soul winning programs. Under the union leadership of Pastor Benjamine Kola people were baptized every night.

Afterwards, we had leadership trainings for the Bougainville and New Ireland pastors along with district seminars throughout the country.



Kainatu choir conducted by a paralyzed man.

Trans-Pacific Union Mission

There has been continued focus on key church leadership throughout the Pacific that included TPUM. As a result, there was a major stewardship seminar for pastors conducted in Fiji along with other leadership trainings which were coupled with evening revival meetings in Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands.

Newland Pacific Union Conference

The concept of stewardship was shared in the Cook and French Polynesia Islands in which Dr. Puni conducted a seminar in the Cook Islands.

Australian Union Conference

In AUC their emphasis is heart connection with God. The people there have taken this very seriously. The initial nationwide initiative was to encourage individual devotional life with stewardship emphasis. Their first book, *7 Week Spiritual Journey*, compiled by Pastor Lionel Smith, one of their conference directors, is a popular resource. It was adapted for the world church and has been printed twice in the union conference.

Division Wide

Overall, the whole work of stewardship is getting more exciting. The South Pacific Division has declared 2010 as the *Year of Stewardship* throughout



Youth sing during a leadership training in the Solomon Islands.

the division and three division-wide initiatives have been put in place:

1. Week of Stewardship Emphasis Sept 25th – Oct 2nd 2010.
2. Special issue in the *Record* highlighting stewardship in SPD.
3. Special postures advertising the Week of Stewardship Emphasis.

A Question of Destiny

Destiny is defined as a predetermined course of events. It may be conceived as a predetermined future, whether in general or of an individual. It is a concept based on the belief that there is a fixed natural order to the cosmos!

Matthew 19:16-29 records an encounter between Jesus and the rich young man. The young man raised a serious question which may be termed “a question of destiny.” His question should actually be a question of every serious Christian. It was directed to the right person. The question paints a picture of seriousness on the part of the young man.

The young man asks, “Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?” Matthew 19:16. Jesus focuses on the question of the young man, the response He gives surprises him. The reference to the commandments led the young man to the reaction, “which ones?” To the young man it appeared as though Jesus was talking about some set of commandments he was not aware of. It is strange that Jesus refers a Jew to the commandments. The life of a serious Jew was characterized by commandment keeping.

In verses 18-19 Jesus enumerates the six commandments that have to do with our human relationships. To which the young man responded by saying “all these I have kept.” Was he right by making such a claim? Did he really understand Himself?

Micah Choga
Stewardship Director



In verse 21 Jesus answered, “If you want to be perfect go sell all your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasures in heaven. Then come, follow me.” The response of Jesus, makes it appear as though He was now deviating from the subject under consideration, yet Jesus pursued the same subject from an angle that would assist the young man to discover that he had not kept the very commandments he claimed to have always kept. The statement from Jesus became a point of departure with the young man. It revealed his true character. It aroused feelings of anger and rejection of the counsel of the master.



Why did the young man react?

Many times we behave as though we love God, because our true selves have not yet been revealed. We tend to be devoted to our religion as long as it does not disturb us in those things that we cherish. We appear to want to be good when we are just parading ourselves. We sometimes appear to be genuine and serious in what we are doing until the Holy Spirit exposes our pretense.

Let us analyze this story. The young man came to the right place and left for the wrong place, came as one concerned about his destiny and left as one who did not care about his destiny, came asking the right questions but looking for flattery rather than the truth, came to the source of knowledge and left without true knowledge, came to the source of life and left without life, came happy and left sorrowful. He forgot that the gospel does not heal before it bruises, it does not comfort before causing some discomfort, it does not provide hope before exposing your hopelessness, neither does it establish you before it knocks you down.

What was the problem of the young man?

Wealth stood between him and his God. He had another God called his wealth. Covetousness caused him to turn against the Savior. He valued temporal things more than the permanent. “But he was not ready to accept the Savior’s principle of self-sacrifice. He chose his riches before Jesus. He wanted eternal life, but would not receive into the soul that unselfish love which alone is life, and with a sorrowful heart he turned away from Christ (*Christ Object Lessons*, p. 393.2).

Was Jesus fair with the young man?

Why would Jesus not require people like Abraham, David, and Job to sell all they had and follow Him? According to what we have established so far, Jesus was not requesting the young man to do anything strange. He Himself had walked the road of sacrifice. He was simply asking him to follow His footsteps. He was requesting Him to accept the cost of discipleship.

Are you concerned about your destiny? Then hearken to the advice from Jesus. You need to surrender yourself totally to Him and walk the road of sacrifice. Allow nothing to stand between you and God. Let not your wealth replace God in your life.

How Do We Worship Our Maker and King?

When we close our eyes and scan our life history, we can see at a glance how wonderfully God has led us through life. It is amazing! His love, care, compassion, His mercies, His sacrifice made for the world and his blessings He has bestowed upon us are GREAT and FANTASTIC. It is beyond our comprehension to understand. Nothing that we can do can compensate His love for us!

We owe Him everything and even in eternity we cannot repay Him. It is beyond our ability. So we simply ADORE and WORSHIP Him in singing, meditation, reading, teaching and preaching the Word of God. But more than this, the most effective way and the best way to show our love for Him is through our tithes, offerings and gifts that we bring unto the Lord. It can be in kind or cash.

When I go around the division, many of our village church members bring their offerings such as you see here, like goats, eggs, fruits, chicken, grains in bags. It is so wonderful to see these gifts. I am sure the Lord will bless them abundantly because it is the real sacrifice, not in just words, but in deeds and actions of sacrifice! This is the only way to show our true love, and gratitude unto Him!



Marapaka D. Joseph
Stewardship Director

Below is a church in Pegallapadu, North Andhra Section, East-Central India Union, India.



Division-wide Stewardship Training Seminar

In May 2007, a division-wide Stewardship Trainers Certification and Trust Services Seminar was held in Bangkok. Pastor Noldy Sakul, the Southern Asia-Pacific Stewardship director then, was pleased to have the GC Stewardship and Trust Services personnel attend as resource speakers: Erika Puni and Jean-Luc Lézeau for Stewardship and Jeff Wilson and Wilfredo Sumagaysay for Trust Services.



Erika Puni



Jean-Luc Lézeau



Jeff Wilson



Wilfredo Sumagaysay



Noldy Sakul

The changing of the guards

Before being called to be president for the union in east Indonesia early 2008, Pastor Noldy Sakul manifested faithfulness to his duties and passion to his calling in the stewardship department. His life has always been a testimony to the never-ending grace of Christ towards a faithful steward.

Wendell Mandolang Stewardship Director



New paradigms on stewardship and trust services were introduced and new materials were made available to be used by the local church members and pastors in the southern Asia-Pacific territory. Stewardship and Trust Services directors under SSD gave positive feedback about the experience and are inspired to take on the greater challenge in their work field.



Delegates from the South Sulawesi and North Sulawesi Conferences at the Bi-Union Stewardship Congress held in Bali, Indonesia.



Pastors and officers from the local missions/conferences along with Wendell Mandolang and Erika Puni at the Stewardship Certification for Pastors and Officers held at the West Indonesia Union Mission in Jakarta, Indonesia.

Stewardship in Parts of Hungary and Israel

Did you know that the Trans-European Division has a total population of 616,675,000 people in its territory and 1,384 churches with a membership of 108,166 people? Today, TED is delighted to share with you pictures highlighting events that occurred in the territories of Hungary and Israel.

Stewardship Director Raafat Kamal presented meaningful and purposeful stewardship seminars in Kecskemet Church, Pecel, and Budapest Hungary for pastors and Bible workers. Erno Osz-Farkas, president of the Duna Conference in Hungary and former Hungarian Union President Andras Szilvasi assisted Kamal as his translators.



Raafat Kamal
Stewardship Director



District Conference in Kecskemet Church, Hungary. Raafat Kamal, TED stewardship director (right) presents a stewardship seminar with Erno Osz-Farkas, president of the Duna Conference in Hungary as translator (left).



Tel Aviv—Participants at the Stewardship Seminar 2009.



A prayer session during a stewardship training in Budapest for pastors, elders and church officers in Hungary.



Participants at the Stewardship Seminar in Jerusalem, Israel, at their Study Center in 2009.

First West African Stewardship Summit Held In Ghana

The first ever Stewardship Summit in the West Central African Division was held in Ghana from the 9th-13th of April 2009 at the Valley View University Campus at Techiman. It was organized by the West Central African Division in collaboration with the Ghana Union Conference.

The objective of the summit was to introduce delegates to the new GC strategy for stewardship promotion.

Present was GC Vice President in charge of Stewardship, Pastor Armando Miranda. The GC Stewardship Director, Pastor Erika Puni stated:

“Stewardship is the lifestyle of one who has a living relationship with Jesus Christ, accepts His lordship and walks in partnership with God, and acts as His agent to manage His affairs on earth. This transcends financial stewardship, which hitherto has been the emphasis.” Pastor Puni also noted that the summit was able to bring church leadership, district pastors, and laypersons together to learn more about wholistic stewardships.

“Too much attention has been given to financial stewards in the church, yet stewardship is wholistic, it is about one’s relationship with Christ and his response to God. Delegates must understand the principles of the new approach and then go back to adapt them to fit their environment,” said Pastor Puni.

The five day Summit featuring the theme “Faithfulness in the Mission of Hope” was attended by 300 delegates made up of church officers, pastors and laypersons.

Every year we are holding Annual Stewardship Revival during the first week of December in all our churches throughout the Division.



in the church, yet stewardship is wholistic, it is about one’s relationship with Christ and his response to God. Delegates must understand



Salomon Grah Assienin
Stewardship Director



In November 28–December 5th, 2009 we held Stewardship revival in all the churches

During WAD Year-end Committee (2008), it was voted to implement the combined offering plan across the division.

As we are getting closer to the end of the quinquennium, we have noticed a significant increase in the number of members returning an honest tithe. The stewardship department is determined to continue the work of tithe, offering and church finances education.



From the Desk of the Director . . .



Erika F. Puni
Director

This issue of the *Dynamic Steward* provides an opportunity to celebrate what God has done and is doing in the life of His church in the thirteen divisions of the world. By celebration I mean to acknowledge and express gratitude to God for the wonderful way He has led and blessed His church and the ministry of stewardship during this quinquennium (2005-2010).

From a global perspective, I am happy to testify to the goodness and faithfulness of God to His people, and His people's faithfulness to Him even in difficult times and situations.

I think of the financial crisis of 2008 and 2009 which affected many of our members, and yet God has

sustained His church and His mission in the world in spite of this reality. In fact, we know that in many divisions of the world tithes increased at the end of last year. This one example reminds us that God can and will always sustain His church even without our help and resources. He is in control!

A time to celebrate

This issue is also an opportunity to acknowledge and express gratitude to our field directors in the thirteen divisions of the world for their leadership and example as stewards and stewardship educators. The greater awareness now of Christian stewardship as a total and full response of the believer to the grace of God, and the increase in faithfulness among church members in financial stewardship are clear indicators of the progress achieved through their tireless efforts from divisions to the local churches.

I praise God for these leaders and their commitment to make stewardship a way of life among Seventh-day Adventists. I accept that the work of stewardship education is never finished, and there is more to be done every year into the future but I will acknowledge that as a team we have made significant progress and have covered good ground in the last five years. To God be the glory!

At the General Conference, I am blessed to have an office team who believes in going the extra mile in providing ministry support and services to the field. As a field trainer and resource personnel, Jean-Luc has done much in stewardship education and his passion and ministry is appreciated around the world. Maria, our point person in resource development and editor of the *Dynamic Steward* has brought added value and appeal to our resources, and her contribution is well received and appreciated as well.

With the day to day operations of the department, Jean-Luc, Maria, and I count on the experience, skills, and dedication of Johnetta and Mary our two administrative assistants to ensure that as a team we are going places, and I am thankful for their supportive roles.

While she was only with us for the first two years of this quinquennium, Claire Eva was a positive force and an important player of the stewardship team, and I want to acknowledge her contribution.

To this group of special people, my team, I say thank you!



"In Service Around the World"