

# JAMAICA UNION CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS



## FAMILY MINISTRIES DEPARTMENT

### Resource Manual 2022-2025

Dr. Roy R. Dennis, Director



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## Family Ministries Department

### Action Plan 2022-2025

The Action Plan for the Family Ministries Department was developed in adherence to the Strategic Imperatives of the Jamaica Union Conference for the period 2022-2025, with focus on seven supporting ministries:

1. Couples Ministries
2. Singles Ministries
3. Men's Ministries
4. Senior Citizen's Ministries
5. Mentorship Ministries
6. Parenting Ministries
7. Professional Counseling Ministries

## JAMAICA UNION STRATEGIC PLAN 2022 - 2025

### **OUR VISION:**

The full manifestation of the image of God in humanity and the restoration of all creation.

### **OUR MISSION:**

Glorifying God by passionately proclaiming and living the Everlasting Gospel, in anticipation of the Second Advent.

### **OUR VALUES:**

#### **GODLINESS**

Aspiring to be like God in our thoughts, conduct, and service.

#### **RESPECT**

To God, and to every person regardless of age, gender, abilities, ethnicity, economic or social status, political or religious beliefs, and for the environment.

#### **EXCELLENCE**

Optimal performance in all tasks, and honoring God through talents and accomplishments.

#### **UNITY**

A state of togetherness marked by genuine love, fellowship, and care for one another.

#### **COMPASSION**

Extending sympathy, empathy, mercy, and kindness to everyone.

#### **INTEGRITY**

Always governed by the highest ethical and moral standards.

## TRANSPARENCY

Practicing openness in personal and professional relationships and in the execution of our duties.

**Family Ministries Department Key Emphasis:** Family Relational Health and Emotional Wellness

### **Jamaica Union Strategic Imperatives:**

1. Evangelism & Spiritual Nurturing
2. Education
3. Health & Family Wellness
4. Community
5. Stewardship & Technology

## **HEALTH & FAMILY WELLNESS**

The Family Ministries Department and Health Ministries Department are the key departments of Jamaica Union to drive this strategic imperative.

### **GOALS**

To promote harmonious relationships and perpetuate Christian family values in our homes and communities.

### **OBJECTIVE**

Strengthening and enriching the spiritual life, family relationship, and social well-being of family members in the Church and the society.

### **ACTION PLAN**

- Improved family relationships by reducing conflicts and violence in our homes and communities – individual members.
- 2022 – National Couples’ Education Online
- 2022 – 2025 Family Life Educator’s Certification (FLEC) in each conference to certify 250 family life educators
- 2022 – 2025 “Family Basics For Happy Homes” media education programme. To produce 100 media programmes for television, radio, and social media on family life and emotional wellness issues

- 2023 – National Men’s Convention
- 2024 – Parenting Conference
- 2023 - 2025 – Annual National Singles’ Convention
- Annual participation in the “End-It-Now” programme
- Support local conference directors with all their major programmes
- Conduct 100 seminars in the local congregation
- Utilize and make available local and international resources that can empower families including:
  - The General Conference Annual Family Plan book and
  - Introduce the JAMU Family Life Resource Manual

## **OBJECTIVE**

- Harnessing the expertise of Family Life and Emotional Health Practitioners in the Seventh-day Adventist Church to meet the relational, emotional, and psychological health needs of our church and community.

## **ACTION PLAN**

- Address issues annually on topics such as Grief, Domestic Violence, Human Sexuality, Mediation, Conflict Resolution, and Psychological issues such as Clinical Depression.
- Emotional wellness seminars for men, women, and youth. “I want to have healthy” seminars for women. Empower and support our schools, hospitals, churches, pastors, chaplains, and their families on emotional wellness issues.
- Launch and establish a National Adventist Counselling-professional Network (ACN) to include Adventist psychologists, social workers, and trained counselors to support local Pastors and churches with professional counseling services.
- Support the local conferences with crisis intervention, emergency counseling, and case management.
- Facilitate professional counseling services for organizational employees nationally.

## **Effective Family Ministries in the Local Church**

The Families Ministries Department of the Jamaica Union Conference recognizes the value of quality family life both among Seventh-day Adventist members and non-members. The family is defined as “The basic structural and functional unit of society.” If the families are not well, then the church and society will be in trouble. Therefore, creating and engendering family wellness is of utmost importance to the Family Ministries Department and every family member must be included in this plan.

“Our work for Christ is to begin with the family in the home. By many, his home field has been shamefully neglected and it is time that the divine resources and remedies were presented, that this state of evil may be corrected.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 6, pp. 429,430).

### **DUTIES OF THE FAMILY MINISTRIES LEADER**

The major functions and tasks of the Family Ministries Leader are as follows:

1. ***Needs Assessment.*** Work with pastor to survey the needs of the church: Couples, Singles, single parents, children, teens, young adults, mature adults, etc., finding which topics are of interest to them. Needs assessment tools such as survey questionnaires and analysis worksheets are available in some of our resource materials.
2. ***Programme Development.*** The Family Ministries Leader works in cooperation with other church leaders to implement family life programmes. This involves planning, promotion, recruitment and training of volunteers, delivery of the programmes and evaluation. Although a number of very detailed and “user-friendly” programme help are available, successful programmes still require considerable attention to detail, good organization and strong communication for many weeks in advance.
3. ***Chairs the Family Ministries Committee.*** It is recommended that even in the smallest congregations a committee be selected for Family Ministries instead of following the tradition of making it a one-person assignment. Family

Ministry is about relationships and helping people learn to be Christlike in their relationships. This needs to be modeled in a group setting because it is “caught as much as it is taught.” Even if the committee only meets once a quarter and includes people who holds other offices in the Church, it should become a support group as well as a working unit. It is the responsibility of the chairperson to not only put together an agenda and moderate the discussions but to facilitate times of personal sharing, prayer and learning.

4. ***Family Advocate.*** The Family Ministries Leader sits on the Church Board and should represent the need and concerns of family life there. It is easy for a board to become involved in the organizational and financial issues of the church and forget that congregations are essentially clusters of households; people trying to live out their faith together. It is the responsibility of the Leader to help the Board keep in view the relational needs of the member of the Church and make family life a real priority in all that the Church does.
5. ***Information Source.*** The congregation depends on the Leader as a primary source of information about ministry. It would be a good idea to construct a list of Christian Counselors to whom you can feel confident making referrals. The Leader will want to guard against getting too involved in “playing psychologist” (unless he/she is), but highly developed listening skills will make it easy for other church member to share their concerns and needs and ask for information. This informational task includes taking opportunity regularly, during personal ministries time or other worship period to share information with the whole congregation as it comes from the Conference in resource materials.

## **Duties of Officers**

- Chairs Family Life Committee
- Identifies target groups for Family Ministries
- Conducts Need Assessments
- Provides Bible-based Family Life Education & Training
- Provides or identifies means for Professional Family Counseling



- Coordinates Programme Development
- Cooperates with Conference to implement Family Ministries Emphasis Programmes
- Be a Family Advocate

Information Source: (Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual, 2005, p. 141)

## **Approaches to Family Ministries**

The form the Family Ministries Department takes will be determined by the overall goals of the

Church, the felt needs of the congregation and the community, and the resources available. Three approaches may be used:

- Education
- Enrichment
- Counseling

### **A. Education**

Bible-based Family Life Education is one of the key strategies of the Family Ministries Department. Churches should structure Family Education in the pre achingservices, nightly meetings, Sabbath School programmes, A.Y. programmes, Bible

Classes, etc. Study groups, workshops, seminars and lending libraries are some additional ways to include Family Life Education.

### **B. Enrichment**

This is the process of enhancing the family relationship through better communication, deeper understanding, and increased ability to resolve anger and conflict and other family issues. Married persons, parents, singles, children, men, women, seniors, disabled, the church family and all parts of the family system must be included. Couples retreat, conventions, clubs and seminars can foster enrichment to the various groups in the family system.

## **C. Counselling**

There is an emerging and increasing need for Professional Family Counseling. Coordinators must not play Counselor, unless he/she truly is! Counseling is a specialized work where families are assisted in resolving long-term and short-term personal and relational problems. When there is such a need, the services of the Pastor, Professional Counselors in the congregation, community or Conference's Counseling Department must be sought.

### **Planning the Programme**

The key to a successful Family Ministries Programme in the local church includes:

- A definition of needs
- A specific target audience
- Adequate planning
- Quality communication with the target audience
- Connecting Family Ministries to the whole church programme

(family.adventist.org, 2006).

A successful programme speaks to people's needs. Where are people in the congregation and in the community feeling their greatest need right now? How many are interested in parenting skills, grief recovery, divorce recovery, coping with single life and strengthening family worship? When the needs are ascertained then plans should be put in place to use available resources to meet the needs.

The plans of the department must be developed including the Family Ministries programme of the Conference. In addition to these Conference programmes, others are to be developed to meet the special needs of each local congregation.

### **Family Units**

- ❖ **Nuclear Families** – Children living with mother and father.

- ❖ **Extended Families** – Grandparents, mother, father, children, uncles, aunts, cousins
- ❖ **Stepfamilies** – sometimes called “blended.” Step families are formed when parents are divorced or are widowed and remarry. Some become stepfamilies when an unmarried parent marries someone who is not the father/mother of his/her child.
- ❖ **Single Individuals** – Sometimes “just me and the cat” – living alone. They may be divorced, widowed, or never married, but the household is a separate entity. Some singles may live with other singles in one household.
- ❖ **Single Parent Families** – This may occur when a parent is divorced or widowed and has not remarried or is a parent who has never married.
- ❖ **“Empty Nest Families”** – Mom and dad when the kids leave home.
- ❖ **Re-attached Families** – When adult children come back to live with mom and dad – Usually a temporary arrangement. A family is re-attached when an aged parent lives with the family of a son or daughter or grandchild.
- ❖ **Sandwiched Generation** – Middle-aged adults with adolescent off-springs and aging parents.
- ❖ *The Church family - Families that are a part of the family of God.*

## **COUPLES MINISTRIES**

### **What is a Couples Ministries?**

This is where couples of all ages meet regularly to encourage each other in the growth and enrichment of their marriages. Couples ministries is not a department of the church by itself, however, over the years it has evolved within the Family Ministries Department to offer specialized ministry and meet the particular needs of couples.

Couples Ministries create the space for:

- Educating, encouraging, and supporting couples.
- Shared experience.
- Establishing a support network through social interaction with other couples.
- The couple to look at each other, face to face, and be honest about their marriage – identifying good points, struggles, as well as solutions to their concerns.
- Learning new ways to enrich their love relationships.
- Renewal and recommitment to each other.

### **Why Couples Ministries?**

The main idea of Couples Ministries is to facilitate growth among couples. Couples, in a supportive, confidential environment, may be motivated and equipped with the necessary tools to develop and maintain a healthy relationship. In this ministry, key issues involving couples, including communication, conflict management, intimacy and family finance are dealt with, and those relationships that need help can benefit from group therapy sessions, as well as gain opportunity for individual couples sessions with Christian professionals. There are good, strong relationships in the church, but no perfect couple. Here couples learn and will see that we are all dealing with similar issues in our marriages, we realize that we are not alone, and a sense of shared experience

replaces the feelings of isolation.

### **Establishing Couples Ministries**

For some churches, one couple is selected as Couples Coordinator at the time of church election. However, due to the fact that it is not an official office of the SDA Church, it may not be on the officer's list. If it is not on the officer's list, the Family Ministries committee may recommend to the Board a couple for the position early in the year. As soon as that couple is ratified by the Board, then they will call all couples together on a Sabbath to establish an executive body selecting secretary/treasurer, public relations officer and chaplain, if they so desire. This executive will do their needs assessment with the couples and plan for the couples for the year. Those plans will be brought to the Family Life Committee and will form a part of the Family Ministries plan for the year. The Family Ministries Leader will make the necessary representation of the local church board.

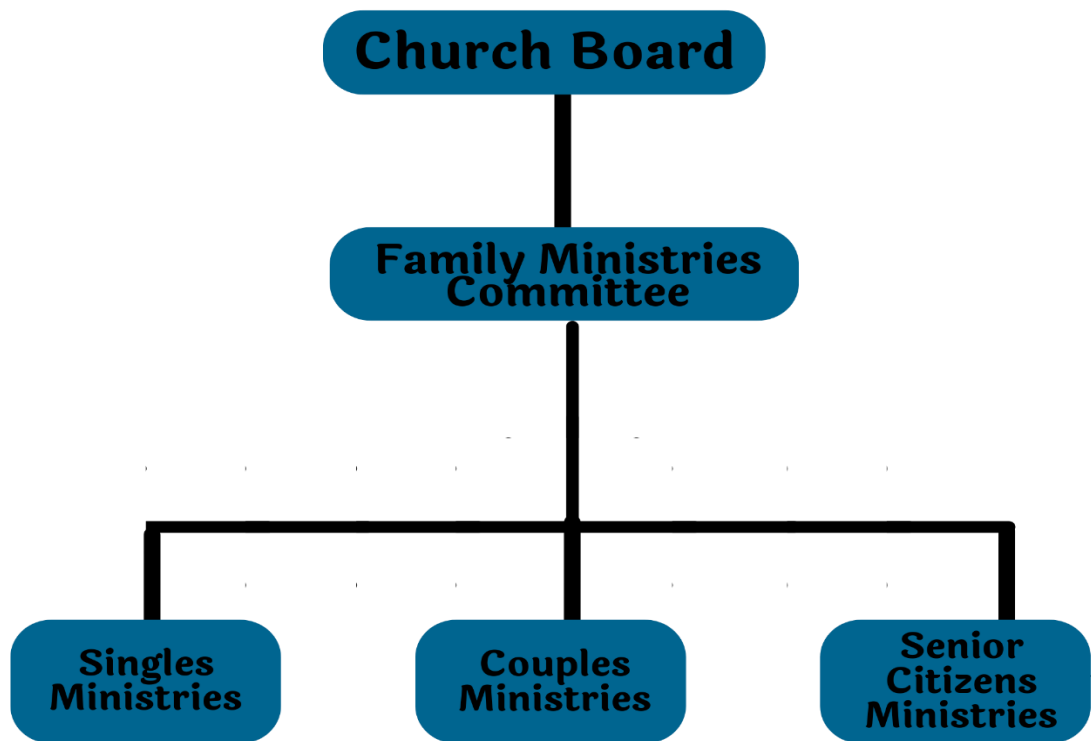
### **IDEAS FOR COUPLE MINISTRIES**

1. Highlight wedding anniversaries weekly with the same enthusiasm that you celebrate their birthdays.
2. Marriage Hall of Fame for those in your church and community who have been married for 10 years or more.
3. Organize an annual weekend couples' retreat.
4. Organize Couples Social once per quarter.
5. Coordinators should take the time to strengthen his/her own marriage so he/she can be an example to others in the community.
6. Educate people about the benefits of marriage by handing out copies of the marriage quiz.

7. Give marriage education books as wedding anniversary, birthday, and baby shower gifts.
8. Place marriage education posters, and pamphlets, at doctors, daycares, salons, barbershops, and other public buildings.
9. Integrate intercession for marriages and families as a part of the church's prayer programme
10. Conduct Marriage Enrichment Seminars to strengthen marriages.
11. Organize couple's banquet.
12. Couple's mentorship ministries.

# Jamaica Union Conference

*Family Ministries Focus Group*



**Effective Singles Ministries**  
**A Seventh–day Singles Ministries Programme**  
**By: Sharette Kirby, MSc (2007)**

**How would you develop an effective singles ministry in your church?**

*‘The Singles Circle’*: An interactive, informative, entertaining, and vibrant programme for  
singles by singles

**Introduction**

Is singleness a tragic wreck or a tremendous resource? Is it helplessness or hopefulness? Is it full of problems or full of promises? Is there something wrong with singleness? Is it an abnormal state of being found somewhere in the DSM IV TR Manual or is it perfectly normal to be single? Does it help when those among us stereotype those who have chosen to remain single? The amusing factor is that those who listen and actually believe these myths seem to have selectively forgotten that they themselves were single at one time or the other in their lives. Some of these myths include:

- Singles are immature
- Singles are incomplete
- Singles are unstable
- Singles are damaged
- Singles are dangerous
- Singles are inconsequential
- Singles are unacceptable
- Singles are lonely
- Singles are sexually frustrated
- Singles have more money than married individuals
- Singles have fewer problems
- Singles are afraid of making a commitment
- Singles have more time than married individuals
- Singles are a threat to married adults
- Singles are not complete until they are married



## **Developing a Seventh-day Adventist Singles Ministries:**

### ***'The Singles Circle'***

Part of the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is to provide encouragement, support and nurture for single adults within the church. This is often done by:

1. Providing social and spiritual activities held throughout the year
2. Conducting conventions, retreats and seminars that promote emotional, social and spiritual growth
3. Providing meaningful service opportunities
4. Promoting appropriate resources and training opportunities for leaders in singles ministry.

### ***Mission and Aim of 'The Singles Circle'***

The mission of any singles ministry should be to create a Christ-centered atmosphere where single adults can come together to fellowship with others of their peers. It should aid in guiding these individuals down the pathway of living successful and fulfilling lives as they pass through this stage in their lives.

### ***Scope of 'The Singles Circle' Ministry***

With such foundations of existing myths and a stream of loneliness as its ultimate effect, 'The Singles Circle' should be developed to help to guide both male and female single individuals into experiencing successful and fulfilling intimate and social life. It is recognized that singleness is not confined to the young and inexperienced and should hence cater for three categories of individuals; namely: a) young college students, b) working professionals and 3) older individuals who may be single due to divorce or death of a spouse.

In keeping with the mission of the Church, when developing an Adventist Singles Ministries, the following must be taken into consideration:

1. **Ask God to guide you.** The first step is to pray. Study God's Word and the Spirit of Prophecy for guidance.
2. **Talk to other Singles Ministry Leaders.** The experiences of others will always serve as an excellent guide in teaching the prospective leader the rights and wrongs, and do's and don't's of a successful ministry.
3. **Identify the singles in your church.** Begin with your immediate circle of influence! Include single adult church members, neighbors, and co-workers. Compile a list of whom you know. Ask your pastor and church members to add names to your list. Collect names, addresses, telephone numbers, fax, and e-mail addresses.
4. **Use singles to pull other singles.** Use singles to encourage other singles to become involved. Provide a mentoring system. The fellowship of the evening may blossom into an enjoyable experience and a concern for the needs of others.
5. **Prepare a survey.** To help determine the needs of the group, ask the singles of the Church to complete a needs assessment survey.
6. **Study the needs of the singles in your local church.** What type of support do they need? Is it experts to give them advice? Inspiration and affirmation?
7. **Plan programmes to meet the identified needs.** Plan the content of your program ahead of time. It would be best to begin your singles ministries with a consecration and commitment service. Be sure that the speaker that is invited is familiar with the needs of your singles, as identified by the needs assessment survey. Be sure to get the singles involved right from the start.

8. **Identify a name, mission statement, vision, and the goals and objectives of the Singles Ministry.** Know where you are going and you will get there.

### *Duties of the Single's Ministries Coordinator*

Becoming a leader of 'The Singles Circle' includes the following responsibilities:

- **Forming a Committee:** Find responsible people who will help plan and develop activities and programmes. Keep in mind when choosing committee members that the adult singles need to 'own' their ministry in order for it to be relevant to their needs. Therefore, as far as possible, responsibilities must be delegated in such a way as to involve as many individuals as possible in the programme.
- **Bible Study:** A ministry of single adults must include Bible teaching which may take place in a large or small group situation or both. Small group Bible studies can meet during Sabbath School and be recognized as a Sabbath School class, or meet as a Home Bible Fellowship. Large group activities might take the form of a monthly Singles' Fellowship where Bible study would be the only item on the agenda.
- **Involve Singles in the Worship Service:** Look at ways to help the singles in the Church to become a part of the worship services and contribute to a spirit of commitment among the members of the Church. It allows them to feel involved and a part of something bigger than themselves.
- **Plan Entry Events:** The leader will need to help the Church plan entry events and build pathways to attract new members, specifically single

members and non-members of the Church, and nurture their growing faith. In the Church the singles who may be hardest to reach are those who are single parents and those who have been divorced; as such, the leader can host a divorce recovery seminar or a single-parent workshop in order to attract these individuals to the ministry.

- **Attitudes:** Help the larger congregation and the leaders develop a non-judgmental, open, and accepting attitude. Focus on how to minister to singles in the situation in which they are found. The question is, ‘What can be done now?’ rather than, ‘What happened?’ or ‘Why did you do what you did to get yourself into this?’

### *Foundations of ‘The Singles Circle’*

This Ministry should be built on three primary cornerstones:

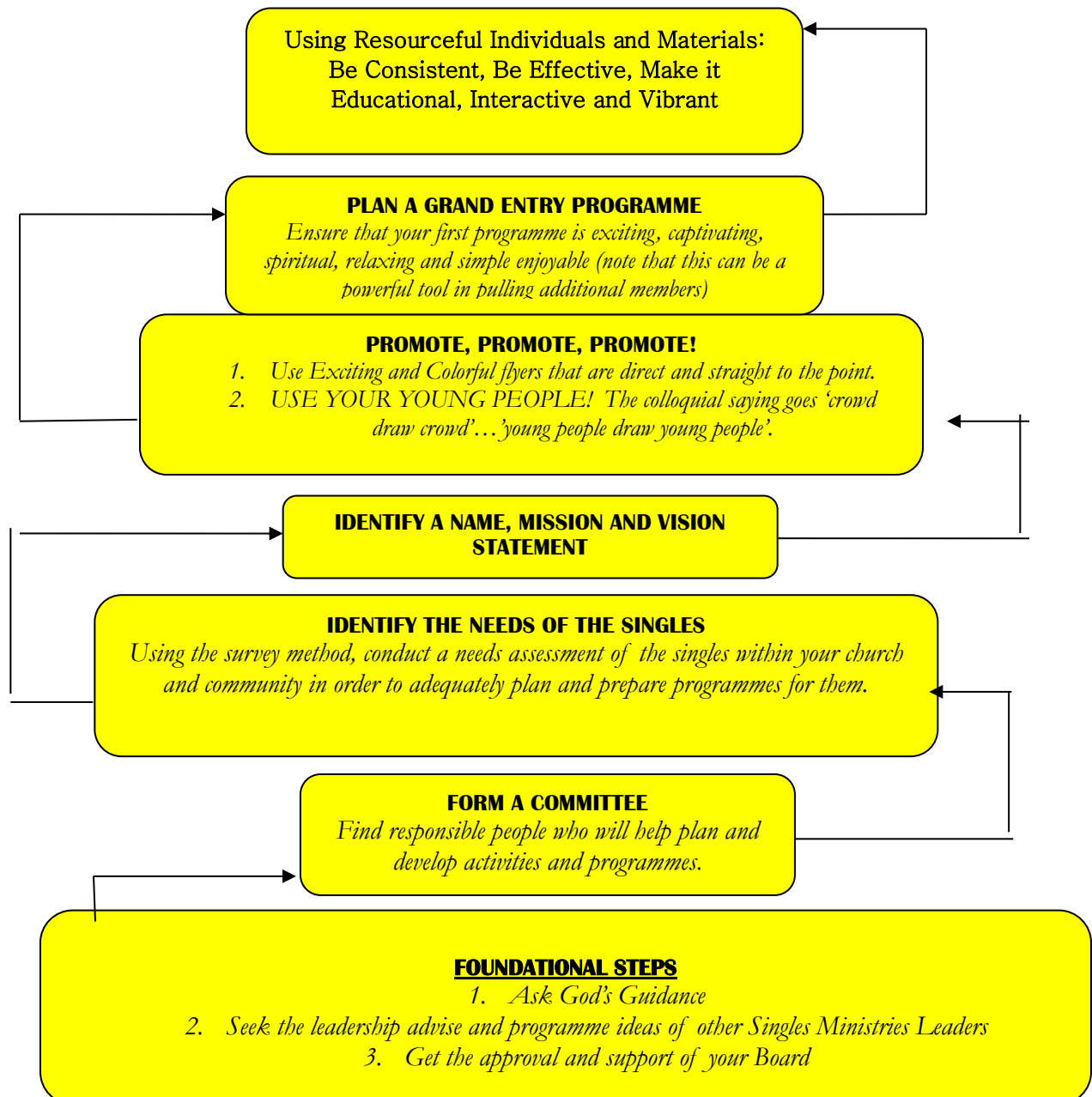
1. **Being consistent:** This ministry will meet once per week at a particular time, day and place. Only in extreme cases of emergencies will the meeting be canceled. As far as possible the leaders of this group will strive to maintain this standard and consistency, which will only serve to improve its aim of guiding single adults into living a fulfilling life.
2. **Being Effective:** Though this ministry will not solely be developed for the main purpose of helping single adults ‘find and keep a mate’ it will facilitate and encourage group interactions and dating; and as such, its effectiveness will be partially measurable as it explores the results of singles who have met suitable partners through this ministry. In order to aid in this success, a local network of singles in the Seventh-day Adventist Church across the island will be developed in order to encourage and promote local area interactions and the development of friendships.

3. **Educational:** The Singles Circle will facilitate numerous avenues that will serve to educate the intellect of single adults. Some of these avenues will include seminars, question and answer sessions, discussions and educational game works (such as the game Men are from Mars; Women from Venus). The Singles Circle believes the best possible way of choosing a mate is through acquaintances that occur and develop through face-to-face contact. The following concepts are strongly encouraged to be explored:

- accepting singleness
- coping with changes
- building healthy relationships
- bitterness
- dating and courting
- dating again (after divorce or death of spouse)
- forgiving and relating to my former spouse
- dealing with guilt
- depression
- overcoming loneliness
- developing identity
- finding God's will
- finding a career
- gossip
- learning to forgive
- learning to risk
- learning to trust
- managing anger
- managing emotions
- managing stress
- the ethics of dating
- money management
- pre-marital education
- self-esteem
- setting goals
- sexuality
- singleness in a family-oriented church
- spiritual growth
- understanding emotions

In order to facilitate a successful and effective singles ministry, the leader of the ‘The Singles Circle’ needs to ensure that appropriate and relevant information is also available to its members and dispensed in a vibrant and interesting manner at all times. Additionally, each leader should strive at all costs to develop a ministry that is effective, informative and consistent with the foundations, that will serve to positively enhance the life of singles within each congregation.

**STEPS IN DEVELOPING A SINGLES MINISTRIES (Jeffery Brown, 2001)**



## How to Develop a Single's Ministry

### **1. Personal Preparation**

We cannot over-emphasize the spiritual and personal preparation of the leaders.

- ❖ Seek God's guidance. Pray for God's leading. Ask a few others to join you. Do this for the purpose of clarifying your motives so that the ministry you are about to start is God's idea and not just an ego trip.
- ❖ Pray that the right people will be brought together.
- ❖ Pray for the Holy Spirit's leading in determining the direction of the group.
- ❖ Seek other experienced leaders and talk with them.
- ❖ Read good books on leadership skills

### **2. Get Pastoral Support**

- ❖ Communicate interest to the pastor
- ❖ Ask for ideas
- ❖ Incorporate the pastor's ideas and goals into the plans
- ❖ Keep the pastor informed with the progress of the ministry

### **3. Develop a Core Group**

Core group can:

- (a) Serve as resource persons
- (b) Assist in interviews
- (c) Develop a Mission Statement

### **4. Develop a Mission Statement**

A well-designed Mission Statement keeps the ministry on track. It is easy to swipe someone else's mission statement. The real benefit of working on your own mission statement is ownership.

### **5. Interview and Survey the Singles in the Church**

Surveying:

- (a) Avoids needless work
- (b) Shows what to target.
- (c) Identify needs
- (d) Connects with the needs of the singles from the start
- (e) Get single's input
- (f) Helps select a good cross-section of singles

## 1. Set a Date to Invite All of the Singles of the Church to a Special Meeting

- (a) Notify the singles of your plans
- (b) Agree on a day and time when the singles will be available to meet for organization

### How to Develop a Game Plan and Get Ministry Ideas

- **BRAINSTORMING**  
Brainstorming is an exercise that can offer all kinds of suggestions. It is a way to give singles ownership and create excitement for the ministry. All ideas are written down on a flip chart. No one is to react to any idea negatively.
- Draw from all of the information gathered—surveys, questionnaires, interviews, pastor's suggestions.
- Start with the top three in five needs
- Develop action plans.
  - (a) Divide responsibilities
  - (b) Define roles and responsibilities
- Develop a time-line. Plan how often the group will meet.



## HOW TO ORGANIZE A SINGLES' MINISTRY IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

### 1) **Planning**

He who fails to plan, plans to fail.

### 2) **Organize a Single's Ministry Committee**

a. The role of the committee is to:

- i. Assist in planning
- ii. Execute plans
- iii. Serve as resource persons
- iv. Assist in assessment
- v. Develop a purpose statement

b. Family Life Committee

c. Separate Committee: suggested persons—Family Life Director, Care Group leader, pastor/elder

### 3) **Conduct needs assessment**

- a. Singles of the church
- b. Singles of the community
- c. Surveys, interviews, questionnaire
- d. Listen to all the singles of the church
- e. Plan first meeting

4) **Plan according to needs** — (a) spoken (b) unspoken

5) **Match resources with needs** — (a) human (b) financial

### 6) **Develop a resource bank**

Develop a list of professionals—seek permission to circulate their names and make it available.

### 7) **Develop resource materials**

- ❖ Conference Director develops programmes - research material for local directors.
- ❖ Select persons to research on specific topics
- ❖ Subscribe to family life/single's journal magazine
- ❖ Obtain copies of presenter's presentation
- ❖ Ask group members to donate a book to the ministry

- ❖ Request that single's ministries library be included in church's budget
- ❖ Check internet for family life or single's related materials

## **ADVENTIST SINGLE'S COORDINATOR AT THE LOCAL CHURCH**

### **Selecting a Coordinator:**

This person may be selected by the church board or the church nominating committee.

**Responsible to:** Church board and works closely with the Pastor, Local Church Family Ministries Leader, and the Conference Family Life Director.

**Term of Service:** One or two years. This will give continuity to the programme in the local church. It is possible that the church may want to elect this office on a one-year only basis.

**Purpose:** To assist the church in meeting diverse needs of the singles who are a significant part of the church body.

- ✓ Establish and chair the Adventist Single's Ministries Committee. The size of the committee should be three to five persons. It is recommended that the Family Life Director and the Personal Ministries Leader be members of the committee. The purpose of the committee will be to brainstorm, develop strategies, network and assist in planning and implementing programmes and activities relevant to men's specific and varied needs.
- ✓ Assess needs of the singles in the church and community. This could include identifying the demographics of the single's population such as age, ethnicity, educational level, marital status, etc., and identifying topics specific to their needs.
- ✓ Develop programmes and activities for singles (based on needs), harmonizing these activities into the larger church programme. This will be done by the team effort of the Adventists Single's Coordinator, Single's Organization Committee and the Pastor
- ✓ Disseminate information to the total church membership on Adventist Single's Organization and its contribution to the church life

- ✓ Liason between the singles of the church and the church board members, assisting them to keep in view the needs of singles in the church, and recognizing Adventist Single's Organization as a significant and vital part of church growth and church dynamics.

## EFFECTIVE MEN'S MINISTRIES

Men's ministries is not a substantive department of the General Conference as Women's Ministries or Youth Ministries. There has been focus on the men both in Personal Ministries Department as well as Family Ministries. The Inter-American Division follows the same trend. However, the North-American Division has established a substantive department for ministry to men from which we can gain some insight on how to operate. Their focus is to support men in their roles as husbands, fathers, and committed Christians. In the Jamaica Union Conference it is our intention to foster a strong ministry to men as a "focus group" of the Family Ministries Department. Our emphasis will be on educating and equipping men by ministering to their spiritual, personal and professional needs.

The Jamaica Union intends to have active men's ministries in every Seventh-day Adventist Church in Jamaica. For this reason, we recommend that men's ministries be on the officer's list for church election. We will seek to have the last sabbath of November designated as Men's Ministries Day on the Calendar of Events in keeping with International Men's Day which falls in that month. We also recommend that we have at least one men's chorale in each pastoral district. The National Men's Convention on November 25, 2023 will commemorate the beginning of our observance of an annual Men's Ministries Day in that month.

### Steps To Establishing an Effective Men's Ministries Programme In the Local Church

1. **Identify a Leader:** *The success of an effective Men's Ministries programme begins with strong leadership. The involvement of the local church pastor is integral in identifying and supporting the men's ministries leadership.*
2. **Start with a small group of men.** This may include men's chorale, men's Bible study group or a men's league. This group provides a foundation of prayer,

direction, and leadership for the entire Men's Ministry.

3. ***Focus on relationships, not programmes.*** Plan on relationship-building types of events like men's conferences; men's special events (such as, cookouts with an afternoon of football, personal and professional development seminar, father-daughter banquets, marriage and fathering seminars; evangelism seminars; men's prayer breakfast, men's mentorship, evening institutes or Bible study groups).
4. ***Goals and Objectives.*** Identify the needs of the men in your congregation and decide together what you want to accomplish. Develop a mission statement, clear goals and objectives. Do not try to do everything in one year. After identifying the personal, professional and spiritual needs, decide on how you will work to meet these needs incrementally overtime. Without a clearly defined purpose for this ministry, you will lose focus.

### **Duties of the Coordinator**

1. Develop and conduct on a periodic basis a wide variety of programmes and activities that will meet the various contemporary needs of a diverse male constituency.
2. Encourage and facilitate meaningful spiritual, mental, and emotional growth among the men of the church.
3. Work with a small administrative committee to make plans and policy.
4. Communicate with the church secretary and pastor when scheduling programmes.
5. Serve as the conference's Men's Ministries representative to the local church.
6. When requested, assist the conference director in planning meetings that are for the benefit of all men of the conference.
7. Communicate news of interest to men that is disseminated from relevant sources in the church's structure.
8. Mentor someone else in this ministry.

9. Report to the Family Ministries committee and/or Church Board.

(North American Division of Seventh-day Adventist, 2008)

### **Tips for Effective Programme for Men**

1. Men's Day (At least one sabbath in the year designated for men's ministries).
2. Men's Mentorship.
3. Men's Chorale or choir.
4. Men's League (Bring together a pool of professionals).
5. Men's Seminars/Education.
6. Men's Evangelism.
7. Men's Fellowship (to include social, retreats and cook-outs)
8. Men's Convention.
9. Men's Help (Set up a system for financial, counseling, educational, or other types of support).
10. Men's Prayer Ministries.
11. BEAMS (Boys of Excellence Attaining Morals and Standards) was started by the East Jamaica Conference and is a great programme for equipping and mentoring our boys and young men.
12. Evening Institute (programmes to upgrade our men with skills and degrees)

## **SPIRITUAL MENTORSHIP**

Prepared By: Dr. Roy R. Dennis

Spiritual Mentorship according to Anderson and Reese, is defined as a means to enhance intimacy with God. His call for the disciples to follow Him assumes a complex relationship through which one becomes educated for the reign of God in their hearts. The kind of instruction Jesus provided was different from the classroom instruction. It assumed relationship styles that made mentor and protégé (Spiritual Mentoring, p. 12). The ideal type of spiritual mentorship does not only affect the relationship between the person and God but must impact the person's relationship with their fellowman. It is the transfer knowledge, experience, achievements, opportunities and the relationships they accrue in their possessions to others according to Myles Munroe (Passing It On: Growing Your Future Leaders, p.x & xi) ). "After individuals have been converted to the truth, they need to be looked after. . . . These newly converted ones need nursing— watchful attention, help, and encouragement. These should not be left alone. . . ; they need to be educated . . . to be kindly dealt with, to be led along, and to be visited and prayed with" (*Evangelism*, p. 351).

Jesus could be considered as one of the greatest leaders of all times because he invested over three years in personal training of a handpicked group of people. We also should seek to first be equipped and then take someone to impact in positive

ways. It does not have to be in a formal or structured setting. Even in an informal way we can engender and perpetuate quality relationships with God and one another, while imparting values and cultivating growth.

Bob Biehl gives four reasons why the mentorship tradition should continue today:

1. Mobility: People are overtime separated by thousands of miles. Mentorship ensures the perpetuation of teachings, traditions, values and practices.
2. Ushering young people into manhood and womanhood.
3. The need for modern day models to emulate.
4. Maintaining Status and Traditions: Minority groups will soon become extinct if traditions and practices are not perpetuated through mentorship (Mentoring: Confidence in Finding a Mentor and Becoming One, p.13).

One of the earliest traditional documents that outlined the father's responsibility to his son is the Babylonian Talmud. The father was required to circumcise his son and redeem him, referring to the firstborn son, as per Biblical passage in Numbers 18:15-16; to teach him Torah; and to teach him a trade. Some say he must also teach him to swim. Rabi Judah says whoever does not teach his son a trade, teaches him robbery (Babylonian Talmud, *Tractate Kiddushin p. 29a*).

Traditionally boys, and in more modern era girls, were initiated into Jewish religious practices by their fathers. Jewish initiation marks a person's entry into God's covenant with Abraham and membership of God's Chosen people. The two important stages



of male initiation in the Jewish tradition are B'rit Milah and Bar Mitzvah. The Hebrew term is B'rit Milah (covenant of Circumcision). This is a religious rite performed eight days after the boy's birth. It symbolizes the covenant or agreement that Abraham entered with God. When a boy is circumcised, it is a sign that he is entering the Jewish community, the community of the descendants of Abraham. A Jewish boy has his Bar Mitzvah in a synagogue on the first Saturday after his thirteenth birthday. Jews believe that when a boy turns thirteen and a girl turns twelve, they are old enough to understand and obey the ten commandments. These are the most important rules of Judaism. The words *Bar Mitzvah* mean "a son of the Commandments." *Bat Mitzvah* means "a daughter of the Commandments" (Sacramentsofinitiation.weebly.com/Judaism.html. accessed October 10, 2017).

Abraham was set up by Jehovah as an example of that father who could be trusted to model godly values to his children. "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgement: that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him" (Genesis 18:19). It was Abraham's duty to pass on to future generations what he knew of God's dealings with the human race.

In my reading and experience I have deduced at least four forms of mentorship

programmes:

1. **Social Mentorship Programmes** in which a person with more experience and expertise may assist a less experience person to be successful in a field or relationship.
2. **Humanitarian Approach** in which experienced and equipped persons or institutions to include government entities employ methods for lifting vulnerable persons or groups, such as at-risk black men in vulnerable communities in the United States.
3. **Spiritual Mentorship** in which religious methods are employed by experienced religious leaders for spiritual formation and moral transformation.
4. **Eclectic Approach** where social, humanitarian and spiritual methods are employed by the experienced to facilitate transformation in the less experienced.

### **Theoretical & Theological Perspective**

Mentorship is to be considered as a valuable way of passing on information not only theoretically but mainly through right examples as the idiomatic expression states “values are more often caught than taught.” Learning theories gives the best framework for understanding mentorship in its entirety. Learning theories are conceptual frameworks in which knowledge is absorbed, processed, and retained during learning. There are three types of learning theories:

- Classical conditioning: where the behaviour becomes a reflex response to an antecedent stimulus.
- Operant conditioning: where an antecedent stimulus is followed by a consequence of the behaviour through a reward (reinforcement) or a punishment.

- Social learning theory: where an observation or behaviour is followed by modelling. People learn through observing others' behaviour, attitudes, and outcomes of those behaviours. Most human behaviour is learned observationally through modelling: from observing others, one forms an idea of how new behaviours are performed, and on later occasions this coded information serves as a guide for action (Wikipedia the Free Encyclopedia, accessed July 19, 2017).

The Bible is replete with examples of men and women who through their positive examples guided their sons and daughters, and younger persons who were not necessarily their offsprings in their field to success. The story of Abraham is one of the earliest examples of such mentorship. "For I have chosen him; so that he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing what is right and just; so that the LORD will bring about for Abraham what He has promised him" (Gen. 18:19). For Abraham he was a positive role model and mentor to Isaac. Elijah was a positive role model for his colleague prophet Elisha from his integrating him into the prophetic ministry to handing over to him before being swept away into heaven (1 Kings 19 – 2 Kings 3). Asa was a great mentor to his grandson Jehoshaphat (2 Chronicles 17 – 21), and the Apostle Paul to a younger minister Timothy in the New Testament. Huldah was regarded as a prophet accustomed to speaking the word of God directly to high priests and royal officials, to whom high officials came in supplication, who told kings and nations of their fates,

who had the authority to determine what was and was not the genuine Law. She was a mentor and inspiration to many (2 Kings 22). In the book of Ruth, Naomi was a tremendous mentor to her daughters-in-law Orpah and Ruth. Phoebe was a mentor to Paul and many others in the New Testament (Rom. 16:1&2). Jesus Himself was a great Mentor to His disciples. He intends also that a similar strategy for spiritual mentoring be replicated by the Church as enunciated in the “Great Commission” (Mathew 28:18-20) where all disciples are to become a teacher of the faith to the nation.

The kind of instructions Jesus provided for the disciples was different from the classroom instruction. It assumed relationship styles that made different demands on both Rabi and disciple, teacher and learner, mentor and protégé. More like the work of a mentor craftsman tutoring the young apprentices, Jesus’ style of instructions embodied a pedagogy that invested life in the learner through and incarnation of the message being taught, lived, experienced, tasted, and touched by the learner. Jesus did not only spend time instructing, training, and informing, he spent much time forming a community.

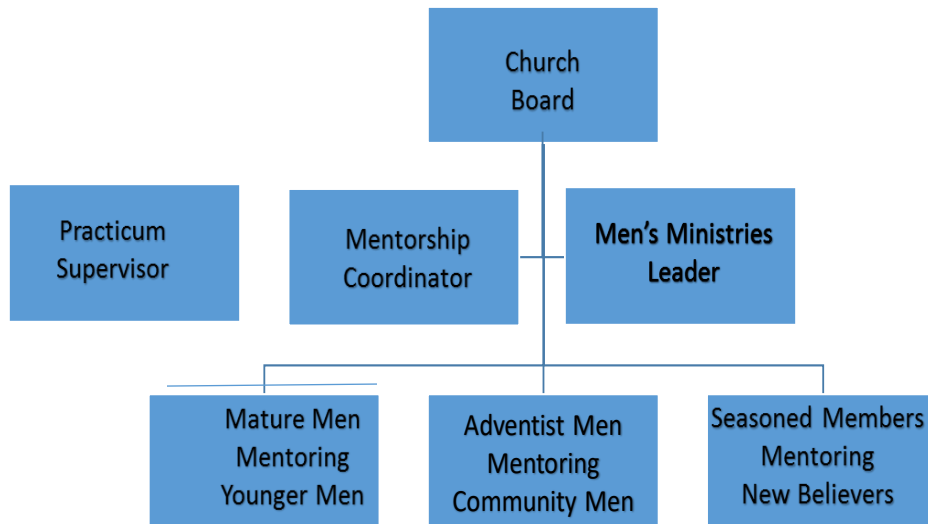
### **Establishing a Mentorship Programme**

The structure of the mentorship model presented by Anderson/Reese involves initiating the relationship and covenant-making and the establishing of clear boundaries. Next in the process is the development of trust and unity, which requires

the spiritual teachable response of the mentee (Anderson and Reese). In 2017, I developed a Men's mentorship programme at the Sydenham Seventh-day Adventist Church using 4 stage adopted from the School of Inspired Leadership (SOIL) and modified it to meet the particular needs of that Mentorship Programme.. The four phases of the programme included:

1. Prescriptive Stage – Selecting and training mentors
2. Persuasive Stage - Making contact with mentees & defining the relationship
3. Collaborative Stage – Mentors relating to mentees on a weekly basis
4. Confirmative Stage – Guidance by mentors and evaluation by those who monitor the programme. Even before the process of mentorship began, a decision was made on who would oversee the programme and how it would be monitored. The Men's Ministries Leader was appointed to monitor the programme and he would report to the church on a monthly basis. The Dennis' Men's Mentorship Ministry Model below gives an idea of a workable structure for Christian mentorship in the local church.

## Dennis Men's Mentorship Ministry Model (2017)



### **Final Recommendations**

There are a range of social, spiritual, professional and personal development benefits that can be derived from a Christian men's mentorship ministry. I recommend that this ministry be included as a part of the operation of every Seventh-day Adventist Church in Jamaica. Secondly, mentors must be carefully selected, trained and evaluated. The fact that mentorship is observational and incarnational learning one must ensure that the negative influence of dons and predators is avoided. Mentors must not only be persons who know their skills and have leadership qualities, but men and women of integrity. Finally, an effective mentorship programme is one that is used as a medium to

transfer knowledge, experience and success into the next generation. Mentorship aids in the preservation of values and attitudes, and inspires involvement of the next generation to quality family relationships and leadership in the church and society.

## **ADVENTIST COUNSELING-PROFESSIONAL'S NETWORK (ACN)**

With more than 30% increase in cases of depression, grief, and anxiety since the pandemic, as well as the increase in carnal abuse, domestic violence, and many other emotional and relational concerns, the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Jamaica through its Family Ministries Department launched the Adventist Counseling-Professionals Network on May 29, 2022.

This network is an attempt to bring all the main professionals and stakeholders in the Counseling field to support the pastors and local congregations in enhancing emotional wellness and family relational health in the Church and in the communities.

Present at the launch were representatives from Northern Caribbean University Counseling Services and Behavioural Sciences Department, Jamaica Psychological Society, Jamaica Union Conference, Family Ministries Directors from the five Seventh-day Adventist Conferences in Jamaica, along with more than 140 professionals from various counseling disciplines including psychologists, guidance counselors, social workers and Christian counselors, in the Adventist Church across the island.

Pastor Everett Brown, President of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Jamaica charged the gathering, reminding them that there are suffering people all around us in Jamaica who need hope and professional help.

The main Presenter was Professor, Dr. Orlean Brown-Earle of Northern Caribbean University. She spoke about “Engendering Emotional and Psychological Wellness in the Local Church.” She addressed the Counselors, challenging them to be representatives of Christ, to be intentional in meeting the needs of the members of

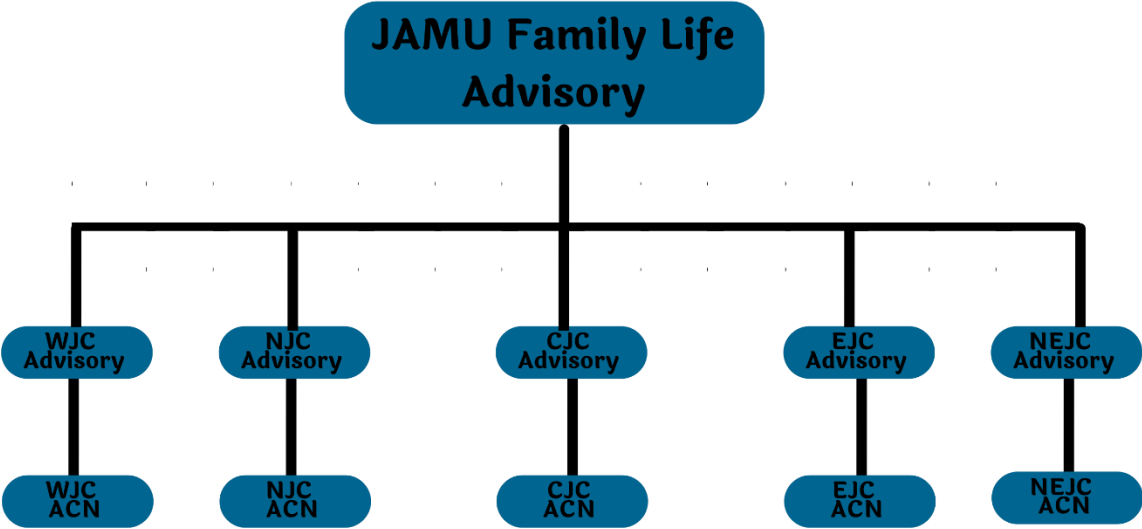


the Church and community, to support one another, and not to neglect self-care. Ministry to those in need includes guiding people on the right path, helping people cope and solving problems in a healthy way. She also cited incidences demonstrating how impacting Counseling has been in the local Church including saving the lives of persons attempting to commit suicide. Engendering emotional wellness is necessary she says because “any of us could become temporarily or permanently emotionally disabled at any time.”

**There are three objectives for this programme:**

1. To harness the expertise of the wide range of professionals now available in the Church to support the Pastors with specialist needs counseling.
2. Create an integration and support system for professionals in the Counseling field.
3. Create an organized approach where Family Life Education and Counseling can be used as an initiating factor for proclaiming the gospel.

**Jamaica Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists**  
*Adventist Counseling-Professionals Network*



## **FAMILY LIFE EDUCATOR'S CERTIFICATION (FLEC)**

The number one priority of the Family Ministries Department is to provide Family Life education. Directors and Family Ministries Leaders alone will not be able to carry all the load. In 2011, the FLEC was started in the Central Jamaica Conference with the use of resources from the General Conference, North American Division, and Pastor Gordon Martinborough, along with local resources focused on family life concerns. In this certification, elders, family life practitioners, and lay preachers were targeted to join in getting trained and they were provided with seminar materials to teach and preach on family life issues. Recently, the General conference has conducted level 1 and level 2 family life certification for directors and leaders in the English-speaking territories of the Inter-American Division, thus providing more materials that can be utilized. Dr Lorraine Vernal, former Family Ministries Director of Jamaica Union, was the Coordinator. The presenters were Dr. Willie Oliver, Mrs. Elaine Oliver (of the General Conference) and Pastor Pedro Iglesias (of the Inter-American Division).

The objectives of the FLEC are:

1. To provide the training and materials necessary for family life educator's to effectively educate the church and community on Christian family living.
2. Interest and attract family life leaders, family life practitioners, lay preachers, elders and other church leaders to teach and preach more on family-related matters.
3. Equip the church to use family life education as an entering wedge for the promulgation of the gospel.
4. To bring to the fore and keep before the church and the community the relevant family issues of our time.
5. To include more church leaders as a part of the solution to the many ills that

plague the modern-day family.

6. To create a pool of educators that can be called upon to meet the needs on family life special days in the local congregations.

The Family Life Educator's Certification (FLEC) is one of the flagship programmes that will be used to drive the strategic plan of the Family Ministries Department of the Jamaica Union up to 2025. Approximately 10 to 12 key seminar topics will form the curriculum in keeping the General Conference certification programme and the local needs. These topics include but are not limited to:

1. Biblical & Theological Foundations For Family Ministries
2. Spiritual Parenting
3. Conflict Resolution Strategies
4. Human Sexuality & Family Planning
5. Family Life Evangelism
6. Child Abuse
7. Domestic Violence
8. Personal & Family Finance
9. Ministry to Singles
10. Men's Mentorship Ministry Model
11. Human Trafficking
12. Mediation

## **BIBLICAL AND ECCLESIASTICAL PROCEDURES FOR REMARRIAGE**

By: Dr. Roy Dennis, Family Ministries Director

In the sinful world that we live amidst the attempt of so many to keep their marriages and families together, many marriages have come to an end due to unfaithfulness, abandonment, migration, domestic violence and numerous other circumstances. Divorce is contrary to God's Biblical Ideals (Matt. 19:3-8). And not every case of divorce makes one eligible for remarriage, based on the scriptures. The foundation that the Seventh-day Adventist Church uses to grant permission for remarriage to those who follow the process and makes a request to the church board or the Divorce and Remarriage Committee of the local Conference, is Matt. 19:9. When asked by the Pharisees "Should a man divorce his wife for every cause (verse 3), Jesus responded, "And I say unto you, whosoever shall put away his wife, except it is fornication, and shall marry another, commit adultery."

The statement of Jesus does not only make sense in the one-fleshness charge of Geneses 2:18,24 but also in keeping with the rule of legal contract where sex is the sealing of the contract and whichever party get involved with another outside of the marriage breaks the contract that they sealed with their spouse; thus, rendering the other free. Fornication here mentioned is wider than adultery. Adultery is an extra-marital affair where a man sleeps with a woman that is not his wife or a woman who does the same with a man who is not her husband, but fornication is any sexual deviance. Fornication includes adultery, bestiality and all types of sexual deviance. To be free if one party commits fornication does not mean the immediate departure of the innocent party as long as reconciliation is possible. This should be the first route to seek to forgive and reconcile the guilty. In some cases, there is no sorrow, no repentance, nor a desire on the part of the guilty to reconcile. The innocent party has the choice to both divorce and remarry. The guilty party has no right to divorce and remarry

except that the innocent party has remarried or died.

Whenever a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is divorced and wishes to remarry, the procedure is that such a one is to make a request in writing to the local church board where they hold membership. This should include:

- ◆ A request for permission to remarry
- ◆ Brief account of the reason for divorce

The church board has no right to grant any permission for remarriage except that there is evidence of unfaithfulness on the part of the other party. Evidence includes but is not limited to:

- ◆ A child born to the other party
- ◆ The other party caught in the act
- ◆ Technological evidence including pictures, text messages
- ◆ Confession of the other party

Persons wishing to remarry, and feel that they have not been properly served by their local church board may write to the Divorce and Remarriage Committee of the Conference. They may also choose to make their initial request to this committee which is chaired by the Family Ministries Director of the Conference.

Anyone who violated the marriage vow and is divorced and remarried shall be subject to the discipline of the local church. The disciplinary action may be removal from membership. If that person who violated the marriage vow got divorced and remarried and was subsequently dis-fellowshipped, and desires to be readmitted into membership, that request for re-admission should be sent by the local church board to the conference Committee for consideration, (S.D.A. Church Manual, 2015, Edition, pg. 15-160).

## **GUIDELINES FOR REPORTING CHILD ABUSE**

### **What Is Child Abuse?**

Child abuse is defined as the willful and unjustifiable infliction of pain and suffering on children. It can take many different forms. These not only include sexual and physical abuse, but also emotional abuse and neglect. Emotional abuse is a chronic pattern of behaviour such as belittling, humiliating, and ridiculing a child. It is also the consistent failure of parents or caretakers to provide a child with appropriate support, attention, and affection.

Physical abuse is defined as acts of physical assault by parents, caretakers or strangers. This includes cuts, fractures, bruises, burns, shaking, and internal injuries. Sexual abuse is defined as acts of sexual assault and sexual exploitation of minors by parents, caregivers or strangers. It may consist of a single incident or many incidents over a long period of time. It includes fondling a child's genitals, intercourse, incest, rape, sodomy, exhibitionism and sexual exploitation ( <https://www.health24.com>, retrieved November 12, 2018).

Physical neglect is the failure to provide children with adequate food, clothing, shelter and medical care. It also includes abandonment, expulsion from home and failure to enroll children in school.

### **Reporting Child Abuse**

Below are statements from the Office of the Children's Registry (OCR) as outlined in the Gleaner, Friday, January 13, 2017: The Office of the Children's Registry (OCR) is reminding Jamaicans of their duty to report incidents of child abuse. Persons who know or suspect that a child is being abused and fail to make a report to Registry could find themselves in trouble with the law.

## **Failure To Report**

Persons who know or suspect that a child is being abused and fail to make a report to the OCR are liable upon summary of a conviction before a resident magistrate to a fine not exceeding \$500,000 or to imprisonment for up to six months or both.

## **What To Report**

A report should include information to help the authorities identify and locate the child in question. Vital information includes:

- ◆ Name, age, and sex of the child
- ◆ Names and addresses of parents/guardians
- ◆ The school that the child attends
- ◆ Details of the incident being reported
- ◆ Identity and other details of the alleged perpetrator
- ◆ Any other information that can assist in the completion of the report and intervention

## **How To Report**

Call the Office of the Children's Registry to make a report on Mondays to Fridays between 7 a.m. and 11 p.m., Saturday and Sunday from 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m.

- ◆ Toll free: 1-888- PROTECT (1-888-776-8328)
- ◆ Telephone: 908-2132/754-9133/618-5888/631-8933/631-8908
- ◆ Mobile: 822-7031 (FLOW)
- ◆ Mobile and WhatsApp: 878-2882 (DIGICEL)

(<http://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/lead-stories/20170113/ocr-urges-jamaicans-report-child-abuse>, retrieved November 12, 2018).

Please note that due to the requirements of the law, parents, pastors and church leaders should ensure that where there are cases of child abuse, a report is made to



the OCR before requesting counseling intervention at the Conference offices. The Seventh-day Adventist Church upholds the standards of the Bible and the Jamaican law, that we should love and protect our children. “But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it was better for him that a millstone was hanged about his neck, and that he was drowned in the depth of the sea” (Matthew 18:6).

## FAMILY WORSHIP

Prepared By: Dr. Roy Dennis

Elijah brought the people on Mount Carmel; the prophets of Baal were there, and so too were the servants of God. The altars were set up and the God that caused fire to come down from heaven should be worshipped. The prophets of Baal chanted all day long but no fire came. At 3 p.m. Elijah called his men to throw 12 barrels of water on the sacrifice. He called on the name of Jehovah and fire came down from heaven consuming the water, the wood and the sacrifice. Choose you this day whom ye will serve. *“And Elijah came to all the People and said, how long will you falter between two opinions if the Lord be God follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him.” 1 Kings 18:21*

The call of Elijah is relevant to Seventh-day Adventist families today. The television, the computer, the cell phone and a myriad of competing influences, threaten to remove the altar of God from our homes. The altar of God is established only through our personal devotional lives and family worship. Do not allow anything to rob you of the blessings of this valuable ingredient for success in your spiritual lives – Family Worship. *“Every home should be a place of love, where the angels of God abide, working with softening and subduing influencing upon the heart of parents and children. Spread the word of God before your families in love and ask what has God spoken today?” (Ellen G. White, AH pp. 18, 19)*

### What is Worship?

Worship means to ascribe praise and reverence to God. There are four things that should be present as you do so:

1. Prayer
2. The study of the Bible.
3. Praise & thanksgiving or singing.

Fellowship: as the scriptures declare where two or three are gathered together there will the Lord be to bless them. Below are some practical pointers for your Family Worship:

- i. Have Family Worship everyday
- ii. Include the Bible and prayer in your Family Worship.
- iii. Have a curriculum (follow the Lesson Study or Morning Watch).
- iv. Include your children; use their lesson and let them participate; use bedtime stories
- v. Make it short – Family Worship should be 15 minutes to no more than ½ hour. You can spend a longer time in your personal devotion.
- vi. Have a prayer list and prayer partners
- vii. Each person should have the opportunity of leading out from time to time
- viii. Utilize musical instruments if you have them.

The family that prays together, stays together – If God be God, serve Him.

# THE TEN COMMANDMENTS OF CONSTRUCTIVE CONFRONTATION

By Len McMillan

Orlando, Florida

1. Think about what you are going to say before you open your mouth, “Don’t talk so much. You keep putting your foot in your mouth. Be sensible and turn off the flow.” (Proverbs 10:19, LB).
2. Don’t procrastinate. The sooner you can calmly confront the person with your problem, the sooner the healing can begin.
3. Don’t withdraw in silence. Most problems will not go away by themselves. Silence only leads to more frustration. *Exception:* when one or both of you is out of control.
4. Be open to criticism. Remember, all criticism is destructive before it can be constructive. It will usually hurt before it heals. “It is a badge of honour to accept valid criticism.” (Proverbs 25:12. LB.)
5. Resolve one issue at a time. Oftentimes we bring up the past because our present argument is weak, or there were not enough grievances in our “hurt bag” to initiate a confrontation.
6. State your complaint objectively, kindly, and privately.
7. Let the other person know you are not dissatisfied with the entire relationship. Remember, “It is harder to win back the friendship of an offended brother than to capture a fortified city. His anger shuts you out like iron bars.” (Proverbs 18: 19 LB)
8. Avoid a win-lose situation. Learn to bend a little. Seek to compromise. Negotiate! Don’t make threats to terminate the relationship if the other person doesn’t agree with you.
9. Don’t accuse or attack the other person. Use “I” phrases such as *I am very angry! I am extremely upset! This really bothers me.* Avoid “you” phrases such as *you make me so mad! You never do anything right! You don’t care about my feelings!*
10. Seek the solution. You may need to enlist a third person (counselor, pastor, friend) who will listen objectively and not take sides. Sometimes a mediator can help you reach an understanding even if the two of you fail to reach an agreement.

**FAMILY MINISTRIES DEPARTMENT**  
**FAMILY FRIENDLY CHURCH PROGRAMME**

**REPORT FORM**

FOR THE YEAR \_\_\_\_\_

Family Ministries Leader \_\_\_\_\_ Pastoral istrict \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_ Church \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please tick (✓) the appropriate box for each item below and indicate in the section under NUMBER the amount of times each event is held

CONFERENCE EVENTS OBSERVED	NUMBER	SPECIFIC PROGRAMME	NUMBER
<input type="checkbox"/> Christian Home & Marriage Week - February		<input type="checkbox"/> Family Fun Day /Games Session	
<input type="checkbox"/> Married Couples Retreat		<input type="checkbox"/> Cook - outs	
<input type="checkbox"/> Family Life Leader's Council		<input type="checkbox"/> Revivals/Crusades/Seminars	
<input type="checkbox"/> Mentorship Programmes		<input type="checkbox"/> Family Fasting	
<input type="checkbox"/> Family Togetherness Week - September		<input type="checkbox"/> Retreats	
<input type="checkbox"/> Mother's/Father's Day, Child Month			
ACTIVE FAMILY LIFE MINISTRIES AND FOCUS GROUPS IN YOUR CHURCH		ANY OTHER NOTABLE PROGRAMMES WORTHY OF REPORTING (Please specify)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Singles Ministries		<input type="checkbox"/> Other	
<input type="checkbox"/> Couples Ministries		<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Mentorship Ministries		<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Senior Citizens Ministries		<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Men's Ministries		<input type="checkbox"/>	

**NB:** The completed form should be returned to the Family Ministries Department of the local Conference by the 31<sup>st</sup> of December. Conference email address \_\_\_\_\_.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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