

A BRIEF SKETCH OF SDA MINISTERIAL TRAINING
[Cursorry and suggestive, and not exhaustive]

Earliest Ministerial Concepts. It is an irony of SDA history that its initial perception of ministry centered exclusively upon a "pastoral" rather than an evangelistic focus. This was an inevitable result of the "shut door" period that immediately followed 1844. Since it was generally believed that probation for the world had closed, intense efforts were made to wean back those former Adventists that were one time a part of the movement, but who had left the fold.

Following that shut door period, evangelistic concerns were the primary focus of SDA ministry and the training of its ministry centered upon tent evangelism. That concept by and large dominated SDA perceptions of ministry and ministerial training throughout most of its history. Initially, the evangelistic methodologies were successful in greatly increasing membership within the church, but, as Ellen White observed, the church paid a heavy price due to the entrance of a debating, argumentative style of ministry that focused almost entirely upon the theoretical rather than the practical aspects of Christianity.

Perhaps the most relevant factor necessary for us to understand about 19th century SDA ministry was the non-stationary, itinerant nature of ministry. Ministers were not stationed as pastors of local churches in 19th century Adventism and that fact must be constantly borne in mind in our understanding of the Ellen White counsels relative to ministry during the period. Not only was there a scarcity of ministers that forbade stationary pastorates, but there was a consistent fear expressed by Ellen White and others that a stationary pastorate would lead to "one man's mind" prevailing over the local congregation. It would be primarily in Australia near the end of the century

where the team ministerial approach was most fully developed that became the Ellen White model for SDA ministry in the 19th century.

During the primarily evangelistic phase of ministry that dominated the period within the United States, the husband-wife ministries came the closest to combining the needed evangelistic with pastoral ministries. James White described a typical team effort where the husband would go to the new area, put up his tent and when the work was fairly established the wife would join and work with her husband in going house to house with him and then remain in the area for a time to nurture the new church while her husband went on to new areas. [RH, March 8, 1860]

While James White continued to define his concept of ministry throughout the 1860s primarily in evangelistic terms, the church began to see more clearly a necessity for pastoral ministry: churches were being disbanded, children were rejecting the religion of their parents, churches were being plagued by disunity. So, attempts were made to enhance pastoring. Conferences began to district their territories to allow for systematic visiting of churches, a column was established in the Review that reported "Labor Among the Churches," quarterly meetings of local churches were attended by ministers and pastoral concerns would be the primary focus.

It appears to have been Ellen White counsels that pushed the church toward major ministerial reform. Mrs White made significant addresses concerning ministry at both the 1870 and 1871 GC sessions and sought to move the church from its preoccupation with a debating ministry toward more pastoral concerns. In the aftermath of Mrs White's urging for a more "qualified" ministry, the session established a committee to outline a course of study for ministers. [2T 498ff, RH, May 10, 1870] In addition, a ministerial lecture course for both men and women who were planning ministerial labor was held after the 1871 session. It is interesting that the price of membership in the Minister's

Lecture Association was \$5 for men and \$3 for women. Most state conferences adopted the Ministerial Association idea and that became a means of increasing the bonds and education of the ministers in the various states. James White outlined the purpose of the ministerial lecture course: "There are a hundred young men and young women who should attend a thorough course of lectures" that would "qualify them to teach the word to others." [RH, Jan 10, 1871]

Apparently reacting to the Ellen White admonitions, the 1871 GC session delegates voted that "means should be taken to encourage and properly instruct men and women for the work of teaching the word of God." The resolution called for a course "to instruct our devoted young men and young women, all over the land, in the principles of present truth, and the best methods of teaching them to the people." [1871 GC session actions]

In 1873, George Butler, GC president, defined the purpose of the ministerial lectures as "to furnish instruction in the theory of our faith to those who wish to enter into the ministry immediately" and in that same issue of the Review the General Conference Committee told why the SDA church was calling for both men and women to receive training and licensing to the ministry: "It is well known to most of the readers of the Review that our cause stands in great want of laborers properly qualified to present our views to the people who are everywhere ready to listen to them." The central administrative body of the church "believed there are those among us who have ability sufficient, could they have the proper instruction" to become successful evangelists of the SDA message. [RH, Mar 25, 1873] This appears to have been the earliest attempt to provide formal training for the ministry. It would be several years before Battle Creek College was established for that purpose.

A formal means of determining membership in the SDA ministry began with the general organization of the church during 1861 to 1863. The Michigan

Conference Committee in 1872 concisely defined the license to preach. Its definition was consistent with that of all conferences:

In reference to our young licentiates, it should be understood that the proper place for them to labor is in new fields. They have received licenses to try their gift, in order to ascertain if they are qualified to present the truth. The only proper place for them to do this is in new fields. [RH, Oct 22, 1872]

The testing of the licentiate was clearly through evangelistic success. In addition to the practical test of raising up churches in new areas after receiving the 4-6 weeks' ministerial lecture course, ministers seeking the ministerial license were also tested at the yearly conference meetings when the Committee on Credentials and Licenses examined applicants for the license to preach. After 1870, the licentiates were tested by the prearranged "yearly course of study for ministers," that was published in the Review and included doctrinal subjects and general historical and theological recommended readings. The 1878 GC session voted that licentiates should be "examined by a competent committee in regard to their doctrinal and educational qualifications" prior to receiving the licence. [RH, Oct 11, 1878]

The Review regularly published admonitions to the licentiates to "try their gift" in new fields "to ascertain if they are qualified to present the truth" and protested "against their going among our old churches to preach, where there are men of older and larger experience than themselves." [RH, Oct 22, 1872] It would appear that most ministerial "interns" during the early period were converts from other religious bodies. Because of the small number of SDA ministers, an internship program under the guidance of experienced ministers was not a viable option. And because of the uncertainty of financial support, the licentiate often was forced into school-teaching, canvassing or some additional business venture to support himself and thus was drawn away from the ministry.

Battle Creek College was established in 1874 and designed to train SDA workers as teachers, missionaries, or ministers. By the 1880s a number of innovative ministries had been developed within the denomination that enabled young workers to train for city mission work, Bible reading ministry, health evangelism, colporter work, etc. It was at the 1883 GC session when the concept of a ministerial institute for additional training of the ministry originated. That idea was promulgated throughout much of the 1890s. It was also at that session where the new and innovative Bible reading ministry was tried out and accepted. In addition, 1883 was the year for the development of the city mission program when SDAs established a number of city missions for the purpose of promoting evangelism in the large cities. Those missions from the beginning gave in-service training in city evangelism most especially to Bible workers. Although the financial drain on the local conferences caused the closing of many of the missions by the 1890s, the period of the 1880s and 1890s was a period of great innovation in the SDA understanding of ministry.

The Australian Model of Ministry. The most innovative and advanced concepts of ministry were worked out through the influence of Ellen White during her years in Australia in the 1890s. We have often failed to contextualize the Ellen White statements of ministry during this period with the absence of a stationary pastorate and thus failed to realize that Ellen White considered ministry far more a team effort than our usual application of some of her statements. It was thus not proper for one minister to "hover" over a church because "the Lord has a variety of workers, who must impress the people in various lines." Although that variety of workers in the 19th century was largely an itinerant variety, the point was that, in the absence of a stationary pastorate, all together served as the ministerial team for the local church and that variety of gifts was the means of educating the local church. The implications to the training of the minister within that setting of the

Ellen White statements has seldom been considered in our analysis of Mrs White's counsels during that period.

In Australia, Ellen White saw a "new world, and a very great work to be done," and considered that "The Lord designs that there shall be a true pattern in Australia, a sample of how other fields shall be worked," and she called for a "symmetrical" development of the work in that new world. [Aug 4, 1894 and Jan 6, 1899]

It was a "ministry of compassion" that Ellen White believed would be the best solution to the dilemma of 19th the century and also the means of bringing Adventism into the cities. It was working in "Christ's own lines," "working as he worked," ministering to the needs of others. It was the outworking of the plan of salvation: "Love awakens love." [Aug 4, 1894] It was the consequence of the new focus upon "Christ and the gospel" sounding more loudly within the church after 1888 and it came at the very time Mrs White was completing her major book on Christ, The Desire of Ages.

From Australia, Ellen White informed the church that "the Lord is in need of workers who will push the triumphs of the cross of Christ," and declared that "in every department of the cause of God, there is need of men and women who have sympathy for the woes of humanity." Tragically, she observed, however, "such sympathy is rare." Urging the church to respond to the more Christ-centered approach, Mrs White saw its implications concerning ministry:

Christ drew the hearts of his hearers to himself by the manifestation of his love, and then, little by little, as they were able to bear it, he unfolded to them the great truths of the kingdom. We also must learn to adapt our labors to the condition of the people,—to meet men where they are. While the claims of the law of God are to be presented to the world, we should never forget that love—the love of Christ—is the only power that can soften the heart, and lead to obedience. All the great truths of the Scriptures center in Christ; and rightly understood, all lead to him. [Home Missionary, Dec, 1892]

Ellen White was concerned about the concepts of ministry that some who had been sent from America to Australia were practicing. In fact, it was "by

revelation of the Spirit of the Lord" that she perceived those defects. She observed that one defective minister "preaches to the people, but makes no after effort to follow up the sermons given." Indeed, this minister "just despised that kind of labor" that involved visiting families. "You can imagine the condition of a flock unvisited by the shepherd," observed Mrs White. The ability to sermonize, according to Mrs White, constituted less than half of the true purpose of ministry. True ministry was personal labor and already-ordained ministers needed to be educated to that ministry. Notice how Mrs White in her understanding of ministry shifts the test to include pastoral concerns while the church had tested its ministers almost solely on their performance in evangelism:

I have repeatedly had this matter presented before me that these men who are ordained to preach the word, should be educated to make full proof of their ministry in their personal labors in families, talking with the members of the family, understanding their spiritual condition, encouraging, reprovng with all long-suffering and doctrine, praying with them, binding up his interest with their heart and souls. This is the work of a faithful shepherd. . . .

Men who are accepted to preach, and not to minister, better not go into foreign countries. Better have one thorough shepherd who will care for the flock as a faithful shepherd should, than to have twenty sermonizers who will excuse themselves, saying, It is not in my line to visit; I can not visit the church in their families. Then let there not be a moment's hesitation in telling them, we do not propose to accept you, and give you credentials.

. . . If a man fails to do this part of the work he can not be a minister after God's order. . . . Better, far better, have less preachers and far more earnest humble, God-fearing workers. [March 12, 1892]

From Australia, Mrs White was consciously attempting to change the SDA definition of ministry. Indeed, she really declined to consider the previous focus upon doctrines as true ministry: "There has been so much preaching to our churches that they have almost ceased to appreciate the gospel ministry. The time has come when this order of things should be changed." [Ms 45, 1895] It was this advanced perception of ministry that caused Ellen White to exclaim "The way is open for consecrated women." [Ms 43a, 1898]

Because Mrs White considered that the personal contacts were the most valuable facet of ministry, she perceived that the experience gained in the canvassing work would be "of the greatest value to those who are fitting themselves for the work of the ministry" and that it was the "accompaniment of the Holy Spirit of God that prepares workers, both men and women, to become pastors to the flock of God." [RH, Jan 15, 1901] When Ellen White considered that women could become "pastors of the flock of God" she was clearly assigning to women that facet of ministry that she knew the local congregations most needed.

In Australia, Ellen White consistently argued against "narrow" ideas of ministry and noticed that "It takes the varied gifts of various laborers" to provide the necessary symmetry to the work. [Ms 51a, 1894] Because there were not stationary pastors during that period, it would appear that Mrs White is urging such a team ministry within the local church. Indeed, Mrs White would notice, "There has been so much preaching to our churches, that they have almost ceased to appreciate the gospel ministry." [RH, June 11, 1895] And Mrs White wanted no permanent rules for guiding the understanding of the nature of ministry: "The scheme of salvation is not to be worked out under the laws and rules specified by men. There must be no fixed rules; our work is a progressive work, and there must be room left for methods to be improved upon." [RH, July 23, 1895] Mrs White did believe, however, that the variety of ministerial training that was carried forward in Australia should be carried on in each of the SDA colleges within the United States. [WCW, Aug 28, 1898] She urged that "It should be kept before the youth that there is no work more blessed of God than that of the gospel ministry. The highest of all work is ministry in its various lines." [Jan 6, 1899]

As the 19th century came to a close, Ellen White presented to the church her concept of the binding nature of the various elements of SDA ministry: "The

children of God constitute one united whole in Christ, who presents His cross as the center of attraction. Human feelings will lead men to take the work into their own hands and the building thus becomes disproportionate. The Lord therefore employs a variety of gifts to make the building symmetrical. Not one feature of the truth is to be hidden or made of little account." [Dec 5, 1899]

The Ministerial Internship Program. In the late 1920s, the SDA church sought to rectify conclusions that ministerial training had become too academic, "theoretical" and "unattached to actual needs." Various colleges began to develop programs that emphasized a "balanced proportion of field laboratory work" under faculty supervision. During the spring meeting of 1929, J L Shaw, GC treasurer, presented the initial rationale for the establishment of a proposed "Ministerial Internship" program. The hope was to "bridge the gap" between academic training and actual field work and to include men who had completed college ministerial training and women who had completed the Bible worker program. Another rationale for the plan concerned the observation that "every year the number who have received a college education and are not placed in the work increases."

Shaw noted that the plan adopted by the GC several years previous that urged local conferences to hire from one to three graduates for evangelistic work preparatory to their being called by the GC for foreign mission work was not successful. The basis for the new plan continued to be field evangelistic work, but was also an attempt to "give every young man who has the consecration and education an opportunity, for a year at least, to prove his call to the ministry." During this trial year, those ministerial graduates who had not been hired by the conferences would receive "a limited means of support" while their ministerial calling was examined. The plan would have the additional benefit of uniting the local, union and GC in an endeavor to increase the numbers in the SDA ministry to work together in a financial plan to do so.

Such a plan, it was hoped, would likewise be an incentive to stimulate a flagging interest on the part of ministerial prospects. [RH, June 6, 1929]

As approved at the 1929 spring meeting, the internship was designated as a "period of service spent in practical ministerial training, to be entered upon after the preparatory theological course; this training period to be served under supervision in a local conference, at a limited wage, for the purpose of proving the divine call to the ministry or to the Bible work." The duration was for one year and to be financed from GC funds for 2/3 of the salary with the local and union conferences to provide 1/3.

Reaction from the field was very positive and considered the move a stimulating enlargement of opportunities for developing the ministry. A "new day had dawned" for those looking toward the ministry and others saw a means of rectifying "our present policy" of placing "inexperienced men in charge of districts, making them pastors of churches, or perhaps we might call them presidents of little conferences, shoving them in these positions right from the start." The plan was seen as a means of moving "bright, active, consecrated young men, as they come from the college, and place them directly in evangelistic work." The president of EMC considered the plan a rectification of the fact of "the present inability to present openings in field work" that was "causing a number of our most promising young men to consider giving up the theological course and seeking some other line of training" and the NY Conference president labeled the plan as "one of the greatest forward steps to encourage our young men toward the ministry that we have yet taken." [Ministry, July, 1929]

The ministerial internship plan was described in the 1930 Working Policy as a means to "stimulate interest in the gospel ministry and Bible work and to coordinate the work of the General, union, and local conferences in selecting, training, and placing recruits for these evangelistic lines of service." GC

vice president, W H Branson, clearly outlined the evangelistic purpose of the program and affirmed that "it can never be God's plan that SDA preachers should find their pulpits in beautiful edifices," but rather "it is the Lord's plan for [interns] to go out into the highways and hedges....They should be pioneers." SDA ministry seemed to be consciously moving back to its 19th century evangelistic roots. Branson looked longingly back to the times when the church had no stationary pastors when "laymen" had the responsibility of leadership placed upon them and affirmed that he believed "that God will especially bless laymen of experience and maturity as they care for the churches while preachers are laboring in new territory." [Ministry, Jan, 1931]

The ratio of men to women as recipients of the intern plan was noticed after the initial two years of operation: of the 112 college-trained recipients of the plan, 81 were men training for the ministry and 31 were women who received internships for Bible work. Ministry lauded the basic principle enunciated by the president of the NJ Conference: "It has been our policy from the first not to utilize these young men in pastoring small churches. We have held them in virgin territory continuously from the day they began their internship in our field." The tendency of some conferences "to divert internes to district leadership, church pastorates, or to continuous campaign promotion work," was decried by both Ministry and by most denominational leaders. [Ministry, Mar, 1931]

The ministerial internship plan seemed to push academic training strongly into an evangelistic mold. The field director of PUC reported: "We are enlarging our plans for field work, so that upon graduation our young men can go out with a tent and engage in active evangelism as they enter their first year of internship." Students were trained in the use of such equipment as "charts and maps, stereopticon and moving-picture machines, and equipment for giving chalk talks." When the college ministerial student had finished his

schooling, reported the director, "he is prepared to assume responsibility in general field evangelism." The focus upon tent evangelism was also reported by R A Anderson of the Ministerial Association:

It is one of our aims to see in every college a real field room where charts, illustrations, and devices of various kinds are not only displayed but in many cases actually manufactured; where, too, the whole science of soulwinning can be studied at close range, thus giving more than a mere theoretical training. The ministerial student of today needs to have a first-hand knowledge of many things that had no place in such a course of a quarter of a century ago. The place and use of projectors, the technique of the radio, the best methods of publicity all must have a vital place in our present theological courses. [Nov 30, 1942]

The philosophy of ministerial training was clearly enunciated in the 1942 Working Policy: "Local conferences shall use their interns chiefly in public efforts, and thus give them opportunity in direct evangelism as the ideal initiation into the gospel ministry." The policy outlined that "ministerial interns shall be left free from the burdens of superintending districts, serving as pastors of churches, etc, and shall be given their time very largely for personal and public evangelism...thus having opportunity to 'make full proof' of their ministry by doing the work of an evangelist." By 1942 it was necessary for those conferences who received interns to agree that the services of the intern "during their two-year intership period, shall be thus utilized in the field of evangelism." The one exception to the previous requirement was the opportunity for the intern to participate in the regular Ingathering campaign.

The internship plan was modified after the development and integration of the SDA Theological Seminary into the training of SDA ministers. While the seminary was established in the early 1930s, it was not until 1945 that it became something more than a means of advanced training for Bible teachers. The 1944 Autumn Council recommended that after completion of college and the two years of practical internship training that the intern then take additional training at the seminary that would lead after four quarters to the M.A. degree

and after eight quarters to the B.D. degree. Part of the rationale for the additional training involved the "advancing level of general education and the pressure of accreditation upon our colleges" and the failure of the ministerial profession to keep pace with the more extensive training within the medical and teaching professions. Thus the "Seminary graduate training provisions became the designed capstone on the pyramid of ministerial training for the denomination." [Ministry, Jan, 1945]

It appears that one of the initial results from the enhanced ministerial training was a more balanced approach to ministry and indeed the 1946 Fall Council called for a "well-rounded development in all the phases of the ministry--Evangelistic, Pastoral, Teaching, and Promotional" for its ministerial trainees. After four years of college, the student was to receive a two-year internship where some nine months would be spent training under a successful evangelist and four to six months in association with a strong local pastor. The rationale was that "Soul winning, important as it is, is not, however, the only work of the minister. He must be a shepherd to the flock and a counselor to the distressed." R A Anderson, secretary of the Ministerial Association observed: "We need strong evangelists, but we also need strong pastors. God has not called every minister to a lifework of evangelism. Pastoring, promotion, and administration are all part of the sacred work of the ministry. Therefore, in training men for so diversified a calling, we must keep a thorough balance." An important aspect of that 1946 action was also the planning for more expert supervision of the intern during the two years of internship prior to seminary training: "For the carrying out of such a program we need real field trainers, men who, by experience, education, and spiritual leadership, are equipped to mold future workers." [Ministry, March, 1947]

By the mid-1950s, denominational leaders became alarmed by a rapidly decreasing quantity of ministerial candidates and assigned GC field secretary,

D E Rebok to survey the ministerial trainees to ascertain the reason. After close analysis based upon careful research and statistical applications and visiting each of the ten senior colleges and two junior colleges during 1956-57, Rebok observed that while institutional workers had increased 604% since 1941, SDA ministers had increased only 13%, and thus that "it is evident that more and more we are becoming institutionalized, and that more and more of our money and effort is going into such work." While tithe had increased 400% during the period and was more than sufficient to "meet the demands for our growing work and the need for ministers," its use for varying purposes caused the destabilizing of the ministry. Rebok noticed that the "figures show that our failure to use our ministerial graduates in the ministry during the past three to five years has resulted in a drying up of our source of supply. The number of ministerial students has decreased and the quality of the candidates has been seriously affected. The number of high scholarship candidates has diminished." The better students were entering medicine, dentistry and engineering.

He also urged the discontinuance of the "practice of using the church school teaching plan as a 'door' to the ministry," where students who had trained for the ministry were placed as schoolteachers for a period before being called to ministry. Rebok called for an innovative plan that would rekindle an interest in ministerial training. [Rebok, 1957 report]

By the early 1960s, the relationship between practical and theoretical studies was still at issue within the training program. The five-year Ministerial Training Course was comprised of the four years of college training and was to involve a minimum of 400 hours of literature ministry before the college training was considered completed. The fifth year was spent at the seminary with "approximately one third of the load in evangelism and church work, or training courses in which theory and practice are blended." After the

fifth year, "the candidate was eligible for appointment to a two-year ministerial internship, or for other direct appointments into the ministry." ["Ministerial Training and the Ministerial Internship Plan," 1962]

In 1950, the GC established a special "Ministerial Training Advisory Committee" that by 1964 consisted of representatives from the GC, sermonary, union conference presidents of North America, college administrators and deans of theology, who in that year reacted to the theological upheavels of the 1960s and recommended a new B.D. curriculum, "tailored specifically for the parish minister and evangelist, with provision not only for the study of the Bible, but also for its effective proclamation." The curriculum was designed to bring about "an integration of exegesis and preaching that will forestall a fragmented knowledge of the Bible and help the young minister to understand and preach the Scripture as a whole." Sermonary study was now to be a two-year period and the GC was to share 50% of the expense with the conferences. The B.D. now became the key to SDA ministry. [Ministry, Jan, 1965]

In 1968, Ministry Magazine used its "Ron Runyan" pseudonym to complain about the uneven treatment of ministerial interns, some of whom were put into the position of running errands for the supervisor's wife, etc. "Too often we use interns rather than train them," was the complaint and the author expressed it as his conviction "that it is time for this church to assign interns to only a select group of overseers." [Ministry, Oct, 1968] While it was in the 1970s and thereafter that many innovative and advanced programs of ministerial training were put forth, it seems apparent that the basic issues of ministerial training had been regularly replayed during various periods of past denominational history.

Brief Listing of Some Developments Since 1970. 1973 Ministerial Association Advisory discussion of plans for assuring better internships, among which involved "having the intern placed with a productive supervisor." John Osborn outlined the Pacific Union plan. N. R. Dower discussed the Ministerial Training Questionnaire that was to be used throughout North America to determine the effectiveness of the worker's ministerial training.

1973 Ministerial Training Advisory Committee. Joint M Div-MSPH Degree had been approved. Doctor of Ministry degree approved. Committee drew attention "to the need to include in the curriculum for ministerial training more emphasis on personal evangelism." Mention was also made for the need for including blocks of instruction for young ministers to enable them to understand church finance and accounting, reading blueprints, etc. Also discussed report of subcommittee headed by John Osborn entitled "Ministerial Internship and Intern Selection." Pacific Union Conference to field-test that plan. Seminary Task Forces report on how to make Seminary training more practical.

1973 Annual Council action concerning the Ministerial Training Program: "The educational requirement for entrance into the ministry shall ordinarily be the completion of the seven-year ministerial training program, four years of which shall be completed in a SDA senior college, the fifth and sixth years in the Theological Seminary of AU, and the seventh in a supervised internship in the field. Upon satisfactory completion of the Seminary studies, the student will be eligible to receive the degree of Master of Divinity. After being graduated from college, ministerial students as selected shall proceed to the Theological Seminary to complete the fifth and sixth years of the program. The enrollment in the Seminary for this ministerial training may be on the basis of the GC Scholarship Plan, or on the basis of a conference scholarship, or as a student without financial assistance from a conference. Upon satisfactory completion of the sixth year, the graduate is eligible for a twelve-month assignment as a ministerial intern, or for other direct appointments to the ministry." NAD 73AC.

1974 Ministerial Association Advisory discusses the issue of "making the theoretical courses practical" and also emphasized "that the practical courses must have content." Also observed was that "the women in the church represent a vast untapped resource. Their talents and abilities should be utilized in a more meaningful way at various levels of responsibility."

1974 MTAC meeting reported on survey of attitudes of young ministers evaluating the quality of training they had received for the ministry. Report was to be published in Ministry. Voted to recommend that colleges reinstitute the programs for training of Bible instructors and consideration given concept that "Bible Instructor" terminology be changed to the term "Associate Pastors." Also agreed that "encouragement should be given to outstanding young women interested in spiritual ministry to enroll in the M.Div program, in that there is increasing possibility that they may be employed as associate pastors or as Bible teachers."

1974 report of Special Ministry Internship Plan Committee designed to respond to needs of the field expressed in such plans as the "Literature Evangelist-Minister, the Teacher-Minister, the Student-Minister, the Layman-Minister, the 'Dark County'-Minister, etc."

1975 MTAC meeting: Majority of committee believed that "one year in the field before coming to the Seminary is desirable and should be recommended, but not to be made mandatory." Donald Jacobsen reported on a survey he recently made of recent graduates. Discussion by committee concerning question "Is there a need for a special course of training for the field supervisors of the ministerial interns?" Recommended that plans be submitted to Annual Council for workshops to be held in every union for the benefit of the ministers who supervise ministerial interns." Mervyn Maxwell reported on a survey that assessed the "opinions of lay leaders relative to the efficiency and training of pastors who were graduates of the Theological Seminary." Dr Steven Vitrano reported on the Clinical Pastoral Education Program "and its future role in the training of ministers at Andrews University. No official action was taken, but Dr Vitrano recommended that the Seminary maintain its present policy and watch

the developments in Clinical Pastoral education in the future." Two student surveys conducted by the Seminary Student Forum indicated that students "felt the need for more practical courses" in their ministerial training. MTAC voted to request GC officers "to give study to establishing internships specifically for Bible instructors, whether they be male or female." MTAC also voted "to recommend to the Annual Council a policy that would strongly encourage young persons taking the ministerial training program at our colleges to spend at least three months in literature ministry before becoming eligible for a GC internship, and further that exceptions to this policy be made only in a few instances."

Dec, 1975 Ministry article by John Osborn, "Why Continuing Education?" stressing that "seminary training that formerly equipped a minister for a lifetime now prepares him for only the first five years of his ministry," and thus "A minister's education must continue after seminary training."

1976 MTAC: "After it was brought to the attention of the committee that the action taken last year concerning Bible Instructors Internships had not yet been implemented, it was VOTED, to reiterate last year's action and bring it once more to the attention of the GC officers." Also "VOTED, to request the GC to establish internships for female ministers which should not be open to men, and to encourage the conferences to use these internships to avail themselves of the still untapped talents of young women who want to serve the church in the capacity of (unordained) ministers."

MTAC voted to devote its next meeting to a study of the "Role of the Ministry in the SDA Church," from a Biblical and Spirit of Prophecy perspective. A committee was appointed to prepare a statement that would be the basis of the discussion. "After this statement has been studied, edited and approved by the MTAC in its next meeting it will be presented to the GC officers for adoption."

Dr Steve Vitrano "presented the need for a better trained supervisory staff for young ministers who are placed under their care. It was therefore VOTED, that the Church and Ministry Department of the Seminary continue to study the problem of training supervisors of Seminary students and ministerial interns and that a plan be presented to the officers of the GC for adoption by the Annual Council, providing that the ministers who supervise ministerial interns receive an adequate training for their task."

1976 Annual Council action: "Eligibility to [ministerial] internships shall include:...K. Three months or 420 hours of experience as a literature evangelist. (Exceptions should be allowed only after careful study of the individual case and should be very few.)"

1976 AC approval of document "Evangelism and Finishing God's Work," that stressed "that every effort be made to bring about a clear, unequivocal, church-wide understanding of the crucial nature and primacy of evangelism." [1977 AC implemented the concept by "accept[ing] as our faith objective the baptism of 1000 souls per day by the time of the 1980 GC session."

1977 MTAC VOTED that GC Ministerial Assn be asked to develop an Internship Candidate Evaluation Instrument "based on the best from each instrument now in use in our different colleges in their ministerial evaluation programs."

MTAC also "VOTED, that the Seminary be asked to work out a quarter in which Seminarians could spend their full time in the field. This program should be implemented beginning with the Fall quarter of the 1977-78 school year and that it be made a core requirement." Evidence of theological issues being faced by the church is reflected in the "following items [referred] to the Seminary faculty for a discussion and formulation of responses:

"1. What is the SDA Church going?

"2. What understanding of and attitude toward critical approaches to

Biblical studies is being communicated to the future ministers of the church through the Seminary?

"3. In view of the impact which Seminary students could have as Bible teachers both here and overseas, how does the previous item apply to candidates for the M.A. in Religion, and for the Th.D. candidates of the Seminary?

"4. What course is required of all Seminary students toward the end of the program that pulls together the hermeneutical study which they have done in various classes, and, will they have received thoroughly compatible hermeneutics from the various teachers involved or could there be a plurality of hermeneutics absorbed by students here?

"5. What steps is the Seminary taking to prepare a ministry that understands and supports church organization, church unity, church discipline (knowledge of and attitude toward the CHURCH MANUAL, for example) and church polity?

"6. In view of the continuing complaints that too much of our preaching today has little basis in the Scriptures, what steps are being taken to rob such criticism of its validity both at the college and Seminary levels? And could it be that students are being diverted from the objective of pastoral and evangelistic work (especially if they carry a high GPA) and so take little interest in the practical aspects of their Seminary training?"

1978 MTAC: "Steve Vitrano presented a proposal for new programs in ministerial training. It was VOTED, that the concept be approved, the instrument be refined and presented to the necessary bodies to be implemented." The program involved a "9th quarter field training program" that emphasized personal evangelism. See "Proposal for New Programs in Ministerial Training," Department of Church and Ministry, SDA Theological Seminary, May 4, 1978.

1979 Spring Meeting: 9th quarter plan approved.

1979 Institute of Church Ministry established at Andrews

1979 Faith Action Advance

1980s...

Bert Haloviak
April 26, 1988