

## PROJECT ABSTRACT

Masters of Arts in Pastoral Theology

Adventist University of Africa

Theological Seminary

Title: A STRATEGY FOR PARTICIPATION OF MEMBERS OF  
NAJJANANKUMBI SDA CHURCH DISTRICT, UGANDA

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Date completed: June 2015

This research was carried out by this researcher in order to design a suitable strategy which could enable the members of the Najjanankumbi Seventh-day Adventist Church in Uganda to increase their participation in the life and mission of the church.

It had been discovered that only 11% of the members were involved in most evangelism activities in the last ten years from 1996 - 2006. All the others supported the Great Commission through prayers, contributions of either money or other materials, and others were mere spectators.

This research sought to increase the percentage of participation to at least 60% by the year 2008. In order to reach this goal, this researcher had to work very closely with the entire church through the evangelism committee. The researcher then designed a questionnaire to work as instrument of research to solicit answers and ideas from the members themselves. The respondents were church members from three organized churches especially church officers and influential members of the church.

The findings revealed that many members claimed to have no time for evangelism and others just lacked knowledge, direction, seriousness, commitment and faith. However, the respondents raised a number of strategies which could make them become more involved in evangelism.

Their suggestions started with the need to be equipped for evangelism. Then they suggested methods like: evangelism to neighbors, inviting visitors at their churches, social gatherings, departmental public evangelism and many others.

When this strategy was implemented in three churches for only one year, the level of participation increased in these churches to at least 55% and 634 new members were baptized and a new church was started at Kabaawo in Wankulukuku area with 254 new baptized members.

The achievement from this project has encouraged the leaders of these three churches to support and strengthen the evangelism committee for the continuity of this program. The church members are now eager to participate in the life and mission of the church.

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A project

presented in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

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by

Samuel Kajoba

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The Najjanankumbi Seventh-day Adventist Church district is one of the largest Church districts in Central Uganda Conference and among the best performing in various disciplines as per church programs. It is strategically placed on the outskirts of Kampala the capital city of Uganda. It is along Entebbe road, which leads to the main airport in the country.

Its territorial boundaries cover one of the most populated slum areas hence the population growth in the area is very high and dense. Many middle-class members of the general work force in and around the city have residences within the territory. This makes it one of the most fertile areas for evangelism.

However, despite its strategic position, membership and facilities, the majority of the Najjanankumbi Seventh-day Adventists members have not been fully participating in the life and mission of the Church for the last ten years from 1996-2006.

However, out of the 3096 members in the district, only 350 (11%) were involved in evangelism activities all the time. The rest were busy either doing their personal work, or other Church activities that had little contribution to the Great Commission. This might have led the Church to grow on a very slow speed. Yet, all these eleven congregations are served by two ordained ministers and one un-ordained.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Despite its strategic position, membership and facilities, eighty nine percent of the Najjanankumbi Seventh-day Adventist district members have not been directly participating in the life and mission of the Church for the last ten years from 1996-2006.

### **Purpose of the Study**

To design a suitable strategy which will enable effective participation of at least sixty percent of the members of the Najjanankumbi Seventh-day Adventist Church district in the life and mission of the Church.

### **Significance of the Study**

This research will help Najjanankumbi Church district and other Churches in the entire Conference to find alternative solutions to make their members to fully participate in the life and mission of the Church.

As a Church called into existence for a missionary purpose, this research will also benefit individual Churches in evaluating the effectiveness of the ways and means by which the gospel is being communicated.

This research will also benefit individual Churches to increase their membership because it will contribute to the growth of the Church. Lastly, it will also enable the entire leadership of Central Uganda Conference in its overall planning for evangelism.

### **Delimitation of the Study**

Despite the fact that this problem is common in almost all Seventh-day Adventist Churches in Central Uganda Conference, this study will only concern itself with Najjanankumbi Seventh-day Adventist Church district.

## **Methodology of the Study**

In order to achieve the purpose of this study, the following methodology shall be applied:

1. To study literature on evangelism and Church growth, focusing on involvement of members in the life and mission of the church. It will involve reading the following materials: the Bible, Ellen G. White, other Seventh-day Adventist writers, and other Christian writers.
2. Obtain permission from the Church boards and district council to conduct the research in their district and to involve them in the project.
3. Gather relevant data from statistical reports of the Najjanankumbi Seventh-day Adventist Church, Lay activity departmental reports, Seventh-day Adventist Central Uganda Conference, and from the Local Government population department.
4. Design a questionnaire and distribute it to the church members of the three organized churches namely: Najjanankumbi, Namasuba, and Wankulukuku.
5. Interview the Church officers, district council members, and opinion leaders in the district. This interview will also include the two neighboring district pastors.
6. Analyze the gathered information.
7. Design an appropriate strategy which will enable leaders and other church members to participate in the life and mission of the Church.
8. Carry out the program in the district for one year.
9. Evaluate the results especially through records.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### **The Mission of the Church**

The mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the world is to proclaim to all peoples the Everlasting Gospel in the context of the Three Angel's Message of Revelation 14:6-12, leading them to accept Jesus as their personal savior and to unite with His Church, and nurturing them in preparation for His soon return.

Consequently, this becomes the mission for Uganda Union, Central Uganda Conference, and Najjanankumbi Seventh-day Adventist Church district.

The methodology of implementing this mission can only be achieved when the Church implements Jesus' last words to His disciples which said, "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit" (Matt 28:19).

In order to be effective, Jesus promised to empower his disciples for the Great Commission. "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

#### **The Great Commission and Church Growth**

According to Rainer one of Church growth specialist, there is a clear relationship between the Gospel Commission and Church growth. He stated that: "True Church growth takes place when 'Great Commission' disciples are added and

are evidenced by responsible Church membership.”<sup>1</sup> That is why growing Churches like Saddleback Valley Community Church grew faster through their commitment to the Great Commission. Their slogan and motto was “A great Commitment to the Great Commandment and the Great Commission will grow a Great Church.”<sup>2</sup>

Even though many look at the increase of Church members as a sign of its health, Warren refers to the health of the Church differently according to Saddleback Valley Community Church standards. To them the health of their Church depended on how many members were mobilized for the Great Commission. He stated that, “A Church’s health is measured by its sending capacity, not its seating capacity.”<sup>3</sup> Therefore, in order to fulfill the Gospel Commission the Church should always be very busy sending its members in the community. This will not only increase its membership but will also raise the spiritual standards of its members.

The Great Commission should not be interpreted as an effort to force people to “go” but as according to Green, “a plan of action for individuals who are in the process of ‘going’.”<sup>4</sup> Warren further argues that the word ‘go’ in the Great Commandment is a present participle in the Great text and that it should read as ‘you are going’.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Thom S. Rainer, *The Book of Church Growth* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1993), 21.

<sup>2</sup> Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995), 103.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

<sup>4</sup> Hollis L. Green, *Why Churches Die* (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany Fellowship, 1972), 20.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 104.

So, it is every Christian's responsibility to fulfill the Gospel Commission by going out. Christians should be Ambassadors for Christ, whose mission is to evangelize the whole world starting from the community where they live. Maxson calls it "active ministry" because every Christian is involved not as spectator but as a player in the field.<sup>6</sup>

Commenting on the five dimensions of Church growth, Warren emphasized that the Church grows broader through ministry and larger through evangelism.<sup>7</sup> Another Church growth advocate, Burrill, calls it our only reason for existence. He said, "It is its reason for existence. It is called "the Great Commission" because of the magnitude of the commission."<sup>8</sup>

Therefore, the growth of the Church will depend on the commitment of its members to fulfilling this commission. This idea is not man-made but was ordained by God that His people would be witnesses. A Christian should therefore witness in order to be complete and obedient to God. Maxson reminds Christians that all ministries are useless without witnessing. He stated that, "while our individual calling may have a narrower focus, we must remember that all ministry finds its ultimate purpose in this Gospel Commission."<sup>9</sup>

This can be seen when Apostle Peter even directed that this Great Commission had to be fulfilled by the Gentile Christians who were scattered throughout the Roman Empire.

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<sup>6</sup> Benjamin C. Maxson, *The Missing Connection* (Silver Spring, MD: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2005), 87.

<sup>7</sup> Warren, 48.

<sup>8</sup> Russell C. Burrill, *Recovering an Adventist Approach to the Life and Mission of the Local Church* (Fallbrook, CA: Hart Books, 1998), 7.

<sup>9</sup> Maxson, 89.

“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light” (1 Pet 2:9). He cautioned each member to view himself as a “living stone” in the temple of God. “You also, like living stones are built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ’ (1 Pet 2:5).

In order for the Seventh-day Adventist Church to fulfill this unique mission, the Church should remember Dudley’s statement that, “Seventh-day Adventist believe that their organization is not just another Church with a different day of worship than the majority of the Christian Churches, but a special movement God raised up during the last years of earth’s history to prepare people everywhere for the coming of Jesus and citizenship in the new and perfect world.”<sup>10</sup>

Sticking to this unique mission will make the Church to grow both numerically and spiritually. Both are absolutely essential to the fulfillment of the Great Commission. This will give birth to responsible members of the body of Christ who will gladly share their faith. Growing Churches have more members holding Church offices or other services. The more people are engaged in some type of witnessing programs the more growth is expected.<sup>11</sup> Since the Adventists have always believed in the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, then they must accept the fact that as priests, all believers have a ministry or else they will be regarded as

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<sup>10</sup> Roger L. Dudley and Des Cummings Jr., *Adventures in Church Growth* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1983), 17.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 110-111.



unfaithful Christians.<sup>12</sup> The whole idea is that every believer is called into ministry to minister to the world and the Church.

Warren points out the idea of individual participation as a major necessity in fulfilling the Great Commission. He reminds every believer that service to the Lord is not optional to Christians because, “In God’s army, there are no volunteers-he’s drafted all of us into service.”<sup>13</sup> In his other book Warren indicates that once you are saved, God intends to use you for his goals. God has a ministry for everybody He calls in the Church. Everybody He calls must make a contribution because everybody is called for His mission in the Church and in the world.<sup>14</sup>

Unfortunately, most members have not yet understood that they are a part of God’s plan from the beginning. They are God’s representatives to their families, friends and neighbors. Ellen G. White clearly stated that, “Not upon the ordained Ministers only rests the responsibility of going forth to fulfill this mission. Everyone who has received Christ is called to work for the salvation of his fellow men.”<sup>15</sup>

It is only the selfishness of the human heart that can stop someone from not carrying the Good news of salvation to others. According to Green, “The Good News of the gospel impels those who receive it to share their experience with others.”<sup>16</sup> No

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<sup>12</sup> Russell C. Burrill, *Revolution in the Church* (Fallbrook, CA: Hart Research Center, 1993), 26.

<sup>13</sup> Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church*, 368.

<sup>14</sup> Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life* (Grand Rapids, MI: Oasis International, 2002), 229.

<sup>15</sup> Ellen G. White, *Acts of the Apostles* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1911), 110.

<sup>16</sup> Hollis L. Green, *Why Churches Die* (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany Fellowship, 1972), 20.

wonder, the early Christian believers of the New Testament devoted their whole life in fulfilling the mission of Jesus (Acts 2:42).

This made the Church to grow from time to time through conversion growth.

When the Christians fully devote their lives and time on the Great Commission, the Church will experience conversion growth. Church growth specialist McGavran mentions three types of Church growth: biological growth, by which children of believers are added to the Church; transfer growth, which means the increase of certain congregations at the expense of others; and conversion growth, in which those outside the Church come to rest their faith on Jesus Christ and baptized and “added to the Lord” in His Church. However, he puts conversion growth above all others because it is the only kind of growth by which the Good News of salvation can be spread to all segments of people in the whole world.<sup>17</sup> This was the type growth experienced during the time of Jesus’ ministry on earth. Churches during the time Jesus and the Early Christian Church grew through conversion growth by baptism of new converts from time to time.

The Good News spread from place to place by the new members who were baptized and devoted their lives to spreading the Gospel. This made the Church to grow from strength to strength. “More and more men and women believed in the lord and were added to their number” (Acts 5:14).

### **Jesus’ Ministry in the Cities**

Jesus’ ministry in Capernaum clearly shows the need for serious city evangelism. He spent a lot of time in this city in order to use the opportunity of places where there were multitudes of people. “Christ labored in Capernaum much of the

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<sup>17</sup> Donald A. McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1980), 98-99.

time because this was the place through which travelers were constantly passing and where many often tarried.”<sup>18</sup> The influence of Jesus was felt to the extent that Capernaum came to be known as “His own city.” This was so because here Jesus could meet all nations and all ranks, the rich and great, as well as the poor and lowly, and His lessons would be carried to other countries and in too many households.<sup>19</sup>

In order to follow in the footsteps of Jesus in city evangelism, a serious revival is needed in the Christian churches which will enable them to organize the Christians to fulfill the Gospel Commission in the cities. Core Church growth scholar Donald McGavran revealed that the Church needs a special revival in order to follow in the footsteps of their master and to make the salvation of the world a chief purpose.<sup>20</sup>

### **The Early Church Ministry in the Cities**

The importance of cities on the side of the Gospel can be seen in the way Christianity came into existence. Church growth specialist McGavran narrates the history of Christianity as having its origins in cities: “Unlike Islam which became powerful in the small towns and oases of the Arabian hinterland, the expansion of Christianity is inextricably associated with centers of power in the ancient world.”<sup>21</sup> Cities and large towns had great meaning for the early Church and that is why Dudley advises all those who are interested in the growth of the Church especially in cities to focus on the book of Acts as the record of God’s principles of Church growth<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> White, *Evangelism* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1946), 58.

<sup>19</sup> White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1948), 121.

<sup>20</sup> McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth*, 138.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 314.

<sup>22</sup> Dudley, 151.

Gaylord pointed out that in the first-century Church, the gospel spread quickly in cities, it went beyond Judea, Jerusalem and spread from city to City like: Ephesus, Corinth and Rome.<sup>23</sup> Therefore, it has always been God’s strategy to target people centers. That is why many Christian churches were planted in large cities including the seven churches of the book of Revelation. It is important also to note that even during persecution, those who scattered in these cities still continued to spread the gospel. “Those who had been scattered preached the word whenever they went” (Acts 8:4). It was through spreading the Gospel that Christianity shook cities and thousands joined the faith.

Therefore, there is a great need to use the urbanization opportunity to spread the gospel of Christ. Monsma warned the Christian Church in African cities not to be careless but to use the urbanization opportunity maximumly through proper planning of evangelism especially through the life and witness of individual members.<sup>24</sup> Failing to use this opportunity will be a total loss as Green stated; “If we fail in the urban areas we shall have failed indeed.”<sup>25</sup> Walemba also cautioned pastors and members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Uganda never to neglect the urbanization opportunity which was taking place. His research revealed that there was a need for an

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<sup>23</sup> Noyce B. Gaylord, *Survival and Mission for the City Church* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 1975), 29.

<sup>24</sup> Timothy Monsma, *An Urban Strategy for Africa* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey, 1979), 132.

<sup>25</sup> Roger S. Greenway, ed., *Guidelines for Urban Church Planting* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1976), 18.

urbanized approach to ministry in order to reach all segments of the fast-growing city membership.<sup>26</sup>

### **Two Church Growth Hindrances in Today's Cities**

Church growth is very important to the life of the local Church because it shows its healthy status. According to Warren, a Church is a living organism which is expected to grow in a natural way if it is healthy. Therefore, when it is not growing it becomes one of the leaders' tasks to handle. "The task of Church leaders is to discover and remove growth-restricting diseases and barriers so that natural, normal growth can occur."<sup>27</sup>

There might be so many diseases hindering the health of Churches in today's generation, but this research will address only two, namely:

1. Lack of the spirit of mission within Church programs
2. Lack of individual participation of members in the Life and Mission of the Church.

### **Lack of the Spirit of Mission within Church Programs**

Warren noted that when Churches grow they start to be driven by some other things like events, tradition, personality, finances, programs, tradition and buildings.<sup>28</sup> These events start to compete with each other causing the Church to head in different directions at the same time. The most unfortunate part of it is that during this time

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<sup>26</sup> Nathaniel Mumbere Walemba, *An Approach to a Holistic Ministry in a Seventh-day Adventist Urban Church in Uganda*, Adventist Theological Seminary DMin. Dissertation, (Berrien Springs, Michigan: Andrews University Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, 1988), 1.

<sup>27</sup> Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church*, 16.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 77-79.

evangelism is not given the first priority. Yet, according to Burrill, the Church is supposed to be driven by a mission mentality in all its programs. “Seventh-day Adventist is a mission movement. It is founded, and nurtured in a mission mentality. As the Church has grown and matured, the danger of losing this mission mentality has increased.”<sup>29</sup> This is a disastrous situation the Church is facing today.

Burrill stated: “The great danger Churches face as they mature is to spend time tending to the aquarium of the saints rather than becoming fishers of men.”<sup>30</sup> Much of the time and funds are spent on nurturing the few members who enter the Church instead of going out for more fish from the sea.

This problem was never heard of in the Early Christian Church because it was a mission-centered movement organized for the purpose of mission. Unfortunately these days most Churches spend most of their time, energy, talents, and money just trying to keep the status quo.<sup>31</sup> Yet, all the assets, programs and plans of the Church should revolve around the goal of reaching the people.

Unfortunately, in today’s situation some members from the elite class have adopted many Western cultures which hinder the mission of the Church. They want luxurious well built, well-furnished places of worship. This makes the budget of the Church to focus mainly on infrastructure other than on members who will utilize the infrastructure. Warren fore- saw this problem when he wrote: “Paying for and maintaining the building becomes the bigger item. Funds needed to operate ministries must be divided to pay the mortgage, and the actual ministry of the Church suffers.”<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Burrill, *Recovering*, 222.

<sup>30</sup> Burrill, *Revolution*, 50.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 30.

<sup>32</sup> Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church*, 78.

It is true that having good, well-built-furnished Churches is good but there is also need to strike the balance by bringing in more people so that they can share their faith with others. This is the major reason of our existence. Therefore, a bigger percentage of the budgets should be allocate to evangelism as Ellen G. White states: “Evangelism, the very heart of Christianity, is the theme of primary importance of those called to herald God’s last warning to a doomed world.”<sup>33</sup>

Unfortunately most of the Church funds collected in the Church are spent on erecting large Church buildings, maintenance of the Churches, purchase of new Church lands, sophisticated gadgets and running of other Church projects and events. All these are good but Calf calls them secondary issues when we neglect evangelism. He wrote that; “In traditional Churches, Christians easily become preoccupied with secondary issues. They often push agendas on their Church that neglects the goal of replicating faith.”<sup>34</sup>

Ellen G. White warned against erecting large buildings on the expense of evangelism. Instead the Church would construct possible Churches so that we can save money for the mission of the Church. She also warned against needless expenditures in cities when she wrote: “Let all who take up the work in our large cities be careful in this respect in no place should there be any needless expenditure of money. It is not by outward display that men and women are to learn what is comprehended by present truth. Our workers are to practice strict economy. God forbids all extravagance.”<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> White, *Evangelism*, 5.

<sup>34</sup> Carl F. George, *Prepare your Church for the Future* (Grand Rapids, MI: Fleming H. Revell, 1973), 105.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 85.

This means maximum benefit should be gained from the Lord's money and needless expenses should be avoided. The Church should eliminate expensive features that contribute little to soul-winning. Also Tippet indicated that the mission of the Church is in the world: "There is no place in Church growth theory and theology for the enclosed congregation without outreach."<sup>36</sup> Without evangelism the local Church will surely stagnate and eventually collapse to death.

Rex urged believers to understand the mission of the Church when he pointed out that, "Therefore, the objective of the Church and the emphasis of its program must be changed to whatever degree is necessary so that it will point specifically towards helping the membership to understand the essential mission God has entrusted to those whom he has called to be the people of God and to lead them to accept and fulfill this ministry in the world."<sup>37</sup>

Unfortunately, some members with their social status are just fond of organizing parties, jubilees, graduation, birthdays, weddings which seem to be very costly but when you compare what they put in for these celebrations and their contribution towards the life and mission of the Church, the gap leaves a lot to be desired.

### **Lack of Individual Participation of Members**

Too often we attempt to measure the success of the Church in fulfilling the great commission by counting the number of baptisms in the Church. Through this method we become satisfied with the numbers so that we totally neglect to count the number of members who participated in the evangelism process.

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<sup>36</sup> Alan R. Tippet, *Church Growth and the Word of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1978), 64.

<sup>37</sup> Rex D. Edwards, *Every Believer A Minister* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1979), 115.



Many times the work of evangelism is done by very few members. Yet, the Great Commission was never given to a few individuals. This command was given to all believers. Every member must participate in this soul winning exercise. However, most of the time some members make themselves busy with work at their work places having no time for outreach programs.

According to Ellen G. White, “The Savior’s Commission to the disciples included all the believers. It included all in Christ to the end of time.”<sup>38</sup> Therefore, the work was not placed on shoulders of ordained Clergy or some few members only. It was a commission for all and every individual Christian made vows at baptism to be a co-worker in Christ. Rex confirms this; “Therefore, every individual who is called by God to join the Christian fellowship and Church membership should understand that as a Christian he has a ministry to perform, and in uniting with the fellowship he must understand that thereby he is covenanting with God that he will accept and fulfill this ministry.”<sup>39</sup> The leaders of the Church must teach this important theology to each individual before and after baptism.

Burrill also confirms that, there was individual participation during the Early Christian Church in the following words: “The New Testament Church could not even imagine a Christian who was not involved in ministry. It was inherent in the theology of the first Christians.”<sup>40</sup> The involvement of every member was the norm of the first-century Church and this should be the norm of God’s last-day Church.

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<sup>38</sup> Ellen G. White, *Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1940), 822.

<sup>39</sup> Edwards, 113.

<sup>40</sup> Burrill, *Revolution*, 25.

Therefore, Greens' advice to Church leaders should be taken seriously when he stated that, "The Church must create an atmosphere conducive to individual participation in the work of the kingdom."<sup>41</sup> The atmosphere should help the members of the Church to become conscious that this task is for all members. Braun also agrees with other Church growth proponents when he confirmed that, "The key to a growing Church and an active laity is participation."<sup>42</sup> So the involvement of every member is one of the major solutions to the growth of the Church.

Green also warns the Church that: "The Church is not supposed to be in a seated position. The New Testament Church was made up of men in motion. No provision was made for men to sit down until their work was finished."<sup>43</sup> Burrill again agrees that in the early Church all members and believers were not pew warmers: Every individual was actively engaged in the ministry. This is why it can be called the model Church up to this day. He describes this Church this way: "There was a special work for all. Some were front-line soldiers, out there confronting the world for Christ. Others were back-up troops, helping care for new converts, integrating them into the fellowship of the Church-and keeping other members supplied. Others were generals and administrators who kept the whole Church running. Each had a place and ministry."

In order for the Church to accomplish God's mission in its assigned territory, the members must be ready individually to face the task with determination. This should be done with no difference in gender, size, position or status of an individual.

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<sup>41</sup> Green, 27.

<sup>42</sup> Neil Braun, *Laity Mobilized: Reflections on Church Growth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1971), 130.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.

All should actively participate in the soul-winning exercise. Burrill emphasized that; “To be a Christian is to be involved-to be engaged in ministry involvement.”<sup>44</sup> Our mission should always be to take the Good News of Jesus Christ to our neighbors, friends, and relatives. Rainer looks at this task as the only hope for the sinners. “Only by involving the body of Christ in this urgent task can we hope to reach a lost world.”<sup>45</sup>

In the first Christian Church all the eleven stood up as a unit with Peter when he preached to the crowd (Acts 2:14). There was no idle member during this period because each member had the zeal of fulfilling the Commission.

Edwards stresses that, “The spectator Christian therefore, is not a Christian even though he sits in Church.”<sup>46</sup> It is necessary for every individual to participate in the Church’s mission in order to save God’s people. However, the situation is worse according to Warren: “Today thousands of local Churches are dying because of Christian who is unwilling to serve. They sit on the side lines as the spectators, and the body suffers.”<sup>47</sup> Ellis similarly describes the situation in more details: “Many desert the cause entirely; others take a permanent leave; still others always remain recruits, practicing their use of the spiritual armor, but never returning out on the battle field.”<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 36.

<sup>45</sup> Rainer, 167.

<sup>46</sup> Edwards, 111.

<sup>47</sup> Warren, 230.

<sup>48</sup> Joe S. Ellis, *The Church on Purpose* (Cincinnati, OH: Standard Publishing, 1982), 48.

Unfortunately, some members of the Church rest all the burden of evangelism on the shoulders of the Church ministers. Yet, every member needs to understand that though there are differences in performance and roles, every Church member should be engaged in some line of service for the master. According to Ellen G. White, “Some cannot do so much as others, but everyone should do this utmost to roll back the tide of diseases and distress that is sweeping over our world.”<sup>49</sup>

Burrill uses the early Christians as a model because to them witnessing was a way of life, every believer had a ministry, and the entire Church worked together and realized that each person had his place in God’s Church.<sup>50</sup> Ellen G. White calls it the only way we can finish God’s work here on earth. “The work of God in this earth can never be finished until the men and women, comprising our Church membership rally to the work, and unite their efforts with those of ministers and Church officers.”<sup>51</sup>

This calls upon every Church administrator to make sure each Church member is involved in the fulfillment of the Great Commission because fulfilling the Great Commission is being faithful to God.<sup>52</sup>

When the laity of the Seventh-day Adventist in North America became actively involved in the work of evangelism, there was rapid Church growth in the Church. This rapid growth can be experienced by any Church that can decide to implement it.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1942), 149.

<sup>50</sup> Burrill, *Revolution*, 28.

<sup>51</sup> Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1948), 352.

<sup>52</sup> McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth*, 35.

<sup>53</sup> Burrill, *Revolution*, 39.

In the New Testament, the disciples of Jesus put away all their differences, all their desire for supremacy, and came together to fulfill the Great Commission.<sup>54</sup>

All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions were his own, but they shared everything they had. With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all. (Acts 4:32-33)

This resulted into baptisms, miracles, wonders, and many members were added to the group of believers daily. This early Christian church grew from strength to strength every day because they all participated with one mind and heart.

In planning for evangelism in the church, care should be exercised so that they use methods that can involve as many members as possible.<sup>55</sup> Some methods like general outreach programs on Sabbath evenings, Sabbath school baptism classes, and week of prayers in schools are methods which involve just few members of the church. Their nature uses few technical people leaving the rest as spectators. However, Gottfried advised that there are new methods and ways the Adventist church can use so as to involve members in this generation; “Because of the new situation Christendom in general and in the Adventist church in particular, we must develop new forms of mission, new methods, and new strategies.”<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> White, *Acts of Apostles*, 37.

<sup>55</sup> Warren, *Purpose Driven Church*, 108.

<sup>56</sup> Gottfried Oosterwal, *Mission Possible* (Nashville, TN: Southern Publishing Association, 1972), 19.

## **Some Methods and Ideas That Involve Many Members**

According to various Christian writers, there are many methods and ideas of evangelism that can attract many members to get involved in evangelism. The followings are some of them:

1. Equipping the Laity
2. Visitor's Sabbath
3. Home evangelism and Neighborhood ministry
4. Departmental public evangelism
5. Small group ministries
6. Planting new Churches
7. Social gathering
8. Disciple making

### **Equipping the Laity**

For any method of evangelism to be successful, the first priority should be given to equipping the Laity. Equipping means furnishing or preparing someone for service or action.<sup>57</sup> Therefore, the equipper works to enable the Christian to achieve God's purpose. While the term laity, is delivered from the Greek word "ho laos" which means "the people of God."<sup>58</sup> Therefore, the laity are God's laos meaning they are God's own people.

Therefore the equipping exercise should go to every member of the church because everybody in the church belongs to God. Ellen G. White stresses the importance of the involvement of laity in the church. "The work of God in this earth

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<sup>57</sup> Warren, *Purpose Driven Church*, 56.

<sup>58</sup> Burrill, *Revolution*, 33.

can never be finished until the men and women comprising our church membership rally to the work and unite their efforts with those of ministers and church officers.”<sup>59</sup>

That is why according to Apostle Peter, everybody was sent by God. “But you are a chosen people a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light” (1 Pet 2:9).

Therefore, equipping is a process of training and empowering church members in order to facilitate them for evangelism. Equipping is the main responsibility of church leaders. It is their job to train, develop, encourage and set others to do greater things than they can accomplish.<sup>60</sup> That’s why Jesus spent most of his time in the three and a half years equipping his disciples for the work which was a head of them.

According to Burrill, a Church should be run as a Mini-Seminary of which the pastor himself is the dean.<sup>61</sup> He should train these front-line soldiers of Christ whose ministry occurs not in Church buildings only but in many work places like trading centers, markets, workshops, factories, offices, sports grounds, offices, health clubs, and neighborhoods. Ellen G. White also reminds that, “Many would be willing to work if they were taught how to begin. They need to be instructed and encouraged. Every Church should be a training school for Christian works.”<sup>62</sup> She even stresses the importance of the youth, “With such an army of workers as our youth, rightly

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<sup>59</sup> White, *Gospel Workers*, 351-352.

<sup>60</sup> Barry Gane, *Building Youth Ministry: A Foundational Guide* (Riverside, CA: Hancock Center Publications, 2005), 87.

<sup>61</sup> Burrill, *Revolution*, 39.

<sup>62</sup> White, *The Ministry of Healing*, 199.

trained, might furnish, how soon the message of the crucified, risen, and soon coming savior might be carried to the whole world.”<sup>63</sup>

According to Ellen G. White, the role of Adventist pastors should be mainly to educate the people so that they do evangelism themselves. She stated that: “Christ intends that His ministers shall be educators of the Church in the gospel work. They are to teach the people how to seek and save the lost.”<sup>64</sup>

This training will help the lay men to assume responsibility which will help the Church to grow both numerically and spiritually. According to Braun, “Training is a major secret of power. There can be no question that if the Churches are to move in to an era of Church multiplication used primarily upon lay evangelism, the training of the laity must be assigned high priority.”<sup>65</sup> However, McGavran’s discourages any training that focuses on few individuals. He stated that: “The first most important task is to train the entire Church rather than a select few devoting themselves to full time ministry.”<sup>66</sup>

Apostle Paul uses the word soldiers of Christ to mean Christians (Phil 2:25, 2 Tim 2:3). Yet, a successful soldier always must first be trained before deployment. You cannot succeed in any victory when your soldiers are untrained and uninvolved. So, in order to get real victory, the majority of the Church members must be ready to be trained and to be involved in the ministry. “Training and involving people in the

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<sup>63</sup> White, *Message to Young People*, 196.

<sup>64</sup> White, *Desire of Ages*, 825.

<sup>65</sup> Braun, *Laity Mobilized*, 140.

<sup>66</sup> Donald A. McGavran, *Church Growth and Christian Mission* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1979), 120.



ministry is the best nurture we can give them.”<sup>67</sup> Therefore, the Church should organize training seminars for the evangelism. These seminars should be organized in such a way that the members can find time to participate. Coursey advises that, “Every Church should provide one of these seminars every year for equipping its members.”<sup>68</sup>

In these seminars special emphasis should also be put on how to discover and use the spiritual gifts and talents of church members. In the Bible, the New Testament emphasized that each individual member possess certain spiritual gifts from the Lord which should be used for His glory (1 Cor 12-14). According to Wagner, “When the gifts work together in a church that wants to grow and is willing to pay the price for growth, the church will see God’s blessing and it should grow.”<sup>69</sup>

Warren pointed out God’s intention on gifts that: “God never wasted anything. He would not give you abilities, interests, talents, gifts, personality and life experiences unless he intended to use them for His glory.”<sup>70</sup> This implies that every believer is empowered by the creator for the purpose of fulfilling the Great Commission. Ellen G. White unveils that when you use them they multiply.<sup>71</sup>

However, all members cannot have the same gift but God gives the Church the gifts which are enough for that Church to function properly. In the early Christian

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<sup>67</sup> Burrill, *Revolution*, 52.

<sup>68</sup> Claylan Coursey, *How a Church Can Include and Keep its Members* (Nairobi, Kenya: Baptist Publications House, 1989), 37.

<sup>69</sup> C. P. Wagner, *Your Spiritual Gifts: Can Help Your Church Grow*. Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1979), 52.

<sup>70</sup> Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life*, 235.

<sup>71</sup> Ellen G. White, *Christ Object Lessons* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1969), 353.

Church every believer was facilitated by God through a certain gift. This made every believer important and needed.<sup>72</sup> Therefore, the Church must never force every person to do the same thing because each person was gifted by God differently.

Dudley explained it this way; “Everybody does not have to go door to door handling out printed materials or attempting to secure Bible studies in order to be an effective Christian. The Holy Spirit has distributed various spiritual gifts, all necessary for building up the body of the Church.<sup>73</sup> This distribution of gifts saves the Church from the problem of having a right person doing the wrong job. According to Dudley this is one of the many reasons why some members are not participating in Church activities.<sup>74</sup>

Therefore in evangelism planning, special attention should be given to the spiritual gifts of members. Wagner revealed that, “Whenever and wherever the Church is to minister, both inwardly and outwardly, the ministry is best done through gifted believers.”<sup>75</sup>

These gifted believers can be identified by their Church by observing their results in Church activities because spiritual gifts are task oriented. Even individual members can identify themselves after attending seminars on spiritual gifts identification.<sup>76</sup> One of the Pastor’s responsibilities is to help the congregation to make an inventory of the special gifts which the Lord has bestowed upon the

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<sup>72</sup> Burrill, *Revolution*, 28.

<sup>73</sup> Dudley, 116.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 114.

<sup>75</sup> C. Peter Wagner, *Your Spiritual Gifts* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1979), 35.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 235-251.

members of the Church. Then these gifts can be stimulated and developed for service in the life and mission of the Church.

Wagner further clarifies that every true Christian is a witness for Jesus Christ whether or not they have the gift of evangelism.<sup>77</sup> Apostle Paul stresses how these many gifts can work together for the ministry of Jesus Christ: “Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same functions, so, in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others” (Rom 12:4-5).

Therefore, some may use their gift of charity, kindness, teaching, comfort, and care for others, while others will be using, hospitality, sharing, administration and leadership. When Church members participate fully with such gifts they will enjoy the work of evangelism because it will be easy for them and the Church will obviously grow rapidly.

### **Visitor’s Sabbath**

A cheap and simpler way of increasing the participation of church members is to encourage them to invite visitors in their churches. According to Warren you do not need to use a lot of brain and energy to do this, “You must simply get more people to visit!”<sup>78</sup> This method is not only cheap and simple but Rainer listed it among the many approaches that have some success.<sup>79</sup> Visitors program should be emphasized especially in cities where new residents join the community all the time because newcomers are always open to other changes than old residents.

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<sup>77</sup> Wagner, 161.

<sup>78</sup> Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church*, 252.

<sup>79</sup> Rainer, 242.

Therefore, the more visitation programs you organize the more you increase your chances of new families to be added on your Church family. The Church should organize visitors' Sabbath on a well-designed program and the members should be encouraged to invite visitors from their homes and community who are not members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. This will not be very difficult because in the invitation the target group will include some members of their families who are not members of the Church, neighbors, colleagues at work places and other friends.

When the members involve themselves in this program of inviting visitors, even their characters will be changed to glorify God. "The very knowledge that the church is working actively to encourage nonmembers to attend will help the members to be more conscious of their personal impact and that of the church on the community."<sup>80</sup>

### **Home Evangelism and Neighborhood Ministry**

In this method, members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church are encouraged to use their homes as evangelistic centers by inviting their neighbors and other members of the community to share the word of God in their homes. This will help the members to come close to the people of the community. On this subject, Ellen G. White emphasized that the best way of doing missionary work is to start with your family and neighborhood. She wrote: "Not all can work as missionaries to foreign lands, but all can be home missionaries in their families and neighborhood."<sup>81</sup>

The Bible clearly teaches that Jesus ministry operated more in homes than in buildings. He taught his disciples in houses (Mark 2:1, 7:14-27). Those houses to

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<sup>80</sup> Howard Weeks, *Breakthrough: A Public Relations Guidebook for Your Church* (Washington, DC. Review and Herald, 1962), 103.

<sup>81</sup> White, *Testimonies*, 9:30.

house meetings were so powerful that daily conversions took place. These house meetings make it simple to reach our neighborhood. Yet according to Ellen White this is our special obligation to fulfill. “Every church member should feel it his special duty to labor for these living in his neighborhood.”<sup>82</sup>

She further explained that, “It is not preaching that is the most important; it is house-to-house work, reasoning from the Word, explaining the Word.”<sup>83</sup> This method is one of the cheapest ways of preaching to the world if arranged properly. According to Greenway, the non-Christians will attend freely without being threatened or provoked. The conversion will take place easily so that new neighborhoods will be penetrated with the gospel.<sup>84</sup>

Dudley calls it the most natural, fruitful and cost-effective way to make Churches grow.<sup>85</sup> It is a method that can help the Christians to reach the upper class members of the society. These are people who cannot open their doors to strangers with a Bible. These are even members who cannot attend evangelistic campaigns but when invited in homes by their neighbors they will respond positively.

This will help the Church to scatter all over the villages and towns and it will be easy to start Sabbath school branches. The new Sabbath school members will have the capacity to attract more non-Church members.

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<sup>82</sup> White, *Testimonies*, 6:238.

<sup>83</sup> White, *Gospel Workers*, 468.

<sup>84</sup> Greenway, *Guidelines*. 14.

<sup>85</sup> Dudley, *Adventures*, 111-112.

Mugerwa revealed that, the early Christians used their homes for fellowship, worship, and evangelism; “Archaeology and evidence from history seem to indicate that the New Testament believers had no Church buildings. They met in any house or building that could accommodate them”<sup>86</sup> That is why the New Testament does not use “Church” to refer to Church buildings, but to a group of men and women who have responded to God’s call (Rom 16:5; Col 4:15).

In today’s sophisticated and lonely life this approach will help to bring neighbors together and in the end spread the Word of God through a person –to-person approach. It should be remembered that even during the early stages of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Uganda, the first converts used the same method very effectively.<sup>87</sup>.

When it comes to city dwellers, they are living a lonely individual life which lacks human contacts. They scarcely know their neighbors or even have any free time to socialize with other people including their families and relatives. At home they are absorbed in Televisions, Radios, Computers and Internet. It is true they can be reached by these methods but they can easily change the channels every time a religious program appears. That’s why Gottfried warns the Church not to rely on these methods only: “And Adventists must not base their hope in reaching the world on radio and television. Push-button evangelism through our modern communications media remains sterile religious propaganda if the listeners and viewers do not see the

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<sup>86</sup> Reuben Mugerwa, *Basic Bible Teachings* (Kampala, Uganda: n.p. 2004), 101.

<sup>87</sup> Walemba, 23.

Word exemplified in the living service and fellowship of the laity, God's own people."<sup>88</sup>

Bohannon's advice to this generation is to employ relevant methods. He wrote: "evangelistic methods must always be updated and modified in keeping with difference to be found in social and cultural settings and changes that take place in an ever-changing world."<sup>89</sup>

This method of home evangelism was tested and confirmed in many large cities of the world like in Rio de Janeiro, Lima, Sao Paulo, Montevideo, Santiago, Buenos Aires, and many others.<sup>90</sup>

Through this method, every Christian is taught how to seek and make friendship with other people. Alejandro discovered that, "Seventy-one percent of those who had heard of the Seventh-day Adventist Church said that it was through a friend, neighbor, or relative."<sup>91</sup> Every family in the Church should be encouraged to select some families from the community and make them their closest friends. These families should always be invited to share meals and any other social event in the family. During every encounter the word of God must be shared.

These families should always be influenced to attend Church functions like camp meetings, social gatherings, youth camps, marriage seminars and prayer meetings. These activities will slowly attract them to the Church of Christ. Ellen G. White emphasizes that every family should be involved in this method. "Whenever a church is established, all the members should engage actively in missionary work.

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<sup>88</sup> Oosterwal, *Mission: Possible*, 115

<sup>89</sup> Jack Bohannon, ed. *Public Evangelism* (Kampala, Uganda: n.p 1989), 1.

<sup>90</sup> Alejandro Bullon, "Reaching the Cities," *Ministry*, June 2001, 12.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

They should visit every family in the neighborhood, and know their spiritual conditions.”<sup>92</sup>

When this method is used as stated from the above statements, many members will be involved because most households are made up of parents and children who are members of the church. This method will help the church to reach all classes of people. Ellen G. White wrote: “The church of Christ on earth was organized for missionary purposes, and the Lord desires to see the entire Church devising ways and means where by high and low, rich and poor, may hear the message of truth.”<sup>93</sup> Still on the same issue of home visitation she stated that: “People of any occupation or profession can take part.”<sup>94</sup>

### **Public Evangelism**

This is a method of evangelism in which the Church uses its members in public evangelism or “Effort” for the outreach programs. When these public meetings are well planned and conducted, they serve as one of the best methods of fulfilling the Great Commission. Through this method, the members of the Church go out of their Churches, homes, offices and work places in order to reach the members of the community.

During this period, the Master’s Great Commission is given the highest priority both in the Church programs and in the lives of individual members. Conant warned members who neglect to participate in going out but instead send others that; “The Lord never commanded us to either go or send someone else in our

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<sup>92</sup> White, *Christian Service*, 12.

<sup>93</sup> White, *Testimonies*, 6:29.

<sup>94</sup> White, *Lift Him Up*, 106.



place. He commanded us to 'Go!' And every Christian has a personal world into which he is to go. It is our business to do the going. It is the Lord's prerogative to do the sending."<sup>95</sup>

However as we move towards the end, says Ellen White, "Some methods used in the work will be different from the methods used in the past."<sup>96</sup> These public meeting should be well organized to preach the word of God, and also meet the needs of the society. These needs should include things like food, shelter, clothing, medical care or any other needs.

Dudley also indicated that, "The Church that would grow must become the Church that serves."<sup>97</sup> According to Ellen G. White, that was Jesus' tactic of evangelism, "...the Savior mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence and then He bade them, 'Follow me'."<sup>98</sup> When this method is fulfilled many non-Church members will find it so simple to associate with the Church.

Schwarz calls this the secret of health Churches. He stated that: "A secret of healthy Churches is to meet the needs of non-Christians."<sup>99</sup> This method helps to share the gospel in a way that answers the questions and meets the needs of non-believers. Many church members are interested in serving their community.

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<sup>95</sup> J. E. Conant, *Every-Member Evangelism* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1922), 33.

<sup>96</sup> White, *Testimonies*, 7:25.

<sup>97</sup> Dudley, 155.

<sup>98</sup> White, *Welfare Ministry*, 60.

<sup>99</sup> Christian A. Schwarz, *Color Your World with Natural Church Development* (Oregon, Ohio: Church Smart Resources, 2005), 118.

Therefore, many members will be involved in public evangelism that cares for their community.

Ellen G. White viewed members of the Churches as people who must come close to the people. She urged believers to: “Come close to the people; get into the families when you can; do not wait for the people to hunt up the shepherd.”<sup>100</sup>

According to Dudley, the Church should start to utilize the existing research methods and techniques to evaluate and enhance their methods. When these methods are discovered and used, many members will be encouraged to participate in evangelism. Therefore, in order to increase the involvement of members in public evangelism, the church should use the “grass roots operation” methodology. This method was used in central Uganda Field from 1988-1994.<sup>101</sup>

This method was supported by many members and many church members were involved in public evangelism. The tactic which attracted members to participate was that, whoever came to participate in public evangelism also learnt some practical skills which could help them at home. They learnt skills in construction of houses, carpentry, small scale farming, and many development programs which could increase their income and improve their lives at home.<sup>102</sup>

### **Small Group Ministries**

The history of the Church reveals that the Seventh-day Adventist Church was born from small group which were formed after the Great Disappointment of 1844. Now that our Church has grown in its membership, it has disintegrated along different

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<sup>100</sup> White, *Evangelism*, 158.

<sup>101</sup> Dudley, 152.

<sup>102</sup> James Kaggya, *Grassroots: An Alternate Approach to Church Growth in Uganda* (Kampala: Upper Nile Press, 1990), 2-13.

lines making some to be idle while others are doing what pleases them without a common goal in the Church. It would be wiser to organize this Church in small group for effectiveness.<sup>103</sup>

The love and care for one another shown in these small groups can be a useful magnet which can attract those who are not members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church to the group and finally to Christ. When these individuals in this group start sharing the gospel through this friendship with non-members of the Church, a strong foundation is laid for small group evangelism.<sup>104</sup> These groups will enable the Church to equip the Laity properly so that they can reach the unbelievers easily.

In support of this idea, Sister Ellen G. White reveals that this idea came from God directly. She said; “The formation of small companies as a basis of Christian effort is a plan that has been presented before me by one who cannot err. If there are a large number of Churches, let the members be formed into small companies to work out only for the Church members but for unbelievers also.”<sup>105</sup>

The system helps to eliminate many idlers in the congregation and the members who are under-utilized as far as Church activities are concerned. All members are expected to unite in laboring as fishers of men because the primary aim of small groups is to reach non-Christians.<sup>106</sup>

This is the best way to organize the members in order to fulfill their duty for the Lord because it eliminates many barriers of society. On this issue, Schilt wrote

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<sup>103</sup> W. R. Bornstein, “The Ministry of Small Groups,” *Messenger*, 18 March 1982, 6.

<sup>104</sup> Steve Barker et al., *Small Group Leader's Handbook* (Westmont, IL: Intersity Press, 1982), 104.

<sup>105</sup> White, *Evangelism*, 15.

<sup>106</sup> Gane, 131.

that; “The Church of Jesus Christ is called effectively to break down these dividing walls is the small group approach.”<sup>107</sup> Through small groups many members are involved easily because of their number. Even the youths who are the majority in the churches can be developed easily through their involvement.<sup>108</sup>

The formation of small groups helps the Church to utilize the spiritual gifts of all members. This helps the Lay Ministry committee to place people in ministry according to their spiritual gifts. These groups help members to minister to each other in a supportive way and also to serve the non-members. During their meetings in their cell group, every member is encouraged to bring a non-member including the children of the families involved. According to time distribution for each weekly meeting some few minutes are allocated for mission work. In some groups they plan for outreach evenings. During this they share the gospel in a specific way.<sup>109</sup>

### **Planting New Churches**

In order to fulfill the Gospel Commission, the early Christian Church scattered all over the villages, towns and all over the country. The secret was that they determined to be a Church planting movement. Rainer’s report on the study that was conducted in Churches of all denominations in the Santa Clarita valley of California strengthened the idea of planting new Churches. According to this report it was discovered that older Churches were baptizing four persons for each one hundred

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<sup>107</sup> W. Clarence Schilt, *Dynamic Small Groups: How to Make Them Happen* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1992), 20.

<sup>108</sup> Gane, 34.

<sup>109</sup> Barker, 105.

members, while new Churches were baptizing sixteen persons per one hundred members.<sup>110</sup>

According to that research it is quite obvious that new Churches members have the capacity to attract new members. The secret behind is that these new members are ready to be used by God through witnessing. They have a burning zeal and enthusiasm to participate in the life and mission of Church. Burrill urges that Adventist Church to emulate the spirit of planting new Churches. He wrote: “Likewise, the Adventist Church today must once again become a Church-planting movement or it will cease to be a Great Commission Church,”<sup>111</sup>

This movement must be confirmed rather than struggling to increase the membership of existing congregations. As C.P. Wagner expressed it this way; “the best way for a Church to grow... is to be active in reproducing itself.”<sup>112</sup> Planting new Churches is not only an effective and efficient evangelistic methodology but a Biblical method. In the New Testament it was one of the ways of spreading the gospel (Acts 13:1-5). That is why Ellen White urges, “Place after place is to be visited; Churches to be raised up.”<sup>113</sup> According to Coursey, “The kingdom of God will grow rapidly if the Church will teach its people to start new Churches.”<sup>114</sup>

This will not be very difficult because in the city most big Churches cannot fully evangelize all the territory. Yet, some mother Churches have already plateaued

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<sup>110</sup> Rainer, 206.

<sup>111</sup> Burrill, *Recovering*, 17.

<sup>112</sup> C. P Wagner, *Frontiers in Missionary Strategy* (Chicago, CA: Moody Press, 1972), 40.

<sup>113</sup> White, *Testimonies*, 7:19.

<sup>114</sup> Coursey, 39.

in membership. So, this will be an opportunity to transfer some members in the new Church which will make them active members because of their number.

Some new congregations can even be started near the existing mother Church on the basis of different languages. In the absence of land for the new Church, the new congregations can be started in places like Hotels, Schools and local Community Centers. This means that the leadership of the new Churches will go in the hands of those few members involved and many will join in the running of their Church.

If this method is clearly implemented most villages in the area will be having an Adventist Church which will minimize the number of un-entered areas. At the same time it will increase the participation of members in the life and mission of the church because new members have a zeal of increasing the membership in their new church.

### **Social Gatherings**

Social gatherings are functions which bring together members to meet for socialization activities. Social gatherings are very much enjoyed by young persons in the churches. It provides them a wonderful opportunity to meet their friends both from their churches and outside the church. They meet their school friends, neighbors and colleagues from their work places.<sup>115</sup>

According to Ellen G White, Non-Adventist youths are invited to join the club, and through enjoyable fellowship with Christian leaders and members are introduced to the Bible truth of personal salvation and preparation for Christ's coming.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> Gane, 282.

<sup>116</sup> White, *Lift Him Up*, 107.

The youth find this as a very simple method which they can use to invite their friends. By inviting their friends in such functions they are participating in the work of the Lord. Through this they can influence their friends to Christ.

According to church growth specialist,” Most people are introduced to Christ and the church by a friend and it is this friendship that keeps them alive.”<sup>117</sup>

### **Disciple Making**

Too often the church tries to fulfill Christ’s Great commission by outreach activities only; they forget to nurture or follow-up these new converts. That is why members enter from one door and leave through the back door. Therefore, after baptism new converts should be properly nurtured and disciplined so that they become strong Christians.

One of the ways of turning Church members into responsible members is by making them become disciples. This process will increase their spiritual growth and will enable them to serve better in Christ’s task force of evangelism. Rainer condemns any evangelism which neglects disciple making. He stated that; “Since the heart of Church growth is disciple making, evangelism that produces no disciples is certainly not the type of evangelism that Christ had in mind when he gave the Great Commission.”<sup>118</sup>

According to the Greek language, the verb “make” found in Matthew 28:18 is the only one which is imperative. This means that, every disciple is to be involved in the mission of making new disciples. According to Cress, “Thus the goal of the gospel commission is to continue the work that Jesus begun by following the strategy.

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<sup>117</sup> McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth*, 395-411.

<sup>118</sup> Rainer, 216.

Make disciples! Teach them! Enable them to produce their lives and faith in the lives of others for whom they labor.”<sup>119</sup> Jesus gave an example by investing himself in his disciples, who in turn were commissioned to do the same. This is supposed to be an ongoing process.

In agreement Carl calls it one of the ways the future Church can survive. His vision was; “Churches of the future will be committed to making more and better disciples. Anything less won’t do.”<sup>120</sup> Disciple making will also increase the spiritual growth of individual members Cress adds on that: “Their wrong behavior patterns can be arrested and stopped. They are better protected from the enemy.”<sup>121</sup> Eventually, their lives will be purified so that they can succeed in their plans to carry God’s mission to the world.

Therefore, effective evangelism could be measured not by numerical Church growth only but by the number of new members who have assimilated into the life of the congregation. Unless disciple making is done properly, evangelism programs will not be of much benefit to the Church. The principle of multiplication that God has implanted in His creation is in such a way that: “A tree doesn’t grow bigger and bigger; it bring forth new trees which in turn produce more trees.”<sup>122</sup>

In order to develop the spirit of discipleship in the Church, each member should be encouraged to disciple new converts for a period of time. During this period an old member is expected to invest a lot of time in building Christian values in the

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<sup>119</sup> James A. Cress, *You Can Keep Them If You Care: Helping Members Stay on Board* (Silver Spring, MD: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Ministerial Association Resource Center, 2000), 15.

<sup>120</sup> Carl, 154.

<sup>121</sup> Cress, 15.

<sup>122</sup> Schwarz, 94.



new converts. The process will include teaching, nurturing, motivation, inspiring and influencing the new members. Even these members will be encouraged to do the same when they mature. According to Dawson everybody is born to produce spiritual babes. He states that failure to do so, is not only a sign of sin, but a sign of spiritual immaturity and lack of communication with Christ.<sup>123</sup>

Maxson blames the Church for wasting a lot of its time counting the converts instead of disciple-making because it led the Church into the trap of boasting because of their institutional greatness instead of focusing on the Great Commission which leads to the essence of our mission which is disciple making.<sup>124</sup> This can be easily done when the Church adopts the method of making members to become spiritual parents. In this method spiritual babes are raised from time to time.<sup>125</sup>

These spiritual parents are sometimes called “spiritual guardians” because of the love and care they use to care for the new members. The spiritual guardian is a person assigned to care for a new member as a parent cares for his child.<sup>126</sup>

In order to become a spiritual parent each member is encouraged to care for least one new member. Then, this new member after baptism is also taught how to win another person and so on. If this method is used by Church members for ten years, the results will be as shown in Table 1 below.

In order to get a clear picture of membership growth in any given church or district, you need to obtain membership figures for the last ten years.<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> Dawson E. Trotman, *Born to Reproduce* (Colorado Springs, CO: Navpress, 1996), 34.

<sup>124</sup> Maxson, 40.

<sup>125</sup> Trotman, 15.

<sup>126</sup> Robert A. White, *How To Win A Soul*. (Nashville, TN: Southern Publishing Association, 1971), 89.

However, Table 1 below shows that after ten years the first person will have 1024 people resulting from his or her work. If only 100 members engaged themselves in this method, the Church will have 102400 members after ten years. It is very important to note that in this program shown in the above table even the new members became evangelists or spiritual parents immediately. This is a very important element in keeping the new convert in the Church because, “A well-disciplined lamb becomes a well-disciplined sheep.”<sup>128</sup> This will be a tremendous growth and for sure this will help to multiply laborers in the Church. When the laborers in the Church increase then numerical growth which is considered to be the goal of the Church’s mission and a reliable indication of its qualities will be realized.<sup>129</sup>

*Table 1. Disciple Making Proposal for Ten Years*

Year	Person(s)	Brought Church	Total Church Members
1	1	1	2
2	2	2	4
3	4	4	8
4	8	8	16
5	16	16	32
6	32	32	64
7	64	64	128
8	128	128	256
9	256	256	512
10	512	512	1024

<sup>127</sup> Yamamori Tetsunao and E. LeRoy Lawson, *Introducing Church Growth: A Textbook in Missions* (Cincinnati, OH: Standard Publishing, 1975), 95.

<sup>128</sup> Cress, 79.

<sup>129</sup> McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth*, 49-52.

## CHAPTER 3

### DESCRIPTION OF THE LOCAL SETTING

#### **Najjanankumbi SDA Church District**

The Najjanankumbi Seventh-day Adventist Church which as the headquarters of the district was established in 1950. It began with a handful of members who worshipped in a home of one prominent member of the society called Parma.

In 1951, they conducted an effort in the city center which brought in some members of the Royal family of Buganda plus the late Dr. Samson Kiseka who was once the Prime Minister and Vice President of Uganda.

In 1955, another effort was conducted within the capital city and its outcome was an inflow of many educated young men and women. From that time Najjanankumbi Church became not only a mother of all the Churches in the district but also it gave birth to many other Churches and districts. The membership of this Church continued to grow from time to time until it included senior government leaders, politicians, members of parliament, members of the royal family, dignitaries and civil servants.

However, after 40 years of its existence, the Church record shows that it is not growing at the same speed as it was at its inception. The spirit of evangelism in the same Church is very low. According to Church records, out of the 10 public

evangelism efforts conducted from the year 2000, only 350 members out of the 3096 were actively involved which was 11%.participation.<sup>1</sup>

These were the same members who did the camping, distribution of handbills, conducting community service, visitations, distribution of literature and giving of Bible study lessons. The rest of the members supported these programs either through prayers or through financial and material support.

In the past, the district approach has been; public evangelism meetings called “efforts”, Annual week of prayer in Church schools, literature evangelism and Sabbath school baptism classes. For public evangelism, it would take the district not less than five years to conduct an effort in one Church. This was because of big budgets and difficulties in getting Church land especially in un-entered areas.

Since most of the people contribute in terms of money, when they come at the evangelism site they just sit as spectators. They go to the extent of giving you money to get people from the rural areas to come and participate in the Effort in their places. This makes the work more difficulty because these hired participants will pack up and return on to their homes immediately after the Effort. This again complicates the follow-up exercise because it becomes very difficult to trace those who turned up for the meetings or even those who were baptized.

This makes the evangelists on follow-up to be labeled inefficient and non-fruitful. Yet, the real members of the Church who are supposed to know the area and homes of the people, who might be their neighbors and friends but because they have not participated the work becomes difficult.

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<sup>1</sup> Seventh-day Adventist Church Najjanankumbi District, “*District Lay Activity Departmental Records*,” Kampala, Uganda: East and Central Africa Division, 31 December 2006.

On the side of week of prayers, the district has only one school Najjanankumbi Young Christian School where the week of prayer is conducted once every year. Yet the follow-up exercise of the baptized students has some gaps due to communication after leaving school. When it comes to literature evangelism, the district had only two literature evangelists; this is because very few people are willing to become literature evangelists due to the low reading culture of the society. The books are also in English making it difficult for the members of the community to read. All these make the income of literature evangelists very low and thus many abandoned the job.

Lastly, the baptism classes are the only functioning organs of evangelism in the Church. However, these also depend on the few visitors who come every Sabbath plus some children of Church members. Therefore there is a need for new and alternative approaches to evangelism given the changing trends of the world in which we live. Those new strategies should also target the “upper class” people in the city community. These are kind of people who are rich and powerful in the society. This can be as a result of their education, wealth, position or status in the society. Since, these people also belong to God, something needs to be done to win them, also.

### **Past Church Growth Statistics**

As stated above, the Najjanankumbi Seventh-day Adventist Church district has been engaged in evangelism to a great extent in the past. However, when you look at the present membership and compare it with general population in and around its territorial boundaries, one would find out that the Church is not growing in proportion with the population around the area. When we go by that, the Church records of the district statistical reports from 1996 to 2006 shows a very slow annual growth.<sup>2</sup> The

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<sup>2</sup>Seventh-day Adventist Church Najjanankumbi District, “*District Statistical Report*,” Kampala, Uganda: East and Central Africa Division, 31 December 2006.

growth of the district can be seen through the statistical report from 1996 – 2006 as shown in Table 2.

*Table 2. The District Church Growth Pattern from 1996-2006*

Year	Membership
1996	955
1997	1008
1998	1084
1999	1327
2000	1584
2001	1618
2002	2026
2003	2448
2004	2723
2005	2990
2006	3096

This area is situated in the city center of Kampala; it is densely populated because many people find it easy for them to work in the city. It has grown tremendously in the last ten years from 1990 to 2000 and many areas have become slum areas. However, according to the records from the Government Population Census Office of the area where the church is located, the number of the Seventh-day Adventist members was very small and the annual growth of this church was very small compared to the growth of the community in the same area.<sup>3</sup>

This area was divided by the local government into eleven political administrative areas called zones and its growth in the last ten years from 1990 – 2000

is as shown in Table 3. The Table shows that a bigger number of the members who attend in the district Churches do not come from within the territory of operation.

*Table 3. Local Area Population Census Report*

Zones	Population Census	Population Census	Adventist Population	Ratio
	1990	2000	2000	
Kabowa	2737	13670	220	1:62
Ndeeba	2691	13455	104	1:129
Najjanankumbi	2014	10070	56	1:180
Masajja	8299	41495	230	1:180
Bunamwaya	2605	13025	107	1:22
Seguku	1828	19140	89	1:103
Mutungo	3415	17075	48	1:355
Bweya	1169	5845	58	1:101
Mutundwe	4517	22540	38	1:593
Kitende	3079	15395	110	1:140
Ndejje	4508	22540	38	1:593
TOTAL	36859	194250	1098	1:177

<sup>3</sup> Local Government, “*Population Report*”, 31 December 2000, Rubaga Division Kampala.

### **District Growth Rates**

In order to get the growth rate, you subtract the membership at the beginning of the period under study from the membership at the close and express the difference as a percentage of the beginning membership. Therefore, the decadal growth rate for the general population was 427%. This means that the annual average growth rate of the general population of the area was 42.7%. Whereas the growth rate of the Seventh-day Adventist Church was depicted as 224%, meaning an annual average growth rate of 22.4%.

Unfortunately even the growth rate of 22.4% was not maintained in the year 2000 because, if that was done properly, the growth rate would have looked as in Table 4. Table 4 shows that the growth rate is not stable. However, one observes that, had the Church growth trends been relative to the population growth in the area of 42.7% every year, then the membership in the territory currently would have been different.

*Table 4. Expected Church Membership Growth*

Year	Church Membership	Membership Growth If Growth Rate Was 22.4%
1996	955	-
1997	1008	1169
1998	1084	1413
1999	1327	1751
2000	1098	2143
2001	1344	2623
2002	1644	3210
2003	2013	3929
2004	2464	4809
2005	3016	5886
2006	3962	7204



Table 5 shows that the Church is not growing in the territory as it is supposed. Even if one could take birth as one of the factors contributing to Church growth, the figures would have shown differently. The most unfortunate part is that according to mere observation in the same area there are so many congregations belonging to Pentecostal Churches which are growing rapidly. They are winning new converts daily while the Adventist Churches are static. This therefore means that there is a certain factor hindering the growth of the Adventist Church in the area. However, this cannot be a result of members dropping from the church.

*Table 5. Expected Membership Compared to the Community*

Year	Membership	Would Be Membership If Growth Rate 42.7%
1996	955	-
1997	1008	1363
1998	1084	1945
1999	1327	2775
2000	1098	3960
2001	1566	5651
2002	2236	8064
2003	3190	11507
2004	4553	16420
2005	6497	23431
2006	9271	33436

The following is a summary for year 2000-2006 showing membership dropping

- |              |    |
|--------------|----|
| 1. Transfers | 91 |
| 2. Death     | 57 |

- |                    |    |
|--------------------|----|
| 3. Apostasies      | 20 |
| 4. Missing members | 81 |

According to Table 6, the drop in membership is such that in 7 years 91 members transferred to other places. This is normal because at times it is brought about by change of residence, marriages, jobs, and many other factors. Another inevitable factor was death which took 57 members. In the same period the apostasies were 20 members. The highest drop came from “missing members” who were 81. However, some members can miss because of transferring without officially notifying the Church.

It is true membership drop is not a healthy issue as far as Church growth is concerned, but under normal circumstances it is inevitable. Therefore, as stated earlier, had the Church been doing its work effectively the ratio of those who come into the Church to those who drop out would have been negligible.

### **Evaluation of Membership Participation in the Life and Mission of the Church**

In order to evaluate the level participation of the Church members in the life and mission of the Church, questionnaires were designed by this researcher to serve as instruments of research. During the camp meetings of the year 2007, 200 questionnaires were given out randomly to church members of three organized churches namely: Najjanankumbi, Wankulukuku, and Namasuba. The purpose was to seek information on their individual participation in evangelism for the last ten years from 1996-2006. These churches were chosen by this researcher to serve as project areas because their membership makes sixty five percent of the whole church district.

*Table 6. Membership Dropping from 2000 – 2006*

Year / Churches		Najjanankumbi	Ndeeba	Zzana	Wankulukuku	Kitebi	Mutundwe	Namasuba	Ndejje	Kajjansi	Seguku	Kitiko	Total	
2000	Letters	3								7			10	43
	Deaths	2	1								1	2	6	
	Apostasies											3	3	
	Missing									11		13	24	
2001	Letters	17	4		3	2		5		2	4		37	76
	Deaths	6					1					3	10	
	Apostasies												-	
	Missing	10	5		1	4	4	2			3		29	
2002	Letters	3											3	17
	Deaths	2			1					1			4	
	Apostasies					1		2		2			5	
	Missing				3			1			1		5	
2003	Letters	14	4					2		1	2		23	42
	Deaths	9	2									3	14	
	Apostasies												-	
	Missing		5										5	
2004	Letters		1										1	19
	Deaths	4		1						3			8	
	Apostasies					1					1	2	4	
	Missing					1	1		1			3	6	
2005	Letters	1										4	5	23
	Deaths	3						1		2	2	1	9	
	Apostasies												-	
	Missing									6		3	9	
2006	Letters	6	2						4				12	28
	Deaths	6											6	
	Apostasies										2	6	8	
	Missing											2	2	

## **Data Gathered From the Questionnaires**

The data gathered from these questionnaires differed according to age, education levels, social-economic background and position in Church offices. Unfortunately, out of the 200 questionnaires given out, only 131 (61%) were returned. The rest were either misused or destroyed because such exercise was new to them. The data collected showed the following results:

1. 85 (65%) were employed people who claimed to be very busy at their work places. Their employers gave them Saturday as the only day of rest. Therefore, they could not participate in Church programs organized during week days like “Efforts”. Unfortunately even the self-employed also claimed to have very little time.
2. 30 (22%) of the Church members attributed their little participation in evangelism to the Church’s failure to plan for the out-reach programs properly.
3. 25 (20%) of the Church members were just ignorant of their obligation to the mission. So, they just needed to be trained, equipped, and motivated in the direction of evangelism.
4. 25 (20%) were of students who claimed that the “Efforts” were being conducted during their stay at school. Some were in school where they are not even allowed to preach to their fellow students.
5. 15 (12%) complained that the methods being used in evangelism are old fashioned and do not meet the needs of the community.
6. 14 (10%) of the members complained that the leaders of the Church do not involve the entire Church in the planning process. This complain came especially from the youth and women.

7. 10 (8%) of the members claimed that for them they were not gifted in the line of evangelism. Therefore they lacked that spiritual gift and talent of evangelism. The same percentage also attributed their lack of participation to their Church leaders who were also setting a bad example because they were also not participating in evangelism.
8. 5 (4%) attributed their failure to participate in evangelism to lack of faith, commitment, and fear of failing, persecution, loss of friends, relatives and jobs.

During the interviews with District Church officers and five Pastors of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in capital city during the camp meetings of 2007, the answers given were not very different from those given by Najjanankumbi members. They attributed the problem of lack of participation to lack of time, seriousness, faith, commitment, meager funds in Church budgets, and poor evangelism facilities.

*Table 7. Reasons why Members were not participating in Evangelism*

No.	Reasons Given By Members	Number of Members	Percentage
1	Very busy	85	65%
2	Poor outreach programs	30	22%
3	Ignorant of their obligations	25	20%
4	Students at school	25	20%
5	Old fashioned methods	15	12%
6	Leaders are not involved	14	10%
7	Lacked spiritual gifts	10	8%
8	Lacked faith and commitment	5	4%

## **Suggestions from the Questionnaires**

According to the results from these questionnaires, most members were ready to participate in evangelism in their local Churches if the following programs were implemented:

1. 62 (47%) Suggested that the best method was to use each family as a unit for evangelism. Each family should start a door to door method of evangelism starting from their neighbors and friends who are not members of the Seventh-day Church. Again each family of the Seventh-day Adventist Church should be encouraged to invite these same people to attend parties, ceremonies and functions in their homes. Such relationship will prepare those friends to accept coming to Church more easily. Yet, this will involve many because every member belongs to a particular family.
2. 60 (45%) were willing to participate in evangelism only when they are trained to do so. The Church should conduct equipping seminars to facilitate all the members. The seminars should focus on how to retain members, disciple making, talent identification and small group ministry. The students wanted to know how they can do evangelism in their schools.
3. 57 (43%) advised the Church to organize visitors' Sabbath in every Church in the district. This should be done once every three months or even to use one complete month dedicated to evangelism every Sabbath. Through this program every member will be encouraged to invite at least one visitor.
4. 48 (37%) preferred public evangelism especially through different Church departments like youth, women ministries, Adventist men, Community service and many others. Every member falls in any one department.

5. 43 (32%) proposed a program of organizing outreach that cater for the needs of the community like community service. Many were willing to use this method because it does not need preaching but actions.
6. 33 (25%) suggested social invents like social gathering would serve as a very nice strategy. The youths found this strategy simple because they could easily invite their friends during the holidays.
7. 31 (24%) suggested that they can only participate in actions that involves hospital and prison ministry.
8. 30 (22%) were emphasizing to participate through literature evangelism because some members find it simple to just give out this written material to their friends.
9. 27 (20%) Suggested that in order for most members to participate in evangelism, the Church should be in position to use new technology like Internet preaching, Computers, Projectors, Phones through short messages, and use Radios and Television They feel comfortable by using such methods.
10. 23 (17%) suggested planting new Churches as a program that makes members to be active. Some are idle just because they hide in the big numbers of some big Churches.

These suggestions are summarized in Table 8 below.

*Table 8. Suggestions Which Can Make Members Participate*

No.	Suggestions	Number Of Members	Percentage
1	Home evangelism	62	47%
2	Equipping seminars	60	45%
3	Visitor's Sabbath	57	43%
4	Public evangelism through Departments	48	37%
5	Community service	43	32%
6	Social gatherings	33	25%
7	Hospital and prison ministry	31	24%
8	Literature evangelism	30	22%
9	New technology	27	20%
10	Planting new churches	23	17%



CHAPTER 4  
STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION  
AND EVALUATION

Given that background, it is obvious that in order to activate this district in the area of evangelism, something must be done to improve on the existing methods and to insert in new suitable strategies. However, in order to introduce these new strategies the three major components of the Church namely the Pastor, Church officers and the entire members should unite and work as a team in choosing and implementing these strategies.

According to the results from the questionnaires, the suggestions which were suggested by members were ten. However, for the start, this researcher decided the priority to be given to only five. The others could be considered after observing the results of this project. The followings were given the first priority:

1. Equipping the laity.
2. Visitors' Sabbath.
3. Home evangelism
4. Public evangelism through Departments.
5. Social Gatherings

**Strategy Development Plan**

The researcher gave direction and guidance to the evangelism committee of the three churches on how to develop a plan which will enable the members of the

church to participate in the life and mission of the church. The plan was accepted by the committee members and was developed as follows.

### **Equipping the Laity**

The equipping exercise was to be headed by this researcher working with the evangelism committee. This committee was to consist of all evangelism leaders in these churches, youth leaders, women leaders, church elders, and Sabbath school leaders. The responsibility of the committee was to organize evangelism seminars in all Churches, to divide all the members into evangelism groups, to provide tools of evangelism to members, to guide and receive reports, and to plan for the Church in all areas of evangelism. This committee was also to make sure that the members are not only trained but deployed for service. .

Evangelism seminars were to be organized by the researcher and evangelism leaders in order to train members in the work of evangelism in the three churches. Each Church was to get one week dedicated to evangelism each quarter. During this week, training of members on how to win souls was to be done by the team of the evangelism committee members and this researcher. The training was expected to include topics like how to witness to neighbors, relatives, unbelieving spouse, friends, and backsliders. They were to be equipped on how to make home visitations, giving Bible studies, and witnessing through casual relationships like in offices, hotels, waiting rooms, markets, parks and during travel.

Then, special evangelism Sabbaths were also to be organized in these churches for more training of the whole church. The training had to start right from the Sabbath school through the Divine service. During the Afternoon practical skills were to be passed on to the members. The results of these practical skills were to be reported

back every Sabbath to the evangelism committee and an overall evaluation was to be made after a period of the three months.

In order to achieve this, the Church was to be divided by the evangelism committee into small evangelism groups according to the size of the Church. These groups would be the reporting centers where the work of each person will be measured and guided. Special materials like Bibles, Spirit of prophesy books and hand-outs on evangelism were to be given out to each participant in order to facilitate them.

### **Visitors' Sabbath**

Visitor's Sabbath is a special Sabbaths organized for purposes of evangelism. Members of the Church invite visitors who are not members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church to come to their churches. These could be individuals in their real homes, relatives, neighbors, colleagues or friends.

Under the guidance and supervision of the evangelism committee, each Church was to organize a visitor's Sabbath at least once every quarter. At the beginning, a full month was to be dedicated to evangelism in each Church as a visitors' Sabbath program. Each Sabbath two sermons were to be preached; one in the morning and another in the afternoon .Every member would be asked to invite a minimum of five visitors.

Special invitation cards were to be printed in both local and national languages. These cards were to give a detailed programmed showing the speaker, venue, and the topics to be covered.

The Church leaders were to be requested to stop any other program that will not directly be focusing on evangelism so that the emphasis will be evangelism only. This will include stopping any fundraising or promotions in the Church so that even

the local funds collected will be used in evangelism. Banners were to be made, posters, handbills and decision cards. Hand-outs of every sermon or lesson were to be given out every Sabbath afternoon. The Church was to prepare special meals for the visitors on every Sabbath. Bibles, Hymn books, sprint of prophecy magazines and other Church literature books were to be given out to the visitors as free gifts.

The Sabbath school program was to have a special Bible class for the visitors and good singing groups for the entertainment of the visitors. There was going to be an appeal for baptism after every day's session, and the organizing committee had to be ready to receive those who would respond to the call. In order to cater for the "follow-up" exercise, the Church was supposed to register all the visitors showing the addresses of each visitor plus the person responsible. This program was expected to turn the Church in a real evangelism center because many members were expected to be involved.

### **Home Evangelism**

As mentioned earlier, the members of this district are fond of organizing very expensive parties in their homes; these same parties were to be used as evangelistic campaigns. Church member were to be encouraged to use their homes as evangelism centers by just improving the programs in their functions and ceremonies so as to include evangelism. Function like graduation, birthday, silver or golden jubilee, or funeral service were to be well planned so that the visitors will hear about the good news of our Lord and Savior. Even the few members who could afford to arrange such functions were to be assisted by others so that they can at least organize a small tea party so as to invite a few neighbors, friends and relatives. Then the Church through the pastor and the evangelism committee had to assign preachers and choirs to all homes with such programs.

## **Public Evangelism through different Church Departments**

This is one of the most effective methods which has been used for years in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in this Conference. Most of the Churches in the district came through that method. However, it has turned out to be surrounded with a lot of problems. It's very expensive in terms of money, but worse still few members directly participate in this exercise.

In order to solve this problem, the Church had to start conducting these evangelism meetings through different church departments. In these churches there are fifteen Church departments and every member falls in at least more than one department. In addition to that all the Church members were divided into special groups called "families". This was done by the Church administrators just for easy access and monitoring of its members. It is therefore, logical to use these same departments or families to conduct public evangelism because every member belongs in a certain family. It has been observed that, in their different groups they participate and at times they compete with each other.

The church could even choose one or two department and give them responsibility of conducting an "Effort". They could even conduct evangelism meetings through combining different church families. This means that the district could even run more than one "Effort" at the same time if it is well organized. This was also going to help many professionals and high class people in each family to participate as a way of supporting their families. In the end, this method was going to break some barriers in the Church like tribes, classes, and social status.

## **Social Gatherings**

The young people in the church, who could not find time and opportunity to participate in evangelism because of their busy schedule in schools, were going to be encouraged to just invite their friends to join their social gatherings in the holidays. The church through the Youth Ministry department had to organize these social gatherings in holidays. They had to be planned with the spirit of evangelism in mind.

This researcher with his team of evangelism committee had to join these young people in their programs. This would help them to insert evangelism tips in the youth program.

## **Implementation of the Project**

In order to implement these new programs, this researcher worked together with the church board and the evangelism committee. Even though the respondents gave so many suggestions and programs in their questionnaires, the committee decided to start with those that had scored the highest. The rest could be implemented afterwards.

## **Equipping the Laity**

This researcher started by training a special team of evangelism promoters in these churches for one week. Then, this team formed an evangelism task force which did most of the promotion work but under the supervision of this researcher and the Lay activity committee.

Then, it was decided by the committee to conduct evangelism seminars in each church for one week. The program was as shown in Table 9 below.

*Table 9. Evangelism Seminars*

Year	Church	Dates
2007	Najjanankumbi	October 13-20
2007	Wankulukuku	November 3-10
2008	Namasuba	January 5-12

The attendance of members especially on the Sabbath days helped the preachers and other evangelism facilitators to meet almost all Church members because the program was well promoted and ran for the whole day. During the same week, the seminars continued even on working days every evening in the same Churches at the time agreed upon by Church members. The success of this strategy could be identified though the attendance of members, their participation, commitment, and strengthening of the evangelism committee.

### **Visitors' Sabbath**

During the month of May 2008, three organized Churches in the district namely: Najjanankumbi, Namasuba, and Wankulukuku implemented the visitor's Sabbath program for four weeks. Every Sabbath the visitors came and received messages from the Church.

This researcher was the preacher at Najjanankumbi Seventh-day Adventist Church and the other two members of the evangelism committee preached in the other sites. The participation of members was very nice and the church baptized 253 new members.

Table 10 indicates the results from these visitors' Sabbath indicate that out of the 1365 members in these Churches at least for the first time 579 members participated in the evangelism exercise which was 43%. It was resolved after this

program that the same program should be repeated every year during the school holidays when all the children in the community are at home.

*Table 10.* The Results from the Visitors' Program

Name of Church	No. of Church members	No. of members who invited visitors	No. of invitations	No. of visitors who came	Baptism
Najjanankumbi	980	350	1556	615	151
Wankulukuku	247	142	815	312	57
Namasuba	138	87	343	124	45
Total	1365	579	2714	1051	253

### **Public Evangelism through Church Departments**

The Youth and Women ministries departments of Najjanankumbi Seventh-day Adventist Church jointly organized an “effort” at Wankulukuku in the month of December 2008 and this researcher was the preacher. The two departments organized 107 campers who stayed in the place full time while 173 members came from their homes daily. This gave a total of 280 participants which was 20%. It is very interesting to note that half of the participants were new faces in the field of evangelism and participated in the public evangelism for the first time.

They came because they were active members of their departments. They had different roles assigned to them through their departments. The camping of many Women attracted the participation of their husbands who usually came to visit and also assist their Wives.

After three weeks, 187 people were baptized and after only one month 67 people were also baptized during the follow-up exercise. This gave a total of 254



baptized members within two months. A new land was bought and a new temporary Church structure has been constructed.

After this public evangelism, it was resolved by the same churches to organize another “effort” in the year 2009 under the leadership of Adventist Men and Family life departments.

### **Home Evangelism and Neighborhood Evangelism**

This program was launched in October 2008. For only four months, 69 homes were involved with 138 members in them utilized this evangelism strategy. They invited their relatives, friends, neighbors and colleagues to attend some social events in their homes. In every case, the Church sent Preachers and singing groups so as to facilitate and pass on the salvation message to the visitors. This strategy utilized functions in members’ homes like Birth days, Graduations, Weddings, Silver and golden jubilees and many other functions.

According to the reports from each family, the total number of visitors who were invited to the Adventist homes was 915. Some of these have been influenced to visit the Churches and 75 have now become members through baptism.

### **Social Gatherings**

The young people who are not coming from Adventist homes where they can invite visitors, decided to form fellowship groups. Through these groups they organized many evangelistic social events where they also invited their friends and schoolmates. In these events they included games, sports, Bible reading, quizzes, Christian music and other funds. The youths agreed to conduct these social gatherings once every quarter of year.

In the year 2008, the Adventist Youths organized four meetings where 580 Adventist Youths attended. Each Youth was encouraged to at least invite one visitor to these meetings. The results showed that 227 Youths participated in inviting 300 visitors. The Youth participation was 39%, which also resulted into 52 baptisms at the end of the year. The Youth decided to conduct these social gathering once every year. According to the results got from these programs, the Church agreed to use disciple making as a method to help them to retain these new members. Each member was encouraged to disciple at least two new converts for a period of one year. During this period an old member is expected to invest a lot of time in building Christian values in the new converts. This process will include teaching, nurturing, motivation, inspiring and influencing the new members. Even these members will be encouraged to do the same when they mature.

### **Evaluation of the Project**

This project was conducted in the year 2008 in the three organized churches of Najjanankumbi, Namasuba, and Wankulukuku. At the end of this year, the results were encouraging. According to the records of the evangelism committee, out of the 1365 members of these three churches where this program was conducted, 750 (55%) members directly participated in this strategy as seen in Table 11.

*Table 11. Summarizing the Participation of Members and Results*

Activity	Number of People Who Participated	Baptism Results
Invited visitors	579	253
Public evangelism	280	254
Home evangelism	138	75
Inviting friends in youth social gathering	227	52
Total	1224	634

After this project, it was discovered that women and youth participated more than men. Out 1224 individuals who participated, 736 (60%) were female compared to men who were 488 (40%). While the young people below the age of 30 years were 937 (77%). On the side of church officers, 40 church elders in these churches 27 (68%) have been involved. While out of the other 119 Church officers in these churches, 68 (57%) were also involved in the implementation of this evangelism strategy. The participation of church officers in this strategy has been summarized in Table 12 below:

*Table 12. Participation of Church Officers in the Year 2008*

Type of people	Number in the group	Number of those who were involved	Percentage involved
Elders	40	27	68%
Other Church Officers	119	68	57%
Total	159	95	60%

## CHAPTER 5

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study was divided into five chapters. Chapter One was the introduction of the study; Chapter Two dealt with the review of the related literature on the life and mission of the Church; Chapter Three showed the situation in the district; Chapter Four dealt with the strategy design, implementations and evaluations; finally this Chapter summarized, concluded and gave recommendations based on the findings of the study.

#### **Summary**

The main problem of this research was that eleven percent of the members of the Najjanankumbi Seventh-day Adventist Church district were participating in the life and mission of the Church in the last ten years from 1996-2006.

The main purpose was therefore, to find suitable strategy which would raise the level of participation of members in the Najjanankumbi Seventh-Day Adventist Church district in the life and mission of the Church from Eleven percent to at least Sixty percent.

This project was conducted in three organized churches whose membership contributes sixty five percent of the total membership in the district. Therefore, the outcome from this research can give us a picture of what can happen in the whole district.

The outcome after implementation for one year, the results in these three churches, was as follows:

1. Out of 1365 members in these churches, 750 (55%) directly participated in the life and mission of the church.
2. Out of 159 church officers in this area, 95 (60%) directly participated in these evangelism programs in the same year.
3. These three churches managed to baptize 634 new members from this project.
4. From that time, these churches became evangelistic and training centers for church members in evangelism activities. The major responsibility of a district pastor in these churches has been narrowed to training members and to supervise evangelism programs.
5. One new church has been established at Kabaawo to cater for the 254 new members baptized from Wankulukuku Church during Public evangelism in 2008. Land was bought and construction of the church building is going on with support from Central Uganda Conference and the district church members.

### **Conclusion**

The outcome got after implementation of this project can be concluded in the following way:

1. The mission of the Church is a great work which cannot be accomplished by just a few individual Church members. It can be achieved by the involvement of all believers.

2. The more members are committed to the Great Commission, the more chances the church has to grow numerically and spiritually.
3. The Churches are training centers for evangelism. Therefore, the pastor's role is to train and recruit as many members as possible to get involved in the ministry.
4. There are so many methods which can be used to accomplish God's work. Therefore, the leaders should not use only one method all the time.
5. When the church members are involved in planning for evangelism they participate directly because they own the program.

### **Recommendations**

Basing on the above results, the following recommendations were made:

1. That the programs suggested in the project should be implemented by all Churches in the district because they involve a lot of people, are practical, and can help the church to grow numerically and spiritually.
2. That these churches should continue with these methods even after this research project. These methods will enable the churches to get many knowledgeable and responsible members of evangelism and other church activities.
3. That a strategy should be developed through the evangelism committee which will enable more men to participate in the programs of the life and mission of the church.
4. A similar research should be done in the same district to find out what other factors contribute to the slow Church growth in the Najjanankumbi Seventh-day Adventist Church district.

5. This research should be done in some other Church departments in the district which need individual participation like the Stewardship department.
6. A similar research should be done in any other Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Central Uganda Conference for comparison.
7. The findings got from this research can be used by any other Church of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the entire Conference as well as the Uganda Union.

APPENDIX  
QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaire on Participation of Members in the Life and Mission of the Church in  
the Najjanankumbi Seventh-day Adventist Church District

1. **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:** (Please circle each item that applies to you)

a) Sex

Male

Female

b) Age

12 – 18 years

19 – 29 years

30 – 39 years

40 – 49 years

50 – 59 years

60 – or more

c) Marital status

Single

Married

d) Completed Formal Education

Primary

Secondary

High school

Collage/ Professional School

University

Other (Please Specify) -----

e) Occupation -----



2. **CHURCH LIFE** : (fill in as requested)

- a) Which year did you join the SDA church? -----
- b) How did you become a member of this very congregation? (Circle which applies to you)
- Baptism
  - Letter of transfer
  - Profession of faith
- c) How did you get your first acquaintance with the SDA church? (Circle that applies)
- Public evangelism
  - Radio
  - TV
  - Literature
  - Friend
  - Relative
  - Neighbor
  - Colleague
  - School
- d) What relatives of yours are SDA members? (Circle as many as apply)
- Father
  - Mother
  - Brother(s)
  - Sister(s)
  - Wife or Husband
  - Son(s)
  - Daughter(s)
  - Grandparent(s)
  - None of these
- e) Are you a church Officer? (Choose)
- Yes
  - No
- f) What office do you hold in the church? -----

3. **PARTICIPATION IN EVANGELISM:**

- a) How often do you invite non-SDA visitors in your church?
- Always
  - Nearly always
  - Not regularly
  - Occasionally
  - Seldom
  - Never
- b) Type of person(s) you invited:
- Friend
  - Relative
  - Spouse
  - Neighbor
  - Colleague
- c) How often do you invite non-SDA visitors in your home for Sabbath lunch, dinner or party?
- Always
  - Nearly always
  - Not regularly
  - Occasionally
  - Seldom
  - Never

- d) Have you ever participated in public evangelism campaign/effort?  
(Choose)
- Yes
  - No
- e) What is your contribution during these evangelism campaigns? (Circle as many as they apply)
- Camping
  - Distribution of handbills
  - Distribution of hand-outs
  - Distribution of literature
  - Giving Bible study
  - Visitation
  - Singing
  - Financial support
  - Manual labor
  - Prayers
- f) Are you satisfied with the outreach program as organized by your church?
- Yes
  - No
- If No, give reasons-----  
-----
- g) What suggestions would you give your church leaders to improve on evangelism strategies in your church?
- -----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----
- h) What new strategies can you suggest ?
- -----  
-----  
-----  
-----
- i) What will be your major contribution in these evangelism strategies?  
(State clearly)-----  
-----  
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2000 – 2008 - District Pastor Najjanankumbi Seventh-day Adventist church  
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