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### Strategic Church Planting in the Central Zimbabwe Conference: Towards a Paradigm Shift in Church Growth

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ABSTRACT

STRATEGIC CHURCH PLANTING IN THE CENTRAL  
ZIMBABWE CONFERENCE: TOWARDS  
A PARADIGM SHIFT IN  
CHURCH GROWTH

by

Nkosiyabo Zvandasara

Adviser: Douglas Kilcher

ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Dissertation

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: STRATEGIC CHURCH PLANTING IN THE CENTRAL  
ZIMBABWE CONFERENCE: TOWARDS A PARADIGM  
SHIFT IN CHURCH GROWTH

Name of researcher: Nkosiyabo Zvandasara

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D.Min.

Date completed: July 1998

Problem

This dissertation focuses on church planting in the Central Zimbabwe Conference. While impressive results have been achieved in evangelizing the lower classes of the society, there has been meager success in reaching the upper classes of the Black community as well as the White, the Indian, and the Colored minorities. A strategic church-planting approach to

church growth hopes to not only target the least promising population segments served by the Central Zimbabwe Conference, but also to increase the effectiveness of the other church methods currently being employed to reach the more responsive classes in that conference.

#### Method

A diachronic analysis of the various church-growth methods that have been and are currently being used in the Central Zimbabwe Conference is conducted, highlighting their strengths and weaknesses. Data gathered from interviews and a survey sent to the Central Zimbabwe Conference authenticate the need for a paradigm shift in church growth that is driven by a church-planting consciousness.

#### Conclusion

The Central Zimbabwe Conference has much to gain by embracing a strategic church-planting approach to church growth. Placing church planting at the core of the conference's mission enhances lay participation in evangelism and is cost effective.

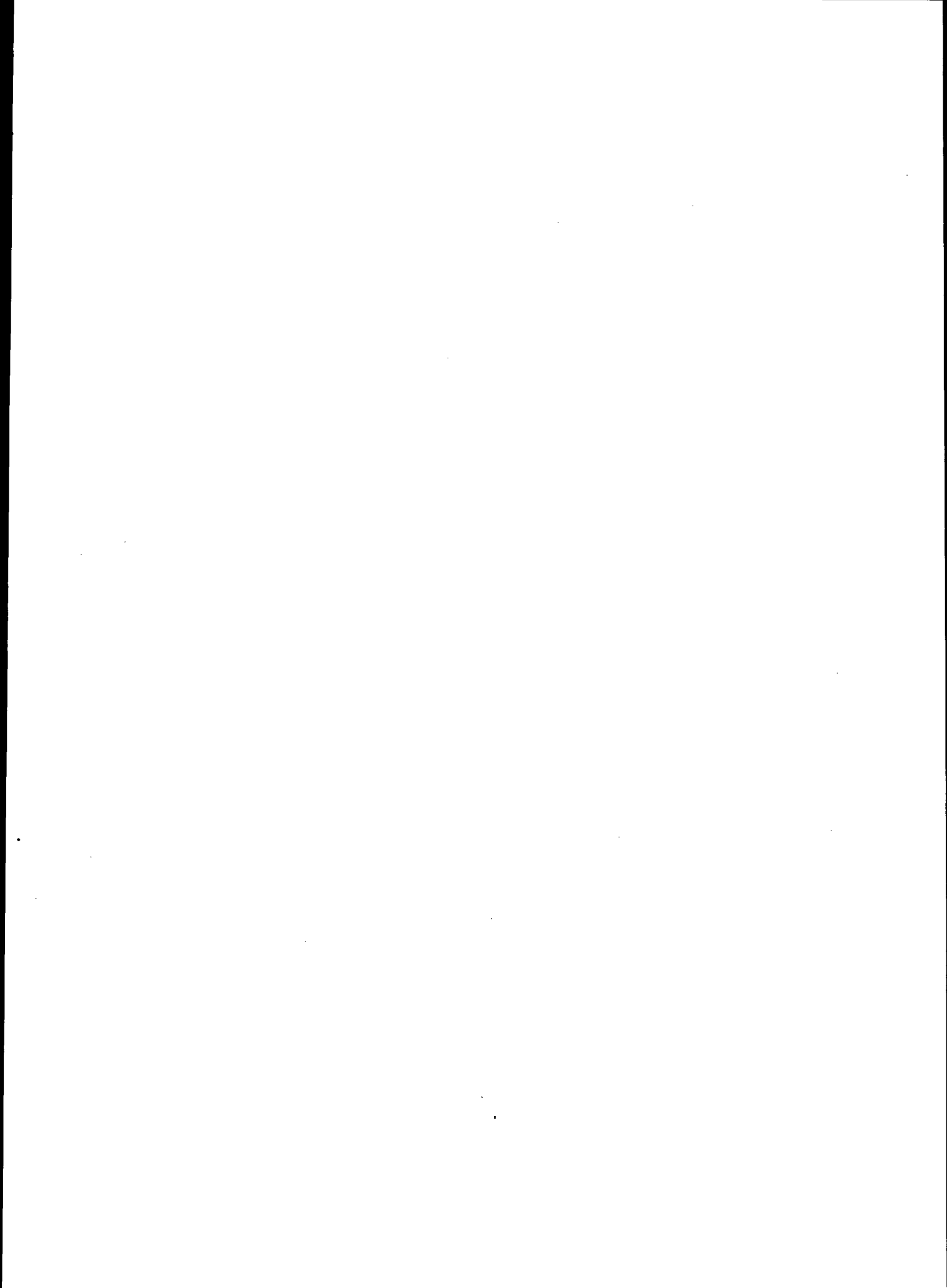
Andrews University  
Seventh-day Theological Seminary

STRATEGIC CHURCH PLANTING IN THE CENTRAL  
ZIMBABWE CONFERENCE: TOWARDS  
A PARADIGM SHIFT IN  
CHURCH GROWTH

A Dissertation  
Presented in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Ministry

by  
Nkosiyabo Zvandasara

July 1998




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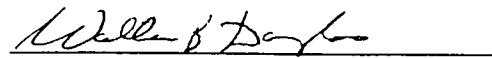
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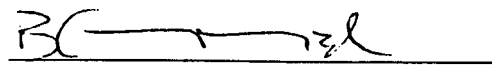
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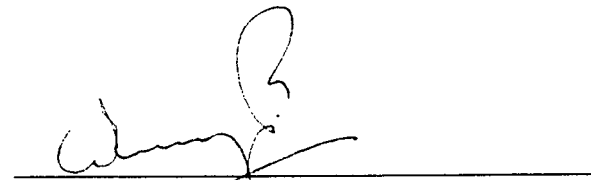
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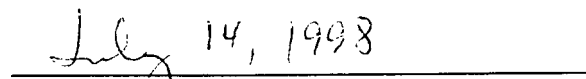
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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to spell out the parameters of this dissertation. To accomplish this objective, several steps are taken and these include the statement of the problem addressed by the dissertation, the purpose, as well as the significance of the research. This chapter also outlines the methodology that is employed in this research, gives a description of the study, contours the delimitations of the dissertation, and provides definitions to some key terms. Finally, this chapter shares some general but pertinent information about Zimbabwe and the Central Zimbabwe Conference.

#### **Statement of the Problem**

Over the years, the Central Zimbabwe Conference has experienced considerable growth in church membership. Various methods of evangelism have been

used. There has been little success, however, in reaching the Black middle and upper classes, the White, the Indian, and the Colored minorities. Strategic church planting would seek to target, among other things, these various people groups within the territory of the Central Zimbabwe Conference.

### **Purpose of the Dissertation**

This dissertation reports the development of a strategic church-planting model for the Central Zimbabwe Conference.

### **Significance of the Dissertation**

This study tries to substantiate the need for a paradigm shift in the church-growth efforts of the Central Zimbabwe Conference. An approach to church growth that has strategic church planting at its core has several benefits. Apart from reaching all segments within the Central Zimbabwe Conference territory, strategic church planting will help to curb the attrition rate of new converts, as smaller churches would provide more personalized care for the converts.

It will also enhance a greater lay participation in church growth.

Given the ailing economy of Zimbabwe and the high cost of public evangelistic campaigns, strategic church planting will prove to be a less expensive and more effective alternative to public evangelism.

### **Methodology**

Most of the resources that were used in this research came from the James White Library at Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan. Other materials were acquired through inter-library loan services from universities in North America and Africa.

A review and critique of selected literature on church planting and church growth was undertaken. Due to the bulk of the literature on church planting, only a few books by some of the most accomplished church-planting specialists, and those books particularly dealing with the inception and growth of Christianity in Zimbabwe, were consulted.

Past and present trends in church planting and church growth in the Central Zimbabwe Conference were

reviewed and evaluated. To achieve this objective, the following things were done:

1. A questionnaire was sent to all seven administrators, thirty pastors, and thirty church members from one church of each district in the Central Zimbabwe Conference. The pastors randomly chose, from their district, one church member to complete the questionnaire.

2. Statistical information on church growth from the Central Zimbabwe Conference was obtained.

3. A number of students from Zimbabwe, currently studying at Andrews University, were interviewed.

4. My personal experience as one who has served in the Central Zimbabwe Conference as district pastor and youth and education director was utilized.

A suggested model based on contemporary church-planting techniques but contextualized to fit the situation in Zimbabwe was developed. This model includes eight written one-hour presentations for a two-weekend seminar for educating administrators, pastors, and local church leaders on the merits of

strategic church planting as a viable paradigm for church growth in the Central Zimbabwe Conference.

### **Description of the Study**

Chapter 1 of this dissertation is introductory and spells out the problem, purpose, significance, and methodology of the research. In addition, it also provides a definition of some terms that are used in the dissertation and gives brief information about the country of Zimbabwe where the Central Zimbabwe Conference is located.

In chapter 2, past and present paradigms of church growth in the Central Zimbabwe Conference are explored and analyzed. The strengths and shortcomings of each method of church growth that has contributed to the increase of church membership in the Central Zimbabwe Conference are evaluated.

A literature review that falls into three parts is conducted in chapter 3. The first section deals mostly with literature on how Christianity encountered the Zimbabwean culture. The second looks at Ellen G. White's comments on the importance of church planting. The final part of this chapter explores literature on



the biblical foundation of church planting as a method of church growth.

The findings of a survey that was conducted in the Central Zimbabwe Conference with a view to ascertaining its readiness for church planting as an attractive paradigm for church growth are analyzed in chapter 4. This chapter reports on the responses given by administrators, pastors, and lay members in the Central Zimbabwe Conference.

Chapter 5 provides a model of the contextualization process. After reflecting on contextualization as a concept, this chapter presents eight lessons aimed at enlightening the Central Zimbabwe Conference thought leaders on the merits of strategic church planting as a viable paradigm for church growth. The lessons are presented in a two-weekend seminar.

Finally, chapter 6 gives a summary and a conclusion to the research. Recommendations for the adoption of church planting as a driving method of church expansion in the Central Zimbabwe Conference are outlined.

### **Delimitations of the Dissertation**

This research project focuses mainly on charting the course to a paradigm shift in church growth. The basic thrust of the dissertation is the creation of awareness of the viability of the church-planting paradigm as a means to the achievement of unparalleled church growth for the Central Zimbabwe Conference. In light of this primary focus, this dissertation does not attend to the finer details of every aspect of church planting. Rather, only broad guidelines aimed at articulating the principles that validate church planting as the way of the future for Central Zimbabwe Conference are outlined. The task of customizing the finer church-planting details and nuances particular to specific settings within the Central Zimbabwe Conference is left to local churches, pastors, and Conference administrators. Once they have embraced the church-planting paradigm for their conference, these thought leaders should let the context guide them in the application of church-planting principles.

### Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined as used in this dissertation.

*Comity*: An ecumenical arrangement endorsed by the World Council of Churches at the 1910 Convention held in Edinburgh to have different Christian denominations concentrate on specific areas in their evangelization of Zimbabwe.

*Humwe*: A Shona practice in which villagers appeal for assistance to work their field on a corporate or rotational basis. The host usually brews some beer or some non-alcoholic beverage which people drink as they help with the task that needs to be done (e.g., harvesting the fields).

*Ndebele*: One of the major tribes of Zimbabwe that constitutes 16 percent of the national population. Historically, the Ndebeles originated from South Africa, migrated into Zimbabwe, and settled in the western part of the country.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Franklin Parker, African Development and Education in Southern Rhodesia (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 1960), 7. He notes that "the Matabele, a branch of the Zulus, entered what is now Southern Rhodesia [Zimbabwe] about 1836 from Transvaal,

*Shona*: A major tribe of Zimbabwe accounting for 71 percent of the entire population and comprising several dialects that include the Karanga, Korekore, Zezuru, Manyika, and Duma, among others. The grouping of the above dialects into one language was the work of linguists during the colonial era who saw similarities in the dialects spoken by the inhabitants of Zimbabwe and labeled the combination "Shona."<sup>1</sup>

*Zunde*: A term that denotes a traditional Shona practice in which the Shona people of Zimbabwe corporately worked the field of their respective kings. A day would be set in which all the subjects would team up and work for their king. *Zunde* was initiated by the subjects and not by the king.

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South Africa. They occupied the southern and western parts of the country, which became known as Matebeleland." Ibid.

<sup>1</sup>Ibid. He shows that the Shonas have inhabited Zimbabwe for at least four hundred years, occupying the southeastern part of the country.

### About Zimbabwe and the Central Zimbabwe Conference

Geographically, the Central Zimbabwe Conference is situated in the heart of the country of Zimbabwe.<sup>1</sup>

Zimbabwe is a Southern African country that shares a border with South Africa to its south and Zambia to its north. Land locked, Zimbabwe is sandwiched by Botswana to its west and Mozambique to its east.<sup>2</sup>

The country of Zimbabwe has a population of 11,423,175 with 98 percent being of African origin. The Shonas comprise 71 percent of the population with the Ndebeles at 16 percent. The White and Asian

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<sup>1</sup>The name of the country of Zimbabwe has experienced a great deal of change over the years. Oliver B. Pollark and Karen Pollark, Rhodesia/Zimbabwe (Oxford, England: CLIO Press, 1979), xviii. They show that prior to the 1890s the Portuguese called it Munhumutapa and Zimbabwe. During the early part of the 1890s it became known briefly as Zambesia and then Charterland. However, by the mid-1890s it was called Southern Rhodesia. When Northern Rhodesia attained independence in 1964 and became Zambia, Zimbabwe was increasingly referred to as Southern Rhodesia. At the unilateral declaration of independence Rhodesia became the official name. Towards the end of the 1970s Zimbabwe was known as Zimbabwe/Rhodesia. At independence in 1980 Zimbabwe became the official name.

<sup>2</sup>Frances Strauss, My Rhodesia (Boston, MA: Gambit, 1969), 3.

population each have 1 percent of the national population.<sup>1</sup>

The religious milieu of Zimbabwe shows that Christianity claims 25 percent of the population. Animists form 24 percent and that considered syncretic constitute 50 percent.<sup>2</sup> The national statistics on religion generally resembles the situation in the Central Zimbabwe Conference. Most people are tied to their traditional beliefs. Of the segment that is Christian, 40 percent are Roman Catholic, 30 percent Anglican, 20 percent Methodists while Pentecostals and Seventh-day Adventists each have 5 percent.<sup>3</sup>

The Central Zimbabwe Conference is a place where two major cultures of Zimbabwe converge, namely the Shona and Ndebele cultures. Politically, the territory under which the conference falls has had a volatile history of tribal tension. Although Shonas constitute 71 percent of the Zimbabwean population, and the

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<sup>1</sup>Borgna Brunner ed., 1998 Information Please Almanac (Boston, MA: Information, 1998), 343, 344.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Johnson Otto, 1995 Information Please Almanac (New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1995), 295.

Ndebeles 16 percent, in the Central Zimbabwe Conference the picture is different. Shonas and Ndebeles each claim 48 percent of the population, leaving 4 percent to be shared among the White, Indian, and Colored populations.<sup>1</sup>

Although the Central Zimbabwe Conference was established in 1921 and organized in 1981,<sup>2</sup> its name and territory have constantly changed from the time Adventism was first introduced to Zimbabwe. In a country of 11 million people there are only 241,130<sup>3</sup> Seventh-day Adventists who are shared among the three conferences that comprise the Zambezi Union Conference; these include the East, West, and Central Zimbabwe Conferences.<sup>4</sup> Of the entire Adventist population in Zimbabwe, the Central Zimbabwe Conference claims a

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<sup>1</sup>Sean Moroney, Africa (New York, NY: Facts File, 1989), 609.

<sup>2</sup>The Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1997), 78.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

membership of about 97,410.<sup>1</sup> The territory covered by the Central Zimbabwe Conference has a population of 2,802,550.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>William R. Cash, "The 134<sup>th</sup> Statistical Report-1996," General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists (Silver Spring, MD: Office of Archives and Statistics, 1996), 14.

<sup>2</sup>The Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1997), 78.



## CHAPTER II .

### PAST AND PRESENT PARADIGMS OF CHURCH GROWTH AND CHURCH PLANTING IN THE CENTRAL ZIMBABWE CONFERENCE

#### **Introduction**

The aim of this chapter is to outline the past and present paradigms<sup>1</sup> of church growth and church planting in the Central Zimbabwe Conference. At least four discernible church-growth paradigms characterize the spread of Adventism in the Central Zimbabwe Conference,

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<sup>1</sup>See: Thomas Kuhn, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions (Chicago: University Press, 1970), 175. In his epoch-making book, Kuhn employs the term "paradigm" in at least two senses. He notes: "On the one hand, it stands for the entire constellation of beliefs, values, techniques, and so on shared by the members of a given community. On the other, it denotes one sort of element in that constellation, the concrete puzzle-solutions which, employed as models or examples, can replace explicit rules as a basis for the solution of the remaining puzzle." Ibid. In the context of this research the second meaning of the term is used. A paradigm relates to the "concrete-puzzle-solutions," the "models or examples" which displace existing models in church growth because the old models have outlived their usefulness. It is because the new paradigm offers a better promise in solving the current problems or challenges that it replaces the old paradigms.

and these include the founding of mission schools, the public evangelistic campaigns, the forced relocation of Africans in Zimbabwe, and the *Zunde* evangelistic approach. In addition to these four paradigms of church growth is the mother-daughter paradigm of church planting.

On the one hand are church-growth paradigms, each with a distinct time frame. The paradigm of mission schools started in the 1890s. The massive resettlement of Blacks took place after the Land Apportionment Act of 1931. The public evangelistic campaign paradigm in church growth was popularized in the 1940s. The 1980s saw the emergence of the *Zunde* approach to evangelism in the Central Zimbabwe Conference.

On the other hand, the mother-daughter church planting paradigm, like a thread, runs through all the paradigms of church growth from the time Adventism was introduced in Zimbabwe in the 1890s to the present. In a significant way the mother-daughter model of church planting seems to have facilitated the actual multiplication of congregations within all the paradigms responsible for the expansion of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Central Zimbabwe

Conference. The mother-daughter church-planting strategy, therefore, has been instrumental in crystallizing every paradigm's church-growth endeavors into concrete congregations.

### **The Introduction of Adventism in Zimbabwe and the Founding of Mission Schools**

#### **Solusi Mission School Established**

A study of the beginnings of the Christian faith in Zimbabwe shows that the establishment of mission schools was a common strategy of church growth used by missionaries of various denominations.<sup>1</sup> Early Seventh-day Adventist missionaries to Zimbabwe embraced the founding of mission schools as a key strategy in their church-growth endeavors. No sooner had the first Seventh-day Adventist missionaries set foot on the Zimbabwean soil than they founded the first mission school. On a farm approximately thirty-two miles west of the city of Bulawayo, Solusi Mission was established in 1894.<sup>2</sup> The Seventh-day Adventist missionaries

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<sup>1</sup>Harold D. Nelson, Zimbabwe (Washington, DC: American University Press, 1982), 114-115.

<sup>2</sup>The defeat of the Matebele King Lobengula by the British colonial power in 1893 was a defining moment in the evangelization of Zimbabwe. See: Robert Blake, A History of Rhodesia (New York: Alfred A. Knoff, 1978),

considered the events leading to the founding of Solusi to have been providential in that 12,000 acres of land (on which Solusi stands) were given to the missionaries by Dr. Jameson, the Administrator of Rhodesia.<sup>1</sup> Later, 4,000 acres, out of the 12,000 acres given for the establishment of Solusi, were ceded for the establishment of an Inyazura mission school among the Shona people.<sup>2</sup> Although the missionaries were initially ambivalent concerning the offer, they later decided to accept the land when Ellen G. White

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160-161. Describing the auspicious political climate for the introduction of Christianity in Zimbabwe, Blake notes: "The whole matter became important after 1897, for the defeat of the rebellious brought with it the longed-for Christian breakthrough. The early missionaries had predicted that the gospel could only penetrate these benighted parts if it was preceded by the sword—and they were right. The gods and spirits of the Africans had failed them. The God of the conqueror had prevailed, and as so often in past history, the conquered, hesitantly and with many reservations scarcely recognized by those who had 'converted' them, accepted the creed of the conquerors. The immemorial resistance of the Shona and Ndebele to Christianity began to melt" (161).

<sup>1</sup>A. T. Robinson, "Pioneer of Solusi Pioneers," Africa Division Outlook, July 17, 1944, 1.

<sup>2</sup>O. Montgomery, "Inyazura Mission," The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, October 22, 1931, 15. See also, Jean Cripps, "Africa Is Opportunity," Trans-Africa Division Outlook, March 15, 1976, 6.

indicated in a letter that there was nothing wrong in their accepting the offer.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>W. H. Anderson, "Solusi Mission," The Southern Division Outlook, May 15, 1944, 1. He notes that a crew of eight men led by Peter Wessels and Druillard, after exploring the site of the proposed mission station, went to see Dr. Jameson, the administrator of Rhodesia, giving him a letter from Cecil John Rhodes. After reading the letter, Jameson told Wessels and Druillard that the 12,000 acres they needed they could get free of charge. See also Alberto Sbacchi, "Solusi," Adventist Heritage 4, no. 1 (Summer 1977): 37. He notes that although the 12,000 acres given for the establishment of Solusi Mission were a free gift, a rent of \$60 was to be paid each year. This rent was paid up to 1923. Sbacchi provides useful information when he states: "In November, 1894, the Adventist Foreign Mission Board received details of the land received from the BSAC (British South Africa Company) and expressed concern at the implications. The denomination believed in separation between civil government and religious organization; Those who believed in the complete separation of church and state accused the BSAC of wresting land from the Africans by force and fraud, and then making grants to missionaries as a speculative investment. February 15, 1895, in response to these arguments, the local leaders decided to write to Rhodes and Jameson explaining their reasons. A letter from Ellen G. White, however, arrived just in time to change the decision. She stated that God as owner of the world, moved the hearts of worldly men and rulers to help His cause." It is difficult to explain how Providence works especially when one looks at the motive of the settlers in granting to the missionaries land which the settlers themselves had actually usurped from the Africans. Sbacchi (35) tries to show why settlers gave missionaries preferential treatment when he says: "Accompanying these settlers were missionaries from almost all Christian denominations. Rhodes welcomed the churches because he believed that missionaries were cheaper than soldiers, and that one of them was worth fifty policemen. Moreover, missionaries could report

Virgil Robinson notes that the first missionary to arrive at Solusi was Fred Sparrow, who was accompanied by J. Harvey, A. Goepf, A. Druillard, Peter Wessels, Barry Burton, and Landsman. Other missionaries who shortly joined Sparrow were G. B. Tripp, G. W. Armitage, W. H. Anderson, and Dr. A. S. Carmichael. As soon as Solusi Mission was ready to operate, F. L. Meade was appointed as its first superintendent. Among the first teachers he worked with were F. B. Armitage and his wife, W. Chaney and his wife, Dr. H. W. Green and his wife, Lloyd, and Miss Hiva Starr.<sup>1</sup>

The motive behind the founding of Solusi Mission was more than a literacy campaign. Solusi aimed at training teachers and evangelists who were to be a major force in the spreading of Adventism throughout Zimbabwe and eventually the rest of Africa. Sbacchi affirms:

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rebellious chiefs to the authorities. Rhodes' liberality towards missionaries brought him missionary requests for land, including one from Seventh-day Adventists."

<sup>1</sup>Virgil Robinson, Third Angel over Africa, Ellen G. White Research Center, James White Library, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI, 45. Please note that this manuscript does not supply the initials for Lloyd.

With the turn of the century a new era began. Giving greater emphasis to African education, the missionaries sought to teach the Africans to read the Bible, to write, and to become leaders among their own people. After establishing a third grade education for all, they intended to send the more promising students to teacher's college.<sup>1</sup>

As part of their training, teachers were equipped to function as pastors so that they could plant and take care of churches. The pronounced distinction that seems to currently exist between teachers and pastors in Zimbabwe was absent when Adventism was introduced in Zimbabwe. Gospel ministers and school teachers saw their mission as one, namely, the spreading of Adventism.<sup>2</sup>

The early missionaries to Zimbabwe quickly realized that learning was a reciprocal experience because it was not only the local people who needed an education. They needed to learn before they could become effective teachers. Tripp aptly notes:

We feel that our hands are tied until we can learn the language. We are trying to pick up what few words we can now, and expect to begin a study of language as soon as we can procure the books, which we expect to be able to do as soon as we reach Bulawayo.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Sbacchi, 42.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>G. B. Tripp, "Africa," Advent Review and Sabbath

Fred Sparrow is credited with having stressed the need for missionaries to master Sindebele, the language of the local people.<sup>1</sup> The willingness to learn the people's language, in spite of the heavy English accent, promoted mutual respect and rapport.

Apart from attracting converts from the immediate vicinity, Solusi drew students from various parts of Africa. Jim Mayenza from Zambia was one of the earliest students to come to Solusi from beyond the borders of Zimbabwe. After a close scrutiny of the lifestyle of the missionaries, he embraced Adventism. After completing his training, he became one of the most prominent evangelists in both Zimbabwe and Zambia.<sup>2</sup>

During its formative years, Solusi produced other renowned graduates who made significant contributions to the initial phases of the Adventist work in Zimbabwe. Jona Chimuka, Emory Mlalazi, and Edward Janda were among the early Solusi graduates to work at

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Herald, September 10, 1895, 585.

<sup>1</sup>Robinson, Third Angel Over Africa, 47.

<sup>2</sup>Virgil Robinson, History of Africa, Ellen G. White Research Center, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI, 138.



Inyazura. Mark Mlalazi devoted his life to youth ministry, while Clarence Moyo opened schools in several villages within Zimbabwe. It was Henry Mabona, however, who pioneered the Adventist work in Zambia after he graduated from Solusi.<sup>1</sup>

#### More Mission Schools Are Founded

Encouraged by the witness of Solusi Mission in its immediate surroundings, the early missionaries continued to establish more mission schools in Zimbabwe. F. B. Armitage traveled 150 miles northeast of Solusi to open Somabula Mission in 1901. This new mission school, which later became Lower Gwelo Mission, served as a base from which the Seventh-day Adventist church could evangelize the vicinity.<sup>2</sup> Lower Gwelo Mission sent eight students to train as teachers as soon as Solusi was able to offer a teacher training course.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>J. N. De Beers, "How Old Sogwala Was Won," The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, April 24, 1919, 15.

<sup>3</sup>Robinson, Third Angel Over Africa, 146-149.

In addition to fostering the work of evangelism in the surrounding area, Lower Gwelo functioned as a springboard for the opening of village schools in the Central Zimbabwe Conference. Reporting on the progress of the expansion of Adventism through the founding of schools, Andross notes:

There are eighteen outschools considered directly with the Somabula Mission and the Shangani outstation. These schools are doing excellent work. Some of them are very large, and are creating an interest in this truth for long distances about the school. This is especially true of the Que Que School, from which the interest extends fifty miles.<sup>1</sup>

In 1910, Studervant opened Tsungwesi Mission School (present-day Inyazura Mission) about 100 miles east of Harare, the capital city of Zimbabwe. Gradually the influence of the new Adventist mission school could be felt within the surrounding community as many converts were won to the Adventist message. Commenting on the impact of the Inyazura Mission in its neighborhood, Andross observes that "our missionaries on this station are exerting a splendid influence and are gaining the confidence of both the white and native

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<sup>1</sup>Elmer Andross, "Somabula Mission, Southern Africa," The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, April 24, 1919, 16.

population in the entire district."<sup>1</sup> Andross points out that, unlike Lower Gwelo Mission, Inyazura Mission was unable to open some outschools soon after its establishment. To assist in the running of the work at Inyazura, a call was placed and F. B. Jewel responded, leaving the United States for Zimbabwe.<sup>2</sup> Andross shows that as soon as circumstances would allow, F. B. Jewel "hope[d] to get this line of work started soon."<sup>3</sup>

Located some forty miles south of the city of Gweru is Hanke Mission, which was founded in 1913 by George Hutchinson. The same success realized in Solusi, Lower Gwelo, and Inyazura Missions was evident at Hanke. Many responded to the preaching of the Adventist message. The vision of the pioneers bore much fruit because, wherever schools were established, churches sprouted.<sup>4</sup>

In 1914, L. P. Sparrow opened Glendale Mission ten miles south of Fort Victoria (Masvingo). In 1919, however, a decision was made to sell the school. The

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Robinson, History of Africa, 149.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

major reason behind the selling of the Glendale Mission was that the number of converts was discouragingly small and it seemed futile to operate a school in such an unpromising area.<sup>1</sup>

The decision to sell Glendale Mission School may help to explain why Adventist church membership is a minority in Masvingo Province. Notwithstanding more recent efforts to establish churches in Masvingo, the degree of exposure to Adventism has been less than in those places where schools were founded. Perhaps the case of Glendale Mission is an example of a decision on the part of the pioneers for which more vision was needed.

The paradigm of the founding of mission schools offered the early Seventh-day Adventist missionaries the prospects of quickly spreading Adventism in Zimbabwe. Andross sums it when he notes:

We are establishing missions in this dark land to take the message of salvation quickly to the multitudes; and thus far this has proved to be one of the most successful methods yet found of accomplishing this task, especially in the interior.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid. See also, Andross, 16.

<sup>2</sup>Elmer Andross, "Tsongwesi Mission, Mashonaland, Southern Rhodesia," The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, May 13, 1919, 16.

## Adventism and Comity in Zimbabwe

In strategically establishing mission schools in almost every part of the country, the Seventh-day Adventist church was *ipso facto* contravening the comity of Christian denominations endorsed by the World Council of Churches at a convention held in 1910 in Edinburgh, Scotland.<sup>1</sup> The essence of the comity was that in their evangelization of Zimbabwe (at that time Rhodesia), Christian denominations were to target and limit their evangelistic activities to specific areas. The Seventh-day Adventist pioneers took no notice of the ecumenical concerns of the Edinburgh comity because their church-planting efforts were not to be restricted to one specific region but the entire country of Zimbabwe.

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<sup>1</sup>Stephen Neill, A History of Christian Mission (Baltimore, MD: Penguin Books, 1964), 393. See also; Diedrich Westermann, Africa and Christianity (London: Oxford University Press, 1937), 176. He notes: "The call for missionary comity has found a wide echo, not least among African Christians who fail to understand why they should not be allowed to worship together with their fellow Christians, and regret that belief in the One God should be possible only at the price of new ruptures in their social life."

Current demographic patterns in Zimbabwe testify to the faithfulness of other denominations in adopting and implementing the evangelistic strategy that was mapped out in the Edinburgh Convention. Most denominations are predominant in certain areas of the country because they followed the comity strategy.

In Mberengwa, for example, the Lutheran Church dominates because that is the section they were assigned to evangelize. The Dutch Reformed Church worked mostly south of Masvingo, and, as a result, its membership outnumbers that of other denominations. The Roman Catholic Church dominates the area north of Masvingo and Harare. The Brethren in Christ Church has its stronghold in the southern part of Bulawayo.<sup>1</sup>

### **The Resettlement of Blacks and the Spread of Adventism**

#### **The Land Apportionment Act**

After the passing of the Land Apportionment Act of 1931, the work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in

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<sup>1</sup>Nelson, 114-118.

the Central Zimbabwe Conference grew in an unconventional manner. The involuntary relocation of Africans by the Rhodesian Government, although selfish, ruthless, and devastating, later proved to be a blessing in disguise for the spread of Adventism. Most Africans who had embraced Adventism carried their newly found faith with them to the remote regions of the country whence they had been thrown. The prime land from which the Blacks were moved had been the earlier site of the evangelistic work of the early missionaries to Central Zimbabwe Conference. The Somabula area, for example, in which Lower Gwelo Mission had been founded and from which many Africans were uprooted, had received considerable exposure to Adventism.

The Land Apportionment Act passed in 1931 was as infamous as it was brutal.<sup>1</sup> It is one of the most devastating laws to be enacted by the Rhodesian Government. In his book Drums of War, Daniels describes the Land Apportionment Act as "the

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<sup>1</sup>Kenneth Young, Rhodesia and Independence (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1969), 13.

cornerstone of racial discrimination"<sup>1</sup> in Colonial Rhodesia. The Land Apportionment Act became, according to Blake, "the very symbol and embodiment of everything most resented in European domination."<sup>2</sup>

Kapungu, an Oxford graduate and Zimbabwean historian, and Daniels, a specialist in Rhodesian history, concur that the true motive behind the Land Apportionment Act was to usurp land from the Africans in order to give it to the White settlers. Kapungu observes:

From the early days of his appearance in Zimbabwe, the white man wanted to reserve the best lands for his own utilization and settlement. Those parts of the country having better soil and rainfall and well served with road and rail communications were to be reserved for the white man. Unmindful of the needs of the Africans, the white man removed most of them by force from their traditional fertile lands, driving them to settle in the hot, unproductive, and at times unhealthy parts of the country.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>George M. Daniels, Drums of War (New York: Third Press, 1974), 140. See also Barry N. Floyd, "Land Apportionment in Southern Rhodesia," Geographical Review U.S.A. 52 (October 1962): 566-588.

<sup>2</sup>Blake, 204. See Robin Palmer, Land and Racial Domination in Rhodesia (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1977), and Ken Brown, Land in Southern Rhodesia (London: African Bureau, 1959).

<sup>3</sup>Leonard Kapungu, Rhodesia (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1974), 14. See also Arthur Shearly, An Africa for Africans (London: Longmans, 1927).



Daniels also notes that in addition to the Whites grabbing all the fertile land along the railway line, they made sure that "pockets of fertile land elsewhere"<sup>1</sup> were reserved for them.

Under the Land Apportionment Act, 41 million acres of the best land were given to the Whites, who comprised less than 5 percent of the entire population. The Africans were left with 44 million acres of mostly barren land and yet they constituted at least 95 percent of the country's population.<sup>2</sup> In 1970 the Land Apportionment Act was replaced by a more "vicious and ruthless" Land Tenure Act, which increased the land apportioned to Whites by 9 million acres making them own 50 percent of the land, thus leaving another 50 percent to the Africans.<sup>3</sup>

The brutal impact of the Land Apportionment Act as well as that of its successors upon the African psyche can best be appreciated when one understands the relationship that existed between the African and his

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<sup>1</sup>Daniels, 141. See also Oliver B. Pollark, "Black Farmers and White Politics in Zimbabwe," African Affairs 76 (July 1975): 263-77.

<sup>2</sup>Kapungu, 29.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

land. Kapungu perceptively sums the ties that bind the African to the land this way:

To the African, land holds a deep meaning that transcends the need of his day-to-day livelihood. On land is based the African's traditional social system, his security as an individual and as a member of a family, his ties with his ancestors and therefore the basis of his religion. Take away the land and the African ceases to exist; the security of the individual and the family is threatened.<sup>1</sup>

Struck by the incivility of the Land Tenure Act, which was a revised version of the Land Apportionment Act, Daniels reflects: "What makes the new law particularly savage is the fact that land belonging to a father may be taken away from the son, despite all the laws of inheritance brought to this country by the western society."<sup>2</sup>

The Land Apportionment Act did not affect only those Africans who lived in the communal areas who were moved from the central plateau of 3,500 feet or more above sea level to make way for White settlers. That same law imposed restrictions to Africans in urban

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 13. See also, Malcom L. Rifkind, "Rhodesian History," Rhodesia/Zimbabwe 3 (1972): 53-76. He points out that land is frequently indicated as the crux of the Rhodesian question.

<sup>2</sup>Daniels, 141.

centers. Blake's analysis of the Land Apportionment Act is perceptive:

The feature of the Land Apportionment Act, which is least defensible of all, was the inclusion of virtually every town and city in the European purchase area. This meant that no African could buy or rent a house in Salisbury (Harare), Bulawayo or any urban area.<sup>1</sup>

Not all Whites, however, were blind to the hypocrisy under which the Land Apportionment Act was concealed. Sir Robert Tredgold was able to see through the overtly selfish law. Insightfully he states:

It has become a feature of Government propaganda in Rhodesia to claim that the Land Apportionment Act and other supporting legislation were passed primarily in the interests of the Africans. This is simply not true, as anyone must bear witness who watched the growth of the ideas behind the legislation and saw its passage through the House. I would concede that the legislation was intended to be in the interests of all the inhabitants, black and white, of the Colony, but the Europeans had more to gain from it than the Africans.<sup>2</sup>

The eviction of the Blacks from their traditional lands entailed serious adjustments. The land from which they had been uprooted was not just "amenable to permanent white settlement,"<sup>3</sup> it was suitable for human habitation

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<sup>1</sup>Blake, 202.

<sup>2</sup>Robert Tredgold, The Rhodesia That Was My Life (London: Oxford Press, 1968), 154-155.

<sup>3</sup>Parker, 2.

regardless of race or skin color. Mason notes that the lower parts of Zimbabwe to which the Blacks were forced are hotter, have low rainfall, and are less fertile, apart from being infested with the Tsetse fly.<sup>1</sup> It is, therefore, an open secret that the conditions on the frontier were harsh. As a result, many lost their loved ones to diseases associated with the inhuman climatic conditions.<sup>2</sup>

To a large degree, the resettlement program was carried out in a systematic fashion. Each chief, together with his subjects, was uprooted, transported in government trucks, and then transplanted in a new and strange area hundreds of miles away from his place of origin. Although in a totally new environment, this "managed chaos" allowed the chief to continue

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<sup>1</sup>Philip Mason, The Birth of a Dilemma (London: Oxford University Press, 1958), 257. See also, Wolf Roder, "Division of Land Resources in Southern Rhodesia," Annals of Association of American Geographers (USA) 54 (March 1964): 41-52. This article refutes the claim that Africans worked light, sandy soils while settlers sought out unpopulated, more fertile, and heavier red clay soils. The author concludes that "evidences of African short handled hoes denies the existence of unoccupied areas. Unequal apportionment of land and the justifying argument are a result of the first decade of settler occupation" (52).

<sup>2</sup>Kapungu, 14.

exercising control over his people, thus ensuring the preservation of law and order. The Gokwe area, among others, became home to the many chiefs who had been displaced.

#### Opportunity in a Crisis

Most of the Seventh-day Adventists who had fallen victim to the massive resettlement scheme by the government, upon their arrival in their respective new lands, assembled for regular worship every Sabbath. In many instances, isolated families met faithfully for worship and eventually these developed into large churches. A considerable number of the earliest Seventh-day Adventist churches in Gokwe, for example, were named after the families that started them. Bova Seventh-day Adventist church, Gumunyu Seventh-day Adventist church, and Svosve Seventh-day Adventist church are a few of the many that can be cited. These early churches became the mother churches from which companies and branch Sabbath Schools were started.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, after the 1931 Land

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<sup>1</sup>I worked in Gokwe as a pastor for three years (1982-1985), and it is during that time that I noticed the impact of the forced resettlement of Blacks on the spread of Adventism in the Gokwe area.

Apportionment Act, churches mushroomed in Gokwe as new congregations were planted. The scattering of the Africans due to the forced relocation seems to have helped the church to spread to those areas that the Central Zimbabwe Conference had not formulated a strategy to evangelize.

In the wake of the crisis that had been created by the involuntary relocation of Blacks, the Central Zimbabwe Conference had to send pastors to man the new districts that were coming into existence. Because the Conference had some budgetary constraints, the supply of pastors could not match the quickly sprouting churches. This situation of exponential church growth opened the door to increased lay participation in the running of the churches in the absence of a pastor. To date, the Adventist presence in Gokwe is very strong, and this area supports a large portion of the Central Zimbabwe Conference's budget.

#### **Public Evangelistic Campaigns**

Campbell shows that, as early as the 1940s, missionaries in the Zambezi Union were convinced of the effectiveness of the public evangelistic campaigns as a viable method for reaching the towns and cities of

Zimbabwe. Campbell observed that the tents or halls were ideal venues for holding the evangelistic efforts.<sup>1</sup> He also observed that rural evangelism would require a modification of the method used in urban centers. To reach the African segment of the rural population, Campbell advocated an evangelistic approach in which Bible workers were to visit the people in their "homes or out in the gardens and fields where they are working during the day. The Bible worker should be prepared to use a hoe himself and work along as he visits with the people."<sup>2</sup>

Robinson endorsed Campbell's view that city evangelism needed to be contextualized to the rural setting. However, beyond the simple humanitarian gestures of giving the villagers a hand as they worked their fields, Robinson envisioned more far-reaching initiatives in addressing people's felt needs.

Perceptively he noted:

As Christian workers we should be concerned with the various families and the village as a whole in our contacts. Through encouraging and teaching cleanliness, village hygiene, and making of better

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<sup>1</sup>J. R. Campbell, "Native Evangelism in Africa," Ministry, January 1940, 6.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 7.

homes, the health and care of children, and through work for the women, and in many other ways, the Christian missionary should make his presence felt and appreciated.<sup>1</sup>

As the Seventh-day Adventist Church ministered to the felt needs of the people in their evangelistic endeavors, people became increasingly attracted to their unique message. However, it was only by coming and spending meaningful time with the peasant farmer in the rural areas that the missionaries gained the confidence of the rural population.

Robinson's analysis of the rapport that developed between the missionaries and the rural people in Zimbabwe is insightful. He notes:

The Mission, the School, and the Church are important as places to gather the people for training and worship. But only as we get out into the village, spend days and nights there, share in the joys and sorrows of the people, and sacrifice and endure with them, will we be able to reach the hearts of the people for whom we labor. There is a constant temptation to do our Mission work from the office or by an occasional trip into the territory.<sup>2</sup>

The planting of churches in most villages of the Central Zimbabwe Conference was enhanced when the

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<sup>1</sup>J. I. Robinson, "Village Evangelism in Africa," Ministry, July 1940, 7.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 8.



evangelistic approach articulated by Robinson and Campbell was implemented with consistency. The actual establishment of churches evinced the effectiveness of the evangelistic method, which took seriously the need for the meaningful and close contact between the missionaries and the people. Robinson insisted that "church membership is the permanent expression of a faith that has changed the life."<sup>1</sup> At tandem with this assertion, Robinson also viewed "the formation of baptismal classes, and establishment of organized churches"<sup>2</sup> as the inevitable result of an evangelistic method that valued genuine interaction with people where they live.

In 1947, the Southern African Division Council further validated the public evangelistic campaigns as a viable method of church growth within its territory. Among the resolutions passed by the Council was one, which stated: "That evangelism, both public and personal, be made the keynote of the coming union and

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

local conference or mission field sessions in the Southern African Division."<sup>1</sup>

Public evangelistic campaigns, therefore, have occupied center stage in church-growth endeavors in the Central Zimbabwe Conference since the 1940s when the Southern African Division embraced this method of soul winning. From the time it was introduced in the Southern Africa Division, the public evangelistic campaign paradigm has remained basically intact. Periodically, however, this approach has been face lifted or rejuvenated by use of different catch phrases. In the 1970s the public evangelism campaigns method of church growth was propelled by such mottoes as Mission 1970, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1974, etc.<sup>2</sup> in the 1980s, "1000 Days of Reaping"<sup>3</sup> was in vogue. The 1990s

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<sup>1</sup>F. G. Clifford, "Plans and Resolutions Passed by the Division Council," The Southern Africa Division Outlook, June 1, 1947, 11. The same resolution urged: "That we place a new and fervent emphasis on evangelism, calling everyone, including our ministry, secretaries of departments, institutional workers, teacher-evangelists to a greater consecration and to engage actively in public evangelism for as much time as possible each year." Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Desmond B. Hills, "Mission '74 Report," Trans-African Division Outlook, August 15, 1974, 6.

<sup>3</sup>Kenneth Mittleder, "Placing First Things First," Trans-Africa Division Outlook, February 15, 1982, 2.

were ushered in by the "Harvest 90"<sup>1</sup> slogan. In the first quinquiniam of the 1990s the Seventh-day Adventist world church adopted "Global Strategy" as its motto, and the Eastern Africa Division, under which the Central Zimbabwe Conference falls, coined such slogans as "Penetration 95"<sup>2</sup> for the period leading to 1995 and "Saturation 2000"<sup>3</sup> for the period between 1995 and the year 2000. In 1974, for example, Matabele-Midlands Field, the precursor of Central Zimbabwe Conference, was cited in the Zambesi Union President's report at the Trans-Africa Division Council. The report states:

In the Matabele-Midlands Field alone, there have been 855 evangelistic efforts of 21 to 22 days each. The goal of the Zambezi Union is 150 efforts, 1500 decisions for Christ and 800 decisions for baptism. The president of Zambezi Union, Pastor Carl Currie, personally conducted an evangelistic campaign, and there was an attendance of 700 to 1000 each evening. Pastor Currie also conducted a training school for laymen during the period of the evangelistic effort.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Bekele Heye, "Harvest 90 in 1989," Eastern Africa Division Outlook, January-February 1989, 3.

<sup>2</sup>Harold Peters, "Global Strategy," Eastern Africa Division Outlook, September-December, 1989, 13.

<sup>3</sup>Paminus Machamire, "State of the Zambesi Union Report," speech presented to the Zimbabwean Student Community, Berrien Springs, MI, September 1996.

<sup>4</sup>Hills, 6.

Randolf Stafford, a guest African-American evangelist, conducted one of the more recent and probably the most historic public evangelistic campaign in Zimbabwe in 1983. As many as 1,350 were baptized in a single campaign held in the city of Bulawayo.<sup>1</sup> Although this campaign was conducted outside the Central Zimbabwe Conference territory, it helped to trigger a similar effort in Gweru, the city in which the Central Zimbabwe Conference headquarters is located.

After the impressive results of the campaign conducted by Stafford in Bulawayo, the Central Zimbabwe Conference invited Delbert Baker, another African-American, to conduct a similar campaign in Gweru. As many as 400 people were baptized as a result of the campaign.<sup>2</sup> Although the number of converts was not as colossal as in the campaign held in Bulawayo, the Conference experienced a significant increase in its church membership.

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<sup>1</sup>Janice Ernston, "Pentecost Experience," Trans Africa Division Outlook, July 15, 1983, 13.

<sup>2</sup>Dumiso Matshazi, former pastor Gweru West District, Central Zimbabwe Conference, interview by author, Berrien Springs, MI, 1997.

Apart from the huge and intermittent public campaigns by visiting preachers, the Central Zimbabwe Conference pastors continued to run their routine public evangelistic efforts. In 1986, the entire Zambezi Union conducted 365 efforts. As a result, eight new churches were organized, 482 companies opened, and 221 branch Sabbath Schools formed.<sup>1</sup> The Central Zimbabwe Conference contributed substantially to the impressive results achieved by the Zambesi Union.

#### **The Zunde Approach to Evangelism**

The *Zunde* method of Evangelism deserves much credit for the phenomenal church membership growth in the Central Zimbabwe Conference since the 1980s. In 1987, Pastor Jim Phiri pointed out that "statistics show that the Central Zimbabwe Field has found the secret of success in baptisms. The secret lies with its lay people who have adopted the method of 'Zunde.'"<sup>2</sup> A brief overview and analysis of the

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<sup>1</sup>Reward R. Ndlovu, "Zambesi Union," East Africa Division Outlook, November-December 1986, 6.

<sup>2</sup>Jim L. M. Phiri, "'Zunde' Brings More Baptisms," Eastern Division Outlook, March-April, 1987, 15.

origin, development, and exploits of this unique evangelistic method is necessary in order to gain a better grasp of the manner in which the church is growing in the Central Zimbabwe Conference.

#### The *Zunde* Concept and the Shona Culture

The term "Zunde" is drawn from the Shona culture of Zimbabwe. The term denotes a practice within the traditional Shona<sup>1</sup> culture of Zimbabwe. From time immemorial the Shona people had an arrangement in which subjects of any given Shona king or chief would team up to give voluntary service to their ruler.

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<sup>1</sup>M. F. C. Bourdillon, The Shona Peoples (Gwelo, Rhodesia: Mambo Press, 1976), 31-32. He notes: "The derivation of the word 'Shona' is uncertain. It appears to have been used first by the Ndebeles as a derogatory name for the people they had defeated, and particularly the Rozvi. The Shona did not call themselves by this name and at first disliked it; even now they tend rather to classify themselves by their chiefdoms or their dialect groups (Karanga, Manyika, Zezuru, Korekore, etc.) though most accept the designation Shona in contrast to unrelated peoples. The extension of the term to all tribes native to Rhodesia appears to have been a British innovation" (32). If Bourdillon's observations are correct, it is probable that the derogatory term "Svina," which the Ndebeles applied in reference to the Shona people, might have been converted to the term "Shona" by the British who might have failed to pronounce the term "Svina."

Commenting on the essence of the age-old *Zunde* tradition, Phiri reflects:

Years ago when chiefs ruled their people, the villagers appointed days on which they used to help their chief. Their personal activities were laid aside and they gathered at the chief's place to do whatever was necessary.<sup>1</sup>

Although need usually determined the kind of work subjects could do for their king, much of the assistance rendered was mainly agrarian. With agriculture as the main pillar of the Shona economy, there was always a place for additional helping hands to work the king's vast fields. Therefore, during the planting, cultivating, and harvesting seasons the people converged on the royal field.

Matemavi shows the difference between *Zunde* and *Humwe*. He notes that in the case of the *Humwe*, villagers had a mutual and reciprocal practice in which they would extend an invitation to each other in order to help one another in working their fields. The host would provide enough food and drink for all who would come to assist him/her in working on their field. The *Zunde*, however, was different since the initiative to work on the king's field came from the people and

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<sup>1</sup>Phiri, 15.

not the king himself. *Zunde* was specifically for the king.<sup>1</sup> *Zunde* was, therefore, an expression of uncoerced love and loyalty the people had for their ruler. Phiri attests to the convivial mood that permeated the *Zunde* gatherings when he states: "Happily, with songs on their lips, they finished their duties."<sup>2</sup>

#### *Zunde* in Evangelism: Maponga's Brainchild

Several church administrators and pastors within the Zambesi Union familiar with the *Zunde* approach to evangelism cite Mike Maponga as a crucial figure in the application of the Shona concept of *Zunde* to church growth. Although Matemavi points to Maponga, Chidhuza, and Tunhira as the trio who popularized the *Zunde* concept in evangelism, he singles out Maponga as the key spokesperson for *Zunde*.

Matemavi also shows that Maponga attained only Standard Six.<sup>3</sup> Maponga seems to have transcended his

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<sup>1</sup>Titus Matemavi, former President of Eastern Zimbabwe Conference, currently M. Div. Student in the Seventh-day Adventist Seminary, interview by author, Berrien Springs, MI, February 19, 1997.

<sup>2</sup>Phiri, 15.

<sup>3</sup>Matemavi, interview by author, February 19, 1997.



academic limitations by employing his apparently congenital charismatic leadership skills. Under his guidance, *Zunde* moved from the backwaters of prominence to center stage in the Central Zimbabwe Conference evangelistic endeavors.

Maponga's ingenuity was evinced by his ability to adopt a Shona cultural practice of *Zunde* and infuse it with some religious utilitarian value. In the *Zunde* practice, Maponga saw an effective model of evangelism. He observed striking parallels between the traditional Shona king and God the King of the Universe. Both kings have subjects and fields. Both desire to have their subjects come and help in working their royal fields. With regard to the Shona king, the field denotes a piece of land with some crop of corn or sorghum. Yet, in the case of God, the Ruler of heaven and earth, the field that stands in need of corporate human labor is the millions of people in the world who are waiting to hear the gospel preached to them.<sup>1</sup>

Furthermore, Maponga did not ignore the pivotal role of singing in the *Zunde* tradition. Inasmuch as

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

singing played a vital role in boosting the morale of the subjects as they worked the field of the Shona king, singing occupies a privileged place in the *Zunde* method of evangelism. Maponga popularized the song *Zunde Iro!* This song became the theme song of all the *Zunde* evangelistic meetings. Reminiscent of the convivial mood on the Shona royal field, the theme song was sung choreographically, thus setting the people ablaze with the passion to voluntarily go and work in the Lord's field.

Phiri highlights the role of singing in a typical *Zunde* outreach session when he graphically describes the scene of lay people returning from their home visitation program. He notes:

To watch these bands return is very interesting. They sing joyful choruses as they come and if decisions have been made, they hold green twigs in their hands. The number of twigs shows the number of souls won. Those already in the Camp join in the singing as they walk towards the arriving band to meet and congratulate it.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Phiri, 15.

### Birth Pangs of a Paradigm Shift

Although initially ambivalent about the legitimacy and destiny of the *Zunde* method of evangelism, the Central Zimbabwe Conference leadership later appreciated its contribution to the general church-growth efforts of the Conference. Before it could be accepted fully, numerous committees both at the Conference and Union levels of administration subjected the *Zunde* to intensive scrutiny. As pros and cons were discussed it became clear that, in spite of the few problems the *Zunde* created, it presented an unprecedented approach to evangelism—a paradigm shift in the way evangelism was to be done in the Central Zimbabwe Conference.

Several reasons may account for the rise in popularity of the *Zunde* among most of the lay people in the Central Zimbabwe Conference. Among the major reasons are the issues of identification, empowerment, gender inclusiveness, and freedom.

Ndlovu points to identification as a factor that promoted the acceptance of the *Zunde* among the lay people in the Central Zimbabwe Conference. He notes that unlike other methods of evangelism, *Zunde* struck

responsive cords within the laity because they were familiar with the traditional *Zunde* concept of the Shona culture.<sup>1</sup> Many Shona people, therefore, could easily identify with the *Zunde* method of evangelism because there was much in it that resonated with their culture. Musvosvi thinks that although most lay people lacked formal education, they could easily tell that *Zunde* was not some foreign concept desperately in need of contextualization.<sup>2</sup> *Zunde* was born and bred within their culture. As a result, the people felt at home in the presence of *Zunde* just as much as *Zunde* felt at home in their presence.

Zvandasara cites empowerment as another factor that enhanced the popularity of *Zunde*.<sup>3</sup> Probably for the first time, many lay persons found in *Zunde* a forum

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<sup>1</sup>Trust Ndlovu, former pastor in the Central Zimbabwe Conference, currently Ph.D. student in the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, interview by author, Berrien Springs, MI, February 16, 1997.

<sup>2</sup>Nyasha Musvosvi, former Youth Director, Eastern Zimbabwe Conference, currently M.Div. student in the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, interview by author, February 16, 1997.

<sup>3</sup>Bonginkosi Zvandasara, former Publishing Director in the Western Zimbabwe Conference, currently Ph.D. student at Andrews University, interview by author, Berrien Springs, MI, January 30, 1997.

in which they could participate meaningfully in the work of evangelism. Hitherto, it seems in many cases the pastor had dominated the pulpit in the Central Zimbabwe Conference. The advent of the *Zunde* method of evangelism unleashed many latent preaching talents. Zvandasara also notes that with many lay persons suddenly discovering undreamed-of preaching abilities, they began to question the need for the salaried pastors whose preaching skills were conspicuously surpassed by those of the more dynamic preachers *Zunde* was producing.<sup>1</sup>

Masuku argues that *Zunde* proved to be gender inclusive because men and women had equal access to the pulpit. Women discovered in themselves preaching talents that a chauvinistic culture and tradition had suffocated and buried. In an independent Zimbabwe's egalitarian social milieu, fewer men found the idea of a woman behind a pulpit outlandish or repugnant.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Silas Masuku, former Secretary-Treasurer, Central Zimbabwe Conference, currently Ph.D. student at Andrews University, interview by author, Berrien Springs, MI, February 16, 1997.

Ncube attributes much of *Zunde's* appeal to most lay persons to reside in its offering of freedom. Many lay persons, whose irregular standing in their local congregations prevented them from active participation, found some release in *Zunde*. In *Zunde* they could freely participate in preaching and teaching. These lay people faithfully followed *Zunde* gatherings from one district to another. Away from the gaze of those who knew them well, many lay persons with disciplinary problems in their local churches had no problems of acceptance in the *Zunde* evangelistic campaigns.<sup>1</sup>

Significantly, *Zunde* presented a paradigm shift in the way evangelism was done in the Central Zimbabwe Conference. Among other things, *Zunde* meant a redefinition of the role of the pastor in light of the lay people's enthusiasm to engage in intensive evangelism. Gradually, pastors and administrators learned to relinquish control by lifting unnecessary restrictions that prevented church members from working for God through *Zunde* evangelism.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Zebon Ncube, former President, Central Zimbabwe Conference, interview by author, Berrien Springs, MI, December 19, 1997.

<sup>2</sup>Jonathan Musvosvi, Former Pastor Eastern Zimbabwe

### An Encounter with *Zunde*

In 1989 I had the privilege of witnessing a *Zunde* evangelistic campaign. This firsthand experience gave me some additional insight to earlier descriptions of *Zunde* that I had obtained from some of its exponents and opponents. In this section, I briefly share my observations of a *Zunde* program I attended.

The *Zunde* has a steering committee that comprises a president, a treasurer, a secretary, and a few other members whose number may vary. The responsibility of this committee is to manage the affairs of the *Zunde*. Areas that have not been exposed to Adventism and also those in which Adventism has not taken deep root are earmarked for *Zunde* campaigns. The venue and the dates for the meetings are announced in advance, usually three months before the event, to allow people adequate time for preparation. Membership is open to all, and every member is asked to contribute some money for the expenses associated with the running of the *Zunde* campaigns.

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Conference, currently D. Min. Student in the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, interview by author, Berrien Springs, MI, February 16, 1997.

A typical *Zunde* campaign lasts for five days, stretching from Tuesday night to Sunday morning. The first night is for orientation, and usually the President gives a keynote address. A routine program is followed from Wednesday to Friday and this includes a season of prayer at around 5:00 A.M. and a devotional time in which about five speakers preach five-minute sermons. Preachers are drawn from the young and the old, and from women and men.

After breakfast, the campers disperse into the surrounding villages and homes for intense house-to-house visitation. The *Zunde* members use a simple strategy. They create rapport with the people they visit. If they find them busy in their fields, the *Zunde* members roll up their sleeves to help them while extending an invitation to attend the *Zunde* preaching sessions that take place in the afternoons.

At 2:00 P.M. a preaching session is held. Five preachers mount the pulpit. Although they are given some latitude of creativity, they adhere to a specific theme. The preaching is pointed and expounds Seventh-day Adventist doctrines passionately. The afternoon preaching lasts for about one and a half hours. After



the preaching service, time is devoted to recreational sports; supper and an evening preaching service featuring another set of five preachers follow this.

On Sabbath the *Zunde* campaign comes to its climax. All those who during the week have made decisions for baptism and have attended an intensive baptismal class are baptized on Sabbath. On the average, fifty people are baptized at each *Zunde* campaign.

The *Zunde* campaign is characterized by a unique spiritual mood. Songs are sung with passion and there is a ring of an unmistakable depth and density of commitment to serve God. While *Zunde* meetings are primarily outreach in orientation, many old church members find them spiritually invigorating.

Overwhelmed by my first encounter with *Zunde*, I was convinced that what I had witnessed presented a paradigm shift in evangelism in the Central Zimbabwe Conference. It was clear to me that, in our Conference, as far as evangelism was concerned, it was no longer going to be business as usual.

### **Mother and Daughter Churches**

A diachronic analysis of the way the church has grown in the Central Zimbabwe Conference shows that the

mother-daughter church model characterizes the manner in which the churches have been multiplying in Zimbabwe since the introduction of Adventism. While various paradigms of church growth have contributed immensely to the spread of Adventism across the Central Zimbabwe Conference, the mother-daughter model can be largely credited with the establishment of congregations from the time the missionaries came to Zimbabwe a hundred years ago.<sup>1</sup> Each past and present paradigm in the process of the growth of the Seventh-day Adventist work in the Central Zimbabwe Conference seems to have relied on the mother-daughter paradigm of church planting for the consolidation of their church-growth endeavors. Soon after Solusi Mission was founded in 1894, Lower Gwelo Mission was established in 1901.

Although the primary role of mission schools was to educate Africans for Christian service, these schools also served as a springboard from which church planting could be launched. The mission schools were

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<sup>1</sup>My observation as a District Pastor in the Central Zimbabwe Conference confirmed that the mother-daughter church-planting model was the main model followed in the multiplication of churches. The traditional way churches have been multiplying in Zimbabwe has been after the mother-daughter church model.

among the first mother churches from which many daughter churches sprouted. From the beginnings of Adventism in Zimbabwe, the mother-daughter method of church planting proved attractive because of several pragmatic reasons. First, the mother-daughter model of starting new churches allowed several branch Sabbath schools and companies to be opened and run from a mother church. Since the branch Sabbath schools or companies usually lacked experienced leadership who were well versed in church polity and doctrine, the mother church naturally supplied the needed personnel to help guide the work in the outlying areas. Around the Lower Gwelo Mission, for example, many branch Sabbath schools and companies became full-fledged churches, which also repeated the process of church multiplication following the mother-daughter model.<sup>1</sup>

Second, the mother-daughter church-planting model is also evident in the churches in Gweru, the city in which the headquarters of the Central Zimbabwe Conference is located. Among the earliest churches to be established in Gweru was Mtapa Seventh-day Adventist Church. This church served the Black population of the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

Seventh-day Adventists since the Whites worshiped separately during the colonial period. Mtapa Seventh-day Adventist Church was instrumental in starting several companies within the city of Gweru. The Mkoba, Senka, and Seventh Street Seventh-day Adventist churches are daughter churches of the Mtapa Church. Although most of these daughter churches may surpass the mother church in both their membership and tithe returns, Mutapa Seventh-day Adventist church tries to remind these daughter churches of its status as a mother church and their indebtedness to it for their existence.<sup>1</sup>

The mother-daughter model of church planting is a pattern that can be traced in the way the Seventh-day Adventist churches have spread in virtually all the urban centers in the Central Zimbabwe Conference. In every city a mother church, almost invariably, started daughter churches, and the status and authority of the mother church are unmistakable and far less ephemeral.<sup>2</sup>

The phenomenon of mother-daughter church planting is not just limited to cities. Church planting in the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

rural areas of the Central Zimbabwe Conference also evinces a similar pattern. Nembudzia district, for example, has Svosve Church whose name later changed to Musorowennzou from which Gumunyu and Chinyenyetu churches later sprouted in the 1960s when Blacks were involuntarily resettled.<sup>1</sup> Over the years, the daughter churches have also spearheaded work in their respective environs and many companies have been opened.<sup>2</sup>

### **Summary**

In almost every sphere of human existence, the paradigm that wins the day is the one which rises to the occasion by solving the problems that confront any given facet of life. In the task of evangelizing Zimbabwe, countless paradigms have vied for consideration, but only those that promised a measure of success were embraced. The goal of spreading Adventism in Zimbabwe has not been a static challenge.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

From time to time the Seventh-day Adventist Church has had to choose specific paradigms to tackle the work of evangelizing the people of Zimbabwe.

The paradigm of church growth that saw the implantation of Adventism in Zimbabwe was the founding of mission schools. This paradigm dominated the 1890s to the 1930s. Faced with an illiterate mission field, nothing could have been more relevant than the mission school in empowering the people to read and write, as well as training them to evangelize their own. While the need for education persists from one generation to the next, the paradigm of the establishment of mission schools eventually gave way to other paradigms. Schools continue to be opened. Yet they no longer occupy center stage in church-growth endeavors as they did during the heyday of the establishment of mission schools.

After the Rhodesia Land Apportionment Act of 1931, a problem was imposed on the Central Zimbabwe Conference. With the forced relocation of Blacks, the church spread to the remote parts of the Central Zimbabwe Conference through a strange way. The people who had been resettled started churches, and in the

interim the Central Zimbabwe Conference had to respond by sending pastors to care for the new churches that were rapidly increasing. Due to budgetary constraints, the Central Zimbabwe Conference could supply only a limited number of pastors. Therefore, it is not uncommon for a pastor to shepherd multi-districts. The paradigm associated with the resettlement of Blacks remained predominant in the 1930s and 1940s and tapered off towards the end of the 1950s.

In the 1940s, the public evangelistic campaign paradigm gathered momentum. The Seventh-day Adventist Church made this method central to its church-growth endeavors. Public evangelistic campaigns proved effective in reaching a large segment of the urban population in Zimbabwe. However, the same method had to be adapted to the rural setting of Zimbabwe for it to be successful. Since the 1940s the public evangelistic campaign approach has been used in Zimbabwe to increase the membership of the church. The public evangelistic campaign, however, has difficulty in reaching some segments of the population within the territory of the Central Zimbabwe Conference.

The *Zunde* paradigm of church growth emerged in the early 1980s. Popularized by the laity, it was later embraced by church administrators who initially treated it with suspicion. The popularity of the *Zunde* approach to evangelism coincided with a debilitating controversy between the Zambesi Conference and the Zambesi Union together with its three Fields, namely, the Western, Central, and Eastern. To the *Zunde* method of evangelism can be attributed much of the steady increase in membership which the Central Zimbabwe Conference achieved when much time and energy were expended on trying to resolve internal friction within the Zambesi Union.<sup>1</sup> *Zunde's* appeal has been limited to the lower strata of society, leaving most of the Black elites, White, Indian, and Colored minorities virtually untouched.

The overarching mother-daughter paradigm of church planting, like a midwife, has facilitated the evangelistic energies of the various paradigms of church growth in the Central Zimbabwe Conference to

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<sup>1</sup>Nyasha Musvosvi, interview by author, February 16, 1997.



produce churches and congregations. This model of church multiplication characterizes the way most churches have come into existence within the Central Zimbabwe Conference.

## CHAPTER III

### A REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### **Introduction**

This review of church-growth and church-planting literature comes in three parts. The first focuses on the literature on the encounter between Christianity and the Zimbabwean culture. Literature in this section is both descriptive and evaluative of the manner in which Christianity gained a foothold within the Zimbabwean society. This section hopes to indicate, among other things, some potential paths to more effective church-planting approaches for the Central Zimbabwe Conference, in particular, and Zimbabwe, in general. The second part deals with Ellen G. White's stance on church planting. It is essential to evaluate White's comments on an important subject of church planting since she is a key figure in Seventh-day Adventist theology. The third shows the scriptural

basis for church planting by highlighting some Old and New Testament passages.

In researching the subject of church growth in the Central Zimbabwe Conference, I discovered a dearth of contemporary church-planting literature on Zimbabwe. Current literature that accounts for the strategies, application, or effectiveness of any church planting in Zimbabwe is rare if not nonexistent. There is, however, a considerable amount of literature that focuses on the implantation of Christianity in Zimbabwe and the resultant encounter between Christianity and the culture of the people of Zimbabwe.

Granted that Christianity and colonialism came to Zimbabwe at the same time, it can be asserted that the history of colonialism in Zimbabwe cannot be told fully without highlighting the role of Christianity. The concomitant introduction of Christianity and colonialism into Zimbabwe helps to explain why much of the literature on the colonial history of Zimbabwe has a direct bearing on church-growth and church-planting, particularly during the 1890s when more effective groups of missionaries established themselves in Zimbabwe.

### General Literature Review

In his book, The Origin and Development of African Theology, Gwinyai Muzorewa points to the difficulty presented by the coincidental introduction of Christianity and colonialism into Zimbabwe. He quoted Mbiti, who notes that "Christian missionaries from Europe and America penetrated into the interior of Africa either shortly before or simultaneously with the colonial occupation."<sup>1</sup> Muzorewa, however, seems to rationalize the relationship between the missionaries and the colonial settlers to Zimbabwe, stating:

There is a thin line between the missionary intention and the intent of colonizers. I presume that the missionaries only meant to take advantage of the health and transportation facilities made available by the colonizers, but not to facilitate colonization as such. What is indisputable is the fact that the colonists tended to use the missionaries to make their work easier.<sup>2</sup>

Muzorewa, therefore, argues:

It is within the context of the negative impact of colonialism that African scholars rightly contend that what Africa needs is the essence of Christianity without the Western cultural garb in

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<sup>1</sup>John S. Mbiti, quoted in Gwinyai H. Muzorewa, The Origins and Development of African Theology (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books), 1985, 24.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 26.

which the new Faith was wrapped when it was first preached in Africa.<sup>1</sup>

Without minimizing the apparent complicity of the missionaries in aiding colonizers in their subjugation and exploitation of the Zimbabweans, Muzorewa contends for some objectivity: "But the point I wish to make is this: these shortcomings can never minimize the significance of the contribution of missionaries who introduced Africans to the Bible and its message."<sup>2</sup>

Ambrose Moyo, in the book Understanding Contemporary Africa, shows that Africans saw that "the missionaries and the colonialists were bird of a feather."<sup>3</sup> Moyo asserts that such a perception of missionaries is in consonance with the attitude missionaries showed towards the Africans. Moyo notes that it was not surprising for missionaries to practice racism in their interaction with Africans since they shared a "common worldview" with the colonialists.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ambrose Moyo, "Religion in Africa," in Understanding Contemporary Africa (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1992), 237.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

Moyo, however, refutes the fact that all missionaries had no qualms of conscience, saying: "Despite their close co-operation with colonial agencies, many of the missionaries often stood up for some of the rights of the black people."<sup>1</sup> Moyo, therefore, insists that for the positive contributions it made in various countries of Africa, "Christianity continues to be very much respected and looked to for support."<sup>2</sup>

In his book African Thought, Religion and Culture, Oliver Onwubiko evaluates the missionary presence and engagement in Africa on three levels. First, he points out that the advent of missionaries on the African continent followed "military pacification" by the colonial settlers and *ipso facto* predisposed the missionaries to African hatred.<sup>3</sup> Second, Onwubiko cites the education of children as a strategy missionaries employed to instill change among the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Oliver A. Onwubiko, African Thought, Religion and Culture (Enugu: SNAAP Press, 1991), 123.

Africans. The attraction to educate children lay in the malleability of their minds as opposed to those of the adults, which were ossified, and therefore they were well set in their ways.<sup>1</sup> Third, Onwubiko shows that missionaries targeted African institutions, and this unfortunately resulted in the polarization of new converts against their own natural environment and social structures. Converts were conditioned to look indiscriminately askance at their traditional religious ceremonies.<sup>2</sup> Consequently, Onwubiko asserts that "the constant call to cultural renewal is, therefore a call to the recognition of the fact that the attitude of the Christian missionary to African institutions has left much to be desired."<sup>3</sup>

Atkinson states that missionaries pioneered education in Zimbabwe. He shows that the main reason for the promotion of education by missionaries was literacy "as a means of encouraging converts to read and understand both the Bible and the service books of

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

the church."<sup>1</sup> Atkinson reveals that colonial settlers, on the contrary, were prompted by economic benefits that would eventually accrue to themselves. To the Europeans colonists, educating an African was seen primarily as of economic or utilitarian value and not as a moral imperative.<sup>2</sup>

D. N. Beach shows that "missions were as much the result of African enterprise as of European."<sup>3</sup> He notes that

missionaries tended to think of a mission beginning when a European missionary settled permanently at one spot, whereas for the Shona, their experience of Christianity at firsthand often began when an African evangelist arrived to preach and to lay the foundations for later mission.<sup>4</sup>

This observation is particularly true with respect to the Dutch Reformed Church in the Zimuto area of Masvingo. Beach also indicates that in 1880 the Shona

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<sup>1</sup>N. D. Atkinson, "The Missionary Contribution to Early Education in Rhodesia," in Christianity South of the Zambezi, (Gwelo: Mambo Press, 1973), 1:83.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>D. N. Beach, "The Initial Impact of Christianity on the Shona: The Protestants and the Southern Shona," in Christianity South of the Zambezi, Gwelo: Mambo Press, 1973), 1:40.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.



people welcomed the news of the imminent arrival of such Transvaal Afrikaner missionaries as Gabriel Buys and Petrus Kolkodo, who were planning to establish missionary work in Zimuto. The joy of the Shona people was heightened by the prospect of the "perceived protection against the Matabele, whose land it is not."<sup>1</sup> The Shonas hoped that the presence of the missionaries would deter the Matabeles from conducting their frequent raids into Mashonaland. Furthermore, in a critique of the Shona people's early stance on Christian missions, Beach commends them, saying:

The initial Shona response to missions was both rational and logical, and that whereas Shona religion and culture remained generally unmoved in their early years, there was no automatic rejection of new and strange ideas as such.<sup>2</sup>

Paul Bohannan and Philip Curtin point out that missionaries exerted a great deal of influence upon Africa and much of the influence "was of a cultural nature rather than merely of theological nature."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Paul Bohannan and Philip Curtin, Africa and Africans (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, 1988), 206.

Furthermore, they note that "whatever an individual Westerner may think of the missionary edifice, every African knows that it is to the missionary that they owe the beginning of African educational system."<sup>1</sup>

Abdul A. Said underscores the gratitude that Africans should evince to Western Europe for the positive contributions to Africa. However, he notes that Africans "are quite justified in their condemnation of colonialism."<sup>2</sup> Perceptively, Said points out that "the bright light of colonialism also cast a dark shadow. The colonial period was one of cultural dislocation and, above all, lack of purpose."<sup>3</sup>

Bill Freund observes that in most cases missionaries who came to Africa transmitted and projected values that were on the decline in their own countries of origin. He notes that "for them, taking up mission vocation was often a reaction, through personal sacrifice and commitment, against the new

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Abdul A. Said, The African Phenomenon (Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon Press, 1968), 35.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

industrialized, concentrated capitalism at home."<sup>1</sup> In light of the values the missionaries were fast losing in their home front, it is not surprising, therefore, that missionaries tended to impose upon Africans some Christian standards that were increasingly becoming obsolete in their native countries.

Ali A. Mazrui argues that in spite of the cultural disparity between Africa and the Western world, Africa is "experiencing perhaps the fastest pace of westernization this century of anywhere in the non-western world."<sup>2</sup> Mazrui accounts for this phenomenon by citing seven factors that pertain to culture. He points out that culture

provides lenses of perception, standards of evaluation, conditions motivation, is a medium of communication, is intertwined with means of production, provides a basis of stratification in society and determines who are 'we' in a given situation and who are 'they'.<sup>3</sup>

Mazrui argues that Christianity altered the African worldview by transmitting Western science through

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<sup>1</sup>Bill Freund, The Making of Contemporary Africa (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1984), 157.

<sup>2</sup>Ali A. Mazrui, The African Condition (London: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 47.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 48.

missionary schools.<sup>1</sup> He notes that when Africans embraced Christianity they adopted "Christian ethics," which is another standard of evaluation.<sup>2</sup> Western capitalism also instilled individualism into the African way of life.<sup>3</sup> This Western influence altered the stimuli that motivated Africans to behave in certain ways and transformed "means and modes of production."<sup>4</sup> Mazrui shows that almost invariably "African countries south of the Sahara chose their imperial language as the national language"<sup>5</sup> after the attainment of their independence. Mazrui accuses the West of pitting Africans against each other along tribal lines by enacting "policies of tribal reserves: drawing tribal distinctions between people who knew nothing about the tribal divide."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 50.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 54-59.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 59.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 47.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 60.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

N. B. Bhebe observes that missionaries blundered in their predicating the conversion of the African upon total abandonment of the African culture. Missionaries ignored the reality that Africans had their own culture and civilization worth preserving. Bhebe points out that missionaries "demanded not only a break with the traditional religious system, but also an abandonment of their African cultural background."<sup>1</sup>

M. L. Daneel attributes more weight to the quest for filling a void that missionary churches could not address as the major reason behind the emergence of the independent churches among the Shonas. He notes that some of the Africans have an aversion towards a Christianity that is draped in Western garb. Daneel argues that Africans are comfortable with the "presentation of Christianity in a typical African guise, which rings true according to African perceptions."<sup>2</sup> Consequently, Daneel doubts the veracity of theories that allege politics to have

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<sup>1</sup>N. B. Bhebe, "Missionary Activity Among the Ndebele and Kalanga, A Survey," in Christianity South of the Zambezi (Gwelo: Mambo Press, 1973), 1:45.

<sup>2</sup>M. L. Daneel, "Shona Independent Churches in a Rural Society," in Christianity South of the Zambezi (Gwelo: Mambo Press, 1973), 188.

triggered the existence of the independent churches.<sup>1</sup> Daneel's dismissal of politics as a pivotal factor in the emergence of independent churches smacks of suspicion because of his White background in a formerly apartheid-ruled South Africa.

Anthony Chennells notes that "to the early missionaries in the [nineteenth] century, the adoption of European lifestyles by the heathen was regarded as one of the fruits of conversion to Christianity."<sup>2</sup> He also affirms Robert Moffat's belief that "only the power of divine grace could soften the heathen heart and make him susceptible to civilizing influences."<sup>3</sup>

Harry Sawyer maintains that the sooner the missionaries realize that "it is not necessary for Africans to become detribalized to become Christians,"<sup>4</sup> the easier it will be for Africans to embrace Christianity genuinely because, instead of destroying

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 160.

<sup>2</sup>Anthony Chennelles, "The Image of the Ndebele and the Nineteenth-Century Missionary Tradition," in Christianity South of the Zambezi (Gwelo: Mambo Press, 1973), 1:43.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Harry Sawyer, Creative Evangelism (London: Lutterworth Press, 1968), 157.

their culture completely, Christianity will affirm those aspects of their culture that are compatible with Christian teaching. Sawyer cautions against syncretism and perceptively notes that

if we are patient enough to distill from the corpus of African traditional beliefs and practices such factors as are consonant with Christianity, we shall ultimately redeem them [Africans] unto obedience of Christ.<sup>1</sup>

M. F. C. Bourdillon believes that for the Shona people religion constitutes an integral part of their traditional social structure. Consequently, Bourdillon notes that "traditional religion also bolsters the traditional social structure and underlies the fact that each person has a place in the community."<sup>2</sup> This inter-relationship between religion and the social structure of the Shona people presented a great challenge to the missionaries. By simply targeting the religious aspect of the Shona people without dealing sympathetically with the overall impact of the Christian message on the general social structure of the Shonas, missionaries unwittingly created a void in

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 158.

<sup>2</sup>M. F. C. Bourdillon, "Traditional Religion in Shona Society," in Christianity South of the Zambezi vol. 1 (Gwelo: Mambo Press, 1973), 22.

their Shona converts. Bourdillon's argument is appropriate when he says that "the adoption of the new religions tends to facilitate changes in the traditional structure; and if new religions are adequate to replace the old they must provide a new basis for the structuring of community relations."<sup>1</sup>

Titus Presler shows that

the roots to Christianity in Africa take place in a complex of historical backgrounds. These include African cultures, religions, and political structures, mission work by both Europeans and African agents, and the legacy of colonialism.<sup>2</sup>

An awareness of the complex unity of the situation can save missionaries from committing the same blunders as their forebears.

#### **Ellen G. White on Church Planting**

The aim of this section is to survey Ellen G. White's theological corpus for comments on church planting. White's prominent place within, and contribution to, Seventh-day Adventist theology warrants more than a cursory glance at her convictions

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 22.

<sup>2</sup>Titus Presler, "Missionary Anglicanism Meets an African Religion: A Retrospect of the Centenary of Bishop Knight Bruce's Entry into Zimbabwe," Missionalia 17, no. 3 (1989): 162.



on church planting. In her book, Testimonies to the Church, White states the need to plant new churches wherever the gospel message is preached. She notes that

new territories are to be worked by men inspired by the Holy Spirit. New churches must be established, new congregations organized. . . . There should be representatives of present truth in every city and in the remote parts of earth.<sup>1</sup>

Further urging the multiplication of churches, White notes that resources should be employed for the introduction and spread of Adventism in new areas. She notes that "churches must be built to accommodate the people of God, that they may stand as centers of light, shining amid the darkness of the world."<sup>2</sup>

White believes that every new church that is planted should have within its "genetic code" the mandate to plant other new churches. In her book Christian Service, White shows that

as churches are established, it should be set before them that it is even from among them that men must be taken to carry the truth to others,

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<sup>1</sup>Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church, 9 vols. (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1948), 6:24.

<sup>2</sup>Ellen G. White, Testimonies for Ministers and Gospel Workers (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association), 1923, 424.

and raise new churches; therefore they must all work and cultivate to the utmost the talents that God has given them, and be training their minds to engage in the service of their Master.<sup>1</sup>

White also notes that "churches are to be organized and plans laid for work to be done by the members of the newly organized churches."<sup>2</sup>

White is categorically opposed to the idea of ministers babysitting organized churches. In light of the immensity of the task to evangelize the world, White puzzles and poses the question:

Why are ministers who should be laboring in special service earnestly to open new fields and raise up new churches, hovering over the churches which have already received great light and many advantages which they do not appreciate?<sup>3</sup>

White, therefore, argues that "as soon as churches are established ministers should be going in every direction to raise up new companies."<sup>4</sup> White stresses

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<sup>1</sup>Ellen G. White, Christian Service (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1983), 61.

<sup>2</sup>Ellen G. White, Evangelism (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1946), 19.

<sup>3</sup>Ellen G. White, Manuscript Release (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1993), 209.

<sup>4</sup>Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church, 9 vols. (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1923), 3:210.

that those who become converted at the preaching of the gospel should "be organized into churches, and the minister is to pass on to other equally important fields."<sup>1</sup>

White also shows that far from paralyzing the organized churches, releasing pastors to plant more churches opens opportunities for the church members to participate more in the running of their local church.

White points out:

Uncalled for and unused, the spiritual gifts bestowed on them [church members] have dwindled into feebleness. If the ministers would go forth into new fields, the members would be obliged to bear responsibilities, and by use their capabilities would increase.<sup>2</sup>

White encourages innovation and creativity in the way church planting should be done. She urges: "Devise methods that will bring a deep and living interest in the planting of churches."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>White, Evangelism, 353.

<sup>2</sup>Ellen G. White, Selected Messages, 2 vols. (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1958), 1:127.

<sup>3</sup>White, Testimonies for the Church, 6:85.

### **Church Planting and Church Growth in Scripture**

This section reviews scriptural passages that relate to church planting and church growth both in the Old and New Testaments. Technically, the phenomenon of church-planting as we know it has its origin in the New Testament with the inception of the early church. Church-planting as seen in the early church was a result of the aggressive witness of the apostles and those who had embraced the gospel message preached by Jesus Christ.

The concept of witnessing to God's love and His salvific acts, however, is not unique to the New Testament alone. As early as God's call to Abraham, which is recorded in Gen 12, the idea of spreading the witness of the goodness of God is already evident in the promise God made to Abraham when he said that "all peoples on earth will be blessed through you" (Gen 12:3). This section, therefore, tries to show the presence and evolution of the concept of witnessing to God's love, word, and acts from the Abrahamic times to the period of the early church when witnessing concretized into church planting.

### The Old Testament

There are at least three defining moments in the Old Testament that are pertinent to the concept of witnessing to God's salvific acts. The first is the call to Abraham. The second is the Exodus experience under the leadership of Moses. Third is the impact of recurrent exilic experiences of the children of Israel.

While it is difficult to particularize instances of church planting in the Old Testament the way one may in the early church times, the call of Abraham in Gen 12 provides a starting point or at least a veiled indication of church planting. In Gen 12:1-3, God calls Abraham and asks him to "leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you." Coupled with this call is a promise that encapsulates the idea of witnessing to God's love and salvation which would in due course widen like a ripple to assume universal dimensions.

After God reveals to Abraham the kind of future God has in store for him—of becoming a great nation, of receiving God's blessings, of his name becoming great, of divine protection—God spells out the witnessing dimension of the promise when he says that "all peoples

on earth will be blessed through you." The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary puts it well:

The blessing vouchsafed to him [Abraham], would finally unite divided families on earth, and change the dread curse pronounced upon the ground because of sin into a blessing to all men. All further promises to the patriarchs and to Israel either clarified or amplified the promise of Salvation offered the entire human race in the first promise made to Abraham.<sup>1</sup>

The Exodus was another key and foundational event in the Hebrew story and their witnessing potential. Thomas D. McGonigle and James F. Quigley show that it was in the desert that the Israelites became truly a religious community as God established a covenant with them at Mount Sinai with the giving of the Law to Moses. McGonigle and Quigley, therefore, observe:

The history of the Jewish people was a covenanted history—I will be your God and you will be my people. Abraham and his descendants had been nomadic peoples organized into clans. These groups of semi-related peoples came together only as a religious community at the time of the Exodus and Sinai revelation. Later on these groups of people became a kind of tribal confederacy and settled in the land of Canaan. Later still these tribes became a nation.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"Genesis," Seventh-day Adventist Commentary, ed. F. D. Nichol (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1978), 1:294.

<sup>2</sup>Thomas D. McGonigle and James F. Quigley, A History of Christian Tradition (New York: Paulist Press, 1988), 6-7.

From the call of Abraham through the Exodus to the settlement of the children of Israel in Canaan, God sought to nourish the identity of Israel as a religious community. Unambiguous about their distinguished identity as God's people, the Israelites witnessed to the surrounding heathen nations concerning the love of God. This was God's plan for Israel. From far and wide the nations of the earth would come to learn about this God of the Israelites. Because of the apostasy of Israel, however, God had to resort to a less pleasant alternative. God employed Israel's exilic experiences so that in their captivity the children of Israel would witness about God to the heathen nations. Much of the history of the children of Israel is cyclical, that is, apostasy, exile, cries to God for deliverance, and God's deliverance and then back to apostasy, in a repetitive fashion.<sup>1</sup>

#### The New Testament

Jesus' evangelistic ministry recorded in the four Gospels underscores the fact that Christ "came to seek

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.,

and to save the lost." Christ's entire earthly ministry paved the way for the establishment of the church which was to become a new model for advancing the kingdom of God. At the close of his earthly ministry, Christ gave a missionary mandate to his disciples in the form of the Great Commission recorded in Matt 22:19. The missionary command endorsed the establishment of worshiping communities by embracing all people groups.

The apostolic church was engaged in extensive church planting. The book of Acts is a lucid record of how the early church started and grew under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The Pauline Epistles and the other books of the New Testament have a direct bearing on the promotion of spiritual vitality in the churches that were planted during the New Testament period. Both the book of Acts and the New Testament in its entirety provide a biblical foundation for church planting as well as offer principles for effective church growth.

### **Summary**

The literature on Zimbabwe which has a bearing on church planting and church growth seems largely limited



to the early missionary arrival to Zimbabwe and also the subsequent confrontation of Christianity and the culture of the people of Zimbabwe. There is a dire need for a study on church planting not only in the Central Zimbabwe Conference but also on Zimbabwe in general. A study on church planting in the Central Zimbabwe Conference will, it is hoped, show the direction for further studies in church planting in Zimbabwe. The need for strategic church planting in the Central Zimbabwe Conference is made more imperative by Scripture and also the Ellen G. White mandate for church planting.

## CHAPTER IV

### A REPORT ON A CHURCH-PLANTING SURVEY

#### **Introduction**

This chapter reports on a church-planting survey that was conducted in the Central Zimbabwe Conference in March 1997. The main objective of the survey was to determine the tenability of church planting not only as an alternative method of church growth in the Central Zimbabwe Conference, but also as a logical paradigm the Conference should embrace in its current and future church-growth pursuits.

In order to bring this main objective into focus, the survey explored several critical points. One of these was to ascertain the most effective of the current methods of church growth employed by the Central Zimbabwe Conference. Another task was to gauge the attitude of administrators, pastors, and church members with respect to church planting as a viable method to church growth for their Conference. This survey also tried to determine the degree of readiness on the part of all concerned in adopting the church-

planting method as an approach fraught with great potential. Among other things, this survey hopes to uncover the limitations inherent in most of the currently acclaimed methods of church growth in the Central Zimbabwe Conference.

This report comes in two major parts. The first part is descriptive and analytical of the responses given to the survey. The second part tries to interpret the data on the survey.

### **Description and Analysis of Survey**

Form M: Questionnaire for Church Members

#### **Respondents' Cross Section**

A total of 30 questionnaires to be completed by church members was sent to the Central Zimbabwe Conference. The questionnaire was distributed to the church members through the pastors in each district of the Conference. Pastors were advised to randomly pick any of their church members in one of their churches to complete the survey without any regard to the position the potential respondent occupied in their local church. Out of the 30 questionnaires distributed, 19 were completed and returned; this represents 63% of the total questionnaires sent out.

There are some salient observations which flow from the responses made by the church members. The

majority of the respondents fall within the age groups 31 to 40, 41 to 50, and 51 and above. Each group comprised 31.6% of the total respondents. Conspicuous is the absence of the views of the youth since only 5.3% of the respondents were between the ages of 10 and 20.

Another observation pertains to the gender of the respondents. One hundred percent of those who completed the survey were men. No females took part in the survey. The section dealing with the interpretation of the survey tries to show whether coincidence or culture is to blame for this anomaly.

Regarding education, there seems to be a fair distribution because 11.1% of the respondents hold a Primary School Certificate, while 33.3% a Form Two School Certificate, 22.2% an 'O' Level Certificate, 16.7% an 'A' Level Certificate, and those who attained at least a University degree consists of another 16.7%.

An examination of the religious background of the respondents reveals that 84.2% were born Seventh-day Adventist, while 15.8% were not. Of those not born Adventist, 25% became Seventh-day Adventists through the influence of either a relative or a friend, while those who converted to Adventism through either

literature evangelism, evangelistic efforts, Zunde, or the Seventh-day Adventist Schools, each comprise 21.1%.

The survey also shows that 73.7% of the respondents were drawn from churches in excess of 300 members. Those from churches ranging between 100 and 200 members comprised 15.8% of the respondents. There was 5.3% each for the churches with 50 to 100 and 200 to 300 members.

Although 18.8% of the churches were shown to not supervise any branch Sabbath school, 81.2% of the churches do operate at least one branch Sabbath school each. The survey also indicated that another 18.8% of the churches also oversee five branch Sabbath schools or more. Only 5.3% of the churches do not have any companies under their care. The respondents show that 97.7% of the churches surveyed have at least one company to supervise and 42.1% of the churches operate five companies or more.

### **Church-Planting Preparedness**

The survey shows that 94.7% of the church members who completed the questionnaire feel very much attached to their local churches, while only 5.3% do not sense any strong attachment to their churches. On the question of the degree of involvement in their local churches, 84.2% indicated that they are very involved

while 15.8% feel moderately involved. In accounting for their lack of involvement, 10.5% blamed it on lack of opportunity, 5.3% pointed to lack of interest, and 84.2% cited lack of training.

The survey revealed that 84.2% of the respondents have some experience in working with either branch Sabbath schools or companies. Only 15% confess inexperience. Asked whether the respondents would be prepared to leave their local church in the interest of planting a new church, 72.2% answered in the affirmative while 27.8% gave a negative response. Whereas 21.1% of the respondents saw no opportunity for more involvement in the prospect of moving to a new church, 78.9% did.

Almost invariably, the respondents reflect high %ages concerning their willingness to move and plant new churches in spite of real or imaginary problems. An overwhelming 94.4% of the respondents showed their willingness to move to form a new church regardless of the lack of efficient organization which usually characterizes the starting of new churches. Only 5.6% of the respondents were reluctant to move to a new church for fear of disorganization. A substantial 77.8% of the respondents were eager to move and be part

of a new church as that would give them an opportunity to try new ideas. Yet 22.2% did not feel so.

An almost unanimous 94.4% of the respondents were willing to move, leaving behind the warmth and love concomitant with attending a familiar church full of acquaintances and friends. Again, 82.4% indicated that they would move to a new church in order to create new friendships.

On the issue of commitment, 94.1% were comfortable with the idea of transferring to a new church although that would entail added financial responsibility on their part. Another 94.1% would accept to move because it is imperative for the church to take the Gospel where people are rather than sit back and hope that all people will find their way to church.

Further, 94.4% were prepared to go and start a new church among non-Seventh-day Adventists in spite of lack of worship facilities such as church buildings. A 100 % were eager to go and start a new church among the unreached because they wish to concretely obey Christ's explicit command: "Go ye therefore . . ." (Matt 28:19).

Forms (A) and (P): Conference Administrators  
and District Pastors

**Respondents' Cross Section**

There is a fair spread of administrators and pastors who responded to the survey. Those whose ages range from 21 to 30 amounted to 18.5%, 22.2% for those 31 to 40, and 29.6% for those 41 to 50, and another 29.6% for those beyond 51 years of age.

Educationally, there are 4.3% with a Primary School Certificate, 17.4% with a Form Two Certificate, 43.5% have an 'O' Level Certificate, 13% an 'A' Level Certificate, while 21.7% hold at least a University degree.

Concerning their religious background, 51.9% were born Adventist, while 48.1% were not. Of those who were not born Adventist, the percentage of those who became Adventists through the influence of relatives or friends is 13.3%, evangelistic efforts another 13.3% , literature evangelism 20%, Zunde none, Seventh-day Adventist schools 33.3%, and other unspecified methods of evangelism 19.1%.

Most administrators and pastors have their membership in large churches. The statistics show that 64% belong to churches with 300 or more members. Only 12% hold membership in churches with 200 to 300 members and 16% in churches with 50 to 100 members. Churches



of 50 or fewer members and 100 to 200 members each claim 4% of the membership of the pastors and administrators.

The respondents show that only 8.3 of the churches do not operate any branch Sabbath school but at least 91.7% of the churches have at least a branch Sabbath school under their care. The survey shows that 29% of the churches operate at least five branch Sabbath schools. Regarding companies, only 4% of the churches have none to oversee and 96% have at least one, while 52% of the churches have at least five.

#### **Church-Planting Preparedness**

Survey responses show that 88.9% of the administrators and pastors have some experience in working with branch Sabbath schools and companies whereas 11.1% lack that experience. With as many as 81.5% of the pastors strongly disagreeing on the fact that starting a new church in their district would cripple existing church programs, and another 7.4% mildly disagreeing, technically 88.9% of the pastors and administrators, therefore, do not think that planting new churches in their districts would disrupt any of their current or future church programs. Of those who regard church planting as a noble idea, 62.9% believe that lack of trained leadership is a major

handicap in running new churches while 37.1% are convinced that there is adequate leadership resources to oversee the planting of new churches.

The survey shows that 81.5% of the pastors and administrators believe that church planting will not be detrimental to existing churches particularly insofar as finances are concerned. Only 7.4% think that planting new churches would harm the financial health of the existing churches, while 11.1% are neutral.

The respondents who think that their existing churches are prepared to parent new churches amount to 76.9%, those who do not think so total 19.2%, and 3.8% are neutral. The survey shows that those who believe that church planting will be costly comprise 11.5% and those who disagree make up 88.9%. Pastors and administrators who are daunted by the difficulty of church planting consist of 7.4%, with 3.7% being neutral and 88.9% viewing church-planting as something that can and should be done.

Furthermore, the survey also indicated that 76.9% of the respondents are convinced that their districts are compassionate towards the unchurched. Only 7.6% show no compassion, while 15.4% are neutral. In connection with cultural relevance, 61.6% of the pastors think that their districts are culturally

relevant when it comes to the way they conduct their ministry, 15.3% believe that their approach to ministry is culturally irrelevant, while 23.1% are ambivalent.

The survey revealed that 85.2% of the respondents think that their districts are very conscious of the Great Commission given by Jesus Christ, therefore, they will not allow financial limitations to blur their vision of bringing people to Jesus. Conversely, 14.8% of the pastors do not regard their districts as conscious of the Great Commission. The survey also shows that 88.9% of the pastors believe that their districts are confident that God will help them plant many more new churches than the number of current churches. An insignificant 3.7% doubt God's ability to sustain their church-planting initiatives, while 7.4% remain neutral.

Again, 80% of the pastors testify to the fact that their districts have a *kingdom perspective* of things which makes them keen to extend God's Kingdom by planting more churches regardless of the seemingly adverse impact on their local church ministry. A meager 8% of the respondents lack the *kingdom perspective*, while 12% are neutral.

As far as concrete commitment in terms of time, talent, strength, and money, with respect to the

planting of churches, 47.7% pastors indicated that their districts would render total commitment. A significant 30% of the respondents were neutral, while 11.5% think that their districts would not commit themselves sacrificially.

### **Current Methods of Church Growth**

The survey revealed that of the current church-growth methods employed in the Central Zimbabwe Conference, 48.1% of the pastors and administrators think that the *Zunde* method is effective in evangelizing the Black elite in their Conference. A considerable 56.6% believe that the same method is effective in reaching the Black middle class, while only 23 %believe that *Zunde* is effective in reaching the Coloreds and Indian minorities. A substantial 74.6% of the pastors and administrators regard *Zunde* as effective in evangelizing the lower classes in cities and towns. Another 88.9% of the respondents are convinced of *Zunde's* effectiveness in reaching the people in the communal lands.

With respect to the public evangelistic efforts, the survey shows that 62.9% of the pastors and administrators see this method as efficient in reaching the Black elite of the Central Zimbabwe Conference. Respondents who felt that the public evangelistic

efforts were effective in reaching the Black middle class within their Conference comprise 65.4%. Only 15.3% of the respondents thought that the public evangelistic efforts were effective in reaching the Whites, Coloreds, and Indians. A substantial 73.1% of the pastors and administrators believe that public evangelistic efforts are effective in reaching the lower classes in the cities and towns, while 81.4% believe that the same method is effective for people in the communal areas of the Central Zimbabwe Conference.

Asked what they thought was the most effective method of church growth in the Central Zimbabwe Conference, 56.6% of the respondents cited public evangelistic efforts, 21.7% pointed to *Zunde*, while another 21.7% selected personal evangelism. The survey also shows that 42.9% of the pastors and administrators indicated that their Conference has not laid down any strategy to evangelize the White, Colored, and Indian minorities within their territory. A total of 19% regard public evangelistic efforts as a strategy which their Conference is using to reach the minorities, while 14.3% point to personal evangelism.

## Interpretation of Survey

### Analysis of Respondents' Cross Section

In the section dealing with the cross section of the respondents on Forms A, P and M, it is evident that those who completed the questionnaire were all adults 21 years of age and above. While the issue of age is of no concern for those completed by administrators and pastors since it is expected that for one to fill these positions one has to be an adult, the issue of age, however, is consequential when it comes to the questionnaire completed by church members. The fact that only adults responded deprives the research of the views and input of the youth. It is probable that the exclusion of the youth is a form of cultural reflex action on the part of those who distributed the questionnaire. In a culture where age is revered and valued, the visibility and recognition of the youth is not always automatic. The input of the youth on church planting is indispensable because they should have a say in the direction their church should take.

Another cultural bias evident in this survey is that on all Forms, that is, Forms A, P, and M, all the respondents were males. A more representative picture requires the input of women as well, especially on issues which pertain to the church since women

outnumber men by far in the church membership of the Central Zimbabwe Conference.

The educational background of the respondents shows that most of them attained at least a Form Two Certificate. This fact indicates that the respondents were at least able to understand questions on the survey thereby enhancing the accuracy of the findings. None of the pastors became a Seventh-day Adventists through the *Zunde* method of evangelism, while 21.1% of the church members did. One way of explaining this difference is that the *Zunde* method of evangelism is very recent, thereby making it unrealistic to expect converts from *Zunde* to have already trained as pastors.

The survey shows that most of the respondents come from large churches in excess of 300 members with Forms A and P comprising of 64% and Form M 73.7%. Most respondents show deep involvement in their local churches. Of those not involved in the affairs of their churches, a majority (84.2% on Form M and 62.9% on Forms A and P) blame their lack of involvement on the absence of trained leadership. This finding reveals the need for well trained leadership in the Central Zimbabwe Conference churches, the kind of leadership which would stimulate church members to fully participate in the affairs of their church.

### Evaluation of Preparedness

The survey assessed the degree of preparedness on the part of the Central Zimbabwe Conference administrators, pastors, and church members to embrace church planting as a viable method for church growth. Statistics show that against real or imaginary obstacles, people in the Central Zimbabwe Conference are ready to embark on strategic church planting that is a new paradigm of church growth for that Conference. Respondents on all Forms of the survey attest to the fact that church planting will enhance the church-growth efforts of their Conference. In every category of the survey aimed at gauging the level of readiness concerning church planting, the respondents show high interest in starting new churches as a way of evangelism.

### **Findings on Current Church-Growth Methods**

The survey shows that the current methods of evangelism in the Central Zimbabwe Conference are not very successful in reaching the Black elite, the White, Colored and Indian minorities. The public evangelistic efforts, the *Zunde*, as well as personal evangelism all seem to be quite effective in reaching the lower classes of the Central Zimbabwe Conference population.



### **Findings on Strategies**

The survey reveals an absence of strategies in evangelizing the minorities in the Central Zimbabwe Conference. A total of 42.9% of the administrators and pastors indicates that there is no concrete strategy by their Conference to witness to the Whites, Coloreds, and Indians, and 19% cite public evangelistic efforts and 14.3% point to personal evangelism as the strategies that their Conference has laid for reaching the minorities within their territory.

### **Conclusion**

This report shows that the administrators, pastors, and church members in the Central Zimbabwe Conference are prepared to engage in intensive church planting. Provided with some guidance in laying down strategies for church planting, most of the respondents show their eagerness to work for God in witnessing to those outside their church. The survey also shows that with the prevailing atmosphere in the Central Zimbabwe Conference, effecting a paradigm shift that places church planting at the center of church-growth efforts is the most logical thing to do in trying to reach all segments of the population as well as multiplying churches and church membership.

## CHAPTER V

### THE CONTEXTUALIZATION OF CHURCH-PLANTING PRINCIPLES TO CENTRAL ZIMBABWE CONFERENCE

#### **Introduction**

The aim of this chapter is to provide a model for a contextualization process of contemporary church-planting techniques to the Central Zimbabwe Conference setting. To achieve the above objective, the concept of contextualization is explored prior to outlining the eight presentations for a two-weekend seminar on church planting. The seminar hopes to equip administrators, pastors, and the lay people of the Central Zimbabwe Conference on the merits of embracing strategic church planting as a promising paradigm for achieving unsurpassed church growth in their Conference.

#### **Dimensions of Contextualization**

Many books on church planting have been written and countless articles published. Convincing methods

and techniques on how to multiply churches have been crafted. To find one's way through the maze of church-planting methodologies is a daunting task that confronts both budding and accomplished church planters. An indiscriminate application of even the most proven church-planting technique will not guarantee automatic success. Sensitivity to the particularity of each unique situation elicits a careful contextualization of church-planting principles that might have proved successful elsewhere.

Bruce Bradshaw, the director of holistic development research for MARC (World Vision International) is correct in pointing out that

to a large degree, the current support for contextualization is a reaction against non-contextualized mission efforts, particularly efforts from the stages of the modern mission era. When the early missionaries worked in primal cultures, they assumed Christianity and Westernization comprised a single, unified package. With few exceptions, these missionaries believed indigenous cultures contained nothing they could use to communicate the Christian message.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Bruce Bradshaw, Bridging the Gap (Monrovia, CA: MARC, 1993), 52-53.

Among the several perceptive definitions that have been assigned to the term "contextualization," one by Mikha Joedhiswara is perhaps more comprehensive. He defines contextualization as

the capacity to respond meaningfully to the gospel within the framework of one's own situation. It is the process by which a local community integrates the gospel message with the real-life context, blending text and context into a single, God-intended reality called Christian living.<sup>1</sup>

The principles of contextualization hold for any facet of church growth of which church planting is part. With this in mind, it should be noted that general references to the contextualization of the Christian message have a bearing on church-planting.

Highlighting the importance of proper contextualization, K. P. Yohannan refers to Professor B. Makhathini of the University of Swaziland whose critique of the way Christianity was brought to Africa is noteworthy. Makhathini reflects:

Before the bread of life (the Christian faith) came to our part of Africa, it stayed in Europe for over a thousand years. There the Europeans added a plastic bag (their own customs) to the

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<sup>1</sup>Mikha Joedhiswara, "Holistic Evangelism: On Suffering in the Face of Overwhelming Poverty and Multifaceted Religiosity," Mission Focus 20, no. 2 (June 1992): 32-33.

bread. Now, the plastic bag is making us sick! The plastic is theirs. We know that God planned for us to receive the bread just as he planned for them to receive it. We can remove the plastic, and enjoy the bread.<sup>1</sup>

To avoid mistakes, church planters should pay attention to Paul Hiebert's four principles on contextualization. He argues that for contextualization to yield fruit one ought to: (1) understand what the people believe about the problem, (2) create a bridge between Scripture and the problem, (3) let people evaluate their customs in light of Scripture, and (4) practice the contextualized ethic.<sup>2</sup>

With regard to the Central Zimbabwe Conference, Hiebert's four principles of contextualization stand in need of contextualization themselves. His foregoing principles seem to relate specifically to situations where Christianity is encountering non-Christianity for the first time. Yet in the case of the Central Zimbabwe Conference, Christianity, particularly Adventism, has

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<sup>1</sup>K. P. Yohannan, Why the World Waits: Exposing the Reality of World Missions (Lake Mary, FL: Creation House Publishers, 1991), 103.

<sup>2</sup>Paul Hiebert, "Critical Contextualization," International Bulletin of Missionary Research, July 1987, 109.

been part of the religious landscape for over a hundred years. The challenge is no longer on an elementary plane but on how to enable people who are already Christians to update the methods and techniques of church growth that have worked so well for them in the past but which may no longer be as viable in the present.

Getz's further elaboration on contextualization is persuasive. He draws a line between function (end) and form (means) when he says

the Bible often teaches function without form. Where it does describe it, it is partial and incomplete. What form is described varies from situation to situation. . . . It is not possible to absolutize something that is not described; that is always incomplete; and that is always changing from setting to another.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Gene A. Getz, Sharpening the Focus (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1974), 38.

Getz also presents a diagram that helps to show the relationship between absolutes and non-absolutes. (See table 1.)

TABLE 1  
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ABSOLUTES  
AND NON-ABSOLUTES

Absolutes	Non-absolutes
Function	Pattern
Organism	Organization
Truth	Tradition
Message	Method
Supracultural	Cultural

Source: Gene A. Getz, Sharpening the Focus (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1974), 38.

In Getz's analysis, absolutes are fixed and should not be altered. Non-absolutes are bound to change from place to place. Absolutes should take precedent over non-absolutes. Proper contextualization should take into account the differences between absolutes and non-absolutes. In contextualizing church-planting methods, the church planter should draw a line between the supracultural nature of the Christian message and the various cultures from where the church planters may be

coming from. Methods employed in church planting should be customized to the local situation without compromising the integrity of the message.

### **Seminar on Strategic Church Planting**

First Weekend

#### **Lesson 1: Strategic Church Planting and Central Zimbabwe Conference**

Audience: The Central Zimbabwe Conference Administrators, Pastors, and local church leaders.

Lesson Objective: This presentation hopes to persuade Central Zimbabwe Conference Administrators, pastors, and local church leaders that strategic church planting is arguably the most cost effective way of achieving phenomenal church growth for their constituency.

*An evaluation of past and present paradigms of church growth*

*The founding of mission schools.<sup>1</sup> At the inception of Adventism in Zimbabwe, the establishment of Mission*

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<sup>1</sup>See chapter 2 of this dissertation for a detailed discussion of how the founding of mission stations facilitated church planting in Zimbabwe.



Schools facilitated the planting of churches. Mission Schools functioned as launching pads for evangelizing surrounding communities resulting in the establishment of churches.

*The involuntary resettlement of Blacks.*<sup>1</sup> After the Rhodesian Government passed the 1931 Land Apportionment Act, Adventism spread to the remote parts of the Central Zimbabwe Conference. As a result of the involuntary resettlement of black Seventh-day Adventists, the conference experienced a growth in church membership.

*Public evangelistic campaigns.*<sup>2</sup> Popularized from as early as the 1940s in the then Southern Africa Division, the public evangelistic campaign method of church growth has proved quite effective in reaching the lower classes in the Central Zimbabwe Conference.

*The Zunde method of evangelism.* The merits of the Zunde method of evangelism lie in its heightened lay

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<sup>1</sup>Daniels, 140.

<sup>2</sup>Clifford, 11.

participation in soul-winning and its appeal to the poorer segments of society. This means that the highly educated and the White and Indian minorities are left out.

*The spontaneous generation of daughter churches.*

From the time Adventism entered Zimbabwe the Seventh day-Adventist church has been growing as new churches have mushroomed. Many organized churches continue to support and supervise some work in surrounding areas by opening some branch Sabbath Schools that later mature into companies and these eventually become autonomous fully organized churches. More churches could be planted if careful demographic studies were conducted strategically identifying places where churches could be established. An approach that makes use of current church-planting techniques would minimize the erratic and sporadic sprouting of daughter churches by ensuring more constant and even coverage of various people groups and the unchurched.

*Why strategic church planting?*

*Three theological considerations.*

1. Jesus commanded his disciples saying,  
"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations,  
baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son  
and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey  
everything I have commanded you" (Mt. 28:19-20).

2. The early church in the New Testament obeyed  
the gospel commission by planting churches cross-  
culturally in places such as Asia Minor and Europe.<sup>1</sup>

3. Ellen G. White shows that "churches are to be  
organized and plans laid for the work to be done by  
members of the newly organized churches. This gospel  
missionary work is to keep reaching out and annexing  
new territory, enlarging the cultivated portions of the  
vineyard."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Alfred Palla, Church Planting Manual (Berwyn, IL:  
Polish Book Service, 1994), 7.

<sup>2</sup>Ellen G. White, Evangelism (Mountain View, CA:  
Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1942), 19.

*Four economic considerations.*

1. Church planting is arguably the most cost effective method of church growth. Peter Wagner, an authority in church growth points out that "The single most effective evangelistic method under heaven is planting new churches."<sup>1</sup>

2. Church-growth studies at Fuller Theological Seminary also prove that it cost much less to win a new member into a new church than in into an old one.<sup>2</sup>

3. New churches tend to be more effective in their outreach efforts than old churches.<sup>3</sup>

4. New Churches tend to give more offerings and return tithe more faithfully.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Peter C. Wagner, Church Planting for a Greater Harvest (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1990), 11.

<sup>2</sup>Donald A. McGavran, Ten Steps for Church Growth (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), 93.

<sup>3</sup>Roger L. Dudley, Plant a Church, Reap a Harvest (Boise, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1989), 200-203.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

*Four pragmatic considerations.*

1. The old churches that give birth to new churches experience some renewal themselves. A church-planting consciousness in the mother church stifles selfishness as the members engage in selfless outreach.<sup>1</sup>

2. In order to reach a wider and more diverse population new churches must be planted. If people will not come to church the church must be taken to the people. Ellen White stressed the need to penetrate cities for she urged that "we are far behind in following the instruction to enter these cities and erect memorials for God."<sup>2</sup>

3. New churches need to be raised in order to meet the changing needs of people. The church should accommodate the taste and needs of the people it hopes to reach rather than remain rigid and unbending.

4. New church settings widen church member participation by giving them an opportunity to exercise

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<sup>1</sup>Palla, 10.

<sup>2</sup>Ellen G. White, "The Work in Cities" Review and Herald, September 30, 1902, 7.

their spiritual gifts.<sup>1</sup> "Trees that are planted too thickly do not flourish. They are transplanted by the gardener that they may have room to grow and not become dwarfed and sickly. The same rule would work well for our large churches. Many of the members are dying spiritually for want of this very work. They are becoming sickly and inefficient. Transplanted they would have room to grow strong and vigorous."<sup>2</sup>

**Lesson 2: The Century 21 Church-Planting System and Strategic Church Planting in the Central Zimbabwe Conference (10 Components)**

Lesson Objective: To show that a strategic church-planting paradigm which takes into account the principles that comprise the Century 21 Church-planting System promises a more enduring multiplication of churches in the Central Zimbabwe Conference.

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<sup>1</sup>Kent R. Hunter, Foundations for Church Growth (New Haven, MO: Leader Publishing Company, 1973), 66-69.

<sup>2</sup>White, Testimonies for the Church, 3:244.

*Introduction*

A growing realization by most church-planting specialists indicates that a church-growth paradigm that places church planting at the center of the church's mission is the direction the church should move. The approach that makes church planting the centerpiece of the church's reason for existence asserts at least three key points. The first is that churches give birth to churches and not districts or "conferences." The second is that church leadership should invest in the creation of a church-planting culture which sets the stage for the multiplication of churches than plough means into planting one or two churches at a time. The third crucial factor is the development of leaders with a clear vision of the centrality of church planting to the overall business of the church. The Century 21 System, which has ushered in a paradigm shift in church planting in some churches in North America, tries to uphold the foregoing three crucial aspects of an approach that weaves church planting into the very fabric of the church's mission. Contextualizing the Century 21 System to the Central

Zimbabwe Conference's proposed strategic church-planting vision will enhance the current church-growth initiatives.

*A description of Century 21 System*

A product of many church-planting specialists, the Century 21 System came into being in an attempt to inject balance between institution and movement, the two poles to which most churches seem to naturally gravitate. On the one hand, *stagnation* characterizes the state of those churches that are not growing. Usually, churches in this category have become very institutionalized, with self-preservation as the dominant reason for continued existence. Implicit is the fear of growth for it might contaminate the purity of the church. Lacking an accurate cause for their stagnation, many churches seem unable to free themselves from that which impends their growth and multiplication.<sup>1</sup>

On the other hand, *shotgun* typifies churches that view themselves as movements and these churches tend to

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<sup>1</sup>Kevin W. Mannoia, Church Planting (Indianapolis, IN: Light and Life Press, 1994), 33.



be task-oriented. Churches that send personnel to plant new churches on the frontline operate under the *shotgun* approach to church planting. Although occasionally successful, this method of church planting tends to thrive on the charisma of the individual church planter. Not only is it erratic but ephemeral because it comes and goes with each particular gifted "performer." *Shotgun* does not guarantee continuity.<sup>1</sup>

In essence, a movement is the flip side of the institution for these two are opposite sides of the same coin. Kevin Mannoia is right in his appeal for balance between the institution and the movement when he says, "Christian leaders must find a careful balance between our human instinct for order and our impulse for chaos."<sup>2</sup> In light of the seemingly inevitable but unhealthy opposite characteristics of the church, that,

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 35.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 39.

is stagnation and *shotgun*, the Century 21 System was devised as a corrective.

*Components of the Century 21 System*

*Parent Church Network.*<sup>1</sup> The original model of the Parent Church Network comprises three to five local churches. Its purpose is to equip pastors and lay leaders to help congregations to be committed to church planting. A vibrant Parent Church Network should enable pastors and lay leaders to design and implement an effective strategy to plant a church within two years.

The Parent Church Network represents a distinct paradigm shift in the way churches are to be planted. An effective Church Parent Network sends a message that accentuates the high priority of church planting in the entire mission of the church. The Parent Church Network points to the local church as the natural agent of church planting because churches should reproduce themselves. A view that shifts church planting to the local church should prompt the district to provide

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 61-66.

resources to ensure that this objective is accomplished.

Within the contextualized model, once the Conference administration, pastors, and the lay leaders embrace the concept of the Century 21 Church-planting System, initiating a Parent Church Network in the Central Zimbabwe Conference should not prove too difficult. The prevailing administrative organization of the Seventh-day Adventist church in the Central Zimbabwe Conference is conducive to the development of the Parent Church Network. The Conference is made up of about thirty districts. Each district has an average of four local churches under it. The norm is that pastors oversee the affairs of an entire district and not just a single church, as is the case in North America from which the Century 21 Church-planting System originates. Multi-pastor churches are unheard of. In addition to taking care of many churches, pastors also supervise several companies that fall under the local churches.

Far from being a liability, the reality of a pastor taking care of several churches is a great asset for mobilizing churches into networks. Since districts

are under the direction of a single pastor and since churches that belong to the same district already network on several programs of the church, contextualizing the idea of Parent Church Networking for church-planting purposes would be relatively easy. The infrastructure for local churches to network within each district of the Central Zimbabwe Conference already exists. The challenge that remains is to convince the church leadership on its various levels to view the mission of the church through church-planting eyes. Beyond that, the church leadership should appreciate how tenable the Century 21 Church-planting System is as a viable approach to effect strategic church planting in the Central Zimbabwe Conference.

*Profile Assessment System.*<sup>1</sup> Within the contextualized model, the Profile Assessment System tries to establish some objective and intensive processes for assessing the skills, performance, and personality profile of the prospective church planters. Observation has shown that the better the quality of

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 67-78.

church planters, the more the chances of successfully planting a church. This component of the Century 21 Church-planting System recommends three major kinds of assessments. These three are personality, performance, and skill tests.

The personality assessment is conducted by the Counseling Center, the Recruitment Office does performance assessment, and the behavioral interview evaluates the skills. Such a comprehensive professional assessment would reveal the candidate's strength and weaknesses as well as provide some recommendations.

Within the contextualized model, it would not be possible to implement the Profile Assessment System in the Central Zimbabwe Conference exactly the same way it is done in North America. The highly specialized assessments of personality, performance, and skills may be hampered by lack of expertise in the behavioral sciences. Even in cases where professional assessment is available, the exorbitant expenses of obtaining the services of the psychologist place such help beyond the means of the Conference. A suggested solution to the problem of profile assessment would be to use the

conventional method that the church uses in hiring pastors. The church should seek recommendations from those who have known the candidates for a considerable length of time and, on the basis of the recommendations, determine the suitability of the prospective church planter. Before an elaborate Profile Assessment System can be made available, the Central Zimbabwe Conference can make good use of what it already has, that is, the current and inexpensive way of selecting people for the gospel ministry.

*New church incubator.*<sup>1</sup> Within the original model, the main objective of the new church incubator is to provide a supportive environment for skills training and coaching relationships for the church planters, their spouses, and key lay leaders from the conception of the church through the first year of its existence.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 79-86.

The new church incubator has five functions:

1. The new church incubator provides prayer partner support and how to develop it among the church planters.

2. It is in the new church incubator that the church-planting vision is conceived, shaped, and given focus.

3. Planning the birth of the new churches and mobilizing seed families is another function of the new church incubator.

4. The incubator prepares for the grand opening of the new church and ensures that the start is smooth and impressive.

5. A facilitator is elected whose main responsibility is to convene monthly meetings for the monitoring of the progress of the new church plants.

Within the contextualized model, there should be minimum problems in adapting the concept of a new church incubator to the Central Zimbabwe Conference (CZC). Steps that are outlined in the original model above can be implemented in the CZC context without any major adjustments.

*Recruitment network.*<sup>1</sup> Within the original model, the recruitment network basically establishes an intentional strategy for recruiting a pool of pastoral candidates. It targets mainly those with church-planting interest and proficiency. Events that educate people on the importance of church planting are conducted. At such occasions names of all who show an interest in church planting as a calling are collected.

Within the contextualized model, adopting the recruitment network concept in the Central Zimbabwe Conference should not present any major problems. Convening both local church and district meetings where the church members are introduced to the merits of embracing the Century 21 Church-planting System can create a pool of pastoral candidates. Once the Conference administrators, the district pastors, and lay leaders have seen the potential of implementing this church-planting system as a successful method of multiplying churches, they will facilitate the creation of recruitment networks.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 86-90.



*Pastor factory.*<sup>1</sup> Within the original model, the primary objective of the pastor-factory model is to train proven lay leaders to become founding pastors of new church plants. This training is accomplished through mentoring and guided Bible study in the context of group interaction. In the pastoral factory, those who have sensed the call to the ministry and are willing to minister cross-culturally, but have slim chances of ever going to college, are groomed for church planting. These candidates are trained to become visionary leaders with top-notch leadership skills.

Within the contextualized model, to ensure uniformity and a high standard of training, it is suggested that the Church Ministries Director in the Central Zimbabwe Conference coordinate the activities of the pastoral factories. There should be, however, enough flexibility to allow the adjacent districts to team up in facilitating the continued function of the pastoral factories. At times, districts may chose to organize their pastoral factories on a regional level

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 91-94.

with six or seven districts selecting a strategic venue for conducting the training of church planters.

*Church Planters' Summit*<sup>1</sup>

*Original model.* The Church Planter's Summit is a retreat designed at orienting and initiating church planters. The church planters are exposed to the various dimensions of the Century 21 Church-planting System.

The summit aims at providing balance in prospective church planters by stressing the need for equilibrium between the seen and unseen dimension of the church planter's life. The unseen facet of a successful church planter should be grounded in a consistent prayer, rooted in accountability, and anchored in supportive relationship with fellow church planters.

The seen dimension deals with training, systems, and strategy. The church planter's comprehensive training ensures adequate familiarity with the Century 21 Church-planting Systems and the various strategies

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 95-99.

that would facilitate successful church-planting endeavors.

*Contextualized model.* In conducting Church-planting Summits in the Central Zimbabwe Conference, particular attention should be given to both the seen and the unseen dimensions of the church planter. As far as the unseen dimension is concerned, there is no need of any serious contextualization because the role of prayer, accountability, and supportive relationships are universal.

It is the seen dimension of training, systems, and strategy that requires sensitivity to the Central Zimbabwe Conference context. While upholding the general tenor of the Century 21 Church-planting System, trainers in the Central Zimbabwe Conference should be creative to replace aspects that are typically North American with more pragmatic ways suited to their local conditions.

*Maturing church cluster*<sup>1</sup>

*Original model.* This phase of the Century 21 Church-planting System tries to assist new churches in the first five years to identify and navigate major paradigm shifts that confront new churches as they grow to full maturity in a healthy manner. This is a crucial stage during the growth of the new churches because the church's personality and focus are permanently ingrained in this period much like what happens in a child's earliest years.

The new church plants should be weaned from dependence on the church planter who played a pivotal role in the inception of the church. The local church members who constitute the newly formed church should increasingly take over the running of the church.

*Contextualized model.* Beyond the task of helping the new churches to successfully cope with growth pangs, the maturing church cluster phase should place

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 100-105.

the affairs of running the church in the hands of the local church members. Lay participation is not a foreign concept to most church members in the Central Zimbabwe Conference because several churches share the services of one pastor, leaving the church elders to carry the function of the pastor in his absence. While the degree on lay participation is high because of the shortage of pastors, not every member is motivated to be active in the work of the church. By assisting the new churches to mature, the church-planting trainer has an opportunity to draw more church members into full church participation.

*Strategic Planning Network*<sup>1</sup>

*Original model.* The Strategic Planning Network component of the Century 21 Church-planting System aims at helping pastors and lay leaders to have a church-planting consciousness which should prevent the new church plants from becoming institutionalized. In other words, pastors and lay leaders should seek to nurture the church-planting "genetic code" that should prompt

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 106-113.

new churches to plant other new churches as soon as they get established. This component diagnoses all the newly planted churches, and those that show signs of becoming institutionalized are redirected to avert the undesirable trend. Solutions are suggested for curbing institutionalization, and these are highly individualized to match the specific needs of each given church.

*Contextualized model.* The Central Zimbabwe Conference should establish a Strategic Planning Network that fights institutionalization within the newly planted churches. Diagnostic instruments by accomplished church-planting specialists such as Ray Ellis and Dan Reeves—who seek out small- and medium-sized churches to be "redirected, refocused, and revitalized resulting in growth and reproduction"<sup>1</sup>—should be employed. Since most of these instruments are highly technical, there should be a deliberate effort to simplify the diagnostic tools so that they

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 110.

are not cumbersome and difficult to use in the Central Zimbabwe Conference context.

*Harvest 1000<sup>1</sup>*

*Original model.* Within the Century 21 Church-planting System, the Harvest 1000 component is aimed at raising money for church-planting efforts. This is usually a regional arrangement among several churches.

*Contextualized model.* The Central Zimbabwe Conference may decide to adopt the Harvest 1000 idea or have a budget at the Conference level solely devoted to church planting throughout its territory. Whatever fund-raising method the Central Zimbabwe Conference may opt for, it should be compatible with their general mission.

*Meta-church network<sup>2</sup>*

*Original model.* The meta-church network brings together pastors of churches who wish to implement the meta-church principles that have at the core an

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 114-120.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 121-124

approach to ministry that is needs based. The meta-church concept of ministry tries to address all major facets of the church member's Christian experience, and these include the church leadership, worship events, small-group ministries, support groups, and the outreach endeavors of the church. Carl F. George explores the nuances of the meta-church concept in his book entitled Prepare Your Church for the Future.<sup>1</sup>

*Contextualized model.* A holistic approach to ministry which tries to attend to all the dimensions of the church members' life all week long and also when he comes to church for worship is something the Central Zimbabwe Conference may be delighted to know about. In implementing the meta-church concept in the Zimbabwean Context, a great deal of contextualization will be required. Highly technical evaluations that would normally be conducted in the North American setting may prove untenable in the Central Zimbabwe Conference. Diagnostic tools that have been designed by church-

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<sup>1</sup>Carl F. George, Prepare Your Church for the Future (New York: Revell, 1991).



growth specialists may need some revision in an effort to adapt them to the local situation.

### **Lesson 3: Church-Planting Models**

Lesson Objective: To help the participants to appreciate the various models of church plants in order for them to intelligently choose the model applicable to their given situations.

#### *Introduction*

There are two general models of church plants. The first is the modality model, and the second is the sodality model. The former characterizes the congregational church structure, with the local church being instrumental in the inception of the other new churches.<sup>1</sup> The latter is task oriented and deals mainly with parachurch structures. In the sodality models, churches are brought into existence without the role of any local church.

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<sup>1</sup>C. Peter Wagner, Church Planting for a Greater Harvest (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1990), 60.

*Modality models**Daughter church model.*

1. Hiving off is one of the ways of starting a daughter church by a select number of church members from the local church. These chosen members become the nucleus of the new church plant. Usually the church is planted not too far from the mother church. As the new church gains maturity it becomes more and more autonomous.<sup>1</sup>

2. Colonization is another way daughter churches come into existence. In this case the nucleus members permanently relocate to a different place for the purpose of planting a church. The nucleus may comprise several families.<sup>2</sup>

3. Adoption is the third method through which daughter churches come into being. There are rare times when some big church for purposes of mentoring or financial support adopts an independent church.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 60-62.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 62.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 64.

4. *Accidental parenthood.* There are some churches that come into existence accidentally with no planning or intention on the part of the existing congregation. Factors that account for the establishment of a new church range from differences in theology, disgruntlement with current leadership, to personality conflicts among the church members. While the reasons for separation are not always justifiable, the outcome is usually positive because resultant churches may become vibrant as new members join the church.<sup>1</sup>

*Satellite models.* Two basic church arrangements belong to the satellite model of church planting and these are the gathered and the scattered system.

1. In the gathered system various congregation make use of the same church building at different times of the week. Space may not be the primary reason for multi-congregational meetings but a desire to customize worship services to the different needs and tastes of church members.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 65.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 65-67.

2. The scattered system obtains when new churches linked to the main church hold worship services in several different places. In this set-up, the scattered congregation may run church services that resemble those conducted in the parent church. Congregations may meet for worship concurrently.<sup>1</sup>

*The multi-campus model.* When a single congregation rotates its preaching personnel among several church buildings under its ownership, it is said to be following the multi-campus model.<sup>2</sup>

*The multi-congregation model.* In order to accommodate cultural diversity, some congregations choose to let people of various cultural backgrounds to conduct their worship services at different times.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 68-69.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 67-68.

*Sodality models*

*The apostolic or catalytic church planter model.* A classic example of this type of church-planting model is the apostle Paul. He founded churches, nurtured them until they could function on their own, and then left them as he moved on to establish more new churches.<sup>1</sup>

*The pioneer church planter.*<sup>2</sup> In the pioneer model of church planting, someone starts a new church and plans to work as its pastor after it has been established.

*The mission team.* Under this arrangement some agencies train and sponsor a group of people to plant new churches.<sup>3</sup>

*The partnership model.* Several congregations pool their resources in order to plant new churches. Some of

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 70-71.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 73.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 70.

these congregations may contribute finances or manpower towards the starting of new church plants.<sup>1</sup>

*The denominational model.* The planting of new churches under this model depend on the initiative of the denominational leaders who identify and target places where churches should be planted. The leadership also chooses people who should go and start the work.<sup>2</sup>

#### Second Weekend

#### **Lesson 4: Preparing for Church Planting**

Lesson Objective: This presentation hopes to highlight the necessary preparation that should precede the planting of a new church.

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<sup>1</sup>David W. Shenk and Ervin R. Stutzman, Creating Communities of the Kingdom: New Testament Models of Church Planting (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1988), 188.

<sup>2</sup>Elmer Towns, Getting a Church Started (Lynchburg, VA: Church Growth Institute, 1985), 91-94.

### *Introduction*

To plant a healthy church, people should be willing to invest time and effort. Although situations will vary from place to place, there is general preparation that should predate the birth of any church. Before attention is given to the formation of a nucleus that will eventually start a new church, a conducive spiritual environment ought to be cultivated. The church planter should prescribe programs that are appropriate, effective, and appealing to the targeted people. The new church should have a budget to sustain its operations.

*Spiritual preparation.* Prayer should be first and foremost in preparation for planting a new church.

1. Encourage all leaders to cultivate a deep prayer life. The experience of prayer should continue to characterize the leaders' life beyond the immediate goal of planting a new church.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Craig A. Dossman, From House to House (Lincoln, NE: Baby Boomer Ministries Center, 1994), 62.

2. The church as a corporate body should also be engaged in prayer for revival and the successful launching of the new church.<sup>1</sup>

*Formation of the nucleus.* In starting a new church, a nucleus of about 100 people is recommended. A church that starts with this number can have a fullfledged program thereby increasing the chances of assimilating the new members. One way of enlisting members who will form the nucleus is to spell out the advantages of leaving the mother church to start a new church.<sup>2</sup>

*Training the nucleus.* Once the nucleus has been formed, members should receive training in various aspects of the church including the way they should treat visitors. Among the things the nucleus should bear in mind is the value of visitors. The environment in the new church should be visitor friendly.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Palla, 46.

<sup>3</sup>Wagner, 122-123.



*Education on church programming.* As the church planter sets the stage for the opening of the new church he or she should intentionally ensure that the programs he or she designs for the new church will have at least a responsiveness to the age groups of the targeted audience and a commitment to excellence. Every aspect of the church worship programs should be well planned and effective.<sup>1</sup>

*Financial preparation.* A budget for the new church should be developed. Services of bookkeepers in the church should be sought. Funds should be allocated carefully paying attention to economy. Although the initial funds to launch the new church may come from the mother church, a stewardship program should be instituted to ensure a continuous flow of funds.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Robert L. Bast, Attracting New Members (Monrovia, CA: Church Growth, 1985), 53-55.

<sup>2</sup>Roger N. McNamara, Practical Guide to Church Planting (Cleveland, OH: Baptist Mid-Missions, 1985), 234-237.

## Lesson 5: Getting Started

Lesson Objective: This presentation hopes to explore the details that should be taken into consideration as a new church is inaugurated.

### *Introduction*

Starting a new church is a crucial event. Decisions that have to be made have a direct bearing over the success or failure of the church-planting enterprise.

*Geographic area.*<sup>1</sup> Perhaps this forms the starting point in the contemplation of church-planting. With respect to the Central Zimbabwe Conference, an identification of those areas where Adventist presence is either minimal or absent is crucial.

*Target Audience.*<sup>1</sup> After the selection of the geographical location a target audience has to be identified. For which group of people is the church primarily being planted? Since the Central Zimbabwe Conference needs to reach the Black elite, the Indian,

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<sup>1</sup>Wagner, 78.

and the White minorities, these segments of the society will be the focal point.

*Demographics.*<sup>2</sup> Any intelligent selection of the geographic area for church planting requires accurate demographic information. Among other things demographic information helps in the identification of the target audience, the determination of receptivity of the people the church hopes to reach, and the building of confidence in the nucleus who, in faith, have stepped out to participate in planting a new church. A well-informed and systematic approach to church planting by the leadership boosts the confidence of the nucleus.

*Nine sources of demographic information.*<sup>3</sup>

1. National census data from the Ministry of Information

2. Town clerk's office

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 81-82.

<sup>3</sup>Sources of demographic information will vary from one country to another. The sources of information listed above are some of the ones someone in the Central Zimbabwe Conference may find useful.

3. Local colleges
4. Lending institutions
5. Chamber of commerce
6. Radio stations
7. Public libraries
8. Real estate firms
9. Newspapers

*Five things that the demographic data will help you find out.<sup>1</sup>*

1. The socio-cultural composition of the target area and the location and sizes of the social groups
2. Population growth projections for the area
3. Patterns of internal migration
4. Infrastructure and traffic patterns
5. Land-use projections

*The new church site should be strategically chosen and three things should be taken into consideration.*

1. Visibility.<sup>2</sup> The new church should be conspicuous enough for the local people to see it.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 90-91.

<sup>2</sup>C. Peter Wagner, Church Planting for a Greater Harvest, 93.

2. Accessibility.<sup>1</sup> People should find it easy to get to the new church. Roads must be well maintained and signposts should be clear and easy to follow.

3. Size.<sup>2</sup> Does the selected area for building a church allow for future expansion?

*Four possible venues for worship*<sup>3</sup>.

1. School buildings
2. Community halls
3. Homes
4. Renting another denomination's church building

*Two things to consider when planning to build a church.*

1. Study the growth trends and purchase land in an area you are targeting.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 94.

<sup>2</sup>Kennon L. Callahan, Twelve Keys to an Effective Church (New York, NY: Harper and Row Publishers, 1983), 72-73.

<sup>3</sup>Robert E. Logan and Steve L. Ogne, Church Planter's Toolkit (Pasadena, CA: Fuller Evangelistic Association, 1991), 6:1.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 94.

2. Avoid purchasing land in an industrial area.<sup>1</sup>

### **Lesson 6: Leadership Training**

Lesson Objective: This lecture hopes to equip both pastors and lay persons with leadership skills that will ensure the successful growth of the new church plants.

#### *Introduction*

Church planting requires a multifaceted approach to leadership. Beyond the selection of a suitable leadership style, the church planter has to have proficient human relation skills.

#### *Four kinds of leaders.*<sup>2</sup>

1. The Catalyzer. This type of leader is energetic and charismatic. He can start a church but becomes frustrated in maintaining the church once it begins to grow.

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<sup>1</sup>Duane Ruth-Heffelbower, A Technical Manual for Church Planters (Elkhart, IN: Mennonite Board of Missions, 1989), 48-52.

<sup>2</sup>Shenk and Stutzman, 177-178.

2. The Organizer. A leader who is an organizer can bring chaotic situations to order. The catalyzer, like the organizer, gets the church started but quickly becomes bored once the church begins to grow.

3. The Operator. This type of leader is gifted in maintaining the organization once it has been started and all the main assumptions are in place. This leader cannot handle change and is loyal to the status quo.

The Redeveloper. In this leader all the qualities of the catalyzer, organizer, and operator converge. A redeveloper can reverse the trend of a church that has lost its growth momentum and is on the decline.

*Three leadership roles in church planting.*

1. Creating a vision for the future. The leader needs to create a vision of where he hopes to find the church in the future. The leader should articulate the vision constantly to the people. This has several advantages and these include:

- (a) It communicates to people that things can be better than they are now.
- (b) It gives the people a glimpse of the future they can attain.

- (c) When the leader articulates his vision for the future that makes him accountable to the fulfillment of the vision.
- (d) Visioning is an expression of faith because God desires to extend His kingdom beyond the wildest human dreams.

2. The development of a vision.<sup>1</sup> Below are some steps a leader should take in cultivation of the vision and these include taking time in:

- (a) Prayer and meditation
- (b) Exposing oneself to human needs and the opportunity to make a difference that these bring
- (c) Pleading with God for specific visions that He wants you to see and achieve
- (d) Refining the vision by sharing it with those who are well poised to facilitate it
- (e) Marketing the vision so that it gets wider acceptance

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<sup>1</sup>Aubrey Malphurs, Planting Growing Churches (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1992), 238-240.



(f) Cast the vision in terms that are easy to understand

(g) Reiterate the vision at every possible occasion.

3. Developing a Mission Statement.<sup>1</sup> A good mission statement should have the following components:

(a) It should clearly reflect the vertical and horizontal dimensions (with the vertical relating to God and the horizontal to human beings).

(b) It should promote both inner spiritual growth in the individual as well as prompt the individual to reach out to others with the gospel message.

(c) It should focus on the purpose of the church.

4. Articulating the mission.<sup>2</sup> The mission statement should be brief, easy to remember, catchy,

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<sup>1</sup>David, L. McKenna, Power to Follow Grace to Lead (Dallas, TX: Word Publishing, 1989), 101-106.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 102.

and precise and should prescribe the focus and locus of the people being ministered to, and rest on God's word.

**Lesson 7: Principles for Healthy and Reproducing Churches that Grow.**

Lesson Objective: This final presentation hopes to provide an overview of the key principles that accompany successful church growth. A critical reflection on the principles below should aid the church planter as he or she tries to extend God's Kingdom through the planting of lively churches.

*Introduction*

In his book, How Churches Grow,<sup>1</sup> Francis M. Dubose outlines twenty principles that he considers critical to church growth. Dubose has succeeded in distilling into twenty what most authors have written countless volumes about. The brevity and clarity of the principles he shares commend themselves and should prove valuable to all seriously engaged in church-

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<sup>1</sup>Francis M. Dubose, How Churches Grow (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1978), 169-171.

planting. Following are church growth principles<sup>1</sup> that should not be ignored.

*The Spiritual Base Principle.* The spiritual foundation of church growth is irreplaceable and all other principles are useless without it.

*The Theological Principle.* The methods of church growth are first and foremost based on biblical principles such that Scripture should always govern any engagement of pragmatic approaches.

*The Principle of the Holy Spirit.* Because church growth is unequivocally the work of the Holy Spirit, it should never be compressed into a mere human science.

*The Leadership Principle.* Church growth requires exceptional leadership. Visionary leadership moves beyond the conventional to bring into existence few dream about. Next to foregoing three principles, leadership is perhaps the most important factor.

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*The People Principle.* Committed people, not money or methods bring churches into existence. People should come before programs. Their participation should be valued. People should never be treated impersonally as if they were some cold statistics.

*The Balance Principle.* Vibrant church growth should evince balance. It should be both "organic and influential, quantitative and qualitative, enlargement and multiplication." Christian maturity is goal of genuine church growth.

*The Principle of Impact-Penetration Balance.* In order to reach the cities, mass communication is essential for impact, while small group communication is needed for penetration.

*The Principle of Presence-Proclamation Balance.* Jesus' incarnational ministry balanced presence with proclamation for he came and lived among man while proclaiming God's word. The church should imitate Christ in its evangelistic endeavors.

*The Rhythm Principle.* The early church "assembled and dispersed and reassembled and dispersed again." The personal and corporate worship experience always expressed itself in wider ministry and evangelism.

*The Heterogeneous Principle.* In light of the heterogeneous nature of urban society evident in the fabric of social life, the church should seek to relate to society on the same wavelength.

*The Homogeneous Unit Principle.* The effectiveness of small group ministry lay in their homogeneous nature usually with people of the same race or ethnicity coming together. The use of the homogeneous unit should not be used as some brand of apartheid aimed at secluding those belonging to a different racial or ethnic origin.

*The Indigenous Principle.* Churches growth principles should be contextualized in order for them to be relevant to the immediate environment.

*The Principle of Flexibility.* Church growth methods should be flexible to match the changing

environment. There should always be openness to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

*The Point-of-Contact Principle.* The deepest felt needs of people are the best point of contact. The church should try to meet the felt needs of the community.

*The Principle of Responsiveness.* Good stewardship on the part of the church requires it to reach first those that are susceptible to the influence of the Holy Spirit. Such an approach should not, however, preclude evangelizing some people groups on the pretext that they are difficult and unpromising.

*The Principle of Simplicity.* Church-planting methods should be kept simple. All church members should be able understand put into practice the principles of church-planting in spite of their limited formal education.

*The Scientific Principle.* The church should not view it as a contradiction of its faith in God when it makes use of research and social sciences. All

scientific disciplines should serve as "handmaidens of Christian theology."

*The Cooperative Principle.* Church growth should not be a solitary concern of one level of the church's organizational structure. The intense desire to expand the kingdom of God expand should pervade every member from the local church throughout the entire denomination.

*The Principle of Timing.* The church should seek God's will in order to accurately follow God's timetable. In this regard the role of prayer cannot be overemphasized. When the timing is right, every part of the puzzle seems to fall in place.

*The Love Principle.* Church planting that is love-driven makes a difference. Love will impel the church to transverse cultural boundaries and minister to all of God's children. The language of love is universal. Many will respect and naturally respond to a church that practices the *agape* love.

**Lesson 8: A Strategy for Effectively Reaching the Black Elite as well as the White, the Indian, and the Colored Minorities in the Central Zimbabwe Conference.**

Lesson Objective: To incorporate within the strategic church-planting paradigm for the Central Zimbabwe Conference an effective approach for attracting and ministering to the Black elite as well as the White, the Indian, and the Colored minorities.

*Introduction*

In designing and implementing a strategy to reach the above mentioned segments of the Central Zimbabwe Conference, particular attention should be given to the specific felt needs of each group of people. A differentiated approach that recognizes and addresses the unique needs of each group should yield positive results.

*The Black elite.* Most of the Black elite in the Central Zimbabwe Conference is highly secularized. From a distance these people may seem happy with lots of money to spare in an economy bedeviled by inflation. A closer look, however, may reveal the contrary. Most of



the elite are hurting, empty, disillusioned, and in search for something more concrete and fulfilling—something that money cannot buy.

Prior to planting a church for the Black elite in the Central Zimbabwe Conference each urban church should identify the pockets of the elite within their vicinity. The local churches should assess the felt needs of the elite. Most of the elite may desire good pre-schools for their children. Some may have health fitness needs. Others may be seeking pre-marital or marital counseling, financial advice, or stress management. A careful and sympathetic study of the elite will show that there are many services the local church can offer. The local church should seek to address those needs that will make a difference in the lives of the elite while asserting the church's presence and high visibility.

After establishing a strong Adventist presence, the local church should identify and select individuals or families who belong to the elite class from among its own members to go and plant a church for the elite.

This select group, therefore, should form the nucleus to spearhead church planting among the elite.

The churches planted for the elite should take a keen interest in keeping abreast with the fast-changing needs of the people they hope to minister to. Church programs should be relevant and attractive to ensure sustained church attendance.

*The White and the Indian minorities.* The Central Zimbabwe Conference should hire two pastors, one White another Indian, to minister to these distinct groups. These pastors should be given a travel budget large enough to allow them to minister in all the cities across the conference since Whites and Indians are sparse.

In hiring pastors for the White and Indian minorities, the Central Zimbabwe Conference will be following an example set by the Zimbabwe Union Conference which has specifically employed a pastor to reach the minorities. Due to the small population of Whites and Indians, a church-growth strategy that allows for a highly personalized visitation program by the pastor should prove effective. Personal evangelism

combined with a genuine desire to meet the felt needs of the Whites and the Indians holds more promise in effectively planting churches among these minorities.

*The Colored minority.* In pre-independent Zimbabwe the Coloreds had their separate conference and churches. Soon after Zimbabwe became independent efforts were made to merge the colored conference with Black conferences. The attempt was largely abortive. Economic considerations and personality clashes, among other things, account for the much of the failure to bring the Coloreds and the Blacks together.

An effective church planting strategy for the Coloreds must allow for the mutual coexistence of Colored churches and Black churches. Coloreds should not be forced to worship with Blacks. The Central Zimbabwe Conference should have room for diversity. Colored churches will give birth to other Colored churches. The local Colored churches should form some nuclei for starting new church plants within targeted Colored communities. Utilizing the insights shared in the preceding lessons will ensure successful church planting among this group of people.

## CHAPTER VI

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### **Summary and Conclusion**

This research project has tried to show that strategic church planting is a paradigm of church growth that the central Zimbabwe Conference should seriously consider and embrace. A diachronic analysis of the different paradigms of church growth that have dominated specific periods of the expansion of Adventism in the Central Zimbabwe Conference was conducted.

The first paradigm was ushered in by the early missionaries who established mission schools, whence churches were planted. The second paradigm of church growth in the Central Zimbabwe Conference was triggered by the forced relocation of the Blacks from the prime land along the watershed area to the remote parts of the Conference. Although unplanned for, the

involuntary removal of the Africans was a blessing in disguise for the church because those who had become Seventh-day Adventists upon arrival in their new homes began to assemble regularly for worship, and soon churches sprouted.

The third church-growth paradigm to dominate the Central Zimbabwe Conference made use of the public evangelistic campaign method. This method is still in use although it has failed to reach the elite among the Zimbabwean community.

The *Zunde* approach to evangelism characterizes the fourth paradigm. Unique to this method is its usage of concepts drawn from the traditional local Shona culture. The laity play a key role in this form of evangelism.

Running concurrently to all the foregoing paradigms is the mother-daughter model of church planting. It seems that wherever the gospel has been preached in the Central Zimbabwe Conference, the result has been a planting of churches after the mother-daughter church-planting model.

A general literature review on church planting highlighted the way Christianity was introduced into Zimbabwe through church planting. A survey on the attitude of the Central Zimbabwe Conference showed that there is a readiness on the part of administrators, pastors, and lay leaders in the Central Zimbabwe Conference to try strategic church planting in their church-growth endeavors.

This research has discussed the challenges of contextualization in order to pave a way for the application of church-planting principles other church-growth specialists have tried elsewhere. Eight presentations that will be delivered during a two-week seminar on the merits of church planting help to demonstrate the contextualization process of insights on strategic church planting.

### **Recommendations**

Several recommendations flow from this research project. The first recommendation for the Central Zimbabwe Conference is to have them embrace church planting as a central part of its mission in carrying out the gospel commission. An adoption of a strategic

church-planting paradigm will boost the other methods of church growth that are being employed in the Central Zimbabwe Conference. Viewing church planting as the heart of the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church suggests a different starting point. When church planting is the driving force of the church's task, all the other methods the church may employ in church growth take on a new twist. There is a difference between the opening of schools, the conducting of public evangelistic efforts, and *Zundes* when strategic church planting is the guiding principle and when it is not. This means that although the Central Zimbabwe Conference should continue the various methods of church growth it has always employed, it must deliberately make strategic church planting the organizing principle for mission.

Second, I wish to recommend that the Central Zimbabwe Conference take pride in the past and present achievements of the *Zunde* method of evangelism by recognizing the promise it holds for effectively reaching some segments of the society. The merits of the *Zunde* method of evangelism reside in the fact that

it does not require contextualization like the other methods of church growth which originate in the western hemisphere often do. In fact, contextualization presupposes an importation of superior knowledge, techniques, or methods to a place believed to be underprivileged or backward. The successes of *Zunde* in the Central Zimbabwe Conference show that the Seventh-day Adventist Church should discover those meaningful cultural or traditional practices of the people they minister to and then creatively use them as evangelistic methods.

Third, I wish to recommend that embracing church-planting as a paradigm for church growth, the church in the Central Zimbabwe Conference will overcome a time-honored flaw in the way the Seventh-day Adventist church has often approached evangelism. The church has often used the wrong mathematical function of addition instead of multiplication. The church seems to be satisfied with adding new members to its ranks while oblivious to the fact that the world operates on the basis of multiplication. This phenomenon is evident in population growth, technological expansion, and



financial investments. Nowadays, hardly a week goes by without some big bank merging with another. Recently, Daimler Benz merged with Chrysler Corporation. The main reason for such moves is to multiply profits and investments. The church cannot penetrate a world of multiplication with simple addition. The church should rediscover multiplication that the church-planting paradigm of church growth promises, and the phenomenal manner in which the Early Church grew will be repeated.

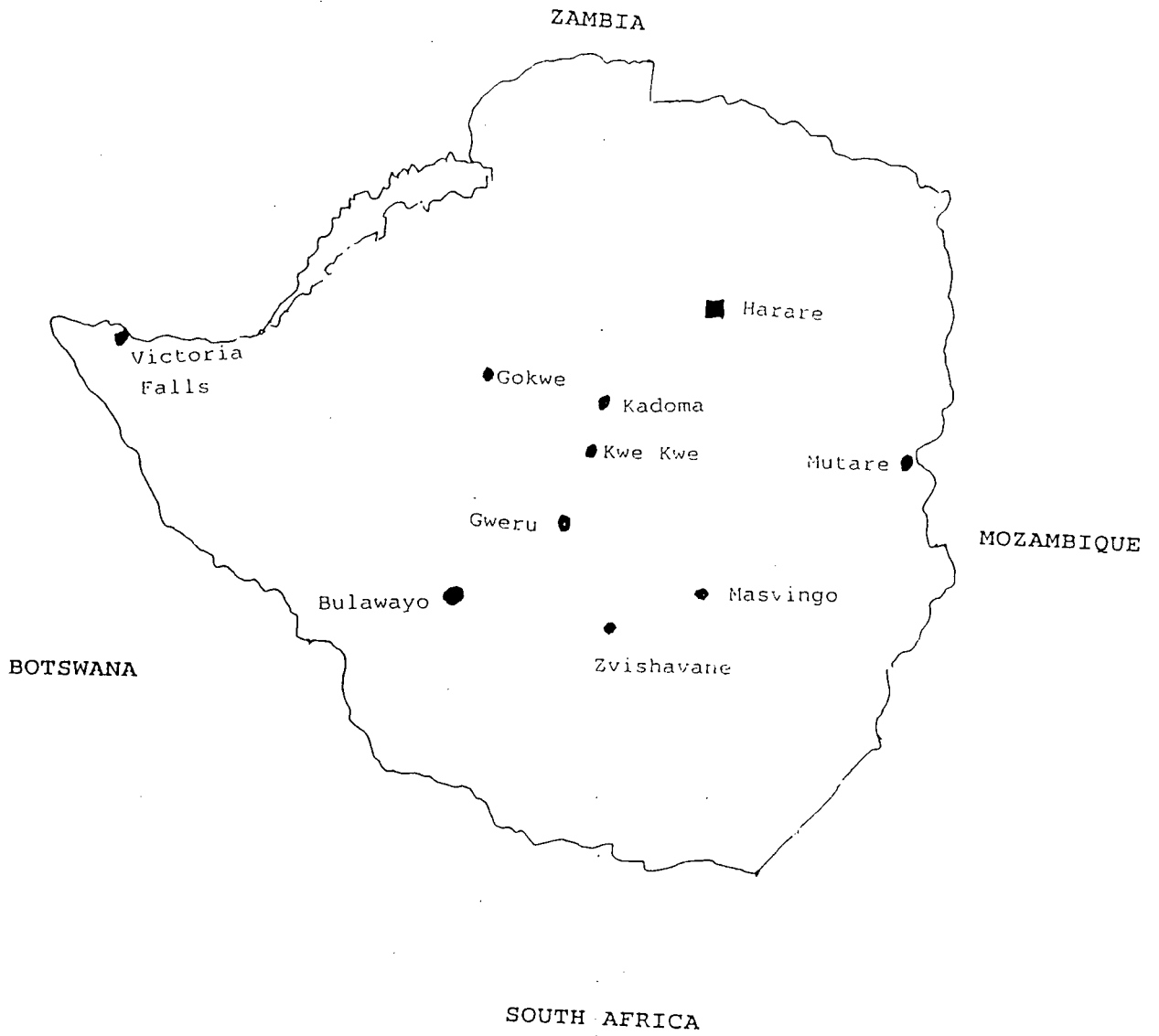
In light of the potential that strategic church planting holds for the growth of church membership in general and the targeting of specific segments of the Central Zimbabwe Conference population, I also recommend that the Conference should empower the local church to engage in church planting because once church planting becomes part of the local church's driving mission, there will be countless benefits for the local church. With the local church members fully involved in church planting, more new churches will be planted because church planting's genetic code will be passed from one generation of church planters to another. There will also be efficiency because, in the long run, church

planting is the most cost-effective means of church growth. With the multiplication of churches, lay participation in church-related activities will increase, thus lowering the reducing attrition as members feel valued and well utilized.

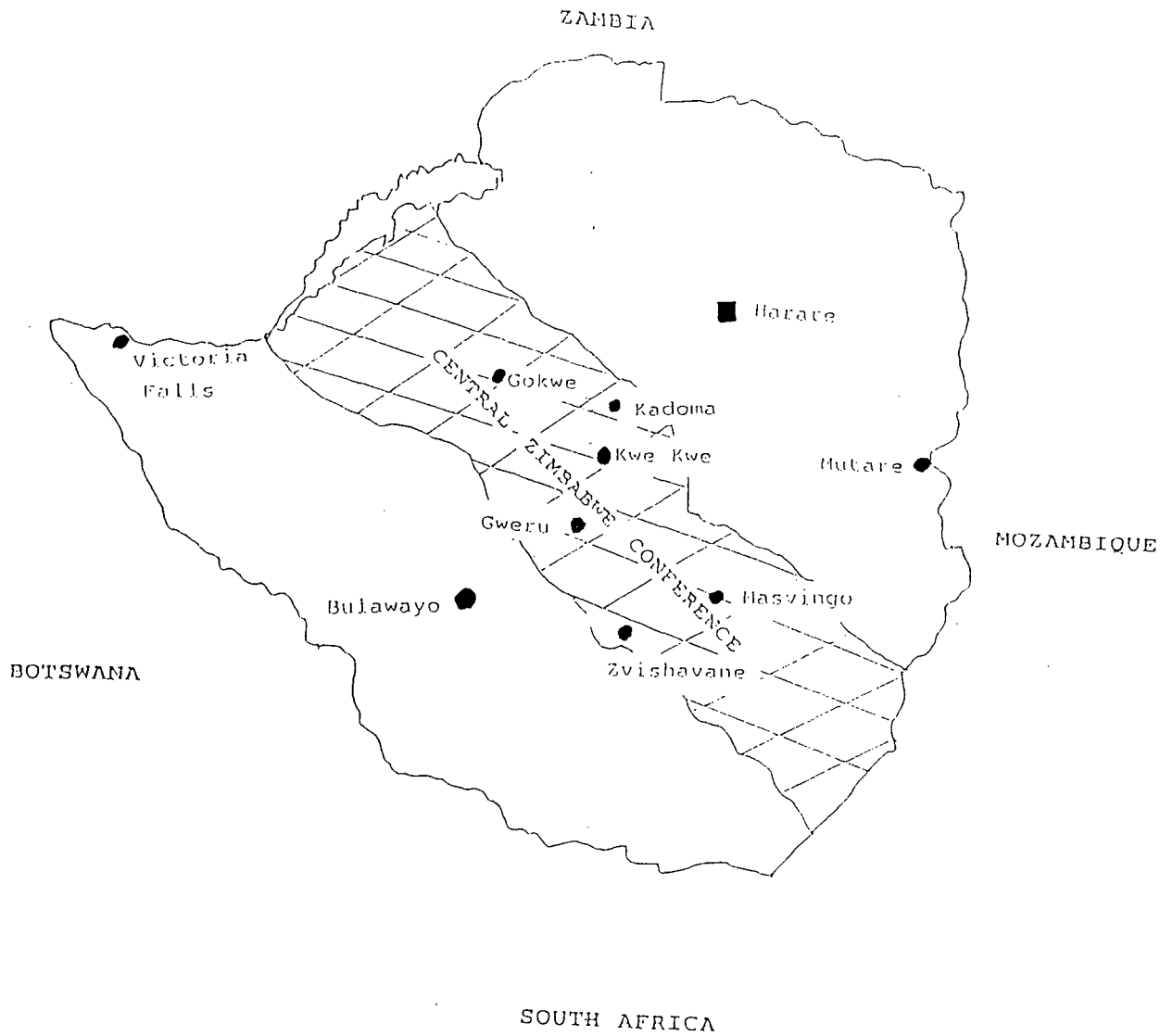
APPENDIX A

MAPS

THE MAP OF ZIMBABWE



THE MAP OF THE CENTRAL ZIMBABWE CONFERENCE  
(shaded area)



APPENDIX B  
FORMS A, M, AND P

## FORM A

This form should be completed by administrators

## Section 1

Your assistance in responding to the following questions will be greatly appreciated. Circle the option that best describes you and the way you feel.

1. How old are you? a) Between 10 and 20 years of age, b) 21 -30, c) 31-40, d) 41-50, e) 51 and above
2. What gender are you? a) Female b) Male
3. Which of the following best describes your highest educational qualification?
  - a) Primary School Certificate
  - b) Form Two Certificate
  - c) 'O' Level Certificate
  - d) 'A' Level Certificate
  - e) At least a University Degree
4. Were you born a Seventh-day Adventist? Yes \_\_\_ or No \_\_\_
5. If you were not born a Seventh-day Adventist, how did you become one?
  - a) Was invited to church by a friend or relative
  - b) Through an evangelistic effort
  - c) Through literature evangelism
  - d) Through *Zande* evangelism
  - e) By attending a Seventh-day Adventist School
  - f) None of the above
6. If your response was (f) in number 5, how did you become an Adventist?

- 
7. Which of the following best describes the size of your church?
    - a) Less than 50 members
    - b) Between 50 and a 100 members
    - c) Between 100 and 200 members
    - d) Between 200 and 300 members
    - e) 300 members and above
  8. How many Branch Sabbath Schools does your church operate?
    - a) None
    - b) 1
    - c) 2
    - d) 3
    - e) 4
    - f) 5 and above
  9. How many Companies does your church supervise?
    - a) 0
    - b) 1
    - c) 2
    - d) 3
    - e) 4
    - f) 5 and above
  10. Have you ever worked with a Branch Sabbath School or Company? Yes \_\_\_ or No \_\_\_

## Section 2

On a scale of 1 to 5 rate your attitude as well as that of your Conference. 1=Strongly disagree, 2=Mildly disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Mildly agree, 5= Strongly agree. Circle one of the five alternatives.

11. Planting or starting new churches in our Conference will disturb other projects and programs we have in mind for the future. 1 2 3 4 5
12. I wish we could plant more churches in our Conference but the problem is lack of trained leadership to run the new churches. 1 2 3 4 5
13. It is not a noble idea to start new churches in this Conference because existing churches will lose members, leaders and givers who support the churches financially. 1 2 3 4 5
14. Our existing churches are not yet ready to parent a new churches. 1 2 3 4 5
15. We cannot plant new churches because it is too expensive. 1 2 3 4 5
16. It is very difficult to start new churches and for this reason we cannot do it. 1 2 3 4 5
17. Our Conference has a strong compassion for the unchurched. 1 2 3 4 5
18. Our Conference is culturally relevant because it ministers to the needs of all groups of people in our territory. 1 2 3 4 5
19. The priority in our Conference is *The Great Commission* given by Jesus Christ, therefore, we look beyond limitations such as money or otherwise in our effort to bring as many people to Jesus. 1 2 3 4 5
20. Our Conference has a lot of faith in God and is confident that He is able to help us plant more churches than we now have. 1 2 3 4 5

FORM A

- 21. We have a kingdom perspective of things, therefore, we encourage each pastor and church member to plant new churches even if it means that some aspects of their local ministry will be affected. 1 2 3 4 5
- 22. Our Conference has very generous churches which give of their time, talent, strength, and money. 1 2 3 4 5

Section 3

On a scale of 1 to 5 rate the effectiveness of the Zunde method of church growth in reaching the following segments of the population in the Central Zimbabwe Conference. On the scale, 1= Not effective at all, 2= Not very effective, 3= Effective, 4= Quite effective, 5= Very effective. Circle one of the five alternatives.

- 23. How effective is the Zunde method of evangelism in reaching the black elite ( the rich and highly educated upper class) in the CZF? 1 2 3 4 5
- 24. How effective is the Zunde method of evangelism in reaching the black middle class in the CZF? 1 2 3 4 5
- 25. How effective is the Zunde method in reaching the Colored and Indian minorities in the CZF? 1 2 3 4 5
- 26. How effective is the Zunde method in reaching the lower-classes in the cities and towns of the CZF? 1 2 3 4 5
- 27. How effective is the Zunde method in reaching the people in the communal or rural areas of the CZF? 1 2 3 4 5
- 28. How effective are the public evangelistic efforts in reaching the black elite in CZC 1 2 3 4 5
- 29. How effective are the public evangelistic efforts in reaching the black middle class in CZC? 1 2 3 4 5
- 30. How effective are the public evangelistic efforts in reaching the Colored and Indian minorities in the CZC? 1 2 3 4 5
- 31. How effective are the public evangelistic efforts in reaching the lower classes in the cities and towns of the CZF? 1 2 3 4 5
- 32. How effective are the public evangelistic efforts in reaching the people in the communal or rural areas in the CZC? 1 2 3 4 5

33. Which is the most effective method of church growth currently under use in the CZF? Give your comments below. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

34. What strategies has the CZF laid in reaching the Indian, Colored, and White minorities as well as the Moslems in that Conference? Give your comments below. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for completing the questionnaire. God bless you.



## FORM M

This form should be completed by church members.

## Section 1

Your assistance in responding to the following questions will be greatly appreciated. Circle the option that best describes you and the way you feel.

1. How old are you? a) Between 10 and 20 years of age. b) 21 -30. c) 31-40. d) 41-50. e) 51 and above
2. What gender are you? a) Female b) Male
3. Which of the following best describes your highest educational qualification?  
a) Primary School Certificate b) Form Two Certificate c) 'O' Level Certificate  
d) 'A' Level Certificate e) At least a University Degree
4. Were you born a Seventh-day Adventist? Yes \_\_\_ or No \_\_\_
5. If you were not born a Seventh-day Adventist, how did you become one?  
a) Was invited to church by a friend or relative b) Through an evangelistic effort  
c) Through literature evangelism d) Through *Zinde* evangelism  
e) By attending a Seventh-day Adventist School f) None of the above
6. If your response was (f) in number 5, how did you become an Adventist?

- 
7. Which of the following best describes the size of your church?  
a) Less than 50 members b) Between 50 and a 100 members c) Between 100 and 200 members  
d) Between 200 and 300 members e) 300 members and above
  8. How many Branch Sabbath Schools does your church operate?  
a) None b) 1 c) 2 d) 3 e) 4 f) 5 and above
  9. How many Companies does your church supervise?  
a) 0 b) 1 c) 2 d) 3 e) 4 f) 5 and above
  10. How strongly do you feel attached to your church?  
a) Very strongly attached b) Not quite strongly attached c) Not attached at all
  11. Which of the following best describes your degree of involvement in your church?  
a) Very involved b) Moderately involved c) Not involved
  12. If you are not very involved, what could be the reason?  
a) Lack of opportunity b) Lack of interest c) Lack of training
  13. Have you ever worked with a Branch Sabbath School or Company? Yes \_\_\_ or No \_\_\_

## Section 2

If you were asked to be part of a group of church members which was going to move from the main church so as to start a new church among people who are not Seventh-day Adventists, how would you respond to the following questions? Answer T for True and F for False.

14. I would not accept to move leaving my friends and family behind \_\_\_\_\_
15. I would accept since this will give me opportunity to be more active in church \_\_\_\_\_
16. I would refuse because new churches are usually disorganized, I hate chaos \_\_\_\_\_
17. I would accept because in a new church it is easier to try new ideas and things \_\_\_\_\_
18. I would refuse because I want to be around many people, I love my big church \_\_\_\_\_
19. I would accept since in a new and smaller church I would get to know more people \_\_\_\_\_
20. I would refuse since starting a new church will increase my financial commitment \_\_\_\_\_
21. I would accept because if people won't come to church, take the church to them \_\_\_\_\_
22. I would refuse because a new church usually lacks good facilities \_\_\_\_\_
23. I would accept because I want to obey Christ's command: "Go ye therefore..." \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for completing the form. God Bless you.

## FORM P

This form should be completed by District Pastors.

## Section 1

Your assistance in responding to the following questions will be greatly appreciated. Circle the option that best describes you and the way you feel.

1. How old are you? a) Between 10 and 20 years of age. b) 21-30. c) 31-40. d) 41-50. e) 51 and above
  2. What gender are you? a) Female b) Male
  3. Which of the following best describes your highest educational qualification?
    - a) Primary School Certificate
    - b) Form Two Certificate
    - c) 'O' Level Certificate
    - d) 'A' Level Certificate
    - e) At least a University Degree
  4. Were you born a Seventh-day Adventist? Yes \_\_\_ or No \_\_\_
  5. If you were not born a Seventh-day Adventist, how did you become one?
    - a) Was invited to church by a friend or relative
    - b) Through an evangelistic effort
    - c) Through literature evangelism
    - d) Through *Zande* evangelism
    - e) By attending a Seventh-day Adventist School
    - f) None of the above
  6. If your response was (f) in number 5, how did you become an Adventist?
- 
7. Which of the following best describes the size of your church?
    - a) Less than 50 members
    - b) Between 50 and a 100 members
    - c) Between 100 and 200 members
    - d) Between 200 and 300 members
    - e) 300 members and above
  8. How many Branch Sabbath Schools does your church operate?
    - a) None
    - b) 1
    - c) 2
    - d) 3
    - e) 4
    - f) 5 and above
  9. How many Companies does your church supervise?
    - a) 0
    - b) 1
    - c) 2
    - d) 3
    - e) 4
    - f) 5 and above
  10. Have you ever worked with a Branch Sabbath School or Company? Yes \_\_\_ or No \_\_\_

## Section 2

On a scale of 1 to 5 rate your attitude as well as that of your District. 1=Strongly disagree, 2=Mildly disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Mildly agree, 5= Strongly agree. Circle one of the five.

- |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 11. Planting or starting a new church in my District will disturb other projects and programs we have in mind for the future.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. I wish we could plant more churches in our District but the problem is lack of trained leadership to run the new churches.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. It is not a noble idea to start new churches in this District because existing churches will lose members, leaders and givers who support the churches financially.                                 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. Our existing churches are not yet ready to parent new churches.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. We cannot plant new churches because it is too expensive.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 16. It is very difficult to start new churches and for this reason we cannot do it.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 17. My District has a strong compassion for the unchurched.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 18. My District is culturally relevant because it ministers to the needs of all groups of people in our territory.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 19. The priority in our District is <i>The Great Commission</i> given by Jesus Christ, therefore, we look beyond limitations such as money or otherwise in our effort to bring as many people to Jesus. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

## FORM P

20. My District has a lot of faith in God and is confident that He is able to help us plant more churches than we now have. 1 2 3 4 5
21. We have a kingdom perspective of things, therefore, we encourage each church to plant new churches even if it means that some aspects of their local ministry will be affected. 1 2 3 4 5
22. My District has very generous churches which give of their time, talent, strength, and money. 1 2 3 4 5

## Section 3

On a scale of 1 to 5 rate the effectiveness of the *Zunde* method of church growth in reaching the following segments of the population in the Central Zimbabwe Conference. On the scale, 1= Not effective at all, 2= Not very effective, 3= Effective, 4= Quite effective, 5= Very effective.

23. How effective is the *Zunde* method of evangelism in reaching the black elite ( the rich and highly educated upper class) in the CZF? 1 2 3 4 5
24. How effective is the *Zunde* method of evangelism in reaching the black middle class in the CZF? 1 2 3 4 5
25. How effective is the *Zunde* method in reaching the Colored and Indian minorities in the CZF? 1 2 3 4 5
26. How effective is the *Zunde* reaching the lower classes in the cities and towns of the CZF? 1 2 3 4 5
27. How effective is the *Zunde* method in reaching the people in the communal or rural areas? 1 2 3 4 5
28. How effective are the public evangelistic efforts in reaching the black elite in CZC? 1 2 3 4 5
29. How effective are the public evangelistic efforts in reaching the black middle class in CZC? 1 2 3 4 5
30. How effective are the public evangelistic efforts in reaching the Colored and Indian minorities in the CZC? 1 2 3 4 5
31. How effective are the public evangelistic efforts in reaching the lower classes in the cities and towns of the CZF? 1 2 3 4 5
32. How effective are the public evangelistic efforts in reaching the people in the communal or rural areas in the CZC? 1 2 3 4 5
33. Which is the most effective method of church growth you are currently using in the Central Zimbabwe Conference? Give your comments below. \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

24. What strategy are you laying for the evangelization of the White, Colored, and Indian minorities as well as the Moslems in the Central Zimbabwe Conference? Give your comments below. \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

*Thank you for completing the form. God bless you.*

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