

S O U T H E R N A S I A - P A C I F I C

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**New
AIIAS President
Installed**

PAGE 8

SOUTHERN ASIA-PACIFIC
OUTLOOK

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I started writing this piece six hours to 12 P.M., December 24, 2006 as the clocked chimed a familiar tune, “Should old acquaintance be...” Then suddenly my mind raced back six hours to 12 midnight when my wife Shirly and I said “I do” 37 years ago!

Now we have three grown-up children, who, except my youngest, have their own families. It is nostalgic, indeed. Our wedding day was marked with festivities like Christmas vespers always offer.

My daughter Iris just came from a short recreational trip with her couple friends. They offered us company as the world awaited the heavens littered with myriads of multicolored fireworks.

My son in Singapore and daughter in Davao sent their families’ anniversary and Christmas greetings. I said to myself, “Will we ever have another anniversary and Christmas celebration together with them?” I hope that wish does not remain remote even if distance has become a real factor.

As I write this piece, three neighbors have knocked at our door delivering their Christmas gifts. Wow! I hope there won’t be another knock so that the night would be more meaningful: more than 2,000 years ago, Jesus had three visiting wise men with their gifts, commemorating the first Christmas ever!

Yes, 37 Christmases have gone since our family was established. Some were white, others blue. Some were memorable; others insignificant. What matters, though, is that Jesus’ purpose in the first place has never changed direction—to reestablish a relationship that was lost in the Eden home. He did it for me and for my family—He did it for you. And He will continue to do it for us all!

My wife and I still long to spend Christmas with our children and grandchildren when we will relive the bygone days that we enjoyed very much when they were young. At that time we will tell bedtime stories to our grandchildren. What a day that will be. It could be here on earth or at the palace on high surrounded with the angels. The grandest will be that Jesus will be there to tell us real-life stories of victories and triumphs.

Oh Lord, let that day come, soon!

CHRIST- MAS REESTAB- LISHES A RELA- TIONSHIP



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is the editor of Southern Asia-Pacific Division
OUTLOOK and Adventist News Dispatch.

Farewells at Adventist Regional Headquarters

ADVENTIST NEWS DISPATCH

Silang, Cavite, Philippines - Bidding farewell is always hard to do because people have become part of us—and they of us, and the thought of them being around has already been a norm. And then they leave.

Farewell parties are usual events to the personnel at the Adventist headquarters in the Southern Asia-Pacific region (SSD). This time, two valuable leaders, Dr. Stephen R Guptill, education director and Dr. GT Ng, executive secretary, were called to new assignments; Guptill, as president of the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies (AIAS); and Ng, as associate secretary at the Adventist world headquarters in Maryland, USA.



The SSD Social Committee together with the SSD staff prepared a farewell party for Drs Guptill and Ng and their wives on November 12, at 7:00 pm, during the final week of the SSD Annual Council meetings, where officers and delegates from unions and institutions were among the well-wishers. It was a time to reminisce “good old” memories and making new ones, and good food!

Video presentations, songs and gifts were presented to honor them.

Ng worked for the division headquarters for six years while Guptill worked for 11 years. Peggy, wife of Dr. Guptill, will continue to serve as secretary for the associate treasurer at SSD.



Adventist Health Leaders Hold Convention, Outreach

ARMAND D ARDANAS

Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines - The Adventist Health Professionals Association (AHPA) of the Adventist church in Northern Mindanao (NMC) held its Annual Convention at Kaamulan, Malaybalay City, November 4, with the theme, "The Role of Faith and Integrity in Health." This was followed by a medical outreach in Kisolon, Bukidnon, a day after. Hosting the two events was the AHPA-Zone 4 headed by Amy A. Reyes and assisted by her husband, Dr. Raymond B. Reyes.

Representatives from five zones of AHPA came with their families and invited guests. Delegates from the nursing department of Mountain View College also attended the convention. They were led by Dr. Danny Dial, MVC president, who also was the speaker for the Sabbath morning worship. Pastor Alejandro G Perez, health director of the Adventist church in southern Philippines (SPUC), gave a health lecture at the start of the program.

On Sabbath afternoon, Dr. Klaus Irrgang, professor at the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies, presented a lecture on stress management.

The mayor of Sumilao, Bukidnon, Mary Ann A. Baula, gave her support to the medical outreach as 412 of her constituents took advantage of the medical, dental and optical services.

"It is very important for the church to maintain our integrity and our faith so we can do our duty as servants of God because out of integrity grows respect, loyalty, self-control, trustworthiness, responsibility, thankfulness, care, cooperation, and courage. We are not born with integrity; we cannot buy integrity; we must learn integrity," said Dr. Gay B Ardanas, AHPA president, as she addressed the delegates, "And we are committed to supporting our church in upholding integrity and faith. Because nobody can say that he is totally healthy if his integrity and faith are questionable."

AHPA has been actively serving the people of northern Mindanao since the time of Dr. Miriam Ruth Dela Calzada, who formerly headed the AHPA, holding numerous health expos and conventions.

"We give special thanks to Pastor Abraham Carpena, health director for the Adventist Church in the southern Asia-Pacific region (SSD), Pastor Alejandro Perez of SPUC, Pastor Eugene dela Peña, health director of the church in northern Mindanao and to all benefactors who contributed to the success of the convention," said the program organizers. "Without their support our convention and medical outreach would not be as successful as this."



Medical & Optical Check-up with free Medicines
ADVENTIST HEALTH PROFESSIONALS
in LGU SUMILAO @ George F. Baula Sports Center
November 5, 2006, KISOLON, SUMILAO, BUKIDNON



300 Attend Team Ministry Congress

NEDA JUNE SALAZAR

Cebu City, Philippines – Three hundred participants attended the recently held Team Ministry Congress for ministers and their wives at Central Philippine Adventist College (CPAC) in Murcia, Negros Occidental in central Philippines.

The participants represented the church headquarters in the East Visayas, Central Visayas, Negros Oriental-Siquijor, Negros Occidental, West Visayas, and Romblon field. Spearheaded by the Ministerial Association of the Adventist Church in Central Philippines, the program was held in coordination with the Adventist Church in the Southern Asia-Pacific (SSD) region.

Pastor Albert Gulfan, Jr, SSD president, opened the program with a spiritual challenge to all ministers and wives. Later that day, he also presented to the pastoral couples a topic entitled, “Winning the Straying Members.” The first topic discussed at the Congress was on Retirement Plans by Sergie Ferrer, undersecretary of SSD. He got the interest of his audience by presenting statistics regarding family finance among ministers.

Dr. Peter Prime, associate ministerial secretary at the Adventist world church (GC), enlivened the participants with his presentations on love, which became the running theme of the congress. He exhorted that the very essence of our existence is love, that is, loving God and our neighbors. And failure to love means failure to connect—the source of all failures and problems in life. His other presentations were on Evangelism & Evangelistic Methodology and Marriage and Family.”

Dr. Martin Feldbush, GC director for Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries, inspired the participants with topics: How Jesus Cared for People in Crisis, Caring for Adults in Crisis, and Bereavement Ministry. His wife, Martha shared Caring for Children in Crisis and A developmental Look at Human Need.

Helen Gulfan, SSD Coordinator for Shepherdess International, nurtured the participants’ spirits with refreshing thoughts on her presentation entitled, A Walk With God. She demonstrated ways on how to do journaling in order to enrich one’s spiritual life, while Dr. Neda June Salazar, professor at the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies (AIAS), reinforced Dr. Prime’s talk on love. She emphasized love with power and conviction as well as elucidating the ripple effect of love and lack of it in one’s life; how it affects personal, family and work life. Her other topics were Basic Counseling Skills and Qualities of a Good Counselor.

Pastor Houtman Sinaga, ministerial association secretary of the church at SSD, talked on spiritual maturity as he invoked the great need of it among workers. Dr Alfredo Amada, president of CPAC, showed his warm welcome to the delegates as evidenced by the delicious and balanced food served by the college. He also hosted a banquet by the pool which served as a delightful respite from the hectic schedule of the program.

Sabbath morning delegates were treated to some inspiring and heart rendering experiences straight from the lives of ministers and their wives. Their lives are living testimonies of the goodness of God.

The closing program on Sabbath afternoon was participated in by all delegates as they delved on the theme, “Tell The World.” It was highlighted by the awarding of service pins to the ministers and hospital leaders. Asked about their impression of the event, some participants said it was “encouraging to workers who spent years of faithful service to the ministry.”



Upper Myanmar bounces back after stormy days

KHAI KHAN KHUAL

THE CHURCH IN Upper Myanmar provides half the size of the total membership of Myanmar's Seventh-day Adventist population. Its more than 97 organized churches and companies are shepherded by 155 pastors and their wives. During the last four years, 1,400 baptized members were purged from the list for apostasy as the field was rocked by controversy. But the picture is reshaping as the church bounces back to normalcy.

Its dark days were lighted up with greater efforts and victories—six satellite efforts were conducted. The February 2006 VOP series broadcasts on downlink sites recorded more baptisms followed by the successful evangelistic effort in June conducted by Pastor Albert Gulfan, president of the Adventist Church in the southern Asia-Pacific region. One hundred nine new church members began to replenish the lost ones.

The November 2006 'Ignite Myanmar 2006' of the Back to Eden evangelistic team baptized 153 precious candidates in Mandalay; 148 in Pangpi, Kalemoyo; and 171 in Siyin, Kalemoyo, where the Upper Myanmar Adventist Seminary is located.

As the largest mission territory, Upper Myanmar is home to many ethnic groups, and the church is better known by the name AWR. Many people testify of their affiliation as regular listeners of Bama, Chin, Kayin, and Mizo AWR programs.

Mr. Nang Khan Cin, elder of Pangpi Seventh-day Adventist Church, founder of the Everlasting Gospel Team (EGT), owns the Golden Cross orphanage and a member of the Upper Myanmar Executive Committee. His rubber plantation was accorded national distinction as best plantation in the Kalay District. It was given national coverage at MRTV in October 2006.

"We praise God for what He wrought to our church in Upper Myanmar," said Kenneth Suanzanang, communication director for the country. "It has survived the shaking, and more are coming in to embrace the Three Angels' messages of Revelation 14 and we are fast offsetting the lost of membership, in fact, a plan was underway to reorganized one of the lost churches in the district," concluded Suanzanang.

New AIIAS President Elected

GINA WAHLEN, DEVELOPMENT OFFICER, AIIAS

Dr. Stephen Guptill, education director for the Adventist Church in the southern Asia-Pacific region, has been elected president of the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies (AIIAS), October 8, at the institution's management committee meeting held in Washington, D.C..

A graduate level educational institution of the Adventist world church, AIIAS consists of the School of Graduate Studies and the Theological Seminary, and has a total yearly enrollment of over 600 master's and doctoral level students, including those studying at the school's distance learning centers.

Guptill has served in the Asian region for over 23 years, beginning as an assistant professor of theology and chairman of the health education department at Hong Kong Adventist College from 1974-1980. He also served as the college church pastor.

After completing a Doctor of Education in Education Administration and Leadership degree from Loma Linda University in 1982, Guptill served as vice president for public relations, alumni, recruitment and development at Pacific Union College in Angwin, California and then as president of a development corporation of San Diego Academy.

In 1990 Guptill returned to Asia where he served as president of Bangladesh Adventist Seminary and College until 1995. While there he was instrumental in major campus development, including the construction of a new church, women's dormitory, dining hall/gymnasium, bell tower, library and walkways and landscaping around the campus. The new college library was named in his honor in 1995.

Since 1995, Guptill has served in the Education Department of the Southern Asia-Pacific Division (SSD), first as associate director, then as director beginning in 1997. In this capacity Guptill served as chair of the Commission on Accreditation for SSD, and as a board member of numerous colleges in the region. He also coordinated the annual SSD College Presidents' Council. Guptill has given frequent lectures and seminars on school administration and faith and learning. He has a special interest in curriculum development for colleges and libraries, and has written a number of textbooks being used throughout the region.

Dr. Guptill will be installed as the seventh AIIAS

NEW AIIAS PRESIDENT ELECTED, to page 11



New AIIAS President Installed

GINA WAHLEN

Silang, Cavite, Philippines — Dr. Stephen R. Guptill was installed as the seventh president of the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies (AIIAS), November 11.

During the presidential installation service, Dr. Paoring Ragui, vice president for student affairs and public relations and the longest serving AIIAS faculty member, recalled the history of how God has led the institution.

“This is my personal testimony,” said Ragui, “because I have seen how God has always brought the right leader at the right time.” Illustrating his talk with slides of the six previous AIIAS presidents: Drs. Leslie G. Hardinge, Werner Vyhmeister, Rolando Itin, John Pesulima, David Birkenstock, and Julian Melgosa, Ragui expressed confidence in God’s leading in the process of choosing Dr Guptill as the next AIIAS president.

Dr. Eugene Hsu, vice president of the Seventh-day Adventist World Church and chairman of the board of AIIAS, emphasized God’s leading in the life of Dr Guptill, who has served in educational leadership positions in Asia for over 21 years, most recently as the education director of the Southern Asia-Pacific Division (SSD) of the world church.

In his dedicatory address, Hsu said “this service is more than a time for change in leadership. It is a time for establishing the next level or direction of vision for the institution. This is a critical point in the history of AIIAS as it faces a world that is ever changing and the challenges that are ever increasing, both inside the church and in society.” He said further, “I am pleased that we have found the right individual to lead AIIAS into the 21st century in the person of Dr. Stephen Guptill.”

“This is a great university with a wonderful heritage, of which I am proud to be a part,” said Guptill in his acceptance speech. “The alumni of the master and doctoral programs of the seminary and graduate schools hold prestigious positions around the world, including university presidency, world church education leadership and health professionals...”

“The true measure of leadership and success is how well we can fulfill the mission of the church, and the plans God has

NEW AIIAS PRESIDENT INSTALLED, to page 11



New Executive Secretary and Education Director Appointed

ADVENTIST NEWS DISPATCH

THE NEWLY APPOINTED executive secretary of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Southern Asia-Pacific (SSD) region, was confirmed by the Executive Committee of the world church, on Wednesday, November 15, a day after it was recommended by the delegates of the 2006 SSD annual council.

Dr Hendrik Sumendap has taken the place of Dr GT Ng, who was recently elected as associate secretary for the world church. Dr Sumendap has served SSD as Sabbath School and Personal Ministries director for more than 12 years until his election as secretary, elevating him to an officer position of the church in the region.

Also on Tuesday, the delegates voted to elect Dr Larry Boughman as Education Director vice Dr Guptill, who earlier accepted the call to become President of the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies (AIAS). Dr Boughman, who is serving as education director at a conference in the United States, was assistant director of education for the region when its headquarters was based in Singapore. He was also a professor at AIAS before returning to the United States. Also voted to replace Dr Sumendap as Sabbath School and Personal Ministries (SS/PM) director was Pastor Leonardo R Asoy, ministerial secretary for the church in Southern Philippines (SPUC). For several years he served as SS/PM director for SPUC.

(Note: As we went to press, Dr Boughman declined the appointment.)



TOP PICTURE: Elder Alberto Gulfan, presented to the delegates, Dr. Hendrik Sumendap, the new SSD Executive Secretary, during the SSD Annual Council.

ABOVE PICTURE: SSD president Alberto Gulfan (middle), SSD treasurer Keith Heinrich (right) with the out-going SSD executive secretary GT Ng (left).



President Arroyo Challenges Public Servants

MELINDA H. TORMES

Silang, Cavite, Philippines - President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo challenged the participants of the first National Summit of Bagong Usbong na Lingkod Bayan or BULB (New Breed of Public Servants) to help in nation building by uplifting moral integrity and the lives of state workers.

Speaking at the second day of the four-day conference held at the Adventist University of the Philippines (AUP) gymnasium in Silang Cavite, October 25-29, Arroyo said: “Our progress can only continue if you and I as public servants knock down the walls that are dividing our country.” She emphasized the hope that BULB expects to achieve and that is “to uplift not only the state workers’ moral integrity, but also their lives.”



Aiming to uplift the moral standards of Christians working in government offices, BULB’s vision is to provide “a venue for the exercise of the ministry...by taking part in good governance.” With its theme, “Moral Integrity: A Key to Nation Building,” organizers believed that Christians, particularly Seventh-day Adventists in public service, can spell out a difference in their workplace by being honest and truthful in the performance of their functions.

BULB was registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission as an advocacy group composed of government officials and employees. On its successful attempt to gather all church leaders and members in public service to a forum, Dr Jonathan C Catolico, Communica-

tion and Public Affairs and Religious Liberty (PARL) director for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Southern Asia Pacific region, explained that “[This is a forum to] interact with each other and generate stronger desire to get involved in the proclamation of the everlasting gospel!”

“There is, indeed, a pressing need for new breed of public servants to come out in the open and share their values-oriented principles in serving better the Filipino people,” said Philippine Undersecretary Teddie Elson Rivera. He is also the national president of the BULB. “Part of moral integrity is lifestyle transformation,” he stressed.

PRESIDENT ARROYO CHALLENGES..., to page 11

Several topics on strengthening the moral responsibility of some 300 Christian public officials in attendance were presented. These topics included Transparent and Productive Service, Model of Character Development in Public Service, Nation Building through Cooperative Efforts, and Christian Workers' Social Responsibility. The speakers of the Summit were a mixture of government and church leaders.

Among the government dignitaries besides the President, were Department Secretaries: Honorable Rolando Puno, Department of Interior and Local Government; Honorable Roberto Pagdanganan, Department of Trade and Industry; Honorable Jesli Lapuz, Department of Education; and several commissioners and congressmen.

On the religious sector, church leaders made presentations on the above topics. Among those who spoke were Dr Catolico; Pastor Alberto Gulfan Jr., president of the Adventist Church in the Southern Asia-Pacific region; Pastor Abner Roque, president of the Adventist Church in Northern Philippines (NPUM); Pastor Wendell Serrano, executive secretary of the Adventist Church in southern Philippines; Dr Nestor Rilloma, president of the Northern Luzon Adventist College; Pastor Daniel Viloso, former president of NPUM; and several others.

Along with Rivera, organizers of the said summit were the Honorable Harlin Cast Abayon, Congressman, 1st District of Northern Samar and the national chairman of the BULB; Rodolfo Bautista, national coordinator of the BULB; in cooperation with Public Affairs and Religious Liberty Department of the regional and world offices of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

For more information on BULB activities, interested parties may write or call BULB National Office at Unit 1205, Taipan Place Condominium, F. Ortigas cor. Julia Vargas Sts., Ortigas Center, Pasig City with phone numbers (02) 631-6640; (02) 631-8338.

for this institution," Guptill continued, "and I realize what a privilege we have to prepare Christian leaders for service to the whole world."

The special service of dedication and installation began with a flag processional featuring the 45 countries served by AIIAS represented by the faculty, staff and students. Musical anthems presented by the AIIAS Jr Academy children, under the direction of Mrs. Margaret Whidden, and the AIIAS International Ladies' Choir, directed by Mrs. Mi Hyang Song, enriched the program.

At the special request of the new AIIAS President, soloist Dr. Demuel Dee Berto, sang "Find Us Faithful" following a prayer of dedication by Pastor Alberto Gulfan, president of the Southern Asia-Pacific Division.

Representatives from the world church, along with delegates from SSD, community leaders, faculty, staff and students, as well as the greater AIIAS community members attended the service, which was the highlight of a series of special events that weekend.

On Friday, a groundbreaking ceremony was held in celebration of a greatly anticipated multi-purpose building which will house a new church, as well as provide a state-of-the art auditorium, preaching lab and classrooms, health and social facilities. The building will be constructed through a generous gift from philanthropist Dr. Tan Hian-Tsin in Singapore, along with matching funds from the Northern and Southern-Asia Pacific Divisions, the AIIAS Seventh-day Adventist Church, and many personal donations.

Friday evening featured a sacred music concert, showcasing the numerous ethnic choirs of AIIAS. Following the installation service on Sabbath, a grand fellowship dinner was held, with a large variety of international foods, for the approximately 1,000 attendees.

AIIAS is a graduate-level educational institution of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, and is the first G.C. educational institution to be located outside of the United States. AIIAS holds full accreditation by the Adventist Accrediting Association (AAA), located in Silver Spring, MD, and has recently become a member of the prestigious International Association of Universities, the UNESCO-based worldwide association of higher education institutions.

The institution is also accredited by the Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges, and Universities (PAASCU), and the Association for Theological Education in South East Asia (ATESEA), which is affiliated with the Association of Theological Schools and the World Conference of Associations of Theological Institutions.

NEW AIIAS PRESIDENT ELECTED, from page 7

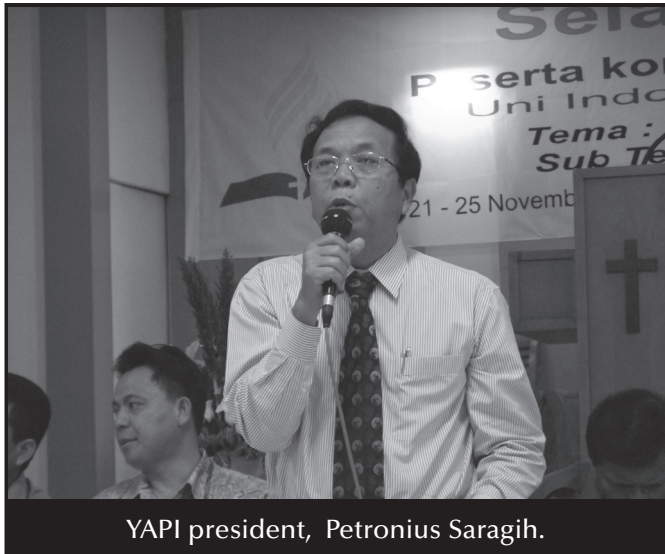
President at a special service of dedication and installation to be held on the AIIAS campus on Saturday, Nov. 11, at 10 a.m.

"Faculty, staff and students welcome Dr. Guptill and his wife, Peggy, acknowledging God's guidance in providing a couple so experienced in the concerns of this region," said Dr. Graeme Perry, dean of the School of Graduate Studies, and acting AIIAS president.

The Guptills have two grown children—Christopher, who works as a computer graphic designer for Loma Linda University Press; and Wendy, who is currently serving as a missionary nurse in Palawan, Philippines.

YAPI: The Poor and the Needy— Our Mission Field

JONATHAN CATOLICO



YAPI president, Petronius Saragih.

Jakarta, Indonesia – In every locality—be it urban or rural—the poor and the needy exist. This situation is a usual sight that majority has lost sight of. Many hearts have become hardened to emotional perks as they pass through streets littered by people—young and old, with their way of extracting compassion—young babies on arms—as they ask for alms.

The Seventh-day Adventist church members in Jakarta had a feeling opposite the ‘norm’ and the usual. They banded themselves to organize the Yayasan Advent Peduli Indonesia (YAPI) to look into the very need of the unfortunate children who by themselves could never find a home. “Our goal is to establish at every headquarters of the church in the regions of Indonesia an orphanage so we can provide a decent home for children who have no more parents to take care of them,” said Jannus Hutapea, vice president of YAPI and a leader of the Seventh-day Adventist Church at the church headquarters in western Indonesia.

“The Lord is coming soon and so we need to put our resources to where they are needed to prepare people for such a glorious event,” said Petronius Saragih, president of YAPI. “Our faithfulness in returning to God His share of the entrusted wealth in us should be non-negotiable. It is what God wants us to do and there should be no disregard of it.”

One YAPI initiator echoed this thought, “We have a role to play in bringing the gospel to the world regard-

less of economic status—poor or rich—especially to the unfortunate children in the streets who need the care of a mother or a father. This we can do only by providing them a home.”

YAPI has been on the go since 2005, and within the period it exists it has provided help to several needs. It gave financial assistance of millions of rupees to the survivors of the tsunami in Nias in 2005, and recently, to those who suffered loss in the Jogakarta earthquake. Today it has established orphanages in the localities in Medan and Pontianak, and it hopes to complete the same projects in Kupang, Jawa Tengah, Manado, and Bali, all of Indonesia.

Aside from orphanages, they also provide housing for workers in the different mission fields by donating millions of rupees to this effect. Other projects include renovation of existing church headquarters, hospitals and other establishments.

The YAPI ministry has for its leadership the following: Petronius Saragih, president; Jannus O Hutapea, vice-president; Stevanus Wijaya, treasurer; Henkie W Suawah, secretary; and members: Hartono Elia, Doli Simorangkir; B Sihotang, Keke Sumendap, Edison Mawikere, Ferdinand Iskandar, and Herman Chandra. Providing counsels and advise include Dr Jonathan Kuntaraf of the Seventh-day Adventist world church; Pastor Johnny Lubis of the church in West Indonesia; Pastor Bobby Sepang of East Indonesia; and Gunawan Tedjasukmana.

“We won’t be neglecting orphaned Adventist children,” said Iskandar, “as we will help supply their needs, as well. About 50 percent of those we have been providing homes are the unfortunate Adventist children who lost their parents.”





IFCEEN

Church Members See Spiritual Needs of Company Executives

ADVENTIST NEWS DISPATCH

Jakarta, Indonesia – Foremost in the minds of a group of Seventh-day Adventist members in Indonesia is how to address the spiritual needs of professionals and executives who sit at their high-rise offices in the metropolises of Indonesia. This concern was finally addressed when church members recently organized a ministry that directly catered to this need.

Thus the Indonesia Friendship Center for Executives and Entrepreneurs (IFCEEN) came into being within the group engaging itself into providing spiritual nurture to hundreds of people otherwise unreached by traditional methods.

A weekly devotional time was first attended by 40 executives and professionals but later had swollen to close to 200. This weekly devotional has attracted busy young adults and older ones to find time to take a break from the strenuous demands of their work. In fact, many have been attending nurturing presentations on NEWSTART programs—a great need indeed for people who value life while being pressed for lifework activities.

“Among other things, this weekly devotional has attracted people of different religious persuasions to attend and consider interesting topics such as how to understand and study the Bible,” said Jannus O Hutapea, one of the initiators of IFCEEN.

Ferdinand Iskandar, president of the IFCEEN, on Wednesday, November 23, told church leaders at their yearend meetings, that the ministry will fully support the church initiatives on “telling the world” the message of hope and love and to participate in activities that will “hasten the fulfillment of this message—the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.”



IFCEEN president, Ferdinand Iskandar

“I look at this initiative as the best way to reach the urban jungles of Indonesia,” said Jonathan C Catolico, communication director for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the southern Asia-Pacific region, who was at the meeting of leaders. “Church leaders and laity joining hands to preach the gospel to this vast segment of unreached people on high rise offices is a manifestation of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon His people—to finish the work and then the Lord

comes.”

The IFCEEN board is composed of Ferdinand Iskandar, president; Petronius Saragih, Jannus Hutapea, Stevanus W Suwandi, Doli Simorangkir, Peggy Iskandar, Hartono Elia, Veronia Dewi Setiawan, Edison Mawikere, Anjuan Sibuea, as members; and advisers include Dr Jonathan Kuntaraf from the Adventist world headquarters in Maryland, USA, and the officers of the Jakarta Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Myanmar Adventist Church Records Highest in Baptism

MAN/AND

Yangon, Myanmar – The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Myanmar has made history when 903 people were baptized following six simultaneous evangelistic meetings at six locations on November 11-18, conducted by the Back to Eden Team composed of 46 guests from the United States and South Korea. This record surpassed the accession of 514 new members into church roll through baptism on January 17, 2004.

The new baptism events took place at six different locations: Pathein, with 234 baptisms; Yangon, 138; Hpa-an, Kayin State, 71; Mandalay, 147; Pangpi, Kalemyo, 142; and Siyin, Kalemyo, 171.

“Field preparations were done since the start of 2006 through the ‘Ignite Myanmar 2006’ program using the Voice of Prophecy Discovery courses,” said Kenneth Suanzanang, communication director for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Myanmar. The six teams of four or five members enlisted 4,655 enrollees to the course resulting to 1,437 graduates. Each group was provided with motorcycles for use to visit remote places. About 80 bicycles were made available during the ground work prior to the final launching of the evangelistic meetings.

Among the team who came to Myanmar was the president of the Bicycle Ministry. In his speech at the turnover of the bicycles, he said that “Myanmar is the first country in Asia that benefited from the ministry next to Africa.”

At Hotel Panda in Yangon, a luncheon meeting was held to honor the 46 guests from United States and South Korea. Pastor Muller Kyaw, president of the Adventist Church in Myanmar, expressed his appreciation, saying: “I am very pleased by the visit of the Back to Eden Team because they came not for pleasure, neither for personal business but they were here to help the Myanmar people know Jesus and the way to salvation by not only preaching the Word but healing the sick.” The team was composed of pastors, medical doctors, nurses and paramedics. They attended to more than five thousand patients in one week’s time.

“We were more than cured of our diseases—our spiritual weaknesses were also addressed,” the patients confessed.

In November of last year, Korean Pastor Daniel Jinwang Yoo and his wife conducted an evangelistic meeting in Myanmar. After the series, a proposal was firmed up between him and Pastor Kenneth Suanzanang. This proposal was later approved by the executive committee of the country church. “We saw the realization of that plan today,” added Suanzanang.

“We made history today because of the unprecedented partnership of lay members and church leaders. We saw the cooperation of everyone in order to achieve our goals. The church also made history because of the commitment of our American and Korean friends to share their time and resources in order to spread the gospel by way of preaching and healing,” said Pastor Caleb Paw, ministerial association secretary for the church in Myanmar. “Without the support of these brethren from here and abroad, this could not have happened today,” contributed Nang Do Dal, treasurer for the church.

As the team bade farewell to the people at Siyin village in Kalemyo, they promised to visit Myanmar again in 2008. “The same group will come,” said Pastor Shin A. Kim as he assured the teary-eyed audience. Suan Sawm Sang, a speaker for the local language reiterated the groups desire to finish God’s work “because we long to see heaven soon.” He, V.C. Mang, and Muanpi sang “O Holy Hill,” and “Lead me safely to the harbor” as the ceremony went to close.

It Is Enough!

They said, "Lord, look, here are two swords." And He said to them, "It is enough" (Luke 22: 38, NASV).

It must have been quite an interesting day and a very strange night for the disciples; a night they would never forget. The day began with Christ giving Peter and John a rather puzzling instruction to find a place where they would celebrate the Passover. Then, of all the men in the room, one they called Lord began to wash their feet (traditionally done by a servant).

As they were feasting, Christ began to speak of the bread as His body given for them and the wine as His blood poured out for them, saying further that one of them would betray Him!

The disciples must now be quite shocked to be accused of betrayal by their beloved Master. But there was still more to come for the disciples that evening. In the heat of their debate as to which one of them was regarded greatest, Christ began to remind them of the dissimilarity of His kingdom and the kingdoms of this world. And as the night deepened Christ said His farewell speech and the surrounding circumstance of His soon death. It was here the disciples urged Him, "Lord, look, here are two swords." They suggested the 'sword for sword' or 'tooth for tooth' remedy. But Christ could only respond: "It is enough."

In this brief account of the Lord's last supper we see a humble, thoughtful, and worried Master against a crew of ignorant and proud disciples. Christ was worried because of His disciples' ignorance and pride, seeing them as His

disciples' problems.

The disciples were too presumptuous to think Jesus had problems and that they could fix Christ's problems by offering Him the swords. They thought they could secure Him. They were His body guards, they surmised. After all they had been with Him a few years. But it was the other way around. They themselves needed Christ to protect and save them!

Similarly, under the guise of God's blessing and mercy, we float the idea that we have power, ability and influence to preserve and spread the Gospel.

But what makes us think God needs our protection and that we can provide this need?

Evidently, we don't see our real selves. But the truth is that we are the problem. Let's hear Christ saying, "Enough of yourself, enough of your self-sufficiency, let Me take charge of your life!"

Cin Sian Mung is an AIIAS graduate student from Myanmar



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