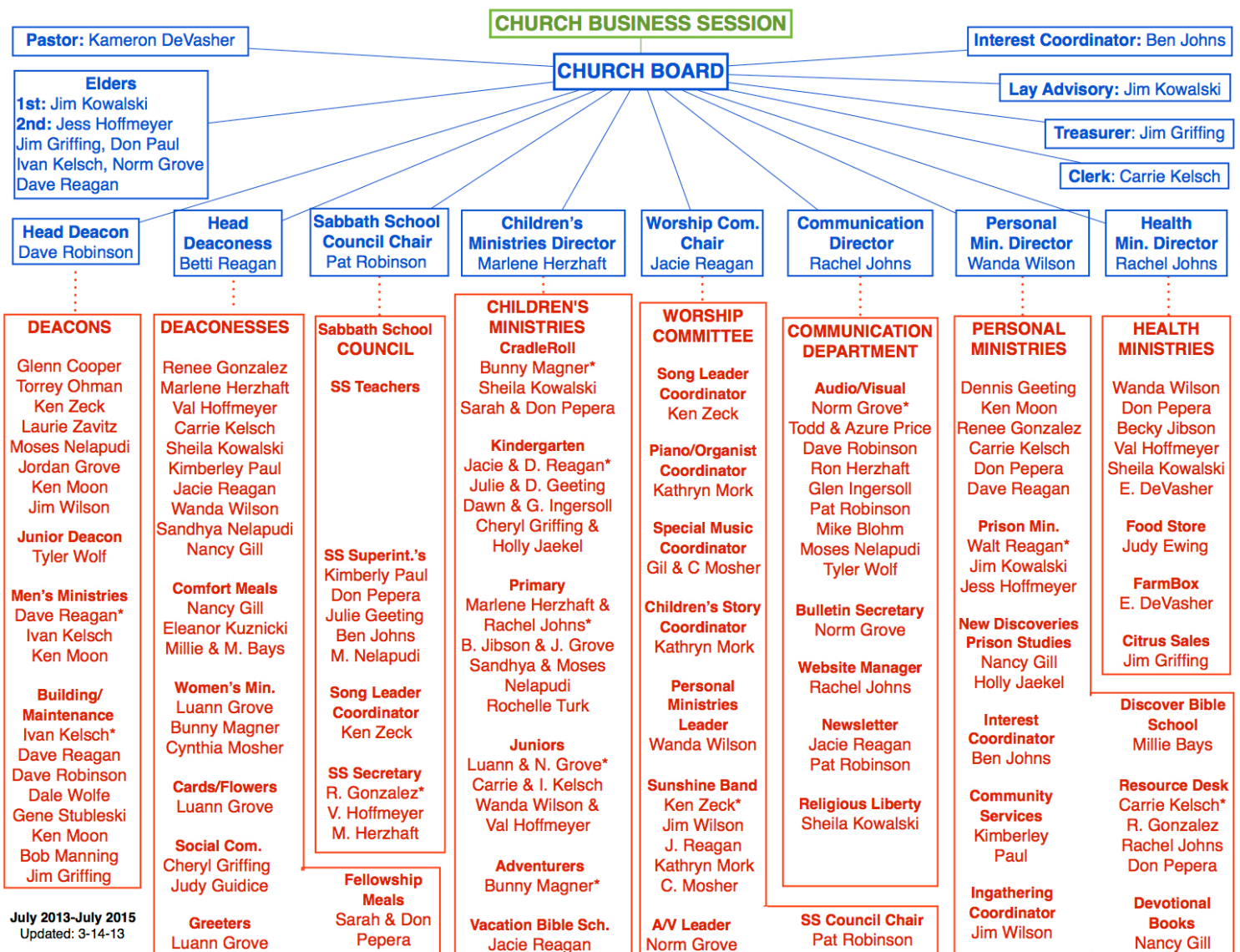


THE PURPOSE OF CHURCH STRUCTURE

- ▶ **Matthew 28:18-20** “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”
- ▶ **Acts of the Apostles, p, 9** The church is God's appointed agency for the salvation of men. It was organized for service, and its mission is to carry the gospel to the world... The members of the church, those whom He has called out of darkness into His marvelous light, are to show forth His glory.
- ▶ **Official SDA Church Mission Statement:** “The mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is to make disciples of all people, communicating the everlasting gospel in the context of the three angels' messages of Revelation 14:6-12, leading them to accept Jesus as personal Savior and unite with His remnant Church, discipling them to serve Him as Lord and preparing them for His soon return.”



**Excerpts from the *SDA Church Manual* (2010), pp. 124-127**

The gospel commission of Jesus makes evangelism, proclaiming the good news of the gospel, the primary function of the church (Matt. 28:18-20). It is, therefore, also the primary function of the board, which serves as the chief committee of the church. When the board devotes its first interests and highest energies to every-member evangelism, most problems are alleviated or prevented, and a strong, positive influence is felt in the spiritual life and growth of members.

1. The most important item on the agenda should be planning the evangelization of the outreach (missionary) territory of the church. In addition, once each quarter an entire meeting should be devoted to plans for evangelism. The board will study conference recommendations for evangelistic programs and methods and how they can be implemented locally. The pastor and the board will initiate and develop plans for public evangelistic campaigns.
2. Coordinating outreach programs of departments. The church board is responsible for coordinating the work of all church departments. Each department develops its plans for outreach within its own sphere. To avoid conflict in timing and competition in securing volunteers and to achieve maximum beneficial results, coordination is essential. Before completing and announcing plans for any program, each department should submit its plans to the board for approval. The departments also report to the board on the progress and results of their outreach programs. The board may suggest how departmental programs can contribute to the preparation, conduct, and follow-up of a public evangelistic campaign.
3. Encouraging the personal ministries department to enlist all members and children in some form of personal outreach (missionary) service. Training classes should be conducted in various lines of outreach ministry.
4. Encouraging the interest coordinator to ensure that every interest is personally and promptly followed up by an assigned layperson.
5. Encouraging each department to report at least quarterly to the board and to members at business meetings or in Sabbath meetings.
6. Receiving regular reports. The board should consider details of church business and receive regular reports of the treasurer on the church's finances. The board should study the membership record and inquire into the spiritual standing of all members and provide for visits to sick, discouraged, or backslidden members. Other officers should periodically report.

The board should permit no other business to interfere with planning for evangelism. Should other business be too time consuming, the board should appoint committees to care for specific areas of church business, such as finance or church building projects. Such committees will then make recommendations to the board.

**Excerpts from the *SDA Church Manual* (2010), p. 97, 98**

The personal ministries council guides the outreach (missionary) efforts of the church and works under the direction of the board. The council should meet at least once each month and should consist of the pastor, an elder, the treasurer, and leaders of the other departments and auxiliary services functioning in that congregation.

The [Personal Ministries] leader trains and directs members in outreach (missionary) service and chairs the personal ministries council. The leader reports in the monthly church outreach (missionary) Sabbath service and business meetings about total outreach (missionary) activities of the congregation. Assistants may be assigned to coordinate the Bible correspondence school, Bible evangelism, literature distribution, Ingathering (or equivalent appeals), small group ministries, member training, and other soul-winning programs.

**Excerpts from the SDA Church Manual (2010), p. 84**

An interest coordinator should be elected to make sure that interests developed through the church's missionary outreach are cared for promptly. This person is a member of the board and the personal ministries council and works directly with the pastor and chairperson of that council. Duties of this office include:

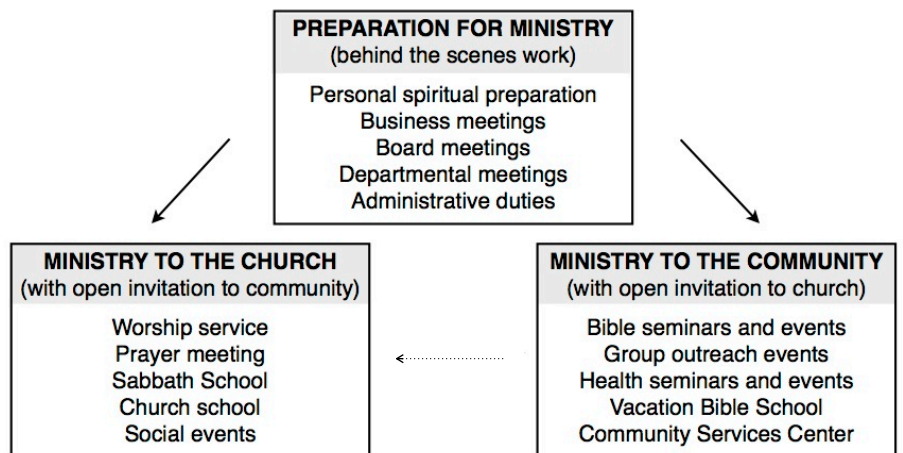
1. Keeping an organized list of all interests received by the church.
2. Assisting the pastor and chairperson of the personal ministries council in enlisting and recruiting qualified members for follow-up service.
3. Presenting to the board a monthly report on the number of interests received and followed up. When an interest is sufficiently developed, it should be shared with the pastor.

**TYPICAL CHURCH MINISTRY STRUCTURE**

Most Seventh-day Adventist churches probably function this way. At first glance, everything seems fine:

- ✓ Administrative work
- ✓ Ministry to the church family and the community
- ✓ Plenty of activities and programs, and even public evangelism
- ✓ Perhaps even steady tithe, stable membership, and healthy budget

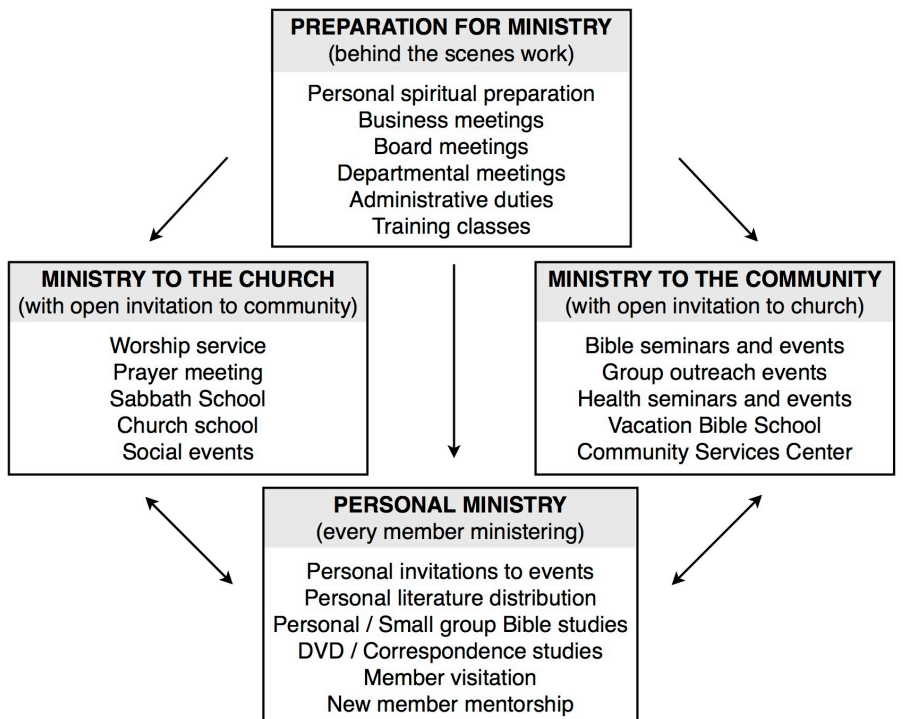
What is missing?



**TRAINING CENTER CHURCH MINISTRY STRUCTURE**

In a training center church, the primary objective is training, equipping, and employing all members in personal soul-winning labor and care for each other.

- ✓ First work of the board is evangelism in all its phases and the spiritual nurture of all members
- ✓ Classes held for all members to be effective personal soul-winners
- ✓ All corporate outreach activities, including evangelistic campaigns, simply augment ongoing personal work of the individual church members



God uses created beings as His ministers to care for the needs of each other.

- **Revelation 5:11** Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands
- **Hebrews 1:14** Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?
- **Mark 6:39-42** Then He commanded them to make them all sit down in groups on the green grass. So they sat down in ranks, in hundreds and in fifties. And when He had taken the five loaves and the two fish, He looked up to heaven, blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to His disciples to set before them; and the two fish He divided among them all. So they all ate and were filled.
- **Desire of Ages, p. 369** In Christ's act of supplying the temporal necessities of a hungry multitude is wrapped up a deep spiritual lesson for all His workers. Christ received from the Father; He imparted to the disciples; they imparted to the multitude; and the people to one another. So all who are united to Christ will receive from Him the bread of life, the heavenly food, to impart to others.
- **In Heavenly Places, p. 223** In heaven none will think of self, nor seek their own pleasure; but all, from pure, genuine love, will seek the happiness of the heavenly beings around them. If we wish to enjoy heavenly society in the earth made new, we must be governed by heavenly principles here.

#### Pastor

**SDA Church Manual (2010), p. 73** Because the pastor is appointed to the position in the church by the conference, the pastor serves the church as a conference employee, is responsible to the conference committee, and maintains a sympathetic and cooperative relation to and works in harmony with all the plans and policies of the local church. Elders, who are elected by the church, are responsible to that body and to its board.

#### Elders

**SDA Church Manual (2010), p. 72** The pastor should not assume all lines of responsibility, but should share these with the elders and other officers... The pastoral work of the church should be shared by the pastor and the elders. In counsel with the pastor, the elders should visit members, minister to the sick, foster prayer ministries, arrange or lead out in anointing services and child dedications, encourage the disheartened, and assist in other pastoral responsibilities.

#### Deacons / Deaconesses

**SDA Church Manual (2010), p. 77** In many churches visitation is arranged by distributing membership by districts and assigning a deacon to each district with the expectation that he will visit each home at least once a quarter.

**SDA Church Manual (2010), p. 78** If a church elects several deaconesses, it should organize a board of deaconesses chaired by the head deaconess and another deaconess serving as secretary. This board is authorized to assign duties to individual deaconesses and cooperates closely with the board of deacons, especially in welcoming members and visitors and in home visitation.

**SDA Church Manual (2010), p. 78** Deacons and deaconesses are charged with assisting the sick, poor, and unfortunate and should keep the church informed of their needs and enlist the support of members.

**SDA Elder's Handbook (2013), p. 123** Planning for home visitation should be a regular part of the elders' meeting. Visitation can be assigned to leading church members gifted and trained in the particular ministry. Such programs are often called a parish or under shepherd plan, where membership is usually divided into geographic zones. An elder, assisted by a deacon or deaconess, could be in charge of a parish zone. The pastor and elder[s] lead out in the visitation plan and other programs that build spiritual strength in the church.