

PROJECT ABSTRACT

Master of Arts in leadership

Adventist University of Africa

School of Postgraduate Studies

Title: A STRATEGY TO IMPROVE KARURA ADVENTIST SCHOOL
PRAYER LIFE

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Karura Adventist School offers a holistic approach to education integrating faith and learning. The school admits adherents of the SDA church and other religions, giving opportunity to all who qualify for admission both from the Republic of Kenya and other countries.

Though it is a Christian school, just like many institutions, the school has been experiencing a spasmodic prayer life. In addition, as a result of having a diverse population of different religious backgrounds, many of the students have different ideas on prayers. Most have an inconsistent prayer pattern.

The spasmodic prayer life affects both the academic and spiritual performance, as observed in the year 2011-2012. Thus the study on a model of a vibrant and effective prayer. This is aimed at enlightening on the various components of effective prayer as outlined in the Bible and various sources of prayer, as well as on the specific chronological order. Ultimately, the study introduces prayer as an

important element, necessary to produce a people of positive influence on the immediate society and on the world at large.

The study used a questionnaire method of data collection. This helped to identify existing prayer patterns and programs in the school, the effectiveness of the programs as well as providing a more solid perspective on how to cater for the various spiritual needs of the school. The study showed that most of the respondents need encouragement in giving preference and participation in the prayer program. The analysis enabled us to propose a prayer model, which helped usher people in prayer through a prayer session in a systematic way, that involves active and conscious participation of everyone involved.

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ADVENTIST SCHOOL PRAYER LIFE

A project
presented in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree
Master of Arts in Leadership

by
Jane Mukami Ndung'u

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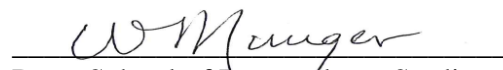
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

The Seventh-day Adventist Church education philosophy uses a holistic approach which ensures a balanced development of the mental, physical, social, and spiritual dimensions of life. Seventh-day Adventists are formally educated in all dimensions of life, where they learn to know, to do, to be and to relate with God and fellow human beings; in pursuit of a main objective, to reach all human beings for Christ in accordance with Revelation 14:6 which states: “And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people. (KJV)” and Matthew 28:19-20 which states “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, [even] unto the end of the world. Amen. (KJV)”

In light to this, the church has taken an initiative of developing institutions of learning that equip students not only with knowledge, but also with other competencies for a holistic life, relational skills, and service. This educational system is intended to integrate faith and learning in the process of educating.

An example of such institutions is Karura Seventh – day Adventist School. The school was started in 1934 by a missionary called W.W. Armstrong. The institution presently has a population of about 600 pupils and students, as well as 62

staff members; both teaching and supportive. It is double streamed both at primary and secondary levels, where all secondary school students are required to be boarders with a provision for primary level pupils to be boarders or day scholars. The school is managed by a board of governors and administrators, with the Principal as the overall head working in conjunction with a chaplain attached to the school, as a counselor and overseer of spiritual matters.

Although Karura is a Christian institution, there have been some challenges in connection with how Christian teachers, staff, and students engage in prayer and other spiritual exercises. Prayers have been irregular and inconsistent; hence a research on how to develop prayer habits that will become the life in the institution is needed. The school does not discriminate in its enrollment. As a result, some students come as church members or adherents, while others are from other Christian denominations and religions. All these children are sent to KAS with the hope that they will be taught moral standards.

The researcher's presupposition is that by praying together regularly, both the students and workers will grow stronger spiritually and be a positive influence to the community and beyond. In addition, the habits of regular prayer will, in turn, improve academic performance, and social life of both students and workers. The Project's focus is to develop a model prayer program which will enhance the spirit of prayer within the school community. Furthermore, the research aims at helping Karura to be a vibrant institution; where all are well connected with God through prayer, and ultimately helping the school reach her objective, excellence.

Statement of the Problem

A regular and consistent prayer life will improve Karura School's effectiveness, both academically and spiritually. But this prayer life does not seem to

be happening, therefore the question is asked of how to improve prayer life. This Very few in this school are convinced that prayer should be given preference and be an integral part of the school program. There is a departure from the Biblical blueprint in connection to how a believer should live, relate, and serve.

Many students as well as staff have forgotten that the Christian life is one that is lived in union with God through prayer. Nevertheless, the few committed who pray regularly and consistently for the institution and its development, experience tremendous and positive results. A vibrant prayer program, that will encourage and involve all in facilitation, would ensure a constant continued spirit of prayer in both normal and difficult times of life.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to research into various sources in connection with prayer, and develop an appropriate program of prayer that will be implemented at Karura School. This is aimed at helping the institution in addressing her challenges, as well as restoring the School to the blue print of doing Christian education, as was intended by the founders of the institution. All who join the institution have diverse expectations: the students expect to be in a place where they can learn peacefully, in good relationships and with the right peers, to help them meet and handle life challenges. Similarly, the staff members expect to have a peaceful and conducive working atmosphere. Therefore, by developing a prayer fellowship, this would be realized.

Justification of the Study

This study is justified in that the findings will inform the chaplaincy, the administration, and the teachers about the prayer life that facilitates holistic development of the Christian students as well as workers. The Project will also help to

motivate serious Christian students and workers to engage in prayer on a regular basis even when there are pressures of work and examinations. Moreover, this study will aid in successful completion of the requirements of a Master's degree in leadership by the researcher.

Delimitation

Although the problem of inadequate prayer life in institutions of learning is prevalent in many institutions, this study is delimited to Karura Adventist School. As a former Chaplain, the researcher believes in prayer, as a means of enhancing the spiritual life.

Methodology

In order to develop a program of prayer for Karura Adventist School, it will be necessary to lay a strong foundation for it. Therefore, the researcher will examine the scriptures as a whole, the writings of Ellen G. White and other Christian writings. The local situation in and around Karura Adventist School will also be studied in order to understand the dynamics which warrant a need for a program of prayer. In doing this, both qualitative and the quantitative analyses may be used. Based on these, a program of prayer was designed and implemented at Karura Adventist School for a period of one year, (2011-2012) and the results were analyzed.

The next chapter examines primary and secondary sources in order to establish theological foundations that inform a life of prayer which calls for a specific program for promoting prayer.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theological Foundation for the Life of Prayer

This chapter seeks to establish a theoretical framework for the whole project on prayer. The aim of this project is to help the administration, staff and students at Karura Adventist School to engage in regular prayer. In order to build a theoretical foundation for a life of prayer, the following will be examined: First, selected narratives in the Bible both in the Old and New Testament; second, selected portions of Ellen G. White's writing's; and finally, other Christian thinkers' views on prayer are considered. Some of the questions to be answered include; what is prayer and why is it important? What may prayer do for an individual Christian, as well as for a group of believers praying together?

Definition of Prayer

There are various definitions of prayer. Though from different sources, all have something in common. They refer to prayer as a linking activity and a means to keep in touch with God. For instance, Gerald O' Collins defines the action of praying, as to invoke, adore, praise, thank, express sorrow and/or ask for blessings from our personal Creator and Lord. A prayer may be uttered aloud or whispered silently in the heart; it can also be done alone or with others, within the official liturgy of the church

or beyond it. For example, in the Bible, several cases show Jesus praying publicly and in private (Mark 1:35, 6:46, 14:12-26, 32-42).¹

Sinclair B. Ferguson defines prayer as communication with God in worship; the renewed and restored fellowship through Jesus Christ, that is possible for all people. A similar idea is found in the Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary.² It defines prayers as the words which one says to God to give thanks, or ask for help. A good example of this can be seen in the Bible where David in the book of psalms communicates his challenges to God through prayer. He expresses his feelings and acknowledges God's power as the source of his help; therefore he utters these words showing his constant need for God. He said, "O God You are my God: early will I seek You: my soul thirsts for You; my flesh longs for You in a dry and thirsty land where there is no water, So I have looked for You in the sanctuary, to see Your power and glory" (Psalm 63:1-2).

Prayer is also defined as a linking activity which draws God's presence in human life. Robb³ further says, "Prayer at its very heart is a linking activity. First, prayer links us with God to receive His power and direction as we pray for the world, and carry out our own ministries."

Jerry Bridges⁴ attests to prayer as the tangible expression of our dependence through the discipline of prayer. We may assent to the fact that we are dependent on Christ, but if our prayer life is meager or perfunctory, we thereby deny it. A glance at

¹Gerald O'Collins, and Edward G. Farrugia, *A Concise Dictionary of Theology* (NY: Paulist Press, 2000), 209.

²Hornby, A. S. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* ed. S. Wehmeier, 6th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

³John D. Robb, *The Power of People Group Thinking MARC* (Monrovia: Mission Advanced & communication Center, 1994), 98.

⁴Jerry Bridges, *Growing Your Faith* (Colorado Springs, Colorado: NavPress, 2004), 86.

the Bible and especially in the collection of songs of worship, prayer characterizes belief in God. The following selected portions of the scripture underline the point.

Prayer in the Old Testament

The Bible clearly states that human beings were created in the image of God. Notwithstanding several dimensions and aspects of being in the image of God, there are strong nuances that they were created for fellowship with God. It is therefore important for people to live in union with God and communicate with Him on a regular basis, as prayer is a vital means of communication through which human beings can be in harmony and fellowship with their God and Creator.

Prayer

Before sin, there was no need for prayers since communication with the divine was direct face to face. However, after the fall sin severed the relationship between God and human beings, separating human beings from God who is the source of life. But God provided for constant communion between Himself and His special creation. He instituted a worship system which incorporated offering of sacrifice for forgiveness of sins, and in the course of which human beings gave thanks, praised God as well as made their requests known to their creator – prayed. Those who stay connected to God, attest to prayer as the power that links and sustains them in communion with God.

In the Old Testament or Hebrew Bible, there are numerous examples of prayers. Under this category, prayer has been done in different forms which can be categorized on the basis of the purpose of a specific prayer. Bible scholars have identified various forms of prayer. Some of these include prayers of adoration, confession, thanksgiving and supplication.

Prayer as Sacrifice

In Genesis there is an example of Abel communicating to God through sacrifice and God responding to this prayer (Gen 4: 3-7). Through prayers, human beings could seek for wise judgment and right decision making. For instance, Abraham's servant sought for God's intervention while choosing a wife for his master's son, he asked for a specific sign from God that would serve as confirmation of an answer to the prayer for identification and conviction that it was God's providence (Gen 18: 12-19).

Prayer is a means of communication through which God manifests His power to human beings, in order to enhance the human-divine relationship. This is vital to all, to keep them connected with their Creator. The expressions of thanks giving prayers in the following verses are indications that people can communicate with God effectively through prayer. The experience of the children of Israel over their victory after crossing the red sea is an explicit example which is responded to by expressions of thanksgiving prayers offered by Moses and Miriam through music as a sign of gratitude. Miriam mobilized all women in triumph and expressed their thanksgiving prayer through playing music (Exod 15: 1-20).

Moses invoked God's presence in their journey to Canaan for protection and guidance against the enemies. He prayed to God as to a powerful friend, able to carry them through successfully to the promised land of Canaan.

Moses took prayer as a refuge and sustaining power for all situations. Hence, he presented his supplications confidently when he pleaded with God for His grace and His continuous presence in their journey to Canaan (Exod 33:13). He also interceded for his people, the Israelites not to be destroyed in the wilderness for their continuous rebellion against God, showing God's willingness to communicate with

His own creation even in their shortcomings, and His readiness to put them right with Him (Num 14:17-20).

In another instance, King Solomon also interceded for his people. He prayed that God's presence may continually be among them. Pleading that God may never fail to hear them, whenever they would confess and repent of their sins, cry to Him, and seek for His help (1 Kgs 8). In response to his prayer, God affirmed and assured him that if the Israelites would humble themselves, pray and seek Him, and turn from their wicked ways, then He would hear from heaven, forgive their sins and heal their land (2 Chron 7:14). This response expresses the concern God has over all human affairs and His willingness to stay connected to them as the source of their help.

The recorded responses to prayers are evidences of how prayer is indispensable to all human beings since their lives are daily met with challenges which need divine help. Prayers lift human beings to God. When they pray in total surrender, and dependence on Him, they get encouraged and are transformed. Prayer bridges the gap between God and humanity as a result of sin. It reassures and sustains human divine relationship, and brings to conscience the consequence of sin, which would lead to eternal separation. Hence, this awareness urges them to humbly and in contrite spirit pray and fast for the healing of their souls and reconciliation with Him, which alone would give them peace and hope in this life and eternity (Joel 2:12-13).

The four categories of prayers mentioned above are both significant among the Old and New Testament worshippers, and are practiced also in the contemporary world today. The significant prayers are characterized by these four aspects: Adoration, confession, thanksgiving, and supplication. These attest to who God is and His power over humanity, to change and transform situations. The human heart is expected to appreciate through the thanksgiving prayer. This expression is referred to

as a sacrifice that glorifies God (Ps 50:14, 23). The four categories of prayers are further elaborated below.

Adoration

According to the free dictionary,⁵ adoration can be defined as the act of paying honor, as to a divine being; worship. In other words, to adore God is to exalt Him; to express who He is; as well as to acknowledge His mighty power as the Creator of the universe. In one of his prayers, David adores God with the words, “O LORD our Lord, How excellent is your name in all the earth, who have set your glory above the heavens!” (Ps 8:1). He also admonished his people to adore God and declare His marvelous works and greatness among the heathens (1 Chron 16:24-27).

Confession

This is an act of acknowledging a person’s sinfulness and seeking for forgiveness. An example of this can be seen in one of David’s prayers where he confesses his sins. He says, “...for I acknowledge my transgression and my sin. Against you alone have I sinned and done this evil in your sight. That you may be found just, when You speak and blameless when You judge” (Ps 5:3-4).

In another instance, Nehemiah made an intercessory prayer, in which he confessed his sins and the sins of his people, seeking for forgiveness from God. God answered him and honored his plea which marked the beginning of the great work of rebuilding of the wall of Jerusalem (Neh 1:6). This enabled all to be engaged in prayer and effort through the entire period of reconstructing the wall of Jerusalem. Regular and constant communication with God helped them overcome the challenges from

⁵American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fifth Edition. Copyright © 2011 by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company.

their opponents and accomplish the great task. Thus, Nehemiah's vision was realized within 52 days (Neh 6: 15).

Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving prayers are expressions of gratitude to God after a response to a prayer. The Bible refers to a thanksgiving prayer as an acceptable sacrifice glorifying God, which moves the heart of God to bless humanity more (Ps 50: 14, 23).

The psalmist expresses his thanksgiving and declares God's greatness in His people's lives as follows: "We give thanks to You, O God we give thanks! For your wondrous works declare that your name is near" (Ps 75:1).

Supplication

These are petitions a person in need or challenges makes, seeking for God's intervention through prayer. In several cases in the Bible, the Israelites raised their supplications to God for deliverance from their enemies. For example, in 1 Samuel 12:10-11, God delivered and gave them peace through prayer.

The impression created by Nehemiah's prayer is that of a God who understands and is concerned with human affairs; a God who can be depended upon for power and strength. He is attentive to their cry and responds as they commune with Him through prayer (Neh 1:5-6). In addition, Hezekiah, the king of Israel, prayed with the same impression when he was confronted by Sennacherib's servant. Overwhelmed by the contents of the letter threatening him, and despising his God; he went to the temple. Like Nehemiah, he prayed in faith. He attested that God is attentive to His servants' cry, and determines the cases of His people in response to prayer (2 Kings 19:14-16).

The prayer was effective, as a result of which God responded by saving His people (Is 37:16-17, 38). Believers like Hezekiah show total dependence on God whereby trust and commitment were the focus in their prayer life. Prayers were indispensable in the Old Testament as the channel of hope and source of divine power, and as the major link between human beings and God.

One of the Bible characters who had a remarkable prayer life was Daniel. He had a regular prayer pattern of three times a day, though he would at times have prolonged periods of prayer and fasting depending on the intensity of the challenge he was facing. He not only prayed for himself but he also interceded for others in similar challenges. One of such instances was when the King of Babylon issued a decree for all the wise men, including Daniel, to be eliminated. Daniel and his three friends, Shadrack, Meshach and Abednego prayed, and God saved their lives and those of Babylonian wise men (Dan 2:17-23). This was not the only time that prayer saved him. His constant communion with God through prayer saved him from death in the lion's den (Dan 6:20-22).

When it also came to understanding and solving mysteries, Daniel resorted to God through prayers as a source of all wisdom and knowledge. He sought to understand the time determined for his people to stay in captivity. Through prayers and fasting, he confidently and in faith pleaded with God to reveal to him and in response, an angel was sent to make him understand (Dan 9:23-24). Knowledge was imparted in him to understand and do the calculations of the time. This indicates that prayer is a source of every power human beings would require to guide them in any situation or challenge in life.

Prayer a Strong Defense

Daniel was however not the only character in the OT who experienced remarkable breakthroughs through prayers. Other characters engaged in fervent prayers and fasting at times, when they were greatly challenged. Some of these include: Esther, as the queen of Persia, Esther observed prayer and fasting and organized fasting for the whole Jewish nation, when a death decree was issued against all the Jews, through Haman's wicked machinations and signed by the King of Persia. Through serious prayers Haman's plot was thwarted turning against him and his house. Esther took prayers as a means to penetrate through a risky decision to see the king without prior appointment, an action that could result to death. Prayer gave her and her people victory over their enemies through the king's intervention (Es 4:15).

Elisha the prophet also prayed confidently requesting God to make blind the Syrian soldiers who were seeking to kill him and invade his people. God did it, and as to a friend, Elisha requested Him still again to open their eyes when they reached before the king of Israel. God answered and granted his prayer (2 Kgs 6:18-20). In a separate incidence, he looked and cursed in prayer the children who jeered him; they were instantly mauled by bears from the woods and killed 42 of them (2 Kgs 2:24). Elisha demonstrates prayer as a power to challenge and manage all situations. When his company of prophets complained of death in water at a certain city, he requested for a bowl of water with salt, communicated to God and proclaimed God's word of healing to the water and the land; and the prayer was answered (2 Kgs 2:19- 22).

All the illustrations above show the love of God for humanity, and His willingness to commune with them through prayer. This suggests that human beings have access to God's power by staying connected to Him as their source of defense for every challenge, and relate to Him as a Father, a friend, the Almighty and able

God. The responses to these prayers also teach that human beings at all levels and in every situation can trust the power of prayer from a loving God who is interested and indiscriminately helps all those who seek for His help through prayer.

Both Old and New Testaments allude to some key factors in prayer, these are: Faith, confidence, trust, and total dependence on God. These characteristics are demonstrated and emphasized throughout a believer's entire life of prayer. As the research explores more on prayer life of believers in the New Testament, the success in gospel commission to reconcile humanity with God, and the many miracles performed in people's lives were basically as a result of these prayers. It was a result of faith and confidence in God. Jesus Christ the Author and founder of Christian faith led by example in the life of prayer, as He dedicated His entire life to save humanity.

Prayer in the New Testament

Just like in the Old Testament, the New Testament also contains some characters who thrived on prayers and had a prayer pattern. One of the most outstanding examples is that of Jesus. He taught faith in prayer, and demonstrated a model life of prayer to His followers. He qualified prayer as the source of power to overcome all human challenges. Knowing the importance of being in constant communion with the Father, He encouraged all to pray without ceasing and without fainting (Luke 18:1).

He also emphasized on faith as small as a mustard seed, as a key factor to effective prayer (Matt 17:20). He assured His followers of God's readiness to answer and respond to all seeking for His help. In addition to being a means of communion with God, Jesus portrayed prayer as the key for access to God's store house. Here, all power and resources needed by humanity are found. As a result, there is a need for human beings to constantly and confidently communicate their requests to God as to

their Father, who would respond in answer to their prayers (Mark 11:24). He continued to admonish them saying, “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives, and he who seeks finds, and he who knocks, it will be opened” (Matt 7:7-8).

Jesus teaches prayer as the main focus of life to help humanity handle confidently all issues and different situations in life, with the help from the divine, as a source that never gets exhausted. He likens it to a well-established relationship, between a father and a child who when in need, asks confidently for help. When the father listens and shows concern, the child leaves the matter with the father and goes assured it is done. This is aimed at encouraging all humanity to enjoy the privilege of total dependency on God through prayer. On the same, Jesus emphasized faith as the moving power that penetrates, and changes conditions and situations. In a certain instance, He assertively taught that in whatever things one would ask for in prayers, having faith or believing, it would be given. Believing was key to the actual receiving (Mark 11:23-24).

At some point when teaching about prayer, Jesus taught the Lord’s Prayer as a model prayer. It identifies all the human needs to be addressed to the heavenly Father, who provides and gives ability to humanity to do all things. The prayer is as follows:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive our debts as we forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever Amen. (Matt 6:9-13)

The prayer starts with acknowledging who God is, His power and authority. It also acknowledges God’s ability to provide help for every human need both physical and spiritual, including the protection He offers against evil. Jesus encourages human beings to look upon God as their father since He is their creator and source of their

lives. Having a knowledge of what an earthly responsible father does for his children, and the care and concern he has over all his family affairs; human beings can trust in God as their Father who cares and is concerned over all their challenges.

Being aware of their vulnerability in the presence of evil and sin around them, God offers provision for all power and protection to all those who acknowledge Him as their Father and God, seeking for His help through prayer. The prayer ends by demonstrating the everlasting power of God, and assurance of the unfailing power to all human beings who make this prayer their source of help.

The prayer points out human needs and addresses all areas of human anxiety specifically, mentioning and raising them as supplications. Jesus' desire, passion and vision are for human beings to realize that God is aware of their need, and to identify themselves with a powerful able helper as a Father. Hence He urges them to address Him as a Father who is Holy above all, in His majesty as a King with a Kingdom. He also encourages that the Kingdom's rule of love, kindness, care and concern be emulated by all trusting in Him as their Father and ruler of their lives.

In His own life and ministry, Jesus demonstrated the power of prayer. Before and after His daily interactions with people, He would seek for divine intervention. The result was evidenced in the many miracles recorded in connection with the lives of those He ministered to (Matt 14:18-23). As a way of ensuring that God guides our way, Jesus demonstrated the need of involving God before undertaking any venture. This He did when He went praying and fasting for forty days in the wilderness, before appointing His disciples and starting His ministry on earth. It is through the same prayers that He was able to resist and overcome the great temptations by the devil (Matt 4:1-10).

In the feeding of the five thousand, Jesus was reemphasizing on the point that prayer is a link that communicates the human needs to God. He, in turn responds and provides for those who faithfully seek for His help (Matthew 14:18).

Jesus depended on the power of prayer in all the mighty works He did. He taught of this power of prayer as the only power that transforms and translates things and situations, a power that surpasses even death. This He demonstrated for example when He resurrected Lazarus after being dead for four days (John 11:41-44).

Jesus depended on prayer and encouraged His followers to do the same. Before starting His daily business He would, very early in the morning, retreat in solitude to seek for divine power and strength through prayer (Mark 1:35). Prayer was to be the fountain from which His followers would draw their power, at all times. This He emphasized even at the last night before His crucifixion in the Garden of Gethsemane (Mark 13:32).

Many during Jesus' ministry experienced relief when they came to Jesus in prayer. One such example is a leper who prayed to be cleansed as He knelt before Jesus. Jesus assured him of being cleansed and the man was healed (Matt 8:2-3).

Prayer in the Early Church

Prayer was a way of worship and source of power for all believers in the early Church. This was demonstrated in their lives as they went through their mission. At the beginning of their mission they all gathered together, prayed in one accord. While praying, they received the power of the Holy Spirit who helped them to manifest the power of God, through prayer to those they ministered to (Acts 2:42). As time went on, there were various cases that elaborated the power of prayer in the early Church.

One such instance was when Peter made a prayer of faith on behalf of a lame beggar. Instantly, the cripple received power and started walking (Acts 3:6-10).

Further on, due to the same incident of healing, the manifestation of God's power was experienced by the believers. He responded to their prayers of supplication when they were threatened, and received hostility from the chief priests and Pharisees, who were opposed to the spread of the Good news. They received the Holy Spirit, became bold, united and continued working in one accord through prayers (Acts 4:29-31).

In humility and repentance, Christians are assured of enjoying a consistent relationship with the divine, where there is power to forgive sins, cleanse, sustain and give hope of eternal life through prayer (1 John 1:9). James also asserts that the effective fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. He refers to Elijah as a man with a nature like ours and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. And he prayed again and the heaven gave rain and the earth produced its fruit (James 5:16-18).

Pauline Writings and Prayer

In His writings, Paul views prayers as a way of invoking the presence of the divine by the worshippers. He lays emphasis on intercessory prayer where he urges the believers to persevere always in prayers and supplication in spirit, praying for all saints and for the bold spreading of the gospel (Eph 6:18-9).

Paul always depended on prayer for the success of all his missions. Additionally, he taught prayer as a combination of gratitude, thanksgiving, and supplication (Philippians 4:6-7). In his emphasis on intercessory prayers, he points out the importance of praying for kings, leaders and in authority. He indicates that, Prayers are the source of peace and quiet life which is important for all people.

He writes: "I urge then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone- for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness." (1 Timothy 2:1-2).

Paul was a good leader, in that he not only taught others to pray for him, but he did it for them too. He prayed for grace, love, and fellowship as he interceded for his followers to remain connected with God as they communicate with Him through prayer (2 Cor 13:14).

In regard to effective prayers, Paul indicates that the Holy Spirit is the divine person who helps humanity pray effectively (Romans 8:26 -28). In relation to this, he further lists down some of the things which grieve the Holy Spirit and would hinder effective prayers, hence the need to avoid them. Some of these things include; anxiety, bitterness, hatred, anger, unforgiving spirit, evil speaking, and malice (Eph 4:30-31).

On one instance, Paul and Silas were arrested for preaching the gospel, while in prison; they sang and prayed till the late hours of the night. The result was a great earthquake that shook the foundations of the prisons freeing all the prisoners. Paul however did not seize the opportunity to run away. Instead he saw an opportunity to share the good news of Christ with the jailer (Acts 16:25-33).

In a nutshell, Paul views prayers as the source of power to progress the work of salvation. He thus urges all Christians to be vigilant and pray earnestly (Colossians 4:2-3), he asserts that the power of prayer is the power that perfects and helps a person to do the will of God, as he quotes Epaphras' prayers for the Colossians (Col 4:12).

As observed, Prayers in the Old and the New Testaments were considered an integral source of power for all human needs. As the research shows, the power of God has been revealed in the prayer life of all believers and manifested in the lives of those they ministered, they have therefore become advocates and witnesses of the

power of prayer; hence making contributions in testifying of their experiences of what prayer is, and what prayer does in their lives.

Ellen G. White and Prayer

Like many heroes of faith and prayer warriors, Ellen. G. White regards prayer as the life to the soul. She asserts, “Prayer is the breath of the soul, it is the secret of spiritual power no other means of grace can be substituted, and the health of the soul preserved. Prayer brings the heart into immediate contact with well springs of life, and strengthens the sinew and muscle of the religious experience.”⁶

She presents prayer as the source of success which all those who endeavor to be successful in life should prioritize. It is the means through which human beings receive blessings and power from God, to accomplish their missions successfully.

In her book, *the medical missionary manual*, she states:

If the rush of work is allowed to drive us from our purpose of seeking the lord daily, we shall make the greatest mistakes; we shall incur losses, for the Lord is not with us; we have closed the door so that He cannot find access to our souls. But if we pray even when our hands are employed, the Saviors ear is open to our petitions. If we are determined not to be separated from the source of our strength, Jesus will just be determined to be at our right hand to help us, that we may not be put to shame before our enemies. The grace of Christ can accomplish for us that which our efforts will fail to do.⁷

Her view of prayer is that it is a means to guidance, protection and power needed to overcome perplexity. She states that to pray as Nehemiah prayed, in his hour of need is a resource at the command of Christians. Under circumstances when other forms of prayer may be impossible; toilers in the busy walks of life, crowded

⁶ Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers* (Canada: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1915), 254.

⁷ Ellen G. White, *The Medical Missionary Manual* (Altamont Harvestime Books Publishers, 2004), 201.

and almost overwhelmed by perplexity, can send up a petition to God for divine guidance.⁸

In addition, she talks of prayer as a relationship of intimate friendship, and the importance of the human-divine communion, where one should confide in God. She further notes in the book *Steps to Christ* that Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend. She poses a question, "...if the savior of men, the son of God, felt the need for prayer, how much more should feeble sinful mortals feel the necessity of fervent constant prayer?"⁹

Still on prayer, in the book *Desire of Ages*¹⁰, she states: "He who feels most deeply his need of divine aid, will plead for it and the Holy Spirit will give unto him glimpses of Jesus that will strengthen and uplift the soul."

In her counsels to Christians, she suggests that, they should seek to combine their efforts with the divine for success through prayer. She regards prayer as the source of power to keep human beings linked to God the source of life. Her breath analogical explanation of prayer, indicates the significance of prayer for spiritual survival.

Prayer is indispensable for all Christians' lives as other Christian writers also indicate. The research further shows the manifestations of God's power through prayer in the contemporary world, as most of the Christian writers have indicated in their prayer life experiences.

⁸ Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings* (Omaha, Nebraska: Pacific Press, 1917), 631.

⁹ Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ* (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press, 1892), 93.

¹⁰ Ellen G. White, *Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing, 1940), 436.

Other Christian Writers

In addition to the prayer experiences in the Bible and E.G. White's writings; several other contemporary writers have written on prayer. They write on the power of prayer to show the purpose and vitality of prayer in human life.

One such writer is E.M. Bounds¹¹, in his book *The Classic Collection of Prayers*, he quotes some of the prayer warriors who have had the experience of the power of prayer. He encourages all to engage in prayer as the only power to success and victory in all life's battles.

Another writer, Randy Maxwell¹² also attests that the power of God among His people is a point which should strengthen their faith in Him. In his book, *An Eleventh Hour Call to Prayer*, he states that when God is at work, either among a people or the heart of an individual, the adversary of souls is peculiarly at work also. He further notes that a belief of the former should prevent discouragement; and the fear of the latter should stir people up to much prayer. He reiterates the view of prayer as a source of power for every situation or difficult times.

Similarly, E.M. Bounds further explains how Martin Luther, one of the reformers, recalls how he was instant in prayer whenever he was overwhelmed by work. He would take prayer as a means to revitalize him and keep him moving. One of his popular sayings was, "I have so much work to do that I cannot get along without giving three hours daily of my best time in prayer." Another of his sayings

¹¹ E. M. Bounds, *The classic collection on Prayer* (Orlando: Bridge-Logos Publishers 2001), 482,489.

¹²Randy Maxwell, *An Eleventh Hour Call to Prayer* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1995), 9.

was, “It takes meditation and prayer to make a divine.” His daily motto, “He that has prayed well, has studied well.” He emphasizes the key role of prayers in all things.

In addition to being a source of strength, many people attest to prayer being a motivational power that drives a person to high performance and great attainment. E. M. Bounds¹³ presents George Muller, the founder of Ashley Down orphanage in England which cared for thousands of orphans, as one such person is. He ran the institution solely on faith and prayer; he lacked in nothing. The secret of his success was found in a simple statement he always made, “I went to my God and prayed diligently, and received what I needed.” He took prayer as a source of motivation and power as well as a means to alleviate suffering in the world.

In leadership also, many rulers such as King Hezekiah in the Bible, and leaders of institutions such as Billy Graham have led and succeeded through prayers. Most learn and form their habits and characters through their daily life practices, and in seeking divine guidance. This is in accordance to the promise in Proverbs 8:14-16, which is a great influence on the style of leadership and its interaction with the society.

Prayer is regarded as one of the strongest solutions to all injustices in the world and in all sectors of life. Hence human beings need divine intervention in their social lives, praying for one another in Intercessory prayer to build relationships. To this, John Stott¹⁴ in his book, *New Issues Facing Christianity Today* says, “There is a great need to take serious the time of intercession in public worship and to pray for rulers and government, peace and justice, friends and enemies, freedom and stability,

¹³ E. M. Bounds , *The Classic Collections on Prayer*, 496.

¹⁴ John Stott, *Revised Edition New Issues facing Christianity Today* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Marshal Pinkering Publishers, 1984), 120.

and deliverance from nuclear conflagration. The living God hears the prayers of His people.”

The special experience of human-divine relationship through prayer is expedient in all daily affairs. Prayer as an essential changing and transforming agent, is echoed as a power that is constantly and consistently working, in those who pray.

E.M. Bounds in his book *The Classic Collection on Prayer* states

“The more praying there is in the world the better the world would be, the mightier the forces against evil everywhere. Prayer in one phase of its operation, is a disinfectant and preventive, it purifies the air destroys the contagion of evil. Prayer is not fitful short lived thing, it is no voice crying unheard and unheeded in the silence. It is a voice that goes into God’s ear, and it lives as long as God’ ear is open to holy pleas, and as long as His heart is alive to holy things. God shapes the world by prayer. Prayers are deathless the lips that uttered them may be closed in death, the heart that felt them may have ceased to beat, but the prayers live before God. God’s heart is set on them and prayers outlive the lives of those who uttered them. They out live the generation, outlive an age, outlive a world.”

Prayer is crucial in leadership as a source of wisdom and knowledge, essential in solving problems and making wise decisions. It is the power that helps people make right judgments and do the right things.

In times of challenges also, prayer is a good engagement. In the book *Just As I am*, Billy Graham¹⁵ tells of how they could engage in prayer whenever they were challenged, in an institution he was leading. He says, “How we wrestled in prayer over our problems. We had prayer meetings at every turn and received what we deserved.”

Similarly, Bill Hybels¹⁶ regards prayer as source of power to better leadership and accomplishing one’s goals. He solicits for power to reach the peak of his potential through this prayer:

God I want to be a better leader than I am, I don’t want to stand before you some day and have to admit that I squandered the opportunities you gave me. I

¹⁵ Billy Graham, *Just As I am* (NY: Harpers Collins Publishers, 1997), 121.

¹⁶ Bill Hybels, *Courageous Leadership* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Publishers, 2002), 199.

want to develop my leadership skills to the peak of my potential, but I need your help please direct my growth and instruct me in the way I should go.

Randy Maxwell in his book *An eleventh hour call to prayer*, attests to how people have found the importance of prioritizing and giving prayer quality time, before starting their daily activities. This is based on the realization of the need to involve God in all their affairs for success and prosperity. He thus states, "While most sleep, thousands of believers are gathered for an early Morning Prayer meeting, they will pray for the better two hours before beginning work day. This is not week of prayer or once a week occurrence, these seekers are here at 5.00 am every year in, year out."

The Purpose of Prayer

The main purpose of prayer is to connect human beings with God which in turn helps build human relationships. It is the power that changes and transforms human souls to have peace and forgiving hearts. In Mark 11:24, Jesus taught that one condition for effective prayer is a pure clean heart; one that forgives without bitterness but focuses fully on God.

On the relationship between forgiveness and prayer, John Byler emphasizes that forgiveness is a vital component to effective positive prayer. He states, "Forgiveness also yields a stronger prayer life, often when you have unforgiveness in your heart, thoughts of the person or people you are bitter towards intrude on your prayer times. Although you may tend to forget the incidence, the person keeps on showing up just as a police road block prevents vehicles from passing. Bitterness hinders your communication with God."

In relation to this, Steve Miller¹⁷ indicates that the power of prayer should be doubled in all human beings' lives; especially during difficult times. The soul should be ready to frequently receive help from God as it is lifted up in prayer while hurting in pain or sorrow. He expresses his prayer experience in difficult times by stating, "The gracious soul addresses itself with a double zeal to find a way out and send up its groan, it entreats, its sobs and sighs to heaven more frequently."

All human beings can access the power of prayer regardless of their status or physical challenge. This is asserted by Phillip G. Samaan¹⁸ in his book *Christ's way to Pray*. He says that prayers are not hindered by lack of eloquence or fluency in speech; their acceptance and effectiveness is attributed to praying through Jesus Christ. Prayers done through Jesus Christ who is the mediator and intercessor of all human beings are presented well before God. He further states, "Prayer is heard in heaven, it may not be fluently expressed, but if the heart is in it; it will ascend to the Sanctuary where Jesus Ministers. He will present it to the Father without one awkward stammering word, beautiful and fragrant, with incense of His own perfection."

Moreover, the condition of the heart should be that of glorifying and exalting God who has assured of providence when petitions are made according to His will. It is not for self-glorification or pride. The Bible in the book of James states, "You ask and do not receive, because you ask a miss, that you may spend it on your pleasures" (James 4:3).

With this in mind, we get to understand that prayer is one of the greatest gifts God has given to human beings. When embraced, it enhances the relationship

¹⁷ Steve Miller, *C.H. Spurgeon on Spiritual Leadership*. Chicago, Illinois: Moody Publishers.

¹⁸ Phillip G. Samaan, *Christ's Way to Pray* (Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2003), 64.

between human beings and God as they relate with Him as their creator.

Acknowledging God, as a friend and a father, enhances faith and confidence in believers' hearts; a common phenomenon among many who have made history of great achievements in their lives through prayer.

E.M. Bounds¹⁹ attests to this in his statement, "You can do more than prayer after you have prayed. But you cannot do more than prayer until you have prayed." The story of every great Christian achievement is the history of answered prayer as noted by Alexander Whyte;

The greatest and the best talent that God gives to any man or woman in this world is the talent of prayer. And the best usury any man or woman brings to God when He comes back to reckon with them at the end of the world is a life of prayer, and those servants best put their Lords money to the exchangers, who rise early and sits late, as long as they are in this world, ever finding out and ever following after better and better methods of prayer, and ever forming more secret, more steadfast, and more spiritually fruitful habits of prayer, till they literally pray without ceasing, and till they strike out into new enterprises in prayer, and new achievements, and new enrichments.

This research shows that prayers have been the source of power to all those who stayed connected to God. They depended on prayer as an avenue of reaching God's power to transform their lives and change situations. Richard J. Foster²⁰ in *Celebration of discipline*, advocates for this in his statement; "To pray, is to change. Prayer is the central avenue God uses to transform us, if we are unwilling to change, we will abandon prayer as a noticeable characteristic of our lives."

The challenges which were faced by many people throughout history as observed, are the same challenges in the lives of people in the contemporary world. Therefore, the study on how the heroes of faith succeeded through prayer, and the

¹⁹ E. M. Bounds, *The Classic Collections on Prayer*, 496.

²⁰ Richard J. Foster, *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth* (San Francisco, California: Harper Collins, 1988), 33.

effective way through which they remained connected to God, is essential today as a means of empowering Karura institution as well as other people who endeavor to stay connected to God. This is essential also in achieving the goal the institution was established for: To produce people well connected to God through prayer; people of high integrity, great performers and achievers in the society.

This study shows that, those who have achieved much are men and women of prayer who devoted their time to and prioritized prayer in their lives. Praying regularly has been emphasized as a means to gain power, increase in faith, and to have more confidence in God. Prayers have made communication with God a friendly personal relationship, and a possible means for human beings to address all their issues confidently to God the source of their life.

The Biblical emphasis on human beings and their relationship with God through Jesus' name is an indication of God's awareness of fallen human nature, and recognition of Jesus Christ as the savior and mediator. He expresses His goodness, caring love, readiness to communicate with His own creation on a friendly basis through prayer. The text below qualifies this and encourages the same: "...And whatsoever you shall ask in my name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son" (John 14:13).

The whole essence of this research on the model of effective prayer in Karura is to have an effective prayer life with an impact in the institution's performance, and the lives of the entire stakeholders. This is seen in those whose lives were impacted through prayer, and by observing their prayer practices and habits which led to their success. Hence the need to develop a vibrant prayer program, with an aim of enhancing faith and the spirit of prayer in Karura Adventist School.

Throughout the Bible, in Ellen G. White's writings, as well as other Christian writers, prayer has explicitly featured as the main communication given to human beings to access power and blessing from God their Creator. Though God never changes, human beings are changed and transformed by the power of prayer, through Communion with Him. The power of prayer imparts the knowledge of God in the human mind and enables the person to do His will. This sustains the relationship that keeps human beings connected to Him making prayer effective, without praying amiss as James cautions in the Bible.

Throughout the study on prayer, this research indicates that prayer is the main communication that bridges human-divine relationship; a link between human beings and God. Prayer is the communication that restores the broken, severed relationship by sin. Through prayer human beings have access to God's store of blessings and are assured of the promises, if they claim them in faith. Hence the desire to see Karura school benefit from this on a regular basis. The one main means to lift her up to higher standards and make the institution an agent of change and transformation to all the stakeholders.

The evidences and experiences of the power of prayer illustrated in the Bible, in E.G White's writings, as well as other Christian writers suggest that, the power of prayer is the only power accessible to human beings to overcome all life challenges and keep them on the right track. The only power that will help in making the right judgment and decision. If integrated as an essential part of the program at all levels in Karura Institution, prayer will be a factor leading to success and continuous spiritual enhancement; an answer to self-discipline, as well as good academic performance.

The following chapter of this research further explores Karura Adventists School's local setting, and the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats it faces in the quest to attain its goal of excellence.

CHAPTER 3

THE LOCAL SETTING OF KARURA ADVENTIST SCHOOL

Geographical Location

Karura Adventist School is situated in Nairobi, the capital city of the republic of Kenya. Situated 12 kilometers from the city center, it has a good climate with a beautiful scenery ideal for learning and other activities. This also makes it strategically placed, with access to good roads. The National parks, International Airport, good transport system, Banks, and the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) offices are all within reach for any counsel or advice on environmental challenges.



Fig. 1 Karura SDA School on Redhill Road off Limuru Road

Historical Background

The school was started in 1934 by a missionary called W.W Armstrong who had come from Nyanza field to cater for the education needs of Adventists in the region. Though it had to close down for one year in 1963, due to resurgence of emergency, it then reopened in 1964 aiming at higher performance.

In 1981, the Secondary School Section was opened after the Central Kenya Conference (CKC) an organ of Administration in the Seventh Day Adventist Church, Organizational Structure, completed construction of tuition block, and two dormitories for the boys and one for the girls. Presently the school has a well-structured boys' dormitory and a very modern girls' dormitory; conducive resting places without congestion.

In 1993 the CKC handed over the management of the school to the Nairobi Station an arm of administration of CKC which elected a Board of Governors to run the school and a new Principal.

In 1998, the school in a joint effort with ADRA (Adventist Development and Relief Agency) completed the construction of Sweden House for Vocational Training. However, the use did not commence due to some technical reasons. In 1999, the school completed the construction of a new primary school tuition block, and commenced the construction of a storied boys' dormitory in 2000. The foundation of this dormitory was laid by a former pupil Mr. S.M Githunguri, with a donation of Kshs.One Million.

From the year 2000, the school has expanded to a double stream in both secondary and primary schools. It has a well maintained clean environment, with corrugated pavements to maintain cleanliness both in classes and dormitories. It has also two school buses for easier transport. The school's academic performance and spiritual

growth have also been gradual. Furthermore, the school vision is to be a center of excellence in wholesome education in Kenya by providing excellent holistic education that caters for the spiritual academic, physical and social spheres.

In order to establish some important aspects that have contributed to the growth of the Karura institution we apply the use of SWOT analysis. The aspects are classified into four aspects namely; Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.

Strengths

Some of the strengths which attract many people looking for a conducive environment for their children's learning include a large enough land/space for expansion and for more school facilities, with a strong beautiful gate accommodating security personnel to check in and out those who are frequenting the institution. The school has adequate transport; two big sitter buses to ferry students to school and to other school functions. The institution has also qualified staff, and integrates faith with learning giving the learners both spiritual and academic aspects of life.

There is also a science laboratory, a library, a computer laboratory, a moderate furnished dining hall, a good playground, sufficient text books for class use and teachers references, highly qualified and professional board members, supportive parents and friends, adequate accommodation for both male and female students.

Weaknesses

Despite having various key strengths, the institution also faces some challenges; one of these challenges is the inadequacy of library material; the library is not fully equipped with enough materials to meet the targeted objective of learning excellence. There is also inadequacy of staff houses within the school compound

forcing some to commute from far, which in turn restricts them from giving the best of their services due to transport challenges in the areas of residence.

The lack of a Chapel for worship also reduces the reverence that should be there in a house of worship and prayer. This is because the dining hall is same place of worship making little or no difference between a social and worship place, especially to the lower primary pupils.

Opportunities

In addition to the various strengths and weaknesses, the school has several advantages that serve as opportunities. Some of these include; a big land for expansion and more development. The school also enjoys a close proximity to the Central Kenya Conference which is rich in both human and material resources; these are very essential to help the institution in self-development to attain higher standards and reach its goal of excellence. On internal basis, the institution has also the opportunity of increasing her resources through utilization of her fertile land for income generating projects. This coupled with involvement of the supportive willing parents that the School has, are a major advantage of further development.

Due to congestion in most government institutions as a result of the free education program, the institution is attracting a lot of students. Most of the able parents have preferred to enroll their children in private institutions, especially Christian based schools due to performance and discipline.

Regarding the management, the institution has a devoted board of governors, who are high profile members in diverse areas and are thus able to judge, make decisions, and facilitate the functions of the school efficiently and effectively. The church and school administration, together, promote the school in churches for the enrollment of the students. Since the school has maintained a good relationship with

the community in the neighboring estates, it enjoys good response from them as well as great support and contributions whenever they are approached for school functions.

Threats

Despite the massive strengths and opportunities, the school also faces some threats from within and without. One of the school's major threats to the institution is the introduction of subsidized secondary education and complete free primary education in all public schools. This has seen most parents preferring to enroll their children where they are charged less or no fee at all. In addition to this, there is also high competition from other private and church maintained schools.

The high rate of crime in Nairobi has also prevented many of those in the city's outskirts from enrolling their children in schools near town, for fear of negative influence and decadence.

Spirituality

The research done on the state of spiritual growth and prayer life among students and workers in Karura Adventist School yielded several results. These include:

Lack of prioritization of prayers: This is seen in that in various instances prayers may be carried out or skipped depending on circumstances. This makes prayer to be regarded like any other ordinary activity. Also, in some of the cases when prayers are not skipped, they are done hurriedly to give room for other activities. A key thing was also noted where only a few students and workers have prayer at the top of their priority list.

Lack of a deeper emphasis during prayers: Even though there are morning and evening devotions, most people do not take them seriously. This is due to various

factors the major one being that the prayer sessions are mostly presided over by students, in class. In a case where the leaders are not serious, the program is taken as a formality, without a lot of emphasis.

Lack of a keen interest in joint worship: The midweek prayers and Friday vespers are conducted by various appointed persons, and are attended mostly by the boarding students with a few day scholars as well as workers. The fact that worship services are conducted in the same hall where they dine and socialize may be a factor of irreverence to God in prayer. Some chat paying little attention to spiritual matters.

Lack of all-inclusive worship schedules during key prayer: despite there being a week of spiritual emphasis after every four months/quarter, with various guest speakers invited, the time set for the program in the morning 6.45 a.m. and evening from 6.30 p.m. limits the worship to only the boarders, a few day scholars and workers who stay close to the school to attend.

As a result of these challenges the school's spirituality and prayer life have been affected largely, with the effects extending to both academic performance and the social relationships.

These among others facilitate a need for organization and formation of a vibrant prayer program, to help KAS be well connected to God through prayer. Consequently, it will help in excelling to achieve the school's mission of providing holistic education and becoming excellent in performance in preparation for this life and eternity.

In her book *Gospel workers*, E.G. White¹ asserts:

While in daily work we should lift the soul to heaven in prayer. These silent petitions rise like incense before the throne of grace and the enemy is baffled. The Christian whose heart is thus stayed upon God cannot be overcome. No evil can destroy his peace. All promises of God's word all the power of divine grace, all the resources of Jehovah are pledged to secure his

¹ Ellen G. White, *Gospel workers*, 254.

deliverance. It is thus that Enoch walked with God and God was with him. A present help in every time of need.

After the unfolding of the power as well as necessity of prayer by the research, a well-established, consistent and vibrant prayer program was found essential to address the spiritual challenges, leading to weak connection and communion with God through Prayer. This leads to the next chapter on implementation.

Research Methodology

Being a learning institution, KAS family is made up mainly of students and employees. It is entirely on the basis of qualifications that the students are admitted. This is regardless of religious affiliation, race, country, gender or tribe. The institution presently has a population of about 600 pupils and students, as well as 62 staff members; both teaching and supportive. It is double streamed both at primary and secondary levels, where all secondary students are required to be boarders with a provision for primary pupils to be boarders or day scholars.

The school is managed by a board of governors and administrators, with the principal as the overall head working in conjunction with a chaplain attached to the school, as a counselor and overseer of spiritual matters. There is regular daily worship for all students at in the morning and evenings, in their classes. The workers join the worship services on Wednesday, Friday evenings and Saturday for worship services.

Research Design

The study developed a survey questionnaires that was administered to both the staff and to the students (Appendix). The population of the study is comprised of 600 students and 62 members of staff. The questionnaire method was used for data collection for the purposes of evaluation, whereby a total of two hundred

(200) questionnaires comprising of 15 questions each, were used. Table 1 below represents the questionnaire, structure and the responses.

Table 1. Statistics of Questionnaire Responses

	No. of Valid Responses	Missing
What is your age bracket?	200	0
Gender	200	0
For how long have you been in the institution?	200	0
Were you born in a Seventh-Day Adventist Family?	200	0
Did you get converted from other religious persuasions?	200	0
How do you assess prayer attendances in Karura School?	200	0
How would you assess prayer program in Karura?	200	0
How do you assess prayer practices of the students?	200	0
How do you assess prayer practices of the staff?	200	0
Are you a member of any prayer band?	200	0
Are you a member of any Bible study group?	200	0
How much time do you commit to prayer daily?	200	0
How often do you have prayer and fasting program?	200	0
What prayer program do you attend regularly?	200	0
How do you assess small-group prayer cells' effectiveness?	200	0

The respondents were mainly from the secondary section, as the distribution of the questionnaires was mainly age based with the age bracket of ages between 14 to 35 years. There was 100% response from the respondents in this study.

Academic Performance of KAS

KAS has made tremendous academic achievements that have contributed to good ranking of the school in the academic realms. This study makes an assessment and evaluation of the research done in Karura Adventist School, most especially in reference to the year 2011 the year in which the school had targeted becoming a center of excellence. This is done in close consideration of the habits of prayer, the prayer programs put in place and how they were being conducted, in order to analyze and evaluate the relationship between performance and prioritizing God through prayer. Table 2 is a summary of the academic performance for KAS for the years 2009 - 2011.

Table 2. Karura Adventist School analysis of the performance for the years 2009 – 2011 (mean grade summary)

YEAR	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E	ENTRY	MEAN	G	C+%
2011	2	3	9	9	12	9	11	1	0	0	0	0	56	8.179	B-	78
2010	0	6	12	6	16	15	10	6	1	0	0	0	72	7.875	B-	76
2009	0	1	4	5	8	12	26	13	2	1	0	0	72	6.611	C+	42

CHAPTER 4

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION

Program Development and Implementation

The following program (see Table 3) was developed and implemented for the year 2011. It accommodated all candidates both in primary and secondary level and all other willing clubs and individuals.

The Facilitators included, the Chaplain, teachers and student Coordinators. The teachers included, Mrs. Okero from the secondary section, Mrs. Nyachwaya - Pathfinder Director, Mrs. Kombe – the then primary section Head-Teacher, Fredrick Muriithi and Isabella Okindo – student Coordinators. The attendance was taken by the student coordinators.

Table 3. The Prayer Timetable Used in 2011

Day	Time	Activity		
Monday	1:00 - 1:45:00 PM	10 Mins - opening prayer	15 Mins- Tetimonies	20 - Mins Prayer requests
Tuesday	1:00 - 1:45:00 PM	10 Mins - opening prayer	15 Mins- Tetimonies	20 - Mins Prayer requests
Wednesday	1:00 - 1:45:00 PM	10 Mins - opening prayer	15 Mins- Tetimonies	20 - Mins Prayer requests
Thursday	1:00 - 1:45:00 PM	10 Mins - opening prayer	15 Mins- Tetimonies	20 - Mins Prayer requests
Friday	1:00 - 1:45:00 PM	10 Mins - opening prayer	15 Mins- Tetimonies	20 - Mins Prayer requests
Sabbath	5:20 AM	– heroes of faith meeting for intercessory prayers Full day of prayer and worship		

- Mondays and Wednesday's were prayers and fasting days (optional).
- During the National exams period, every day at 7:00 – 7: 45 AM, the Principal and the Chaplain would hold prayers with the candidates in the order:

Prayer and word of encouragement

Songs of praise

Closing prayer

Evaluation

According to the questionnaires more than half of the respondents were between the ages 14 to 17 as shown in Table 4 below. The reason being it is an institution of learning and majority of the respondents were students.

Table 4. Age of Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
14-17	120	60.0
18-21	10	5.0
22-35	55	27.5
36 and above	15	7.5
Total	200	100.0

The questionnaires were distributed to both male and female respondents. However, according to the findings, majority of the respondents were female, as shown in Table 5 below, they were also the majority in prayer programs.

Table 5. Gender of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	85	42.5
Female	115	57.5
Total	200	100.0

According to the findings, a majority of the respondents had been in the institution for a period of 1 to 5 years as shown in Table 6 below. This also bears in mind that the majority of the respondents are students.

Table 6. Length of Stay at the Institution

Years	Frequency	Percentage
1-5	165	82.5
6-10	30	15.0
11-20	5	2.5
Total	200	100.0

Similarly, according to the findings majority of the respondents were born in the seventh day Adventist families as shown in Table 7 below.

Table 7. Respondents of Seventh - day Adventist Affiliation

	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	105	52.5
No	95	47.5
Total	200	100.0

Further to this, the majority of the respondents though Adventists, were not converted from other religions or Christian denominations, they were born in Adventist families, as indicated in Table 8 below.

Table 8. Respondents Converted to Adventist Faith

	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	55	27.5
No	145	72.5
Total	200	100.0

More to the findings, a majority of the respondents felt that the prayer attendance in Karura School was good. However, very few respondents felt it was very good as indicated in Table 9 below.

Table 9. Prayer Practice Assessment of the Students

	Frequency	Percentage
Very good	15	7.5
Good	105	52.5
Fair	65	32.5
Poor	15	7.5
Total	200	100.0

Through personal interviews, it emerged that one of the major factors leading to the respondents feeling that the prayer program was not vibrant was the lack of emphasis on the prayer program from both the administration and the Church leaders.

Additionally, when the respondents assessed prayer practice among the staff in the institution, majority felt that it ranked fair as indicated in Table 10 below.

Table 10. Prayer Practice Assessment among Staff

	Frequency	Percentage
Very good	15	7.5
Good	85	42.5
Fair	80	40.0
Poor	20	10.0
Total	200	100.0

Lack of prioritization of prayers where they can be skipped acts as a major reason as to why majority of the respondents felt that prayer practices could be rated *fair*. Moreover, when it came to assessment of staff prayer practices, most of the staff did not belong to any prayer band (Table 11).

Table 11. Prayer Band Membership

	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	60	30.0
No	140	70.0
Total	200	100.0

In addition to the majority not being part of any prayer band, 60 percent of the respondents were not members in any Bible study group as indicated in Table 12 below.

Table 12. Bible Study Group Membership

	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	80	40.0
No	120	60.0
Total	200	100.0

Through observation and interviews a lack of awareness on the importance of Bible study, and the relationship between the word of God and prayer emerged, majority of respondents commit 0-30 minutes in a day. In addition, as shown in Table 13, a majority of the respondents do not have any prayer and fasting program.

Table 13. Prayer and Fasting Program

	Frequency	Percent
Once a week	5	2.5
Once a month	25	12.5
Once after 3 months	20	10.0
No fasting program	150	75.0
Total	200	100.0

Despite that, a 100 percent of the respondents attend Sabbath worship program regularly as indicated in Table 14. The evening and morning devotion, midweek and Friday vespers carries 17.5, 25, and 30 percent respectively. The almost hundred percent attendance for prayer/worship program on Sabbath, does not in full reflect the prayer life effectiveness of the institution. This is because it is propagated by the fact that the institution is a church school and thus it is mandatory for both the staff and students to attend the Sabbath worship. However, in general, the other prayer programs have less emphasis.

Table 14. Prayer Program Attendance

	Frequency	Percentage
Evening and morning devotion	35	17.5
Mid-week prayer	15	7.5
Friday vespers	10	5.0
Sabbath worship	140	70.0
Total	200	100.0

According to the assessment on effectiveness of small-group prayer cells as indicated in Table 15, the majority of the respondents felt that it is *very good*. However, according to the findings in Table 10, a majority of the respondents felt prayer practices were *fair*. A further observation in Table 11 shows that 70 percent do not belong to any prayer band which leads to a logical conclusion that there are only a few effective small prayer bands.

Table 15. Effectiveness of Small Group pPayer Cells

	Frequency	Percentage
Excellent	50	25.0
Very good	75	37.5
Good	65	32.5
Poor	10	5.0
Total	200	100.0

Based on the findings, the prayer life of KAS scored fair. The evaluation done on the spiritual habits of KAS was done in reference to the year 2011, the year targeted for Karura School to become a center of excellence. Using the findings that indicated the low spirituality state, changes in prayer patterns were effected.

During the research, prayers were given preference and every school activity was prioritized with prayer in that year. Both the staff and students planned prayer programs together. Additionally, many small prayer groups were organized at all levels whereby prayers were scheduled, at different times by various groups; they prayed for all school activities and challenges in all areas of responsibility.

Students set their goals for exams; teachers for their personal mean score. All the directors and leaders of organized school clubs such as the pathfinder club as well as the church and school choirs would set their times for serious prayers, fasting, and fellowship aiming at performing well through the power of prayer. There was also the formation of an organized group called Heroes of faith, a group volunteering to be interceding for others in early hours of the morning every Sabbath.

The school chaplain was to be present for prayers with the pupils and students early in the morning every day before attending classes. Lessons on prayers were taught in church and classes, as the main communication with God and most effective in bringing change and transformation in Karura School in all dimensions. This was accepted readily and practiced zealously the year 2011 as observed. To the young pupils in the lower classes, it was all fun, they would compete on who would get to the chaplain's office first early in the morning for prayers, as well as leading the devotion in class. This led them to being more active in prayer and schoolwork.

Morning breaks and lunch breaks were scheduled for prayers with staff from various departments. Additionally, the chaplain and those who would like to join in

for prayers, would meet twice a day on Mondays, at lunchtime and later in the evening before leaving for home. On Wednesdays and Fridays, the chaplain, staff-members as well as all the national exam candidates would meet during lunch hour for joint prayers more specifically for academic and spiritual excellence.

For the Pathfinders, the director had set Fridays as a day of prayers and fasting for individuals and all pathfinder activities; for their success both academic and spiritual. The school choir would set time for prayers and fasting before doing their presentations in the schools music festivals.

The scheduled time for the prayer fellowship would also be used to study and claim Bible promises to help build child-parent and friend to friend relationship with God; The end result being building individual confidence and faith in God through prayer. This was a joint effort from both the church and school administration and as a result of this prayer and effort unity, the institution realized great achievements according to the evaluation of all the results of all that attended and participated in the activities

During the final national examinations, the whole institution united; both the church and school administration volunteered every morning before the exam, to pray with the candidates holding hands and claiming God's promises of success. It is during this time that the Pathfinder club won great awards from their performance in various activities like poem presentations and singing, up to presidential level where they presented the poem peace Kenya. The school choir performed the best both at National level and provincial becoming number one and being awarded trophies.

The school academic performance improved greatly with the school having the top leading student in English and having an "A" grade in every subject. This particular student was one of the prayer warriors and a very committed Christian in

the secondary level. From the primary level, the leading student who scored 413 marks in the primary level was also a very committed and prayerful pupil. The school Mean score improved from C to B.

The staff and individual performances also improved, in a continued effect, the school discipline and general performance in all levels also improved, and there was significant spiritual growth. The spirit of praying regularly fellowship and unity are found to be the most contributing factors towards these dynamics. Hence the recommendation for this to be encouraged to help in consistence of good performance and the institution achieving the objective and goal of becoming a model for effective prayer.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

After the assessment and evaluation of practices, habits, and prayer life of Karura Adventist School, the research yielded several findings, these include:

There is a low spirituality and inconsistency in prayer. In addition to this, the findings further showed that many people got involved in the school prayer programs not because of passion, but to meet their obligation, since worship attendance is part of the school regulation. Furthermore, the findings showed that only a few people engaged in serious prayers regularly; or were members of small-group prayer bands.

These few were very effective, and when they were joined by others during times of crisis or exams, the prayers become very effective and yielded good results. However, when things were normal, the spirit of relaxation in prayer returns.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the findings of the research on Karura Adventist School prayer life, suggest a need of a strategy for a vibrant prayer program. This will help to bring about a change in prayer habits and practices, to encourage consistency in prayer; which would in turn enhance the prayer life of the institution. The study on the life of prayer of Karura Adventist School, in the year 2011 and the results achieved in that year, suggest that emphasis on regular and consistent prayer would help Karura Adventist School (KAS) meet its objectives. It would also help achieve the goal of making the institution a model of effective prayer as well as a center of excellence.

Recommendations

After evaluation and analysis of the prayer life in Karura Adventist School, some of the recommendations we would make include:

Incorporation of all stakeholders in the implementation of the proposed prayer model (see appendix). This needs a spiritual committee to be appointed, chaired by the school Chaplain. Whereby, the church, school administration, as well as the board of governors should oversee and monitor the activities suggested.

Second, there is need for both human and material resources to be employed, to facilitate and enhance the worship programs. This involves election of strong devoted personnel, to facilitate daily morning and evening devotions; Midweek prayers; Friday vespers; Sabbath worship; as well as week of spiritual Emphasis. This is to be done regularly and consistently in all prayer programs with the involvement of all; under the coordination of both the school chaplain and the administration for effectiveness.

APPENDIX A

PROPOSED PRAYER MODEL

15 min welcome

Facilitator appreciates and welcomes all with a word of encouragement bearing a promise of God's presence and His willingness to commune and help His people that He created. In this case, His willingness to provide for those in learning institutions, and united in action as they gather together, to seek for knowledge, understanding and wisdom for things on earth and eternity.

Adoration and Confession.

An appointed member leads the group in adoration and confession during which the participants acknowledge God as the source of all treasures, and in whom wisdom and knowledge are found (Colossians 2:2-3) and ask for forgiveness of all their sins. Also, there is the claiming of the promises and assurances from God, for those who seek His presence in humility and repentance (Matthew 18:19-20).

15 min involvement of members

Thanksgiving.

An opportunity for a number of personal experiences and testimonies on answered prayers, is presented to confirm the word and encourage faith and trust in God's providence. This also fosters an appreciative heart and a mind that is keen on God's working in every person's individual life. It also encourages faith in others who may be experiencing similar circumstances. After the testimonies, a hymn is sung followed by thanksgiving prayers offered by an appointed member.

15 min prayer

Supplication

A session of Songs of praise follows, and worship be done in reverence as the members prepare to present their requests in small groups, where they exchange their requests and pray for each other.

Finally close with a thanksgiving song and a benediction from the facilitator.

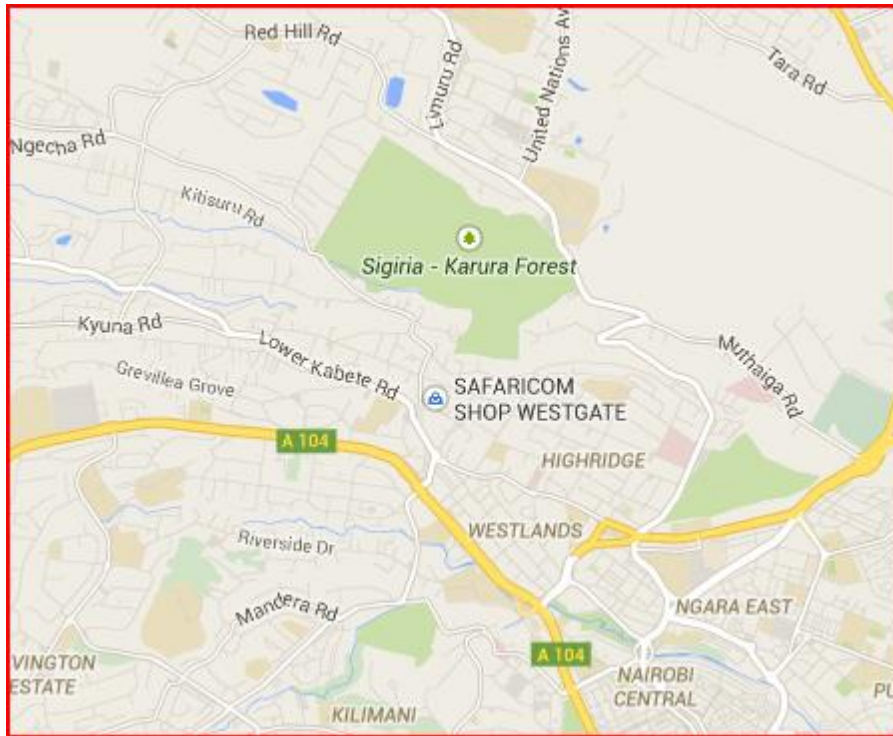
APPENDIX B
MAPS OF KENYA



MAP OF NAIROBI



NAIROBI WESTLANDS MAP



APPENDIX C
LETTER OF PERMISSION TO DO RESEARCH



SEVENTH-DAY
ADVENTIST
CHURCH | Central Kenya Conference
Executive Office

June 26, 2012

Adventist University of Africa
Private Bag
MBAGATHI

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00100-GPO
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020-7121388
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Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: PERMISSION TO DO RESEARCH

Christian greetings!

We write to confirm to you that *Pr. Jane Ndungu* who is taking MA in leadership and Administration with you has been authorized to carry out her research work within the Conference as per her area of study. Her topic of research is "*A model of Effective Prayer in Karura School, 2013.*"

Any assistance and support given to her during her research is of paramount importance.

Thank you and God bless you.

Yours faithfully

Pr. J.P. Kibiisyo Maiywa
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

cc: Officers, CKC
Pr. Jane Ndungu

APPENDIX D
QUESTIONNAIRE

**A STRATEGY TO IMPROVE KARURA ADVENTIST SCHOOL
PRAYER LIFE**

I highly appreciate your voluntary acceptance, in filling the information required for leadership program at Adventist University of Africa. The information given is purely for academic purpose hence will be treated in total confidentiality.

Fill or tick where appropriate. May God bless you for your honest participation and co-operation.

1. What is your age bracket?
(14-17) (18 – 21) (22-35) (36 and above)

2. Gender: Male Female

3. For how long have you been in the institution?
(1 – 5) (6 – 10) (11-20) (21 and above)

4. Were you born in the Seventh- day Adventist Family?
Yes No

5. Did you get converted from other religious persuasions?
Yes No

6. How do you assess prayer attendances in Karura School?
Very good Good Fair Poor

7. How would you assess prayer program in Karura?
Vibrant Average Not Vibrant Poor

8. How do you assess prayer practices of the students?
Very good Good Fair Poor

9. How do you assess prayer practices of staff?

Very good Good Fair Poor

10. Are you a member of any prayer band?

Yes No

11. Are you a member of any Bible study group?

Yes No

12. How much time do you commit to prayer daily?

0 – 30 min 30 – 1 hr
1 – 1½ hr 1½ - 2hr

13. How often do you have prayer and fasting programe?

Once a week Once a month
Ones after 3 months No fasting program

14. What prayer program do you attend regularly?

Evening morning Education Mid – week prayer
Friday vespers Sabbath worship

15. How do you assess small group prayer cells effectiveness/

Excellent Very good Good Poor

16. Briefly comment on how prayer has impacted your life and what you would suggest to enhance regular life in Karura Institution.

- Prayer has given me strength to stay in Karura.

APPENDIX E

TESTIMONY ON PRAYER

A Testimony on Prayer from the Head-Teacher

Karura school though an Adventist school, has a hectic study program and schedule that can swallow one, both teacher and student, into its belly and render one spiritually redundant.

It was out of this observation that I, under the mentorship of Pr. Jane Ndung'u and the discernment of the Holy Spirit, that I set aside part of my lunch hour, I put aside everything else to commune with God and derive strength and wisdom from Him through prayer.

It started just with Pr. Jane and I in my office, but then I invited my daughter Libna Mwaka who was in her fourth form then, who in turn invited her friend Tabitha Njeri. Soon after, more pupils and students, mainly candidates joined the prayer group day by day making the office too small to accommodate everyone.

I could tell the spirit was working in the lives of those involved and in the school at large for character begun to change. The unrest that used to hit the school previously cooled down and one could see and sense the yearning to know the Lord better in the questions asked by the young men and ladies in the school.

When the office could not hold us anymore, we moved to the field where we could now hold hand and cry to God together for guidance and leadership. We read and recited our favorite verses that gave us inspiration and assurance in God's promises. We prayed for love among us and growth in our spiritual lives. We prayed for success, and in all these we saw the hand of God.

Our prayers did not change everyone, but we know we planted the seed of hope by talking to Christ through prayer in the hearts of many young ones who previously had not known what prayer could do. Though our prayers did not eradicate all the problems in our school, it surely gave us the strength to stand during the times of trial. We might not have passed in every exam but truly, God made ways out of working and advancing with the grades we got.

Those prayers in Karura school that year have gone a long way to hold many of the young men and ladies in different institutions they are in, e.g. Strathmore, JKUAT, Egerton, UON, Mt. Kenya University, Baraton, just to mention a few.

For: Mrs. Kombe

P.P. 

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2003 – 2008: B.A. In theology: University of Eastern Africa, Baraton
2001: Clinical Pastoral Education
2000: Hope counselling service
1989: Gov't Proficiency Examination for Clerical Officers
1989: Tulips Commercial College
1979: Pansoms Business College
1975 – 1978 Pan-African High School
1967 – 1974 Karuri Primary School

Professional background

2015 - District Pastor
2014 – 2015 Assistant Publishing Director
2012 – 2013 Karura District Associate pastor
2006 – 2012 Karura School Chaplain
2003 – 2005 Women's Ministries Director – CKC
1996 – 2003 Literature Evangelist and Lay preacher
1992 Survey of Kenya
1990 – 1991 Clerical officer: Ardhi house
1980 – 1989 Rent tribunal (Agriculture house)