

PROJECT ABSTRACT

Master of Arts in Pastoral Theology Project

Adventist University of Africa

Theological Seminary

Title: A STRATEGY TO INCREASE YOUTH RETENTION RATE IN
NYAKONGO DISTRICT OF KENYA LAKE CONFERENCE

Name of researcher: Azaria Otieno Otula

Faculty adviser: Nathaniel Walemba, DMin

Date completed: May 2014

There are indicators that in Nyakongo district many youths are leaving the church and the church leaders do not have strategies to retain them in the church. Churches in Nyakongo have many adults than youths, youths are there in the region but they are not church members. This study seeks to find reasons as to why many youths were leaving the church. The study sets out to design and implement programs which eventually will yield results of reclaiming many youths and winning new ones.

Hence, the purpose of this study was to design a program to reclaim the youth who had left the church and also nurture those who are still in the church. The programs were carried out in Nyakongo district from August 2011 to December 2013. The participants were youths, church officers, non-church members who had left the church. The data for the study was collected by interviewing the youths and adults. Many youths were retained and among those who had left the church 40% were won back. Members agree that the programs can help the church to retain the youths and

reclaim the missing ones. It can be concluded that with the implementation of this program the problem of youths dropping out of church due to social, religious and economic factors like peer influence, non-involvement in church activities can be curbed and the youths reclaimed and retained, through the programs developed, the nurturing of youths will be taken care of by involving youths in the youth ministry which was not there before. The backsliding youths will also be cared for which was not there before in the churches in Nyakongo District. The researcher recommends the programs develop to be used by Nyakongo district, Kenya Lake Conference, and other church institutions which may have the problem of nurture, reclamation and finally retention of youths.

Adventist University of Africa

A STRATEGY TO INCREASE YOUTH RETENTION RATE IN
NYAKONGO DISTRICT OF KENYA LAKE CONFERENCE

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

by
Azaria Otieno Otula


May 2014


A STRATEGY TO INCREASE YOUTH RETENTION RATE IN
NYAKONGO DISTRICT OF KENYA LAKE CONFERENCE


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

by
Azaria Otieno Otula

APPROVAL BY THE COMMITTEE:


Advisor: Nathaniel Walemba, DMin


Dean, Theological Seminary
Sampson Nwaomah, PhD


Reader: Paul M. Mukasa, PhD

Extension Centre: AUA Main Campus

Date: June 2014

Dedicated to my dear wife, Helida
and my four children Clement, Grace, Newton, and Silper.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vi
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	viii
CHAPTER	
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
Background to the Study	1
Statement of the Problem	2
Purpose of the Study	2
Significance of the Study	3
Delimitation of the Study	3
Methodology and Procedure	3
2. THEORETICAL AND BIBLICAL FOUNDATION OF THE STUDY.....	5
The Old Testament on Nurture, Reclamation and Retention of the Youth	
Nurture	5
Nurture	5
Reclamation.....	10
The New Testament on Nurture, Reclamation and Retention of the Youth.....	12
Nurture	12
Reclamation.....	15
Retention	16
Ellen G. White Counsel on the Study	17
Other Scholars on Youth Nurture, Reclamation and Retention	22
3 LOCAL SETTING OF NYAKONGO DISTRICT	31
Factors Leading the Youths to Leave the Church	32
Economic Reason.....	32
Religious Reasons.....	36
Social Reasons	42
Lack of Youth Programs	45
4. PROGRAM DESIGN, IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION	48
Program Design	49
Program Implementation	50

Phase 1: Lectures	50
Phase 2: Dialogue between Parents and Youths	51
Phase 3: Ball Game Evangelism	52
Phase 4: Seminar on Small Group Ministry	53
Phase 5: Progressive Class	54
Phase 6: Bible Conference	55
Program Evaluation	Error! Bookmark not defined.

**5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONSError!
Bookmark not defined.**

Summary	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Conclusion	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Recommendations	Error! Bookmark not defined.

APPENDIXES Error! Bookmark not defined.

A. LETTERS..... Error! Bookmark not defined.

B. QUESTIONNAIRES Error! Bookmark not defined.

C. LECTURES..... Error! Bookmark not defined.

BIBLIOGRAPHY Error! Bookmark not defined.

CURRICULUM VITAE..... Error! Bookmark not defined.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to people who, in one way or the other, contributed to the success of this work. Firstly, Helida, my wife, for her encouragement and patience when I was doing this work, I was spending most of my time which was to be spent with the family. Secondly, to our children Clement, Grace, Newton, and Silper, for encouraging me and sparing time for me, to do the work. Thirdly, to Dr. Nathaniel Walemba, my project adviser, for his good advice, encouragement and navigating me through the research. Fourthly, to Nyakongo church members, for allowing me to do research in their district. Finally, to Kenya Lake Conference Executive Committee for their support by allowing me some time off to go to the field; to my mother Silper for her prayer and encouragement; to all my work colleagues, friends, fellow students, and relatives who wished me the best of luck.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

There is a problem of youths leaving the church in Nyakongo District. There are many adults in the church more than the youths. According the church register of Pap and Kimira church, 70% of church members are adult. The churches do not have strategies to nurture, reclaim, and retain the youths. There is no pastoral care to the youths. The local church leaders do not know the programs to conduct in the youth ministry and of the 10 churches only two are having youth ministry programs, what The youths involved in are brick making, fishing, seek employment in the local firm to an extent that they do not attend church services; they seem to shy off from attending church activities because of the nature of their occupation. The students who go to school make the bricks on Saturday and Sunday. The mission of the church can only be accomplished if youths are included and retained in the church. This can be done by developing strategies to nurture, reclaim and retain youths in the church. the percentage of youths in the church which is 30% is very low us compared to the population of 2009 which say that they are has the you population of 76% of the population. The absence of the youth in the church will pose challenges in the future, for instance reduction in membership and closure of some churches that now appear established, but the number of youth is lower.

Statement of the Problem

Survey conducted as from 2008-2012 reveals a trend of youths leaving the church in Nyakongo District churches. Seven out of ten youths drop out of the church every year. While some join the new religious movements that are picking up in the region, some just stay at home and do not join any church. Because they are near the lake 70% of the youths go fishing this is according to Obari beach management records, as an economic activity and others go to towns where they do not join any Seventh-day Adventist church. Some of those who go fishing in Lake Victoria also stop coming to church because they engage in fishing which is done on Sabbath and other day of the week Brick making which is one of the economic activities requires the service of energetic youths. by the time the researcher was conducting the interview he interviewed six youths from Kital who had dropped from the church and four of them said that they cannot come to church because on week day they go to school and on Saturday is when they can make bricks so they do not go to church because they are making bricks; however, some do leave because of their parents and their commitment to church life. There is no strategy in the local churches to retain the 30% in the District at present. There is no pastoral strategy to nurture, reclaim and retain youths in the local churches in Nyakongo District.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to find a solution to the problem of young people who are leaving the church by developing an integrated strategy of reclaiming the youths who have gone out of the church as well as train for discipling those that are in the church. It is envisaged that at the end of the program implementation, the churches will report positive results.

Significance of the Study

It is hoped that this study will help the local churches, Kenya Lake Conference and West Kenya Union Conference with a strategy which will be used to nurture and train the youths for discipling, as well as reclaim those who have left the church. If the strategy is successful, it can be used by other conferences, and unions which now experience similar challenges. The outcome will further help portray the image of the church in a fairly positive way amongst young people and the community at large. The strategy is aimed at increasing the number of youths won and retained in the local churches of Nyakongo district. As the number of youth who are in the church increases, the church will have a brighter future because they are members of today as well as of tomorrow. The churches will have enough manpower to do the church activities since youths do still have the power and vigor of doing the work of God. It is also a means by which the churches endeavor to confirm its commitment to caring for the lost and to one another.

Delimitation of the Study

This study focuses on the youth of Nyakongo District. Other groups of church members are also leaving the church, but they are not the focus of this study. There are also other problems in the church to be addressed but this study deals only with youth reclamation and retention. Youths could also have other problems that affect them however, this study only attempt to solve the problem of retention in the church.

Methodology and Procedure

This is a program development type of research in which both qualitative and quantitative approaches were engaged in order to reach the conclusions mentioned in the study. In the second chapter the researcher studied other publications and internet

sources. Questionnaires were developed and used for both youths and adults in the churches in order to acquire accurate knowledge about youth retention problem in Nyakongo. Observation of the related youth activities in Nyakongo district from 2010 to 2012 helped find solutions to the problem.

In Chapter 3 the researcher interviewed youths, both in the church and those out of the church. The researcher will use observation for the studies Adults in the church were also interviewed. Statistics of how many youths often leave the church were also analyzed.

Chapter 4 involves development of a program for purposes of implementation in the churches. This further involved conducting seminars for youths and parents in the church. Bible conferences for the youth were conducted during holidays. The youth were reached through visitations as well.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL AND BIBLICAL FOUNDATION OF THE STUDY

This chapter focuses on theoretical basis upon which the study builds. Its first concern is about biblical foundations both in the Old and New Testaments then proceeds to the Ellen G. White's counsels on nurture, reclamation and retention. The final segment of this chapter highlights the work of other scholars in the area of nurture, reclamation and retention.

The Old Testament on Nurture, Reclamation and Retention of the Youth Nurture

Nurture

“These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up” (Deut 6:6-7). If they are well rooted in the word of God nurturing them will be easier

Also, godly parental modeling is a pre-requisite to parental teaching (Deut. 6:5-7). Parents are to model their love (devotion) for God and then teach their children what God says (see 1 Sam 2:26 KJV). And the child Samuel grew on, and was in favor both with the Lord, and also with - Youth should be taught to listen to only one voice and that is the voice of God, the other voice is satanic it led the children of Samuel to fool away. This calls for parents to train the youths to listen to the voice of the Lord. Youths should have a place where they can grow in their

intimacy with Christ. “As water reflects a face, so a man’s heart reflects the man” (Proverbs 27:19), so the church is where they can develop their heart and reflect what they are. The Bible further states that “Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.” (Proverbs 4:23). If the soil is not healthy, it does not matter how many seeds you plant in it-the seed won’t grow well in unhealthy soil. That is, if the church is not grounded in the practice of the Lord and the Biblical word of the Lord then the seeds, that is, the youth will not be having a good foundation. It is important to have as many avenues for “soil preparation” as possible, especially among the youth. If they don’t have a good foundation, they could head off to college and the rest of their lives with hardened hearts – lost in a world begging for their participation.

Churches with strong Biblical foundation will nurture the youth and by the grace of God, they will mature into spiritual men and women upon whom the church can depend.

Solomon calls for the training of the young ones in Proverbs 22:6,[NASV] “Train up a child in the way he should go, even when he is old he will not depart from it”. The training should direct the youth to duties, dangers, and blessings. The Hebrew meaning of this clause is curious: *chanoch lannaar al pi darco*, which means that,

“Initiate the child at the opening (the mouth) of his path When he comes to the opening of the way of life, being able to walk alone, and to choose; stop at this entrance, and begin a series of instructions, how he is to conduct himself in every step he takes. “The training should include the path of obedience and religions. In committing to both Christian and non Christian parents the training of their children, God has, in a very important sense, committed to them the formation of their future character, and he will hold them responsible for the influence they exert.”¹

The analogy about training of young ones is clear. The youth, need firm guidance and good example from their youngest years so that they will grow straight

and “upright” in their knowledge of and love for God. So, the combined benefit of good example from father, and mother, as well as clear and purposeful handling one of the truths of the faith is essential.

The youth should be shown how to perform the duties of his life, how to care for others, that is the service to the community, and how to do the service in the church. This will help the youth to strengthen their faith in God. The early education of youth shapes their characters both in their secular and religious lives. For the parents to train the youth, they have to know the way the youth should go. The right activities the youth should perform for his or her spiritual growth. Also, godly parental modeling is a pre-requisite to parental teaching (Deut. 6:5-7). Parents are to model their love (devotion) for God and then teach their children what God says. God's testimonies must be taught to our youths, and the utmost diligence must be used to make them understand the testimonies of God. This is one of the tasks of the church, the pastor church officers; and it requires much patience, much prudence, much judgment, and much piety in the parents, to enable them to do this good, this most important work, in the best and most effectual manner.

So apart from developing the character of the youths another primary duty of the local church should be training the parents to develop into Christians who will be good models for their children and teens.

The primary objective of the local church should be teaching and helping (counseling) parents to. Teach the youth on the dangers that are in the world, the disadvantages of some practices that are practiced in the world, the choices that they make like the choice of Samson the son of Manoah whose choice did not allow him to progress in life. If they were trained to have good choice then they would be retained in the church. The bad choice of Saul whereby he refused to follow the instructions

given to him by God led him to lose the headship role in Israel, but if they were taught to have the right role in the community then they would be like Joseph who was trained by his parents and succeeded where Samson failed.

They should be taught how to escape the dangers that surround them like Joseph did when he was tempted by Potiphar's wife. Joseph stood tall and he did not fall, so the daily instruction should include the dangers of wrong choice. Adam Clarke expounds, "Fix these on his mind by daily inculcation, till their impression is become indelible; then lead him to practice by slow and almost imperceptible degrees, till each indelible impression becomes a strongly radiated habit."¹ If their habits are trained when they are still young then they will have the right conduct. Adam continues, "Dedicate, therefore in the first instance, your child to God; and nurse, teach, and discipline him as God's child, whom He has entrusted to your care"². The training will help the youth to know his responsibility, and if the parents or the church fail the responsibility of training the result of it will be one who is not fully developed thus resulting to the youth leaving the church. For them to be retained in the church then they have to be fully instructed on the blessings that they will get when they are in the church, and the dangers that they will experience when they are out of the church.

Both the parent and the youth have a responsibility in the training process. The youth is the recipient while the parent is the instructor. They should be trained not to follow corrupt influences during the training; he or she should choose the wise way in contrast to the foolish ways of life which are destructive and once engaged in life, do

¹ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; City, MO: Beacon Hill Press, 1967.,546).

² Ibid.

not lead to getting the blessing but to receiving the curse in life. Train up children in that age of vanity, to keep them from the sins and snares of it, in that learning age, to prepare them for what they are designed for- eternity with God. The training should prepare them to be retained in the church to get instructions for the life to come.

Train them as soldiers, who are taught to handle their arms, keep rank, and observe the word of command. If they keep commands of the Lord then their lives will be a blessing to others and to the church in which they are members of today and tomorrow. Joseph was trained when he was young and his life was a blessing to his family during famine. Moses writes, “For I have known him, to the end that he may command his children and his household after him, that they may keep the way of Jehovah, to do righteousness and justice; to the end that Jehovah may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him” (Genesis 18:19). The youth will become a blessing if they are trained in the way of the Lord, their character will be shaped to the ways of the Lord.

It is the parental authority as well as personal example to the youth which allow them to follow the way of righteousness and truth. If they are brought under spiritual influence they will be retained in the church, but if there is no holy training and holy examples set then the youth will not be retained in the church. This training should not be delegated to anybody else it is a parental duty to give the religious training which retain them in the church. William Laverance says, “They should not readily delegate to others the work of training, either in secular or religious knowledge.”³ Abraham trained Isaac in the right way and was a meditative man; Isaac also trained Jacob who cherished the promises. It is as water that flows from the rill

³ William Laverance, H.D.M Spence, and Joseph S. Exell “Train up” (Gen. 18:19), *The Pulpit Commentary vol. 1*, (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1980 p 19).

which flows to the streamlet, the streamlet to the creek, the creek to the river, and the river to the ocean. The youth do not come to the world with a ready-made stock of knowledge, therefore the youth must be taught the truth and made to see the right path, which was at first unknown to him or her.

Command and persuasion were the two weapons which parental wisdom would do its best to wield the youth for retention. The youth would also be told that their character would determine their destiny and that they are responsible for this. All the very worthiest and wisest influences of home would lead to no good result if they are opposed to them - a rebellious spirit- if they did not receive them in the spirit of docility. Satan could not move him from his integrity.”⁴ If they are firm in their moral act like John then they will be easily retained in the church. This is done by the church members feeding them with the gospel of Christ.

Reclamation

Youth can break away from the church but they should be reclaimed back to the church. They are faced with many challenges which sometime make the to break away from the will of God, but they should be reclaimed back to the church,

Samson the son of Manoah who was born to be a judge of the people of God was given the vow to be a Nazarite. He was forbidden to cut his hair or shave his beard. He was not to drink the wine or other strong drinks; even for the drinks to touch his lips were a sin. The vows were made for him to be set aside for the service to the people of God, this was also for a total devotion and service to God (Judges 13:5, 7) if he could break the vow then he was to be punished. If he deliberately broke the vow that was punishable.

⁴ “Redemption,” *Review and Herald*, March 3, 1874, No. 2, The Ellen G. White Estate, Inc., 2007.

Samson broke the conditions, when he killed the philistines and touched their dead bodies and stole their robes (Judges 14:19) this was a fall. He also told the secrets of his strength to Delilah who then cut his hair (Judges 16:19) this one made him to be a slave the rest of his life. The youths in our churches can fall like it happen to Samson, but they should be reclaimed back in to the fold. They can go and be prisoners like it happen to Samson but they should be reclaimed. They can move away and lead a hopeless life but they should be allowed back.

Before the death of Samson God renewed his strength killed the philistines he killed thousands of people when he regained his strength (Judges 15:14-20). Samson called God to renew his strength (Judges 16; 28-31) though he was in sin but he cried to the lord for strength and his strength was renewed. To reclaim a youth the church should have a life of forgiving them from the sin like God forgave and renewed Samson's strength.

Retention

This art of keeping, or withholding youths in the church. They are not retained by force but by feeding them by the word of God, Deut 6:4-9. This metaphor signifies the manner of instructing them, that it is to be done diligently, earnestly, frequently, discreetly. If it is done frequently then the youth will not have that time to fix they mind in worldly things but to the word of God. The religious educations of youths often repeat these things to them. Be careful and exact in teaching thy youths. Teach these truths to all who are any way under your care. If we are exact to the point then they will learn to stay in the church by studding the word of God alone.

The life Samuel is one of the examples to the church, his family dedicated him to the service of the lord. If we dedicate our youth to the church service that it will be a blessing to the church, the Bible say, And Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him,

and did let none of his words fall to the ground. And all Israel from Dan even to Beer-sheba knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord. 1 Samuel 3:19, 20. If youths are grounded in the word All their increase in wisdom and grace is owing to the presence of God with them; this is all in their growth. God honored Samuel, because he was grounded in the word taught to him by Elli. If we keep them close the church like Samuel was kept they will stay in the church.

The New Testament on Nurture, Reclamation and Retention of the Youth

The work of nurture, reclamation and retention is paramount in the New Testament just as in the old. In discipling, Jesus taught that when one is fully trained, he tends to be like his teacher (Luke 6:40). Children and teens are affected immensely by the things that are modeled in them. Indeed if the parents do not take this responsibility seriously the youth will not be retained in the church. Further, God has ordained that childrearing be the responsibility of parents (Eph. 6:4).

More can be learnt from the story of the prodigal son who left home to enjoy with worldly people but after he sensed the dangers outside their family he longed for home where he could feel the warmth of the father.

Nurture

This is the Moral inability; they want of power or inclination to resist and overcome bad habits and natural propensities. In Luke 2:52 Jesus grew up among a people of good seldom and only contemptuously named by the ancient classics, and subjected at the time to the yoke of a foreign oppressor; but because of this Jesus kept the will of his father in a bad situation he was not attracted to the condition of a remote and conquered province of the Roman empire; but he fixed his will to God in the darkest district of Palestine; in a little country town of proverbial insignificance; in

poverty and manual labor; in the obscurity of a carpenter's shop; far away from universities, academies, libraries, and literary or polished society; without any help, as far as we know, but he followed the parental care, us was communicated by the angle, this is the goodness of a well natured youth in the society. If we do so in our homes, shall have youths who will resist the temptations' and will not leave the church. Jesus at every age he was relevant to his father because of parental nature.

Paul also in the book of Acts 20:28 he owns the apostles to take care of the flock by feeding them with word of GOD. They are given the power to feed, keep and govern in a right way. If youths are fed with good milk then they will be retained. The duty of parents is set forth in the book of Ephesians in two forms, negatively and positively. Paul asserts, "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord" (Eph 6:4). The negative aspect is that the youth is not to be provoked to wrath because their temper is still in transcendent moment, this will determine their character and destiny. Parents are to guard against these evil, pretty interferences, trivial prohibitions, incessant chidings, and an irritable spirit, are the things which are harmful that can cause a youth not to be retained in the church, and provoke the child to wrath. The positive duty is to nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord. The parents were to train the faculties of their youth - bring out their latent powers, and would teach them to think with accuracy, to love purity, to act with adroitness and promptitude. The duty of parents is not to be impatient; use no unreasonable severities. Parents would deal prudently and wisely with children; convince their judgments and work upon their

reasoning. They ought to bring them up well; under proper and compassionate correction; and in the knowledge of the duty God requires.⁵

Many set their children against religion; but this does not excuse the youth disobedience, though it may be awfully occasion it. God alone can change the heart, yet he gives his blessing to the good lessons and examples of parents, and answers their prayers. The parent would tell the youth of what to follow and imitate, what to shun and avoid.

Young children from the ages of 15 to 20 were hungry and wanted to learn. They need the Word of God. If they did not hear the Word of God, they would hear another word, as there were many voices out there. There were only two spiritual camps in this world, God's camp and Satan's camp. There was no in-between and if we were going to be on the Lord's side, we ought to teach the youth the Word of God. But those, whose chief anxiety was that their children should be rich and accomplished, whatever became of their souls, must not look for the blessing of God. Those youths whose fathers punish them out of anger, unfairly, brutally, or arbitrarily would be provoked to wrath. The word "instruction," according to Webster's Dictionary literally means, 1) The act of teaching or informing the understanding in that of which it was before ignorant; information and 2) Precepts conveying knowledge.⁶ Those youth whose fathers put ungodly principles into their youth minds are being provoked to wrath, and they cannot be retained in the church, this is because they are already spoiled. It is the duty of fathers to use their fatherly authority moderately and to God's glory. Correction is better than punishment; this is because

⁵Albert Barnes, "And ye fathers" (Eph. 6:4), *Albert Barnes NT Commentary*, Power Bible CD 4.1.

⁶Noah Webster's 1828 Dictionary, "Instruction," (Ellen G. White Estate Inc., Complete Published Edition, 2007).

punishment is like revenge to the character of the youth. Correction will help him in the future, and will improve their judgment, and correction is in the principle of affectionate concern. When the demands of a parent are unreasonable and severe the spirit of a youth then becomes irritated, and he is “discouraged,” (see Col 3:21). When the parent is excited when correcting, the youth will feel it. He should punish youth not because he is angry, but because it is right; not because it has become a matter of personal contest, but because God requires that he should do it, and the welfare of the child demands it. The moment when the youth sees that a parent punishes him under the influence of anger, that moment the youth will be likely to be angry too--and his anger will be as proper as that of the parent. So we should not be in anger when correcting the youth in the church, this has caused some of them to leave the church. If the church and parents became good stewards of the youth then they shall not leave the church but they will be retained in the church.

Reclamation

One which was lost because of sin from the garden of Aden was reclaimed back through the blood of Jesus Christ in Calvary. In Luke 15 Jesus narrates the story of the prodigal son who went away from the father, consumed everything from the father. But when he came back the love of the father accepted him back, without any condition. The son was looking for his independence and running away from the divine rules of the father, this is also the same with the youths of today they leave the divine rules from home and only to go and enjoy the earthly pleasers. He wanted to be his own master and this did not go well with him.

When the son came back the father had the heart of forging the gone away son, the father swallowed his servile feeling only to accept the gone away son. When

we want reclaim youths we should have the heart of forgiving like the father to the prodigal son. He gave the best to his prodigal son; us the church is also expected to give her best to the youths. The lesson we should learn from the story is that when they come back to the church then we should prepare the church to welcome them back without attaching many conditions which may further discourage and make them to be lost for good. The church members should have the heart of the father of the prodigal son who was ready to forgive without any condition of compensation from the youth. Return of one youth should be celebration to the church like God rejoices when one sinner repents and return to the Lord.

Retention

The very best example we have in the New Testament is the manner in which Jesus called, trained and kept within His fold the historic “disciples of Jesus”. This presupposition is backed with Luke’s narration in Chapter 9 verse 1 as follows:

“Then He called His twelve disciples together, and gave the power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases”

Retention as it were should be based on a decisive effort. Jesus took the initiative to bring together, did the empowering of them that He called and provided them with the power of attorney: power execute and discharge their duty. If we do so to the youths, the church will have a good strategy of retaining her young people. John 10:12-18, Jesus talks of a good shepherd who stays with flock in problems. Youths at their early age the church should be close to them because they face a lot of challenges which need the closeness of the adults to shepherd and give good guidance. If the church runs away from the youths then we shall not retain them. The Bible talks of a good shepherd, John 10:1-21. The youth is one of the flocks that the shepherds need to be familiar with. One which may wonder must be known for

them to be protected, and those which need special care are taken care of both day and night. The shepherds in the church will risk their lives to protect the youths in the church; they will always find food and water for them that is giving them spiritual food. He will always lead them to the safety of sheepfold; this will lead the youth to be retained in the church if the leadership is of a good shepherd. Youths may wander away if the church does not build a well protected sheepfold, the sheepfold will act as a protector to the youth from the wild animals that is from the earthly things which may destroy their life and lead them away from the church.

Ellen G. White Counsel on the Study

There are many publications about the youth by Ellen G. White. In one of them, she considers home as the first school where youths should first get the instructions.

Fathers and mothers who make God first in their households, who teach their children that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, glorify God before angels and before men by presenting to the world a well-ordered, well-disciplined family--a family that love and obey God instead of rebelling against Him. Christ is not a stranger in their homes.⁷

Ellen, a mother of four boys, took most of her life instructing her sons on being good boys in spiritual life, she encouraged homes to be the first schools in the life of the youths for this is where they can learn the lessons' of respect, obedience, reverence and self control. The right teaching from home will lead to the right youth in the church. If they are not trained at home then Satan will influence their thinking, and lead them to destruction as it happened to Samson the son of Manoah. They should be given spiritual, mental and physical instruction, for them to be all-round people in the community. She asserts that "a right foundation must be laid, a

⁷ Ellen G. White, *The Adventist Home* (The Ellen G. White Estate, Inc., 2007), 1952: 27-28.

framework, strong and firm, erected; and then day by day the work of building, polishing, perfecting, must go forward.”⁸ If this is done in the family then there will be the right youths in the community. In light of this, the Bible should be given its rightful place as an educator of the young people. Ellen G. White asserts, “As an educator, the Holy Scriptures are without a rival. The Bible is the most ancient and the most comprehensive history that men possess. It came fresh from the Fountain of eternal truth; and throughout the ages a divine hand has preserved its purity.”⁹ There are principles that every youth should know before heading off to college and discovering their destiny – principles like: Authentic Faith; Spiritual Disciplines; Moral Boundaries; Healthy Friendships; Wise Choices; Ultimate Authority; Putting Others First; and finally, general Bible knowledge. If they have all those points they will stick in the church and grow in Christ.

Ellen G. White affirms, “Children are in great need of proper education in order that they may be of use in the world and in the church. But any effort that exalts intellectual culture above moral training is misdirected. Instructing, cultivating, polishing, and refining the youth and children should be the main burden of both parents and teachers.”¹⁰ Parents become the first teachers to the youths they should understand that this is their responsibility which should not be assigned to anyone, “Parents, remember that your home is a training school, in which your children are to be prepared for the home above. Deny them anything rather than the education that they should receive in their earliest years. Allow no word of pettishness. Teach your

⁸ Ellen G. White, *Child Guidance* (The Ellen G. White Estate, Inc., 2007), 17.

⁹ Ellen G. White, *Messages to Young People*, (Ellen G. White Estate Inc., Complete Published Edition, 2007), 263.

¹⁰ Ellen G. White, *Child Guidance*, (The Ellen G. White Estate, Inc., 2007), 1954), 296.

children to be kind and patient.”¹¹ When the youths are trained early at their tender age they will not go wrong in future, take an example of Joseph who was instructed by the parents (Genesis 37-50). It should be a preparatory school for the youths, if we do not do this then they will receive but instruction in other places which are destructive. How startling is the African proverb, “As the twig is bent, the tree is inclined.” Most of the parents when the youth is not well they are also disturbed by this, so there is no piece when our youths are going wrong direction like it happened to Samson the son of Manoah. The young ones are to be trained to the extent that when they become adults then they can be relied upon like Joseph who stayed away from home but was upright in his morals. So the training of the youths should not be little regarded but given first priority.

Ellen White observes that “Many who profess to be followers of Christ are sadly neglectful of home duties; they do not perceive the sacred importance of the trust which God has placed in their hands, to so mold the characters of their children that they will have the moral stamina to resist the many temptations that ensnare the feet of youth.”¹² She encourages parents to put homes in a way that they become the first schools in the lives of the youth just as Abraham gave education to his family. Home is the first grade in the life the youths and school become the second grade in life. Home instruction will help the youths to be out of danger of the snare. She further says,

Fathers and mothers need to understand their responsibility. The world is full of snares for the feet of the young. Multitudes are attracted by a life of selfish and sensual pleasure. They cannot discern the hidden dangers or the fearful ending of the path that seems to them the way of happiness. Through the indulgence of appetite and passion, their energies are wasted, and millions are

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ellen G. White, *Child Guidance* (The Ellen G. White Estate, Inc., 2007), 22.

ruined for this world and for the world to come. Parents should remember that their children must encounter these temptations. Even before the birth of the child, the preparation should begin that will enable it to fight successfully the battle against evil.¹³

She encourages that the parents should join their effort when they are instructing their children, when they differ in something then it should not be in public where their children watch, it is a dangerous school for them. They should have Christian dignity when dealing with the youths. The youths may not take the instructions that their parents give, but they will never fail to do what their parents are doing practically, they will want to be like their parents in practical things.

Ellen G. White says that “Youthful talent, well organized and well trained, is needed in our churches. The youth will do something with their overflowing energies. Unless these energies are directed into right channels, they will be used by the youth in a way that will hurt their own spirituality, and prove an injury to those with whom they associate.”¹⁴ She counsels that churches should make use of the energies of the young ones in the church for if they are not used then they can be used in doing negative things. On tapping the talents of the youth in the church she states,

They must be trained, disciplined, drilled, in the best methods of winning souls to Christ. Teach them to try in a quiet, unpretending way to help their young companions. Let different branches of missionary effort be systematically laid out, in which they may take part, and let them be given instruction and help. Thus they will learn to work for God.¹⁵

¹³ Ibid., 21.

¹⁴ Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers* (The Ellen G. White Estate, Inc., 2007), 211.

¹⁵ Ibid., 210.

The church should take most of her time teaching youths on the methods of ministering in the church and outside the church for them to minister again¹⁶ to the fellow youths, since they know the culture of their fellow ones. This involvement will make them know that they are part of the family of God, as they prepare for His coming. Let the kindness and courtesy of the minister be seen in his treatment of children. She continues to assert that “Lessons of great importance may be learned from the history of Daniel and his companions. These youth were bound together in the sacred bonds of Christian fellowship. Daniel’s name is placed first on the record because he exerted a strong influence over the other three,”¹⁷ without this they would be led to a dead end. She says that actions speak louder than words, and that those who are lovers of pleasure do not appreciate the rich blessings of being in the assembly of the people of God, they usually go doing against the will of God. Without taking advice they always end up in wrong destiny, for such Ellen White advises,

The youth need to be instructed, carefully and prayerfully, that they may build their characters upon the abiding foundation. The reason so many make grievous blunders is that they do not heed the teachings of experience. The counsel of parents and teachers is lost upon them, and they yield to the temptations of the enemy.¹⁸

If their character is built on Christ then they will not blunder in life and live the church to go and enjoy in the world. They will abide in the love of Christ for their life in this world. The enemy to our youth should be differed by giving them spiritual

¹⁶ Ellen G. White, *Manuscript Releases vol. 4* (The Ellen G. White Estate, Inc., 2007), 129

¹⁷ Ellen G. White, *Manuscript Releases* 113, 1901, p. 7. (“Canvassers Needed,” typed November 4, 1901).

¹⁸ Ellen G. White, *Messages to Young People* (The Ellen G. White Estate, Inc., 2007), 163.

instruction which moves them forward. Ellen White says, “The youth will do something with their overflowing energies, unless these energies are directed into right channels.”¹⁹ She further affirms,

The members of the church, filled with Christ's love for souls, and awake to their privileges and opportunities, may exert upon the youth in our institutions an influence for good that is beyond estimate. Their example of faithfulness in the home, in business, and in the church, their manifestation of social kindness and Christian courtesy, combined with a genuine interest for the youth's spiritual well-being, will go far toward shaping the characters of these youths for the service of God and their fellow men, both in this life and in the life to come.²⁰

It can be concluded that the parent's character will allow them to be retained in the church. The youths will be in the church if the character of the adults in the church is shaped to be a good example to them.

Other Scholars on Youth Nurture, Reclamation and Retention

God calls the church to nurture the young ones so that they may not go away from the church. Whether a young person is born in a Christian family, significant steps need be taken to bring him/her up in a way that will lead to conversion and retention. Barry Gane notes,

Being born into an Adventist family doesn't make conversion or baptism automatic. Our own young people need conversion and retention. Today there is a peculiar sense that the youth are leaving the church. It's time to face up to the reality and take significant steps to reclaim our lost youth. Determining how many youth really leave the church is difficult. We are hesitant to drop the name of an inactive or missing youth, and the name won't even be recorded until the young person has been baptized—a decision a growing number of youth postpone until late teens.²¹

¹⁹ Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers*, (Ellen G. White Estate Inc., Complete Published Edition, 2007), 211.

²⁰ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to the Church vol. 7*, (The Ellen G. White Estate, Inc., 2007), 187.

²¹ Barry Gane, “Reclaiming our Youth: Youth Apostasy and Recovery of Backslidden Youth,” Accent 2006, Q1.pdf.

Young people will be retained in the church provided that its atmosphere is conducive and accommodative to their needs. Youthful talent, well organized and well trained, is needed in our churches.

Gilbert Cangy said in one of his sermons that, “it is the adults leaving the youths in the church not the youths leaving.”²² He meant that the adults are making moves and leaving the youths, the youth are not taken care of by the elderly church members, and they are left alone to take care of themselves. The youths are not involved in the decision making process of the church but are forced to implement what they are not a party of. In his research he said. “Use [sic] young people assert their independence; one of the ways they do it is by questioning and often rejecting the values and beliefs of their parents.”²³ From this stage youths need their independence and if the church does not observe them keenly they end up in other churches. This is true because they are still on their way of making decision which benefits them in life. At this stage of life “they may fail to do what you tell them but they will never fail to do what you do in public” declares Pr. George Okeyo on nurturing and retention of young people in the church.²⁴

Brad Strahan²⁵ has surveyed over 200 college students in an attempt to see if there is a connection between the relationship a young person has with their parents and their images of God. He is convinced that the quality of the parent-child bond is a more powerful predictor of whether or not there will be a positive faith in the child

²² Gilbert Cangy is the Youth Director at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Maryland, USA.

²³ Said Barry Cane, Steve Case, Ministry Magazine, 2002 June, p. 5.

²⁴ George Okeyo, *Your Choice Determine Your Destiny*.

²⁵ Brad Strahan, *Getting It Right: Power Packed Resource for Adventist Youth Leaders*, (Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2005), 275.

than the religiosity of the parent. The young person's understanding of God is greatly enhanced when they have a model of God's love demonstrated to them. The most effective parenting style for building the faith and the psychological and emotional health of the youth is one that is high on care (shows affection and warmth) and at the same time allows freedom and empowers youth to be independent. So parenting is most important in the life of the youths- some leave because of their parent's weakness. If the parents treated them harshly they say that they will not attend the church with them.

One of the church's concerns is how to keep the youth in the church in this troubled age. To retain the youth in the church calls for the church to meet the social needs, the appeal to the intellect and grounding the youth to the Gospel message to meet their individual and being in harmony with the Bible. Johanna Vannath, says, "We can only retain youth in the church if only we socially integrate them in church activities and church life."²⁶ If they are leveled as young and future members of the church this epitomize their thinking, they fill that they are not wanted for now so to retain them then they should be treated as members of the church. They should be treated as members of the church by developing their spiritual life for the work now and the future, this will enable them to be in the church as members.

If we want to see our youth growing in their faith and reaching their full potential in Christ, it is essential that youth are seen as the church of today, the body of Christ today. We need to equip them and release them to develop their spiritual gifts with no limitations. We have to empower them to discover their God-given ministry and we must integrate them into the church from childhood through to their last breath.²⁷

²⁶ Johanna Vannath, Leader of the Baptist Church in New Zealand.

²⁷ Oiso G. Keith, *Counseling Teenagers*, USA: Thom Schurtz Publications, Inc, 1994.page 21

They should also be helped to develop their spiritual gifts and enrolled in church ministries according to their spiritual gifts, they should be given full support in the chosen ministry and given resources to develop. Training them in their area of strength will help them have the passion in what they are doing in the church. If we are in the church to retain the youth then we should involve them in every structure of the church thus from the local church to the higher level so that they become part of decision making of the church. Our services must be designed with the input of youth and also with the presence of youth on our music, worship, visitation and announcement, this in itself sends a message to youth that they are not only welcome but that they belong. A youth service alone will not meet this need.

The other reason the youth are leaving our churches is lack of deep discipleship. We must make the ground in our churches fertile for youth to grow in their relationship with God and in understanding their faith. There are ingredients that will help to do this: the leaders who are elected to lead the youth should be those who are ready to grow spiritually. It is also important that the youth are given opportunity to set spiritual goals and are kept accountable in regard to their progress by a small group ministry of their age group and their local church leaders should be accountable to follow up on what is taking place. They should be good caring leaders and good shepherds of the flock. The church is to make sure that the way the gospel is presented captivates the youth and helps them understand the gospel in today's arts- and media-saturated world. It is important for the church to involve them at this level for they are best able to reflect their youth culture in the arts, dance, drama, music, song and multimedia.

Another way of retention is ministry engagement; youth is maintained if he or she is engaged in a ministry of the church. If they are not involved in any ministry

like choir, community services then after six months the possibility of them going away is higher. They begin by becoming inactive then they move away from the church so for the youth to be resourceful then they are to be involved in church ministries. If they are not involved in church activities then they will go for replacement outside the church because they have energy to be spent, and so let the churches identify their talent for them to use them in the church.

They can also be retained by improving relationship; there are churches where the relationship between the old church members and youth is not there, if it is there than it is not cordial, the church leaders also hate youths, their kind of communication is ever cruel. Youths will be in the church if they are loved and leaders do not lead through criticism but through correction by love- this will help retain youth.

Another way of retaining youth is small group ministry involvement. There are many avenues for such involvement: discipleship groups, home cell groups, ministry teams, and choirs and praise teams, to name but a few. Our research shows that the most effective assimilation group is the youth cell group, which is the open-ended small group that typically meets on the church campus. A person involved in a youth small group class is five times more likely to be active in the church five years later, than a person who attends worship services alone. If they are involved in small groups then they will be active in church life. The small group will help the youth build trust between youth and church members; they can also be given responsibility through the groups that will make them love the church. The groups will also make them discover their talent and use them in the church and outside. Spiritually they will be fed by their fellow youths and the adults in the leadership particularly those in charge of their department.

Another why of nurturing reclaiming and retaining youths is by small group ministry which is a powerful ministry in a growing church? The primary function of small groups is to develop relationships, between people and God, and between people and people. The essence of the kingdom of heaven love relationships. Building such relationships should be the primary concern of the youth ministry in every local church. This kind of relationship will help them to nurture one another. Where there is no small group ministry is like a church without wall. That is there is no retention measures put in place to assist church members not to leave the church. through their friendly relationships the youths will have a wall to protect them from leaving, and will help them in reclamation and nurture.

In 1993 a study was done by the Commission on Youth of the Far Eastern Division, together with the theological seminary of the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies (AIAS). For the years 1990-1995, 446,000 out of a total of 892,000 Seventh-day Adventist young people were projected to leave the church, while for the years 1995-2000, 612,500 out of 1,225,000 Seventh-day Adventist youth were declared lost²⁸

The loss above is because the youths were lacking friendship in their local churches. So small group ministry is import because youth do have relationship with one another this is a system which can be used to nurture and retain them. This is according to the study above.

Adventist youth ministry is also one of the way that is vital in retaining youths in the Adventist church. it is to assist young people into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ and help them embrace his call to discipleship. Youth ministry is vital to helping teens integrate into the larger, intergenerational community of the church. this conclusion is according to the study above.

²⁸Barry Gane, "Reclaiming our Youth: Youth Apostasy and Recovery of Backslidden Youth," Accessed 2006, Q1.pdf.

Youth ministry resists the status quo, this of the adult members and youths helping the church stay relevant, to the call and to the church activities. Youth ministry focuses on inviting those who are not already part of the church into the deeper narrative of God's plan. It helps to evangelize to the youths who are not our church members; this is because they know the culture of youths. Youth ministry reminds the church that teens are not marginalized members of the body, but co-creators and conspirators in the divine work of the church. So they fill that they belong to the church. Youth ministry helps the church focus on the way of Jesus, which goes beyond tradition, dogma, and work. Youth ministry provides a place for teens to gather and explore with others what it means to be a part of something bigger than them and a place to put all that creative energy to work for God and provide for community services. Youth group frequently brings together kids who would not necessarily, because of the social confines of their lives, know each other, nevertheless, and get to know each other well. This take place when they have social events like ball game evangelism

From the study it is that when the youths are nurtured from the childhood well rooted in the words of God they will be retained well in the church. We should have the faith of forgiveness like it was done to Samson for the church to reclaim back the lost once.

CHAPTER 3

LOCAL SETTING OF NYAKONGO DISTRICT

This is the local setting of Nyakongo district, the activities in the district, like economic, social, and religious activities. Nyakongo is one of the districts in Kenya Lake Conference located west wards from the head quarter of Kenya Lake Conference. Administratively it is in Homa- Bay County, Rachuonyo North district, Nyakongo location, in Kamser A, and Kogweno/ Kawuor Sub- location. The reasons as to why youths are leaving the church in Nyakongo district are derived from the findings acquired from the interviews, and answers from questionnaire, and other sources of the information.

Nyakongo District of Seventh-day Adventist church is located in Rachuonyo North administrative district of Homa-Bay County, Kenya. It is located 5 km to the Western part of Kenya Lake Conference Headquarters. This is the place where Auther Cascalen and Peter Nyambo the first Seventh-day Adventist Church missionaries to Kenya started the work. Cascalen was from Canada and was accompanied by Peter Nyambo an African from Malawi. Peter Nyambo had gone to study in Newbold College, England and upon finishing his studies joined the missionary team to pioneer the work in Kenya. They first settled in Gendia hill where they pitched a tent. They From were given land by colonial chief called Ougo who expected them to go and die there. this place the church has spread to all parts of Kenya, Uganda, and parts of Tanzania.

According to the government of Kenya population censure of 2009 the population of the area covered by Nyakongo District is 7253, against the church population of 2044; the church membership is 28% of the total population of the area covered by Nyakongo district of Seventh Day Adventist church. There are 10 churches in Nyakongo district, namely Alego, Pap Nyabwanga, Kwoyo, Osika, Lwala, Kimira, Apondo, Kital, Onjiny, and Pap. There is one Catholic Church but its members are old and coming from far; there are several other religious denominations that are coming up in the region, including Bahai religion dominated by middle aged people, and the rich of the area. They do not have a place of worship so they fellowship in homes. Other religious sects like Roho Maler, Legio Maria, Voice of Healing and Salvation do not have a church building in Nyakongo hence they travels far for fellowship.

Nyakongo lies in a semi-arid area and many of the residents are peasant farmers. However, the Government of Kenya, through the African Development Bank is currently constructing canals which will be used to drain water from River Kibuon for farmers to irrigate their farms in order to increase farm production. Because of its proximity to Lake Victoria, many youths in Nyakongo are involved in fishing from where they get good income; middle-aged women are also involved in small scale trade. They buy farm produce from Oyugis town and sell at the beaches along the lake. Brick making industry is another source of income in the region. Kital church, for example, has many of her youths involved in this local industry from where they draw a good income.

Background of Seventh-day Adventist Church in Nyakongo

This is one of the places in Kenya with the highest population of Adventist membership. The church entered in Nyakongo in 1908, two years after Gendia church which is the first church in Kenya. The first church in Nyakongo district was Alego. To date there are 10 churches in Nyakongo district. There are other areas which neighbor the district and were evangelized by people from this district and they are Ngeta, and Oriang.

According to statistical records of membership of churches in Nyakongo, there is a significant membership growth in the district, with adults making the highest percentage and 80% of this growth is biological. This is according to church registers of 10 churches in Nyakongo District. The percentage would have been better if the youth did not leave the church. Some are at home, while some are in towns and at the beaches along Lake Victoria which takes the highest population of them because that is where they can get drugs. Also fishing is another attraction as it helps them to meet their financial needs. These secondary problems are significant because they point to an inner problem of pastoral care approach that is not fully meaningful to the youths. Nyakongo District, as revealed in this research, has a high level of youths leaving the church. Apondo church, for example, had up to 93% of its young people over a period of 5 years leaving the church. The lowest percentage is in Kimira church where 50% of the young people had left. This trend continues in the rest of the churches within the district with varying percentages. Table 1 illustrates the youth population trend in Nyakongo District for the last five years. These are members who are neither recorded as dead nor transferred membership when they moved to other urban centers.

Table 1. Trend of Youths Population for 5 Years in Nyakongo District

Churches/Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	5 Years % Loss
Pap	34	19	22	20	16	61
Onjiny	7	13	8	5	2	62
Apondo	15	10	11	7	2	93
Kital	37	23	19	14	11	70
Kimira	6	3	2	3	3	50
Lwala	43	37	23	11	15	72
Osika	16	10	11	9	6	68
Alego	55	46	20	16	13	76
Pap Nyabwanga	15	13	8	6	3	80
Kwoyo	18	11	9	7	3	83

Factors Leading the Youths to Leave the Church

There are many reasons why the youth drop out from the churches in Nyakongo district. These are economical, religious and social factors. In some cases if 10 youths are baptized, only 3 will be in the church after 2 years. When young people can't find leadership and guidance from pastoral leadership or from older church members, then they look for it elsewhere by leaving the church and joining other churches or not joining any church. Hence so many youths are leaving the church. The church, through pastoral leadership should help youths to stay in church by providing reclamation and retention strategies. This should be done by training all members of the church.

Economic Reason

One of the reasons why they leave the church is the economic demand that they face. Because of the low poverty level of Nyakongo community, which, according to 2009 Kenya National population census stands at 27% below poverty levels, many youths face economic hardship which force them to involve in odd and low paying jobs.

After leaving school, their parents cannot provide for their upkeep like giving them money to buy their basic needs like clothing. So those who are near the lake go for fishing activities, and from this they can earn an income which can provide for their needs. Most of the people who employ them are not Seventh-day Adventists so they go fishing on Sabbath. This denies them a chance to go for worship. One interviewee reported that “I am now a grown-up person, I cannot go round begging even small things like soap, and so I must work even on Sabbath to meet my daily needs.” Another one told me that he remained an orphan at the age of 15 and was left with his three brothers so he dropped from school to go fishing and this could not allow him to go to church, in this place those who are fishermen are not dedicated to the church. This is why youths who go for fishing are not active church members. So he dropped from the church, and later he became a drug addict and peddler in Obaria beach. He was blamed by church members so he left the church. I interviewed 15 youths from Alego church and 11 of them said because their parents cannot provide for their needs so sometimes they go fishing on Sabbath to get money to provide for their needs.

Some of the youths in Nyakongo sit for their form four examinations and then go to towns and where they do not join any church. One other interviewee told me, ‘I went to Nairobi to look for employment, but I stayed with my brother who was not a church member and he forced me not to go to any church in town and I left the church.’ So because of work requirement some of the youths drop from the church. They value monetary income more than the spiritual welfare of their life. When some of them are asked, they say that they go to a church in town but when I interviewed nine (9) of the Christians they stay within town, seven (7) of them confirmed that they stopped going to church long time ago. Because of the kind of work they are doing in town they go to work on Sabbath so they stop going to church.

There are youths who say that after getting a job in the locality, like the H and Young Road Construction Company and Oluch Kimira Irrigation, they left the church because they work on Saturday, and if anyone misses he is laid off so they choose to leave the church, because they want an income. I interviewed 7 youths who are currently working with the irrigation scheme and 5 of them said that when they consulted with parents and church leaders they were advised to go for work and leave the church and at the expiration of the contract they would return and get rebaptized. Of the 26 youths I gave the questionnaires, 11 of them wrote that their parents prefer them going to work than going to church on Sabbath. Many of the parents will prefer their youths to go to work and leaving the church knowing that from there they will also gate an income which will also support the family. Many of them who go for work in those companies do not come back after the work is over because they get a lot of money, instead some of them end up being drug and alcohol addicts. Of the 7 youths I interviewed, 4 of them told me that they are drug and alcohol addicts because they have money and are working in a place where it is believed that you must drink and smoke.

The orphaned youths face many challenges that make them leave the church. There are some churches which come with some good programs of sponsoring the youth in higher institutions of learning and after they have been sponsored, they are pursued to leave the Adventist church. There are 20 Adventist youths who are sponsored by the Catholic Church and are taking their certificates and diploma courses in Mawego polytechnic. They have left the church because of this program. It is as if the Catholics are doing this as outreach strategy to our youths to win them to Catholic Church. One of them who is in this program told me that, when an Adventist member sees an orphaned youth the only thing they tell the youth is to employ him or

her and give stipends of Ksh 3000 but not developing them academically. If you are employed by an Adventist, they will mistreat you, and will not allow you to go to church on Sabbath. This is the same way the Baha'i faith is taking youths of Nyakongo, they give them money to start projects, like retail shops, some are taken to school and this continues to attract many youths to this faith. The Baha'I faith is gaining ground in Nyakongo because they invest more in the youth. Some are employed by the Muslims in Kendu Bay town in their shops and the first requirement is that you have to be a Muslim; therefore some of the youths have joined Islam for the same reason

One of the economic activities is Boda Boda business. Many of the youths are employed by none church members who buy for them motor cycles and the owners want the Boda Boda cyclist to work on Sabbath this is because they are not Seventh Day Adventist members. Of the 7 Boda Boda drivers interviewed 5 of them disclosed that they cannot come to church because on Sabbath is when they had many clients and the members of their church, Seventh day Adventist Church hire them to take them to places of worship. The Sabbath day is when the number of people in operation is fewer but the demand is high so they hope to leave the church only to get money.

Nyakongo district is also a place where livestock farming is one of the economic activities that bring an income to the local people. According to livestock census of 2009 reveal that 90% of house hold keep cattle I visited 30 homes of Adventist church members in 2011 and 27 homes were keeping cattle. According to my observation, the average number of cattle is between 20-30 per home. So one of the reasons why youths drop from the church is that on Saturday they take their cattle to the grazing field while the parents go to church, this is done until they go to

secondary school. One church elder said “Parents remember their time in the village taking care of cows and consider themselves lucky; this is why they are not allowing their children to come to church because they see it as a success to keep cows than come to church”¹. Thus many youths leave the church to keep their fathers flock.

So they, does not attend church services and are no longer church members. If they are asked the reason for not coming to church, they say that their parents force them to keep their flock and refuse to let them go to church.

Another economic activity in Nyakongo district is Brick making which is done in Kital village. This activity requires people with energy. So many youths leave the church to go for brick making. Because they go to school on week days it is only the weekends that they spend most of their time making bricks, a situation that denies them time to go to church on Saturday hence they find themselves not comfortable with the church because they work on Sabbath. Some of them drop from school because of the kind of income they get from brick making. Unfortunately, after getting their income, some have turned to be drug addicts who are no longer comfortable with the church doctrines and finally leave the church.

Religious Reasons

The reason and mission as to why people go to church is to be nourished spiritually, but among the problems why the youth leave the church is that, they are not fed spiritually. An interview with eight youths who left the church five of them revealed that they come to church prepared to be fed but they move out under fed. Young people feel that the older members of the church don't care about them but care about judging their actions. They say that they are ever in the box or under the

¹ Peter Ochieng, “Interview by the author in Nyakongo” 2012. The interviewee was then serving as a church Elder of Pap SDA church in 2012.

microscope to be checked by the adults. When a youth has made a mistake as a person, it is announced as if all youth have committed a crime and it is announced publically by the elders. This has brought embarrassment to them and many have left because of this. Five of them said that the church is not helping them to grow spiritually; instead its leaders are pressing them to leave. They also argue that church activities are dominated by old people, which means that everything is done by the adults so the youth are only spectators.

There programs are not taken seriously. When they have special weeks like week of prayer, they are not given time to preach instead the church uses aged people to lead out when they are given the opportunity to lead in the programs they are harassed in the pulpit to be fast first because the church wants to do some things. Caleb, an interviewee said, “I left the church because one day I was preaching and the church elder came to the pulpit and told me that am wasting time they want to fund raiser for the church building so I must conclude very quickly.”² Since this was done to him publicly it ashamed him and he left the church just to stay at home. Young people’s perceptions of the quality of relationship with religious authority figures play a significant role in their departure from the church. “Too often the negative words and actions of more mature church members push the younger set to feelings of anger, resentment, bitterness, and fear. . . Satan will employ any method, including the use of church members, to tear us away from our loving Father,”³ said Michael of Osika church.

They also say that the church is boring. The programs they saw when they were young are still the things they see, there is no change. Many things have changed

² Caleb Onyango, “Interview by the author,” Alego Church in 2012.

³ Michael Ochieng, “Interview by the author,” Osika Church in 2012.

in the world around them yet they see no modification in the church programs. The church leadership is static with old things.

Many youths have left the church because of double standards of members and their parents. Five of the youths who have left the church told me that they left because their parents took them for prayers in another church which is a new religious movement in Nyakongo, when they were going to sit for their exams. There were some rituals which were performed, and they were told that some Christians are bewitching them and from that time they left the church. So the enmity between them and the church was brought by their parents who are of double standards. The youths who dropped are also trying very much to influence others who are in the church to join them in their new church. They are more active there than the Adventist youths. The enmity is there between the adult members of the Adventist church, there is in fighting between church members. Some were taken to the other churches by their parents when they were sick so they are saying that since they got healed they cannot come back because while they were in the Adventist church, they prayed and nothing happened

The other reason is that the publications that they should be provided with are not available in all the churches in Nyakongo district. One said, "I feel that am not important to the church, because our materials for Sabbath school are sometimes not there for a year and if it is there, it is a photocopy while I see the adults with nice bible study guides". Two of the youths in Osika church told me that if there is something to be distributed such as magazines, the distributor tells them that they will be given after all the adults have been given. So they feel that they are not recognized members of the church and they leave. They say that programs for them are just artificial, the church talks of big things for youths but they do not fulfill them until the

end of the year. They come with their problems and nobody cares to solve them. They say that their opinions and requests are second hand to the leadership of the church. The church leaders do think that the youth cannot come up with good programs which can help the membership and leadership of the church to grow, that they are not thinking, their ideas are not put into consideration. But the activities of other departments are given first consideration. Moreover the youth are given incompetent leaders as teachers, people who don't prepare for lesson discussion and if challenged by youths, they become annoyed and leave the youths alone. If they meet the same then they say that the youths are politicking the church.

The other problem is that when youths leave there is no effort of redeeming them back to the church, this service is only there for adults, but nobody cares about their leaving. The church can make ways to visit the elderly people who are not coming to church but not the youths. The youth leaders do not visit them. I interviewed 10 youth leaders and 5 of them did not know the youth by name where they stay is a problem to them. Of the leadership 3 did not know the membership of youth in their churches; they did not know where the lost ones were. To trace the information then one must go to the church clerk; this means that the youth leaders are not serious with their duties. Some did not know of what they should do in the department. When I asked them why they do not know what to do they said, "we have not been trained by the conference youth director." In the whole district there is no Master Guide, they are only elected to fill the position as a requirement of the church.

The religious instructions are only received in the church and this is also one of the reasons why they are living the church; parents are not training youths at home. There is no time for devotions at home. Parents have busy schedules that they do not

put spiritual instruction in their programs, they only get religious instruction at school or once in the church. Some parents say that the spiritual instruction is the work of the church and not their responsibility so the youths feel this is not part of their life because they do not start getting nourishment when they are young.

Some parents do not include the youths in their devotions at home. When they want to pray they send them away to go and sleep or they are given some work to do, so the youths are saying church functions are meant for the parents and adults only. Some say that parents can buy expensive books for their own spiritual nourishment but the youth are forced to go to church without Bibles, so this makes them feel guilty in the church, and that they are second hand members in the church. So they shy away from the church and finally drop from the church. Kevin Sluder has this to observe:

Our kids go to church and learn Bible stories. They go to school to learn facts. The facts are often science fiction but are so heavily reinforced by popular culture that the Bible stories look ridiculous by comparison. The church is just as much to blame because we present Biblical accounts as Bible stories in the first place. As an example the speaker displayed a typical picture of Noah's ark. It was a tiny little boat with giraffe heads protruding through the roof and elephants and lions poking their heads out the portholes. Very cute and very unbiblical.⁴

When the youth go to the church, they get different theology conflicting with what they get in the school. Since they don't get the basic instructions at home, and when they go to school they are given falls religious instructions which they just believe because they are not grounded in the truth at home, they end up leaving the church.

The science they learn at school and Bible history they study in the church are contradicting to them, so they say that science at school is more practical but Bible

⁴ Sluder Kevin, *God Genesis and Big Bang*, 2003.

stories are more of a fiction so they don't believe the Bible to be real. To them, what they learn in school are real lessons while in the church they learn of moral fictions. They say that science connects them to the world more than the Bible. They say that the Bible is a collection of fairy tales that have no bearing on their lives, thus the church is a social pastime, a waste.

The other reason why the youths leave the church is lack of confidentiality among the leaders of the church. They don't keep secrets whatever they get from the youth they discuss it outside the church and share with their family members. This response from one of the interviewees indicates that some departed because of this reason:

I left as I said, a year ago. And I would leave church (Sabbath) and I would feel worse than when I arrived... there were a lot of things... but this was last the last straw. I had gone in and talked to a church elder two or three times. I had gone through a very personal upheaval in my life. We talked about confidentiality. It was very important to me that it not go any further. And a year or so later, I did hear it from other places when it was discussed by other youth. The second day one gave a sermon out of my problem; this is when I decided to leave. I left worse than I came.⁵

So some are leaving because the church is not a place where they can keep their secrets. Some church leaders are not able to keep the secrets of the youth who confide in them. The Youth are always furious when one does not keep their secrets.

The use of church properties is another reason why many are not able to be in the church. One of them told me that he left church because one day he was found playing a piano in the church because he wanted to know how to play. He was chassed from the church, and the church elder quarreled with him. This caused him to leave the Adventist church and joined another church. They are not seen as mature

⁵ George Odongo, "Interview by the author in Kwoyo Church" 2012. The interviewee had left the church but came back due to the program.

members of the church who can use the church properties. They see us as destroyers not those who are able to preserve church properties.

Social Reasons

There are social factors which make many youth leave the church in Nyakongo District. This reason pertains to their relations with the community that they relate to within the society and church members.

Of the 10 church elders who filled the questionnaires 8 of them wrote that there are cases whereby when the youth are still in primary school they are active in the church, and they carry out many duties delegated to them in the church, but when they join secondary school they leave coming to church because they feel that they are mature and should not to be used in church activities. I interviewed 12 students of Ongalo Secondary school in Nyakongo and 8 of them told me that they have a lot of work given in school so they can't come to church to waste time, instead of doing their school assignments. One who left the church told me that he joined a catholic school and they are studying on Saturday and so he is now a catholic. Some left because of peer influence from school one said While the picture is bad with secondary school students, it is worse with university students. though they are many in the region I only found three active university students 1 in Osika and 2 in Alego church in the church so the trend is that at in secondary the number can be a little bit high but when they join university many drop from the church. One who joined the university told me that the church can't meet their standard and the church is boring so there is no need of going to church.

Three (3) school girls whom I interviewed were from Alego church left because they fornicated and got pregnant and finally they left the church. There are two girls I interviewed who told me that when they got pregnant the church members

started gossiping about them and they left the church. Their parents could not handle them any better than the church so they decided to run away from home and stay with their distance relative who was not an Adventist but a catholic so one of them is now a Catholic because she was not handled well by the parents nor by the church. This has many of them to leave school earlier than the boys. Girls are highly affected because of this in Nyakongo. Culture has also contributed into this, for if a girl gives birth before marriage then she is treated as an outcast in the community, this is the reason why girls are few in the church. Table 2 shows the ratio of males to females in Nyakongo District.

Table 2. Ratio of Female to Male in Nyakongo District Churches

Church	Ratio
Pap	1:10
Lwala	1:4
Onjiny	1:5
Kital	1:10
Apondo	1:9
Osika	1:8
Kwoyo	1:10
Pap Nyabwanga	1:6
Kimira	1:8
Alego	1:15

Table 2 shows that the females are highly dropping from the church than the male once, of the five (5) parents I talked with seemed as if they don't care about the girls, they do not give them items for their daily up keeps like sanitary towels, soap, ointments, so the ladies in the church say that others who got pregnant were as a result of fornicating to get the upkeep. Some are left as orphans so they can't meet their

basic needs, consequently they don't attend church, since they are close to Lake Victoria one finds them along the beaches involved in fish mongering to get money or fornicate with the beach boys for daily needs. After they have joined such life then they fill guilty of coming to church and later they drop from the church.

In Lwala and Osika where I interviewed 10 church members whose teens did not attend church worship 4 of them said During the week days youths go to school and during the weekend we prefer living them at home as home guards when we come to church, This has led to 4 youths living the church and they say that their parents are the one's denying them chances of going to the church. Twelve (12) of the youths I visited at their homes 8 of the 12 told me that they joined foot ball club to play when they left at home they join foot ball clubs where they play on Sabbath. After they have joined the club they become hostile to their parents and to the church officers. I interviewed 7 secondary school students who are boarding in different schools and 4 of them said that at schools where they are taken by their parents they play on Sabbath so there is no need of deny them chances of playing on Sabbath.

9 out of the 14 respondents said that leadership wrangle is one of the issues widely identified to make youths run out church. They say that they are not happy with the way their parent fight in the church for leadership when they are seeing. They say that some end up fighting physically in the church because of leadership. Also they are also not involved in church leadership as they are not given any positions in church. So they say that the church belongs to the old people not them. In some, churches, if they are given leadership they are not trained, on how to do the work effectively, yet when they make mistakes they are blamed but not corrected through redemptive love, but harshly handled by church members. Some have been removed from the pulpit and they have left the church because of such treatment.

In the social life of church members, youths do not see any difference because they come to church wanting to see different life from that of the world, but they see more worldly things among the members of the church. The smokers, the drunkards, the gossipers, the adulterous, those who hate one another, are all in the church. They preach about love but practice hatred. So some youths say that the church is not a good place but is a place of pretenders.

Lack of Youth Programs

In all the 10 churches that are there in Nyakongo district, there is no single church with the well designed program of youths. I observed that youth leaders and church elders do not know the kind of programs that the youths should have. All the youth leaders now that they should teach only Sabbath school lesson and there is no any other program a part from that. So the churches elect those who are not aware of their responsibility. Out of 10 churches only one youth leader is a master guide. This is one of the factors why youths are leaving the church, they are under fed by the church and the churches do not understand them. Some leaders are unaware that youths need some program, which need more of their participation than the other age groups in the church.

The other reason for their leaving is marriage there are six (6) ladies the researcher interviewed and told him that before their married they were active Adventist members, but they were married in home of non Adventist believers so they were forced with their husbands to leave the Adventist churches and join other churches like Roho Maler, Baha'i, Catholic, and Islam. They say that for them to have a happy marriage they have to follow their husbands. Some are willing to come to Adventist church but if they come then they are beaten by their husbands of why they want to join Adventist church. Strong Adventist ladies sometimes end up

divorcing because of religion. To men there are cases where they marry ladies from other denominations and they end up joining the wife churches or when there is such confusion they stop coming to church. there are also cases where they don't marry officially by following church orders of marriage they cohabite and if they are told by the church leaders that it is a bad practice then they drop from the church. Sometimes the church tells them to go for re baptism and they say that there is no need of that and they end up out of the church.

A college student whom the researcher interviewed told me that the church is more of restrictive but not caring and likewise to Adventist homes. He meant that the church is full of giving rules to be followed but not nurturing the youth, the church is ever on the investigative side of life than caring and giving and giving counseling to the youths. It is better for the church to begin by teaching and counseling than being restrictive when the youth have messed up. This one means that the youths are not cared for by the church, but the church is like a watchman only on the wrong side of their live. There are no preventive measures to the youths. They are only being a waited on the wrong side of their lives. That is when you can see the church being in contact with them.

Since the place of study is along the lake shore, there are many drug peddlers who supply the youths with the drugs. After one has joined, drug trafficking they leave the church and spoiled by the drugs. Some of them are influenced from schools that they go for study but the highest percentage is from the beaches that are a long Lake Victoria. Some are addicted when they are still in primary schools and the highest number is when they have joined secondary school. One of the experiences is, the researcher met a youth who was addicted to drugs, and the researcher interviewed the parents about the status of the boy, they believed that the boy is

bewitched by the neighbor that is according to his parents who are Adventist members. But when the researcher want and set with the boy separate where we were alone the boy told me that he is using drug, and he so me the drugs he is using. He also told me of the youth who are active members of the church and are using drugs. So this is one of the problems that are causing a number of youth to leave. Many members are not aware of this practice. It is difficult for the parents to detect if their children have been allured into abusing drugs, this is because they are not close with then.

There is also a problem of election of new leaders to the youth department every year so youths are saying that, they make friendship with their leaders but after a short while then they are taken to other departments this has some emotional challenges and if the new one do not much the former leader then they will stop coming to church. They say at this time of transition youths are affected by anger, sadness and denial, so some who do not know how to control this always leave the church and say that they are betrayed by the church. the change of leadership do not bring consistency in the department and this make youths to be confused because every leader has his vision this tamper with the already running programs and youths do not like this. Some who are elected knows nothing in youth ministry, they are not master guide but they are elected to train on the job. By the time they are training youth are confused and many decide to leave the church, this is because they are underfed by the new leader who do not know what to do.

This problem is also with pastor's transfer, they are frequently transferred from Nyakongo district some are dissatisfied with the church because when they get use to a pastor that is the time he is transferred from the district, this make many of them dissatisfied hence they leave the church.

CHAPTER 4

PROGRAM DESIGN, IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION

After examining the challenge of youth retention in Nyakongo district in the previous chapter, the researcher set out to develop an integrated strategy to reclaim, retain and nurture the youth. The researcher refer to nurture as a means to disciple the youth to reach out for others. That is the focus of this chapter. This chapter is divided into three parts, program design, program implementation, and program evaluation. The problem of youth retention needs to be solved in Nyakongo district to enhance youth membership growth in the church. On the personal observation, response to questionnaire, the following programs were designed and implemented to solve the problem of low youth retention in Nyakongo district of Seventh-day Adventist church. The program had the following objectives;

1. To help the church know that youths are also members of today and of tomorrow
2. To train the church on the strategies of retaining the youths
3. To train church leaders to know how to handle the youths in the church.
4. To train the church members know how to reclaim back the youths who left the church
5. To train church members ,leaders on how to nurture the youths
6. To train the parents on good parenting, that will allow them to stay in the church

7. Train youths how to evangelize others youths and how they can set small scale businesses.

Program Design

When the researcher was ready to implement the programs in Nyakongo district, he called a meeting comprising the following categories of people, the district leader, church elder, youth and pathfinder leaders in the church. The researcher told the why the meeting was called. All the 10 churches were presented. The number of these who attended the meeting were 245, at Lwala church because it is at the centre of Nyakongo district geographically. The meeting was called on 12/5/2011. The following programs were developed to help solve the problem of why youth cannot be retained in the churches in Nyakongo district.

1. Lectures on parenting,
2. Dialogue between the parents and youths
3. Ball game evangelism
4. Small group ministry seminar
5. Youth progressive classes.
6. Bible congress

The program was conducted in different places, the lectures and progressive classes were conducted at Lwala church because it is at the centre of the district. The dialogue was conducted in the four camp sites in the district, which is Lego, Lwala, Kital, and Pap campsite. Bible conference was conducted at Lego church because Alego primary provided a boarding facility to the participants. Ball game evangelism

was conducted in Ongalo secondary school because it is the place in the area you can get pitches. The program was open to those who wanted to attend. The outlines of the programs are in Appendix C.

Program Implementation

Phase 1: Lectures

The mode of implementation comprised of lectures interspersed with discussions, questions and answer sessions. Seminars took place on Sabbath and Sunday afternoon of every week and were very interactive. Programs were written in English but many could not understand so we largely conducted it in Dholuo which is the vernacular language of the participants. Group discussions were and active in nature many of the participants could participate well in those groups than in the whole meeting. This conducted on March 2012 for the parents and church members. Also in attendance were youth leaders, and pathfinder leaders. The total attendance was 78 people.

The theme of the work shop was “We can change and keep the youths.” The researcher gave the copies of the handout to every participant. The program was conducted as designed. They also requested for regular seminars like that.

The following are what was discussed

1. Devotion topic “train up a child” (proverbs 22:6)
2. How parents can train up their children
3. How to involve youths in the church
4. Good parenting
5. Church atmosphere for the youths

Phase 2 Dialogue Between Parents and Youths

It was started by the dialogue between the youths and parents. This was done in four camp centers namely Lwala, Pap, Kital, and, Alego. In every centre there was a debate for four hours. I introduced the problems that the youths are facing in the church that prompt them to leave the church, the contribution of parental care that is one of the problems that causes them leaving the church. The youths who are still in the church spoke openly of what are affecting them in the church and what caused others to leave. When they were giving the solutions a Few of the parents were in defensive but 98% were in agreement that they have apart to play so that they could retain youths in the church. When they took the youth inventory at the camp meeting they came into the agreement that youths are leaving the church. When they publically checked the programs in the church they agreed that there are no youth programs to keep them in church. in the four centre's The parents talk about the indiscipline of youths in the society and what influences them to leave the church, they are drug influence, peer pressure, as well as the influence of beach life among the youth. They resolved that there should be open discussion between the youth and parents, this will make them know what others feel about one another and will allow them to resolve the problems before the youth leave the church for others.

The interaction allowed the youths to learn more from others and share experience with one another. The social meetings like ball games allowed the youths who left the church to have the venue of coming to watch the games and as they came they were preached to and many of them changed their lifestyles and rejoined the church. We also managed to baptize adult members who joined the church and those who were re-baptized. But many who were baptized were youths who joined various Adventist churches in Nyakongo district, thus their number has increased in the

churches in Nyakongo district. The adults were observing and learning from the researcher's interactions with the youths who participated.

Phase 3. Ball Game Evangelism

The list of events

1. Morning devotion
2. Ball game
3. Lunch
4. Ball game
5. Sermon
6. Baptism last day

They had a program of conducting devotion before they begin the practice and a sermon after the practice. From this in their local churches we managed to baptize 37 youths in all the ten churches before we finalized by December.

The ball game evangelism for the District was conducted for three days at Ongalo secondary school by December 5-7/2013. The total youth attendance was 400 people per day with youth making 80% of the total attendance every day. I began the program by devotion at 10 am every day and after that we move to the field for the ball games for 2hours, before we go for lunch at 1noon there was divine service for 45minutes where a call was done every day. The first day when the call was done we got 36 youth and 2 adults. The second day it rained in the morning so we delay the program for one hour to allow for the field to dry up. When there was alter call the second day we managed to get 41 youths and 11 adult.

The third day it was the final day and it was attended by 2674 people, the local administrator and the politicians who were by the district leader invited also attended

the occasion, the two of them gave a speech about what it has caused in our churches and the community and how it can be controlled by the local administrators.

The sermon was conducted lastly at 5 pm, and in the final day 48 people with 9 adults accepted Christ. The district leader organized baptism on Saturday where 115 youths and 17 adults were baptized. After baptism I assigned every member one youth to take care of from each and every church. The local churches were involved in this activity by providing food to the teams. The local administration was given time to speak at the close of the event, they praised the Adventist church for the event. They requested for the event to be held annually especially teaching the youth about the dangers of drug abuse, and HIV in the community. And administrators and politicians gave admonition to the youths.

Phase 4 Seminar on Small Group Ministry

This seminar was held in Lwala church for 4 hours. In attendance were youth leaders, youths, personal ministry leaders. The total people who attended were 63 people. This session took place on Sabbath afternoon, it was very interactive. I used Luo language to teach because many could understand the language. We used the teaching method of lectures, discussions. I lectured on the importance of small group ministries, how it is important in the youth ministry, and how it will help to retain youths in our local churches. The small group ministry helped in the training of the hand, the head and finally the heart of the youth. After the training, every youth leader in the local churches was charged with the responsibility of going and forming those groups. They were given a time frame of only one week. The following Sabbath they brought the report to me. They elected leaders of the groups and we arranged for another seminar for them.

The small group seminar was done for 6 hours at Alego church. I lectured them on their responsibility of small group leaders. What they should do when they meet, the duration of time they should take when they meet. What they should avoid at the meeting and the rules of meeting. I trained them using personal ministries Hand book, Bible. After the training of the small ministries group leaders they arranged for the meetings and I encouraged them to have the first ones in the churches so that I could go and inspect how they are conducting their meetings. They were doing Bible studies, having sessions of prayer. Churches also assigned church leaders to speak to them in their small groups by encouraging them on their spiritual walk, giving them guidance and counseling on the challenges that they face in the daily life and how to approach them. Some could still go to school were encouraged in their small group to go to school. They preferred church schools for them where they are going to grow in faith, those who could not join higher learning institution were encouraged to join village polytechnics for them to get the skills that will help them to earn a living. In their small group ministries they were able to share the skills that they have with one another.

Phase 5 Progressive Class

The survey conducted revealed that there are no progressive classes in Nyakongo district. They do not know about the classes. The leaders were not where that those classes exist. The training was conducted on September 6 2012, in Lwala church. The seminar was in the following areas

1. Devotion topic, “he empowered them” (John 17:12) every day.
2. The following classes were taught
 - a. Friends first day
 - b. Companion first day

- c. Explorer second day
- d. Ranger, second day
- e. Voyager third day
- f. Guide, third day

I gave them AY Classes Instructors manual to empower them in youth ministry. The seminar was done for at Lwala church attended by youth leaders and pathfinder directors. It was attended by 30 people for the three days from all the churches in Nyakongo District. Tables were used to show r them the classes and what they should teach in different progressive classes which were not there in those churches, because they did not have master guide, the classes and their requirements were new to them. The class participation was not good because of the newness of the program. They promised to go and begin those classes in their local churches.

Phase 6 Bible Conference

The following were considered at the Bible conference:

- 1 .Devotion for Thursday and Friday
2. Bible discussion in the plenary
3. Lunch
4. Group discussion
5. Super
6. Sermon

Wednesday was the reporting day. Thursday they study the life of Joseph. Friday it was the life of Samson and Saturday the life of Christ. The Bible conference was conducted in the month of April when the schools in Kenya were closed for holiday. It was conducted in Alego primary school where they could get the accommodation. It was conducted from Wednesday to Saturday and over 375 youths were in attendance including their local church youth leaders. In the morning there

was devotion from youth leaders from the local churches to which many of them are youth who were elected by the church to lead in the youth ministry. The conference was focusing on the lives of youths who were victorious and what made them to be successful in life. Samson was the first to be discussed. Youths were very active and they asked many questions about the life of Samson. The second was Joseph who through his faithfulness endured when the condition was not good and that led him to succeed in life.

Program Evaluation

In order to evaluate this program, I used personal observation of the changes that took place in the district. I focused on the objectives of the program and observed behavioral changes in the churches. One of the achievements of the program developed is the activeness of youth ministry which was not there before in all the 10 churches in Nyakongo district. The program has activated the youths who were dormant and came back to the church, they are also active in other church programs. I reached to this conclusion when I observed the youth involvement in all the 10 churches. This is happening because the church leadership was also trained through the program developed to include them in the church activities, for example, they are assigned to participate in divine program and are involved in visitations. Of the 10 churches eight have midweek prayer of Youths that are meeting every Wednesday for fellowship and after the fellowship they go for visitation in the community to encourage their fellow youths and minister to the adults also in the community.

Every month-end youths also meet in the district when I visited them in on August 4 2012 at Lwala church by observation they were active and met 235 youths, they met to review the activity of every church. They took the inventory of membership of every church thus helping them retain and visit with those who are

backsliding from the church. After district meeting of every month they usually have an exchange program of visiting missing members and to visit with non-youth members out of the church. This program has helped to increase the number of youth in the churches and they still continue to increase in numbers. This is true because in march 6 2012 the total number of youths were 74 but in January 2013 the number is 356 this is according to the church registers They are able take the record of membership of every youth in every church, and they do it every month at their district meeting. It is the duty of district youth director to arrange for the groups to team up together and strategize on how they are going to visit with the missing members.

The number of youths has since increased in master guide programs conducted by Kenya Lake Conference. Nyakongo is currently the leading district with the highest number of youths enrolled in master guide program in the conference. This according to the number of master guide training conducted at Wire church by youth department where the total attendance was 263 and Nyakongo was leading with total of 36. This program, through master guide training on leadership, has provided opportunity for the churches to improve in good leadership both in the local churches and the district at large. Through the master guide program they are able to have exchange programs with other churches outside Nyakongo district. They visit with them and have exchange programs like music Sabbaths, Bible conferences, and seminars. The district pastor has taken the programs seriously and he is conducting seminars for youths and youth leaders in the church on quarterly basis. This has made the leadership so strong at the local churches. Out of 10 youth leaders, 8 leaders now know what to do and the kind of programs to conduct for youths unlike it was before when many of the leaders thought that it was only pathfinder camporee that the youths

should do. Seven of the churches that were not allowing their youths to join the pathfinder programs now have their programs for them and their leadership is active.

There was a problem of youths not attending the church services but going to graze the cows, while parents go to church. This problem has reduced and among 21 parents interviewed in March 4, 2012, 19 of the parents would prefer tethering cows than leaving the responsibility to the youths to graze missing Sabbath services and their programmes, consequently the youths tended to leave the church. This problem affected the boys more than girls, now the number of male youths is increasing in the church as compared to that of girls. This has happened because when we conducted open debate between the youths and adults, youths communicated this as one of the problems why they don't come to church. There has been a good response towards this problem. To show that parents accepted this they have taken full responsibility of solving this problem alone. They are able to take care of their cattle by themselves; some do keep their livestock at home until the church services are over is when they take them for grazing. Leaving youths to go back to the church for choir practice and small group ministry meeting. After the meetings they are always going for visitation where they visit those who did not come to church and those with different problems. This practice has resulted to youth being active in the church and in community service. We reclaimed 62 youths back to the church and we baptized 23 new converts

Every quarter the church members have found it important to have open forum with the youths so as to know their problems. These practices have allowed the church to know their needs before they enter in to serious problems to which the church has no capacity to solve. They have also paired two youths to one guardian to whom they report their problems, this person will try to solve the problem and if he or she cannot then they report to youth leadership and to the church leadership which

will also take time to share whatever the problem with their parents especially if the problem concerns the parents of the youth. This has helped to solve the problem of the youth which may cause them to leave the church. Notably, they are open with their guardians, who also visit them in their homes.

I interviewed the church leaders about the programs which were conducted and they were very positive about the programs. They charged the youth ministry department with the responsibility of reporting the activities in that department every month in the church board meetings. This has allowed them to evaluate the number of youths monthly. They are also able to take actions immediately in any case a youth is missing or has any problem. They meet the youths quarterly to have a talk with them, giving them life skills, and often invite special guests to motivate them in their spiritual life. This is a sign that the youth in the church is not now left alone to struggle but the church members are moving with them in the church life.

Earlier the youths were not being elected to church leadership positions but by the time of this evaluation it was notable that every church had a youth elder to represent the young people in the elders council. This is according to the election list of the year 2012. They are also now elected in different offices in the church. The ladies, for example, could not be elected to be deaconess because of culture and traditions- there was a belief that the work of diaconry is associated with handling bodies of the dead which was left to the old people traditionally but during this evaluation it became evident that after conducting the seminars they elected the youth of every gender into different leadership positions of the church. The church is training them to take over leadership of the church when they are adults, so they are leaders of today and the future.

By the time when I was conducting the research as to why youths leave the church I found out that many of them leave when they join secondary school but when doing evaluation the number of secondary school-going youth members was increasing at a good rate

One of the reasons for which the youths are leaving the church is when they move to towns. Many of the parents and the churches started following up with their youths in the towns from where they are. Some churches like Alego appointed someone in Nairobi to follow up with youths from that church who are in Nairobi. He is visiting them and having quarterly meetings with them, and reporting how they are fairing to the local church at home. This has encouraged those who dropped from the church to come to the church.

When I was doing evaluation I found out that there is what is called “ministry involvement.” Many of the youths are involved in different church ministries like church choir. This has made them to have relationship with elderly church members in the district; they are also elected to head some ministries, some of them are choir trainers in the local churches, since they are talented in training. This has attracted many youths in the choir just because a fellow youth is a choir trainer. And one who understands them and knows their needs.

One of the ministries which are also active is small group ministry; the churches have assigned youths in different groups. This ministry has resulted to many youths developing spiritually and numerically. Every group has a target of winning many youth every quarter. The goal of baptism is given to every group to which the church evaluate every quarter, and every group which reaches the goal is honored by the church by giving them incentives. This has also helped youths in the assimilation in the church; new youths do not feel lonely but have those they can socialize with in

the church. Through small group ministry 11 youths have started retail shops in Nyakongo district since one of the reasons why youths left the church was because they were looking for where they can get the income. Those who were peddling drugs left and started some business at the beach; this has made their lives to be changed. Evangelism in these groups has been enhanced and they care for one another in those groups. They visit with one another in their homes which is a sign of good cohesion in the church.

One of the programs which is effective is the teaching in the progressive classes, it was not there before the research so the pathfinders could come to church and they were not attended to by the church those leaders who were elected in that department did not know what to teach in those classes. I conducted a seminar for the leaders in pathfinder progressive classes with the aim of starting training the youth from tender age so that the knowledge of Christ can be imparted in them when they are still young. Every church in Nyakongo district now conducts these classes in which the youth are divided according to their ages. They have the classes on Saturday afternoons and every Sunday. Teachers now use the pathfinder study guides to teach them and every church has bought all pathfinder books. Parents are very receptive towards this program and support it financially by providing what the teachers need, some accompany their children to the church and learn with their kids and this gives them moral support.

One of the problems which were there was that the church was not accommodative to the youth. Due to the programs conducted the churches are now accommodative. When I visited the churches during youth week of prayer the adults were giving the youths moral support and the church was fully funding the meeting by providing accommodation for the guest. Youths were earlier not included in the

church meetings like church boards where decisions are made, but now they include the youth in the board meetings. During the divine service youths were not participating but now they are included in the programs. They run youth days without any interference from the adults. They are well coached by the church offices on how to conduct church services. During youth days they are more innovative they do not follow the traditional ways of doing things but they bring now a blend of ideas which makes their days to be lovely and the church attendance notably higher than before.

In the district there was no literature evangelist but due to small group ministry three youths made a decision to join the ministry. They are now literature evangelists who are dedicated to the call, and are making good sales through the publishing ministry. In every church in the district, they meet every week for spiritual nourishment whereby they go for Bible study and counseling, this is every effective

It was in these meetings that they were also taught how to handle youth progressive classes right from adventurer club, pathfinder club, ambassadors cub, master guide, and senior youth societies. It was not that earlier on they were not acquainted with these classes though they are in the Youth Manual. They learnt that it is important to elect youth leaders who have gone through these progressive classes for all the doctrines and history of the church are well covered therein.

The only problem comes when they go to school the groups become dormant, because many of them are in boarding schools. However, they are mostly active when at home for holidays. Those who are going to day-schools cannot meet because their school programs are put in a way that they cannot find time to meet. The adults in the churches have also programmed themselves in a way that they have started this ministry among themselves.

After prayers they usually involved in community service where they visit the sick, they take to them water and firewood. I gave them a goal of winning one youth in there groups per quarter so that they increase their number to 6, this is very effective and many have doubled the number. They are dedicated to the groups and disciplined in the groups

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study has endeavored to check the alarming trend of youths leaving the church in Nyakongo District of the Seventh-day Adventist church. The purpose of this study was to find a solution to the problem of young people who are leaving the church by developing an integrated strategy of reclaiming the youths who have gone out of the church as well as train for discipling those that are in the church. From the beginning of this study it was noted that seven out of ten youths drop out of the church every year. The researcher developed a strategy to reclaim and retain the youth using several methods. Among the methods used to reclaim and retain the youth were lectures, bible conferences, sermons, ball game evangelism, dialogue between the youth and the church leadership, establishing progressive classes in Youth Ministry, and using small group ministry to engage and reach out to different groups of youth. At the end of the program, the following major accomplishments were noticed among many others.

1. According to church records the program reclaimed 62 youths and brought 23 new converts.
2. There is good harmony between the parents and youths
3. Small group ministry is active in the youth progressive classes
4. There are active clubs in all the churches.

Conclusion

From this study, it can be concluded that the problem of youths dropping out of church due to social, religious and economic factors like peer influence, non-involvement in church activities can be curbed and the youths reclaimed to the church. Youths respond to programs and activities that involve them and their concerns, rather than those that leave them out as spectators in the church. Being involved as significant contributors to the life of the church can keep them spiritually vibrant and engaged in evangelistic activities. Hence, similar activities as presented in this integrated strategy can achieve significant results and keep the young people in the church alongside the adults and the older generations. This will make the church vibrant and active from generation to another.

Recommendations

The study of Nyakongo district youth situation showed a dying church, which is dangerous to the current church, and to the future church. For that reason I wish to make the following recommendations:

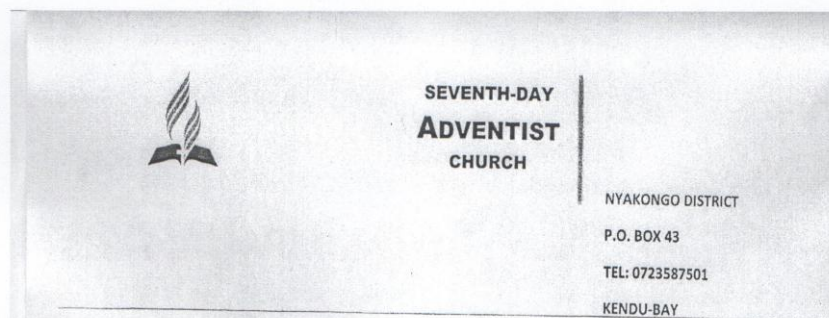
1. Nyakongo district leadership should adopt this program and use it to continue enhancing the nurture and retention of the youths who have been reclaimed to the church as well as continuing to win more souls to the church.
2. Kenya Lake Conference Youth Director should adopt this document as a tool to reclaim and retain youths in all churches within its territory where this problem may exist in order to enhance youth reclamation and retention.
3. It was noted from this study that one of the leading factors that influence young people and draw them away from the church is drug abuse and alcohol addiction. For that reason Pastoral leadership should ensure that they make use of the drug

awareness month in the calendar of events and teach young people about the effects of drug and substance abuse.

4. District leadership should train and elect leaders who are competent in handling youth progressive classes.
5. The leaders should not be changed every now and then.

APPENDIX A

LETTERS



March 25, 2011.

REF: PERMISSION TO ALLOW PR. AZARIA OTIENO TO DO MA RESEARCH PROJECT IN NYAKONGO DISTRICT

The District Board at its sitting on 23rd March 2011 took an action to grant you permission to do your MA research project- **A STRATEGY TO INCREASE YOUTH RETENSION RATE IN NYAKONGO DISTRICT OF K.L.C.**

We have hope that your project will be of great help to the Church in general and to you individually with regards to ministry and leadership development.

Thanks for choosing Nyakongo. May God bless you in your endeavor.

Yours sincerely,


S.D.A CHURCH
NYAKONGO DISTRICT
P.O. BOX 67 KENDU-BAY
DATE _____

Yuda Opapa
District leader- Nyakongo



SEVENTH-DAY
ADVENTIST
CHURCH

KENYA LAKE CONFERENCE

P.O. BOX 43
TEL: 0202048249
KENDU-BAY

24th March 2014

Pr. Azaria Otieno
Kenya Lake Conference
P.O Box 43 – 40301
Kendu-Bay

Dear Pastor,

RE: MA RESEARCH PROJECT

Christian greetings.

This is to inform you that the Kenya Lake Conference Executive Committee has taken action to grant you permission to do your MA in Pastoral Theology Research Project titled A Strategy to increase youth retention rate in Nyakongo District of Kenya Lake Conference within the Conference territory.

We trust that your project will be of benefit to the church in general and to you individually with regards to ministry and leadership development.

Wishing you God's blessings.

Sincerely yours,

for 
**Seventh - Day Adventist Church
Kenya Lake Conference
Executive Secretary**
Pr. Tom Eli Arunga Ogal
Executive Secretary – KLC

Cc: Executive Director – KLC
Treasurer – KLC

B. Church members in general

.....
.....
.....

..... C. Church officers

.....
.....
.....
.....

9. Are there something's you feel should be changed in the church?

A. Circle your answer yes or no

B. What are they?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

.....10. Do the church provide the youths with lessons in the church?

11. Would you say that those you work with in the youth ministry are competent, and helpful yes or no

.....
.....
.....

12. In your opinion what should the church do to retain the youths in the church?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

13. Which doctrine of the church do you feel is/are conflicting with the youths desire to remain in the church?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

14. Give other reasons that may contribute to youth retention in the church

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

.....
.....
.....

8. Do you have strategies to retain the youths in the church If there are, may you list them?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

9. Do you have special programs for the youths in the church and if there is, may you name them, and how often?

APPENDIX C

LECTURES

Lectures and Modules

In 2011, I introduced to the church in Nyakongo district the problems it is undergoing, how youth are living the church, and why they are leaving the church. I presented to them the program I intended to introduce in order to increase youth retention, and prepared the church for the program implementation.

In preparing for the program, I first designed some lectures with modules. First program design is in form of lectures and comprises of many modules as presented in this section. This caters for the church members in general, including both the parents and the youth. The first lecture was entitled “Parental Care for Youth. I designed it to take five hours. It was designed with the objective of teaching parents on how to care for their youths.

Lecture One

Topic: The Parental Care for Youths

Duration: 5 hours

Objectives: To teach the parents how to care for the youth

Specific Objectives:

1. To explain the meaning of Proverbs 22:6, the importance’s of training up a child.
2. To compare Biblical passages related to train training of youth when they are still young.
3. To help parents appreciate that they are the first teachers God has entrusted with the responsibility of teaching youths.

4. To help parents understand that the youth have to be treated well because they are also to learn from the parent.
5. To show the parents that there are some youths in the bible who were fallen but God restored them back to senses, like Samson.

Teaching Method: Lectures, interactions, discussions, questions, and answers,

Resources: The Bible and Bible Commentaries

Activities: Giving and reading more text (Gen. 37:1 – 50:26; Judg. 13:1 – 16:31;

Matt. 1) about the youths (Joseph, Samson, and Jesus) in the Bible and interpreting what it means to the individual and to the church. What can the text do in the life of the parents and the youths in and out of the church?

Lecture Two

Topic: What the Spirit of Prophecy says about Youths

Durations: 4 hours

Objectives: For the church members to know that there are other people God spoke to about nurture, reclamation and retention of youths.

Specific objectives:

1. To help church members know that they have a role to play in bringing up the youths according to the will of God.
2. To aid church members in setting their home in a good atmosphere that the youths can appreciate living together as a family.
3. To help church members in appreciating the importance of the Bible supportive resources and compare them with the Bible messages.
4. To train the members to have a church which is accommodative to the youths and other members of the church

Teaching Methods: Lectures, discussions, interactive questions and answers.

Resources to be used: Notes, Bible, Spirit of Prophecy books- Patriarchs and Prophets and The Desire of Ages.

Activities: Group discussion, interaction with church leaders

Lecture Three

Topic: Why youths are leaving the Adventist church

Duration 6 hours

Objective: Church members to know how they have contributed to youths' dropout.

Specific objectives:

1. To know the factors which lead youth out of the church.
2. To know what the youths are saying about their local church life.
3. To make church members aware of the future if the trend of their leaving is not prevented by the local churches

Teaching methods: Lectures, open discussion, group responses

Resources to be used: collection from the field.

Activities: Group discussions, questions answers

Lecture Four

Topic: Ways of Retention of Youths in the Church.

Duration: Two hours

Objectives: To teach methods which the church can use to retain youths in the church.

Specific objectives:

1. To teach the church on small group ministry for the youths. Using personal ministry Hand book
2. To teach the importance of youth resources like Conner stone, Youth Bible
3. To come up with fellowship groups for nurture and evangelism for both youths and adults.

4. To implore the church to have youth counseling sessions and to train counselors, use the peer counselors in the church
5. To sensitize church members on the need of social meeting for the youths, like games and athletics and make them evangelistic sources.
6. To teach church members on drug awareness and how it is affecting youths in Nyakongo, how they can teach their children from home.

Teaching methods: Lectures, group discussions,

Materials: Bible, *Drug and Substance Abuse in Tertiary Institutions in Kenya, A situational Analysis*, NACADA, November, 2006

Activities: Group discussions, questions and answers, singing, and giving testimonies.

Bible Conference

Duration: Three days

Venue: Alego church starting from Wednesday to Sunday (Wednesday- reporting and Sunday- departure)

Days: Thursday to Sunday morning.

Participants: All the youths, youth leaders, youth sponsors, and elders' in-charge of youth ministry in all the 10 churches in Nyakongo district.

Main Objective: Spiritual nourishment.

Specific Objectives:

1. To explore a specific book of the Bible (Genesis, Judges and Matthew) so as understand it by knowing the author, and why the book is important in their life.
2. To help the youth in internalizing the contents of the book.
3. To help the youth to find role models in the Bible.

4. To equip the youths with an understanding of the Word of God with the view to sharing their faith with fellow youth.

Key Resources: The Bible (Genesis, Judges and Matthew), SDA Bible Commentaries Vol. 1, Vol. 2 and Vol. 5 and Noah Webster's 1828 Bible Dictionaries.

Ball Game Evangelism

Duration: Three days

Days: Tuesday October 2, 2012 to Thursday October 4, 2012.

Types of ball games: Football, net ball, and volley ball.

Main Objective: for the youths to interact socially

Specific Objectives:

1. To have social interactions with fellow youths.
2. To attract the youths who had left the church.
3. To evangelize the unconverted youths.

Participants: Youths who are in the Adventist church, those who left the church, and youths from other denominations.

Activities: Devotion, games, counseling, sermon.

Dialogue between the Youths and the Adults

Duration: 6 hours.

Period: 2012 December

Main Objective: To create awareness among the adults about what the youths are experiencing.

Specific Objectives:

1. To hear the grievances of the youth.

2. To have a general solutions to these problems.
3. To bring harmony between youths and adults.

Participants: Youths, adults, church leaders.

Mode of the meeting: Parliamentary style- both sides the problems that they had and then all debate about them. Every church conducted her discussions.

Activities: Group discussions, questions and responses, committee meeting.

Progressive Classes in Youth Ministry

Main Objective: To teach church leaders and youth leaders in the local churches, on what is required to be taught in the progressive classes from adventurers to youth (Friend 10years, Companion 11 years, Explorer 12 years, Ranger 13 years, Voyager 14 years and Guide 15 years old).

Specific Objectives:

1. To firmly ground the youth in the church.
2. To help the youth in being well rooted in church doctrines and church history.
3. To orient teachers on what to teach in progressive classes.

Duration: Three days of two hours each.

Mode of the meeting: Teaching, discussion, group work.

Each level builds on the levels which came before it and is especially designed to interest, challenge, and provide successful experiences for children of that grade level. These levels revolve around basic introductions that orient the child to the program, principles that facilitate development of a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ, a deeper knowledge of himself, his family and the world around.

Table 3 illustrates an overview of the Adventurers Club class work.

Table 3. An Overview of the Adventurer Class work

BASIC

To ensure that the children have the background necessary to receive maximum benefit from the Adventurer program.

Responsibility

Commitment to the common goals of the group

Reinforcement

Introduction and review of the Adventurer concepts through reading

MY GOD

To facilitate the development of a growing and fruitful relationship between the child and Jesus Christ.

His Plan to Save Me

God's love, sin and forgiveness, conversion, obedience

His Message To Me

Memory verses, Bible books, using and trusting the Bible

His Power In My Life

Prayer, Bible Study, witness, living for Christ

MYSELF

To enhance the children's care and appreciation for individuals God created them to be.

I Am Special

Uniqueness and value of each person, responsibility for service, talents

I Can Make Wise Choices

Feelings, values, decision-making, media

I Can Care For My Body

Health, fitness, anatomy, temperance, sexuality

MY FAMILY

To empower the children to be happy and productive members of the families God gave them.

I Have a Family

Uniqueness of families, family changes, roles and responsibilities

Families Care For Each Other

Authority and respect, appreciation, family activities

My Family Helps Me Care For Myself

Safety, stewardship, indoor skills, outdoor skills

MY WORLD

To enable the children to encounter God's world with confidence and compassion.

The World Of Friends

Social skills, courtesy, prejudice, peer pressure

The World of Other People

Serving the church, community, country, world

The World of Nature

God and nature, nature study, nature recreation, concern for the environment

Table 4. Adventist Youth/Pathfinder Class Curriculum

AY/PATHFINDER CLASSES	Friend	Companion	Explorer	Ranger	Voyager	Guide
PERSONAL GROWTH I Involvement II Commitment III Growth						
	THE PARTICIPANT					
SPIRITUAL DISCOVERY I Scripture II Church Heritage III Christian Heritage						
	SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT AND SPIRITUAL HERITAGE					
SERVING OTHERS I One to One II Group Witness III Community Outreach						
	THE CARING CHURCH					
MAKING FRIENDS I Building Relationships II Christian Lifestyle III Good Citizenship						
	UNDERSTANDING OF ONESELF					
HEALTH & FITNESS I Health Principles II First Aid/Safety III Fitness/Exercise						
	BEING HEALTHY					
YOUTH ORGANIZATION I Leadership II Club Awareness III Pathfinder Programming						
	BEING A PATHFINDER					
NATURE STUDY I Spiritual Lessons II Nature Appreciation III Nature Honor						
	LEARNING IN NATURE					
OUTDOOR LIVING I Outdoor Skills II Outdoor Activity						
	LIVING SAFELY IN THE OUT-OF-DOORS					
HONOR ENRICHMENT I Arts & Crafts & Hobbies Household Arts II Recreational/Vocational Outdoor Industries						
	HAVING FUN WITH AY HONORS					
ADVANCED AY/PATHFINDER CLASSES	Trail Friend	Trail Companion	Wilderness Explorer	Wilderness Ranger	Frontier Voyager	Frontier Guide
	* Requirements: See Class Cards or Instructor's Manual					

Small Group Ministry

Main objectives. To teach the importance of having small groups for nurture
reclamation and retention in youth ministry

Duration.4hours, December 2011

Specific objectives

- 1.For youths to know how they feed themselves spiritually
2. For youths to have friendship groups.
3. To train youths how they can reclaim, nurture and retain youths in the groups.
4. Train the youths in micro finance.
5. Train them on how to use their hand head and finally heart.

Materials. Bible, personal ministries hand book,

Participants. Youth, youth leaders, personal ministry leaders

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Christle, Les. *When Church Kids Go Bad*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008.
- Clarke, Adam. *Adam Clarke's Commentary*, Electronic database, 2006, BibleSoft, Inc.
- _____. *Commentary on the Bible*; Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press, 1967.
- Coleman, Lyman. *Youth Ministry Encyclopedia*: Serendipity House, 1985.
- Crocombe, G. R. *Voluntary Services and Development in the Cook Island*, 1990.
- Dean C. Kenda, Clark Chap, Rahn Dave. *Starting Right*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001.
- Dudley, Roger, L. *Why Teenagers Reject Religion...and what to do about it* : Washington, DC. Review and Herald Publishing Association. 1978.
- Feller, Robyn, M. *Everything You Need to Know about Peer Pressure: The* Rosen, 2001.
- Field, Doug. *Your First two Years in Youth Minister*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002.
- Freeman, B. Richards, Wise David. *Youth Labor Market Problems*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982.
- Gane, Barry. *Building Youth Ministry*. California, IL: Hancock Centre Publication, 2005.
- Gane, Barry. "Reclaiming our Youth: Youth Apostasy and Recovery of Backslidden Youth," Accent 2006, Q1.pdf.
- General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Youth Department. *Power Packed Resources for Adventist Youth Leaders*. Washington DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2005.
- General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Youth Department. *Getting it Right*: Review and Herald, 2001.
- Gillespir, Bailey, V Donachue J. Michael, Gane Bary. *Value Genesis Ten Years Letter*. California, IL: Hancock Centre Publication, 2004.

- Ham Ken, Beemer Britt. *Already Gone*, London: New Leaf Publishing Group, 2009.
- Hopkins, Gary L. *We Can Keep Them in the Church*. California, IL: Pacific Press, 2005.
- Isack, Joyce C., Simbiri Magrate. *Christian Family Living*. Nairobi, Kenya: Evangel, 1986.
- Kageler Len. *The Youth Ministry Survival Guide*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008.
- Morris, Henry, M. *The Genesis Record: A Scientific and Devotional Commentary on the Book of Beginnings*. Grand Rapids, MI, Baker Book House, 1976.
- Oiso, Keith, G. *Counseling Teenagers*. Thom Schurtz Publications, 1994.
- Oison, Ginny, Elliot Diane, Worth Mike. *Youth Ministry Management Tools*. Grand Rapids. MI, Zondervan, 1984.
- Pyce, F. Hugh. *What Every Preacher Should Know: Sward of the Lord Publishing*, 1981.
- Robbins Duggy, Kageler, Len. *These ways to Youth Ministry*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan,2004.
- Schmidt, Alvin, J. *Under the Influence: How Christianity Transformed Civilization*. Grand Rapids: MI. Zondervan, 2001.
- Senter, Mark,H. Black Wesley, Clark Chap, Nel Malan, Ed. *Four Views of Youth Ministry and the Church*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2001.
- Strommen Merton, Jones E. Karen, Rahn Dave. *Youth Ministry that Transforms*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001.
- Taylor, George, R. *Youth Serving Youth in Drug Addiction*. London: Scarecrow Education, 2004.
- White, Ellen, G. *Child Guidance*. The Ellen G. White Estate, Inc., 2007. 1954.
- _____. *Counsels to Parents, Teachers and Students*. Mountain View: CA. Pacific Press, 1943.
- _____. *Education*. Mountain View , C.A: Pacific Press, 1903.
- _____. *Gospel Workers*, Ellen G. White Estate Inc., Complete Published Edition, 2007.
- _____. *Messages to Young People*. Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1944.

_____. *The Acts of the Apostles*. Mountain View: CA, Pacific Press, 1968.

CURRICULUM VITAE

PERSONAL DETAILS

Name: Azaria Otieno Otula
Address: c/o SDA Church, Kenya Lake Conference
P.O. Box 43, Kendu Bay 40301
Telephone: 0725435040
E-mail: otienoazaria@yahoo.com
Nationality: Kenyan
Religion: Christian- Seventh-day Adventist
Marital Status: Married
Language: Luo {vernacular}, Kiswahili, English

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

University Education

2010 – 2014 Adventist University of Africa
2002 – 2008 University of Eastern Africa, Baraton
Bachelors of Art in Theology

Secondary Education

1988 – 1992 St. Paul's Ligisa Secondary School
Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education

Primary Education

1979 – 1987 Lwaho Primary School
Kenya Certificate of Primary Education

WORK EXPERIENCE

2010 –To date Seventh-day Adventist Church, Kenya
Lake Conference Departmental Director
in charge of Personal Ministries.
1997 – 2010 District Leader.
Kanam District, Osodo District,
Rusinga West District
Oyugis Town District
Nyabola District
Nyakongo District.

