

## Pastoral Interviews

Report for Week of: July 9, 1997

Number of Calls: 10

Number of Conferences: 4

My name is Curtis Rittenour and I'm calling on behalf of the Office of Information and Research for the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists. I'm working on a project and have been asked to briefly interview pastors on a few items. Do you have 5-7 minutes to quickly go through them?

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Four out of ten pastors say their churches "do" Ingathering. Sometimes it is simply putting it in the church budget (quite popular, especially where conferences "pressure" local pastors to do Ingathering). Caroling is popular for door-to-door Ingathering. And of course some approach businesses. The primary suggestions given relate to training members to go out, especially in reaching businesses. One pastor felt the "Executive" brochure given to businesses should have a little more quality to it since many businesses give substantial amounts of money. Another suggestion on the brochure was to put in a variety of types of disasters since some people may have a "heart" for certain types of disaster victims than others. Some suggest using buttons as incentives, getting brochures earlier, letting Ingathering die, provide a "local" flavor to brochures, allow money to stay locally, etc. One pastor complained, "I wish the money would go toward what we tell the community it will go toward ... and NOT running conference offices."

2. What has worked well in terms of outreach/evangelism in the last year? It was a toss up between public crusades (three pastors, with two names specifically mentioned—Ron Halvorsen and Mark Fox) and Net '96 (three pastors). Other programs/approaches mentioned: Pathfinders/Adventurers, Community Services Center, Daycare Center, Cooking classes, Discovery Bible School lessons, and an emphasis on friendship evangelism and relationship building. This last pastor also used public crusades, but only after a strong emphasis on building friendships at work, through small groups, etc. Negative comments were offered as well: Net '96 didn't work everywhere, Net '96 works best with a LCD projector on a large screen (vs. an average size TV), the Discover Bible school lessons didn't bring the results we hoped for.

3. How many pastors have heard of or seen "Adventist Witness" magazine? Five out of ten. Some have heard of it, but not seen it. Some have seen copies floating around. One pastor received three copies and passed them on to his Personal Ministries Leader, Sabbath School Leader, and Adventist Youth Leader. One said, "Looks traditional to me." He obviously didn't like the look of it. Another liked it and plans to have his board vote to purchase a subscription.

4. What kinds of resources are pastors looking? Here is a quick run down of yes/no responses:

Video seminars - 8 of 10 said yes  
Printed material - 8 of 10 said yes  
On-line computer service - 5 of 10 said yes  
Computer software - 6 of 10 said yes  
Fact sheets - 8 of 10 said yes  
Live training seminars - 9 of 10 said yes

Other: Provide more materials in Spanish; finances inhibits me; we need a new Bible study series that is Christ centered (not prophecy-centered); I use video seminars in conjunction with my own teaching, not totally by themselves; get on-line services on the Internet, not just Compuserve; make the software affordable; I'd like fact sheets with tidbits I could put in my church newsletter; I've appreciated Ron Halvorsen's lay pastoral training; my key area of need is Christian Witnessing training; I'd like to see a graphical/animated CD-ROM created for use during live public evangelism using a laptop, LCD video projector; the type of print material I need is in the area of training; I like to use lots of visual aids; I wish I had access to more ready-made transparencies for teaching purposes, some kind of exchange with other pastors; I wish I had PowerPoint, a laptop computer, and a laser printer; I'd like a 5 minute resource to use each Sabbath for a slice of our worship service, something directed to children, something that would pull them back, perhaps a video piece.

5. How many pastors have called PlusLine? 6 of 10. Leaders? 4 of 10. How many pastors have called AdventSource? 7 of 10. Leaders? 4 of 10. One pastor's wife wished there were more resources available in Spanish. Some pastors mention getting AdventSource catalogs. No positive or negative comments were given. One pastor said, "I usually call AdventSource. I guess this church is pastor-dependent. In my former church, I had someone do research on resources for me."

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Pastor: IC (his wife answered, he is Spanish)  
Conference: Arizona  
Church(es)/Position: 2 churches, Hispanic

1. Does your church do "Ingathering" (or an alternative)? Do you have any suggestions for improving it?

No.

2. What has worked well in your church in the last year in terms of outreach and evangelism?

We sometimes invite a pastor to come and hold meetings for a couple weeks. Then those who are interested in Bible studies, we go visit and give them studies.

3. Have you ever received "Adventist Witness" magazine? If yes, what is your reaction? Positive/negative? Why?

No.

4. What kinds of resources are you as a pastor looking for (or need most) in doing ministry in your church? (Yes/No)

Video seminars - Yes

Printed material - Yes

On-line computer service - No

Computer software - No

Fact sheets - Yes, but don't have a fax machine

Live training seminars - Yes

Other: Get more material in Spanish

5. Have you ever called PlusLine (1-800-SDA-PLUS or 1-800-732-7587) or AdventSource? Do you know if your church leaders use Adventist PlusLine or AdventSource? If so, which ones generally use it?

Yes. Don't know, I've told them about it.

Yes. We get magazines from them. Sometimes we buy material from them. Do they have any resources in Spanish? [Yes, I encouraged her to tell her husband to look in the pastor's catalog for Spanish resources when he gets it in the mail next time.]

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Pastor: MC

Conference: Arizona

Church(es)/Position: 1 church, and 1 company

1. Does your church do "Ingathering" (or an alternative)? Do you have any suggestions for improving it?

Yes. I happen to love doing Christmas caroling. That's our focus. One thing I'd like to see, especially since I have an active community service center, I really wish we could do something where we could have the money stay with us. [I gave him some sketchy comments on ADRA Appeal, Campaign for Community, and World Service Appeal].

2. What has worked well in your church in the last year in terms of outreach and evangelism?

We actually had a public evangelistic meeting for the first time in 5 years. We are working towards ... this is beside the point ... I had to do a fund raising campaign myself since the board didn't want to do it (partly because the previous pastor didn't believe in public evangelism). And it was successful. I'm now starting a campaign to buy the equipment to get ACN stuff. Plus, we have a couple of Pathfinder clubs and Adventurer's club. Plus we have a Community Services Center. Most of our work is for the homeless.

3. Is there a need in your church for sharing/witnessing ideas that are practical? (Follow-up: Have you ever received "Adventist Witness" magazine? If yes, what is your reaction? Positive/negative? Why?)

Just recently heard of it, but not received it.

4. What kinds of resources are you as a pastor looking for (or need most) in doing ministry in your church? (Yes/No)

Video seminars - Yes, dependent on cost and focus

Printed material - Yes

On-line computer service - We are working that direction, one of my dentists just donated a computer modem ... we are using free email right now.

Computer software - Yes, eventually

Fact sheets - Yes

Live training seminars - Yes, but finances are why I don't...

Other: SDA Plus

5. Have you ever called PlusLine (1-800-SDA-PLUS or 1-800-732-7587) or AdventSource? Do you know if your church leaders use Adventist PlusLine or AdventSource? If so, which ones generally use it?

Yes. Yes, some leaders have, but not a high use item.

Yes. Been awhile. I'm not sure about my leaders. I know my previous church had.

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Pastor: MM

Conference: Arizona

Church(es)/Position: 2 churches

1. Does your church do "Ingathering" (or an alternative)? Do you have any suggestions for improving it?

Yes. What I have done in the last year ... I already received from ACN the Ingathering program ... I'll show that. At the same time, over 3-4 Sundays in December I will go out with my members. If we train our people how to approach ...

2. What has worked well in your church in the last year in terms of outreach and evangelism?

Net '96. The whole series went well. We baptized 16-17 people.

3. Have you ever received "Adventist Witness" magazine? If yes, what is your reaction? Positive/negative? Why?

No.

4. What kinds of resources are you as a pastor looking for (or need most) in doing ministry in your church? (Yes/No)

Video seminars - Yes

Printed material - Yes

On-line computer service - Yes, have computer and modem, use Earthlink Net

Computer software - Yes

Fact sheets - Yes

Live training seminars - Yes

Other:

5. Have you ever called PlusLine (1-800-SDA-PLUS or 1-800-732-7587) or AdventSource? Do you know if your church leaders use Adventist PlusLine or AdventSource? If so, which ones generally use it?

Yes. Yes, I've given to my church members.

No. No, I don't think so.

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Pastor: AF

Conference:

Church(es)/Position: 1 church, Senior pastor

1. Does your church do "Ingathering" (or an alternative)? Do you have any suggestions for improving it?

No. Letting it die is probably what my members would suggest. Some members have talked about building it into the budget.

2. What has worked well in your church in the last year in terms of outreach and evangelism?

Basically, for our church, we have a daycare center (varies around 15). We are getting permission to explore is starting a new Adventist school (K-8). That's where the focus is right now.

3. Have you ever received "Adventist Witness" magazine? If yes, what is your reaction? Positive/negative? Why?

Heard of it. Seen a couple copies floating around. Wasn't something I ordered. Looked fairly traditional to me.

4. What kinds of resources are you as a pastor looking for (or need most) in doing ministry in your church? (Yes/No)

Video seminars - Yes, dealing with a visual generation

Printed material - Yes

On-line computer service - I'm trying to get the church involved. I have my own computer and modem. I'm on CompuServe.

Computer software - Church has a Mac. I use PC.

Fact sheets - Yes

Live training seminars - Yes

Other:

5. Have you ever called PlusLine (1-800-SDA-PLUS or 1-800-732-7587) or AdventSource? Do you know if your church leaders use Adventist PlusLine or AdventSource? If so, which ones generally use it?

No. No, not that I'm aware of.

No, never had the need, but I think couple people I know have

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Pastor: RM

Conference: Carolina

Church(es)/Position: 3

1. Does your church do "Ingathering" (or an alternative)? Do you have any suggestions for improving it?

No. Well, not public Ingathering, we just raise the money. Eliminate.

2. What has worked well in your church in the last year in terms of outreach and evangelism?

Net '95 and '96 and cooking classes.

3. Have you ever received "Adventist Witness" magazine? If yes, what is your reaction? Positive/negative? Why?

No.

4. What kinds of resources are you as a pastor looking for (or need most) in doing ministry in your church? (Yes/No)

Video seminars - Yes

Printed material - Yes, some of them (small things people can read quickly)

On-line computer service - Yes

Computer software - No

Fact sheets - Yes

Live training seminars - Yes

Other:

5. Have you ever called PlusLine (1-800-SDA-PLUS or 1-800-732-7587) or AdventSource? Do you know if your church leaders use Adventist PlusLine or AdventSource? If so, which ones generally use it?

Yes. Yes.

Yes. No, not aware of, probably not.

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Pastor: DU

Conference: Carolina

Church(es)/Position: 1 church (in retirement)

1. Does your church do "Ingathering" (or an alternative)? Do you have any suggestions for improving it?

I've only been here for six months. One things we haven't done. I certainly intend that they will.

I certainly feel it needs to be revamped because the majority of churches in the US aren't doing it. Needs to be re-looked at. Getting people to go door-to-door today is almost impossible, especially in the evening. I think the original plan of having a little

magazine might be easier ... perhaps experimenting with it. I believe we have missed out on a major part of what we could get ... if we had people trained to solicit businesses. [Shared an experience of getting \$30,000 in one donation...].

2. What has worked well in your church in the last year in terms of outreach and evangelism?

In the last year we were involved in the Net programs. Our folk worked well on that. I believe the Discovery Bible School program is going well.

3. Have you ever received "Adventist Witness" magazine? If yes, what is your reaction? Positive/negative? Why?

No.

4. What kinds of resources are you as a pastor looking for (or need most) in doing ministry in your church? (Yes/No)

Video seminars - Yes

Printed material - Yes, one specific kind I'd like to see ... all of our Bible courses that we have printed out... some of them start with a few on Jesus but go straight to doctrine. I think we need to write a series where Christ is the center of every doctrine that we teach

On-line computer service - No, too busy with other things ... have a computer, but haven't learned to use it...

Computer software - Yes

Fact sheets - Yes, if well done

Live training seminars - Yes

Other:

5. Have you ever called PlusLine (1-800-SDA-PLUS or 1-800-732-7587) or AdventSource? Do you know if your church leaders use Adventist PlusLine or AdventSource? If so, which ones generally use it?

No. Not as far as I know

Yes. I think so, not absolutely certain ... possibly when involved with Net '96

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Pastor: WG

Conference: Carolina

Church(es)/Position: 2 churches

1. Does your church do "Ingathering" (or an alternative)? Do you have any suggestions for improving it?

No. This whole conference does not push Ingathering. My former conference, it was a "must." We still have some members who still do it. We mention it, but most that are involved, simply give out of their own pocket. What I would like to see is that funds are used for what we say it will be used for. Funding the operation of the conference is NOT a proper use of funds when we ask.

2. What has worked well in your church in the last year in terms of outreach and evangelism?

We've had the traditional crusade with Ron Halvorsen. We did Net '96, but it didn't help us much. I just finished a crusade myself in one of the churches with good results. We're using the crusade approach along with training seminars for my members. One on one witnessing is practiced. The Discover lessons were not as successful as we had hoped. We didn't get anyone (students with these lessons) to come to the crusade.

3. Have you ever received "Adventist Witness" magazine? If yes, what is your reaction? Positive/negative? Why?

No.

4. What kinds of resources are you as a pastor looking for (or need most) in doing ministry in your church? (Yes/No)

Video seminars - Yes, but what I've done .... you know Mark Finley's seminars (for prior to Net '96) ... but I use them for my own enrichment.

Printed material - No. I have 3 big 7 foot bookcases, I use them but pick and choose

On-line computer service - Yes, but I wish it was on the Internet and not tied to Compuserve, I use the Internet for research all the time. I wish I could also tap into expanding my education since I didn't have the chance to get a Masters at Andrews  
Computer software - Yes, something at an affordable (I am in an old, traditional -- and selfish -- Adventist church, where its difficult to get funding for resources), something customized for the Adventist church

Fact sheets - Yes, and stuff from around the world for our local newsletters

Live training seminars - Yes, here in this conference we have Ron Halvorsen who does lay pastoral training and I really appreciate

Other: Christian Witnessing is one of the key issues that we need to train people

5. Have you ever called PlusLine (1-800-SDA-PLUS or 1-800-732-7587) or AdventSource? Do you know if your church leaders use Adventist PlusLine or AdventSource? If so, which ones generally use it?

Yes. Yes.

Yes. I bought some things from them. Don't know about my leaders.

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Pastor: DA

Conference: Allegheny West

Church(es)/Position: 2 churches

1. Does your church do "Ingathering" (or an alternative)? Do you have any suggestions for improving it?

Yes. Actually, no not really. Brochures are pretty straight forward. What would really be nice is if we could have a more regional thrust to it. I.e. how have we helped people in our state or county or whatever...



2. What has worked well in your church in the last year in terms of outreach and evangelism?

Only been in this district for a year. We are starting a series in September. I tend to favor "every member" involvement with a small group approach, developing relationships ... and then invite them to meetings. Then we do a general series, and open it to the public, but friendships are the basis of our approach.

3. Have you ever received "Adventist Witness" magazine? If yes, what is your reaction? Positive/negative? Why?

I think I got three copies in the mail and I forwarded them to my officers (Personal Ministries, SS leader, and Adventist Youth) ... if I'm thinking of the right magazine. I looked through it. Looked nice. I told them I'll probably vote it at board as a sub for the church.

4. What kinds of resources are you as a pastor looking for (or need most) in doing ministry in your church? (Yes/No)

Video seminars - No

Printed material - Yes

On-line computer service - No

Computer software - Yes

Fact sheets - Interesting, but haven't had anything available yet. Saw a supplement to the Adult Quarterly...

Live training seminars - Yes

Other: What I would like to see ... I know they've put a series of slides on CD-ROM ... If we could produce our own graphics package ... for instance, doing a prophecy seminar ... instead of seeing a static sheet ... but rather moving picture ... geared toward evangelism ... something presented on the screen, with a story-board, your voice is the text built onto the screen for emphasis, proof texts... I know we could do this... maybe some conference could do this... like the beast coming out of the sea ... moving ... action

5. Have you ever called PlusLine (1-800-SDA-PLUS or 1-800-732-7587) or AdventSource? Do you know if your church leaders use Adventist PlusLine or AdventSource? If so, which ones generally use it?

No. I wouldn't be able to say.

No. Yes, some of my church leaders ... I think community services.

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Pastor: SC

Conference: Allegheny West

Church(es)/Position: 1 church

1. Does your church do "Ingathering" (or an alternative)? Do you have any suggestions for improving it?

Yes. We did last year. Improve? Something to motivate my members. One thing that would make it more effective, is to get the brochures in our hands a little earlier, say

not less than 2 weeks before the launching of the campaign so the pastor can go through it. If you have a little incentive to help people reach individual goals... seems insignificant to some, but it is one way to help recognize ways of people complete their goals.

2. What has worked well in your church in the last year in terms of outreach and evangelism?

I recently came into my district where I am at the moment. I came in at a difficult time. I was just assigned to inspire the members here. I try to recognize members. I am preparing for a tent crusade next year. So, they are thinking about it. I conducted my Week of Prayer in March, with plans to do another one in the fall.

3. Have you ever received "Adventist Witness" magazine? If yes, what is your reaction? Positive/negative? Why?

Yes, heard of it but never received.

4. What kinds of resources are you as a pastor looking for (or need most) in doing ministry in your church? (Yes/No)

Video seminars - Yes, I tried it once ... did the Revelation Seminar ... so its not new to me.

Printed material - Yes, for training

On-line computer service - I don't know much about the computer at all, my wife has one but it would need to be updated

Computer software - See above

Fact sheets - Yes

Live training seminars - Yes

Other: I like to use visual aids a lot

5. Have you ever called PlusLine (1-800-SDA-PLUS or 1-800-732-7587) or AdventSource? Do you know if your church leaders use Adventist PlusLine or AdventSource? If so, which ones generally use it?

No. Not sure.

Yes, but not recently. No, I am not sure.

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Pastor: LW

Conference: Dakota

Church(es)/Position: 2 churches

1. Does your church do "Ingathering" (or an alternative)? Do you have any suggestions for improving it?

One of the two does. I know our ministerial secretary is hoping to help our conference shift directions. They are thinking being ADRA-directed. I think that probably having ... as I go to the businesses ... we don't do so much door-to-door as business contacts. I prefer the executive report myself vs. the little booklet. The booklet seems a bit limited in showing how professional the services are that we offer. The executive

folder is much more impressive, eye-catching. I wish it had a few more pages. I think that the brevity is probably done for cost purposes, but when you're talking businesses that often contribute \$100 or more dollars ...

Having more emphasis on what disasters and what areas have been helped in North America helps. But when you open the page to show a well-defined regional approach helps. The story ... diversity ... showing a spectrum of needs (earthquake, flood, etc.) is better. In certain areas they respond more that they can relate to. Earthquakes in our part of the country don't cut it as much as ... say flooding. Some brochures in the past show pictures with no identification of where it was ... such as a hurricane in Tampa, Florida.

2. What has worked well in your church in the last year in terms of outreach and evangelism?

I was, in the past twelve months, have been in two different districts. In my previous district, we held the Net '96 meetings. Satellite evangelism brought good response in a town of 35,000 people. Apparently it wasn't as effective in my current district. So, we are debating Net '98. So, the major outreach ... the biggest outreach was Amazing Facts, Mark Fox in 1994. It was a turning point for this church. So, they are open to live evangelism (vs. satellite). Seems the size of screen is a factor.

3. Have you ever received "Adventist Witness" magazine? If yes, what is your reaction? Positive/negative? Why?

Yes, I saw that. I've taken it to my board. We're going through a planning committee using the Rick Warren book, The Purpose-Driven Church, asking "What are we trying to accomplish?" But it came at a time when we had just changed the Sabbath school magazine ... too many changes at once.

4. What kinds of resources are you as a pastor looking for (or need most) in doing ministry in your church? (Yes/No)

Video seminars - Yes, one that we are attempting is the Love Takes Time one from the couple in Oregon (Corwins).

Printed material - Yes, things I can photocopy and/or hand out.... especially in prayer ministry, evangelism, and church growth

On-line computer service - I don't have a fast enough computer

Computer software - See above

Fact sheets - Yes, especially with graphics I could turn into transparencies

Live training seminars - Yes

Other: Wish we had more slides and transparencies. Don't have the income to get PowerPoint and stuff like that, which would be nice. I copied out of Warren's book a visual that really helped. Roger Morton used his computer at campmeeting showing pie charts ... that was nice. If I had some pie charts to illustrate ... that would really be nice. Perhaps if there was a way for pastors to network and could send me a hard copy that I could make a transparency from ... charts, slides. Learning to Care, that Ben Maxon did, had some really neat models. On another point, if you have a Personal Ministries report for church, it would be nice to have visual material or suggestions for holding people, that

would be good. My mid-week service, I am going to include a video feature, along with the Bible study and prayer time, so we can draw from the First Wednesday satellite feature... you get the idea. Also in the area of Children's Ministries ... we're pretty limited in the features that we have for church ... something 5 minutes that can be used in church .... some excellent puppet thing on video ... in worship.

5. Have you ever called PlusLine (1-800-SDA-PLUS or 1-800-732-7587) or AdventSource? Do you know if your church leaders use Adventist PlusLine or AdventSource? If so, which ones generally use it?

Yes. I doubt it. They might.

Yes, probably more often than PlusLine. They send out printed catalogs of resources. They might have, but I think this congregation has been pastor-dependent.