

Link2Uth

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Fast Forward

the year 2006 is almost over. 2007 is at the door knocking with God's promises. We have nothing to fear for the future unless we forget how the Lord has led us during this exciting year. Think of the successful World Youth Advisory held in March, great decisions in youth ministry were made. Spring and summer saw huge Pathfinder Camporees and Youth Congresses in various territories. Many young people took their first step in accepting Jesus as their personal friend, and many recommitted their lives to Him during these events.

2007 at a GLANCE

• **2nd World Conference on Youth and Community Service (WCYCS)**, Taipei, Taiwan, December 24, 2007 – January 5, 2008.

- Applications have been mailed to all Divisions.
- All applications must be processed through the Divisions to the General Conference Youth Ministries Department.
- Hotels allocations will be made by Jonatan Tejel to all the Division Youth Directors, who will in turn reserve rooms for their delegates. Jonatan will send you the details for the hotels and other accommodations.
- The Service Project list is being prepared. Early next year the complete list (Service Project Menu) will be send to all Divisions; delegates can then choose the projects they want to participate in.
- More information about the 2nd World Conference on Youth and Community Service in Taiwan will be ongoing throughout the year.

Other important items to keep in focus during 2007:

• **Centennial Celebration:** celebrating 100 years (1907 to 2007) of ministering to youth through the Youth Ministries Department.

For 2007 we are encouraging all leaders—division, union, local conference/mission, and local churches to set apart a special time of celebration. Plan and implement activities that will impact the community and show our thankfulness and appreciation to God for what he has done over the last century; and taking us through 100 years of serving

the youth. 100, 100, 100, 100!!

• **2007 is Year of Renewing.**

• **Starter Kits** have been sent out to all Divisions.

• **Small Group Discussion for Adventist Youth Kit** is a compilation of 52 Bible Studies.

The perfect tool for your group, large or small. Please make sure that all the local churches receive this material.

• **Homecoming (Welcome Home) Sabbath.** As was voted at our Youth Advisory in March, please remember that each local church should be urged to include the Homecoming (Welcome Home) Sabbath at the end of their Youth Week of Prayer.

• Also remember that your **Youth Week of Prayer** readings were sent to you in April 2006, in an attempt to give you enough time to plan your program for 2007. Additional copies are available for sale via our website, youth.gc.adventist.org.

• Include the **7 Global Youth Ministries Strategic Themes** in all your youth ministries promotions.

• Every church where there are youth between the ages 16 to 21+, the **Ambassador Club** is for them. Encourage every church to have strong Adventurer Clubs, Pathfinder Clubs, Ambassador, Senior

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Teammate ² Teammate

the 365 hour gift

Ann Landers writes, *“An attorney I very much admired once said that the greatest gift he ever received in his life was a note his dad gave him on Christmas. It read, ‘Son, this year I will give you 365 hours. An hour every day after dinner. We’ll talk about whatever you want to talk about. We’ll go wherever you want to go. Play whatever you want to play. It will be your hour.’ That dad kept his promise and renewed it every year”.*

This is the season of giving and receiving gifts. Decorations are everywhere—malls, churches, schools, houses, and, I even saw some mailboxes bowed-up and fancy. Retailers are trying their absolute best to entice us, to lure us into buying their products, even if we don’t need them. Sometimes it feels like I’m literary smelling gifts everywhere I turn during this time of the year.

What gifts can we give the youth?

Quality time!

24 hours is what everyone has in a day. What we do with it is up to us. When we look at the Great Teacher we see that spending quality time with those he loved was important to him. Not once do we find Jesus too hurried or busy to stop and listen, I mean really listen. Show love. Give love. Spend time. He always made time for those he ministered to. You can do the same. Renew your commitment to youth ministry. Give those we serve quality time in 2007. They will know you love them. Time = Love. Young people are smart, they know that if we give them quality time it’s because we love them.

I am renewing my commitment to give those I serve quality time in my ministry in 2007, and you can do the same.

I thank God for your ministry and wish you a very happy Christmas and great year ahead,

Baraka

Youth and Young Adult groups. We must serve every youth who comes through our doors.

- The document YouthFirst: involving youth in every aspect of church life is a must in every church. Available in Spanish, Portuguese and French YouthFirst is for all youth workers, local AY leaders, and youth volunteers. It will help you plan and implement programs that will involve all the youth of your church.
- Seventh-day Adventist Youth Songbook. Remember each Division is to send a minimum of 12 original songs to be included in the new Adventist Youth Songbook. You will receive more instructions from Hiskia Missah. This book will have all original composition of Adventist young people and Adventist youth heritage songs.

As we close out this Year of Connecting and look toward the Year of Renewing, let us renew our pledge to stay connected to the one True Source, Jesus. Leaders, let us continue our commitment to live authentic Christian lives, both individually and collectively. The youth are watching us. They are depending on us.

God bless you all for your leadership and team spirit. And always remember, the same God who used us, in spite of our imperfections, to bring youth to the Cross in 2006, He will do it again in 2007. Renew your commitment.

From us all,

The General Conference Youth Ministries Team



Romans 10:14 - But how can people call for help if they don't know who to trust? And how can they know who to trust if they haven't heard of the One who can be trusted? And how can they hear if nobody tells them? And how is anyone going to tell them, unless someone is sent to do it?

My hope is that this year brought you one step closer to the Lord, and next year will find you even closer. As we look back we see that God has been very good to us and we want to share with you what this Year of Connecting meant for some of us here in the office...

Silvia

get connected

Around 6,000 years ago, God created life in a new world, the Earth. He created everything, the light, the seas, land, animals, plants, and then His masterpiece, human beings, us. For Him it was essential to be in contact with His creation. And today it's still very

important to Him to be connected to us. He met with Adam and Eve in the Garden. He talked to them, He shared with them, but we, we broke the connection with the Him, with our Creator.

All this past years, all the past history, all the writings in the Bible are trying to reconnect Creation with the Creator. But sometimes we do the same thing that our first parents did. **[see Genesis 3:8]** And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. We try to hide ourselves from the presence of the LORD, and that's wrong.

As we celebrate the end of another year, let us take a moment to look at the greatest connecting that ever happened. God sending Jesus to connect us back to Him. That's how much he loved us. That's how much he still loves us. We want to suggest to you, that you do not let God's sacrifice be in vain. Get connected and stay connected to Him. This Year of Connecting is only the beginning, we are not proposing that you be connected with Him just this year, we want you to be connected with Him from now until the moment He'll come to take you Home.

May God be with you. May you be CONNECTED to, in and with God always,

Jonatan

keeping connected

1 Samuel 20:42 - *"Jonathan said, "Go in peace! The two of us have vowed friendship in God's name, saying, 'God will be the bond between me and you, and between my children and your children forever!'"*

I don't know about you, but the past year has taught me how to connect and stay connected to God. I found out that there is a big difference between getting to know God and thinking you know God. The difference is, when you [think you] know God there is no searching; there is no communication; no connection. You grow up hearing about Him; going to Church, once, maybe twice a week; and praying now and again; and that's it. You feel that's enough to know Him. But is it really enough?

Getting to know Him, now that's another story. To do this, you have to seek Him. You can do what I did. Read the Bible every day, spend personal, intimate time together, talk to Him, and tell Him your secrets, your desires and your heartaches. Find out what He likes. It's like this, when you have a friend and you love them, you try to get to know them, and be with them. You spend a lot of time on the phone talking to them, and as the relationship grows so does the desire to get to know the other person. After a while you start knowing how the person feels and how they think, and you begin to just automatically do things that you know they will like, and they do things for you that they know you will like. Your thinking becomes the same. If they hurt, you hurt. When they are happy, you are happy. Well, that's how it was with me and God this year. The connecting seems to go both ways. The relationship between us grew to the point that my desires fell in line with His desire for my life. I would seek His advice for everything concerning my life, everyday routine things I would talk to God about, because we developed that connection, that good friends connection.

Getting to know God and keeping connected is an on going process. Communication is on-going, no drop calls, no "can you hear me now." - Just call collect, He'll always accept

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connecting the dots

I have a friend who is sharing some personal stuff with me, and as we go through this thing together, I am beginning to see where all the dots are leading. The dots I did not even realize were connecting dots--the seemingly insignificant things that happen or the big disappointment that you never thought you'd ever have gotten over; or what about that mistake you made, the really stupid one!

Everything in life is about relationship. That's what I believe and no matter what, I will always believe that--that everything about life has to do with relationships. Connecting at the right time and in the right place can be crucial in the life of anyone, young or old; but especially so in the life of a young person. As I focused on our theme for 2006, Connecting, that is what I learned, and I am very grateful. Grateful that we had a year to focus on the word connecting. Connecting to. Connecting through. Connecting with. And in the end all the connections, all the dots, begin and end with Jesus. That's what I discovered this year--that everything in life is about relationship and all the dots connect back to Jesus.

You can plan all the really great events, everything is in just the right place, great programming, outstanding presenters (maybe all the best in their fields), and in the end, nothing happens. There's no connection. The young people are ALL wondering why they are there, and you, well you are not even sure why you are there either because nothing connected. Ever wondered why? There was no connection.

In all my relationships I discovered that all the dots connect and always lead back to one place...to Jesus.

But what does this relationship and connecting thing have to do with youth ministry and young people, and on a larger scale the church, you may ask. Well, think about it! If we live an authentic Christian life, one connected to Christ, then everyone we meet will be pointed, by our life, back to Jesus--that's where the connection begins and ends. A well-known radio evangelist asked the question, "How do we reach a generation that listens with its eyes and thinks with its feelings?" I say, by staying connected. I checked out John 15:5, and this is what it means to me, Jesus is the vine; I am the branch. If I, Maria connect with Jesus and Jesus connects through me, I will bear much fruit.... And the next verse for me is just as important, because it tells me that if I, Maria, does not stay connected in Him, I will be like a branch that is thrown away and withers away; and that's a very scary thought. Check it out for yourself.

With my friend I mentioned earlier, I can now see how God is using all those little [connecting] dots in my life to help her through her situation right now, and in the end...all I can do is leaving the connecting to Him, in His hands.

Check out John 15 for yourself, it will help you stay connected.

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In your spiritual journey, you will encounter with many things initiated by Satan that can cripple and deteriorate your spiritual lives. The devil is so cunning and is working very hard to lead you into refusing God's presence in your lives, so that God will have no power to control your lives. Satan is a great enemy of God and His Church. He wanted to defeat God and destroy His Church, but he couldn't. The only chance he has is defeating the young people - the future church leaders - and their minds, so that the church can be destroyed.

Ellen White wrote, *"The more responsible the position, the more essential that the influence be right. Every man whom God has chosen to do a special work becomes a target of Satan. . . . The only safety for any of us is in clinging to Jesus and letting nothing separate the soul from the mighty Helper."* 5T p. 429

Your spiritual connection with Jesus is your only way of diverting Satan's raid and attack in your lives as well as to preserve the longevity of the church. As young people and the future leaders of the church, you are instructed to have personal connection with Jesus because He is 'the only safety refuge' from Satan's aggression.

This year is designated as the 'YEAR OF CONNECTING,' therefore, get connected with Jesus, be always connected with Him, live a life connected with the MOST POWERFUL SUPREME BEING, and stay connected until He comes. By doing so, we could extend God's love to others so that they, too, can get connected with their Creator, the Alpha and Omega, the Almighty God.

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2006 YEAR OF CONNECTING



**2ND WORLD CONFERENCE ON
YOUTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICE**

Taipei, Taiwan

December 24, 2007 - January 5, 2008

Contact your local conference