3. A Significant Shift in the Use of Resources in the 1960s and 1980s in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Australia and the United States

Robert K. McIver[1]

Highlights

- I examine possible reasons for a dramatic stall in the growth rate of the number of ordained Seventh-day Adventist Church pastors[2] in the 1960s and 1980s, despite growth in church membership and tithing.
- Main outcomes: the number of pastors, teachers, churches, members, and other quantitative data from Australia, New Zealand, the United States, and the United Kingdom.
- I find that (1) growing disparity between potential and actual tithing (resulting in lower overall budget resources), and (2) internal church upheaval provide a ready explanation for the phenomena in the 1980s.
- It also appears likely that some financial resources were moved from supporting ordained pastors to school teachers in Adventist schools. If this is the case, then the current age- and education-demographics of churches with attached denominational schools demonstrate that this has proved to be a very wise investment in the future of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

---

[1] This chapter is dedicated to Duane McBride. I have known of Duane's work since my time as a student at Andrews University in the late 1980s. In more recent times, I have been privileged to work with Duane on the executive committee of the Adventist Human-Subject Researchers Association, where I have been able to see first-hand his ability to provide cheerful and directed leadership to an international scholarly endeavour. Duane is to be congratulated for a lifetime of research directed at the public good.

[2] In official Seventh-day Adventist Church reports, the term "minister" is sometimes used in place of "pastor". While this chapter primarily uses the term "pastor", the term "minister" is sometimes used when needed for clarity regarding specific church terminology.

Introduction

This chapter will note a significant change in the growth of the number of ordained pastors in the Seventh-day Adventist Church that took place about 1955 and 1980. Despite a continued growth in membership and tithe receipts, for a 15-year period after 1955 and three decades after 1980, there was near zero growth in the number of ordained pastors in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Australia and New Zealand. A similar pattern may be observed in the number of ordained pastors in the United States. There was near zero growth in the number of ordained pastors between 1960 and 1970, and again after 1985. These changes took place without fanfare, and largely passed without notice. The chapter will also explore some of the possible reasons for such a change.

Australia and New Zealand

Table 3.1 records the number of ordained pastors, teachers, churches, members, as well as school enrolment and tithe receipts from 1900 to 2015 in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Australia and New Zealand. (These figures are based on official church statistics, found in the Annual Statistical Reports for the church, which are published each year under slightly different titles, and available at http://documents.adventistarchives.org/Statistics; it has not proved possible to find teacher numbers for 1900, 1955 and 1960.)

Figure 3.1 Ordained Seventh-day Adventist pastors in Australia and New Zealand

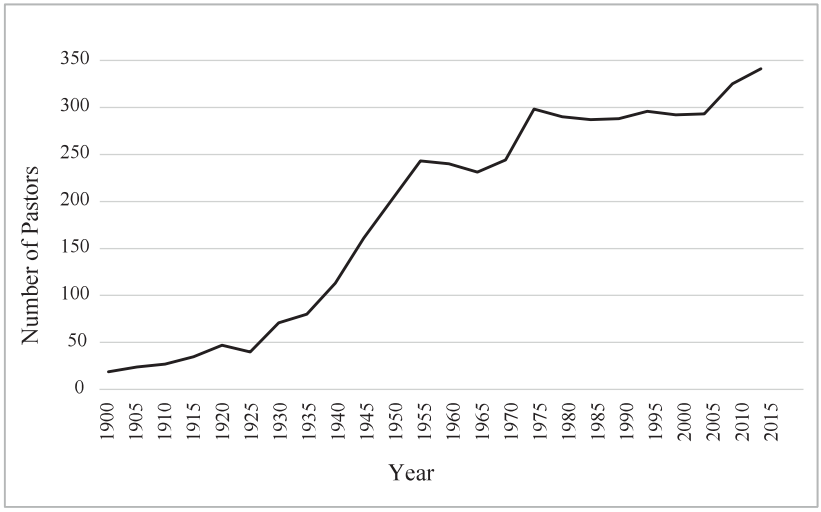


Table 3.1 Selected statistics for Seventh-day Adventists in Australia and New Zealand

Year	Ordained pastors (OZ & NZ)	Teachers	Churches	Members	School enrolment	Total employees	Employees who are ordained pastors	Tithe (US$)	Tithe (AUS$)	Oz$: US$ 31/12
1900	19		47	2,086		65	29%	$21,582		
1905	24	14	87	2912	278	164	15%	$45,227		
1910	27	15	97	3,757	239	200	14%	$71,997		
1915	35	19	107	5,122	237	353	10%	$108,759		
1920	47	24	145	7,013	310	446	11%	$262,214		
1925	40	27	127	5,227	237	303	13%	$113,814		
1930	71	37	192	9,862	446	445	16%	$331,847		
1935	80	54	213	13120	972	523	15%	$383,504		
1940	113	61	243	15,842	1,112	526	21%	$534,872		
1945	161	74	264	17,742	1,307	731	22%	$706,332	$438,171	0.620
1950	202	101	276	21,062	2,007	693	29%	$895,236	$799,318	0.893
1955	243	136	306	25,367	2,112	794	31%	$1,518,536	$1,355,836	0.893
1960	240	170	325	30,392	2,082	826	29%	$2,351,771	$2,099,796	0.893
1965	231	174	369	35,766	2,629	950	24%	$3,348,027	$2,989,310	0.893
1970	244	230	384	40,563	3,040	973	25%	$4,705,997	$4,201,778	
1975	298	268	413	45,797	3,850	1,164	26%	$8,188,270	$10,129,384	
1980	290	408	432	50,203	4,513	1,340	22%	$19,641,575	$17,187,991	
1985	287	442	389	55,008	7,463	1,345	21%	$27,069,052	$24,827,572	
1990	288	418	475	56,923	7,670	1,423	20%	$26,239,411	$33,976,559	
1995	296	433	490	58,870	8,403	1,497	20%	$26,963,580	$36,942,452	
2000	292	607	493	61,706	9,549	1,657	18%	$25,099,430	$44,249,124	
2005	293	689	489	63,658	10,325	1,561	19%	$43,084,063	$57,182,501	
2010	325	861	502	67,584	10,760	2,366	14%	$63,994,860	$71,032,957	
2015	341	818	504	71,534	11,879	4,629	7%	$78,860,130	$86,563,575	

Figure 3.1 and Table 3.1 between them, reveal that up until about 1955 there was a natural growth curve in the number of ordained pastors in Australia and New Zealand. In the 15 years between 1955 and 1970 there was very little growth in the numbers of ordained pastors. Between 1970 and 1975 growth began again. After 1975 there was a hiatus of 30 years in the growth of ordained pastors, and since 2005 the numbers have only increased slowly when compared to the period 1920 through 1960.

Table 3.1 also reveals that during this time period, church membership continued to grow (see Figure 3.2), as did tithe receipts (see Figure 3.3; please note, the apparent dip in 2000 is an artefact of changes in exchange rates following the global financial crises, when the AUS$1 went from an exchange rate approximately US$0.75 to US$1.06 and back; when expressed in Australian dollars tithe increased during all of the period covered in Table 3.1). The continued growth of tithe receipts and of church membership may be discerned in Figures 3.2 and 3.3.

Figure 3.2 Seventh-day Adventist members in Australia and New Zealand

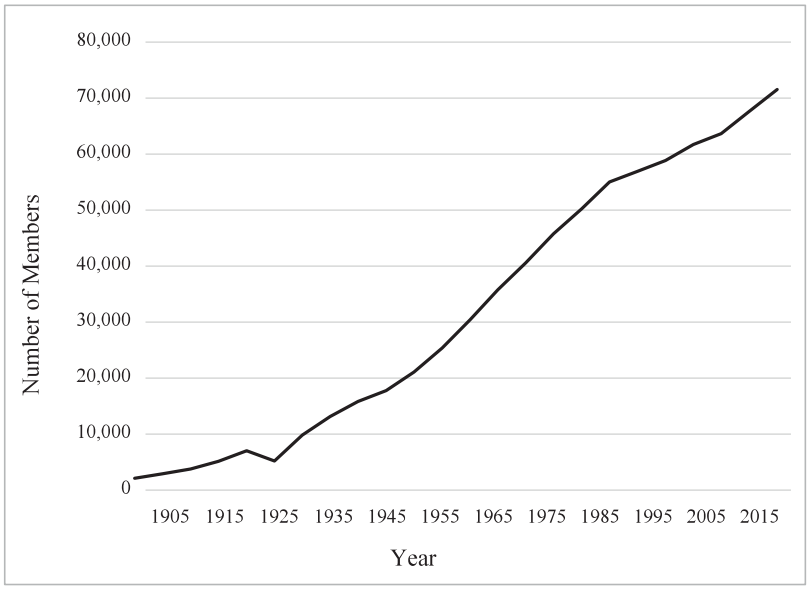
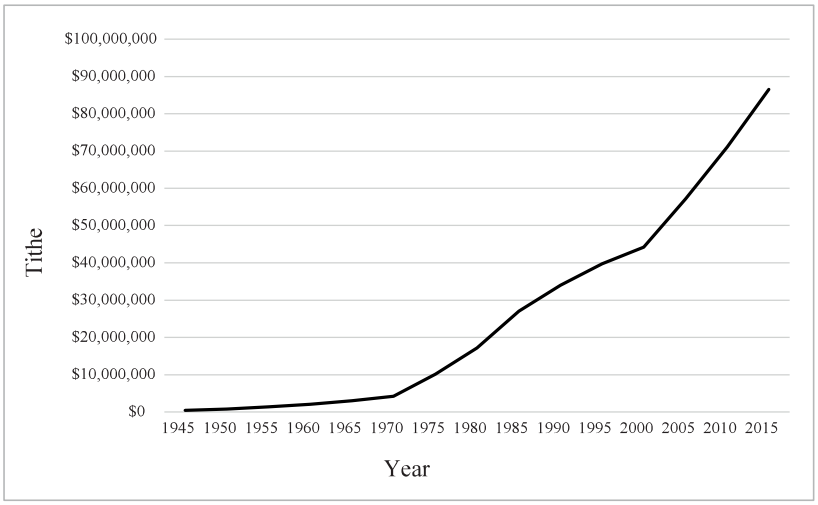


Figure 3.3 Tithe receipts (US$) from Australia and New Zealand



Given that tithe receipts continued to grow after 1955 and 1975, it will be argued here that these years saw a shift of church resources away from funding church pastors into funding reserves, or other needs of the church.

The first question that needs to be addressed, however, is whether the number of ordained pastors is the best proxy available for the number of budgets available to employ pastors in local churches in Australia and New Zealand. The church provides a wide range of credentials to its full-time employees. For example, the *2017 Annual Statistical Report: 153rd Report of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists for 2015 and 2016* (pp. 49-73) lists the statistics for employees who have been issued with the following credentials: Ministerial Credential (i.e. ordained ministers/pastors), Commissioned Minister Credential, Commissioned Ministry of Teaching Credential, Administrative Ministries Credential, Missionary Credential, Ministerial License, Commissioned Minister License, Commissioned Ministry of Teaching License, Administrative Ministries Licence, and Missionary License. Yet, among all these possible credentials, only the ministerial credentials issued to ordained ministers/pastors is tracked in this chapter. It does so largely on the grounds of consistency of definition and type of employment.

The practice of ordaining pastors after 4 to 5 years of successful ministry was well established in the Seventh-day Adventist Church by 1900. As a consequence, the numbers reported under this category represent experienced pastors, almost all of whom have been placed in churches or administrative roles. This observation, though, introduces the first challenge in using the number of ordained pastors as a proxy for those appointed in local churches as pastors. A significant number of ordained pastors are employed to provide administrative leadership at Conference, Union and Division levels. Another issue is that those placed in local churches in pastoral roles before they have been ordained have usually been issued with a Ministerial Licence or Missionary Licence. Statistics are available for licenced pastors back as far as 1900 (*1901 General Conference Bulletin*). Yet, given the variability of offering licences and missionary credentials over the decades, including the numbers of Ministerial Licences and Missionary Licences in the data would be problematic. Credentials such as licences have not necessarily been confined to those with appointments to pastoral positions in local churches. As a consequence, Ministerial Licences and Missionary Licences have been left out of consideration in these statistics. Pastors in local churches with ministerial licences do not exactly match the number of ordained pastors in positions in local conferences, but in many places and times the numbers are not dissimilar. It is not usually possible to determine how true this statement is from the official church statistics, but those for 1995 and 2000 reported separately "Evangelistic and Pastoral Employees," and "Administrative, Promotional, Office, and Miscellaneous Employees," a practice that had ceased by 2005. In the year 2000 there were 2,599 ordained pastors and 586 licenced pastors employed in evangelistic and pastoral roles, and 478 ordained pastors employed in administrative roles, in the North American Division (the equivalent figures in the South Pacific Division were 542, 243 and 132). Thus, it is argued, that the number of ordained pastors is the best proxy available for estimating the number employed by the Seventh-day Adventist Church in pastoral roles.

Possible Reasons Underlying Choice to Not Expand the Number of Pastoral Budgets in Australia and New Zealand after 1980

Explanations for administrative caution in expanding the pastoral work-force of the church in the period following 1980 are not far to seek. The reasons likely lie in the significant issues facing the church during this time period, at a time when there was increasing pressure on budgets.

Pastoral budgets are funded out of tithe donations. As Table 3.1 and Fig. 3 demonstrate, tithe receipts have continued to rise in Australia post 1960 and 1980. Yet this apparent robust growth in the church's finances masks an underlying weakness in the church's ability to continue to support the growth of pastoral budgets. This trend can be observed when tithe receipts are compared to 10% of church members' wages. It is possible to do this in Australia because, since 1976, the Australian census asks a question about religious affiliation as well as questions about income level and age. This data enables an estimate to be made of total income of Seventh-day Adventists across Australia, and 10% of this income can then be compared with tithe receipts to provide an estimate of what percentage of their income Seventh-day Adventists are returning to the church as tithe. When this is done, a growing disparity between 10% of Adventist income and tithe returned to the church is revealed, starting from the mid-1970s. For example, in 1976 (the first year this calculation can be made) the tithe in the West Australian Conference was the equivalent of about 91% of the potential tithe (i.e. 10% of estimated income for all Seventh-day Adventists in Western Australia). By 1986, this percentage had fallen to 69% (see McIver, 2016 for data from Western Australia; and McIver and Currow, 2002 for data from North New South Wales). Pastoral wage rates tend to follow income in the wider society. The growing disparity between tithe income and wages would have already been causing budgetary pressures on administrators that would make them hesitate to expand their pastoral work-force. Other events in the church during this period can have only tended to increase uncertainty in the minds of administrators.

The period following 1980 was a challenging time for administrators in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Australia and New Zealand, who, in addition to the regular administrative challenges associated with running a complex organization consisting of church-

es, schools, campgrounds, retirement villages, etc., faced a number of challenges that effected the international church. The financial and reputational issues surrounding the collapse of the investment scheme promoted by Donald J. Davenport largely left church finances and the reputation of administrators in Australia and New Zealand untouched. Even so, there was a general unease felt about it in many quarters, something known to church administrators.

Walter Rae's presentations attacking the prophet and influential pioneer of the Australian Seventh-day Adventist Church in Australia and New Zealand, Ellen White, and publications presenting and attacking his findings (Rae, 1982; Ellen G. White Estate, 1982; Veltman, 1988) also became widely known across Australia. Given the importance of Ellen White to the church from members to presidents, such discussion had the potential to disturb many.

But the international church event that took place at Glacer View, California between August 11 and 14, 1980 was one that had the greatest impact in Australian and New Zealand. A group made up of administrators and academics from around the world met at Glacier View to consider the document, "Daniel 8:14, the Day of Atonement, and the Investigative Judgment," by Desmond Ford (Ford, 1980). This meeting and the subsequent rejection of Ford's ideas, his dismissal from church employment and the removal of his ministerial credentials (*Ministry*, October 1980) were closely followed by members, administrators and ministerial employees of the church in Australia, and a noticeable number of pastoral employees left church employment and church members resigned as a result.

While significant, it is possible to overemphasize the impact of the events surrounding the dismissal of Des Ford. [Peter] Harry Ballis' published dissertation, *Leaving the Adventist Ministry* (Ballis, 1999) documents the results of his study of those Adventist pastors who left ministry during the 1980s and early 1990s. He discovered that the proportion of pastors that left ministry within 10 years of graduating in the 1980 and early 1990 was equal to that which took 40 years in earlier decades. He further discovered that while the events surrounding Des Ford's dismissal had been a catalyst for many pastors which crystallised their decision to leave church employment, a greater influence was the clash in expectations of how younger pastors felt their situation could have been managed when compared to the authoritarian approach taken by many administrators during this time period.

Whatever the case may be in the experience of Adventist pastors who left church employment during the 1980s, there was a sense of great unease in many parts of the pastoral work force during this time period. For example, as a recent graduate who was first employed by the church in a ministerial role in 1982, I heard from several sources that there were more ex-Adventist pastors living in South Australia than were employed by the church in that Conference. True or not, such rumours indicate the climate of the time, and explain why administrators would be reluctant to expand the pastoral work force.

One possibility that should be considered, though, is whether some of ordained pastors who left church employment during the 1980s were replaced by those with ministerial licences rather than ministerial credentials. On the whole, though, this does not appear to have been much of a factor, as this state of affairs would have been adjusted within 4 to 5 years as those recently employed as pastors became eligible for ordination. Such adjustment does not appear to have happened, as there is no upswing in the number of ordained pastors until after the year 2005. Consequently, the effect of replacing ordained pastors with licenced pastors can be discarded as a factor in explaining the near zero growth in the number of ordained pastors during this period.

It appears, then, that budgetary constraints together with uncertainties growing from the events in the church in the 1980s likely account for the near zero growth of numbers of ordained pastors in Australia and New Zealand between 1975 and 2005. The reasons for the dramatic change in growth in the 1960s have yet to be explored.

Institutionalisation of the Church as a Possible Explanation for the Changes After 1955

If explanations as to why church administrators may have felt the climate unsuitable for expanding the pastoral workforce in the 1980s are close at hand, the same cannot be said for the period of the 1960s in the Australian church. This is revealed in the varied responses of those who are best informed about the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Australia. For example, the late Arthur Patrick devoted much of his academic life studying Australian Seventh-day Adventist history, and was a young pastor in Australia during the 1960s (he graduated from Avondale College in 1957 and entered full time ministry in 1958). I was fortunate to be able to have several long interviews with him about the data in Table 3.1 and Figure 3.1

when I first noticed these trends in the early 2000s. I also was able to interview Lance Butler, a treasurer of the Australasian Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and later General Conference Treasurer, about these trends. Neither gentleman had a good explanation of what was going on in the church at the time that would account for the dramatic change in the rate of growth in the numbers of ordained pastors, nor did Milton Hook, another specialist in Australian Adventist History (Milton did raise the possibility of the impact of the theological agitation by Robert Brinsmead and others, but this is known to have had a smaller impact on the Australian and New Zealand Church than the dismissal of Des Ford during the 1980s).

While uncertain of any substantial cause, Arthur Patrick did point to two possible contributing factors. During this period, (1) the leadership of the church became increasingly professional; and (2) many Adventist schools moved from the back room of their local church, and into purpose-built buildings. Perhaps this was a period in Seventh-day Adventist history when the church became more institutionalized, an explanation that would appeal to many sociologists of religion, who would tend to view the institutionalization of a religious movement as an almost inevitable outcome as a movement establishes itself. For example, in *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, Max Weber outlines what he describes as "the routinization of charisma and its consequences." He states:

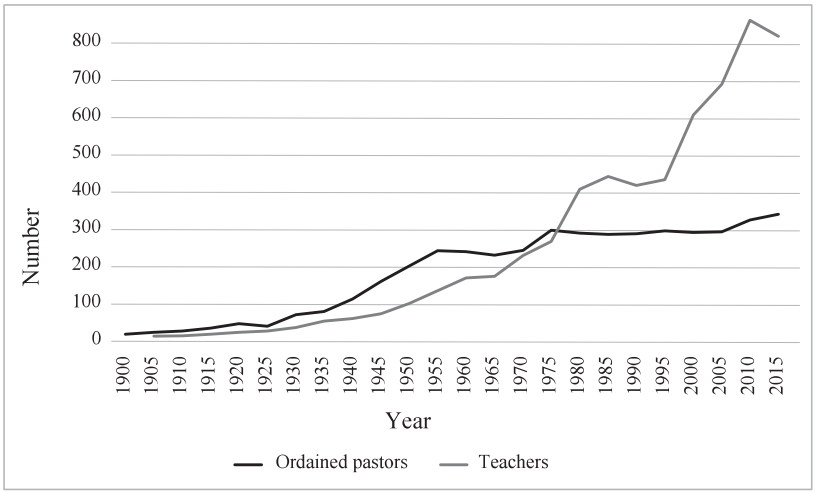
> In its pure form charismatic authority has a character specifically foreign to everyday routine structures. The social relationships directly involved are strictly personal, based on the validity and practice of charismatic personal qualities. If this is not to remain a purely transitory phenomenon, but to take on the character of a permanent relationship forming a stable community of disciples or a band of followers or a party organization or any sort of political or hierocratic organization, it is necessary for the character of charismatic authority to become radically changed. Indeed, in its pure form charismatic authority may be said to exist only in the process of originating. It cannot remain stable, but becomes either traditionalized or rationalized, or a combination of both. (Weber, 1947, pp. 363-364).

David O. Moberg has suggested that a church has a life-cycle, which moves from incipient organization, through formal organization, maximum efficiency, institutionalization and finally to disintegration (Moberg, 1984; Knight, 1995). Moberg is but one of many

sociologists of religion that consider institutionalization of a religious movement as both likely and undesirable (see also Fenn, 2009; Hjelm and Zuckerman, 2013).

One possible indication of the institutionalization of the church may be observed in the column in Table 3.1 which is labelled, "Employees who are ordained pastors." Right from earliest times the Seventh-day Adventist Church has been involved in publishing, running school systems and hospitals (Schwartz and Greenleaf, 2000), and in early times the ratio of ordained pastors to the total workforce was small. By 1920 this percentage was as low as 10%. But it then grew steadily between 1930 and 1955 where it peaked at 31%. It started to decrease thereafter, and in the figures for 2015, it sits at less than 10% of the workforce employed by the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Australia and New Zealand. At issue is where these additional non-pastoral employees are to be found. In Australia and New Zealand, a substantial part of the answer to this question is that the church has been hiring teachers for Adventist schools in increasingly large numbers. This result may be observed from Table 3.1. While the numbers of ordained pastors remained rather flat, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of teachers in Adventist schools. This trend may be observed in Figure 3.4 (note: numbers of primary teachers are not reported separately at union level in 1950 to 1960).

Figure 3.4 Ordained pastors and school teachers in Australia and New Zealand



Given that since the early 1960s an increasingly larger portion of the funding of non-government schools in Australia has come from government sources (Kilgour and Williams, 2017) rather than churches sources, it is difficult to argue that the increasing number of teachers has affected the ability of the Seventh-day Adventist Church to hire more pastors. One factor of importance may have been the policy that was initially put in place when Adventist schools first accepted government money that the church must have reserves to cover two years of school operation to provide a buffer if the government withdrew monetary support unexpectedly. This is one aspect of a likely impact on budgets that flowed from the dramatic expansion of the Adventist school system in Australia and New Zealand. Today church funding only accounts for a small percentage of school operating expenses in Australia (see Kilgour and Williams, 2017). School support is also a much smaller component of conference budgets than it was prior to the beginning of government funding of Adventist schools in Australia. So the expansion of Adventist schools in Australia is not the primary explanation of the pattern of the growth of the number of ordained pastors in Australia. The funding of Adventist schools in New Zealand has had a different history, but the result is that Adventist schools in New Zealand are likewise government funded (e.g. see on Rotorua Adventist School at https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/find-school/school/financial-performance?school=4129&district=24&region=4). Given this, while developing the reserves it felt it needed to ensure the continuing operation of the school system for 2 years if the Government funding ceased may have had some impact on the conference budgets through the 1960s (much of the money going into reserves which had hitherto gone directly to the schools), it is difficult to argue that this would have been a continuing impact. After all, the money to expand and run the school system in Australia largely came from government rather than church sources.

Does this increase in the Adventist primary and secondary school system in Australia and New Zealand mean that the church is becoming institutionalized in the manner that sociologists of religion mean by the term? It is likewise hard to make that case. The Adventist school system in Australia and New Zealand is run by teachers who self-report that they are committed to "sharing the good news of the Gospel" with their students, and "leading them to Jesus" (Hattingh, 2017). The clear majority of teachers employed in Adventist schools share a vision highly congruent to the Seventh-day Adventist Church's vision

of mission. Furthermore, the difference a school makes to the age and education demographics of a church is observable when moving around the different churches in Australia. Some Adventist churches which do not have an Adventist school have an age-demographic similar to attenders of churches of other denominations in Australia, where the largest age cohort of attenders are found in the 60 to 79 age group (http://www.ncls.org.au/default.aspx?sitemapid=6816; note this figure represents the combined demographic of all Christian churches in Australia). By way of contrast, a church that has a local Adventist church school associated with it tends to be demographically diverse, with good representation by families with young children, and the local teachers are often found within a larger group of young professionals in the church. None of these characteristics indicate a church that is becoming institutionalized. Rather, churches with Adventist church schools attached show themselves to be self-renewing and are positioned well for a successful future. The growth of the schools does not indicate a church on the downturn because of increased institutionalization. Rather, it indicates a church that is growing towards its future. If the growth of the Adventist school system represents the institutionalization of the church, then institutionalization of this kind is a great benefit to the church, rather than a detriment.

Another factor that could have been in the minds of church administrators during the period 1955 through 1970, is the economic uncertainty that was associated with the economic downturn of 1957-58. This was strongly felt in the United States, and will be explored more fully when considering why the expansion of pastors in the United States dramatically slowed between 1960 and 1970.

North America

Table 3.2 provides the same group of statistics as found in Table 3.1, although in this instance, they are for the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists. A pattern may be observed in the growth of the number of ordained pastors that has certain similarities to that found in Australia. That is, between 1900 and 1960 there was a continued growth in the numbers of ordained pastors in the North American Seventh-day Adventist Church, but this growth ceased between 1960 and 1970, to be resumed at a much slower rate until 1980, and thereafter, the numbers of ordained Adventist pastors in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America decreased slightly, and only increased in 2015.

Table 3.2 Selected statistics for Seventh-day Adventists in North America

Year	Ordained pastors (NAD)	Teachers	Churches	Members	School enrolment	Total employees	Employees who are ordained pastors	Tithe (US$)
1900	348		1,554	55162	0	1,019	34%	$419,829
1905	477	74	1,667	55,252	1,427	1,439	33%	$670,520
1910	530	559	1,037	66,294	9,514	2,363	22%	$966,920
1915	544	717	2,113	77,735	11,444	2,261	24%	$1,337,810
1920	666	957	2,134	95,877	17,510	2,694	25%	$3,918,515
1925	763	886	2,239	103,362	16,020	2,900	26%	$4,094,690
1930	864	935	2,227	120,560	15,859	2,721	32%	$4,040,190
1935	966	1,073	2,423	157,507	16,987	2,886	33%	$3,618,262
1940	1,045	1,130	2,624	185,788	18,756	3,301	32%	$5,448,244
1945	1,351	1,223	2,713	212,614	23,256	5,304	25%	$16,163,366
1950	1,745	1,649	2,878	250,939	27,731	7,396	24%	$21,137,473
1955	2,215	1,977	3,041	293,448	35,662	9,410	24%	$31,971,347
1960	2,540	2,073	3,197	332,354	43,715	13,667	19%	$45,021,716
1965	2,309	2,721	3,335	380,855	52,166	24,887	9%	$60,835,255
1970	2,575	2,942	3,401	439,726	53,231	29,339	9%	$93,201,151
1975	2,878	3,274	3,601	620,842	57,458	33,277	9%	$154,366,838
1980	3,076	3,284	3,994	604,430	73,861	41,798	7%	$243,675,524
1985	3,286	4,478	4,306	889,507		36,781	9%	$317,233,301
1990	3,285	4,431	4,086	760,148		46,427	7%	$408,640,139
1995	3,090	4,660	4,636	838,898		53,940	6%	$491,795,445
2000	3,077	5,568	4,822	933,935	62,914	66,483	5%	$656,938,357
2005	3,489	5,453	5,094	1,024,035	57,402	62,385	6%	$834,926,647
2010	3,357	4,941	5,284	1,126,815	52,170	80,491	4%	$887,976,937
2015	3,609	4,964	5,484	1,218,397	41,823	114,456	3%	$965,591,087

Note: Because the official figures do not report the number of primary teachers between 1985 and 1995, it has not proved possible to obtain figures for the total number of teachers for those years.

Figure 3.5 Ordained Seventh-day Adventist pastors in the North American Division



Once again, it is not hard to find a ready explanation of the fall in ordained pastors after 1980. Like the church in Australia, the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America was impacted by the events surrounding the dismissal of Des Ford, and the possibility of plagiarism in the writings of Ellen G. White. It is arguable that Des Ford has had a much smaller impact on the Seventh-day Church in North America than he had in Australia. He arrived to take up a teaching position at Pacific Union College in 1977. While he had emerged as a popular camp meeting speaker, he had only been based in the North American Division for 3 years prior to Glacier View. By way of contrast, his influence in Australia was over a long period of time. During his time as head of the religion department at Avondale College for most of the time between 1961 and 1976, he had been involved in preparing students for careers in ministry. He also had long-term involvement in public appearances across Australia which gave him a much deeper profile than he had been able to establish in the United States. So, while his dismissal was noted with interest in North America, its impact would not have been felt as strongly there as it was in Australia. On the other hand, the North American

Division was more impacted by the financial scandals associated with the failure of the investment scheme promoted by Donald Davenport. Individuals from all levels of the church were affected by the loss of money, as were many church entities. Many key leaders of the church had accepted preferential interest rates and had invested church funds in the scheme. The roll call of those eventually disciplined for their involvement contained important names across the Division (Dwyer, 1983).

Yet it is possible to over-stress the impact of these events on the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America. Table 3.2 reveals that tithe receipts continued to grow, as did church membership numbers. These trends are observable in Figures 3.6 and 3.7.

Figure 3.6 Seventh-day Adventist members in the North American Division

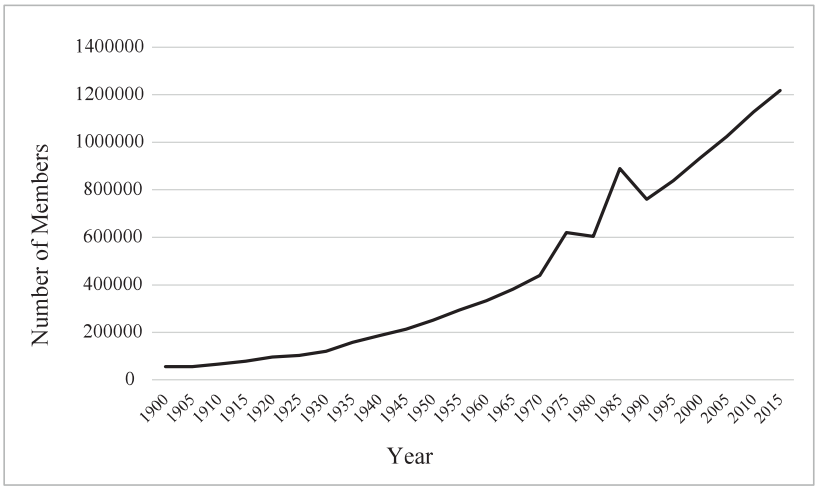
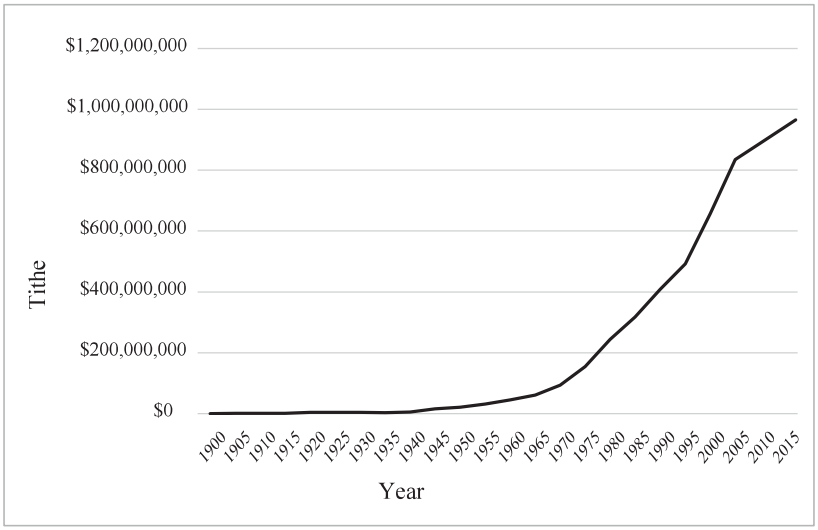


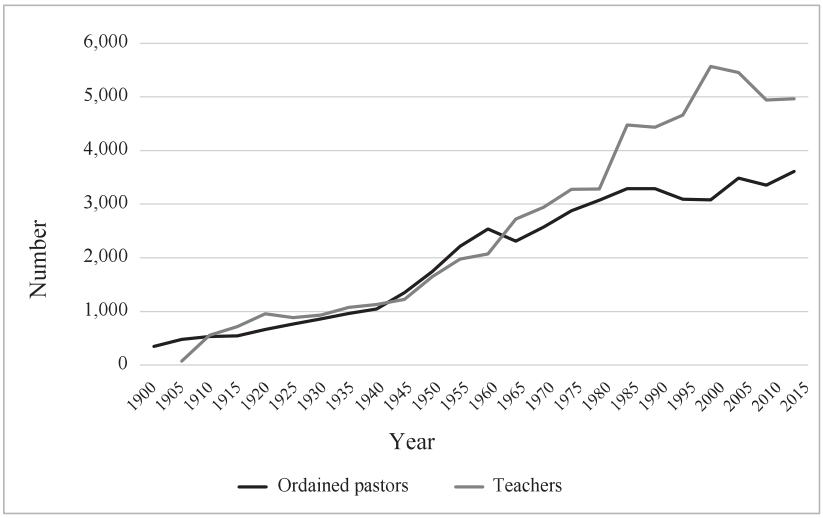
Figure 3.7 Tithe receipts (US$) from the North American Division



Yet, as with Australia, the increase in tithing receipts masks the fact that Adventists were giving a smaller percentage of their income over the period from approximately 1970 onwards (see McIver, 2016 for an analysis of tithing among Seventh-day Adventists in Northern California; and Robert K. McIver and Stephen Currow, 2001 for a North America-wide analysis). Budgetary challenges no doubt contributed to the lack of growth in the numbers of ordained Adventist pastors in North America.

During this time there was also a growth in the number of teachers in Adventist schools across North America. Unlike Australia, where growth had been underwritten by government funds, the growth in Adventist schools in the United States could only be funded from fees and church resources. The growth in teacher numbers in North America more closely followed the growth in the number of ordained pastors, although since the 1970s, there have been more teachers than ordained pastors in North America. The number of ordained pastors can be compared to the number of school teachers in Figure 3.8.

Figure 3.8 Teachers and ordained Seventh-day Adventist pastors in the North American Division



That Adventist schools are a very important part of the health of the local churches is as true in North America as it is in Australia. Churches with local Adventist schools tend to have a very healthy age-demographic, with young families and young professionals making up a significant percentage of the church attenders. Every indication is that Adventist teachers across North America are fully committed to the goals and mission of the church.

The impact of the smaller amount of Adventist income that is coming to the North American church as tithe, together with the modest increase in teachers in Adventist schools account for some of the factors that have meant that the number of ordained pasters in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America has been relatively constant since 1980, despite the fact that the church membership has grown.

While the very low growth rate in the number of ordained pastors in North America since 1980 can be explained, it is much more challenging to explain the dramatic downturn in ordained pastors between 1960 and 1965. The full picture is yet to emerge, but a partial explanation may be found in the remarks made C. L. Torrey, in his "Treasurer's Report" to the 1958 General Conference Session:

> During the period covered by this report, economic conditions have been at an all-time high, and as a result the tithes and offerings have continued to increase. These increases have made possible the expansion of the work right around the world field.
>
> However, as we all recognize, the present economic situation and trends are not as encouraging as during the past four years. Economists, radio commentators, newspapers, and various financial journals have much to say about the depression that we are now experiencing. Just how serious and how severe or how far-reaching this will be is an unknown factor at this juncture. We must pray earnestly that funds will continue to come into the Lord's treasury in ever-increasing amounts so that God's work will not suffer. (Torrey, 1958, p. 31)

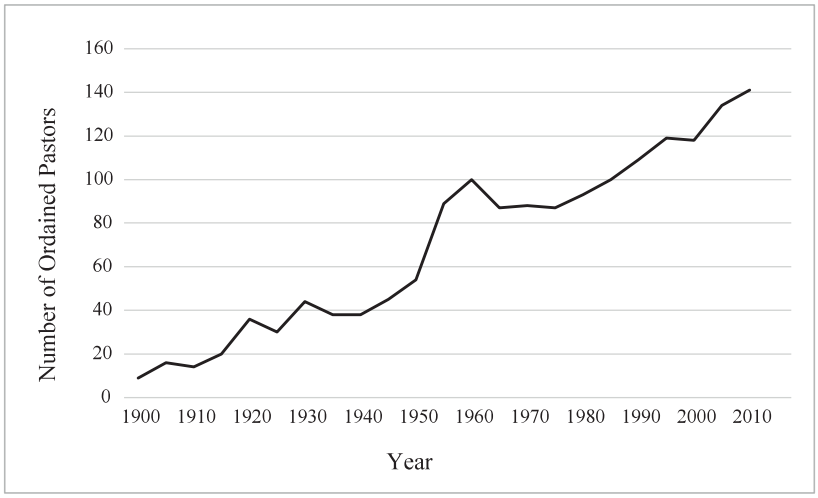
Torrey was referring to the sharp world-wide economic downturn of 1957 and 1958 that has subsequently become known as the Eisenhower recession. This recession proved to be short-lived, and of less impact than other recessions have been (President, 1958, 1959, 1960; 1957-1958 Recession; Gable, 1959). In 1962, Torrey was able to report an increase in tithe receipts not dissimilar to the increase that he had reported for the previous quadrennium (Torrey, 1962). Yet the perception of a sharp economic downturn would not encourage the expansion of the pastoral workforce during this period. Such a consideration, however, provides only a partial explanation of the reduction in the pastoral work-force between 1960 and 1965. One notes that between 1960 and 1965, while there was a decrease in the number of ordained pastors, the number of teachers grew. Perhaps a strategic decision to invest more resources into Adventist schools also contributed to the changes observed in the 1960s in the number of ordained pastors.

The United Kingdom

The pattern in the number of ordained pastors in the British Union of Seventh-day Adventists varies markedly to that of Australia, New Zealand and the United States in the period following the 1980s. Table 3.3 contains the same group of statistics as found in Table 3.1, although in this instance, they are for data for the British Union Conference.

While the growth curve is not constant, the number of ordained pastors in the British Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists shows an upward trend over time. This may be observed in Figure 3.9.

Figure 3.9 Ordained Seventh-day Adventist pastors in the British Union Conference



Like North America, the year 1960 saw a significant pause in the growth of ordained pastors in the British Union. Yet since then there has been a general increase in the number of ordained pastors. This, despite a very similar reduction in the percentage of members income that is being contributed as tithe that has been observed in Australia and the United States (see McIver, 2016). But in the British Union this appears to have been compensated for by an increase in membership that has grown on the back of successive waves of migrants with significant numbers who had been Seventh-day Adventists before arriving in England, and who have remained in the church since arrival. These groups have come from the West Indies, from Eastern Europe and from Africa. Their numbers have swelled Seventh-day Adventist Churches in England, and the tithe generated from the increased numbers has underwritten the expansion of the number of ordained pastors across the British Union. The end result is that the numbers of ordained pastors has continued to increase since the 1980s.

Table 3.3 Selected statistics for Seventh-day Adventists in the United Kingdom

Year	Ordained pastors (BUC)	Teachers	Churches	Members	School enrolment	Total employees	Employees who are ordained pastors	Tithe (US$)
1900	9	0	17	645	0	20	45%	$9,906
1905	16	1	35	1267	30	198	8%	$19,720
1910	14	0	69	1939	0	231	6%	$26,463
1915	20	0	75	2798	0	217	9%	$38,674
1920	36	4	71	3487	74	240	15%	$117,069
1925	30	10	75	4208	156	137	22%	$111,275
1930	44	9	68	4656	159	180	24%	$120,080
1935	38	6	82	5358	130	173	22%	$130,157
1940	38	7	90	5915	105	180	21%	$160,116
1945	45	0	99	6372	0	196	23%	$362,399
1950	54	18	102	6666	419	262	21%	$237,550
1955	89	17	109	7813	328	353	25%	$332,178
1960	100	23	111	8277	256	367	27%	$651,838
1965	87	37	98	10502	511	562	15%	$838,012
1970	88	23	136	12145	406	515	17%	$1,017,164
1975	87	45	149	12719	729	489	18%	$2,127,075
1980	93		163	14569	797	323	29%	$4,681,730
1985	100	58	186	18085	462	352	28%	$4,751,160
1990	109	64	199	17739	712	361	30%	$10,137,600
1995	119		209	18735	266	452	26%	$9,963,076
2000	118	52	213	20637	696	455	26%	$13,383,567
2005	134	100	238	25514	943	524	26%	$24,395,608
2010	141	101	255	31656	943	450	31%	$27,608,691

Conclusions

An analysis of the official statistics of the Seventh-day Adventist Church reveals that in Australia, New Zealand, North America, and the United Kingdom that numbers of ordained pastors grew in the manner of a natural growth curve until the late 1950s and 1960s. For a decade thereafter, the number of ordained pastors did not grow in any of these countries. In Australia, New Zealand and North America the period 1980 through 2000 also saw near-zero growth in the number of ordained pastors.

This chapter has explored reasons for this change in the growth of the number of ordained pastors. For the 1980s much of this phenomenon is likely to be attributed to a reluctance to grow the number of ordained pastors at a time of budgetary constraints that coincided with a very unsettled time in the church. A satisfactory explanation for the dramatic change during the 1960s in the growth of the number of ordained pastors in the Seventh-day Adventist Church has had to be left as an intriguing task for others to take up. Such an explanation is likely to include the impact of the economic downturn in 1957 to 1958. It is also likely that the change may be related to strategic decisions in Australia and North America to expand Adventist schools. The age and education demographics of Seventh-day Adventist Churches found near Adventist schools reveals that this has proved to be a very wise investment in the future of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

References

[Note: the 1915, 1920, 1925, 1930, 1935, 1940, 1945, 1950, 1955, 1960, 1965, 1970, 1975, 1980, 1985, 1990, 1995, 2000, 2005, 2010 Annual Statistical Reports of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists were consulted in developing the statistical tables provided in the chapter.]

1901 "General Conference Bulletin: Thirty-fourth Session, April 9, 1901, Extra No 6."

1905 "Statistical Report of Seventh-day Adventist Conferences and Missions for the Year Ending December 31, 1905."

1910 "Statistical Report of Seventh-day Adventist Conferences, Missions, and Institutions for the Year Ending December 31, 1910." Compiled by H. E. Rogers, Statistical Secretary. Issued by the General Conference of Seventh-Day Adventists Takoma Park Station, Washington, D. C.

[1957-1958] "The 1957-1958 Recession: Recent or Current?" *Monthly Review* 40/8 (August 1958).

2016 "Annual Statistical Report: 152nd Report of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists® for 2014 and 2015 (Revisions made 29-Sept-2016. See last page for list of changes.)" General Conference Office of Archives, Statistics and Research, Silver Spring, Maryland 20904-6600.

"2017 Annual Statistical Report: 153rd Report of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists® for 2015 and 2016 (Revision made on August 29, 2017. See last page for explanation.)" General Conference Office of Archives, Statistics and Research, Silver Spring, Maryland 20904-6600.

Ballis, Peter H., 1999. *Leaving the Adventist Ministry: A Study of the Process of Exiting.* Westport, Conn.: Praeger.

Dwyer, Bonnie, June 1983. "Disciplining the Davenport Offenders." *Spectrum* 13/4: 32-42.

Ellen G. White Estate, 1982. "The Truth about The White Lie: Prepared by the Staff of the Ellen G. White Estate in Cooperation with the Biblical Research Institute and the Ministerial Association of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists." Washington, D.C. [South Pacific Division] Adventist Heritage Centre: AHC Box 1619/#3.

Fenn, Richard K., 2009. *Key Thinkers in the Sociology of Religion.* London/New York: Continuum.

Ford, Desmond. *Daniel 8:14, The Day of Atonement, and the Investigative Judgment.* Casselberry, FL: Euangelion.

Gable, Richard W. 1959. "The Politics and Economics of the 1957–1958 Recession," *Western Political Quarterly* 12: 557–59.

Hattingh, Sherene (Sherry), 2017. "An Analysis of the Responses to Open-ended Questions in the Australian Survey," in Robert K. McIver and Peter W. Kilgour, eds., *Perceptions of Mission Held by Teachers in Seventh-day Adventist Schools in Australia and the Solomon Islands.* Cooranbong, NSW: Avondale Academic Press, 81-97.

Hjelm, Titus and Phil Zuckerman, 2013. *Studying Religion and Society: Sociological Self-Portraits*. London/New York: Routledge.

Kilgour, Peter and Anthony Williams, 2017. "Government Funding of Australian Independent Schools," in Robert K. McIver and Peter W. Kilgour, eds., *Perceptions of Mission Held by Teachers in Seventh-day Adventist Schools in Australia and the Solomon Islands.* Cooranbong, NSW: Avondale Academic Press, 55-70.

Knight, George, 1995. *The Fat Lady and the Kingdom.* Boise, ID: Pacific Press.

McIver Robert K., and Stephen Currow, 2002. "A Demographic Analysis of the Tithing Behaviour of 2562 Seventh-day Adventists in Northern New South Wales, Australia." *Australian Religion Studies Review* 15: 115-25.

McIver Robert K., and Stephen Currow, August 2001. "A Provocative Study of Tithing Trends in Australia." *Ministry* 74/8: 24-29.

McIver, Robert K., 2016. *Tithing Practices Among Seventh-day Adventists*. Cooranbong: Avondale Academic Press; Silver Spring, MD: General Conference Office of Archives, Statistics and Research.

Ministry, October 1980. Special Sanctuary Issue.

Moberg, David O., 1984. *The Church as Social Institution: The Sociology of American Religion.* 2nd ed; Grand Rapids, MI: Baker.

[President] Economic Report of the President Transmitted to the Congress, January 1958.

[President] Economic Report of the President Transmitted to the Congress, January 1959.

[President] Economic Report of the President Transmitted to the Congress, January 1960.

[President] Economic Report of the President Transmitted to the Congress, January 1961.

Rea, Walter T. 1982. *The White Lie.* Turlock, Calif.: M & R Publications.

Schwarz, Richard W. and Floyd Greenleaf, 2000. *Light Bearers: A History of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.* Nampa, ID: Pacific Press.

Torrey, C. L. "The Treasurer's Report." *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald: General Conference Report – No. 2*. Vol 135 No 27 (June 22, 1958): 30-31.

Torrey, C. L. "The Treasurer's Report." *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald: General Conference Report – No. 2*. Vol 139 No 31 (July 29, 1962): 24-26.

Van Rooyen, Jan Smuts, 1996. "Discontinuance from the ministry by Seventh-day Adventist ministers: A qualitative study." Andrews University, ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 1996.

Veltman, Fred, 1988. "Full report of the Life of Christ Research Project." Washington, D.C.: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Weber, Max, 1947. *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization.* New York, NY: Free Press.