

October 1999

57th General Conference Session 2000

PLACE: SkyDome and Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Toronto, Canada

DATES: **June 25 - June 29 (Sunday - Thursday)**
World Ministers Council
June 29 - July 08 (Thursday - Sabbath)
General Conference Session

THEME: *Almost Home*

Encounter With Toronto: International Church Will Meet Toronto's International Community

Among the most exciting features of the General Conference Session in Toronto is the fact that the worldwide family of the Seventh-day Adventist Church will be coming to one of the foremost cosmopolitan, international cities of the world. The encounter between the visitors speaking in their native languages with citizens of Toronto, able to speak the same languages, offers exciting opportunities to share one's faith and Adventist Christian experience.

The international character of Toronto is also reflected in the make-up of the Toronto Adventist community. There are some 12,000 baptized church members in 37 congregations in Greater Toronto. In the city, we have several ethnic congregations. Among them are the following: Filipino, Ghanian, Brazilian, Spanish, Chinese, Estonian, Hungarian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Ukrainian, and Yugoslavian. Apart from these, there are many church members in Toronto's congregations who come from many Caribbean islands.

Toronto has a truly international Adventist community. These congregations are looking forward to welcoming brothers and sisters who speak their languages and dialects and can share the culture of their homeland. [See sidebar on page two for a list of international communities in Toronto with their approximate populations. The various

cultural groups have their own organizations, religious centers, and media.]

By coming to Toronto from so many countries of the world, we can also make a difference through sharing our experiences and our culture with members of the larger ethnic communities, many of whom are to be won for Christ. This offers our visiting delegates and other participants in the world Church convocation an opportunity to prepare for meeting their ethnic brothers and sisters, with whom we can share our faith in Jesus and the hope of His soon return.

Several ideas come to mind. How about preparing **literature**, which can be distributed? How about considering that our **musical groups** be available for public performances, not only in our churches, but in different venues throughout the city? How about considering an ethnic **food fair**, organized by one of the congregations in cooperation with the visitors to the GC Session? There are many more possibilities, including a variety of **evangelistic or faith-sharing events** in the churches throughout Toronto.

The challenge of the international encounter with Toronto clearly belongs to both those who are already there and those who are coming as visitors. The local conference office can offer specific information on "who is who" in Toronto in our Church, as well as respond to other inquiries regarding preparations of the local churches during the GC Session. For more information, please contact Dirk Zinner, Ontario Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, at: 1110 King Street East, Oshawa, Ontario L1H 1H8, Canada; phone: 905-571-1022; or e-mail: dzinner@ont-sda.org.
[Ray Dabrowski]

Session 2000 on the Web!

Have you visited the official website for GC Session 2000? The website contains information you can't afford to miss. Visit us today at: www.adventist.org/gc2000/

Ethnic Communities in Toronto

- The (Native) Aboriginal Community (40,000)
- The Afghans (16,000)
- The African Communities, including people from Ethiopia and Eritrea, Kenya, Ghana, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Zambia, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Congo, Cape Verde, Angola, Mozambique, Sierre Leone, Somalia, Algeria, Morocco, Egypt, Tunisia, the Spanish Sahara, Gambia, Liberia, Zaire, Rwanda, Burundi
- The Ahmadi Muslims (20,000)
- The Albanians (15,000)
- The Arabs (Arab-speaking population represents 21 countries)
- The Armenians (20,000)
- The Australians and New Zealanders (30,000 after World War II)
- The Austrians (10,000)
- The Belarusans (3,000)
- The Belgians (1,000+)
- The Bengalees (5,000)
- The Black Canadians (25,000)
- The Brazilians (3,000)
- The Bulgarians (6,000)
- The Cambodians (6,000)
- The Caribbean Communities, including Antigua, Barbados, Dominica and Haiti, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, St Lucia, St Vincent, St Kitts, Trinidad and Tobago (300,000)
- The Chinese (350,000)
- The Croatians (25,000 in 1981)
- The Czechs (15,000)
- The Danes (20,000)
- The Danube Swabians (32,000)
- The Dutch (50,000)
- The East Indian Communities (200,000)
- The English
- The Eritreans (10,000)
- The Estonians (12,000)
- The Filipinos (30,000)
- The Finns (10,000)
- The French (300,000)
- The Germans (300,000)
- The Greeks (130,000)
- The Hispanics (180,000)
- The Hungarians (50,000)
- The Icelanders (2,500)
- The Indonesians (3,000)
- The Iranians (60,000)
- The Irish (520,000)
- The Ismaili Muslims (20,000)
- The Italians (500,000)
- The Japanese (18,000)
- The Jews (160,000)
- The Koreans (45,000)
- The Lao (5,000)
- The Latvians (9,000)
- The Lithuanians (10,000)
- The Macedonians (50,000 after World War II)
- The Malaysians
- The Maltese (6,000)
- The Norwegians (2,000)
- The Pakistanis (50,000)
- The Poles (80,000+)
- The Portuguese (100,000)
- The Romanians (20,000)
- The Russians (6,000)
- The Scots (500,000+)
- The Serbs (75,000)
- The Sikhs (40,000)
- The Slovaks
- The Slovenians (20,000)
- The Somalis (70,000)
- The Swedes (5,000)
- The Swiss (3,500)
- The Tamils (80,000)
- The Thais (approximately 300 families)
- The Turks (10,000+)
- The Ukranians (100,000 in 1991)
- The Vietnamese (18,000+)
- The Welsh

Taken from *Toronto's Many Faces: A Guide to the media, museums, restaurants, festivals, monuments, prominent citizens & shops of more than 60 cultural communities in the city*, Tony Ruprecht, Quarry Press.

The *Adventist Review* at the GC Session

During each General Conference Session, the *Adventist Review* becomes a daily publication. We move our entire editorial staff on-site, and the Review and Herald Publishing Association sends in a production team with designers, photographers, copy editors and proofreaders. Working side by side, we publish a 32-page color issue every 24 hours. It's an exhilarating, exciting and exhausting time. (The editor ages 10 years during the 10 days of the Session!)

These special issues of the *Review*, called the GC Bulletins, began in 1887. For many years they have been 10 in number, and again there will be 10 at the Toronto Session.

The Bulletins constitute the official record of the Session. They contain all the actions voted by the Session, as well as reports from each of the 12 divisions of the world church and from each General Conference department, service or institution. One of the most interesting parts is the Proceedings, a record of the speeches made on the floor of the business sessions with each speaker identified. In addition, the Bulletins give a condensed version of all the devotionals and sermons presented at the Session.

A GC Session is a uniquely Adventist event, crammed with people, energy, and enthusiasm. Our photographers will capture the color of the Session—its amazing potpourri of humanity—while staff writers add news, analysis, and features.

Bulletin #1 will be prepared ahead of the Session and given to delegates on the first morning of the Session, June 30. The next six Bulletins will be produced on-site and handed out each morning beginning Sunday, July 2. The last three Bulletins will be prepared after the Session closes and mailed to delegates.

All delegates receive the 10 Bulletins free. Visitors and others can purchase the Bulletins individually or as a set from the *Adventist Review* booth located at the Session. When the Bulletins arrive each day (printed overnight and rushed by airplane to Toronto), people scramble to get their copy.

In Toronto, the *Adventist Review* will extend its ministry. Along with producing the Bulletins, we will operate a website to give members access to materials that do not find a place in the Bulletins. [William G. Johnsson]

Session Exhibits

Exhibits are a prominent feature of each General Conference Session. In order to make the exhibits effective, the space and infrastructure are crucial. For Toronto 2000, Session management is excited about the exhibit facilities. Within the exhibit area, you could fit three-and-a-half football fields. The exhibit space will consist of a Promotion Hall with 282 booths, a Commercial Hall with 243 booths and an adjoining room of 10,000 square feet for the Adventist Book Center.

The exhibits will be housed in a section of the Metro Toronto Convention Centre that opened in July 1998. The Convention Centre is located next to SkyDome where the Session will take place. This part of the Convention Centre is all underground with streets and a park at ground level. The exhibit floor is the equivalent of eight stories below ground level, yet so spacious that you have no feeling of being on the lower level. There is a loading dock for 14 large trucks at the exhibit hall level with a spiral drive down from the street. To say the least, Toronto has a convention center that will more than meet our needs.

The first exhibit that will catch your eye as you enter the Promotion Hall is the Theme Exhibit. This is a gift of art from our Canadian Adventists that will be unveiled on opening day. The Promotion Hall will be filled with exhibits promoting the many ministries of our world church. Examples of booths in this area will be:

- Divisions, Colleges, Church Departments and Self-Supporting Ministries.
- A live stage with Global Mission serving as the host. They are planning a full program that includes many different ministries showing and telling how the Lord is opening doors for the gospel message to go around the world. They will also schedule musical concerts each day.
- A working television station will be broadcasting from the convention floor to the world via satellite. Visitors will be allowed to view the station as well as other media exhibits.
- A radio recording booth where visitors get the opportunity to try their "radio voice."

The exhibits will be open Sunday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. The Promotional Hall will be

open Sabbath afternoons from 2:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m., so weekend visitors will be able to enjoy the exhibits.

The Commercial Hall was established for those who are selling a product. However, we are now booking overflow promotion exhibits in this hall. You must visit the commercial exhibits just for the fun of seeing what they have to sell and how you can help your organization.

Examples of the exhibits in this area are:

- Recording artists selling tapes and CDs
- Toronto souvenirs and Session T-shirts
- Crafts from many countries of the world
- Sabbath School and evangelism supplies
- Vendors from the General Conference National Account Program (find out how to save your church or school money on everything from carpet to computers)
- Computer software
- Adventist Book Center
- Food and Beverage Concession

Make plans now to attend the GC Session in Toronto and plan to spend several hours in the exhibit halls. This will be a Session that you will not want to miss.

[Dean Rogers]

World Ministerial Council—Pre-Session: Special Programs for Spouses of Clergy

The office of Shepherdess International is planning a variety of exciting things to do in Toronto for spouses of the visiting clergy.

Sharon Cress, who is coordinating the program, says “There is more to this famous international city than eating at the fabulous ethnic restaurants, more to do than browsing the magnificent museums, more to do than experiencing the interactive Science Center, more to do than seeing the view from the top of the needle, and more to do than shopping on Yonge and Bay Streets! More than shopping? Absolutely! The Ministerial Council Pre-Session has planned four days of once-in-a-lifetime, exciting activities.”

Here is a sampler of what is planned:

- Begin the mornings during the Ministerial Council with interactive family devotionals. This is a special time for family togetherness where we will praise God as a family unit. Exciting segments of this program have been planned for every age group. “This could very well become a landmark event for revitalizing your own family’s devotional time,”

says Sharon.

- If socializing and fellowshiping with other clergy spouses from around the world is something to consider, then the Shepherdess Plenary Sessions may be just what you are looking for. These have been designed especially for clergy spouses. These will offer a potpourri of encouragement, reality, and sharing the highlight of your day.
- If you are wondering what to do with the children while you savor some peace and quiet in the Plenaries and Seminars (over 150 to choose from), consider it to be no problem in Toronto. Sharon says: “Drop them off at the Ministry to Pastoral Children’s Programming, where activities are being planned that are especially designed for children up to nine years old with group activities. For the older boys and girls, there will be special seminars! There will be no charge if you are prompt in your drop-off and retrieval.”
- If you would like a moment’s respite, the Shepherdess Living Room may offer you just that. There you will be able to prop your feet up on the comfortable couches and quietly read a magazine or catch up on all the news with a friend you rarely see!

Here is a final comment from Sharon: “The shopping, browsing, sightseeing? They will all be there long after the Ministerial Council is over. Come and be ready to store your memories of these few days together with your friends in Toronto. And the memories will remain long after you get back home.” [Shepherdess International]

How Are You Receiving Session 2000 News?

Session 2000 News is a monthly publication available to you in the following formats: 1) fax copy; 2) e-mail text copy; 3) e-mail PDF copy; 4) mail; 5) viewing through the official website:
www.adventist.org/gc2000/

Let us know how you would prefer to receive the newsletter. Contact:

General Conference Communication Department
12501 Old Columbia Pike
Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600 USA
Phone: 301-680-6308; Fax: 301-680-6312
E-mail: session2000news@gc.adventist.org