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Update

Volume 20, Number 1 (March 2005)

Review and Critique of Statements on Abuse and Family Violence

Karen Christoffel Flowers, MA
Co-director, General Conference Department of Family Ministries

Historical Background: From the early 1990s, Adventist family professionals, pastors, educators, and researchers expressed high levels of concern regarding the realities of child sexual abuse and family violence among Adventist members worldwide. In February 1995, a taskforce of thirty plus members was convened by the General Conference Department of Family Ministries (GCFM) to chart a course for an appropriate church response to these problems—both within the church and in the communities it serves. At the behest of GCFM and the Office of Women’s Ministries, then world-church president Robert Folkenberg included abuse and family violence as one of six major issues to be discussed at the 56th Session of the General Conference. It was at this world convocation, convened in Utrecht, Netherlands, in July 1995, that *A Statement on Abuse and Family Violence* was released to the press by church administration.

On the afternoon designated, more than one-quarter of the world session delegation—seven-hundred plus persons—chose to attend the breakout session addressing these issues, pressing their call for action regarding child sexual abuse and family violence upon church leadership for more than three hours. In response to this mandate, the established Abuse and Family Violence Taskforce was reconvened to produce drafts of the *Statement on Family Violence* and the *Statement on Child Sexual Abuse* which were voted by the 1996 Annual Council and the 1997 Spring Meeting, respectively. Worldwide circulation of the statements was begun officially through distribution of the Executive Committee minutes, communication releases, and departmental networking and websites.

Nearly a decade has passed. I offer the reflections below as affirmation of the courage of the Church to acknowledge and address these difficult issues. I also offer my thoughts now, as one who has been closely connected to the church’s journey on this issue over nearly twenty-five years, looking for the next steps that will strengthen our resolve and increase our effectiveness in the protection of the innocent, the healing of all who have known this devastation firsthand, and toward the ultimate goal of the elimination of this scourge in generations to come.

A STATEMENT ON ABUSE AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

I believe this continues to be a strong statement for public release. It leaves no doubt in the mind of the reader that the
Please turn to page 2

“Review and Critique of

Statements on Abuse and Family Violence” continued...

Seventh-day Adventist Church views all forms of abuse and violence as incompatible with Christian principles. It affirms the high value Scripture places on every human being and pledges the church’s ministry resources to assist those experiencing such desecration. The statement suggests that an appropriate church response must engage the full network of professional services available in both the church and community to ensure the best possible outcome. It acknowledges that there are conditions that must be met before the full circle of forgiveness may be possible and before reconciliation can safely be considered by the family.

I believe this statement can continue to serve the Church well for a time, but when it is revised, I would like to see it further expand on the value of persons without regard to age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, and gender. I believe this would strengthen the statement because in some circles the attitude lingers that certain victims of abuse and violence are only getting what they deserve. The document would also be strengthened by a change in the last paragraph to the effect that more is needed on the part of the perpetrator than “changed behavior” before it is safe for a family to consider reconciliation. The abusive behavior needs to have *stopped*, and the likelihood that it will not continue to occur needs to be the considered opinion of a professional with expertise in the treatment of perpetrators.

STATEMENT ON CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

As the first statement on child sexual abuse to be released by the Seventh-day Adventist Church, this statement was drafted to serve multiple functions. In many places, it was the first word from the Church to break the silence on a taboo subject. It has served as a basic educational piece for members as to the nature of the problem and the Church’s position. It has guided pastors and Church leaders in the direction of an appropriate Church response. The statement has also been a means of indicating the Church’s strong support of the God-given right of children for a safe, nurturing environment in which to grow. It con-

demns the betrayal of love and trust that child sexual abuse represents. Significantly, the Church acknowledges the presence of the problem within its own ranks and the heavy responsibility resting on parents and Church leaders to protect children.

I believe this statement should be updated soon. Many avenues of education regarding this issue have been opened in the world Church since its inception. The departments of the Church have used their global networks to educate leadership and members alike about the problem—its prevention and how to respond. A curriculum framework on human sexuality, *Human Sexuality: Sharing the Wonder of God’s Good Gift with Your Children*¹—including sections on child sexual abuse—has been developed and disseminated globally in major world languages. The 1997 Family Ministries planbook, *Peace and Healing: Making Homes Abuse Free*², the first hands-on resource for Adventist pastors, educators, and Church leaders to help them respond appropriately and well to individuals and families experiencing these traumas—provided a plethora of resources for breaking silence in the local church. A Sabbath has been set aside in the world Church calendar to focus on sexual abuse and family violence prevention, with annual resources distributed through departmental networks worldwide.

A *Quick Reference Guide*³ for pastors and other likely first responders to sexual abuse and domestic violence is available in English, French, and Spanish and has been placed in every division and union office worldwide. In many places, church leaders at all levels have offered in-service training to their pastors and church leaders. Child-protection guidelines and policies are in place in several world divisions in an effort to make sure that everything that can be done is being done to make church a safe place for children. There is much more educational work to be done, but the Seventh-day Adventist Church has made a start. An updated statement on child sexual abuse could now reflect an educational starting point further down the road from where we began in 1997.

I would like to see the statement strengthened regarding the Church’s responsibility to make the Church, and all activities associated with it, a safe place for children.

Please turn to page 3

“...I would like to see [the statement] further expand on the value of persons without regard to age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, and gender.”

“Review and Critique of

Statements on Abuse and Family Violence” continued...

Nowhere in the world can we afford to be casual about the process by which we put in place the volunteers who work with children. The Church must commit itself to strong policies regarding the supervision of activities involving minors. Jesus’ words and actions in behalf of children demand no less.

An updated statement should make a clear distinction between the services appropriate for a church to undertake in the care and support of sexual abuse victims and those which require professional services, to every extent they are available. If the Church attempts to be all things to its members, it may inadvertently deny victims of child sexual abuse access to professional caregivers with the expertise to really help them. The legal and moral responsibility of pastors and church leaders to be aware of the laws of their community and to make appropriate reports to authorities needs to be further emphasized.

An updated statement should call the Church to its responsibility to the perpetrators of child sexual abuse beyond their fair treatment. Pastors need help to understand how they can best fulfill their role in the network of professionals required to safely and effectively call a perpetrator to accountability and create the best likelihood that the abuser will make the necessary attitudinal and behavioral changes to stop the abuse.

It is also time for a strong, independent statement regarding clergy and church-leader sexual misconduct. Such a statement must call for specific policies and guidelines for (1) making a report of suspected/reported sexual abuse of a minor to appropriate church and legal authorities, and (2) protecting other vulnerable children from abuse at the hands of leaders who have demonstrated by their behavior that it is too risky for them to serve in positions that imply to a child that they are trustworthy adults. This statement should also address the issue of sexual misconduct in relationships with adult parishioners, including procedures for reporting and guidelines for appropriate action. It is our moral responsibility to do so.

STATEMENT ON FAMILY VIOLENCE

This statement effectively contrasts the behaviors that

characterize family violence and those that distinguish Christian relationships in the family and Church. It affirms the Church’s abhorrence of all forms of domestic violence and correctly associates such violence with “tyrannical control and the abuse of power or authority.” It calls for church leaders to break the silence and take action in support of victims in the church and in the community. It also affirms the importance of family life education in the church as a contributing factor for breaking the generational cycle of family violence and overall prevention.

To the extent that this statement—alongside the other supportive resources mentioned above—has broken the silence on this issue, affirmed the dignity and worth of all human beings, informed church leaders and members of the nature of the problem and its incompatibility with Christianity, and set a direction for an appropriate Church

response, it has served the church well. However, an update should be considered in the near future.

There is one potentially serious misunderstanding that could arise from the statement that I believe needs to be clarified. The statement as it now reads is not crystal clear on the fact that it is never appropriate to refer couples for marriage counseling when one partner is abusive or violent. While perpetrators and victims alike do need to be in the care of pro-

professionals wherever available, only individual counseling provides a safe environment for victims to talk freely, without increased risk of reprisal. Marriage counseling may be appropriate at some later stage when the abuse has stopped and a couple has decided to consider reconciliation.

I believe an updated statement should also clarify the fact that the repentance called for is solely on the part of the perpetrator. Of course victims are not perfect marriage partners or family members, but no imperfection on the part of a victim justifies violence against them. Victims do not bring abuse on themselves by their imperfections. Abuse is the choice of one person to control another through an abuse of power in the relationship. It should also be clarified that the decision whether or not reconciliation is safe, or even possible given the trauma experienced, must rest with the victim(s).

Please turn to page 4

“The Church must commit itself to strong policies regarding the supervision of activities involving minors. Jesus’ words and actions in behalf of children demand no less.”

*“Review and Critique of
Statements on Abuse and Family Violence” continued...*

A revised statement might also be a means of making church leaders and members aware of action taken at the 57th Session of the General Conference in Toronto to add abuse and violence to the reasons for which Church discipline is to be administered, as reflected in Chapter 14 of the *Church Manual*. It would also be helpful to emphasize the importance and how-to's of addressing the spiritual questions that often give rise to spiritual crisis in the life of a victim—questions like, “Where was God when my husband was beating me?” “What have I done to deserve this?” “Is God trying to teach me a lesson?” “It must be my fault. Can God forgive me?” These questions must be resolved for healing to take place. This is one role that the Church should be in the best position to fill within the network of professionals and resources needed to effectively confront domestic violence. ■

1 Flowers, K., and Flowers, R. . *Human sexuality: Sharing the wonder of God's good gift with your children*. (Silver Spring, MD: General Conference Department of Family Ministries, [2004]).

2 Flowers, K., & Flowers, R. *Peace and healing: Making homes abuse free*. (Silver Spring, MD: General Conference Department of Family Ministries, [1997]).

3 Flowers, K. (Ed.). *Peace and healing: A quick reference guide for making homes abuse-free*. (Lincoln, NB: AdventSource).



Karen Christoffel Flowers, MA, has been a family ministries specialist at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists since 1980, first in the capacity of assistant director of the Home and Family Service, as associate director in the Department of Church Ministries (1985-1995) and, since 1995, as co-director of the Department of Family Ministries.

Seventh-day Adventist Statements on Women's Issues

This statement was approved and voted by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Administrative Committee (ADCOM) and was released by the office of the president, Robert S. Folkenberg, at the General Conference session in Utrecht, the Netherlands, June 29–July 8, 1995.

Seventh-day Adventists believe that all people, male and female, are created equal, in the image of a loving God. We believe that both men and women are called to fill a significant role in accomplishing the primary mission of the Adventist Church: working together for the benefit of humanity. Yet we are painfully aware that throughout the world, in developing and developed nations, adverse social conditions often inhibit women from fulfilling their God-given potential.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church has identified several major problems, well-documented by research, that often keep women

from making valuable contributions to society. Stress, the environment, and increased demands have placed women at greater risk for health problems. Poverty and heavy workloads not only deprive women of their ability to enjoy life, but also impair their physical and spiritual well-being. Family violence takes a heavy toll on its victims.

Women are entitled to the God-given privileges and opportunities intended for every human being—the right to literacy, to education, to adequate health care, to decision making, and to freedom from mental, physical, or sexual abuse. We also maintain that women should play an increased role in the leadership and decision-making bodies of both church and society.

Ultimately, we believe that the Church will fulfill its mission only when women are empowered to achieve their full potential. ■

Update

Volume 20, Number 1 (March, 2005)

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Response to “A Statement on Women’s Issues”

Ardis Stenbakken

*recently retired director of the Women’s Ministries Department,
General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists*

The very fact that the Church has written and approved “A Statement on Women’s Issues,” but has never even considered such a document regarding men, is evidence in itself that the Church recognizes that women face some special issues. These issues are as evident in the Adventist Church as outside the Church; this is also an indication that for the last 150 years the Church has done little to address these issues. Thank God this is beginning to change. This document is a helpful step toward this change.

Some of the positive aspects of this document include the recognition that man and woman were created equal and are called to fill a significant place in the Church. It also affirms that women are entitled to privileges and opportunities intended for every human being the same privileges and opportunities as men.

Oh, that saying these things would make them so.

It should be noted that this statement was voted by the Administrative Committee. This gives this statement credence but not the full authority and significance of other statements that are voted by the Executive Committee or voted at a General Conference Session. I do not know the history. If it was felt this was enough endorsement or if it was feared that it might not pass if voted by the larger bodies.

According to the statement, we believe that both men and women are called to fill a significant role in accomplishing the primary mission of the Adventist Church: working together for the benefit of humanity. This sounds wonderful, but there are some important questions that must be answered for the statement to be meaningful. What is a significant role? Will women fill a significant role by sheer numbers—women do make up about seventy percent of the Church. Or does it include being the chair person or maybe even an elder? Even those functions for women are not accepted by Church leadership in many places in the world. Will this significant role for women be in proportion to their numbers, or even near it? The figures now for women on the Executive Committee and as delegates to a General Conference Session are less than twenty percent. If it

is to be a significant role in more than membership numbers, the corporate Church has done little to intentionally make it happen. Or are women to work primarily “for the benefit of humanity,” which is usually interpreted as Dorcas work—the proper place for women?

The statement posits that adverse social conditions inhibit women from fulfilling their full potential. It is time for the Church to demonstrate a higher standard than met in the world. What is a woman’s full potential? If the Church cannot fulfill its mission unless women reach their full potential, we had better know what that potential is. Do women have the potential to be elders, or board chairs? They have demonstrated that they have. Could they be conference presidents, or be ordained? If not, why not? The Church has said that women are equal but until the ordination issue is settled, there will be a stained glass ceiling keeping women from their full potential in leadership in the Church. Perhaps it is an iron ceiling, one that not only keeps women down, but they cannot even see through it to their full potential.

The Church has identified several major problems that often keep women from making valuable contributions, but makes no suggestions about what they could or should do about these issues, or how to minister to suffering women, or that this should even be done. Recognizing these issues has helped Women’s Ministries world-wide to identify ministry opportunities. What has not followed are the funds or actions to meet these needs.

The challenges listed in paragraph two and three list literacy, education, health care, decision making, and freedom from abuse. These are serious issues. Historically, the Church has been involved in education and health care, serving men as well as women. But even in those fields women have just recently been allowed into the highest leadership ranks. However, Church scholarships for women to prepare for such positions are sometimes not as available to women as to men. And only in the last couple of years has the Church done much to address abuse or literacy, and

“The very fact that the Church has written and approved “A Statement on Women’s Issues”...is evidence...that the Church recognizes that women face some special issues.”

Please turn to page 6

Response to “A Statement on Women’s Issues” continued...
most of that has been limited to Women’s Ministries programs.

Unfortunately, leadership is not listed as one of the challenges. The greatest weakness of the statement relates to the issue of women in leadership. That issue is ignored.

Joel 2:28, 29 says, “And afterward I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams....Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days” (NIV). If the Church truly believes we are in the last days, it should not be surprised that women want to be full participants. And opportunities/permission must be granted that will allow women these opportunities to meet their full

prophetic potential.

The Church’s “Statement on Women’s Issues” is a good statement, but not a great statement. The Statement should suggest actions to be taken and give an indication that the Church intends to live up to its lofty words. ■



Ardis Stenbakken, MA, is the recently retired director of the Women’s Ministries Department at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Prior to that, she taught English and has her master’s degree from the University of Hawaii. Ms. Stenbakken is very active in her home church, having served as head elder for two years.

Seventh-day Adventist Statements on Abuse A Statement on Abuse and Family Violence

This statement was approved and voted by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Administrative Committee and was released by the Office of the President, Robert S. Folkenberg, at the General Conference session in Utrecht, the Netherlands June 29– July 8, 1995

Seventh-day Adventists affirm the dignity and worth of each human being and decry all forms of physical, sexual and emotional abuse and family violence. We recognize the global extent of this problem and the serious, long-term effects upon the lives of all involved. We believe that Christians must respond to abuse and family violence both within the church and in the community. We take seriously reports of abuse and violence and have highlighted these issues for discussion at this international assembly. We believe that to remain indifferent and unresponsive is to condone, perpetuate, and potentially extend such behavior.

We accept our responsibility to cooperate with other professional services, to listen and care for those suffering from abuse and family violence, to highlight the injustices, and to speak out in defense of victims. We will help persons in need to identify and access the range of available professional services.

When changed attitudes and behavior open possibilities for forgiveness and new beginnings, we will provide a ministry of reconciliation. We will assist families in grief over relationships that cannot be restored. We will address the spiritual questions confronting abused persons, seeking to understand the origins of abuse and family violence and developing better ways of preventing the recurring cycle. ■

Seventh-day Adventist Statements on Abuse A Statement on Family Violence

This statement was voted by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Administrative Committee on August 27, 1996, and was sent for consideration by the Annual Council in San Jose, Costa Rica, October 1-10, 1996

Family violence involves an assault of any kind—verbal, physical, emotional, sexual, or active or passive neglect—that is committed by one person or persons against another within a family, whether they are married, related, living together or apart, or divorced. Current international research indicates that family violence is a global problem. It occurs between individuals of all ages and nationalities, at all socioeconomic levels, and in families from all types of religious and non-religious backgrounds. The overall rate of inci-

Please turn to page 7

“Statement on Family Violence” continued...

dence has been found to be similar for city, suburban, and rural communities. Family violence manifests itself in a number of ways. For example, it may be a physical attack on one’s spouse. Emotional assaults such as verbal threats, episodes of rage, depreciation of character, and unrealistic demands for perfection are also abuse. It may take the form of physical coercion and violence within the marital sexual relationship, or the threat of violence through the use of intimidating verbal or nonverbal behavior. It includes behavior such as incest and the mistreatment or neglect of underage children by a parent or another guardian that results in injury or harm. Violence against the elderly may be seen in physical, psychological, sexual, verbal, material, and medical abuse or neglect.

The Bible clearly indicates that the distinguishing mark of Christian believers is the quality of their human relationships in the church and in the family. It is in the spirit of Christ to love and accept, to seek to affirm and build others up, rather than to abuse or tear one another down. There is no room among Christ’s followers for tyrannical control and the abuse of power or authority. Motivated by their love for Christ, His disciples are called to show respect and concern for the welfare of others, to accept males and females as equals, and to acknowledge that every person has a right to respect and dignity. Failure to relate to others in this way violates their personhood and devalues human beings created and redeemed by God.

The apostle Paul refers to the Church as “the household of faith” which functions as an extended family, offering acceptance, understanding, and comfort to all, especially to those who are hurting or disadvantaged. Scripture portrays the church as a family in which personal and spiritual growth can occur as feelings of betrayal, rejection, and grief give way to feelings of forgiveness, trust, and wholeness. The Bible also speaks of the Christian’s personal responsibility to protect his or her body temple from desecration because it is the dwelling place of God.

Regrettably, family violence occurs in many Christian homes. It can never be condoned. It severely affects the lives of all involved and often results in long term distorted perceptions of God, self, and others.

It is our belief that the Church has a responsibility—

1. To care for those involved in family violence and to

respond to their needs by:

- a. Listening to and accepting those suffering from abuse, loving and affirming them as persons of value and worth.
- b. Highlighting the injustices of abuse and speaking out in defense of victims both within the community of faith and in society.
- c. Providing a caring, supportive ministry to families affected by violence and abuse, seeking to enable both victims and perpetrators to access counseling with Seventh-day Adventist professionals where available or other professional resources in the community.

d. Encouraging the training and placement of licensed Seventh-day Adventist professional services for both church members and the surrounding communities.

e. Offering a ministry of reconciliation when the perpetrator’s repentance makes possible the contemplation of forgiveness and restoration in relationships. Repentance always includes acceptance of full responsibility for the wrongs committed, willingness to make

restitution in every way possible, and changes in behavior to eliminate the abuse.

- f. Focusing the light of the gospel on the nature of husband-wife, parent-child, and other close relationships, and empowering individuals and families to grow toward God’s ideals in their lives together.
- g. Guarding against the ostracism of either victims or perpetrators within the family or church community, while firmly holding perpetrators responsible for their actions.

2. To strengthen family life by:

- a. Providing family life education which is grace-oriented and includes a biblical understanding of the mutuality, equality, and respect indispensable to Christian relationships.
- b. Increasing understanding of the factors that contribute to family violence.
- c. Developing ways to prevent abuse and violence and the recurring cycle often observed within families and across generations.

Please turn to page 8

“It is in the spirit of Christ to love and accept, to seek to affirm and build others up, rather than to abuse or tear one another down.”

“Statement on Family Violence” continued...

- d. Rectifying commonly held religious and cultural beliefs which may be used to justify or cover up family violence. For example, while parents are instructed by God to redemptively correct their children, this responsibility does not give license for the use of harsh, punitive disciplinary measures.
3. To accept our moral responsibility to be alert and responsive to abuse within the families of our congregations and our communities, and to declare that such abusive behavior is a violation of Seventh-day Adventist Christian standards. Any indications or

reports of abuse must not be minimized but seriously considered. For church members to remain indifferent and unresponsive is to condone, perpetuate, and possibly extend family violence.

If we are to live as children of the light, we must illuminate the darkness where family violence occurs in our midst. We must care for one another, even when it would be easier to remain uninvolved. ■

(The above statement is informed by principles expressed in the following scriptural passages: Exodus 20:12; Matthew 7:12; 20:25-28; Mark 9:33-45; John 13:34; Romans 12:10, 13; 1 Corinthians 6:19; Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 5:2, 3, 21-27; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:12-14; 1 Thessalonians 5:11; 1 Timothy 5:5-8.)

Seventh-day Adventist Statements on Abuse Statements on Child Sexual Abuse

*This statement was voted during the spring meeting of the
General Conference Executive Committee on Tuesday, April 1, 1997, in Loma Linda, California*

Child sexual abuse occurs when a person older or stronger than the child uses his or her power, authority, or position of trust to involve a child in sexual behavior or activity. Incest, a specific form of child sexual abuse, is defined as any sexual activity between a child and a parent, a sibling, an extended family member, or a step/surrogate parent.

Sexual abusers may be men or women and may be of any age, nationality, or socio-economic background. They are often men who are married with children, have respectable jobs, and may be regular churchgoers. It is common for offenders to strongly deny their abusive behavior, to refuse to see their actions as a problem, and to rationalize their behavior or place blame on something or someone else. While it is true that many abusers exhibit deeply rooted insecurities and low self-esteem, these problems should never be accepted as an excuse for sexually abusing a child. Most authorities agree that the real issue in child sexual abuse is more related to a desire for power and control than for sex.

When God created the human family, He began with a marriage between a man and a woman based on mutual love and trust. This relationship is still designed to provide the

foundation for a stable, happy family in which the dignity, worth, and integrity of each family member is protected and upheld. Every child, whether male or female, is to be affirmed as a gift from God. Parents are given the privilege and responsibility of providing nurture, protection, and physical care for the children entrusted to them by God.

Children should be able to honor, respect, and trust their parents and other family members without the risk of abuse.

The Bible condemns child sexual abuse in the strongest possible terms. It sees any attempt to confuse, blur, or denigrate personal, generational, or gender boundaries through sexually abusive behavior as an act of betrayal and a gross violation of personhood. It openly condemns abuses of power, authority, and responsibility because these strike at the very heart of the victims' deepest feelings about themselves, others, and God, and shatter their capacity to love and trust. Jesus used strong language to condemn the actions of anyone who, through word or deed, causes a child to stumble.

The Adventist Christian community is not immune from child sexual abuse. We believe that the tenets of the Seventh-day Adventist faith require us to be actively

Please turn to page 9

*“Every child
whether male or female,
is to be affirmed
as a gift from God.”*

“Statement on Child Sexual Abuse” continued...

involved in its prevention. We are also committed to spiritually assisting abused and abusive individuals and their families in their healing and recovery process, and to holding church professionals and church lay leaders accountable for maintaining their personal behavior as is appropriate for persons in positions of spiritual leadership and trust.

As a Church we believe our faith calls us to:

- Uphold the principles of Christ for family relationships in which the self-respect, dignity, and purity of children are recognized as divinely mandated rights.
- Provide an atmosphere where children who have been abused can feel safe when reporting sexual abuse and can feel that someone will listen to them.
- Become thoroughly informed about sexual abuse and its impact upon our own church community.
- Help ministers and lay leaders to recognize the warning signs of child sexual abuse and know how to respond appropriately when abuse is suspected or a child reports being sexually abused.
- Establish referral relationships with professional counselors and local sexual assault agencies who can, with their professional skills, assist abuse victims and their families.
- Create guidelines/policies at the appropriate levels to assist church leaders in:

- Endeavoring to treat with fairness persons accused of sexually abusing children,
- Holding abusers accountable for their actions and administering appropriate discipline.
- Support the education and enrichment of families and family members by:
 - Dispelling commonly held religious and cultural beliefs which may be used to justify or cover up child sexual abuse.
 - Building a healthy sense of personal worth in each child which enables him or her to respect self and others.
 - Fostering Christlike relationships between males and females in the home and in the church.
- Provide caring support and a faith-based redemptive ministry within the church community for abuse survivors and abusers while enabling them to access the available network of professional resources in the community.
- Encourage the training of more family professionals to facilitate the healing and recovery process of abuse victims and perpetrators. ■

(The above statement is informed by principles expressed in the following scriptural passages: Genesis 1:26-28; 2:18-25; Leviticus 18:20; 2 Samuel 13:1-22; Matthew 18:6-9; 1 Corinthians 5:1-5; Ephesians 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:5-8.)

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Please turn to page 10



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Galen and Suzanne Fillmore



Lunch at the Inn at Rancho Santa Fe

Richard and Claudia Flaiz
Blaine A. Fowler
Gary and Sharon Fraser
Gary and Annette Frykman
Frank and Lynn Gasper
Lloyd Edward Gauntt
Fekede W. and Azeb Gemechu
Lawrence T. and Gillian Geraty
Daniel W. and Sarah Giang
George and Carol Gibson
Jon and Marylois Gibson
Richard and Gwen Gingrich
Janine Goffar
James and Arlene Gruber
Richard and Kathlene Guth
Ronald C. Hansen
Steven Hardin
Richard H. Hart
Mark and Carol Haviland
Healthcare for Business & Industry
Lynn and Margaret Heath
Douglas Hegstad
William Heitsch
Joyce Wilson Hopp
Robert and Lerie Horner
Rendel Ramsey Houston
Les T. Jacobs
Chrisotpher and Melanie Jobe
Gordon and Dorothy Johns
Arthur Johnson
Robert and Odette Johnson
George Isaac Kafrouni
Eldyn Karr
Gerald King



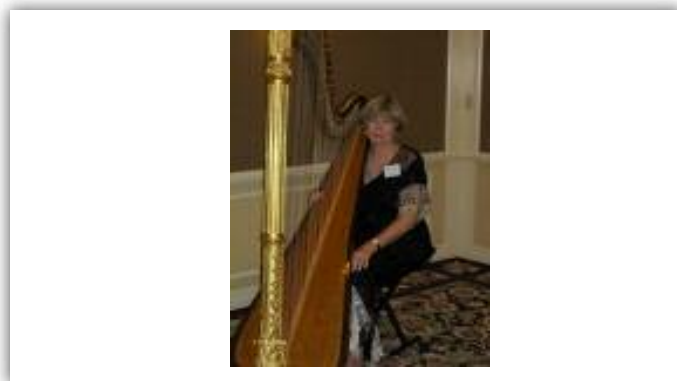
A beautiful day to enjoy our luncheon fare outdoors

Please turn to page 11

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Bernhard A. Kopfer
Edwin and Beverly Krick
Irvin and Doreen Kuh
John Richard and Helen La Gourgue
David Larson
Virgil and Ellen Lau
Robert and Carol Leach
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R. Lindsey and Stona Lilly
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Carl and Evangeline Lundstrom
Theodore and Linda Mackett
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W. Leonard and Carlene Taylor
David and Maxine Taylor
Betty Thacker
Walter Carroll Thompson



Toni Destro performs for contributors and guests

Ralph and Carolyn Thompson
Bernard Tilton
Ada Turner
Richard and Gwen Utt
Lois Van Cleve
Prasit B. Vasantachart
Fred and Renie Veltman
Raymond Lawrence and Colleen Vercio
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James and Betty Webster
Dorothy Weisz
Leslie and Sarah Werner
James Monroe Whitlock
David W. and Connie Wilbur

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Warren Witt
Beverly D. Wombold
Richard K. Wonderly
Douglas S. Wong
Lester Wright

Editorial

In this issue of *UPDATE* we highlight another cluster of statements on ethical issues generated by our Seventh-day Adventist world headquarters. These statements have been approved by our representative body, the General Conference. The statements bring attention to just a few of the ethical issues surrounding women, children, and families. Those of us involved in ethical issues in health care do not pay sufficient attention to these issues and I wish to highlight that need in this issue.

Additionally, we are delighted to share a few pictures of our 2004 Contributors Convocation. Our very generous contributors are listed in this issue as well. We are doing so well to have managed to thrive through these twenty-plus years of operation and it truly is because of the generosity of our donors! Congratulations!



Mark Carr, PhD, MDiv
Co-Director,
Center for Christian Bioethics



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