
Weeks of Spiritual Emphasis

With Youth Involvement, A Highlight of the Year

By R. S. Bower

One of the highlights of an Adventist school year is the week of spiritual emphasis. No school year is complete without this special time, and who better than senior class students could be chosen to conduct these programs?

There are many reasons why seniors should be chosen. They are naturally considered by the lower classes as leaders of the school. They are looked up to as an example to be followed. What better leadership could they offer than to be prominently featured in programs emphasizing spiritual values?

In planning the programs, the

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students should be guided by a reliable, spiritually mature member of the staff who can direct without imposing opinions upon the students. One of the teachers or sponsors of the senior class would be a good choice if his or her relationship with the students is natural and positive. The school chaplain could also be considered. The students may prefer to choose their own staff advisor. The main consideration should be that the advisor not be imposed upon the students.

Endeavor to involve every student in the class. Only a few will play a leading role. Nevertheless, there is a place for every class member to participate in order to make the program run smoothly.

It may appear that certain students would automatically be the best speakers, but allow the class to choose. They may not make the choices you would have preferred. However, the students know their classmates best, and it is better that they choose the ones they consider most acceptable to present the message to the school. In guiding the choice, encourage the class to select both boys and girls to fill the role of speaker. The number of speakers could vary according to how the program is arranged. In day schools only one speaker a day may be needed, whereas in boarding schools two programs could be arranged daily—one during the school day and the other during
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• “Requiring regular teachers to leave an ‘easily administered’ lesson plan and a seating chart. In case of lengthy absences, teachers also should be required to maintain a number of lesson plans on file in the administrator’s office.

• “A thorough evaluation of a substitute by the administrator who oversees the program and the regular teacher.”—*Ibid.*, vol. IV, No. 28, April 3, 1985.

Good Ideas

Making New Students Feel Welcome

• “A special coupon book was put together and distributed to all new students at Fairmont School in St. Charles, Mo.—the brainstorm of counselor Bob Stumpf. Each page of the book entitles the child to something special during his or her first two weeks in the school—a friend at lunch, on the playground and in the bus every day, lunch with the counselor, a tour of the building, an elevator ride with the adult of his/her choice, a free donut and a free call home.”—*It Starts in the Classroom*, November, 1983. Reprinted with permission from *It Starts in the Classroom*. Copyright 1983, National School Public Relations Association.

Request for Materials

A small Christian college run by the Nigerian State has written to request books. This school educates teachers for primary and postprimary schools. Its students include experienced Christian leaders from a number of denominations, including Seventh-day Adventists.

The school requests new or second-hand books on theology and other areas of study. They state that they need books on all levels,

including good-quality fiction.

Books should be packed securely and sent by surface mail. Label packages “gifts” or “second-hand books” so that the school will not have to pay duty.

Send materials to:

The Principal
Library of The College of
Christian Studies
Shuwa
PMB 16, Mubi
Gongola State, Nigeria. □

Legal Update

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this would “unduly interfere with the maintenance of the swift and informal disciplinary procedures needed in the schools.”

Secondly, a search may be undertaken based upon the reasonableness of all circumstances of the search. In determining “reasonableness,” school officials must consider (1) whether the search was justified at its inception; and (2) whether the scope of the search was sufficiently related to the circumstances that justified the initial confrontation.

Such a search will be permissible when the conduct of the teacher or school official is reasonably related to the objectives of the search and not excessively intrusive in light of the age and sex of the student and the nature of the infraction. The goal is not to unduly burden school authorities in maintaining order and yet prevent unrestrained intrusions upon the privacy of school children.

Familiarity with the guidelines set forth by the Supreme Court may assist Adventist educators in applying the new legal principles. A cursory reading of the case, *New Jersey v. T.L.O.*, which can be found in volume 105 of the Supreme Court Reporter at page

733, will provide the basic knowledge needed to address a similar situation.

Despite the fact that the new guidelines are not required to be applied in private schools, we need to recognize that they do fit within a Christian perspective. The Golden Rule is not passé in Adventist education; respect for individual rights as well as elements of fair play should be adopted as policies to help guide educators as they administer schools.

Specifically, in addressing an area of concern, such as search of a pupil and/or the seizure of student property, Christian educators must remain sensitive to the fundamental rights of privacy to which all persons—including students—are entitled. The attention given those rights in a potentially hurtful search situation, coupled with a basic awareness of proper legal procedure, may help to maintain order without harming the trust relationship between educators and students. □

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the evening worship period. It may be possible to arrange an early morning prayer group in boarding schools, in addition to the two regularly scheduled programs.

The program should not be too long. Thirty to 35 minutes is adequate. A brief program will be more likely to retain student interest and enthusiasm.

Selecting the Theme

The theme of the week should be selected by the class. Suggestions may be offered by the staff advisor if requested by the students, but the young people should be allowed to make the final decision. Once the theme has been selected,

the next item of business is a search for an appropriate song to accompany the theme. If there is a songwriter in the group who could compose an original song, that would be ideal.

The theme song should be one that the students will love to sing throughout the whole week and one they will remember for a long time.

Have the theme placed in a prominent spot above the rostrum. Letters cut out of styrene foam and painted in appropriate colors can be most effective. Various members of the class can cooperate to produce these letters, which should be large enough to be visible throughout the meeting room.

Teachers can reinforce the theme by presenting lessons, ideas, and materials in their classes that will bring the concept to mind. As teachers support students in this way, the week will become more meaningful to the young people.

Songbook for the Program

Preparing a special songbook is a must to assure a successful week. The students will not only appreciate the book through the week, but also as a memento to remind them of the program. Select members of the class to be responsible for compiling the songbook, making sure that the presentation is adequate for the occasion. Do not put together a shoddily prepared book that will cheapen the occasion. It is better to spend a little more money and time than skimp in organizing this important adjunct to the program.

The theme and theme song should be placed in a prominent position in the songbook, which should include songs to be sung during the week, as well as a list of talks that will be given. It may be possible to include a photograph of each speaker with his or her

topic. The cover should feature an attractive picture or drawing depicting the school or the theme of the week.

Music should play an important part in the program. Invite students from every class in the school who can play a musical instrument or sing to participate in the song service. With a competent musical director—either staff member or student—music will be a highlight of the week. Students' special musical presentations should be arranged throughout the program to gain maximum student participation.

An element of surprise in regard to the theme chosen, the design of the songbook, or any special features will help to make the week something different, a time the students will look forward to with anticipation. Special features could include an appropriate film, a guest speaker, taped messages from former students, or an interview with a well-known local person. Of course, all special features must contribute directly to the theme of the week.

It is best to conduct the meetings in an area that will not be used for any other purpose during the week. If the school has a chapel, that would be the ideal location. If no chapel is available, an adequate assembly area should be chosen that will be used exclusively for the program.

Allow the students to decorate the meeting area with flowers and greenery to make it as attractive as possible. A little expense in decoration will help set a pleasant atmosphere for the program.

When Should It Be Scheduled?

Scheduling of the week of spiritual emphasis needs to be considered by each school. In some places I have found that inserting the week into the first month or

two of the school year has been beneficial to all students because it sets a spiritual tone and promotes unity in the student body from the very beginning of the school year.

In other locations I have found the program to be most beneficial during the concluding weeks of the academic year, as it then acts to promote spiritual togetherness and culmination of student spiritual relationships. Regardless of when the special week is scheduled, I believe it will be a blessing to all if it is planned so that it fits smoothly into the school program.

Try to ensure that the students enter into the week of spiritual emphasis as naturally as possible. Do not give the impression that it is going to be a week of "pressurizing." Schedule carefully so that attendance by the entire school is assured. This is essential. The school that prays together stays together.

Teachers should speak positively of the scheduled program and offer any assistance that will help promote its successful completion. As the staff members demonstrate their commitment to the importance of the week by faithful attendance, the students will take the week more seriously. If all the students and staff can enter into the week as a family seeking the fellowship of their heavenly Father, then the blessings of the meetings will last through eternity. □

Morning Worship

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the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history."—*Life Sketches*, p. 196. Let us instill in our students a loyalty to the church before Satan gets a chance to snatch them away through false doctrines and indifference.