

Family Life & Men's Ministries Report

2021- 2024

Introduction

Mr. Chairman, Caribbean Union Conference President, Dr. Kern Tobias, and other Administrators of the Caribbean Union, representatives from the Inter-American Division (IAD), delegates and delegates-at-large on the virtual platform, members, I am very happy to present this report to you outlining the progress of the work in the Family Life and Men's Ministries Department for the period January 2021 to December 31, 2024.

Our Mission

Our mission is to equip and strengthen families by providing resources, training, support and counselling that enhance families within the East Caribbean Conference. Additionally, our intention is to assist the local church leaders in providing programmes which will enhance the natural and parental skills of parents, and relational skills of couples.

Department's Vision

Healthy families for time and eternity

Teams and Committees

The department's work was supported and executed whole-heartedly in conjunction with a number of teams. The 26-member Advisory Team is the principal group which provides the Family Life and Men's Ministries Director with advice and guidance in relation to relevant programmes to meet constituents' needs.

Other roles which the team members carried out were:

- (a) engage in strategic thinking,
- (b) provide current knowledge on issues,
- (c) set up networks and connections to access expertise,

Additionally, the Advisory Team gave constructive and critical feedback which assisted the Director in increasing his confidence to cater to the various demographic groups and by extension, meet the needs of the constituents in the East Caribbean Conference.

Members of the advisory board were appointed by the Executive Committee where their experience, contributions and/or skills aligned to the Department's scope and intended impact. Members of the Advisory Team are local church Family Life and Men's Ministries leaders from across the five (5) zones in Barbados and four of the five zones in Dominica. Additionally, other members included are experienced professionals (e.g: Counsellors, Social Worker) and demographic representation (e.g: single, persons who are divorced).

Furthermore, the members selected have subject-based knowledge, experience and various skill sets which allowed them to assist with exploring concepts, provide strategic direction and actively contributed to the achievement of the department's goals and desired outcomes defined in the Conference's Strategic RESET Plan. Additionally, there are eight (8) planning sub-committees chaired by a member of the Advisory Team or is a member of a sub-committee:

- a. Bereavement Support
- b. Divorce Care
- c. Feasibility Research Team
- d. Marriage Enrichment Team
- e. Men's Ministries Planning Team
- f. Research Teams
- g. Single's Ministries
- h. Steering Committee (Counselling Centre).

These have been set up to work with the Director in planning and executing the various programmes.

Department's Principal Approaches to Ministry to Families

1. Education

In order to address the relational dynamics within the different family structure, be it nuclear, extended, single parent, reconstructed/blended or single-headed household, the Department draws upon practical and relevant principles as found in Scripture and Spirit of Prophecy to inform its research and study in an effort to prepare resources for family life education and address men's issues.

2. Enrichment

It is essential to provide enrichment and development activities such as experiential programmes for married couples, men, singles and other demographic groups which enable participants to make relational gains through sharing and interacting in various activities and events. Enrichment seeks to provide enhancement directly for relationships through better communication and an improved ability to resolve issues such as anger problems and conflict.

3. Counselling

The department seeks to assist individuals and families who are overwhelmed with difficulties. Consequently, they need specialized work which is practically tailored to assist them in resolving short- or long-term issues.

4. Evangelism

Family evangelism is another focus of the department, whereby Seventh-day Adventists families reach out to families in their communities through personal and public evangelism. A progressive approach used is that a series of family life and Bible seminars are presented, while an integrated method combines important family life concepts with compatible Bible doctrines during the evangelistic programme. This type of evangelism educates the members of the congregation, while evangelizing the world as captured in St Matthew 24:14.

Department's Areas of Emphasis

The primary target areas of emphasis for the Family Life and Men's Ministries Departments are

- I. Extended Family
- II. Marriage Enrichment
- III. Men's Empowerment
- IV. Parent Education
- V. Pre-marital Guidance
- VI. Relationship Enrichment
- VII. Single Parenting
- VIII. Singles
- IX. Step-family Needs

Department's Goals

- a. Active Evangelism and Resources Provision

This goal aims to support the Year of Evangelism 2024, Homes of Hope and Healing Evangelistic Series and the IAD's Families in Mission Outreach Initiative. This was done through the organization and planning of and encouragement of local churches to set up and speak in Family Life evangelistic campaigns which either focused on family issues and/or in which families were involved in the type of evangelism. Prayer cards, resource books relating to topics such as healing, marriage, and singleness were distributed to various demographic groups.

b. Leadership Training

Volunteers were empowered, trained and equipped for effective ministry to individuals, families and community members. The Church Revitalization programme, the Mental Health Hotline Training Seminars, Elders' Retreats, and Family Life Training Seminars were conducted.

c. Marriage Enrichment

Married couples were assisted by way of personal assessment through the completion of questionnaires focusing on mental health, social, spiritual and psychological issues. Couples are given opportunities in a safe space to get to know each other better. Spouses engaged in activities such as *'Couples' Prayer'*, *Holy Communion Service*, and *Ordinance of Humility* in order to bond closer, address marital issues, and explore dysfunctional family issues.

d. Men's Empowerment

Provide a forum for men to explore issues such as peer pressure, leadership in the home, interpersonal skills and impact of singleness. Men were assisted in enhancing their spiritual lives through Men's Empowerment Conferences, Men's Days of Prayer, Prayer Breakfasts, and Men's Emphasis Days.

e. Nurturing Families

The Department supported the Family Life and Men's Ministries leaders in the local churches with nurturing programmes by conducting Emotional Health Seminars, Christian Home and Marriage Weeks, Family Togetherness Week, Family Life seminars. Additionally, Bible studies were provided.

f. Families' Mental Health Support

An Enditnow Conference, an addiction recovery programme and Mental Health Seminars were conducted to provide an awareness of mental health challenges, psychological issues and provide spiritual guidance and support for members. Additionally, personal, pre- and post-marital counselling services were offered.

g. Personal Development

Courting individuals, married couples and singles were exposed to presentations which addressed psychological issues such as self-esteem, types of attachments, styles of relating, and relational issues such as red flags during marriage enrichment Conferences, Relationship Enhancement Conferences, and Singles' Ministries Conferences.

h. Provision of Bereavement Support and Divorce Care

Providing support for ECC Executive Committee members, ECC workers, community members who supported the Department, Family Life and Men's Ministries leaders, the Department's sub-committee members, and ECC retirees in the form of get well cards, sympathy cards and wreaths.

i. Spirituality Awareness

In providing local churches with resources which enhance and promote personal and spiritual development among families, men, singles and spouses, the Department held various programmes such as the *Core of Adventist Families* (Family Prayer Focus), Men's Prayer Conference, Family Togetherness Days of Prayer and Prayer Breakfasts programmes, and distributed family prayer cards.

ECC Family Life and Men's Ministries Inclusive Programmes

- I. Bereavement Support
- II. Divorce Care
- III. Families Revitalization
- IV. Families in Mission Evangelistic Initiative 2024
- V. Family Life Weeks in Local Church
- VI. Family Mental Health
- VII. Marriage Enrichment and Revitalization
- VIII. Men's Ministries
- IX. Research
- X. Singles' Ministries
- XI. Department's Meetings
- XII. Training and Workshops

Evidence of Engagement with the ECC Strategic Vision

The East Caribbean Conference Family Life and Men's Ministries Department is founded upon the Divine instruction as presented in Ephesians 5:21 - 6:4, which describes an inclusive approach to family ministries, thus targeting married couples, men, parents, and children, all of

whom are expected to have a Christ-centred focus. The biblical instructions are reflected in the Objectives and Actions relevant to the Department as set out in the ECC's Strategic Plan.

Engagement 1

ECC OBJECTIVE 1.1: Encourage every member to exalt our Lord through adopting regular, systematic, personal and family devotions in their lifestyle and practice.

ACTION 1.1.14: Vigorously promote, encourage, and teach the dynamics of family worship

Department's Goal (I): Spirituality Awareness

In providing local churches with resources which enhance and promote personal and spiritual development among families and singles, the Department conducted various programmes such as the *Core of Adventist Families* (Family Prayer Focus), and distributed family prayer cards.

The Department supported the Conference RESET Strategy: Back to Basics and achieved the above objective and Action by hosting the inaugural one-week Core of Adventist Families in six (6) Pastoral Districts, with the theme being: Strengthening Family Altars. The St James District in Barbados had two (2) overseas presenters, and Christ Church East District had one. Each presenter in Dominica conducted the programme in two congregations each. The attendance ranged between 20 and 50 members during the nightly programme, while the attendance at the Sabbath programmes ranged from 100 to 250.

Core of Adventist Families				
Year	Barbados	Presenters	Dominica	Presenters
2023	Zones 2 St James District	Dr Caius Alfred (SLM) Ps Ammaran Williams (CARU)	Central	Ps Joel Shillingford (CJC)
	Zones 4 Christ Church East Central	Dr Mark Brathwaite (SLC)	City	
			Eastern Northwestern Beryl, Penville & Portsmouth,	Ps Victor Marshall (ECC)

Engagement 2

OBJECTIVE 1.6: In consultation and partnership with the Health Ministries department, work to improve awareness of physical, mental, social health and well-being issues for all members and encourage all-round healthful living within the church and community.

ACTION 1.6.3: Promote a harm minimization approach to alcohol and other drugs through prevention and early intervention activities

ACTION 1.6.6: Promote awareness of mental health issues and the support available to members and their families

ACTION 1.6.8: Provide prevention and/or early intervention programs for young people and their families on healthy interpersonal relationships.

ACTION 1.6.19: Collaborate with the Children's, Family Life, Community Services and Health Ministries Departments, to organize Community Health and Wellness Fairs to promote healthy eating, physical activity, and other health and wellness practice.

Department's Goal (F): Families' Mental Health Support

Emotional and psychological well-being has been our Nation's pronounced and topical issue and a major concern, seeing that individuals have been experiencing mental health challenges. To provide an awareness of mental health challenges, psychological issues and provide spiritual guidance and psychological support for members and the community, nine (9) mental health programmes were conducted, four (4) of which targeted the community, as seen from the Table below. Some of the topics addressed were:

- i) Bullying tactics of partners
- ii) Coping strategies
- iii) Emotional and psychological brokenness
- iv) Family addiction
- v) Forgiveness
- vi) Inter-partner violence
- vii) Trauma-informed practices

Offering family mental health support sought to highlight the availability of support, trained personnel, thus, allowing participants to experience moral support and spiritual input to assist them in addressing personal difficulties.

Counselling Services

The constituents continued to make great demands on the department for counselling services such as grief counselling, pre- and post-marital counselling. Others with mental health issues also requested the counselling services, thus resulting in over 286 hours of counselling delivered by the Department, with personal counselling being the type of counselling in highest demand, serving sixty (66) individuals, of which seven (7) were not Seventh-day Adventists.

Hours of Counselling and Type of Counselling Offered				
Years	Pre-marital	Post-marital	Personal	Totals
2021	No Specific data			
2022	3	10	25	38
2023	9	54	47	100
2024	13	46	89	148
Totals	25	110	161	286

Mental Health Programmes		
Year	District & Type of Programme	Attendance
2022	Ebenezer Theme: <i>Mental Health and the Church</i>	Nightly: Approximately 40 Sabbath: 120+
	St John District Suicide Conference Theme: <i>Things Fall Apart</i>	Ladies (80), Men (60), Youth (20) Gospel Concert (80)
2023	North-western (Dom) Addiction Recovery Programme Joint programme with Health Ministries	Weekly: 11 Persons
2024	St John District Community Open Air Seminar Theme: <i>Building Hope in Your Life</i>	Church members: 25 Community Members: 10
	St John District 3-week Comprehensive Health Series	Zoom: 32 weekly
	St Philip #2 Suicide Prevention	Twenty (20) persons
	Bridgetown SDA Primary School One-day Seminar Theme: Maintaining Your Mental Health	All Teaching Staff
	4-day EnditNow Conference Theme: <i>What's Love Got to Do with it?</i> Joint programme with Women's Ministries	Nightly Attendance (In person): 35 – 40; Zoom: 85 Sabbath Convention (Oldbury): 200
	Ephesus One-day Seminar Theme: <i>Building Hope in Your Life</i>	Seventy (70) persons

At the time of reporting, the Steering Committee, selected by the Executive Committee, has Commissioned a Feasibility Research Team, chaired by Dr Pamela Dottin, Senior Programme Officer, University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus, to conduct a feasibility study in order to ascertain the viability of setting up a Seventh-day Adventist counselling service in our field.

The other members of the team were Dr Noel Morgan, Campus Bursar, Open Campus at the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus and Mr Christopher Blackwood, former Treasurer of the Island Development Council, Barbados and worked as a Project Manager.

Engagement 3

ACTION B 5.1.2: Facilitate the conduct of public educational training programs, seminars and workshops on family life and family related issues through the Children's and Family Life Departments, such as: domestic violence, marital problems, parenting, drug abuse, life crises and financial issues.

Department's Goal (B): Leadership Training

From the outset, it was understood that training would take up a considerable amount of the Department's time and budget. Furthermore, for the Family Life and Men's Ministries leaders in the local churches to co-ordinate, plan and execute the ministry entrusted to them, they would need to be equipped and knowledgeable.

The Department conducted two (2) workshops with the ten (10) elders from the St Thomas District at their retreat in November 2022, whose theme was *Training the Untrained*. It is understood that if elders are better equipped and are empowered to develop more skills, they should be able to assist the District Pastor in providing spiritual guidance to their local congregations, and by extension, minimize the conflicts and other church-related issues seen in congregations.

Furthermore, fourteen (14) Family Life and Men's Ministries leaders in Dominica attended the training programme held in January 2023, and which was entitled *The State of Affairs in the Local Church*. The purpose of the training session was to sensitize the leaders to the state of affairs in the local churches from a statistical perspective based on the 2013 General Conference International Survey.

There has been a constant appeal for an intervention to address personal, familial and local congregational issues. Consequently, the *Church Revitalization Training* programme became the premier training programme held annually, except in 2024, which was the Year of Evangelism. In this regard, the Department initiated Phases I and II of the training programme in Barbados, with ninety-nine (99) participants being trained, representing 31 congregations. Thirty-five (35) participants from eight (8) congregations in Dominica attended the training programme. A follow-up coaching session was held to guide the participants through the process of setting up the programme in their local congregations.

At the time of reporting, Phase III of the training was being conducted across the Conference. The next step in the process is to set up a pilot programme with ten (10) congregations from each Island to ascertain the impact of the training.

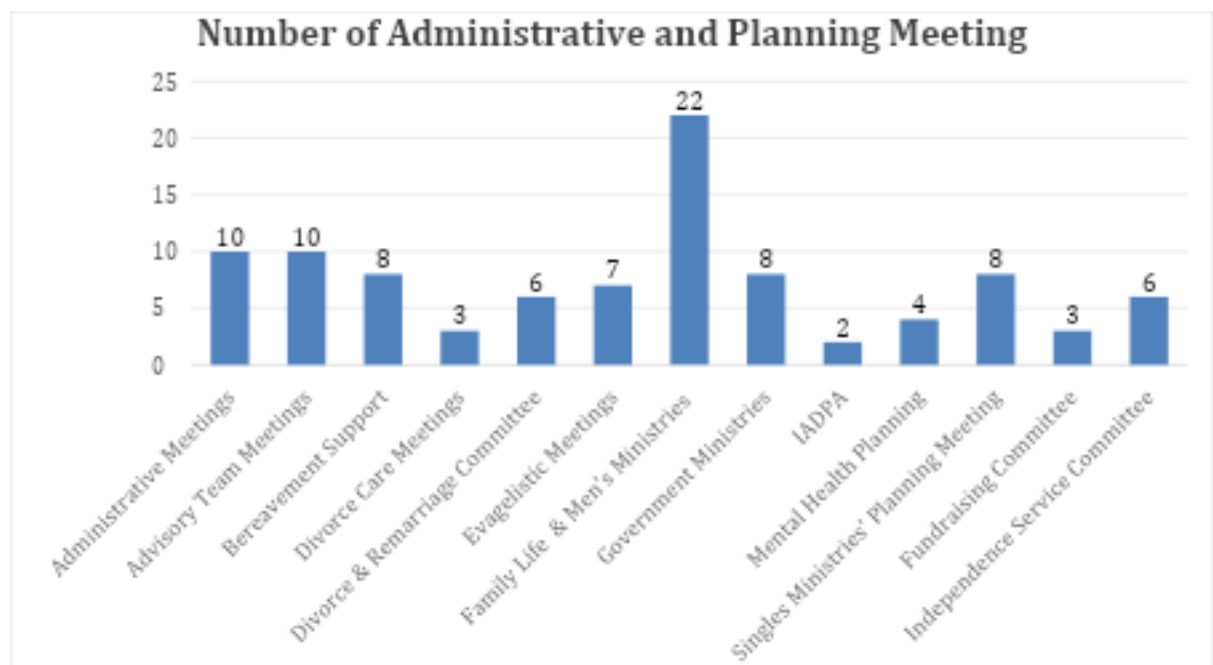
Participants were exposed to, guided and trained in various aspects of congregational and ministerial situations. Some of topics were:

- a. Analyzing the dynamics in congregations
- b. Assessing the readiness level of the congregation
- c. Exploring biblical sub-themes (e.g: forgiveness, acceptance and tolerance)

- d. Identifying biblical themes in and preaching from the biblical Books of Acts, the Gospel of Mark and Genesis
- e. Developing Interventions to address personal, family and congregational issues

Furthermore, the East Caribbean Conference was contacted by the Ministry of Health in Barbados in September 2023 for persons to be trained for 3 days by Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO) as Mental Health Hotline Operators to minimize the increase in the number of suicides throughout the island. In response, the Conference sent a team of five (5) persons for training in November 2023, headed by the Family Life and Men's Ministries Director.

To ensure that the work was planned well, one hundred and seven (107) administrative meetings were held as seen in the graph below, where the most meetings (22) were held with Family Life & Men's Ministries Leaders; and then with the Advisory Team (10) and another ten (10) administrative meetings (e.g; ASI, Steering Committee) were held.



Department's Goal (C): Marriage Enrichment

The needs among various types of couples (e.g courting, engaged & married) have been addressed with two types of enrichment programmes: one for courting, engaged & young married couples (less than 15 years) and one for long-standing married couples (15+ years).

Although a total of 100 couples attended both types of enrichment programme, 73% of the participants were married couples with 15 + years of marriage. The theme was 'Take me to the Sanctuary', during which time we applied the concepts of the sanctuary service (e.g laver, altar of incense) therapeutically to marriage.

The Department supported the North Central Pastoral District (Ebenezer SDA Church) with its marriage enrichment programme by delivering three (3) framed photos of couples who celebrated 50+ years of marriage. Additionally, three (3) three-day Relationship Enrichment Conferences, and whose theme was *Calming the Storm*, for courting, engaged and married couples were held with 24 couples from Barbados attending in 2023 and 27 couples from

Barbados and Dominica in attendance in 2024. During the enrichment programmes every couple received a gift and a bottle of non-alcoholic grape juice.

Department's Goal (E): Nurturing Families

The Department supported the Family Life and Men's Ministries leaders in the local churches with nurturing programmes by conducting Emotional Health Seminars, Christian Home and Marriage Weeks, Family Togetherness Week, Family Life seminars and Mental Health Seminars. Additionally, counselling services and Bible studies were provided.

During the period under review, the Department conducted forty-four (44) Family Life nurturing seminars as seen in the table below. These seminars included Family Life weeks, weekend Seminars, full day and evening/night seminars. Additionally, the various series of presentations were delivered to educate and motivate the various demographic groups. Topics addressed were:

- a) Conflict Resolution
- b) Emotional and spiritual bondage
- c) Emotional health
- d) Family Background
- e) Family secrets
- f) Marital satisfaction
- g) Gender Identity
- h) Parenting effectively
- i) Psychological needs of singles
- j) Styles of parenting

District Family Life Nurturing Seminars Delivered 2021 – 2024			
Year	Family Weeks	Full Weekend Series	Day/Evening Seminars
2022	St Andrew District (1) Central District - Dom (1)	City South District (1) Christ Church South-East (2) North Central (1) St James (1) ST Thomas (1) Southern District – Dom (1)	St James (2) Christ Church South-East (1) North-Eastern – Dom (1) Northwestern – Dom (1) Southern – Dom (1)
2023	St Lucy District #1 (1) El Shaddai - Dom (1) City Central (1) St Philip #1 (1)	East Central (1) North Central (1) City North (1) St James (1) St Philip #2 (1) St Thomas (1)	St Lucy #1 (1) North Central (1) St Philip #1 (1) Central District - Dom (1)
2024	St John District (1) St Peter #2 (1) St Philip #1 (1)	St Thomas (2)	East Central (1) St James (1) St John (1) St Joseph –B’dos (2) St Philip #1 (1) St Thomas (2) Central- Dom (1) National Crusade – B’dos (1)
Totals	9	15	20

Engagement 4

ACTION B 5.1.1: Provide families within the church with appropriate tools for spiritual growth (e.g. annual family life plan book; family worship brochures; information and guidance on family worship format).

ACTION B 5.1.3: Develop a standardized Premarital Counselling Manual that would empower pastors in adequately preparing couples for marriage

ACTION B 5.1.5: Conduct Open Family Life seminars for the non-Adventist community as a soul winning strategy

Department's Goal (A): Active Evangelism and Resources Provision

At the beginning of every year, leaders of the Family Life and Men's Ministries departments in the local churches are furnished with the link to the General Conference Family Life Year Book which contains planning ideas for Christian Home and Marriage Week and Family Togetherness Week, presentations and sermon resources.

The Department distributed 39 sets of the following books to each local congregation which sent a team to the *Church Revitalization Training* programme:

Set the Captives Free: Experiencing Healing Through Holistic Restoration

Set the Captives Free: 12 Studies for Groups of Individuals

Raising the Wounded: Grasping for Hope in the Midst of Despair

On the Road to Forgiveness: Experiencing Healing on the Way

These resources became the primary materials through which participants were exposed to the knowledge gained

During the preparation time leading up to the *Core of Adventists Families 2023* in Dominica, 400 Family Prayer Cards were distributed, with the view to conduct family visitations, encourage families, provide pastoral care and guidance for struggling or missing families and collect various prayer requests with the view to inviting such families to engage in the local congregation's Family Prayer for these families.

Since November 2023, participants attending each of the main Conferences (e.g: EnditNow, Marriage Enrichment, Relationship Enrichment and Singles' Ministries), received a book as part of their package. The following resources were distributed:

November 2023: *35 Mottoes for Happy Marriages* (24 books)

January 2024: *I will Marry You Again* (20 books)

March 2024: *35 Mottoes for Happy Marriages* (17 books)

May 2024: *I will Marry You Again* (53 books)

May 2024: *35 Mottoes for Happy Marriages* (10 books)

June 2024: *Single and Gifted* (37) books

August 2024: *A Legacy of Secrets* (48 books)

All pastors were given access on a memory stick (Thumb Drive) to a copy of *Beginnings: A Pre-marital Counselling Resource for Pastors*. This comprehensive Pre-marital counselling resource is designed to cover the major topics which prospective couples are expected to encounter. Such topics are: Conflict Resolution, Financial Management and Personality.

We are counselled that ‘The church is God's appointed agency for the salvation of men. It was organized for service, and its mission is to carry the gospel to the world. From the beginning it has been God's plan that through His church shall be reflected to the world His fullness and His sufficiency. The members of the church, those whom He has called out of darkness into His marvelous light, are to show forth His glory’ (White, Acts of the Apostles, p.9). Thus, it becomes necessary for the local congregation and the Department to engage in soul-winning activities.

With this thought in mind, eight (8) Pastoral Districts of the East Caribbean Conference engaged in Phase 1 and II of the IAD's Families in Mission Evangelistic Initiative in 2024 and held an evangelistic campaign either under a tent, in the local church building or community centre. These programmes were held for a combined total of 23 weeks. Themes such as *Hope for the Family; The family, the Home and the Kingdom* were the foci of these outreach programmes. At the end of Phases 1& II (April and November 2024), forty-eight (43) souls were led to God through baptism.

Engagement 5

ACTION F 5.1.2: Provide at least one retreat or other major event annually for singles.

Department's Goal (G): Personal Development

In meeting the needs of the Singles in our Conference, a two-day weekend programme was held for the singles for the Warners and Point Michel SDA Churches in Dominica. Attendance online for the Friday Night session was 70 persons (devices) and on Sabbath approximately 65 individuals. Additionally, a two-night series was also conducted at Point Michel SDA Church, with attendance being approximately 30 per night.

The Department continued to address the psychological needs of our Singles by hosting two (2) two-day Singles' Ministries Conference for singles, age 18+ in June and August 2024. These conferences catered to 3 main age-groups: 18 - 25; 26 - 35; and 36+. A total of sixty-nine (69) singles registered and attended the two programmes. For each Friday night, attendance on zoom was 128 persons (devices).

Engagement 6

ACTION F 5.1.3: Provide and offer social activities, Bible study and other monthly support to people who have never been married or who have gone through a divorce.

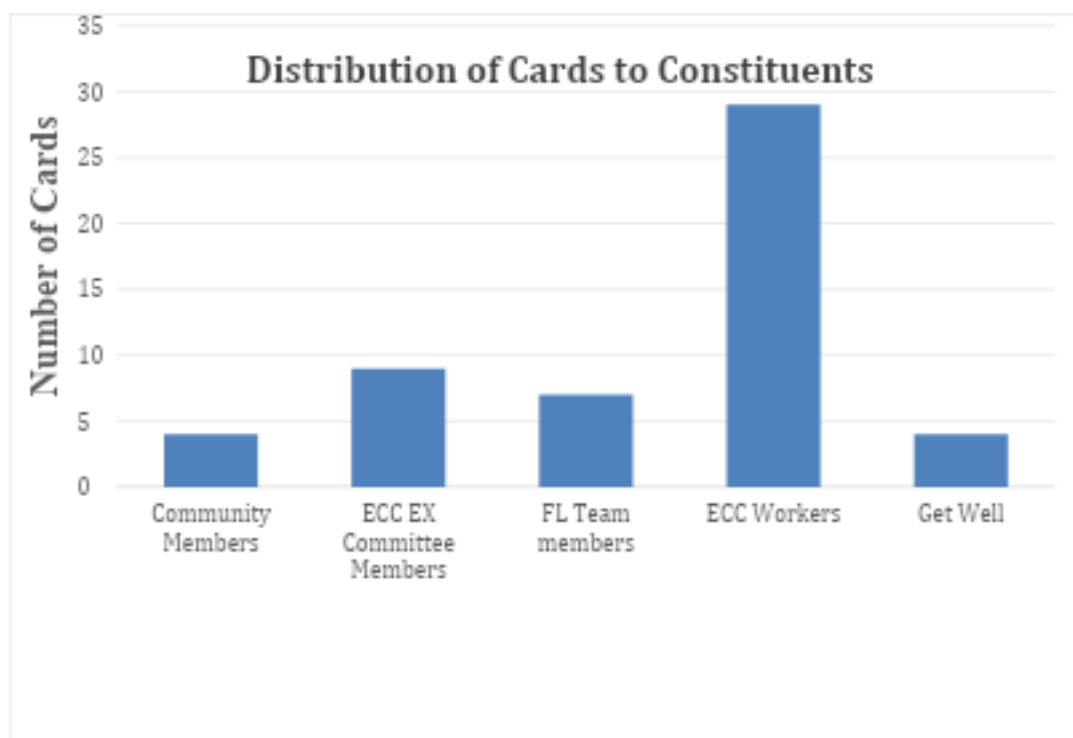
ACTION H 5.1.8 Promote a “Ministry of Presence” immediately following the death of a loved one to provide gender-appropriate support by “being there.” Provide long-term practical help by doing things that the person may not be able to do for themselves.

ACTION H 5.1.9 Create or provide resources for people who have been bereaved to help them see the goodness and grace of God at difficult times

Department's Goal (H): Provision of Bereavement Support and Divorce Care

In catering to the needs of different demographic groups, a seminar was held for persons who are divorced or separated and a follow up prayer breakfast occurred in April 2023. Additionally, a seminar was held for bereaved persons, while a scenic tour and a picnic were held with both groups as follow-up support programmes.

Since COVID-19, grief has become even more prevalent in our society. Considering this development, the department has been supporting grieving members through funeral attendance. Additionally, of the fifty-three (53) bereavement cards distributed, 20% of the cards was distributed to community members affiliated to the Department and Family Life/Men's Ministries leaders, while 55% of them was given to ECC workers, as seen in the diagram. Other forms of support were manifested through 'get well' and Mothers' Day cards.



Men's Ministries

The **mission** of the Men's Ministries Department is to assist men to be effective leaders, to become spiritually focused, and enable them to be mentors to younger male members.

Vision: Men who experience meaningful spiritual, mental and emotional growth.

ACTION D 5.1.2: Minister to men through devotional emails, teaching, men's retreats, individual counselling and discipling.

Department's Goal: Spirituality Awareness

The Department set out to teach and instil the importance of prayer in our men and provide opportunities for men to enhance their personal and spiritual development. We are reminded that “The greatest want of the world is the want of men - men who will not be bought or sold; men who in their inmost souls are true and honest; men who do not fear to call sin by its right name; men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole; men who will stand for the right though the heavens fall.”

The Department’s ministry to men included a 4-part series held for a weekend for the City and Southern Districts in Dominica, November 2022, which focused on men’s issues. Additionally, in 2023 a Men’s Emphasis Day was held in the St James District, Barbados, along with the following:

- a) Two (2) Men’s Empowerment Conferences

Theme: *No Man Left behind* (Northern Dominica and Barbados)

Attendance: Northern Dominica- about 140 men; Barbados- over 500

- b) Two (2) Prayer Breakfasts in Dominica.

Furthermore, a Men’s Ministries Convention was held at Oldbury, Barbados, attracting some 400 men and teens. A Prayer Conference was held in three (3) venues across Barbados – North, Central and South, with over 300 men and teens attending in total. These programmes sought to address issues such as involvement in church, prayer life, spirituality, role of men such as husbands, fathers and priests, and singlehood. There was community involvement to the extent that the Department conducted Gender Assembly at the Lodge School in 2023 and also conducted a Mental Health Seminar for the male staff of the National Insurance and Social Security Scheme in Barbados.

The Family & Men’s Ministries Department continued to cater to the needs of our men by conducting the following programmes in 2024:

- i. Men’s Mental Wellness Seminar for the Maranatha SDA Church,

Attendance: 20 men

Focused areas: Social wellbeing, emotional and sexual health.

- ii. Men’s Day at the Holders’ Hill SDA Church, Barbados
- iii. A Men’s Ministries Week in the St Philip # 1 Pastoral District.

Appreciation

It was a privilege to serve you the constituents during this past quadrennium. I thank the Lord for His grace, favour and insight bestowed upon me as I sought to assist individuals and families. I also extend a heart-felt gratitude to my Conference Administrators, who provided advice, counsel, direction and great support as I performed my duties. Thanks to my Union Supervisor, Ps Ammaran Williams, for guidance, suggestions and support. I also extend my gratitude to my predecessor, Pastor Ricardo Selman for guiding, giving advice, offering support and making suggestions and recommendations. Thank you, Pastor Selman.

I extend a huge thank you to the secretaries who worked directly with me: Leandra Greenidge and Kay Jordan. A special appreciation is extended to my present secretary, Sis Amanda Parris, who has developed greatly. I extend thanks also to the directors who collaborated with me to either host a programme, made suggestions about the type of programme which could be hosted, or provided resources for the department. Additionally, I acknowledge the District pastors who supported the Department’s programme by conducting seminars and attending various programmes. My gratitude is also extended to the Regional Manager and Office Staff of IADPA in the Eastern Caribbean for their support in ensuring that the department was well

stocked with resources. The ECC media team has been very helpful and supportive in aiding the Department in the execution of its programmes. Thanks are extended to all the members, including the volunteers from the different congregations.

To the Office staff— thank you sincerely for responding to my many queries and requests, and for lifting me up in prayer and with encouragement. Additionally, I thank the members of my Advisory team who gave insightful guidance and suggestions along with practical support during the planning, organising and execution of all our programmes. Every programme was planned by a sub-committee. I express my gratitude to the members of all my sub-committees who spent hours with me organising, planning, revising and executing the many programmes. I truly appreciate your great efforts.

The Family Life and Men's Ministries leaders in our local congregations must be commended for promoting the programmes and encouraging members in their churches to attend the programmes. I also thank the members of ECC who attended the programmes, prayed for us, volunteered their time and also encouraged members to attend such programmes. Thanks to all of you for your effort, encouragement, prayers and support.

Maranatha!

Ps Victor D. Marshall
Family Life and Men's Ministries Director