

Plan a Thank You Sabbath

Refocusing Education Sabbaths to actively thank your constituent churches

“Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it.”

William Arthur Ward

Education Sabbaths are a common way for Adventist schools to raise their visibility in their constituent churches. And they are a great idea--if you haven't been doing this, you should.

But I like the idea of a "Thank You Sabbath" even more. The core is still the same, but the focus shifts to thanking all constituents for making the ministry of your school possible.

The core is still the same: Students and teachers participating up front in church.

You know the drill: groups of students singing and/or playing in an ensemble; individual students or teachers giving the prayer, reading the scripture, making announcements; very brave principals preaching the sermon.

So what's different?

You need to set a different tone in your introduction of these presentations. It should focus on this Sabbath being your school's way to thank your congregation for making a Christian education possible for all the students at your school. Give them some specifics, such as:

- The total annual subsidy and tuition aid the church contributes (or the percentage of your operating budget that comes from the church's subsidy)
- The number or percentage of students who are able to attend because of tuition aid
- The total number of volunteer hours that church members contribute
- The prayer support you get (and remind them of your school's daily time for school-wide prayer)

Do not ask for additional contributions or pledges on this Sabbath. A thank you loses its punch if it is followed by a plea for more help.

Print and distribute thank you cards to those attending.

If your church and school are small, you could have some students pass these cards out while you are talking. If large, they can be inserted into the church bulletins. Here's what you can include on that card:

- Thank members for their support with prayers and volunteering, as well as financial support.
- Use the words "Thank You" prominently.
- Include your school name.
- Have a charming photo of smiling kids (up close) on the back.
- Include your school's mission prominently.

I am very willing to create a template card that you can personalize with your school name, mission and photo. But I don't want to take the time if none of you are interested. So....

[Click here to send me an email telling me you are interested.](#)

Credits:

John Soule: Thank you for your wonderful idea—even if you did defect to another conference.

Binder tab: October

School size: All