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TELLING THE STORY

Archives, Statistics, and Research (ASTR) Newsletter - Issue #8



Summertime 2021 Blessings!

From remote working and endless online meetings to various other kinds of travel and health restrictions and guidelines, it seems the world has forever changed in some ways over the course of the past year. But some things are beginning to return to normal, including the re-opening of the Archive Center at ASTR (with some new guidelines, naturally)! Read more about our status (see right), thanks to Ashlee Chism, our Research Center Manager.

As we enter fully into the Summer season, we hope that you'll also enjoy the following articles and news updates. After our ASTR update, read about our involvement with the inaugural online-only Global Campmeeting, with which ASTR staff participated. Other articles include a further update on the *Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists (ESDA)*, an overview of the virtual walkthroughs of our accrediting team during the past year, updates on our Church's statistics during the pandemic. Our human-subject research team also has a piece about our latest research on young people and the book they've recently published. And not least, articles on our Missionary Map, an update on our Journal, and also an ad for our *Yearbook* are below. Thanks for reading our Newsletter and supporting ASTR! We wish you all God's blessings and a pleasant summer season.

ASTR Archives Research Center Re-opening

On June 2, 2020, the Adventist Archives announced that it was to remain closed to researchers indefinitely due to the restrictions from the State of Maryland related to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

While we were closed to in-person research visits from guests (and while we were all working remotely ourselves), the Archives staff still worked hard to answer reference questions sent to us.



Last month, on June 14, 2021, we announced that the Archives will be re-opening to researchers beginning on July 12, 2021. We've had to put a few extra requirements into place for the time being (as the pandemic has not completely ceased), but researchers will once again be able to make research visit appointments. Information on how an in-person research visit can be set up is available at <https://www.adventistarchives.org/research-visits>.

Ashlee Chism

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ASTR Presents at Global Campmeeting

On May 19-23, 2021, the first Adventist Virtual Global Campmeeting was held at www.campmeeting.com. As the name implies, it was available online for audiences everywhere, at no cost. Hundreds of presentations, seminars, and workshops were given on a variety of subjects in different areas, such as Discipleship, Education, Health Ministries, Media, Missions, and Theology. There were round table discussions with church leaders on a wide range of topics. Additionally, a virtual exhibit hall with many Adventist organizations and ministries sharing their resources was available for the participants.

A number of GC departments were represented at the virtual campmeeting, including ASTR, which had its own virtual booth, complete with an online trivia game about Adventist pioneers created by ASTR staff member Lisa Rasmussen. Seven of our own staff also participated by sharing presentations, including our director, David Trim, as well as Galina Stele, Roy Kline, Elizabeth Henry and Ashlee Chism (together), Dragoslava Santrac, and Michael Younker.



Dr. David Trim speaking at Global Campmeeting

The [presentation](#) by Trim was entitled “The Men and Women who made Modern Adventist Mission,” and focused on sharing insightful details about the lives and

ideas that helped create the early Adventist global mission enterprise. He emphasized four key points, including: 1) how organization was key to this endeavor, and as a result of the 1901-1903 reorganization of the General Conference, the mission enterprise came under the responsibility of the GC—which became in essence a Mission Board. 2) Soon thereafter, individuals like A. G. Daniells and William Spicer helped realize this vision by introducing under the Secretariat a complex system for recruiting, deploying, and sustaining missionaries. 3) These changes were supported by moving the GC headquarters to Takoma Park, near Washington DC. 4) Thereafter, all three executive officers passionately supported worldwide mission, especially to non-Christian people groups for many years; Trim shows charts demonstrating that their goals were, for the most part, accomplished. Trim then illustrated the development of the mission enterprise through the lives of several individuals. He concluded by observing the ongoing need to maintain, even return to, our original focus to global mission in the 21st century.

Stele’s [presentation](#) addressed the subject of “Surveys Conducted by the Adventist Church.” In it she described several church membership surveys and other studies that have been conducted since 2011, addressing a variety of issues with specific groups, such as pastors, members, and leaders. Some of the topics surveyed include tithing, doctrinal beliefs, church membership retention, missionaries, youth members, and evaluations of the impact of our media ministries. Her talk also addressed how the Adventist Church’s strategic plans are based on research data. Stele also shared about how the human-subject research group shares their information via reports, blogs, and conferences.

The management of records is central to ASTR’s purpose, and Kline’s [presentation](#) on “Records Management” addressed the core of ASTR’s responsibilities. In his talk, he discussed some principles for recordkeeping, as well

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as the differences between records centers and archives, the basics of electronic recordkeeping, the importance of creating a retention schedule, and lastly an overview of ASTR's records accreditation program.



Elizabeth Henry, sharing her presentation at Global Campmeeting

“Going Paperless,” a joint presentation by Henry and Chism, looked at one of the newer but critically important initiatives that ASTR has undertaken, and that is, naturally, going paperless. They shared about some of the technical issues involved in going fully digital, and demonstrated ASTR’s actual scanning processes for various records. They also included a survey of ASTR’s digital records collections, noting those that are “public-facing” or available for all researchers.

Santrac, the managing editor for ESDA, or the “Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists,” shared an update in her presentation about what is happening with the Encyclopedia. As a reminder, as of July 1, 2020 it is live, and will remain a constantly updated resource for understanding Adventism’s past and present. She further shared more about why the church needs an online encyclopedia, who the editors and other contributors are, the main ESDA goals, and the Encyclopedia’s potential for supporting the Adventist mission through bringing our past and present alive. Santrac also spoke about what has been accomplished to date, what is still needed, and how to use the ESDA website. Targeting a final goal of



Dr. Dragoslava Santrac detailing the ESDA at Global Campmeeting

some 8,500 articles, almost every conceivable subject in our history will be covered. Her presentation also included two useful videos on the development of the ESDA project (see here) and on how to easily navigate the ESDA website (see here).

In his presentation entitled “A History of Extraordinary Circumstances,” Younker described some of the extraordinary circumstances that the Adventist Church has faced around the world, and how, by God’s grace, we overcame them or transformed them into opportunities to spread the gospel. From our Church being born amidst the American Civil War, to numerous natural and other human-made problems and disasters. In each case, God inspired us to find ways to continue to spread the gospel and encourage people amidst suffering, from encouraging examples like Desmond Doss in World War 2, to the endurance of those ministering under the religious persecutions through Soviet Communism.

We’re glad at ASTR to have been participants in this first online Global Campmeeting! You can find links to all the videos here.

Michael Younker

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Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists (ESDA) – Latest Updates

If you haven't visited the *ESDA* website so far, go to encyclopedia.adventist.org and browse nearly 3,000 articles and 6,000 photographs on variety of topics and written by authors from around the world. Beginning in April 2021, articles in languages other than English have been made available in *ESDA*. Currently, the *ESDA* features over 200 articles in Portuguese from the South American Division (SAD). In time, the plan is to provide articles from other world Divisions in their relevant languages.

The *ESDA* is a project of great magnitude, and as such it can be accomplished only through the combined efforts of the world Church, including church administrators, scholars, pastors, and church members. The *ESDA* team, with the support of the GC and the world divisions' leadership, is making every effort to complete the majority of articles by the upcoming GC session in 2022. Thanks to modern technology, the *ESDA* team and the various church entities worldwide have been able to meet, plan, and execute some crucial steps in achieving the *ESDA* goals for 2021 and 2022.

The *ESDA* Editorial Committee convened this year on February 2-4 and will meet again on September 22 to discuss the progress and completion of the project. Since March of this year, the *ESDA* Main Office has met with most Division (regional) *ESDA* teams, which include the Division executive secretaries, to address each division's particular needs and challenges. Present at the meeting with the Southern-Asia Pacific Division (SSD) *ESDA* team on March 9 were the SSD President Samuel Saw, the SSD Education Director Lawrence Domingo and the GC Education Director Lisa Beardsley-Hardy. The General Conference officers gave a strong support to the *ESDA* project at this year's Spring Meeting and highlighted the need for the global Church to join its forces to complete the project as planned. The *ESDA* regional offices reported at the division midyear meetings, with Dr. David Trim presenting at the Inter-American Division (IAD) midyear meeting (April 27) and the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division (SID) Secretariat Advisory (June 3). In cooperation with the *ESDA* Main Office, Northern Asia-Pacific Division (NSD) (March 21), West-Central Africa Division (WAD) (May 28), and SSD (April 10) organized meetings with the officers



ESDA
ENCYCLOPEDIA OF
SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

Nearly 3,000 articles and 6,000 photographs featuring Adventist missionaries, evangelists, institutions, events, and beliefs.

encyclopedia.adventist.org

of their unions and institutions to discuss completing *ESDA* articles on their entities.

While the *ESDA* world teams are working diligently to complete the project, the *ESDA* is already proving to be an invaluable resource, not only for doing research on Adventist history, but also for preparing devotionals, sermons, mission stories, youth and children's programs, study materials for classes, prayer meetings, and other events. The many pictures and videos help users visualize the people and places that the entries explore and bring a personal touch to the historical information. We believe you will find the *ESDA* to be academically and spiritually fulfilling and an excellent missional tool for reaching other people with the Adventist message.

Hundreds of articles remain to be written and everyone has the potential opportunity to make a contribution either as an author and peer-reviewer or by providing photographs, letters and other historical materials. If you are interested in helping, you may contact the *ESDA* main office at encyclopedia@gc.adventist.org or through the [Contact Us](#) page on the *ESDA* website. To find out about what's new in the *ESDA* and the *ESDA* historical nuggets, please follow the *ESDA* on Twitter [@encyclopediaSDA](#), and Facebook [@GC.SDA.Archives](#).

Dragoslava Santrac

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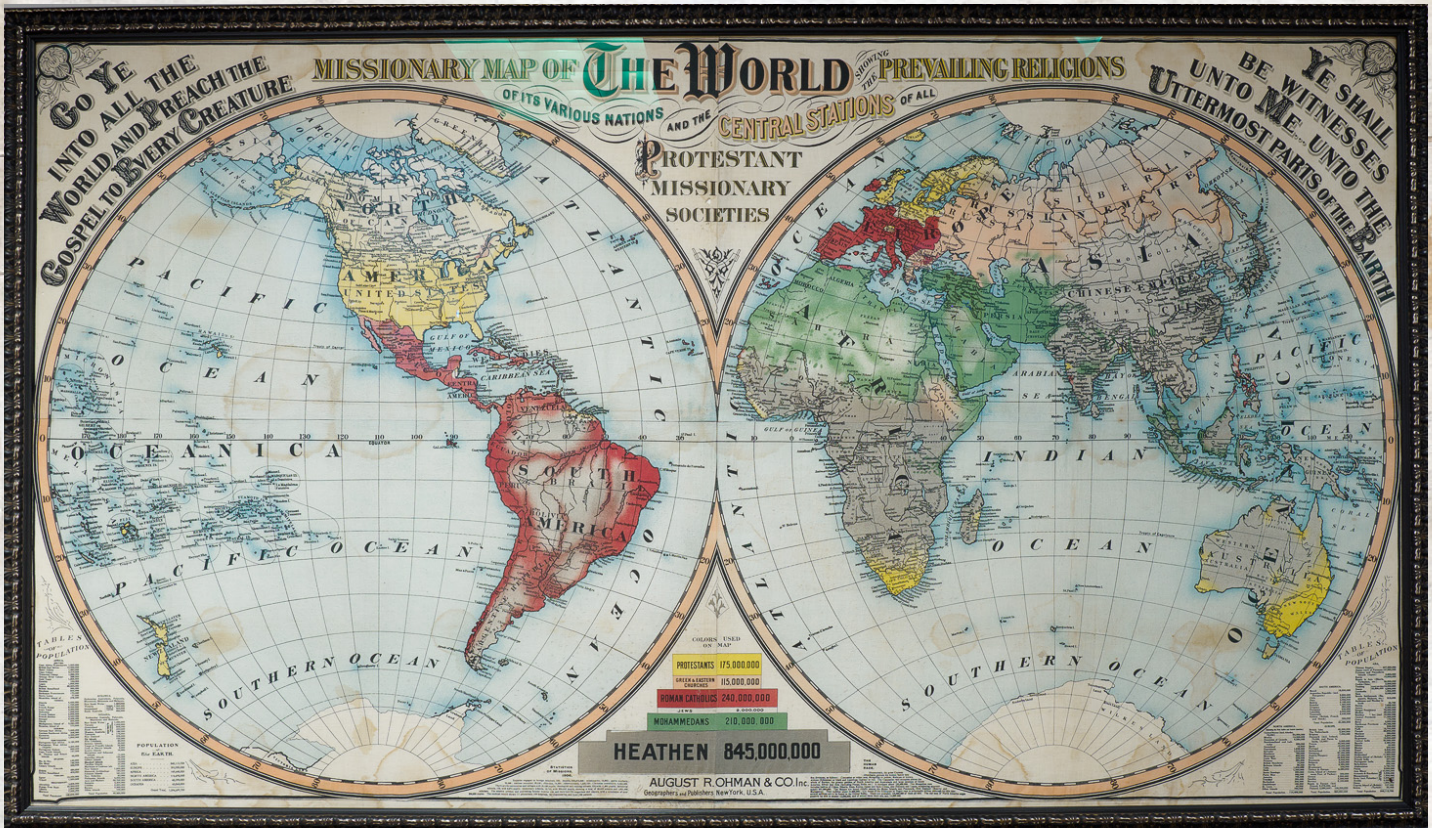
Mapping the World for Missions

This interesting, and politically incorrect, statistical lithograph (see below) was published by August R. Ohman of New York in 1906. It attempted to represent world religious populations and the progress of Protestant missions, color-coding geographical areas to show prevailing world religions at that time.

Adventist pioneer missionaries often acquired and used a variety of maps for various purposes, including to visually illustrate the work ahead of them. This was noted by C. C. Crisler, who wrote, "Seventh-day Adventists from the early twentieth century were determined to use every resource to help them push back the boundaries of mission. Church leaders acquired copies of censuses of

different countries, of encyclopedias and reference works, and they acquired maps. On the ground, as one missionary to China observed, they often found that existing maps were "wholly inadequate." In fact, "Our workers must make their maps as they go." [C. C. Crisler, "Making Maps as We Go", Review and Herald, vol. 100, no. 32 (August 9, 1923), 10-11]. But larger maps, such as this one, served another purpose. Church leaders regularly displayed them at camp meetings, union, and GC sessions, to help church members visualize the challenge the church faced. This map is a reminder of how large was the task the Seventh-day Adventist Church had launched itself into; but it was one the Church's leaders and members engaged in with enthusiasm."

Based on a reported world population of 1,594,699,700



August R. Ohman's Missionary Map of the World (1906)

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the publisher recognized five predominant religions (including the unfortunate term “Mohammedans” rather than Muslims) and a sixth category for those not belonging to the first five – which lumped together a wide variety of different faiths, beliefs and traditions under the unfortunate term of “Heathen.”

Group	World Population	Major Geographic Areas
Protestants	175,000,000	North America, South Africa, parts of Australia and Northern Europe
Greek, Russian, and other Orthodox Churches	115,000,000	Greece, Romania, Abyssinia, and Russia
Roman Catholics	240,000,000	Central and South America, and Southern Europe
Jews	9,000,000	Not noted
Mohammedans	210,000,000	Northern Africa, Arabia, Persia
Heathens	845,000,000	Central Africa, Chinese Empire, India, Japan, Southern/Western Australia

This chart adjudged most people in the world as heathen if they did not belong to one of the four “prevailing” Christian confessions or of Islam – 53% to 47%.

The world population today is thought to be about 7,674,000,000 – 4.81 times as large as the world’s population 115 years ago. Today Protestants are estimated to number between 800 million and 1 billion; Orthodox adherents are estimated to be about 260 million; Roman Catholics at 1.2 billion, Judaism population estimates are about 15 million; and the Muslim population is about 1.8 billion. World religions not considered in this 115-year old map include Hinduism at 1.1 billion; Buddhism at 506 million; and Sikhism at 26 million.

Roy Kline

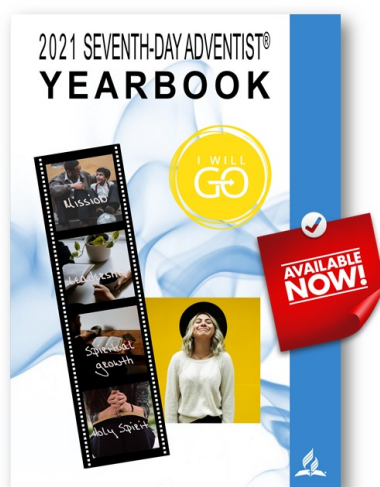
Find a list of all Adventist organizations and institutions around the world in the *Adventist Yearbook*

From General Conference Divisions, Unions, and Conferences to Educational Institutions (excluding primary schools), Food Industries, Healthcare Institutions, and more!

Find their mid-year statistics, contact information, and social media links, among other interesting facts, in the *Adventist Yearbook*.

Pre-order your copy of the 2021 *Adventist Yearbook*, in printed form or electronic file, at PacificPress.com/SDAYearbook.

Don’t miss out on this extraordinary source of information!



Journal of Adventist Archives set to Launch

We’re pleased to announce that the Journal of Adventist Archives is set to launch! Please look for the new issue on the adventistarchives.org website.



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ASTR Welcomes Elder Erton Köhler as our new GC Secretary



Elder Erton Köhler (credit to [Adventist World](#))

The Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research is a part of the larger Secretariat family at the General Conference, and we're happy to welcome Elder Erton Köhler (formerly President of the South American Division) as the new General Conference Secretary as of April 14, 2021, replacing Elder G. T. Ng, who had retired (served 2010-2021). Both of these gentlemen, and their immediate predecessor, it so happens, represented and represent historic firsts amongst the Executive Committee officers of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Elder Ng was the first Asian-born (Singapore) executive officer. He was preceded by Elder Matthew A. Bediako (served 2000-2010), the first African-born (Ghana) officer and Secretary. And now, we're happy to maintain the tradition of historic firsts by welcoming Elder Köhler as the first South American-born (Brazil) executive officer and Secretary. We pray God's guidance and blessings for him and his family as they transition to new duties and challenges in their service for God and the Church.

Michael Younker

Virtual Walkthroughs Advance Accreditations

The COVID pandemic curtailed ASTR's ability to visit various World Church divisions to not only advise and recommend better record-keeping processes in their

archives and record centers, but to also evaluate their record-keeping in order to determine if they have met the record-keeping standards of ASTR's several accreditation levels.

However, interest in meeting ASTR's accreditation standards <https://www.adventistarchives.org/accred-specs> and securing accreditation has never been higher.

To better assist record-keeping entities during this pandemic period, ASTR devised a virtual accreditation walkthrough - facilitated through Zoom. During the walkthrough we explain, point by point, every detail of the standards of their chosen level of accreditation and a detailed explanation of that level's respective scoring particulars. Additionally, the walkthrough becomes the forum for the ability to ask ASTR's Accreditation Walkthrough team any questions concerning records management.

On March 16th we had a very detailed virtual accreditation walkthrough with the Southern Asia-Pacific Division (SSD) personnel. Once GC international travel restrictions are lifted, we plan on making a site visit to SSD in early 2022.

We are looking forward to our next virtual accreditation walkthrough, on July 13th, with personnel of the East-Central Africa Division (ECD). In 2016 we visited ECD and undertook trainings in records management. We are hopeful of an accreditation visit in 2022 if conditions permit it.

Additionally, we have been in talks with Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division (SID) and are planning a virtual accreditation walkthrough for August 17th. An ASTR team visited SID in 2014 and at that time performed record-keeping consultation. As with the above sites, it probably will not be until 2022 before we can make it back.

ASTR is very pleased that momentum has been gathering for Divisions to seek records accreditation. The striving for uniformity and excellence in records keeping that we are seeding within the Church's record-keeping entities will certainly promote their usefulness for researchers in the future.

Roy Kline

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New Book on Adventist Youth by ASTR

Are you curious about Adventist adolescents? During the 2017-18 Global Church Member Survey (GCMS) a total of 63,756 survey respondents participated in it from 13 divisions. Twelve percent of the total sample (7,490 participants) were young people up to 20 years old.



We are so excited to share this recent GCMS data about this group of young people in the book: *The Beliefs & Practices of Adventist Adolescents* published by ASTR this year.

The book will tell us more about who they are, their habits, and how they feel about themselves and their churches. The data will

shed light on key areas of their lives, including those where some improvements can help them continue to grow and thrive. The 2017-18 GCMS was a quantitative study. We compiled the results in easy-to-understand graphs with introductions that tell you more about the findings in each section. At the end of the book, you will find Conclusions and an Index of the original survey questions linked to each respective graph.

We hope this data will inspire you to pray for and love Adventist adolescents more. May the insights you receive help your local church embrace young Adventists, involve them in ministry to the church and community, and encourage them to move forward in their spiritual journeys with the Lord! If you would like to purchase this book, please click [here](#).

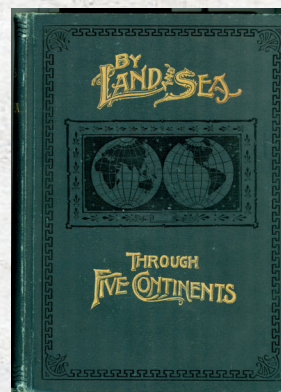
Soon we will publish a similar book regarding the group of 21-35 year-olds with the title: *The Beliefs & Practices of Adventist Young Adults*.

If you have questions or would like to know more information regarding the books, please email us at Research@gc.adventist.org.

Manuela Coppock

Book Acquisitions by ASTR

The Rebok Memorial Library recently acquired *Journeys By Land and Sea: A Visit to Five Continents*, written by George C. Tenney (1847-1921) and published in 1895 by the International Tract Society. It is 392 pages long and includes often full-page illustrations and portraits. You can see the cover of the book below.



George C. Tenney's *Journeys By Land and Sea* (1895)

Tenney journeys from California to the Hawaiian Islands, then across the Pacific Ocean, visiting various islands (including Pitcairn Island) until arriving at New Zealand and Australia. From Australia, the reader joins Tenney on his way to Ceylon (modern Sri Lanka) on his travels and then into and around India. The next stop is Egypt, where the reader visits Alexandria and then visits Jerusalem and Bethlehem (now in modern Israel). The trip then touches Rome and heads home to the States.

The book is the result of Tenney's actual travel, including a generalized account of the trip from California to Australia (which he first undertook in 1888) but mostly incorporating the "extended tour" he embarked upon in 1892 and 1893. It's clear from the way he situated the reader as traveling from the United States and back again that he intended the main audience of the book to be Americans. Tenney packed geographical and demographic information, into the text, some of which

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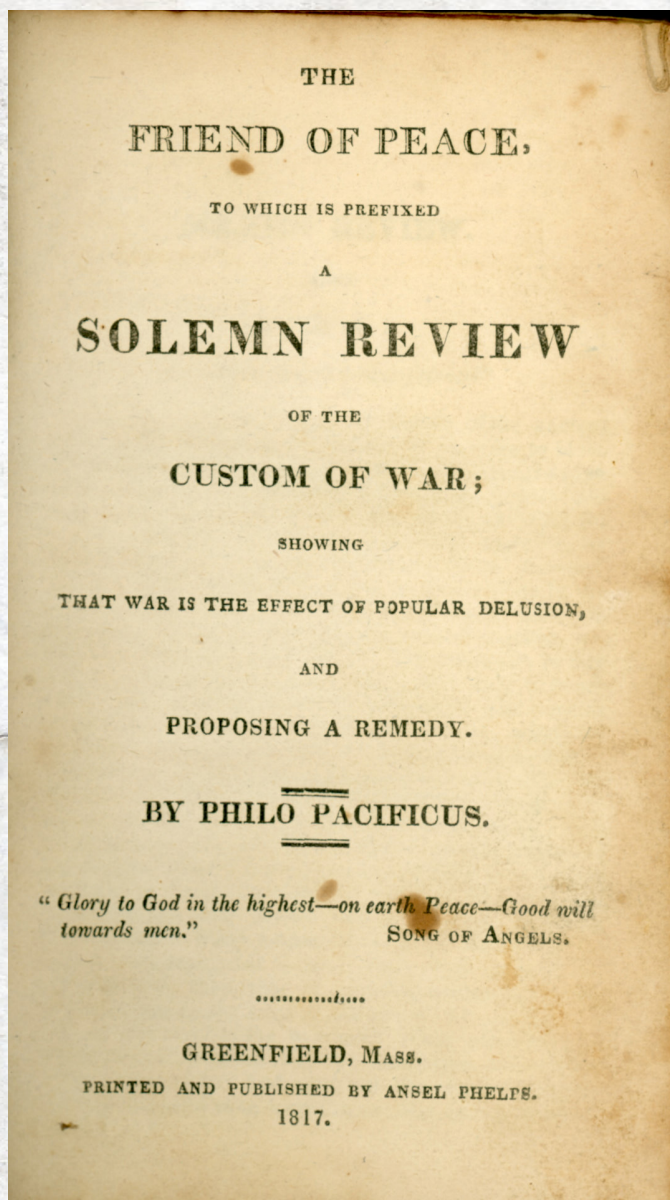
appeared earlier in issues of the *Bible Echo and Signs of the Times*, of which he was ostensibly the editor at the time of his extended tour. The book was later revised and re-issued in 1904 as *Travels by Land and Sea*; the Library does not yet have a copy of this later edition. (To read more about Tenney's life, visit the new *Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists* online; an article about him resides [there](#).)

The Library also recently acquired a copy (see right) of *The friend of peace, to which is prefixed a solemn review of the custom of war; showing that war is the effect of popular delusion, and proposing a remedy*, which was published in Greenfield, Massachusetts in 1817. It contains 283 pages and is in fairly good condition for its age. This text contains "A Solemn Review of the Custom of War" as well as the first seven issues of *The Friend of Peace*, an anti-war periodical.

Its author was Noah Worcester (1758-1837), a Unitarian clergyman, writer, editor, and a key figure in American pacifism (as one might tell from the book's very long title), though the work was published under the pseudonym *Philo Pacificus* (roughly meaning, lover of peace). A participant in the American Revolutionary War, Worcester founded the Massachusetts Peace Society (which later merged with the American Peace Society, which still exists today). You can see the title page of the volume here.

Some might wonder why the book has been added to our collection when it was published long before the organization of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. However, its acquisition will be of use to researchers who are keen to situate the Church's long history with pacifism, religious liberty, and anti-imperialism, among other subjects, within a broader context. For that reason, it is an excellent addition to the Library.

Ashlee Chism



The Friend of Peace, by Noah Worcester (1758-1837)

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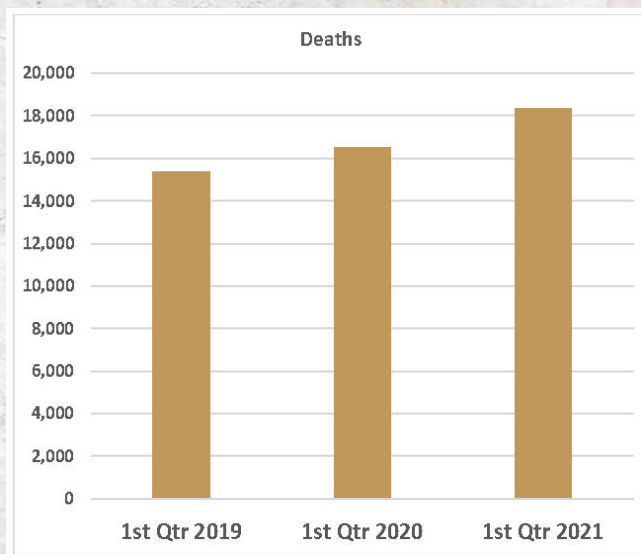
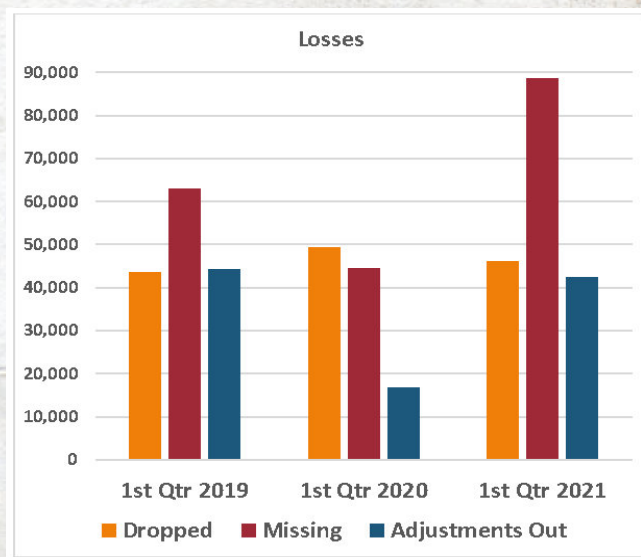
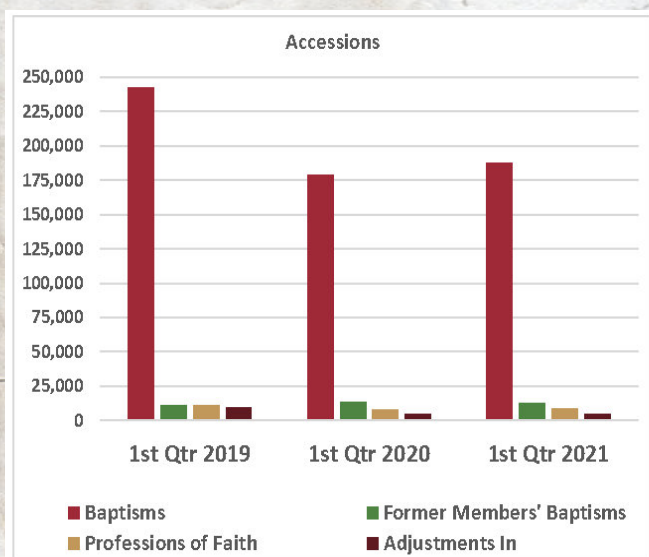
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Realities of a Pandemic: How the Church fared during the Tragedy

A Tale of Three Quarters: How has the covid-19 pandemic affected the activities of the Adventist Church? A comparison of the first quarter statistics for 2019, 2020, and 2021 reveals an interesting story. Notably, one may be wondering if an excess of deaths might be seen given the pandemic. While these statistics merely show the reported deaths of members for any reason, nonetheless, while the increase in deaths reported were not as high as we expected, there was an increase (while noting deaths are often underreported in general).

As can also be seen below, accessions have dropped and remain down from 2019 through 2021. Although losses dipped in 2020, they have also rebounded—apparently pandemics don't make it any harder to leave the Church. People are still moving around much less, as evidenced by the downward trend in membership transfers. (Transfer figures exclude those resulting from the creation of new local fields.) You can read more online in the [Annual Statistical Report](#).



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As always, remember to help us Tell the Story!

As a reminder, our purpose here at ASTR is to tell the Adventist story. We want to inform and inspire church members toward a renewed commitment to the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church by sharing our history.

You can help us to tell the story in two ways:

First, help us to preserve the story: your stories and the Church's story! Letters and other documents, memoirs, photographs, tape recordings, audio and video cassettes, films, and historic books and magazines: all enable us to recover the story of how, in the words of Ellen White, "the Lord has led us . . . in our past history" and of how God has worked in the lives of individual church members. They are the raw materials from which Adventist history can be researched by scholars and without which parts of that history will be lost. So please, [contact us](#) about sending your family's documents, photographs, and other historic materials to us so that they can be preserved and used to help the great Second Advent Movement fulfill its prophetic mission.

Second, help us to conserve and to share the story—to pass it on to the next generation. Historic Adventist photographs and movies allow us to connect with our past in a way nothing else can, because we look into the eyes of those who sacrificed to make this Church. We want to digitize those precious resources, scanning them electronically so they can be accessed by everyone. We especially want to connect with young people. By digitizing photos and movies, we can help them to understand "the way the Lord has led us and His teaching in our past history"—we can help them to connect with our pioneers and be inspired to service.

Haven't received your Newsletter? Sign up [HERE](#). For previous issues visit our [website](#).



Your gift of at least \$25 could:

- Digitize 100 feet of film = five minutes viewing time, or
- Conserve, digitize, and publicize one historic Adventist photograph from our collection of thousands, or
- Contribute to our continuing effort to preserve and digitize rare Adventist books, pamphlets, and magazines

Two ways to Donate:

- 1) Mail your remittance to:
GC Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research
12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD
20904
- 2) Donate Online by visiting:
www.adventistarchives.org/tellthestory
and click the "Donate" link.

