

Featured Articles:

Spring 2022 Greetings, p.1

Windows on the Past GC Sessions, p.1

Adventist Pioneer Work in Iraq, p.5

Digitization Updates, p.7

New Finding Aids, p.8

Presence of SDA Institutions, p.9

Prayer in the Name of Jesus, p.11

Counting the Votes: GC Delegates, p.13

Employee Profile: Meredith Carter, p.14

Remember to help us Tell the Story! p.16

TELLING THE STORY

Archives, Statistics,
and Research (ASTR)
Newsletter - Issue #11



Spring 2022 Greetings from ASTR

With the twice-delayed General Conference Session in St. Louis, Missouri, before us, we here at ASTR, alongside our many other colleagues throughout the General Conference and our friends around the world, are busy preparing materials for use during the upcoming Session. A piece of trivia: While this will only be the second Session in St. Louis, our most common location for GC Sessions was Battle Creek, Michigan, with 32 Sessions held there. This issue of our Newsletter is packed with articles and data we trust our readers will find fascinating as they also prepare for the Summer season and our upcoming Session. With that in mind, we have a couple articles addressing our past Sessions, which we hope you will find informative.

Windows on the Past: Images of Historic GC Sessions

The General Conference Archives has on display photographs of the delegates and attendees at several past historic GC Sessions, which we share with our readers in this issue.

The General Conference Archives displays photographs of the attendees and delegates from past General Conference Sessions, particularly several long photographs of the 39th, 40th, 41st, and 42nd Sessions.

These photographs keenly demonstrate the growth of the Seventh-day Adventist Church during the interwar era, especially as three of the Sessions were held at the same venue, the Exposition Memorial Auditorium, in San Francisco, California, and the photographs were taken in the same spot outside the building. (San Francisco can also be seen growing in the background of the images.) After the 1930 Session, photographs of this sort were no longer possible due to the number of delegates; instead, rectangular interior shots capturing full venues became the norm.

1918 GC Session

The 39th Session was held in San Francisco from March 29 to April 14, 1918. Delayed by a year by World War I, the 39th Session had 443 delegates, which was less than expected due to the conditions in Europe and Africa. In his presidential address to "the Delegates and visiting Brethren and Sisters attending the Thirty-ninth Session of the General Conference", President Arthur G. Daniells, who was elected to a sixth term at this Session, (article continues on page 4)



Nationals at the 1930 General Conference Session
(photo credit: GC Archives)



1926 General Conference Session (photo credit: GC Archives)

1



1930 General Conference Session (photo credit: GC Archives)

Featured Articles:

Spring 2022 Greetings, p.1

Windows on the Past GC Sessions, p.1

Adventist Pioneer Work in Iraq, p.5

Digitization Updates, p.7

New Finding Aids, p.8

Presence of SDA Institutions, p.9

Prayer in the Name of Jesus, p.11

Counting the Votes: GC Delegates, p.13

Employee Profile: Meredith Carter, p.14

Remember to help us Tell the Story! p.16

emphasized the global nature of the Advent movement, speaking of the implementation of the divisions, the work being done in them, and the growing numbers of local workers in mission fields. But he also articulated a goal for planning "a far stronger mission work than anything we have yet approached. No argument is needed in support of this proposal. The very character of our message demands it. The present world situation calls for it. . . . This great, glorious work can be pushed on to any limit we choose. We aim at nothing less than the whole world."¹

1922 GC Session

One hundred years ago, the 40th Session convened in San Francisco from May 11-28, 1922. 581 delegates were in attendance, and GC President Daniells made special note of the delegates from Europe and Africa in his address to the Session. Secretary William A. Spicer gave his report on the work being done in the mission fields. Referring to an "immense illuminated globe prepared by the Pacific Press brethren, bearing the map of the earth, and showing by the shining points of light as it revolves, the places where the light of this message is shining forth" on display at the Session, Spicer made a stirring description of where the Advent message was shining:

"They are shining within the arctic circle. At ever farthest point of all the southern continents and great islands the jets of light shine out toward the Antarctic. They gleam along the equator where it passes though South America, Africa, and the East Indies. The message comes nearer and nearer to belting the earth with continuous lines of sparkling lights. True, there are still dark gaps, empty spaces, many tribes and tongues without the light, to challenge us to yet more earnest effort than we have ever yet put forth."²

1926 GC Session

Associate Secretary Cecil K. Meyers mused on the meaning of the 41st GC Session, which was held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin from May 27 to June 14, 1926, in an issue of the *Review* published on the first day of the Session. In addition to the growth seen in the Church between 1922 and 1926, Meyers found it a wonderful thing that, among the attendees of the Session (including its 558 delegates), were to be found "believers indigenous to these remote parts in which [the Adventist Church is] working." He went on to describe those in attendance:

We not only have representatives here who are natives of almost every country of Europe, but there is a South American girl representing a remote

tribe in the Amazon region, with which Brother Stahl, our pioneer missionary, has begun work. Then there is Ratu Meli, a Fijian chief, . . . Then we have Juan Afenir from the Philippine Islands. . . Then there is L. G. Mookerjee, from Bengal, India. . . from Japan, S. Miyake. . . They speak for a loyal band of foreign workers, numbering almost as many as the workers in North America, who have linked hands with the workers sent from America to carry the gospel to foreign peoples and make it possible for God to be honored through their ministry and service.³

GC President William A. Spicer emphasized in his report that "[t]here is only one thing for us Seventh-day Adventists,—it is to finish the work that God has given us in the commission to carry the message of the judgment hour to every nation and kindred and tongue and people."⁴

1930 GC Session

The results of the Adventist Church aiming at the whole world and linking hands with those in the mission fields can be seen in the photograph of the 42nd Session, which was again held in San Francisco, this time from May 28 to June 12, 1930. Amid the 577 delegates, seated close to GC President Spicer in the center of this photograph are two delegates from Fiji (Ratu Jiali Tuilakemba and Ratu Setareki Cevaca) and one from Korea (Ne Keun Ok). These delegates, seen along with the other Adventist workers in national dress (see page one) in a smaller photograph of "Nationals in Attendance at S. D. A. General Conference, San Francisco, 1930", demonstrate how the Advent message had grown from its American roots and truly encompassed the whole world. It becomes apparent in this photo that the aspirations set out by Daniells, Spicer, and others like them were no longer aspirations, but reality.

Ashlee Chism

¹ Arthur G. Daniells, "The President's Address", *Review and Herald* 95:14 (April 4, 1918), 7. An interior shot of this session can be seen on the first page of the April 25, 1918 issue of the *Review*.

² William A. Spicer, "The Mission Field Outlook", *Review and Herald* 99:21 Extra (May 22, 1922), 8.

³ Cecil K. Meyers, "Meaning of the Conference", *Review and Herald* 103:21 (May 27, 1926), 4.

⁴ William A. Spicer, "Report of the General Conference President", *Review and Herald* 103:21 (May 27, 1926), 11.

Featured Articles:

Spring 2022 Greetings, p.1

Windows on the Past GC Sessions, p.1

Adventist Pioneer Work in Iraq, p.5

Digitization Updates, p.7

New Finding Aids, p.8

Presence of SDA Institutions, p.9

Prayer in the Name of Jesus, p.11

Counting the Votes: GC Delegates, p.13

Employee Profile: Meredith Carter, p.14

Remember to help us Tell the Story! p.16

Adventist Pioneer Work in Iraq: In the Valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates

The following article about the Adventist Church's history in Iraq has been adapted from a longer [article](#) by Basim Fargo, Melanie Wixwat, and Malcolm Russell in the Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists online at encyclopedia.adventist.org. We invite you to visit the encyclopedia to read this and other inspiring stories about the history of the Adventist mission work in the 10/40 Window countries. The 10/40 Window is an area comprising nearly seventy countries in North Africa, the Middle East, and Asia between 10 degrees north and 40 degrees north latitude. This area is home to the majority of the world's Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists. Most of the world's least-reached countries and people groups are in this area. All photos in this article are courtesy of the Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists.

Background

Protestant missionaries entered the territory of the modern Republic of Iraq in the 19th century. Of particular relevance to Adventism, in 1841 a small group of American Presbyterian missionaries arrived in Mosul. They won some converts, whose descendants provided the entering wedge for Adventism. Michael Saaty was the first Presbyterian convert in Mosul. His daughter, Suzanne, married Abdallah Hasso, who became elder of the Presbyterian congregation.¹ Their son Bashir would play a crucial role in establishing Adventism in Iraq.

The First Iraqi Adventist Congregation

Bashir Hasso enrolled at the Syrian Protestant College in Beirut to study pharmacy, c. 1907. He purchased the book, *Daniel and the Revelation* from Syria's first Adventist colporteur, Tigran Zakarian. So, when the first Adventist missionary to Beirut, [Walter K. Ising](#), conducted his first evangelistic campaign in 1910, Bashir was among its most loyal attendees. After several months' study in Ising's home, Bashir was baptized with several others the day after his graduation from pharmacy school

in 1911.² Returning to his homeland, Bashir shared his faith with his family in Mosul. He wrote to the General Conference and asked for someone to be sent to Mosul. Ising managed to visit Mosul briefly in 1913. However, World War I soon intervened. British Empire forces occupied Mesopotamia, and the postwar peace settlement established a new country, named "Iraq."



The first 7 members in Mosul, Iraq, baptized by Walter Ising in 1923

With the war over, Bashir Hasso resumed his pleas for workers to be sent to Iraq. His airmailed letter to Arthur G. Daniels, president of the General Conference, created a stir at the 1922 General Conference Session in San Francisco. Walter Ising was again dispatched to the valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates. A baptistry was prepared in Bashir's basement, and the first of seven candidates to enter the water was Bashir's widowed mother. His wife, two married sisters, and his younger brother, Nassif, were also baptized. Bashir was ordained elder of the little congregation in Mosul, the first Adventist church in Iraq. One of Bashir's sisters, [Salam Fargo](#), became a devout home missionary.

Adventist Expansion in Mosul

Mosul naturally became the first center of Adventism in Iraq. By 1929 the church membership reached 21, meeting in the Bashir Hasso home. Gradually the work began to grow. In 1929, a church school opened in Mosul

Featured Articles:

Spring 2022 Greetings, p.1

Windows on the Past GC Sessions, p.1

Adventist Pioneer Work in Iraq, p.5

Digitization Updates, p.7

New Finding Aids, p.8

Presence of SDA Institutions, p.9

Prayer in the Name of Jesus, p.11

Counting the Votes: GC Delegates, p.13

Employee Profile: Meredith Carter, p.14

Remember to help us Tell the Story! p.16

with about 25 children.³ Only a few years later, the school, with 12 national teachers under Ghanim Fargo, enrolled about 150 students, 30 of them from Adventist homes.



Dar El Salam school in Mosul, 1940

Missionaries came and departed, as did several young Egyptian pastors and teachers. One of them, Hilal Doss, arrived to pastor the church in 1943. His public evangelistic series attracted considerable attention from the public, much to the Orthodox (Jacobite) bishop's dismay. When Doss published a sermon on the Law of God, the bishop sought a legal remedy, demanding that its author be punished for publishing without a license. However, during a courtroom trial of considerable drama, Doss demonstrated that the only such regulation dated from Ottoman times and was not an Iraqi law. The case was dismissed, but the trial provided good publicity. In the following weeks hundreds were attracted to the meetings.⁴

As the oil industry in Iraq expanded after World War II, prosperity enhanced the appeal of private education. Adventist schools attracted many students. For example, in 1954 the Dar El Salaam School in Baghdad had an enrollment of 360 students, the largest in the [Middle East Division](#). The schools became so successful in their mission outreach that the mission president was able to report in 1954, "Nearly all the membership that we have

in our field at present was brought to us through our school, the one that we have operated in the city of Mosul for some years."⁵

One milestone in the development of the Adventist mission work occurred when in 1946 the [Dar El Salaam Hospital](#) opened under Dr. Edwin Essery, the medical director, and two Arab physicians, Dr. Youssef Ibrahim Saaty, an Iraqi, and Dr. Shukri Karmy, from Palestine. Unfortunately, this work was cut short when the revolutionary government that took power in 1958 nationalized the hospital.

Another milestone was construction of the first denominationally-owned church and school facility in Iraq, dedicated in 1955. The chapel seated 250 people and the school included eight spacious classrooms, along with offices for the principal and the church pastor.



Pastor Hilal Doss at Baghdad SDA Church

Surviving in Perilous Times

In the early 1960s much of northern Iraq became politically unstable. Despite the embargo hardship and the fact that many Iraqis, including Adventists, emigrated from Iraq, there continued to be a steady growth of membership. In 1959 the new republican government officially recognized the Church, under Behnam Arshat, its first Iraqi president. In 1978 Hilal Doss, president of the Iraq Field, had negotiated with the government to gain permission for Adventist students at all levels to observe

Featured Articles:

Spring 2022 Greetings, p.1

Windows on the Past GC Sessions, p.1

Adventist Pioneer Work in Iraq, p.5

Digitization Updates, p.7

New Finding Aids, p.8

Presence of SDA Institutions, p.9

Prayer in the Name of Jesus, p.11

Counting the Votes: GC Delegates, p.13

Employee Profile: Meredith Carter, p.14

Remember to help us Tell the Story! p.16

the Sabbath, an important act since all church schools had been taken over by the government a few years earlier.

The members remained faithful during the subsequent 1991 Gulf War. Following Iraq's defeat and a subsequent Shi'a rebellion, the United Nations placed strict economic sanctions on the country. In the distress, Adventist World Radio's listener base in Iraq increased dramatically, and church attendance increased.⁶ Considering Christians politically inactive but economically productive, Saddam Hussein's regime protected Christians from Islamic extremists. However, the American invasion of Iraq in 2003 proved disastrous for Iraqi Christians. Many Muslim Iraqis considered their fellow Christians sympathetic to the occupation. Consequently, during the breakdown of law and order, acts of violence directed against Christians occurred throughout the land and decimated the Christian churches. In 2003 the total Christian population was commonly considered between 800,000 and 1.5 million. By 2020, estimates—no census having been taken—had fallen to around 200,000.

Before the American invasion in 2003 there were four Adventist churches with 200 members and four ordained ministers. After the invasion, just 12 members and one minister remained in Erbil Church in the safer Kurdish zone in the north. The Iraq Field headquarters moved to Erbil in 2013. The church leaders purchased land and built a beautiful church there that was dedicated in 2018. A year later the church membership stood at 81.⁷ No other congregations were functioning in Arab Iraq as of 2020. The greatest needs in mission are to assist the nation's rebuilding and to show God's love and care in a country that has been devastated.

Adapted by Dragoslava Santrac

¹ W. K. Ising, "Mosul, Our First Church in Mesopotamia," *Review and Herald*, July 19, 1923, 8-10.

² W. K. Ising, "Syrian Mission," *RH*, December 28, 1911, 15.

³ W. K. Ising, "In the Arabic Union Mission," *RH*, December 12, 1929, 21-22.

⁴ S. W. Johnson, "A Major Victory in Iraq," *RH*, June 14, 1945, 12-13.

⁵ E. E. Roenfelt, "Items of Special Interest," *RH*, December 30, 1954, 24.

⁶ "AWR Mail Increases in the Middle East," *RH*, February 15, 1996, 6.

⁷ Secretary's Statistical Report by Country, Third Quarter 2019, Middle East and North Africa Union Mission.

Digitization Updates from ASTR

The ASTR digital archives are always being updated. We are glad to share what we have been up to lately in making our digital records available to researchers.

General Conference Executive Committee

ASTR is pleased to announce that the 2005-2011 General Conference Executive Committee Minutes (GCC Minutes) have now been uploaded to the [Online Archives Website](#). Furthermore, the GCC Minutes will regularly be updated each January with a rolling moratorium on minutes of the preceding ten years.

Digitization in ASTR

First used in 1954, digitization is defined by the Merriam-Webster Dictionary as the process of converting something to digital form. In ASTR, scanning documents using high-speed or flatbed scanners is the primary process by which we digitize records.

What do we scan and why? We scan files that, according to the retention schedule, are considered permanent or archival—such as correspondence, minutes, agenda, annual reports, or periodicals—in order to preserve older records, enable indexing and Optical Character Recognition (OCR), and allow for searchable records.

In the last six months, the Records arm of ASTR has scanned over 7,200 files; that is 1,700 more files than over the same time period for the previous year. Most of these files have been scanned for preservation reasons, but many of these files have been used by researchers or departmental staff to further their work. We are glad that in spite of the challenges of the pandemic, we have been able to continue to grow in this area.

Elizabeth Henry

Featured Articles:

Spring 2022 Greetings, p.1

Windows on the Past GC Sessions, p.1

Adventist Pioneer Work in Iraq, p.5

Digitization Updates, p.7

New Finding Aids, p.8

Presence of SDA Institutions, p.9

Prayer in the Name of Jesus, p.11

Counting the Votes: GC Delegates, p.13

Employee Profile: Meredith Carter, p.14

Remember to help us Tell the Story! p.16

New Finding Aids for Archival Holdings

Part of what ASTR does is facilitate access to the archival materials and collections to be found in the General Conference Archives and the Rebek Memorial Library. While these materials and collections have for a long time been listed in an internal database and library catalog, we recently began work to provide more detailed and more public information about our holdings.

First, we worked with a vendor, as well as the General Conference IT team, to implement our new catalog, which incorporates database entries related to archival materials, including photographs, as well as the MARC records from the previous library catalog, into one site. The work is ongoing to ensure that the data in the entries is consistent and accessible. You can find the catalog at <https://catalog.adventistarchives.org/public/final/Portal/default.aspx>.

Second, we have begun the work of creating detailed finding aids for collections within the Archives and the Library. Finding aids are guides to specific collections of enduring value, containing descriptions typically consisting of contextual and structural information about the collection. This information can be at the collection, folder, or item level, depending on several factors, including size, complexity, and relative importance of the collection. These aids can be updated when new materials are added to a collection, but in general they are meant to assist the researcher in knowing what is available to them for their research.

For the Archives, we will be first producing finding aids for the Personal Collections. These collections of enduring value are typically related to the work the creator or compiler of the material did for the Seventh-day Adventist Church; sometimes they contain materials that should have been transferred to the Archives via the Records Center but for whatever reason were not, and yet still made their way into the Archives through later donations.

No finding aids are presently available for any Personal Collections, though several collections are at various stages of the creation process and may be available within the year. These collections are the Pierson

Collection, the Johns Collection, and the Votaw Collection.

For the Library, we will be producing finding aids for its Manuscript Collections. These collections of enduring value are generally related to Adventist history and include materials that were donated by family members or creators of the materials; sometimes they are related to work a person did for the Adventist Church, but the materials were never considered as part of a records center.

Four finding aids are presently available for the Manuscript Collections, and several other collections are in the early stages of processing. The four available finding aids are for the Harvey Edson Rogers Collection (MS 1), the Jennie Thayer Collection, 1875-1916 (MS 7), the Frederick C. Gilbert Collection, 1855-1950 (MS 8), and the Samuel, Ella, and Gladys Frost Photo Collection, 1910-1975 (MS 9). Below you can see the cover from the Rogers Collection finding aid.

All finding aids, whether for the Personal Collections or the Manuscript Collections, will be made available in both the new catalog (linked above) and on the ASTR website (<https://www.adventistarchives.org/astr-finding-aids>). We look forward to making these materials of enduring value available to researchers!

Ashlee Chism



Featured Articles:

Spring 2022 Greetings, p.1

Windows on the Past GC Sessions, p.1

Adventist Pioneer Work in Iraq, p.5

Digitization Updates, p.7

New Finding Aids, p.8

Presence of SDA Institutions, p.9

Prayer in the Name of Jesus, p.11

Counting the Votes: GC Delegates, p.13

Employee Profile: Meredith Carter, p.14

Remember to help us Tell the Story! p.16

Global Presence of Adventist Institutions: Inside/outside the 10/40 Window

The mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is to "Make disciples of Jesus Christ who live as His loving witnesses and proclaim to all people the everlasting gospel of the Three Angels' Messages in preparation for His soon return" utilizing the method of "...Christ-like living, communicating, discipling, teaching, healing, and serving." In the pursuit of accomplishing this mission, the Church organization has planted many institutions around the world, of which some are located in the 10/40 Window. Most of these institutions appear in the *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook*, the annual publication that records all denominationally owned entities.

The 2021 edition of the *Adventist Yearbook* list the following number of institutions:

Type of Entity	Inside the 10/40 Countries	Outside the 10/40 Countries	Total by Entity Type
Administrative Organizations	216	721	937
Food Industries	4	11	15
Hospitals	33	158	191
Media Centers	4	15	19
Radio and TV Stations	6	123	129
Medical/Dental Clinics and Air Bases	48	262	310
Nursing Homes & Retirement Centers	4	75	79
Orphanages	3	17	20
Publishing Houses	11	48	59
Education: Tertiary Schools	22	82	104
Education: Secondary Schools	118	712	830
Denominational Entities Total	469	2,224	2,693

The 10/40 Window, where 67% of the world's population lives, currently has a presence of only 15% of all health institutions, and of secondary and tertiary schools. Although the *Adventist Yearbook* does not list primary schools, the percentage is likely to be similar. Compared to the 23% of administrative entities within the 10/40 Window, the 8% difference in institutional presence appears tremendous. This difference ought to be a positive challenge to encourage the planting of more of these types of institutions, even beyond that 8%, to serve the communities of the 10/40 Window.

Featured Articles:

Spring 2022 Greetings, p.1

Windows on the Past GC Sessions, p.1

Adventist Pioneer Work in Iraq, p.5

Digitization Updates, p.7

New Finding Aids, p.8

Presence of SDA Institutions, p.9

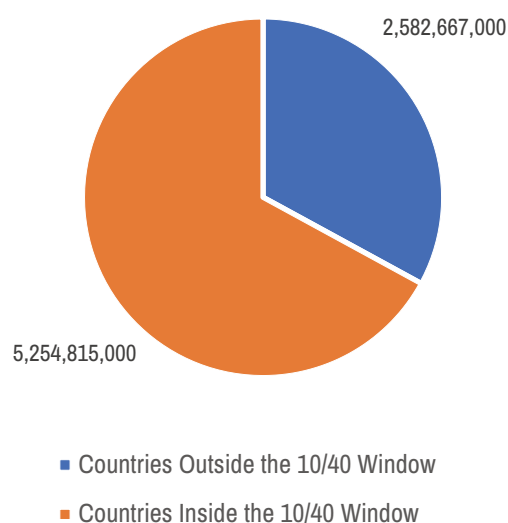
Prayer in the Name of Jesus, p.11

Counting the Votes: GC Delegates, p.13

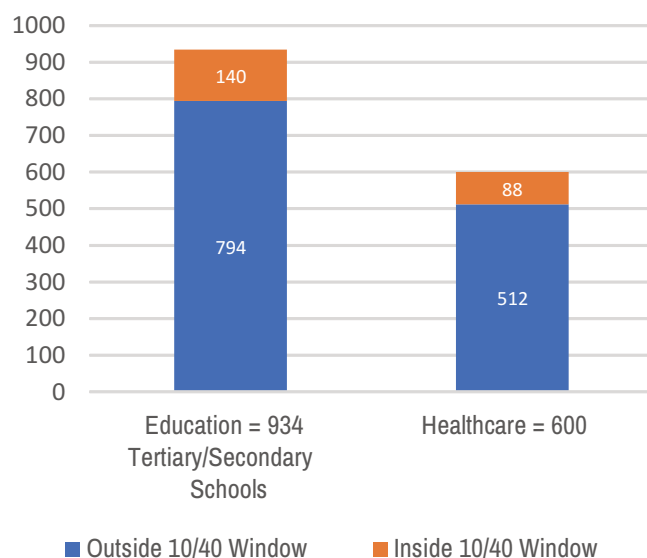
Employee Profile: Meredith Carter, p.14

Remember to help us Tell the Story! p.16

Mid -2021 World Population = 7,837,482,000



Educational and Healthcare Institutions

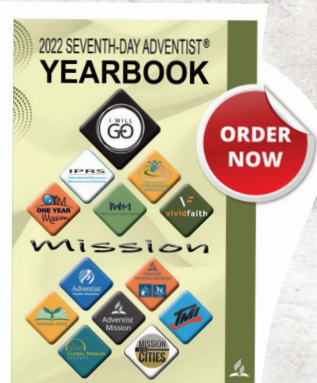


The Adventist Church has been intentional in planting educational and healthcare institutions, though most are regularly where the membership is because it seems natural that these institutions will serve church members; however, history has demonstrated that when we plant institutions where there are no members, these institutions become the doorway for new members and new churches in those places.

Thus, it is crucial that the Adventist Church plant new institutions where there are less or no members, so that these peoples will experience the love of Jesus and hear about the second coming of the Saviour of the world.

Margarita S. Neyra

Don't forget to acquire your own copy of the 2022 Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook [here](#):



Featured Articles:

Spring 2022 Greetings, p.1

Windows on the Past GC Sessions, p.1

Adventist Pioneer Work in Iraq, p.5

Digitization Updates, p.7

New Finding Aids, p.8

Presence of SDA Institutions, p.9

Prayer in the Name of Jesus, p.11

Counting the Votes: GC Delegates, p.13

Employee Profile: Meredith Carter, p.14

Remember to help us Tell the Story! p.16

Prayer in the Name of Jesus

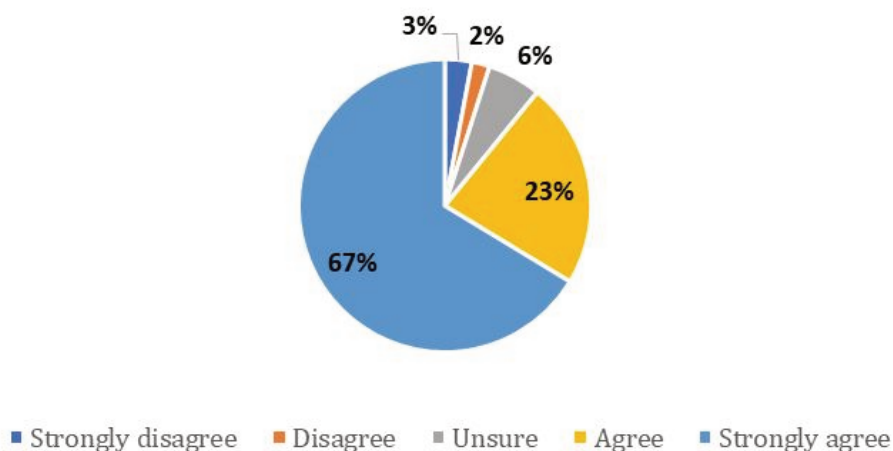
“And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.” (John 14:13 NKJV)

Prayer has many functions—to connect us with God, bless us with His presence, comfort us, and channel our petitions to Him. In addition, it provides us with encouragement from God, His guidance, forgiveness, and hope. Prayer in the name of Jesus is also means of God’s intervention in people’s lives and in the realm of supernatural powers.

Jesus told us that there is power in His name. His name is a name of a victor and ruler over all principalities in heaven and on earth. How do church members around the world view this privilege—How much do church members around the world view this privilege—to use the power of the name of Jesus?

The 2017-18 Global Church Member Survey, conducted in all 13 divisions, asked the participants if the prayer in the name of Jesus is the only way to defeat evil powers. Almost all church members (90%) agreed, about 5% disagreed.

Prayer in the name of Jesus is the only way to defeat evil powers and demonic spirits



In division-by-division breakdown, more than two-thirds of members in each division agreed with such a statement. Members from 12 divisions had even broken the 90% line of agreement. However, the Southern Asia and Southern Asia-Pacific Divisions had the lowest agreement on this question, although still it was over 75%. Next to them were the North American and Northern Asia-Pacific Divisions. The Southern Asia, Northern Asia-Pacific, and Euro-Asia Divisions had the lowest score of “strongly agree” responses. In each division, some people were unsure, and some disagreed with this statement. Overall disagreement ranged from 2% to 6%, and doubts from 2% to 11%. The Southern Asia, Southern Asia-Pacific, and North American Divisions had the highest percentages of those who doubted, and the Southern Asia Division had the highest number of those who disagreed.

Featured Articles:

Spring 2022 Greetings, p.1

Windows on the Past GC Sessions, p.1

Adventist Pioneer Work in Iraq, p.5

Digitization Updates, p.7

New Finding Aids, p.8

Presence of SDA Institutions, p.9

Prayer in the Name of Jesus, p.11

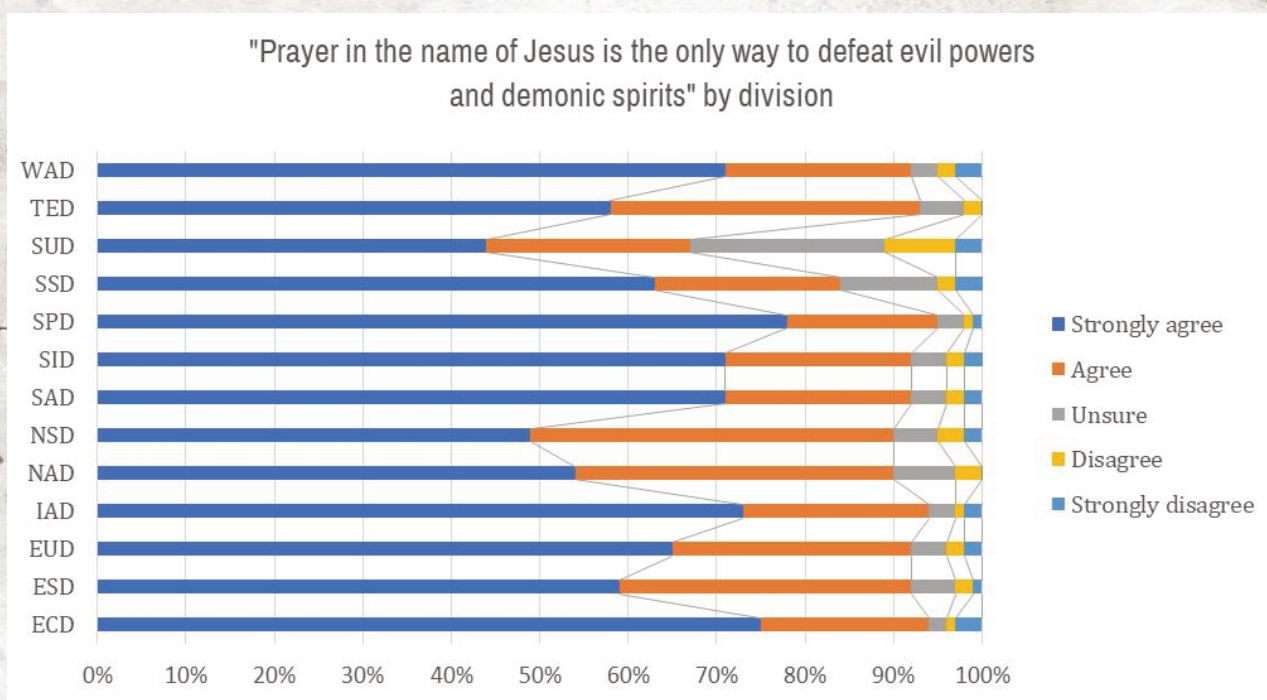
Counting the Votes: GC Delegates, p.13

Employee Profile: Meredith Carter, p.14

Remember to help us Tell the Story! p.16

Why do we have these results in these particular divisions? Is it because the cultural contexts in these parts of the world are heavily invaded with spiritualistic practices or non-Christian religions? Or maybe it is because those who doubted or disagreed did not see enough evidence that such a prayer worked? Or maybe they did not hear about such cases? Could it be that they did not experience Jesus' power over evil forces in their lives?

Thus, while it appears that members worldwide understand that the prayer in the name of Jesus is the only way to defeat evil forces and spirits, there are people who did not witness that. Interestingly, many of them are in the 10/40 Window. Should this give us a call to more persistent prayers so that Jesus could demonstrate His power over evil forces? "For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places" (Eph. 6:12 NKJV).



For more research on church members' prayer, visit our [blog page](#).

Galina Steele

Featured Articles:

Spring 2022 Greetings, p.1

Windows on the Past GC Sessions, p.1

Adventist Pioneer Work in Iraq, p.5

Digitization Updates, p.7

New Finding Aids, p.8

Presence of SDA Institutions, p.9

Prayer in the Name of Jesus, p.11

Counting the Votes: GC Delegates, p.13

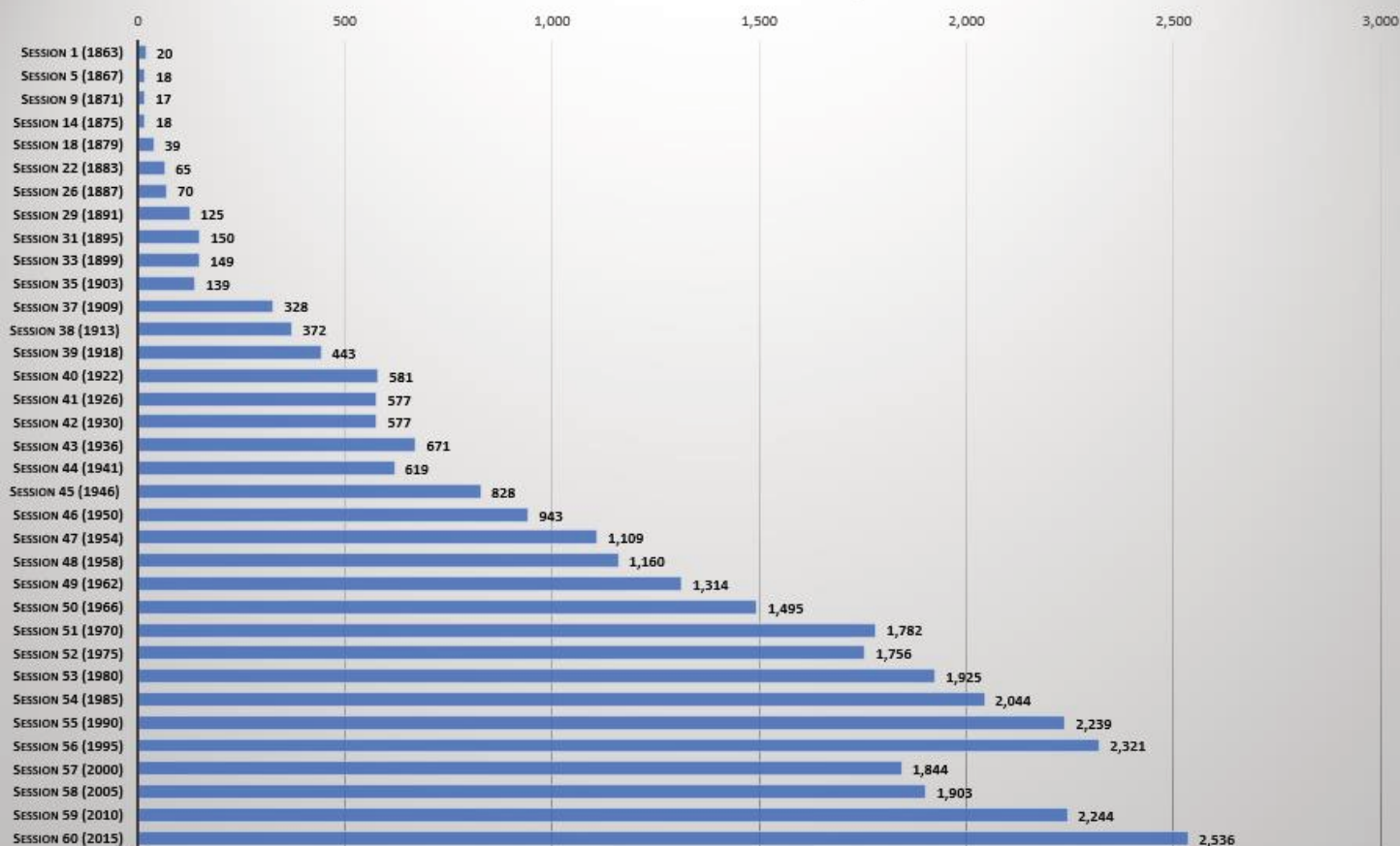
Employee Profile: Meredith Carter, p.14

Remember to help us Tell the Story! p.16

Counting the Votes: The Growing Number of our GC Session Delegates

At the first GC Session held in Battle Creek, Michigan in 1863, only 20 delegates were selected to draft the Seventh-day Adventist Church constitution and bylaws and establish top leadership including president, secretary, and treasurer. This administrative structure remains at all levels of church administration. As the Church has grown so has the number of delegates. This is because the number of voting delegates is based on Church membership in each of the world regions and the self-sustainability of administrative regions. The number of delegates nearly doubled by the 1879 Session. By the 1909 Session, just 30 years later, the number of delegates had grown substantially to 328, which is an increase of 164%. By Session 47 in 1954 the number of delegates increased to 1,109, which is an increase of 5,545%! Over the next 60+ years the numbers of delegates more than doubled *again* to 2,536 by Session 60 in 2015! In the upcoming 61st Session being held in St. Louis, Missouri, approximately 2,713 attendees will have delegate status indicating that the Church continues to grow despite the challenges Covid-19 continues to present.

Number of GC Session Delegates



Meredith Carter

Featured Articles:

Spring 2022 Greetings, p.1

Windows on the Past GC Sessions, p.1

Adventist Pioneer Work in Iraq, p.5

Digitization Updates, p.7

New Finding Aids, p.8

Presence of SDA Institutions, p.9

Prayer in the Name of Jesus, p.11

Counting the Votes: GC Delegates, p.13

Employee Profile: Meredith Carter, p.14

Remember to help us Tell the Story! p.16

**Employee Profile:
Meredith Carter**



*What was your introduction into the Adventist faith?
What was the Church like where you grew up?*

I am the 5th generation of Seventh-day Adventists in our family, so I suppose you could say it was just ingrained in me at a young age. My mom taught cradle roll, so I have vivid memories of attending her classes. My dad, mom, and my older brother were regular attendees at Beltsville SDA Church when I was young; but when my brother and I changed schools to Spencerville, we began attending the Spencerville SDA Church we began attending there. When growing up, Sabbath School, church, and potlucks were part of our weekly activities. Typically, afterwards we'd enjoy a nature walk or bike ride together as a family. I have wonderful and special memories growing up in the church and celebrating the Sabbath with my family!

In 8th grade, I returned from a school sponsored mission trip to Honduras and decided to give my life to Christ. It was such a life altering experience that I was baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist Church at age 14.

We're very happy to have you here with us in ASTR, but you've spent time in other places. Where are they, and what other work experiences have you had?

I come from a family that has worked as pastors or church employees for several generations, so working for the church came very naturally for me. My maternal grandfather, Pastor Melvin Eckenroth, served as the New Jersey Conference president in the late 1950s. He later became an evangelist and was the head of the religion department at Columbia Union College for 12 years beginning in 1963. My mother, Ruth Eckenroth Parish, served as a church employee for 38 years in several areas in the General Conference. Most notably, she retired in 2016 from her position as the General Conference Human Resources director.

Today we're pleased to interview one of our own staff here in ASTR, Meredith Carter. So where are you from? Share a little about your background with us.

I was born in Takoma Park, Maryland, in what once was called Washington Adventist Hospital, now the Adventist Healthcare White Oak Medical Center. Not only was I born in MD I was raised here as well; in fact, I have never lived in another state! I attended Seventh-day Adventist schools my entire life, beginning at Beltsville Adventist School then transferring to Spencerville Adventist Academy, and finally graduating from high school at Highland View Academy. I then attended Columbia Union College (now known as Washington Adventist University) and obtained a BS in Business Administration with an emphasis in Management. I went on to complete my MBA with an emphasis in Technology Management from the University of Phoenix.

Featured Articles:

Spring 2022 Greetings, p.1

Windows on the Past GC Sessions, p.1

Adventist Pioneer Work in Iraq, p.5

Digitization Updates, p.7

New Finding Aids, p.8

Presence of SDA Institutions, p.9

Prayer in the Name of Jesus, p.11

Counting the Votes: GC Delegates, p.13

Employee Profile: Meredith Carter, p.14

Remember to help us Tell the Story! p.16

So, when did you join ASTR, and what are your special duties here? What do you enjoy most about being here, and what are you most looking forward to in the future?

Ironically, I began working in ASTR as the departmental Administrative Assistant right after graduating from college in May 2000! I then worked in ASTR from 2004 until 2007 as the Financial Statement Research Specialist. In November of 2007 I transitioned to the North American Division where I served as the Project Manager in the Church Resource Center. In 2011 I took the position as the Assistant Director in the Vice President's Office of Strategy, Research, and Assessment. In the last position I held, I was the Assistant Director in the NAD Office of Archives and Statistics from 2017 until August of 2021. God truly led when I was invited to return to the General Conference, and specifically to ASTR in August 2021. That is when I took my current position as the *Annual Statistical Report* Editor. It's truly amazing how God works!

I am so grateful and blessed to be in my new position, not

only do I enjoy the nature of the work in analyzing and preparing the reports that make up the *Annual Statistical Report*, but I also sincerely enjoy the group of people I am privileged to work with. The atmosphere of team building and the authentic Christian environment that ASTR cultivates has quickly become my office family and inspiration.

Outside of work, what hobbies/activities do you enjoy most?

My church and work families are incredibly important to me, but what holds my heart closest are my two precious daughters, age 15 and 13. I am a single mom, my husband unexpectedly passed away in 2011, and my girls are my entire world. Although mothering is truly exhausting at times, it is by far the most rewarding job I have ever had. I am so very blessed to have a very close knit and dedicated family that supports my little family of 3 every day – God is so good!

Thank you, Meredith, we're glad to introduce you to our readers, and welcome again into the ASTR family!



Featured Articles:

Spring 2022 Greetings, p.1

Windows on the Past GC Sessions, p.1

Adventist Pioneer Work in Iraq, p.5

Digitization Updates, p.7

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Presence of SDA Institutions, p.9

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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.

