

# ADVENTIST REVIEW



GENERAL CONFERENCE SESSION BULLETIN

8

JULY 11, 2015

- 3 WILSON CALLS FOR UNITY IN MISSION
- 5 DEFINITION OF MARRIAGE REINFORCED
- 7 ORDINATION VOTE DOESN'T CHANGE POLICY
- 8 A BOOK AND PEN FOR SAN ANTONIO'S MAYOR
- 10 PAGEANT OF ADVENTIST MISSION
- 15 TWO DEGREES OF ADVENTIST SEPARATION
- 26 TWO FIRSTS FOR DEAF MINISTRIES
- 30 PROCEEDINGS AND ACTIONS

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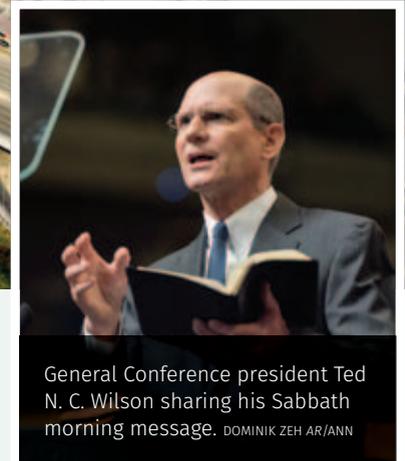
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An early morning view of the Alamodome taken from above by a drone

SAN SUVANKHAM



General Conference president Ted N. C. Wilson sharing his Sabbath morning message. DOMINIK ZEH AR/ANN

## WILSON CALLS FOR UNITY IN ADVENTIST MISSION

**THE GC PRESIDENT GIVES HIS FIRST POST-ELECTION SERMON.**

BY ANDREW MCCHESENEY, ADVENTIST REVIEW/ANN

Ted N. C. Wilson, speaking in his first sermon after his reelection as General Conference president, urged Adventists to press ahead in unity in proclaiming Jesus' soon return.

Wilson drew from hallmark initiatives of his first five-year term—"Revival and Reformation," "Mission to the Cities," "Comprehensive Health Ministry," and a daily online Bible study plan—to call on every church member to share Jesus in their community.

He emphasized that regular study of the

Bible and the writings of Ellen G. White were key to developing a closer relationship with Jesus.

The sermon ended with a thundering rendition of the Adventist anthem "We Have This Hope" combined with "Jesus Is Coming Again" by a 1,100-member choir, a record size for a choir at a General Conference Session.

"We thank the Lord for the ways He has led this General Conference Session during the last 10 days, and we give Him all the glory

for the unity and singleness of purpose in accomplishing His mission for this dying Earth," Wilson said, speaking in the Alamodome stadium packed with nearly 50,000 people in San Antonio, Texas.

"As I stated five years ago, the Seventh-day Adventist Church is God's remnant movement made up of those who, according to Revelation 12:17, keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ, and we are on a heaven-directed journey," Wilson

## **“Don’t get stuck on one side or the other of the road. Stay in the middle of God’s will; cross the Jordan, and don’t retreat!”**

said, referring to the first sermon he gave upon his election at the General Conference session in Atlanta, Georgia, in 2010. “We must go forward, not backward, because we are almost home. I am more convinced than ever that Jesus’ return is near, even at the door.”

Wilson then declared “Jesus is coming soon!” in 11 of the languages represented at the General Conference Session: English, Spanish, French, Portuguese, Swahili, Russian, Korean, Arabic, Chinese, Hindi, and Tagalog. The use of multiple languages echoed the opening of Sabbath school, when presenters greeted attendees with “Happy Sabbath!” in many languages. The Scripture reading for the divine worship service—Joshua 1:1-9—was also read in several languages.

The sermon was Wilson’s first since his re-election eight days earlier, on July 3, to a new five-year term. Re-elected General Conference executive secretary G. T. Ng introduced Wilson by offering a humorous comparison between Wilson and the first General

Conference president, John Byington.

Wilson’s sermon, titled “Cross the Jordan . . . Don’t Retreat,” got its name from the story of the Israelites entering the Promised Land by crossing the river Jordan. Wilson noted that the Israelites raised a stone landmark to commemorate God’s leading and suggested that each person attending the General Conference Session was a “landmark.”

God “wants us to remember what is happening here in San Antonio, what the Holy Spirit is doing in our lives, that our mission is to proclaim ‘Arise! Shine! Jesus is coming!’” Wilson said. “You are the ‘landmarks.’”

“Arise! Shine! Jesus Is Coming!” is the theme of the 2015 General Conference Session.

Wilson pleaded with church members to “revolutionize” their thinking by sharing their personal testimonies and actively participating in the church’s mission of preparing people for Jesus’ return.

“Let it be total participation,” he said. “Don’t only get involved in the mechanics of the

church. . . . We need a total empowerment of lay people in carrying the burden of the church’s evangelistic and mission outreach along with pastors and church workers. Tell someone else about your relationship with Christ! It’s time to go home!”

Wilson asked parents not to allow anything to creep into their homes that would distract them from God’s plans for them and their children.

“Eliminate any television, social media, music, books, and other influences that will distract you from Jesus and His biblical truth,” he said. “Take up God’s command, ‘Cross the Jordan, don’t retreat.’”

He appealed to every church member to put away differences of opinion and humble themselves before God.

“Now is the time to unify under Christ, our Righteousness,” he said.

*Read a transcript of Ted Wilson’s sermon on the Adventist Review Web site: [AdventistReview.org/call-for-unity](http://AdventistReview.org/call-for-unity)*



PIETER DAMSTEEGT AR/ANN



## DELEGATES REINFORCE “MAN AND WOMAN” DEFINITION OF MARRIAGE

THE REVISION IS AMONG A CLUSTER OF CHANGES TO THE CHURCH MANUAL.

BY STEPHEN CHAVEZ, ADVENTIST REVIEW/ANN

Delegates approved revisions to the *Church Manual* to reinforce the Adventist understanding of marriage to refer specifically to a “lawfully binding lifelong commitment of a man and a woman.”

The *Church Manual* article “Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage” refers to the origination of the marriage institution in Eden and mentions the union between Adam and Eve as “the pattern for all future marriages.”

Although this item found its way to the session agenda several years before the U.S. Supreme Court legalized same-sex relationships nationwide in June 2015, social developments in many parts of the world have put this issue in the spotlight.

*Church Manual* changes were discussed over the course of three Session days. Early in the week, several items were referred back to committee, and discussion was preempted entirely on Wednesday when the issue of women’s ordination was discussed and voted.

On Friday afternoon, the final day of the business session, with a fraction of the delegates present, the item about marriage finally came back to the floor, where the mo-

tion to approve the proposed wording passed by a large majority.

In an interview, Willie Oliver, director of Family Ministries for the General Conference, spoke to the growing divide between the church and society regarding marriage, particularly as it relates to same-sex marriage.

“The church’s charge is to present the gospel of Jesus Christ in as winsome a way as possible,” he said. “The church is not against anyone; the church is about upholding principles handed down by God. . . . The Seventh-day Adventist Church should be welcoming of every category of sinner. Our job is to be salt and light.”

Willie Hucks, associate editor of *Ministry* magazine, expressed the ideal of church fellowship for everyone who desires it.

“We welcome all who wish to come and worship God because when we come into His presence, we grow and reflect His image by beholding Him,” he said. “It is the responsibility of [local] pastors and church members to provide an atmosphere that leads to submitting to God’s plans for our lives and growth in Christ. Doing so does not condone any thoughts, words, or actions that

stand outside God’s expressed biblical will.”

Hucks added: “How it becomes operational at the local level gets dicey, because we are a world church, and people do different things in different places. But this one thing I know: If we are true to the Bible, as the church of God, our job is to be redemptive.”

One of the other major items discussed focused on church discipline, specifically whether members have a right to resign their membership without having their names and reason for their resignation made public. The version that finally passed acknowledged that right.

Delegates also approved a revision of the church policy on settling disputes. The change allows divisions to act to keep frivolous or inconsequential appeals from consuming the time of the General Conference. The levels where an appeal can be considered in a division include the local church, conference, and union.

Another item discussed on Sunday, July 5, had to do with the question of who is allowed to preside over a Communion service in a local church. Delegates discussed whether to add the word “commissioned” in the phrase “ordained/commissioned pastor or an ordained elder” as someone who can officiate at a Communion service.

On Friday afternoon, July 10, with a dwindling quorum and with the approach of the Sabbath, this item was referred back to committee. The fact that only the General Conference in session can approve any changes to the *Church Manual* means that this item won’t be considered until 2020 at the General Conference Session in Indianapolis.

Among other things, discussion about *Church Manual* changes revealed how unfamiliar some delegates are with parliamentary procedure. Although things improved during the week, Session chairpersons were often challenged to keep the discussion on topic.



JOSEF KISSINGER AR/ANN



PIETER DAMSTEEGT AR/ANN

Worshippers leave the Alamodome stadium after the divine service on July 11, 2015, the last Sabbath of the General Conference session, top, and head across a footbridge toward the convention center, bottom. The lower photo was taken from the Tower of the Americas near the convention center.

## CHURCH TO RESTUDY BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES OF INTERPRETATION

**A DELEGATE ASKS FOR STUDY AFTER THE VOTE ON THE ISSUE OF WOMEN'S ORDINATION.**

BY MARCOS PASEGGI, ADVENTIST REVIEW/ANN

General Conference leadership has agreed to work with the Biblical Research Institute on a study that informs the world church about the biblical principles of interpretation as the Seventh-day Adventist Church sees them.

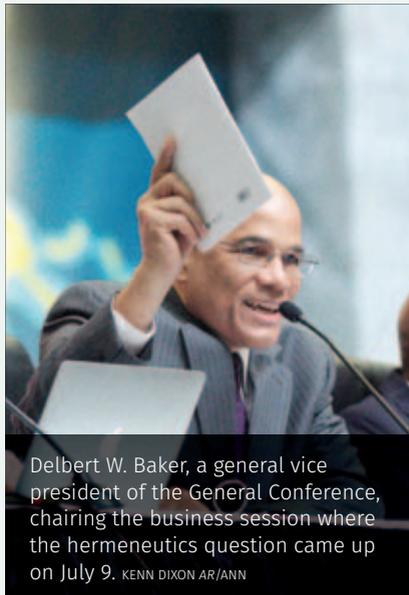
General Conference undersecretary Myron Iseminger, making the announcement on July 10, the last day of business meetings at the General Conference Session in San Antonio, Texas, also told delegates that the Biblical Research Institute “is already studying the issue and has plans to publish their findings” in an updated edition of a book on the subject.

The Biblical Research Institute, which is based at the General Conference headquarters, has published at least two books on the issue, including *Understanding Scripture: An Adventist Approach*, edited by George W. Reid, and *Interpreting Scripture: Bible Questions and Answers*, edited by Gerhard Pfandl.

Iseminger's comments came in response to a request made by a delegate and a subsequent vote on July 9. The delegate had urged the church to restudy its hermeneutics in light of the vote on women's ordination on July 8 so as to avoid similar conflicts of opinion regarding some verses from the Bible in the future.

Hermeneutics, or the study of the principles and methods of interpretation, strives to provide an underlying framework that may be applied across any and every analysis of particular verses or doctrines of Scriptures. Even though Adventist scholars have often weighed in on the topic in the past, the delegate who raised the issue thought that a renewed stance was needed after the women's ordination vote.

It is unclear what practical effects the study might have on future church resolutions or how it may relate to Ellen G. White statements that even though “the great truths of the Word of God are so clearly stated that none need make a mistake in understanding them” (*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 15, p. 150), “we cannot . . . take a position that the unity of the church consists in viewing every text of Scripture in the very same shade of light” (*Ibid.* p. 149).



Delbert W. Baker, a general vice president of the General Conference, chairing the business session where the hermeneutics question came up on July 9. KENN DIXON AR/ANN

## GC PRESIDENT SAYS ORDINATION VOTE DOESN'T CHANGE CURRENT POLICY

NAD SAYS IT WILL CONTINUE TO ENCOURAGE WOMEN TO SERVE IN GOSPEL MINISTRY.

BY ANDREW MCCHESENEY, ADVENTIST REVIEW/ANN

General Conference president Ted N. C. Wilson said the results of a July 8 vote on the issue of women's ordination meant “we maintain the current policy.”

Wilson told delegates at the General Conference Session in San Antonio, Texas, on July 10 that the vote simply barred the church's world divisions from making decisions on the ordination of women.

He said the vote has nothing to do with women being ordained as local elders, a practice based on church policy that has been in place for several decades. Furthermore, he said, the vote was not related to commissioned ministers, who can be male or female under the church's policy.

“So let us be clear on what was voted on Wednesday,” Wilson said. “We are now back to our original understanding, and I would strongly urge all to adhere by what has been voted. But do not place into the vote other things which were not listed in the vote.”

Wilson asked division presidents to clarify the meaning of the vote in their territories.

Shortly after Wilson spoke, North American Division president Daniel R. Jackson issued a statement saying that “the vote prohibited the 13 world divisions of the church from making their own decisions regarding the consideration and potential implementation of women's ordination to the gospel ministry.”

But, he added, the motion did not disallow women from serving as commissioned church pastors, women from serving as ordained elders in the local church, or the ordination of deaconesses.

“Since the motion did not disallow these things, we therefore continue to encourage those who have been serving in these capacities to continue to do so,” Jackson said.

He underscored that the division was following the directions found in the General Conference Working Policy.

## ADDITIONS/CORRECTIONS



Elder Elie Weicke-Dido, newly elected president of the West-Central Africa Division, was not able to join other division presidents for the group photo that appeared in Bulletin 7.

Delegates on July 10 elected Yutaka Inada, secretary of the Japanese Union Conference, as the new secretary of the Northern Asia-Pacific Division.

In the photo caption, Bulletin 7, page 5, top picture, it incorrectly identifies the IT employee as a badge scanner. It is correct that she is an IT employee, but she did not scan badges.

In Bulletin 4, page 8, column 3, it states that Heather-Dawn Small has held the position of director for GC Women's Ministries since 2001. Small has been director since 2005.

In Bulletin 7, see page 51 column 1, the speaker for the following section is Glenn Townend, president of the South Pacific Division: "I think if the church for the past 40 years has been discussing this issue . . ."



San Antonio mayor Ivy Taylor told the Sabbath evening Alamodome crowd that her cities residents had been blessed by the Church's outreach and presence.

JOSAFAT ZEMLEDUCH AR/ANN

San Antonio mayor Ivy R. Taylor thanked Seventh-day Adventists for bringing free healthcare and the 2015 General Conference Session to her city—and said she looked forward to reading a brand-new copy of *Steps to Christ*.

General Conference president Ted N. C. Wilson, speaking at a closing meeting of the 10-day convention at the Alamodome stadium on the evening of July 11, expressed gratitude to Taylor for the warm reception that San Antonio offered its 65,000 Adventist attendees.

"This morning I shared with the group how pivotal San Antonio has been," Wilson told Taylor on the stage.

"Brothers and sisters, in front of the mayor, let's show her again how happy we are," he said to a standing ovation and loud, sustained applause.

This was the largest and longest convention ever hosted by the city of 1.4 million in the U.S. state of Texas, and authorities rolled out the red carpet to its guests. The city airport trained 200 "ambassadors" to assist Adventists to find their way to hotels and tourist sites, restaurants added vegetarian dishes to their menus, and a special police detail was deployed to ensure safety. Local business leaders predicted that the convention would pump \$41 million into the economy.

Taylor, who was introduced on the stage as the first African-American to lead San Antonio and its second woman mayor, said the city had felt the impact of Seventh-day Adventists well before the convention. She thanked church members for organizing a free clinic that provided more than \$20 million worth of health care to nearly 6,200 people over three days in April.

"Our citizens here were touched, and we remain grateful for your service," she said.

Backstage, Taylor told the *Adventist Review* that the free clinic was life-changing for many who received free medical and dental treat-

## SAN ANTONIO MAYOR GRATEFUL FOR GC SESSION AND STEPS TO CHRIST

GC PRESIDENT THANKS MAYOR IVY R. TAYLOR FOR THE WARM WELCOME.

BY ANDREW MCCHESENEY, ADVENTIST REVIEW/ANN

### GETTING READY FOR INDY

Sheri Clemmer, right, associate manager of the 2015 General Conference session posing with three managers for the 2020 General Conference session in Indianapolis, Indiana: Susan Dickey, left; Kerry Werst, second left; and Debbie Hennessey

PIETER DAMSTEEGT AR/ANN.



ment. She was particularly touched by the story of a woman who hadn't smiled for years because of the need for extensive, expensive dental work. But the woman left the Alamo-dome beaming, she said.

"You cannot quantify that kind of impact on a person's life," Taylor said.

Wilson presented Taylor with a leather-bound copy of *Steps to Christ* by Adventist Church cofounder Ellen G. White and a pen to underline meaningful passages. He told her that the slim volume contained only 13 chapters, but its contents "mean so much to me." "When things get a little tough, read a few

lines from it," he explained to the mayor.

Taylor said in the interview that she intended to read the book this week while flying to Fort Lauderdale, Florida, for a family vacation.

"I'm a little nervous flying, so it will be good reading on the plane," she said with a smile.



### THE ADVENTIST REVIEW TEAM FOR THE 2015 GENERAL CONFERENCE SESSION IN SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS.

**Front row, from left:** Marvene Baptiste, Rachel Child, Fred Wuerstlin, John Fowler, James Cavil, Ida Cavil, Sharon Tennyson, Bill Knott, Lael Caesar, Gerald Klingbeil, Gaspar Colón, Kimberly Luste Maran, Ellen Muselman, Wilona Karimabadi, Daun Redfield, Sandra Blackmer

**Second row:** David Sherwin, Lauren Knott, Michael Campbell, Carlos Medley, Nicolai Zeh, Dominik Zeh, Tor Tjeransen, Mark Froelich, Seth Shaffer. Josef Kissinger, Bryan Gray, Merle Poirier, Marcos Paseggi

**Back row:** Brenda Duerksen, Dick Duerksen, Kim Brown, Ron Brauer, Brian Worden, Pieter Damsteegt, Norel Iacob, Clayton Kinney, Kenn Dixon, Stephan Chavez, Andrew McChesney, Elsie Tjeransen, Chad Stuart

**Not pictured:** Julianna Baioni, Evan Knott, Heather Quintana, Jane Sherwin, Libna Stevens, Judy Thomsen, Josafat Zemleduch

DAVID B. SHERWIN AR/ANN



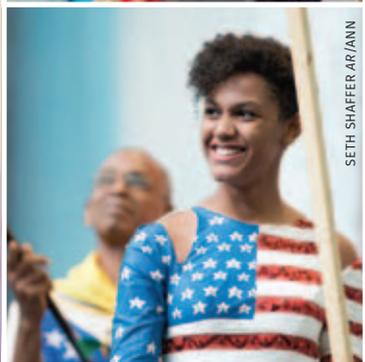
KENN DIXON/AR/ANN



JOSAFAT ZEMLEDUCH/AR/ANN



SETH SHAFER/AR/ANN



SETH SHAFER/AR/ANN



DAVID B. SHERWIN/AR/ANN



JOSAFAT ZEMLEDUCH/AR/ANN



# Pageant of Progress and Challenge

*Final night's program traces Adventist mission from its beginning to now.*

**BY STEPHEN CHAVEZ,  
ADVENTIST REVIEW/ANN**

**S**an Antonio's Alamodome more resembled the United Nations than it did a sports arena as tens of thousands of Seventh-day Adventists, many in native costumes, celebrated the advance of Adventist mission over the past 152 years.

The Parade of Nations, traditionally one of the highlights of the last weekend of a General Conference Session, had a new name designed to reflect the Seventh-day Adventist Church's progress in mission outreach. Billed as "Mission on the Move," the program highlighted five periods of mission outreach from the church's inception in 1863 to the present. This year's pageant chronicled not only the advances of Adventist mission but the societal changes that accompanied them.

The five periods described throughout the evening were The Birth of Missions (1863-1873), Mission to Christian Nations (1874-1889), Mission to the World (1890-1945), Mission With Conscious Intent (1946-1985), and Mission for the Unreached (1986-present). Along with advances in Adventist mission, video presentations seen on large screens traced

advances in technology in communication, travel, and methods to spread the gospel.

Hosts Audrey Andersson, secretary of the Trans-European Division, and Garrett Caldwell, associate communication director for the General Conference, had to compete with the cheers and applause of audience members as they announced each country in turn and more than 450 costumed representatives walked across the stage.

As each nation was introduced, friends in the audience rose to shout and applaud. The most enthusiastic responses came from groups of believers who represented countries in the southern hemisphere, including Brazil, Mexico, Zambia, the Philippines, and perhaps most conspicuously, Cuba. Delegates from countries in the northern hemisphere received polite but noticeably less animated applause.

An example of changing demographics involves the fact that most of the world's population now live in cities and metropolitan areas with more than a million inhabitants. A church where most of its

members originally worshipped in rural settings now has to reach populations that live primarily in high-density, metropolitan areas.

The evening presentation, while tracing the advance of Adventism over the last 152 years, also revealed the tremendous challenges still ahead of it. Several countries where the church has established an “Adventist presence” have zero members today. In other countries, where Adventists have been involved for decades, the number of members compared to the total population is statistically insignificant. In a few countries the number of Christians in general is actually declining.

Attending his first General Conference Session, Gershom Bageni, originally from Uganda, described the evening program in one word: “Wonderful.” He enjoyed seeing how the history of Adventist mission coincided with the history of society at large.

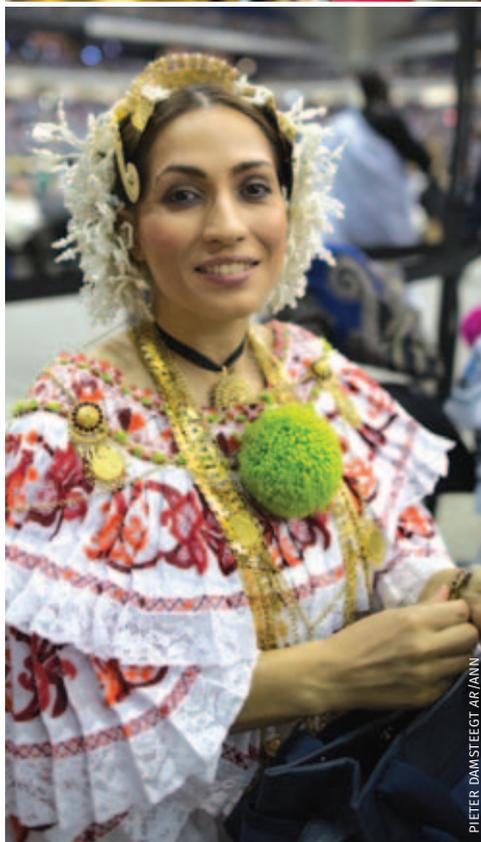
Edson Jarvis, from Tampa, Florida, mentioned as one of the highlights of the evening the singing of “The Midnight Cry” by Kimberly Palmer Washington, near the end of the pageant. Washington sang on the stage, surrounded by hundreds of Adventists dressed in their native costumes. Jarvis described it as “awesome.” “The theme of the Session, pointing to the second coming of Christ, is exactly what we need,” he said.

The final musical number for the evening was an arrangement of “Lift Up the Trumpet,” arranged, orchestrated, and conducted by General Conference communication director Williams Costa, Jr. The choir was a combined chorus of 1,100 singers, made up of artistes, from kids to adults, who presented throughout the Session. The performance, which had nearly everyone in the dome on their feet, was the result of just one rehearsal the day before.

Before pronouncing the benediction on the nearly three-hour-long production, General Conference president Ted N.C. Wilson appealed to those assembled to be filled with the Holy Spirit to share the Three Angels Messages with family, friends, and neighbors. Then, to reiterate what he said at nearly every one of his public statements throughout the Session, Wilson said, “Jesus is coming soon.”



SETH SHAFFER AR/ANN



PIETER DAMSTEEGT AR/ANN



JOSEF KISSINGER AR/ANN



TOR JERANSEN AR/ANN

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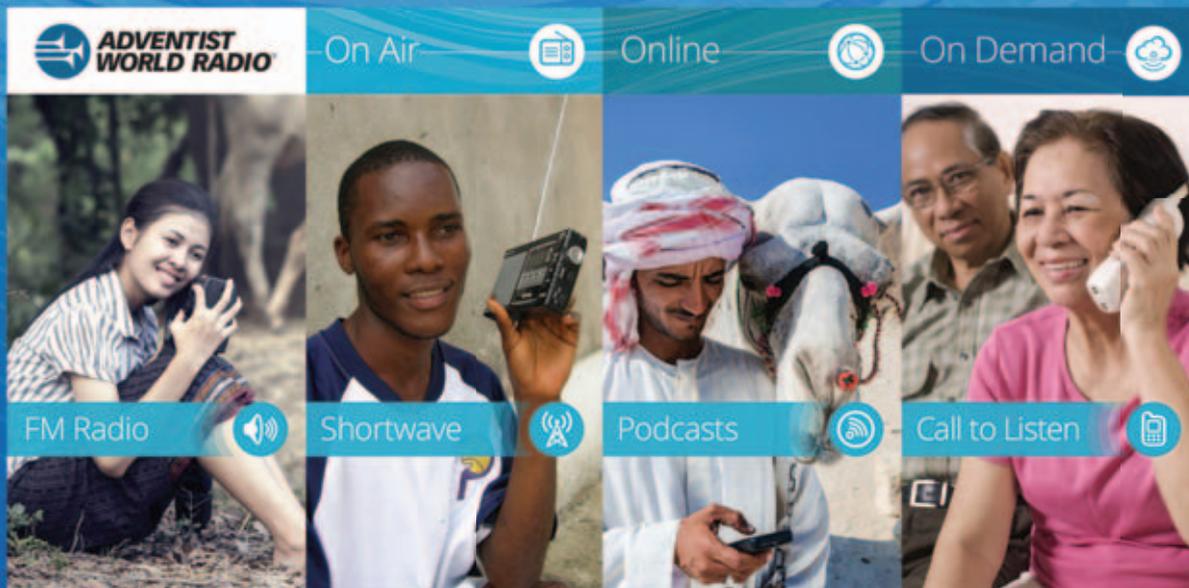
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Dan Weber meets strangers as he plays our “two degrees of separation” game. PIETER DAMSTEEGT AR/ANN

# Two Degrees of Separation

*An informal survey finds Adventists are a tight group.*

*According to the theory of six degrees of separation, everyone is just six connections away from anyone else in the world. But in the Adventist Church, it seems like we're all much closer than that.*

**BY HEATHER QUINTANA,  
ADVENTIST REVIEW/ANN**

In 2007, Dan Weber created a mission video about the history of the church in Romania. He was a video producer for Adventist Mission at the time, so it was a routine task.

This video assignment, however, was a little different, because Weber's father had been born in Romania, and his paternal grandfather attended seminary there. His family was actually German and lived in Romania only a short time, but as Dan researched and looked through the old Romanian photos, his father's family crossed his mind.

"I found a really old picture of a bunch of guys sitting around with white beards," says Weber. "I thought, 'Wouldn't it be cool if my grandfather was in that picture?'"

Archivists knew the photo was of graduates of the Romanian seminary, but they couldn't identify the year it was taken or the names of the people.

"I ended up putting the picture in my video," says Weber. "About six months later I got a call from my mom, and she was so excited. She said that her cousin

was watching 3ABN and saw one of my videos and an interview I did about it. She said, 'Do you know who was in that picture from Romania?' I said, 'I don't know. Maybe my grandfather?'"

It turns out it wasn't Weber's paternal grandfather. But it *was* one of his grandfathers—his great grandfather on his *mother's* side. He had served as the education director for the European division at the time and had visited the school in Romania.

"I never expected that. It's crazy how connected we all are," says Weber, who is now the director of Communication for the North American Division.

## UNEXPECTED FRIENDS

Weber isn't the only person with a surprising story of connection. Most Adventists can think of a time when they've made an unexpected connection in an unexpected place.

"It feels like everybody knows everybody," says General Conference Session exhibit manager Dean Rogers. There are

times, he says with a laugh, when a close community can even seem too close.

“My niece was getting married, and the mothers of the bride and groom were talking about how they both knew this person and that person,” says Rogers. “Finally, my niece said, ‘Stop! Stop! You’re going to have me related to my husband!’”

### THE THEORY OF SIX DEGREES

In the late 1920s, Hungarian author and playwright Frigyes Karinthy introduced the idea of six degrees of separation in one of his short stories. The theory is that everyone is six or fewer connections away from another person in the world. In other words, two strangers are just a few “friend of a friend” introductions away from making a connection.

The idea struck people as interesting, and in the decades to follow, mathematicians and researchers would try with various studies to measure the degree of human interconnectedness.

While some consider the theory of six degrees an academic urban myth, it’s hard to refute that it does feel like a small world after all.

And, just think, if it felt true in the

1920s—before Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn—how much stronger does that sense of connection seem now?

### THE ADVENTIST CONNECTION

There is 1 Seventh-day Adventist for every 393 people in the world. That explains why, when you tell a stranger you are an Adventist, they might respond that they had a neighbor who was an Adventist, or their grandmother took them to an Adventist Vacation Bible School, or they see an Adventist doctor.

That’s an astonishing connection within the wider community, but the connection within the *church* itself is even more remarkable. Six degrees of separation? Hardly. It feels more like two or three.

Michael Porter, associate director for church engagement for Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) International, says the church’s strong social network makes his job not only a lot more fun, but also a lot easier: “I can talk to one of my friends and can get to just about anyone in the world.”

“We’re all so connected to each other,” Porter says. “It makes me look forward to heaven, when we’ll all reconnect.”

## MAIL CALL!

AN UNSCIENTIFIC—BUT INTERESTING—EXPERIMENT

In the 1960s, Yale psychologist Stanley Milgram conducted an experiment in which he gave Americans from the Midwest a letter for a stranger. The Midwesterner was instructed to deliver the letter using only friends as intermediaries. Those friends, in turn, were allowed to pass the letter on to one of their friends who might know the target person. His findings revealed six degrees of separation, although his experiment was later questioned by other researchers.

In an unscientific (but fun!) experiment of my own, I tried a version of this at General Conference Session. A volunteer delivered a document labeled with only my name—not my job title or hometown, not even the country in which I live—to a complete stranger in the exhibit hall. That person was asked to help get the document to me. He accepted the challenge and asked a friend of his from Pennsylvania, United States, if she knew me. As it turns out, she did. In less than three hours, with just two degrees of separation, the letter was on its way back to me.



Dwight Nelson plays the game with Bongie Moyo, left, of Bulawayo, Zimbabwe; Horacio Hernandez-Ble, center, of Silver Spring, Maryland, United States; and Anges Kala of Papua New Guinea. JOSAFAT ZEMLEADUCH AR/ANN

## TWO DEGREES OF DWIGHT NELSON

We put the theory to the test with well-known pastor and author Dwight K. Nelson. In a busy corner of the General Conference Session exhibit hall, we introduced him to people from around the world to see whether they could discover a friend in common. The results? Two degrees of separation, in every case (well, except for all the one-degrees we came across, which made us realize how many people he knows personally). With people he had never met, Nelson was able to identify a common friend within just 10 to 30 seconds—and that was without rushing the conversation.

“In the Adventist Church, if you have gone to Adventist schools, par-

ticularly boarding schools,” says Nelson, “you’ve either roomed with the uncle, dated the cousin, or gone on a picnic with some relative. It’s just a tight-knit community.”

To make the most of this interconnectedness, Nelson advises starting the day with a prayer that you’ll represent Jesus in an authentic, kind way—no matter whom you come in contact with.

“In essence, we’re one degree of separation from every child of God,” says Nelson. “And if that is a lost person, I could be the one link God has been waiting to use to help push that person toward Him.”



PIETER DAMSTEEGT AR/ANN

# Twelve Gates

*Singing the gospel in Southern Africa*

BY JULIANA BAIONI, ADVENTIST REVIEW/ANN

**T**welve Gates made history during this General Conference (GC) Session, as it was the first musical group from Zambia that has been invited to bless participants of the Session and the larger world church through their ministry. Twelve Gates is a vocal ensemble from Emmasdale Seventh-day Adventist Church in Lusaka, Zambia. Beginning as a group of youth singing together in 1993, it has today grown into a 30-member choir made of “professional amateurs,” people who have devoted much time and effort into their craft but who all also have other careers. The members of Twelve Gates are busy people. From firefighters to entrepreneurs, the singers work hard throughout the week, and on weekends most of the members can be seen serving as elders, deacons/deaconesses, clerks, and treasurers. Yet, they are faithful in attending rehearsals on Sundays to devote their time and energy in developing their musical skills to serve the Lord. Trusting in God, the vocal ensemble moves forward in spreading the message and fulfilling, in their own unique way, the mission of the church.

Chrispin Mubanga, vice chairperson of

Twelve Gates, describes his involvement like this: “I need to do my own things to put bread on the table. On the other hand, I have to go rehearse and make sure that we sing better so that people can better enjoy and appreciate what we sing. It requires a lot from you—time, money, and everything—to continue singing. It requires you to pray so that God can encourage you to continue in it.”

Each member of the ensemble is aware of the impact that not only their music has but also their daily lives. “As singers we have a Levitical responsibility, like pastors,” says Mc Borg Musha, secretary of Twelve Gates, “to preach the Word of God. Therefore we need to maintain our lives as an open letter; we need to live what we preach.”

Both their commitment and their musical abilities led to the invitation to participate in the musical performances in San Antonio for the 60th General Conference session. Each of the 30 members received an individual invitation to come to the United States (U.S.), as required by the U.S. Embassy. To the disappointment of the entire group, 20 of the singers were denied visas. After much deliberation and

prayer, it was decided that the remaining 10 who had been granted visas should come to represent their group and their country. Coming to the General Conference Session “has always been our desire and wish,” declared Musha. “This is the biggest gathering in our church; it is an honor to be part of the GC.”

With two-thirds of their group missing, Twelve Gates had to adjust their music to ensure all the parts were covered and could still display the kind of quality that was expected. Hearing them in the Alamodome for evening worship on July 8, it was obvious that they rose to the challenge and succeeded in honoring God by blessing His people.

The emphasis on mission at the Session has encouraged the group to take steps in brainstorming new ways to use their talents to spread the gospel to those around them. Twelve Gates is seeking to acquire a public address system that could be set up in the crowded marketplaces of Lusaka to sing and minister to the people through music. “Music is a sermon,” says Mubanga. “We preach through music, knowing that people will be edified and will be invited to love God.” 🌱

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# Home at Last

*The joy and fullness of Christ's return*



**BY RON C. SMITH**

DEVOTIONAL MESSAGE  
PRESENTED FRIDAY  
MORNING, JULY 10, 2015

## WHAT AND WHERE IS HEAVEN?

Opinions vary from person to person. Children's imagination soars to experience a land of fun. Teenagers and young adults view heaven as a fulfillment of their dreams and a compensation for their seemingly boring and empty lives. The wealthy identify heaven as something better than what they already have in their expensive houses, expansive living, and positions of power. The poor long to set foot on the Promised Land, where every desire will be fulfilled and where no shortage will ever afflict their lives. Still others dismiss the concept as a pie-in-the-sky by-and-by.

Each group tends to define heaven in terms of either their present disappointment or their future anticipation. Regardless, the perennial question remains: Where do we go to get meaningful answers for an issue as crucial as the legitimacy or even the existence of heaven?

We Christians turn to the Bible. The Word of God unlocks the mystery of heaven and removes all ambiguity that surrounds it in human understanding. The Word provides an accurate description of what it is, and what it offers to the redeemed.

It is satisfying to know that we do not have to depend on human theories and speculation. We have authentic and reliable information. We have "the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts" (2 Peter 1:19).\*

The Bible teaches and promises that the present earth, with its thorns and thistles, with its storms and quakes, will be transformed and restored to the

beauty and perfection it had when it came from the Creator's hands. The promise is unequivocal: "Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth" (Isa. 65:17).

From the time Adam and Eve disobeyed God and propelled Planet Earth into rebellion, the prophetic word of the Scriptures pointed to a new heaven and a new earth, where all traces of sin will be removed and where the redeemed will inherit what God has planned for them. The Scripture showcases a brand-new earth devoid of bloodshed and violence, war and senseless destruction, and any threat of a nuclear holocaust. Land, air, and sea will be devoid of anything destructive. There will be a world free from terrorism's maddening outbursts, blood-curdling violence, and cold-blooded crime. No one "shall . . . hurt . . . [or] destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord" (Isa. 11:9).

The Word of God promises an amazing worldwide culture of love, joy, and peace. Think of the restoration of the Garden of Eden: its breathtaking beauty, its imagination-defying splendor, its pure and unspotted glory, far exceeding that of the greatest of current human creativity. Can you envision a world without smog and pollution, with transparent bodies of water and perpetual sunny days without clouds? Can you imagine trees and bushes loaded with your favorite fruit?

## HEAVEN—A PLACE OF HARMONY

The Bible teaches that in Eden all nature was in harmony. Animals and fowl gravitated to the approach of Adam and sought to spend quality time with him. If Eden will indeed be restored, think of a place where conflict is not a

# How shall we be citizens of that heavenly home? Only by being members of the family of Jesus here on earth.

part of interaction between creatures. Instead, there will be unconditional love, joy, and companionship.

Can you envision a world bereft of heart disease, neurological and hematological disorders? Can you imagine a society with no obesity, diabetes, cancer, hypertension, or upper-respiratory disease? Can you imagine a new home where there will be no taint of sickness, suffering, or disease?

Scripture teaches that an evil predator interrupted the bliss of Eden. This smooth-talking enemy of good sought to convince Eve that disobeying God would provide greater fulfillment and joy for her. The platform of the enemy's argument to Eve was that sin provides us greater freedom. That's still the devil's claim. Our first parents fell for that deception, and our planet, consequently, was plunged into an adversarial stance against God.

The tragedy of disobeying God pierced a sword through the hearts of our first parents. Picture Adam watching the first lamb die as a sacrifice for his sin. Imagine the pain Eve endured as she watched each pigeon, turtledove, or goat on an altar dying because of her disobedience to God. Each dying animal pointed them forward to the coming of Jesus, dying for the sins of the world as a means of bridging the gap between earth and heaven for humanity's salvation.

Although the promise to save the human race was real, so was the pronouncement that "the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). Every sacrifice, every drop of blood shed, pointed Adam and Eve and their succeeding generations to the Savior of the world, dying on the

cross as a sacrifice for sin, yours and mine.

Because of the disobedience of the human race in Eden, sin multiplied, disobedience flourished, and evil grew exponentially. Consequently, God destroyed the world with a flood that left the earth's surface broken and eroded. This obviously caused jagged mountain ranges and vast desert wastelands.

## HEAVEN BEYOND TIME

Over the centuries since the Flood totally destroyed and rearranged the original beauty of this planet, there has always been a strong lineup of faith warriors who have tenaciously trusted and obeyed God. They looked beyond time to eternity. A prophetic chorus resounding through generations since the destruction of this world by water has been, "This earth is not my home."

My real home is on the horizon, ready to break out. It is a home without illness, pain, broken hearts, bereavement, and physical debilitation. It is not a result of fanciful imagination; it is real. I am waiting for that "city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Heb. 11:10).

The Bible speaks of men and women who have kept their hearts and eyes focused on that distant goal. Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, and countless others looked forward to that "better [country], that is, a heavenly country" (verse 16). God did not intend this world as we know it to be our home. We don't belong here. We are pilgrims plodding through the predicaments of this planet. We are strangers here; yet eternity is in view. In the darkest of circumstances, children of God have hope and confidence that heaven is on its way.

When schools are bombed, yielding mangled limbs; when innocent citizens of community establishments are gunned down indiscriminately; when diseases such as HIV/AIDS ravish the lives of young men and women; when deterioration and destruction of God's gifts such as marriage and family become routine; when tornadoes, hurricanes, and earthquakes bring about instant devastation and tragedy; when escalating statistics of international hunger, increased crime, and moral decay challenge the very meaning of life; we ought to be convinced this world is not where we belong. We are just pilgrims passing through this world of woe toward our ultimate home.

## HEAVEN THE ULTIMATE HOME

That home is truly an unimaginable reward for those who are faithful and place their trust in God. No human language is adequate to express the beauty and the grandeur of that home God has prepared for His children. The biblical portrayal of the Holy City is astounding. Its walls are real: "The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb" (Rev. 21:14).

Who are these apostles? Peter, who denied; James and John, whose ambition and anger had no boundaries; Thomas, who doubted, and others whose character provided no certificate of entrance into heaven. Unacceptable character traits plagued each disciple. They were believers created of common clay, just like us. If they could make it, so can we, by the grace of God.

Heaven is real. The new earth is real.

The streets are real. The fruit trees are real. The water is real. The air is real. Our bodies will be real. Mannerisms, personalities, and voice intonations will be real. Our looks will be identifiable.

Perfect harmony and peace will mark every aspect of heaven. "And the inhabitant will not say, 'I am sick'; the people who dwell in it will be forgiven their iniquity" (Isa. 33:24). "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb sing" (Isa. 35:5, 6). "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them" (Isa. 11:6).

God Himself shall make His abode with the redeemed of all ages. God with us becomes the finest definition of the heaven that we shall inherit. The prophet adds these beautiful words: "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be

His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away" (Rev. 21:3, 4).

How shall we inherit this promise? How shall we be citizens of that heavenly home? Only by being members of the family of Jesus here on earth. A right relationship with Jesus now will guarantee our entry and residence into the place God has prepared for us.

Are we actively engaged in the daily pursuit of Jesus? Do we spend time talking with and listening to Him daily and maintain a close and lasting relationship with Him?

Do we depend upon Jesus for everything, every day, claiming His promises?

Who is Jesus to you? If you have had a stroke, is He just a neurologist? If you have a bad heart, is He just a cardiologist? If you have a sinking boat, is He just a good passenger? If you are hungry, is

He just a grocer? If your family is breaking apart, is He just a counselor?

Sure, He is all these, but much more. When you're lonely, is He your best friend? When you've messed up and you're embarrassed, is He your robe to cover your shame? When you are unemployed, is He the best employment agent in the universe?

He's the Lamb of God that takes away our sins. He is our high priest, pleading on our behalf. He's our Shekinah that lights the dark way. He rends the veil so we can reach God. He's the way, the truth, and the life. He's the one altogether lovely

He's our passport to our ultimate destination, to that heavenly country in the new heaven and the new earth.

Have Him, and you are in heaven. 🌟

\*Bible texts are from the New King James Version. Copyright © 1979, 1980, 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

**Ron C. Smith** is president of the Southern Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and lives with his wife, Yolanda, in Norcross, Georgia, United States.

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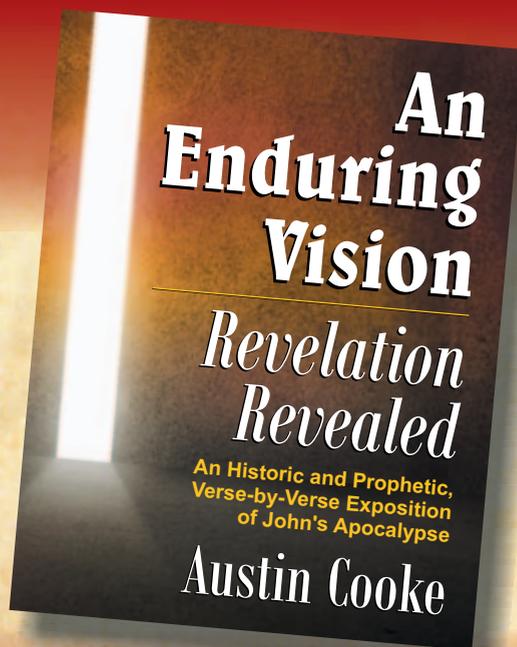
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# The Beehive International

*Helping Adventists share one of their most relevant messages: health*



**Rico Hill (left), Jonathan Euler, and Jared Thurmon lead The Beehive International in training and leading health and development outreach in four countries.**

The Beehive International combines health education with humanitarian aid to develop relationships and reveal Christ's love in practical, relevant ways. Established in 2009, its outreach activities include three primary platforms: Community Health Advocate Training (CHAT), From Sickness to Health seminars, and the Beehive Mission to Haiti.

"We wanted to come up with strategies that anyone can do," says Rico Hill, director. "We take very seriously the concept that every member of the church is supposed to be involved in this kind of work. If health is truly the entering wedge, it's something we want to take advantage of on a regular basis."

The Community Health Advocate Training (CHAT) is a weekend seminar at which participants are trained in health evangelism techniques. By focusing on the life and ministry of Jesus, participants learn how to interact with people and look for opportunities to reflect His love. The course is also available online.

In the Upper Columbia Conference (North American Division) several churches work together, providing seminars in central locations, preparing for a year-round cycle of evangelism.

"We want church [members] to mingle with [those who attend], deliberately getting to know them and love them. People are much more inclined to show up to an evangelistic effort when the invitation comes from a friend," Hill says.

He tells about young a woman who came to a health program on a public college campus. When she arrived she announced, "I want you to know: I'm an atheist, but I came here for the health."

As she returned week after week and

developed relationships with those leading out, she started attending gospel-centric meetings. In less than a year the woman was baptized and married a Seventh-day Adventist. "They are the most faithful couple I have met in a long time," says Hill.

"We've tried to make it so churches can buy materials they can then resell to cover the cost of their own event," says Jared Thurmon, creative director. "Church members can then pay for the event they're hosting."

Some health seminars take place in corporate settings. At an event in Atlanta, Georgia, United States, Thurmon announced, "If anyone wants to be 'coached' over 10 weeks, no strings attached, you can be a testimony in your own company."

Every day for 10 weeks Thurmon sent texts or called two women who volunteered. As their health began to improve, he began receiving texts that said, "You've been a blessing to me." "You've brought me closer to the Lord."

"It was a testimony of the health message; but it also said the door was open to spiritual things. It makes the point: Bless [people] with their health first, then lead them to spiritual things."

## MEANWHILE IN HAITI

The Beehive Mission to Haiti combines health education with community development. Jonathan Euler, director of International Development for Beehive International, lives in Haiti and leads volunteer groups in service to hospitals, schools, and orphanages.

The Beehive has 30 acres on which it provides vocational and agricultural training. One innovative project involves building furniture using wood from discarded shipping pallets. The project helps people learn skills as well as provide for their families. In the last 18 months, more than US\$25,000 has been raised to build up the ministry and provide a living for those involved. 🌱

*For more information about The Beehive International, visit [TheBeehives.org](http://TheBeehives.org).*

**BY STEPHEN CHAVEZ,  
ADVENTIST REVIEW/ANN**



Allan Lindsay (left), featured narrator and producer of the 1989 documentary *Keepers of the Flame*, engages church historian George Knight.

## First Ever Historical Drama Tells Advent Story

*Feature film is evangelistic tool that church leaders want in every Adventist home*

**MICHAEL W. CAMPBELL, ADVENTIST REVIEW/ANN**

**T**ell the World is the first historical drama to tell the story of the early history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The two-and-a-half hour film begins with William Miller's search of the Bible, through which he discovers Jesus as his "friend." The story concludes in 1874, after the organization of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, as the denomination sends its first missionary.

The cinematic feature shares the Adventist story through a team of some 97 professional actors and over 1,000 extras. It was filmed two years ago in Upper Canada Village, a living-history museum located in Ontario, with participants dressed in period clothing. The team consulted historians about how to make it as authentic and historically accurate as possible.

The 5.5 million-dollar film was an initiative of the Australian Union Conference. Major funding came from the South Pacific Division and the General Conference. The Adventist Media

Network in Australia produced the film.

Chester Stanley, president of the Australian Union, stated that it is a "powerful story" that describes the hardships, trials, and determination of the early Adventist pioneers. Woven into the narrative are explanations about how these pioneers discovered core Adventist doctrinal beliefs, especially the Second Coming, Sabbath, and priestly ministry of Jesus Christ in the heavenly sanctuary.

The film was guided by Allan G. Lindsay, featured narrator and executive producer of the 1989 eight-part documentary series *Keepers of the Flame*. Lindsay expressed his deep gratitude to God for how He has led in our Adventist past. He viewed God's providential hand also at work in the various stages of the film as it unfolded. Lindsay noted that he worked closely with George R. Knight, professor emeritus of church history at Andrews University, and James R. Nix, director of the Ellen G. White Estate.

Mark Finley, general editor for *Adventist Review*, welcomed those present at the

screening. "When you watch it, the film grounds you in Adventist history. Many young people have lost their sense of identity. When you get done all you can say is 'Thank God for the Seventh-day Adventist Church.'"

One particularly poignant part of the film features James and Ellen White as they bury their infant son. Ellen places a pair of infant shoes on a wooden cross. My eyes became misty as I noticed others around me wiping away tears from their eyes. Later the film shows their teenage son Henry, who, as he lies on his deathbed, requests to be buried next to his infant brother. "Mother," he says, "I will meet you in heaven."

Knight hopes that if this feature film is well received it will be possible to produce a follow-up that would continue the story up through the end of Ellen White's life in 1915. "There is a tremendous amount of material about the growth and expansion of the Seventh-day Adventist Church that still needs to be told." 🍌



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# SAN ANTONIO 360°

**1. IT'S A BIIIIIG WORLD:** One of the younger attendees of Tuesday night's evening program takes in the impressive view of a full Alamodome. PHOTO: PIETER DAMSTEEGT AR/ANN

**2. HEAVENLY HARMONIES:** Members of the Oakwood University Aeolians delight the audience at Thursday night's evening worship. PHOTO: JOSEF KISSINGER AR/ANN

**3. THREE, TWO, ONE . . .** A busy backstage TV crew directs cameras on the floor of the Alamodome.

PHOTO: DOMINIK ZEH AR/ANN

**4. COLORS OF THE WORLD:** Analia Freire from Brazil shows off a bright Peruvian costume at the booth of the Peruvian Union University. PHOTO: JOSEF KISSINGER AR/ANN

**5. CAN YOU READ IT?** "Jesus is coming again" was the message delegates of the West-Central African Division spelled out at the end of their report on Thursday evening, July 9, 2015. PHOTO: TOR TJERANSEN AR/ANN

**6. LET'S PRAY:** Rick McEdward, director of the Global Mission Centers at the General Conference, invites attendees and delegates to pray during the Global Circle of Prayer on Sunday evening. PHOTO: DICK DUERKSON AR/ANN

**7. SAN ANTONIO'S WATERWAYS:** Visitors to the session could catch a ride on one of the River Tours and get to know a different side of the city. PHOTO: MARK FROELICH AR/ANN

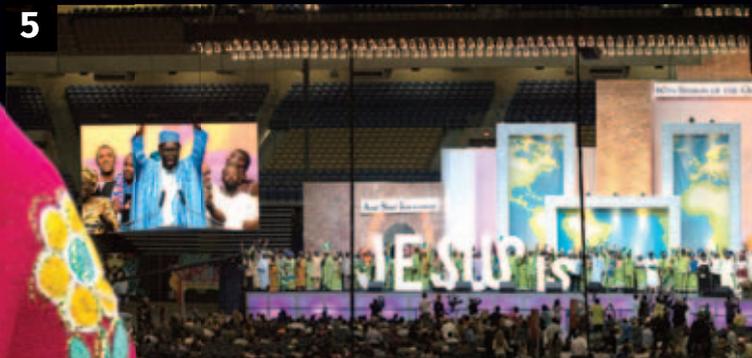
**8. NOT QUITE:** Organizers and participants of TheHayStack event, who had aimed to get into the Guinness World Records, enjoyed a wonderful potluck and warm fellowship—but did not reach the needed 1,276 participants necessary to best the current record holder. PHOTO: SETH SHAFFER AR/ANN

**9. O CANADA:** Rhanda Bonet-Graham represents Burman University, formerly known as Canadian University College (CUC), located in Lacombe, Canada.

PHOTO: TOR TJERANSEN AR/ANN

**10. READY TO GO:** Two participants of the Mission on the Move closing program are getting ready to step on to the platform on Sabbath evening, July 11, 2015.

PHOTO: DAVID B. SHERWIN AR/ANN



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**Taido Rivero from Spain interprets for the Deaf at GC session.**

to know more about Jesus,” said Larry Evans, coordinator for GC Adventist Deaf Ministries International (ADMI), who was visiting the school. “The young man had heard about Jesus, but the church doors were closed to him. Is it any wonder that only 2 percent of the 250 million culturally Deaf in the world are Christian?”

#### **CREATING AN IDENTITY**

Evans began creating an official identity for the Adventist Deaf soon after accepting the role of coordinator for Deaf Ministries in 2010. Regional Deaf ministry coordinators have since been put in place in each of the church’s 13 world divisions, and an international Web site was developed that offers resources for both the Deaf and the hearing who want to help the Deaf. The GC has also hired a Web content manager, Amanda Colgan, who is deaf and lives and works from her home in the Hyannis, Massachusetts, area of the United States.

“Amanda is very computer savvy; she’s tops,” Evans says. “The Deaf know and highly respect her. This helped to create a sense of network for the Deaf.”

The culturally Deaf have their own worldview and unique characteristics, including humor and language, Evans said, as well as 400 different sign languages—and they don’t usually live together in grouped populations.

“So how do we reach all of them?” Evans asked. Part of the answer, he said, is technology.

With a grant provided by Versacare, ADMI was able to purchase a partnership with Hope Channel. As a result, Hope Channel Deaf will launch November 1, 2015. Some 200 programs in five categories—Bible study and evangelism, health, children, and nature—will be aired and subtitled in five languages: Spanish, French, Portuguese, German, and English, with more to be added later.

“What we’re trying to create is not a program but a people movement,” Evans said. “That means people become excited

DOMINIK ZEH/ARJANN

# Two Firsts for Deaf Ministries at GC Session

*The Deaf are now more closely integrated into world church.*

Speaking through an interpreter, a young man in a private non-Christian vocational school for the deaf and blind in Lesotho, in southern Africa, stood up among the student assembly and told the visiting General Conference (GC) representative, “I want to learn about Jesus.”

He then shared his story of being turned away from a Sunday-keeping church because there was no one to interpret for him.

“His tears told me how much he wanted

**BY SANDRA BLACKMER,  
ADVENTIST REVIEW/ANN**

about what's happening and begin to share with other people. Ideas begin to flow in; resources are created; financial assistance becomes spontaneous, and momentum develops. We're beginning to see some of that already."

## SESSION FIRSTS

Even though GC session planners have previously used interpreters for the Deaf, this session is the first time the interpretations have been broadcast.

"The Deaf around the world can now know what is happening and being said at a GC session live, thanks to Hope Channel," Evans said. "Deaf from Germany, Finland, Spain, and Brazil have already written to express their appreciation. They say they're now feeling part of the Adventist Church."

An ADMI booth is also set up in the exhibit hall—another first for GC Deaf Ministries.

"Whether a person is deaf or has other physical limitations, they too have abilities and talents, and we need to include them in our meetings and committees where we develop mission strategies," Evans said. "We must make room for them 'at the table.'"

To access resources or to find out more about Adventist Deaf Ministries International, go to [www.adventistdeaf.org](http://www.adventistdeaf.org).



DICK DUERKSEN ARJANN

**Nohelani Jarnes, coordinator for interpretation for the Deaf at GC session, signing for Hope Channel's live-streaming Internet broadcasts**

**James Nix, director of the Ellen G. White Estate, brings Adventist history to life during the evening devotionals.**



## Songs of Zion

**BY MICHAEL CAMPBELL, ADVENTIST REVIEW/ANN**

Friday evening, July 10, Jim Nix, director of the Ellen G. White Estate, completed his Heritage Stories series by featuring "Favorite Hymns and Stories of Ellen G. White." The songs of the early Adventist pioneers testified to their passionate love for Jesus Christ along with their hope in His soon return. As the thousands of attendees sang those songs, they discovered more of how music interfaced with the personal faith of God's prophetic messenger. Ellen White lived with heavenly realities, and the songs she loved still point us to heaven. Simply singing them together helped many participants understand why no one in her family wanted to miss family worship, especially Friday evening vespers. Nix's intimate glimpses into spiritual forces at work in White's experience were aimed at strengthening contemporary faith, as Adventists sing the "songs of Zion" today and recognize how God still works in our own lives.

“Your impact will be felt  
long after your meetings  
are over.” —San Antonio Mayor, Ivy Taylor





PHOTO BY SAN SUVANKHAM



## Eighth Business Meeting Amended Session Actions

Sixtieth General Conference Session July 6, 2015, 2:00 p.m.

### THE EXPERIENCE OF SALVATION—FUNDAMENTAL BELIEFS OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS - AMENDMENT

VOTED, To amend the Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists, #10, The Experience of Salvation, to read as follows:

#### 10. The Experience of Salvation

In infinite love and mercy God made Christ, who knew no sin, to be sin for us, so that in Him we might be made the righteousness of God. Led by the Holy Spirit we sense our need, acknowledge our sinfulness, repent of our transgressions, and exercise faith in Jesus as Saviour and Lord, ~~Lord and Christ~~, as Substitute and Example. This saving faith ~~faith which receives salvation~~ comes through the divine power of the Word and is the gift of God's grace. Through Christ we are justified, adopted as God's sons and daughters, and delivered from the lordship of sin. Through the Spirit we are born again and sanctified; the Spirit renews our minds, writes God's law of love in our hearts, and we are given the power to live a holy life. Abiding in Him we become partakers of the divine nature and have the assurance of salvation now and in the judgment. (Gen. 3:15; Isa. 45:22; Jer. 31:31-34; Ezek. 33:11; 36:25-27; Hab. 2:4; Mark 9:23, 24; John 3:3-8, 16; 16:8; Rom. 3:21-26; 8:1-4, 14-17; 5:6-10; 10:17; 12:2; 2 Cor. 5:17-21; Gal. 1:4; 3:13, 14, 26; 4:4-7; Eph. 2:4-10; Col. 1:13, 14; Titus 3:3-7; Heb. 8:712; 1 Peter 1:23; 2:21, 22; 2 Peter 1:3, 4; Rev. 13:8.) (2 Cor. 5:17-21; John 3:16; Gal. 1:4; 4:4-7; Titus 3:3-7; John 16:8; Gal. 3:13, 14; 1 Peter 2:21, 22; Rom. 10:17; Luke 17:5; Mark 9:23, 24; Eph. 2:5-10; Rom. 3:21-26; Col. 1:13, 14; Rom. 8:14-17; Gal. 3:26; John 3:3-8; 1 Peter 1:23; Rom. 12:2; Heb. 8:7-12; Eze. 36:25-27; 2 Peter 1:3, 4; Rom. 8:1-4; 5:6-10.)

## Thirteenth Business Meeting

Sixtieth General Conference session, July 9, 2015, 9:30 a.m.

DELBERT BAKER: We'd like to welcome you to the thirteenth business session.

GILBERT WARI: [Prayer.]

GERRY KARST: You've already made reference to the *Adventist Review* this morning. But I think it would be nice for this delegation to go on record as giving a vote of appreciation to the immense amount of work that goes into producing these bulletins every single day. These people must be up all night long, and I would like for it to go on record that we appreciate what they're doing.

DELBERT BAKER: Excellent.

GERRY KARST: These people are visible because we see their paper. There's another group who are invisible that I think we should pay tribute to as well, and that is those who are up there in the translation booth. I think we ought to express our appreciation to them as well.

DELBERT BAKER: Thank you. Excellent, Pastor Karst. Thank you for that. He's just highlighting the fact that not only do we see the names in the *Adventist Review*, the ones that are visible, but he's talking about the support staff that is behind the scenes. They're giving incredible work, backup, making these things that we will take home and remember the session with possible.

So we're taking that in the form of a motion.

[The motion was seconded and approved.]

At this time we'd like to turn the chair over to Pastor Wilson for the GC Corporation meeting.

TED N. C. WILSON: We will reopen the General Conference Corporation of Seventh-day Adventists meeting to hear a report from the Nominating Committee regarding the recommendation for the board of directors.

HOMER TRECARTIN: The Nominating Committee will bring you that report now.

LESLIE POLLARD: G. T. Ng, secretary; Juan Prestol-

Puesán, treasurer. Board members: Guillermo Biaggi, Thomas Lemon, Geoffrey Mbwana, Daniel Jackson, Myron Iseminger, J. Raymond Wahlen, John Thomas, G. Alex Bryant, Timothy Aka, George Egwakhe, Daisy Orion, G. Thomas Evans, Robert Kyte.

Brother Chairman, I move these to serve as members of the GC Corporation board.

TED N. C. WILSON: Voted.

The corporation meeting is adjourned.

Thank you for your kind cooperation.

DELBERT BAKER: We now continue the Nominating Committee report.

LESLIE POLLARD: These are the division officers that we are presenting this morning as recommendations of the Nominating Committee.

East-Central Africa Division, secretary, Alain Coralie (new).

East-Central Africa Division, treasurer, Jerome Habimana (incumbent).

Euro-Asia Division, secretary, Viktor Alyeksyeyenko (new).

Euro-Asia Division, treasurer, Brent Burdick (incumbent).

Inter-European Division, secretary, Barna Magyarosi (new).

Inter-European Division, treasurer, Norbert Zens (incumbent).

Inter-American Division, secretary, Eli Henry (incumbent).

Inter-American Division, treasurer, Filiberto Verduzco (incumbent).

North American Division, secretary, G. Alexander Bryant (incumbent).

North American Division, treasurer, G. Thomas Evans (incumbent).

Northern Asia-Pacific Division, treasurer, German Lust (new).

South American Division, secretary, Edward Heidinger (incumbent).

Southern American Division, treasurer, Marlon de Souza Lopes (incumbent).

South Pacific Division, secretary, Lionel Smith (incumbent).

South Pacific Division, treasurer, Rodney Brady (incumbent).

Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division, secretary, Solomon Maphosa (incumbent).

Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division, treasurer, Goodwell Nthani (incumbent).

Southern Asia Division, secretary, Measapogu Wilson (new).

Southern Asia-Pacific Division, secretary, Saw Samuel (incumbent).

Southern Asia-Pacific Division, treasurer, Max Langi (new).

Trans-European Division, secretary, Audrey Anderson (incumbent).

Trans-European Division, treasurer, Nenad Jeuranovic (incumbent).

West-Central Africa Division, secretary, Kingsley Anonaba (new).

West-Central Africa Division, treasurer, Emmanuel Manu (incumbent).

Brother Chairman, I move these names.

MEGEN MOLÉ: I move to refer this report back to the Nominating Committee because of severe underrepresentation of women and young people.

DELBERT BAKER: It's seconded.

HOMER TRECARTIN: The recommendations that have been brought to you today have come from the caucuses. Those members from each division have caused and brought these recommendations to us. The Nominating Committee as a whole looked at those recommendations from each division caucus, those that you elected, and have recommended them to you.

So if we go back and discuss it, we will probably have to defer a decision until the caucuses could meet again and see if they would recommend new names to be brought back to the process. We need to see if the body would like that process reconsidered or if you are ready to go ahead and vote on the names that the caucuses have recommended.

[The motion to refer back was voted down.]

EMMANUEL MWALE: I want to support the list as it is and also to mention that while it's important for us to include young people, I believe that the positions at the GC division are for people of experience.

LARRY BOGGESS: I would encourage us to start training young people for leadership positions. And I know that's got to start at the conference and division levels. But I really want to stand in support of our young adults and our youth, that we make a better effort to include them in leadership. And as we do that, as they grow in their leadership role, we will see more of them serving in division and General Conference positions. So I'm not sure how you would do that, but I just want to stand in support of the idea.

[The list of division secretaries and treasurers was approved by the delegates.]

LESLIE POLLARD: These are the names for the GC departments as recommended by the Nominating Committee.

Health Ministries, associate director, Dr. Fred Hardinge (incumbent).

Health Ministries, associate director, Dr. Katia Reinert (new).

Health Ministries, associate director, Dr. Zeno

Lancelot Charles-Marcel (new).

Communication, associate directors, Andre Brink (incumbent).

Communication, associate director, Garrett Caldwell (incumbent).

Publishing Ministries, associate director, Wilmar Hirle (incumbent).

I move these names.

[The names presented were seconded and approved by the delegates.]

TED N. C. WILSON: I praise God for supporting ministries that penetrate airwaves, such as 3ABN, LLBN, and many others. We are grateful for Hope Channel and its central role in guiding in our church.

Amazing Facts is celebrating their fiftieth anniversary.

We have a video in honor of their anniversary

[Playing of video.]

DELBERT BAKER: We are moving on to our constitution and bylaws agenda.

DAVID RIPLEY: We have a world church looking at the same Scriptures and coming up with very different interpretations. I think that points out that this church has very divided hermeneutics or rules of interpretation. The world church should take time to study and to bring together what our hermeneutic really is, because we're using two very different ones.

DELBERT BAKER: It has been noted, and it will be referred to Steering Committee, who will look at your item and take note of it.

At this time we're moving to constitution and bylaws.

MYRON ISEMINGER: We have added a research component to the functions of the General Conference Office of Archives and Statistics, and the new name is the Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research. The proposal changes the title wherever it is mentioned in the General Conference Constitution and Bylaws.

DELBERT BAKER: [Moved, seconded, and voted.]

MYRON ISEMINGER: The next item is also an editorial directive. And the rationale behind this is that in some regions of the world the title "chief financial officer" is preferred over the title "treasurer." So this proposal endorses the use of either title and inserts the dual language in the General Conference Constitution and Bylaws wherever the title "treasurer" is mentioned, reflecting the change that's already been voted by the General Conference Executive Committee and reflected in the *Working Policy*.

So I would move to approve this directive to amend the General Conference Constitution and Bylaws where appropriate by replacing "treasurer" with "treasurer/chief financial officer."

DELBERT BAKER: [It was seconded and approved.]

MYRON ISEMINGER: The next item deals with the fact that the *Adventist Review* went from a weekly to a monthly publication. And Article V has been adjusted to tie the publication of notices for the General Conference session to a time period rather than to specific issues of the *Adventist Review*, as used in the current wording. So the new wording also allows for the notices to be placed in other publications if deemed appropriate.

The second item is codify the practice that the General Conference Executive Committee has been doing, and that is to define the process and the distribution for the one category of session delegates at large that it appoints.

"Those representatives of the General Conference and division, institutions and other entities, and those employees, field secretaries, laypersons, and pastors

who are selected by the Executive Committee of the General Conference and its divisions, by a process and distribution as defined by the Executive Committee of the General Conference."

And so this simply clarifies the process for selecting delegates at large who represent the General Conference. I move to approve these.

DELBERT BAKER: [It was seconded and approved.]

LEEZEL DEZA: As a female, a young married mother, visible minority, who loves God, I understand people are very tired and want things to move along quickly. But I ask that the note is taken that there be a better representation of young people and women who represent our church in the future.

DELBERT BAKER: Your concern is noted. Thank you.

MYRON ISEMINGER: This new item deals with the removal of the expression "general field secretary" from Article VI.

The "field secretaries" deal with persons who are appointed by a specific board and, by virtue of that position, become field secretaries. So they have a specific role rather than a general role.

DELBERT BAKER: [It was moved, seconded, and voted.]

MYRON ISEMINGER: The next item is dealing with Article VIII. And the rationale behind this is that two of our General Conference institutions, Oakwood University and Pacific Press, were transferred to the North American Division during the past year, 2014. So their presidents would no longer qualify as ex-officio members of the General Conference Executive Committee, as these entities are no longer General Conference institutions. So the proposed change removes these leaders and reorganizes the remaining positions into separate categories.

Second, it adds a provision for an organization to remain classified as a General Conference-sponsored institution or entity in order to qualify for their executive director or president to be an ex-officio member of the General Conference Executive Committee.

DELBERT BAKER: [It has been moved, seconded, and approved.]

MYRON ISEMINGER: The next item is dealing with the terms of office. The proposal makes some editorial changes in the beginning of this article and then also clarifies how the term of office for division officers relates to the mandatory retirement policies or legislation in their division.

DELBERT BAKER: [It was moved and seconded.]

STOY PROCTOR: We claim to be a Bible-believing church. I don't think there's many references to limitations of service for the characters of the Bible. I think we should be more concerned about the ability—the health—of the individual, the job that they're doing. If they're doing a great job, limiting their service, time, is, I think, unbiblical, and we're not respecting the experience that they have received. So I'd like for us to be at least fair about this issue.

WALTER ALAÑA HUAPAYA: I would like to read a couple of statements of the Spirit of Prophecy.

The question is asked me if it is not a mistake to remove the president of a State conference to a new field when many of the people under his present charge are unwilling to give him up. The Lord has been pleased to give me light on this question. I have been shown that ministers should not be retained in the same district year after year, nor should the same man long preside over a conference. A change of gift is for the good of our conferences and churches" [*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 9, p. 143]. "If a laborer is spiritually strong,

he is, through the grace of Christ, a blessing to the churches and his labors are needed in different conference" [p. 144].

So I think this is a very important issue, and I support this idea.

As you know, some divisions, conferences, have term limitations; others do not. But this is not directly relating to the motion. I appreciate it. Even though the comments are good observations, let's stick with the motion at hand.

DELBERT BAKER: [The motion was approved.]

MYRON ISEMINGER: This is the name change of the Euro-Africa Division to the Inter-European Division. The territories in North Africa were assigned to the Middle East and North Africa Union Mission. The old name is struck out and the new name, Inter-European Division, is added.

DELBERT BAKER: [Moved, seconded, and voted.]

MYRON ISEMINGER: There's been some confusion at past sessions as to whether certain delegates should caucus with the division or with the General Conference delegation.

Additional wording is added to clarify that the delegates appointed by the General Conference administrative should be assigned to the appropriate designation at the time of their selection by the General Conference Administrative Committee.

"Each division and each attached union shall be entitled to select for membership on the Nominating Committee 10 percent of its delegation to the session, after excluding any delegates at large employed by the General Conference or its institutions and any delegates selected by the General Conference Administrative Committee and assigned by the Administrative Committee to meet with the General Conference and institution delegation."

DELBERT BAKER: [Moved, seconded, and voted.]

MYRON ISEMINGER: The recommendation here is to amend the bylaws, Article VII, Division Treasurers, to include the terminology "chief financial officers" or "treasurers." Either term is acceptable.

DELBERT BAKER: [Moved, seconded, and voted.]

MYRON ISEMINGER: During this quinquennium we had a major rewrite of the section dealing with auditing services in the *Working Policy*.

On page 86, line 18, is an example. You'll see there, "Administer a program to provide assurance and related services as part of the worldwide financial oversight program for the Seventh-day Adventist Church." The older terminology was to conduct audits. And so the new terminology, "providing assurance and related services," is what is commonly used in the profession.

I would like to incorporate a recommendation that is taken from the *Working Policy* section SA-0540, striking "consultation with the administrations of the respective divisions" and adding the phrase "taking into consideration work performance and feedback from a variety of sources."

We have added, near the end of line 13, on page 87, "regions" and "mission stations." These are nonconstituency-based organizations under a mission field or conference. We have included those in the *Working Policy*. These would be entities that would be normally audited through the General Conference Auditing Service.

DELBERT BAKER: [Moved, seconded, and voted.]

KARNIK DOUKMETZIAN: In the bylaws there's a reference to general vice presidents and also division vice presidents who serve as division presidents.



DELBERT BAKER: Thank you. That's helpful.

MYRON ISEMINGER: The next item relates to Article IX, General Conference and division field secretaries.

We are defining "field secretary" instead of "general field secretary."

You can see here from the rationale on line 7 that it's proposed that Article IX be adjusted to include General Conference or division field secretaries that report to an officer other than the president. In the past, especially for general field secretaries, they reported to the president.

The wording also reflects the current practice whereby the Executive Committee appoints as field secretaries those individuals who, by virtue of leadership positions in specific organizations, also have important relationships with the General Conference and/or division administrations.

Here is the reading: "The term 'field secretary' shall be used to designate the role of persons elected/appointed to assist the officers of the General Conference or division in a range of general or specific responsibilities."

"A General Conference 'field secretary' ordinarily carries another portfolio of responsibility, the nature of which involves frequent interactions with global church leadership. In the role of field secretary this person works under the direction of the president or another designated officer. Field secretaries shall be elected by the General Conference Executive Committee, after having been appointed to their primary responsibility by their respective board, the General Conference Executive Committee, or the General Conference Administrative Committee as appropriate. Their term of service as field secretaries is contingent on the term of service in the individual's primary responsibility."

I move that we accept the amendment to the bylaws Article IX as noted.

DELBERT BAKER: [The amendment was seconded and approved.]

MYRON ISEMINGER: This comes as a request by a division. In Article XIII, Section F, we're adding "General Conference Executive Committee" to clarify that it's not referring to a division executive committee.

DELBERT BAKER: [Moved, seconded, and voted.]

MYRON ISEMINGER: Our final item is an amendment to Article XVII. We're adding "region" and "field station," and then noting that title receipts would be forwarded through denominational channels.

DELBERT BAKER: [Moved, seconded, and voted.]

We move now to the *Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists*. This is a very exciting project, one that's going to open a whole new era of information and accessibility to the members of our world church.

LARRY BOGGESS: Just a question, Mr. Chairman, concerning the General Conference Constitution and Bylaws.

I think that we urged to follow or to adopt the—I forget what the term is—model constitution and bylaws. Do the local divisions or local unions or local conferences have the power not to adopt the model constitution? And if they do adopt the model constitution, do they have to abide by it?

MYRON ISEMINGER: Perhaps our legal counsel would also like to weigh in on this. But in the model constitutions, which are printed in our *Working Policy*, there are two elements: There is a part in bold print, which we have determined are important and are to be followed. There are also parts of the sections in lighter print, and in those areas there is some flexibility and room to include them or not include them.

KARNIK DOUKMETZIAN: First of all, divisions do not have a constitution and bylaws, because they are divisions of the General Conference. There are model bylaws for unions, unions of churches, conferences, missions, etc.

And there is a paragraph in the *Working Policy* that requires, regardless of the organization, that the model constitution shall be followed. Myron Iseminger indicated that the sections that are in bold print are essential to the unity of the church worldwide and shall be included in the bylaws as adopted by each of those entities.

ELIASIB FAJARDO: I'm thankful to the leadership of the church, which allows young people to participate actively in these meetings. However in light of the comments made this morning that deal with the lack of women and young adults, and equal field representation, I move to amend the constitution and bylaws regarding fair gender and fair age representation of the officials of the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventists and also this body.

JAY GALLIMORE: There's a lot of misunderstanding as to the structure of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. This is a representative form of government. We love our young people. We love the gender inclusiveness. But we must understand that the elections there are from the ground up, and these need to be represented, of course, in the General Conference session. So like the Congress of the United States, you can't just go to the Congress of the United States and say, You will have so many X's so many Y's and so many Z's. They have to come from where those folk were elected. You have to keep that in mind and understand this is a representative form of church government, and we must not undermine that.

LEEZEL DEZA: I would just like to thank the body for verbalizing the unsaid standard that the young men and women need to hold office and the leadership positions of our organization in order for us to have a voice. So I'd like to thank you all in advance for patiently and effectively mentoring young people and for noting our concerns.

DAVID TRIM: A brief flashback in Adventist history. In 1966 the fiftieth General Conference session convened in Detroit, Michigan, nearly 50 years ago. There were 1,495 delegates representing a world church whose membership totaled only 1.7 million.

Also in 1966 a new one-volume *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia* was published by the Review and Herald Publishing Association. And I know many of you will fondly remember that book with its green binding and its red lettering.

Its stated purpose was as follows: "The *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia* is a compendium of facts about Seventh-day Adventists, their work, beliefs, organization, methods, and philosophies. The work is intended to inform not only church members but non-SDAs as well who may be inquiring about the church's work and beliefs."

In 1976, 10 years after the appearance of the *SDA Encyclopedia*, a revised edition was published, this time in brown; and 20 years after that, in 1996, a second revised edition was published, this time in two volumes.

At present the world church leaders see the need for a completely new encyclopedia of the Seventh-day Adventist Church for the following reasons: the first is growth. When the *SDA Encyclopedia* first appeared in 1966, the church was working in 190 countries or regions. Today Seventh-day Adventist work is estab-

lished in 215 countries and regions.

Back in 1966 there were 441 organizational units and 1.7 million members. Today there are 771 organizational units, and our reported membership is a little more than 18.5 million.

So the number of organizational units—conferences, missions, unions—has nearly doubled. The number of Seventh-day Adventists has grown tenfold.

The second reason is changing dynamics. Although the 1976 and 1996 editions of the encyclopedia made some alterations to the existing text, those editions mostly just added to the first edition rather than revising it. That means that the great bulk of the original text has not been revised for 50 years.

We have found that the *SDA Encyclopedia* is not reliable on key facts, such as the date the Adventist work started in a country, the first official missionaries in the country, biographical details, and the foundation dates of organizational units. Furthermore, during the past 20 years, Adventist history has been transformed by new studies based on primary sources.

There is also the matter of innate biases, biases that slant—indeed, distort—some of the articles. Those biases reflect the nature of our church when the encyclopedia was drafted in the early 1960s.

The church then was overwhelmingly Western. So we understand those biases. But those biases, frankly, are not acceptable today. So we need an encyclopedia that reflects today's worldwide church.

The third reason is technology. Currently you can't get the encyclopedia on a tablet. Although the 1966 and, indeed, 1996 encyclopedias sold fairly well, the vast majority of our membership has never seen it and never read it. It is not available online, so the information is not accessible to our members or the general public.

When new church members or prospective members try to find out information on some aspect of the Adventist Church, they are forced to fend for themselves on the Internet, where they can end up at sites that are unreliable or highly distorted, if not actually hostile to the church.

Taking all this into account, on April 14, 2015, the General Conference Executive Committee, at its Spring Meeting, approved a budget for the *Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists*, a new encyclopedia, a five-year world church initiative directed by and based on the General Conference Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research. I am directing that project. And I introduce to you Dr. Benjamin Baker, which is the managing editor.

BENJAMIN BAKER: The *Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists* has drawn on the expertise of thousands of Adventist scholars worldwide, with each organizational unit of the church participating.

It has six goals: 1. Supply reliable and authoritative information on Adventist history, crucial events and themes, people, organizations, entities, and institutions.

2. Strengthen identity in a fast-growing global movement, heightening awareness of distinctive doctrinal and prophetic beliefs.

3. Provide a reference work for those new to our faith, mature in the faith, and not of our faith, to learn about all aspects of Adventism.

DAVID TRIM: 4: This goal is to bring out the role of denominational organization and structure in fulfilling the church's mission. I think even here we find that the church's organization is not always fully understood, even by delegates.

5. We want to highlight the missional challenges still remaining in order to reach the world. Remember, that

is our goal, our strategic plan. We need to reach the world with the gospel and prophetic truth.

And so every article on a conference, mission, or union, every article on a country, city, or region, will end with a summary of the mission challenge still facing the church in that territory. It will summarize statistically and with other analytical tools what needs to be done if we are to reach that territory with the gospel and instinctive prophetic truths of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. That will be a major addition to the old encyclopedia.

And, 6, the encyclopedia will reflect the nature of the world church today, both in its subject matter and in those who write articles for the encyclopedia.

BENJAMIN BAKER: The new encyclopedia will, first and foremost, be available as an online edition that is regularly updated, edited, and amplified, and will include Web-only content, such as video and audio; and additional articles will be added as the denomination grows.

DAVID TRIM: We want this online encyclopedia to become the authoritative source of information on the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the first place anyone checks online, whether they are Adventist or not. And we will build toward that goal even before the full completed edition is ready. We plan to have the encyclopedia Web site live and online this winter, thanks partly to the support of Bill Knott and his team at *Adventist Review* and *Adventist World*.

As of early next year, the Web site that we're constructing at *Adventist Review* will include pages that church members can go to upload copies of historic documents, photographs, film, video and audio recordings, and your own memory statements about the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and your personal history in God's remnant church.

Because the encyclopedia will have an ongoing, continuous existence online, no future major revision process will be required, because the Web edition will be regularly updated.

While the production of a new encyclopedia will be time-consuming and will not be cheap, a similar outlay of resources will never be needed again. The full online edition with all articles, as well as the materials contributed by church members, will be introduced to the public at the 2020 General Conference session in Indianapolis, and a print edition will also appear in 2020.

BENJAMIN BAKER: First, you need to realize that the *Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists* is your project. Pray for it. Tell your constituents about it. Support it in your institutions, administrations, and churches.

DAVID TRIM: Second, we would like you, especially those of you who are institution presidents or board chairs, to prioritize granting research time and assistance to faculty or staff or assistant editors and authors. During the next five years I will make this plain to you. You have independent boards; it's your decision. I make the plea to you institution presidents and board chairs for the next four years: people working on the encyclopedia should be the priority for receiving institutions' own research funding and assistance from your faculty for the next four years. The General Conference is funding this generously—\$1.6 million over a period of five years—but we really need the whole world church to be involved.

Third, if you are so moved, consider donating to the project. As I said, the General Conference has approved a budget, and the budget will make this an outstanding resource, but your donations could make it a superlative resource that could help to establish additional

editorial offices around the world so that every area and region is represented comprehensively. And to enable us to do that requires extra mission-related analysis so that the encyclopedia becomes an invaluable resource for every Adventist evangelist, church planter, pastor, and Seventh-day Adventist Church member.

BENJAMIN BAKER: Fourth, if you know a person, institution, or theme that should be included in the encyclopedia, don't hesitate to contact the GC Archives. The e-mail address is [encyclopedia@gc.adventist.org](mailto:encyclopedia@gc.adventist.org).

Fifth, if you are requested, please write an article for the encyclopedia. We will also be asking you, leader of an organizational unit or an institution, to encourage your staff to write articles if requested.

Finally, sixth, when the encyclopedia Web site goes live, link to it on your own Web sites, promote it on social media, television, and radio, or in mass e-mails and periodicals. Visit the site often, and give us your input and feedback. When the print edition is published, purchase sets for your institutions, churches, administrative offices, and libraries, and for your non-Adventist contacts.

DAVID TRIM: In conclusion, acting together as a global church and by God's grace, we can produce an extraordinary and enduring resource that will strengthen Adventist identity and inspire mission around the world. I move that we accept this request.

DELBERT BAKER: [Seconded.]

JAY GALLIMORE: I would like to ask if one of the goals is objectivity. Something like this could be really wonderful but can also be a vehicle for people to use their own agenda.

DAVID TRIM: We have constructed a rather elaborate editorial structure over this, because it is vital that we work through church structure. Our goals are to be objective, but we also want to be truthful and accurate. We want something that will build up faith. I realize some people here may say, "Well, can you do both?" I believe we can. I really do believe that.

PINTOKO TEDJOKUSUMO: I make a suggestion that the divisions be given the responsibility to translate into various languages.

DAVID TRIM: We hope to work with all division administrations to have it translated into local languages.

BENJAMIN BAKER: We will have a page on the Web site for you to send your input and feedback, but for now, it's [encyclopedia@gc.adventist.org](mailto:encyclopedia@gc.adventist.org).

[The motion to receive the *Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists* report was approved.]

DELBERT BAKER: At this time we have a report from the Nominating Committee.

HOMER TRECARTIN: This is the final report of the Nominating Committee.

LESLIE POLLARD: There will be two recommendations of personnel to fill open positions, and then we will also have a request, a recommendation, to defer certain unfilled positions, certain vacant positions, to the GC Executive Committee and/or to Annual Council. And where there are persons currently in those positions, the incumbents will continue until the Executive Committee and/or the Annual Council.

Youth Ministries, associate director, Jonatan Tejel (incumbent).

Youth Ministries, associate director, Pako Edson Mokgwane (new).

Positions to be deferred:

\*GC Planned Giving and Trust Services.

\*GC Stewardship Ministries.

GC Publishing Ministries, associate director (vacant).

GC Associate Treasurer (vacant).

\*GC Youth Ministries, associate director (public campus ministries).

Southern Asia Division, treasurer (vacant).

Northern Asia-Pacific Division, secretary (vacant)

[\*The incumbent will continue until Executive Committee and/or Annual Council.]

[The final Nominating Committee report was moved, seconded, and approved.]

TED N. C. WILSON: On behalf of the General Conference we want to express deep appreciation to the Nominating Committee that you have selected through your caucuses. We have greatly appreciated the work of Homer Trecartin and Les Pollard, who are here with us, the chair and secretary. We also have other officers who have participated, and we're grateful to them as well.

And I want to express appreciation to you for your willingness to work with the Nominating Committee to bring to us individuals who will truly serve the Lord and help to propel this great Seventh-day Adventist movement toward its ultimate goal of reaching heaven through the grace of Jesus. May God bless the new team that has been assembled. And again, on behalf of the General Conference, we thank you for the extensive work and time that you have put into this, both as officers and as members of the Nominating Committee.

HOMER TRECARTIN: Thank you. And you gave us a wonderful team to work with.

[Applause.]

MAVENI KAUFONONGA: [Prayer.]

DELBERT BAKER and TED N. C. WILSON, *Chairs*  
G. ALEXANDER BRYANT, *Secretary*  
NILTON D. AMORIM, GARY B. PATTERSON,  
and CLAUDE SABOT, *Proceedings Editors*

## Session Actions

*Sixtieth General Conference Session*  
*July 9, 2015, 9:30 a.m.*

### APPRECIATION

VOTED, 1. To recognize and appreciate the Adventist Review staff for their work during the Session.

2. To recognize and appreciate the translators for their work during the Session.

### HERMENEUTICS

VOTED, To refer to Steering Committee the idea of developing a specific hermeneutic for the world Church.

### USE OF "ARCHIVES AND STATISTICS" - CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS EDITORIAL DIRECTIVE

RATIONALE: A research component has been added to the functions of the General Conference Office of Archives and Statistics, creating the Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research. The proposal changes the title wherever it is mentioned in the General Conference Constitution and Bylaws.

VOTED, To approve a directive to amend the General Conference Constitution and Bylaws where appropriate, by replacing "Archives and Statistics" with "Archives, Statistics, and Research."

### USE OF "TREASURER" - CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS EDITORIAL DIRECTIVE

RATIONALE: In some regions of the world the title



“chief financial officer” is preferred over the title, “treasurer.” This proposal endorses the use of either title and inserts the dual language in the General Conference Constitution and Bylaws wherever the title, “treasurer” is mentioned reflecting the change that has already been made in General Conference Working Policy.

VOTED, To approve a directive to amend the General Conference Constitution and Bylaws where appropriate, by replacing “treasurer” with “treasurer/chief financial officer.”

**GENERAL CONFERENCE SESSIONS - CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS AMENDMENT**

**RATIONALE:** In April 2015, the *Adventist Review* went from a weekly to a monthly publication. Article V has been adjusted to tie publication of notices for General Conference Session to a time period rather than to specific issues of the *Adventist Review*. The new wording also allows for the notices to be placed in other publications if appropriate. Section 8. f. codifies the current practice that the General Conference Executive Committee may define the process and distribution for one general category of Session delegates at large that it appoints.

VOTED, To amend the General Conference Constitution and Bylaws, Constitution, Article V—General Conference Sessions, to read as follows:

**ARTICLE V—GENERAL CONFERENCE SESSIONS**

Sec. 1. The General Conference shall hold quinquennial Sessions at such time and place as the General Conference Executive Committee shall designate and announce by a notice published in the *Adventist Review* and or *Adventist World* or other publications voted by the General Conference Executive Committee in three consecutive issues months beginning at least four months before the date for the opening of the Session. In case special world conditions make it imperative to postpone the calling of the Session, the General Conference Executive Committee, in regular or special council, shall have authority to make such postponement, not to exceed two years, giving notice to all constituent organizations.

Sec. 2. The General Conference Executive Committee may call - No change

Sec. 3. At least one-third of the total delegates authorized hereinafter - No change

Sec. 4. The election of officers and the voting on all matters of business - No change

Sec. 5. The delegates to a General Conference Session shall be designated - No change

Sec. 6. Regular delegates shall represent the General Conference's - No change

Sec. 7. Regular delegates shall be allotted on the following basis - No change

Sec. 8. Delegates at large shall represent the General Conference, its institutions, divisions of the General Conference, and division institutions and shall be appointed on the following basis:

a. All members of the General Conference Executive - No change

b. Associate directors/secretaries of General Conference - No change

c. Twenty delegates from General Conference appointed - No change

d. Twenty delegates for each division.

e. Each division shall be entitled to additional delegates - No change

f. Those representatives of the General Conference and division institutions and other entities, and those

employees, field secretaries, laypersons, and pastors who are selected by the Executive Committees of the General Conference and its divisions: divisions, by a process and distribution as defined by the Executive Committee of the General Conference. The number of these delegates shall be 300.

Sec. 9. Division administrations shall consult with unions to ensure that - No change

Sec. 10. Credentials to sessions shall be issued by the General Conference - No change

Sec. 11. Calculations for all delegate allotments, as provided for - No change

**ELECTION - CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS AMENDMENT**

**RATIONALE:** The specific responsibility of field secretaries as defined in Article IX is normally tied to their leadership appointment by a subsidiary organization's board (e.g. Adventist Development and Relief Agency, Adventist World Radio, Ellen G White Estate, Hope Channel). These organizational boards elect their leaders when they meet after the General Conference Session and the General Conference Executive Committee ratifies their role as field secretary at a subsequent meeting.

VOTED, To amend the General Conference Constitution and Bylaws, Constitution,

Article VI—Election, to read as follows:

**ARTICLE VI—ELECTION**

Sec. 1. The following shall be elected at each regular session of the General Conference:

a. A president, vice presidents, a secretary, an undersecretary, associate secretaries, division secretaries, a treasurer, an undertreasurer, associate treasurers, division treasurers, general field secretaries, a director and associate directors of the General Conference Auditing Service, and a director/secretary and associate director/secretary (directors/secretaries) of each duly organized General Conference department and association as specified in Article X, Sec. 1. of the General Conference Bylaws.

b. A General Conference Auditing Service Board as provided - No change

Sec. 2. The following shall be approved by vote - No change

**GENERAL CONFERENCE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE - CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS AMENDMENT**

**RATIONALE:** Two General Conference institutions, Oakwood University and Pacific Press Publishing Association, were transferred to the North American Division in 2014 so their presidents no longer qualify as ex officio members of the General Conference Executive Committee as these entities are no longer General Conference Institutions. The proposed change removes the leaders of those institutions, reorganizes the remaining positions into separate categories, and adds the provision that an organization must remain classified as a General Conference-sponsored entity in order for the president or executive director to qualify as an ex officio member of the General Conference Executive Committee.

VOTED, To amend the General Conference Constitution and Bylaws, Constitution, Article VIII—General Conference Executive Committee, to read as follows:

**ARTICLE VIII—GENERAL CONFERENCE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Sec. 1. The Executive Committee of the General Conference shall consist of:

a. Ex Officio Members—1) Those elected as provided for - No change

2) Presidents of unions, past presidents of the General Conference holding credentials from the General Conference, Conference, the president-executive director of Adventist Development and Relief Agency International, the president of Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies, the editor of *Adventist Review* and *Adventist World*, the editor of *Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*, the president of Adventist Risk Management Incorporated, the president of Adventist University of Africa, the president-executive director of Adventist World Radio, the president of Andrews University, the director of Archives and Statistics, the director of Biblical Research Institute, the president of Christian Record Services Incorporated, the president and the board chair of Ellen G White Estate, the president of Hope Channel, the director of Geoscience Research Institute, the president of Griggs University and International Academy, the president of Loma Linda University Adventist Health Sciences Center, the editor of *Ministry*, the president of Oakwood University, the president of Pacific Press Publishing Association, and the president of Review and Herald Publishing Association:

3) The president-executive director of each of the following organizations provided the respective organization remains classified as a General Conference-sponsored entity: Adventist Development and Relief Agency International, Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies, Adventist Risk Management, Adventist University of Africa, Adventist World Radio, Andrews University, Christian Record Services, Hope Channel, Loma Linda University Health, Review and Herald Publishing Association.

4) The editor of each of the following publications: Adventist Review, Adventist World, Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide, Ministry.

5) The director of each of the following: Archives, Statistics, and Research, Biblical Research Institute, Geoscience Research Institute.

6) The president and board chair of Ellen G White Estate.

b. Elected Members—1) Three laypersons and one church - No change

2) No fewer than fifteen and no more than twenty - No change

3) No fewer than fifteen and no more than twenty - No change

**TERM OF OFFICE - CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS AMENDMENT**

VOTED, To call for the vote on the item, Term of Office - Constitution and Bylaws Amendment.

**TERM OF OFFICE - CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS AMENDMENT**

**RATIONALE:** This proposal makes some editorial changes in wording and clarifies how the term of office for division officers relates to mandatory retirement policies or legislation in their division.

VOTED, To amend the General Conference Constitution and Bylaws, Constitution, Article X—Term of Office, to read as follows:

**ARTICLE X—TERM OF OFFICE**

Sec. 1. All officers of the General Conference and those whose election is provided for in Article VI, Sec 1. shall hold office from the time they are elected and, except for resignation or other termination, termination

for other reasons, shall serve until the end of their term, their reelection, or until their replacement is elected. A person who is not reelected elected to a new term of office during a session does not thereby lose delegate status at the session. Unless other arrangements are made in consultation with administration, such individuals will be expected to fulfill during the session itself any session-related responsibilities which have been assigned to them. In situations where official responsibilities cannot be immediately transferred transferred immediately to a newly elected individual, the officer whose term has expired may be requested by the newly elected officer, and approved by the General Conference Administrative Committee, to carry limited responsibilities, for a defined period of time until transition arrangements have been completed. Their term of office; The current term of office for those elected under Article VI, Sec 1. or elected by the Executive Committee between General Conference sessions to fill such office for the remainder of a term, unless government requirements dictate otherwise, is not subject to division retirement policies, which may determine specific ages for mandatory retirements. This provision does not override the service credit limitations, if any, of a retirement plan in which the person participates. Those who have passed the age of mandatory retirement, as determined by their division or legislation, shall not be eligible for election to a new term of office for positions indicated in Article VI, Sec 1., in that division.

- Sec. 2. Members of the General Conference Executive Committee - No change
- Sec. 3. Members of the General Conference Executive Committee - No change
- Sec. 4. Those persons who, by virtue of holding elected position - No change
- Sec. 5. All those who are appointed to serve the General Conference - No change
- Sec. 6. Service as outlined in Sec. 1. to Sec. 5. above - No change

**TERRITORIAL ADMINISTRATION - CONSTITUTION AND**

**BYLAWS EDITORIAL AMENDMENT**

RATIONALE: This proposed wording reflects the name change of the Euro-Africa Division to the Inter-European Division after their territories in North Africa were assigned to the Middle East North Africa Union Mission.

VOTED, To amend the General Conference Constitution and Bylaws, Bylaws,  
Article I—Territorial Administration, to read as follows:

**ARTICLE I—TERRITORIAL ADMINISTRATION**

- Sec. 1. The General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, hereinafter - No change
- Sec. 2. The duly organized divisions are: East-Central Africa Division, ~~Euro-Africa Division~~, Euro-Asia Division, Inter-American Division, ~~Inter-European Division~~, North American Division, Northern Asia-Pacific Division, South American Division, South Pacific Division, Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division, Southern Asia Division, Southern Asia-Pacific Division, Trans-European Division, and West-Central Africa Division. The boundaries of these divisions shall be subject to adjustment at Annual Councils of the General Conference Executive Committee.
- Sec. 3. If a territorial adjustment is made at an Annual Council, it shall - No change
- Sec. 4. Administrations of all organizations and institutions within - No change

**SESSION COMMITTEES - CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS AMENDMENT**

RATIONALE: There has been some confusion at past Sessions whether certain delegates should caucus with a division or with the General Conference delegation. Additional wording is proposed in Article II clarifying that delegates appointed by the General Conference Administrative Committee should be assigned to the appropriate delegation at the time of their selection by the General Conference Administrative Committee.

VOTED, To amend the General Conference Constitu-

tion and Bylaws, Bylaws, Article II—Session Committees, to read as follows:

**ARTICLE II—SESSION COMMITTEES**

- Sec. 1. At each regular Session of the General Conference - No change
- Sec. 2. Church Manual Committee: The chair of the Church Manual - No change
- Sec. 3. Constitution and Bylaws Committee: The chair of the Constitution - No change
- Sec. 4. Nominating Committee: a. The membership of the Nominating Committee shall consist of the following:
  - 1) Each division and each attached union shall be entitled to select for membership on the Nominating Committee ten percent of its delegation to the session, after excluding any delegates at large employed by the General Conference or its institutions: institutions and any delegates selected by the General Conference Administrative Committee and assigned by the Administrative Committee to meet with the General Conference and institution delegation.
  - 2) Delegates at large who are excluded under 1) above shall be entitled to representation on the Nominating Committee equal to eight percent of their total number.
    - b. The members of the Nominating Committee shall be chosen as follows:
      - 1) Each division delegation and each delegation from a union attached to the General Conference shall act as a unit in selecting members to which it is entitled. Excluded from this process shall be any delegates at large currently employed by the General Conference or its institutions: institutions and any delegates selected by the General Conference Administrative Committee and assigned by the Administrative Committee to meet with the General Conference and institution delegation.
      - 2) The delegates at large currently employed by the General Conference or its institutions: institutions, along with any delegates selected by the General Conference Administrative Committee and assigned by the Administrative Committee to meet with the General Conference and institution delegation, shall act as a unit in selecting members to which they are entitled.
      - 3) The election of the above representatives on the Nominating Committee shall be by the method of voting considered by each delegation to be most convenient and efficient, taking into consideration the size of the delegation and other circumstances.
        - c. Each group (named in Sec. 4. b. 1) and 2) above) - No change
        - d. Those chosen as members of the Nominating Committee - No change
        - e. Delegates holding elected positions under the provisions - No change
        - f. No delegate shall nominate more than one person for election - No change
        - g. The Nominating Committee shall elect its own chair - No change
        - h. The Nominating Committee shall limit its nominations - No change
        - i. In order to expedite the work of the Nominating - No change
  - Sec. 5. Steering Committee: The Steering Committee shall be chaired - No change

**DIVISION SECRETARIES - CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS AMENDMENT**

RATIONALE: The changes to this article more clearly

<b>NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT #6</b>		
VOTED, To not refer Nominating Committee Report #6 back to the Nominating Committee.		
<b>NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT #6</b>		
VOTED, To approve the following partial report of the Nominating Committee:		
<u>East-Central Africa Division</u> Secretary: Alain G Coralie Treasurer: Jerome Habimana	<u>South American Division</u> Secretary: Edward Heidinger Zevallos Treasurer: Marlon de Souza Lopes	<u>West-Central Africa Division</u> Secretary: Kingsley C Anonaba Treasurer: Emmanuel S D Manu
<u>Euro-Asia Division</u> Secretary: Viktor Alyeksyeyenko Treasurer: Brent B Burdick	<u>South Pacific Division</u> Secretary: Lionel H Smith Treasurer: Rodney G Brady	<u>General Conference Communication</u> Associate Directors: Andre D Brink Garrett Caldwell
<u>Inter-American Division</u> Secretary: Elie Henry Treasurer: Filiberto M Verduzco Avila	<u>Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division</u> Secretary: Solomon Maphosa Treasurer: Goodwell Nthani	Health Ministries Associate Directors: Zeno Charles-Marcel Fred Hardinge Katia Reinert
<u>Inter-European Division</u> Secretary: Barna Magyarosi Treasurer: Norbert Zens	<u>Southern Asia Division</u> Secretary: Measapogu Wilson	Publishing Ministries Associate Director: Wilmar Hirle
<u>North American Division</u> Secretary: G Alexander Bryant Treasurer: G Thomas Evans	<u>Southern Asia-Pacific Division</u> Secretary: Saw Samuel Treasurer: Max W Langi	
<u>Northern-Asia Pacific Division</u> Treasurer: German Lust	<u>Trans-European Division</u> Secretary: Audrey Andersson Treasurer: Nenad Jeuranovic	



## PROCEEDINGS/ACTIONS

specify that the references apply to a *division* secretary.

VOTED, To amend the General Conference Constitution and Bylaws, Bylaws,

Article VI—Division Secretaries, to read as follows:

### ARTICLE VI—DIVISION SECRETARIES

Sec. 1. A secretary shall be elected for each division to be designated “division secretary.”

Sec. 2. Each division secretary shall work according to plans and programs voted by the General Conference in session and according to plans and policies agreed upon by the division executive committee. The division secretary shall serve as vice-chair of the executive committee, and shall report to the executive committee after consultation with the president. It shall be the duty of the division secretary to keep the minutes of the division executive committee meetings, to collect information and make such reports as may be required, and to do such other work as usually pertains to this office.

Sec. 3. Division executive committees may appoint - No change

### DIVISION TREASURERS - CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS AMENDMENT

RATIONALE: In some regions of the world the title “chief financial officer” is preferred over the title, “treasurer.” This proposal endorses use of either title and inserts the dual language where the title, “treasurer” is mentioned. The changes also more clearly specify that the references apply to a *division* treasurer.

VOTED, To amend the General Conference Constitution and Bylaws, Bylaws, Article VII—Division Treasurers, to read as follows:

### ARTICLE VII—DIVISION TREASURERS TREASURERS/CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICERS

Sec. 1. A treasurer shall be elected for each division to be designated “division treasurer/ division treasurer/ chief financial officer.”

Sec. 2. Each division treasurer/ division treasurer/ chief financial officer shall work according to plans and programs voted by the General Conference in session and according to plans and policies agreed upon by the division executive committee and shall report to the executive committee after consultation with the president. The treasurer/ division treasurer/ chief financial officer shall be responsible for providing financial leadership to the division which will include, but shall not be limited to, receiving, safeguarding, and disbursing all funds in harmony with the actions of the division executive committee, for remitting all required funds to the General Conference in harmony with General Conference policy, and for providing financial information to the president and to the executive committee. The treasurer/ division treasurer/ chief financial officer shall also be responsible for furnishing copies of the financial statements to the General Conference officers.

Sec. 3. Division executive committees may appoint - No change

### AUDITING SERVICE AND AUDITS - CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS AMENDMENT

RATIONALE: The amendments to Article VIII are intended to incorporate 1) updated terminology, 2) the new non-constituency-based entities now included in the General Conference *Working Policy*, and 3) editorial wording changes relating to auditing services.

VOTED, To amend the General Conference Constitution and Bylaws, Bylaws, Article VIII—Auditing Service and Audits, to read as follows:

### ARTICLE VIII—AUDITING SERVICE AND AUDITS

Sec. 1. At each regular General Conference Session, the General Conference shall elect a director of the General Conference Auditing Service, whose duties shall be to:

a. Administer a program to provide assurance and related services as part of the worldwide financial oversight program for the Seventh-day Adventist Church; Administer the conduct of audits that the General Conference Auditing Service performs for organizations of the Church throughout the world.

b. Monitor the assurance and related services provided for the Seventhday Adventist Church including where such services are rendered by an external provider; Monitor the overall audit program throughout the denomination.

c. Recommend to the General Conference Executive Committee or division executive committee standards and/or guidelines for the endorsement and selection of external auditors; and Recommend to the General Conference Administrative Committee or division executive committee standards and/or guidelines for use by divisions in the endorsement of external auditors that may be engaged within the division territory, and

d. Report to the General Conference Executive Committee, through the General Conference Auditing Service Board, on the overall assurance and related services in the Church and on current issues and emerging trends that appear in the global picture of financial reporting and organizational policy compliance. Report to the General Conference Executive Committee, through the General Conference Auditing Service Board, on the overall audit program in the Church and the trends/issues that appear in the global picture of financial and policy administration.

Associate directors shall also be elected at each regular General Conference Session. The director and associate directors shall be recommended by the General Conference Auditing Service Board to the Session Nominating Committee after taking into consideration work performance and feedback from a variety of sources. consultation with the administrations of the respective divisions.

References to service directors and associate service directors elsewhere in these Bylaws shall not apply to the director and associate directors of the General Conference Auditing Service, except as provided for in Article XIII, Sec. 1.c.

Sec. 2. a. At each regular General Conference Session - No change

b. A quorum of the General Conference Auditing Service Board - No change

Sec. 3. The General Conference Auditing Service, ever sensitive to the country-specific regulations governing the audits of denominational entities in a particular country, serves as the Seventh-day Adventist Church's preferred provider of assurance and related services. The client base includes all denominational organizations such as General Conference institutions, world divisions and their institutions, unions/conferences/missions/fields/regions/mission stations and their institutions, local conferences/missions and their educational institutions at the secondary level or higher, and Adventist Development and Relief Agency country offices and projects not audited by external auditors.

denomination's preferred provider of auditing services for world divisions; unions; conferences; missions; affiliated services, organizations, and institutions of the General Conference and every other administrative level; Adventist Development and Relief Agency country and regional administrations and projects (not audited by external auditors); and special funds. Exceptions to the above global requirements shall be by specific action of the General Conference Executive Committee.

### GENERAL AND DIVISION FIELD SECRETARIES - CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS AMENDMENT

RATIONALE: It is proposed that Article IX be adjusted to include General Conference or division field secretaries that report to an officer other than the president. The wording also reflects the current practice whereby the General Conference Executive Committee appoints as field secretaries those individuals, who by virtue of leadership assignments in specific organizations, also have important relationships with the General Conference and/or division administrations.

VOTED, To amend the General Conference Constitution and Bylaws, Bylaws, Article IX—General and Division Field Secretaries, to read as follows:

### ARTICLE IX—GENERAL CONFERENCE AND DIVISION FIELD SECRETARIES

Sec. 1. The term “general field secretary” shall be used to designate general field leaders elected to assist the officers in carrying the field responsibilities of the General Conference.

Sec. 1. The term “field secretary” shall be used to designate the role of persons elected/appointed to assist the officers of the General Conference or division in a range of general or specific responsibilities.

Sec. 2. The general field secretaries shall work under the direction of the General Conference Executive Committee and the president, and be assigned either to field service or to special projects or responsibilities that are approved by the General Conference Executive Committee.

Sec. 2. A General Conference “field secretary” ordinarily carries another portfolio of responsibility, the nature of which involves frequent interactions with global church leadership. In the role of field secretary this person works under the direction of the president or another designated officer. Field secretaries shall be elected by the General Conference Executive Committee after having been appointed to their primary responsibility by their respective board, the General Conference Executive Committee, or the General Conference Administrative Committee, as appropriate. Their term of service as field secretaries is contingent on the term of service in the individual's primary responsibility.

Sec. 3. The term “division field secretary” shall be used to designate field leaders appointed by a division executive committee and assigned either to field service or to special projects or responsibilities, divisions. They may be appointed as necessary to serve in the divisions under the direction of the president or designee, and their respective division executive committees.

### GENERAL CONFERENCE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE - CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS AMENDMENT

RATIONALE: Clarification in Section 1. f. that the reference is specifically referring to the General Conference Executive Committee. This change was requested by a division to avoid any confusion that it may be referring to a division executive committee when reproduced in the division working policy. It also provides consistency

with the sections before and after Section 1. f.

VOTED, To amend the General Conference Constitution and Bylaws, Bylaws, Article XIII—General Conference Executive Committee, to read as follows:

ARTICLE XIII—GENERAL CONFERENCE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Sec. 1. a. During the intervals between Sessions - No change

b. The General Conference Executive Committee - No change

c. The General Conference Executive Committee - No change

d. The General Conference Executive Committee - No change

e. The removal from office by the General Conference - No change

f. The General Conference Executive Committee shall have the power to remove, for cause, members from the Executive Committee or any committee for which it is responsible by a two thirds majority vote of the members present and voting at any duly called meeting.

Sec. 2. a. A meeting of the General Conference Executive Committee - No change

b. A meeting of the General Conference Executive Committee - No change

Sec. 3. A majority of the full membership of the General Conference - No change

Sec. 4. Any fifteen members of the General Conference - No change

Sec. 5. All meetings of the General Conference Executive Committee - No change

Sec. 6. Meetings of the General Conference Executive Committee - No change

Sec. 7. Local conference/mission/field presidents shall be invited - No change

Sec. 8. Notice as to time, place, and any other requirements - No change

FUNDS - CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS AMENDMENT

RATIONALE: Two non-constituency-based administrative levels have been added to the General Conference *Working Policy* so these levels also need to be reflected in the Bylaws. In addition, flexibility is given in this amendment for funds to flow through whichever denominational channel is appropriate.

VOTED, To amend the General Conference Constitution and Bylaws, Bylaws, Article XVII—Funds, to read as follows:

ARTICLE XVII—FUNDS

Sec. 1. The funds of the General Conference shall be as follows:

a. A percentage of the tithe receipts of the ~~local conference/mission/field~~ local conference/mission/field/region/field station shall be forwarded through the union and division denominational channels in accordance with the General Conference ~~*Working Policy*~~: *Working Policy*.

b. A percentage of the tithe receipts of the union - No change

c. Regular mission offerings. - No change

d. Special gifts. Proceeds from the maturities of planned - No change

Delbert W Baker, Chair  
G Alexander Bryant, Secretary  
Myron A Iseminger, Actions Editor  
Tamara K Boward, Recording Secretary

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT #7

VOTED, To approve the following partial report of the Nominating Committee:

General Conference  
Youth Ministries  
Associate Directors:  
Pako Edson Mokgwane  
Jonatan Tejel

# Fourteenth Business Meeting

## Sixtieth General Conference session, July 10, 2015, 9:30

ELLA SIMMONS: It is time to call the business session to order.

As we move to looking at *Church Manual* items this morning, we need to ask the Lord for very special guidance. We need to ask again for the Holy Spirit to be with us and for our ability to hear God's will on all things.

Let us take a few minutes to pray with a partner or two. Pray what is on your heart. But I ask you, please pray specifically for this session as we bring all of these items to conclusion.

At the end of the prayer session, Agustin Galicia will have the closing prayer for that prayer session, and then we will move forward.

AGUSTIN GALICIA: [Prayer.]

ELLA SIMMONS: We have eight items from the *Church Manual* Committee that have been referred back for further consideration.

HOMER TRECARTIN: We are bringing you the final final Nominating Committee report. Our secretary, Dr. Leslie Pollard, will read that and make the motion.

LESLIE POLLARD: The Nominating Committee wishes to recommend for the position of secretary to the Northern Asia-Pacific Division the name of Yutaka Inada.

ELLA SIMMONS: [The motion was seconded and voted.]

NEALE SCHOFIELD: I have a suggestion. During the past week we have wasted literally hours in points of order that are not points of order and people coming to the microphone with inappropriate comments. My suggestion is that there should be some form of vetting process in the future to stop people coming to the microphone and wasting everybody's time.

Would it be appropriate to have a full-time parliamentarian that people can go to with their questions or comments before they get to the microphone and waste people's time?

ELLA SIMMONS: Thank you so much for the suggestion, and, as indicated earlier, we actually have received that suggestion.

Certainly this is something we should consider for the General Conference rules of order in the future.

We call Elder Miranda and Elder Wollan to the podium in order to consider the eight items from the *Church Manual* Committee that still remain.

ARMANDO MIRANDA: We would like to thank those



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delegates who met with us two days ago. The *Church Manual* Committee has heard them, their suggestions, their comments. We also took note of the comment received here, and we discussed carefully each one of the comments and suggestions. We also received in writing some of the suggestions. So now we are ready to present to you some of the adjustments and changes.

HARALD WOLLAN: The question that was raised and the reason for referring it back was that it was felt that the issue made a greater distinction between the *Church Manual* and *Working Policy* than necessary.

The *Church Manual* Committee looked at the issue, and we want to explain to you that when we come back to you with the same wording, it is because we probably need to underline that we are talking about representation. We're talking about how members are represented at sessions in the church, in the conferences, and so on.

We are bringing to you the same wording without any change. I move the acceptance of this.

ELLA SIMMONS: [The motion was seconded and voted.] HARALD WOLLAN: This other item that was referred back related to the appeal to higher organization.

"When differences arise in or between churches and conferences or institutions, matters that are not mutually resolved may be appealed to the next higher organization. If the matter does not get resolved at this level, the aggrieved entity may appeal to successive higher levels of organization. An organization to which an appeal is forwarded may choose not to hear the matter, in which case the decision of the highest organization involved in the dispute shall be final."

AGUSTIN GALICIA: Seconded.

RONALD OLIVER: I think there's a little bit of confusion in the last sentence. The last sentence says that "the decision of the highest organization involved in the dispute shall be final." It should say, "In which case the decision of the highest organization to which that dispute was appealed would be final."

ARMANDO MIRANDA: We need to make some adjustment there—but we are not talking about the organization that is involved in the dispute itself. If we can find another word, we could by common consent make this element clearer.

ELLA SIMMONS: This could, as worded here, be a bit misleading or unclear, and I hear you saying that another word could be substituted. We need to determine how we would handle this.

ADWOA ADDO: It says, "When differences arise, if the matter does not get resolved at this level, the aggrieved entity may appeal to the successive higher levels of organization. An organization to whom an appeal is forwarded may choose not to hear the matter." I think that that would be a denial of people's rights or institutional rights of the appeal. Because if we are appealing and the organization may choose either to deal or not to deal with it, it wouldn't be worth appealing to that organization.

So rather it should read that "the organization to whom an appeal is forwarded may decide on the appeal as they deem fit or refer it to the next successive organization to be dealt with appropriately." Otherwise, it would be denying institutions the right of appeal or the right to be heard.

CLINTON WAHLEN: I agree with the two previous speakers, and especially the last one. It's this final sentence that really still eliminates any right of appeal, because there is no way of getting to be heard at the General Conference Executive Committee or even here

at the session if there is no satisfactory resolution.

I think this is a very basic right. We're talking about disputes between churches, conferences, institutions, entities of the church, and we need to preserve that right for them.

MAINKA HOLGER: This discussion is a bit abstract. So just for my understanding, let's take an example. A local church has an issue with a local conference. It can appeal to the union. According to the initial proposal, it can stop there when the union decides. Now with a new proposal, a local church can appeal one level higher to the division. Is that correct?

ARMANDO MIRANDA: That's correct.

MAINKA HOLGER: So we are already in the situation with this proposal that a local church can go to the division. And change the example one level higher. A local conference can, with that proposal, already go directly to the General Conference? Is that correct?

ARMANDO MIRANDA: It's correct.

ELLA SIMMONS: Please make this clear to the body. There is a lack of clarity.

I want to hear from the committee regarding current policy, under existing policy, not the amendment, what the case in the scenario presented would be.

HARALD WOLLAN: In the original—as it stands in the *Church Manual* now—an individual or an entity can appeal successively all the way to the General Conference.

The proposal here is that we leave it with an entity to which it has been appealed on second level to decide upon whether they want to hear or to act on it and make that final, or forward it onward to the next organization.

If a church has a disagreement with the conference, the appeal goes onward. The church can appeal to the union. If the union disagrees, they can continue to the next level. But that level, the division, can determine whether they want to deal with it there or to forward their appeal onward.

LESLEIGH BOWER: I rise to speak in favor of the motion, because it affords the same procedural fairness to aggrieved claimants as would be available to them in a court of law, at least in a common-law jurisdiction where I operate. Even procedural fairness has an end point. And I'm satisfied that the motion affords an end point so that vexatious matters can be dealt with once and for all.

In addition, if I could have the words back up on the screen. Just a minor amendment that might add some clarity to a point previously raised. And that is on line 28, the word "involved" could be amended to read "that considered the dispute." Perhaps that might add some clarity.

JIM HOWARD: When I read that it states, "If the matter does not get resolved at this level, the aggrieved entity may appeal to successive higher levels of organization." So if I'm a church and I have an issue that I've not resolved with the conference, it almost appears like it stops at the union.

Even if it did not stop at the union but stopped at the division, I work in a wonderful conference, a wonderful union, so I don't see any issues ever occurring. But we cannot totally rule out the possibility that there would be cases in which there are areas of the world where the policies and practices and beliefs of this body that are established at a General Conference session are not followed.

If there was a situation in which the General Conference was being bombarded with difficult, trivial matters, we could have reason for this. But when we met

with the *Church Manual* Committee and discussed this with various individuals, we found that this has never been a problem of multitude of issues being dealt with.

ELLA SIMMONS: Thank you.

[The motion was approved.]

ARMANDO MIRANDA: The next item has to do with the use of the words "pastor" and "minister."

The current *Church Manual* says that "pastors," referred to in this manual, are those who have been appointed by the conference to oversee the efforts of the local church or district.

We are adjusting the use of the word "pastors" in the *Church Manual* to be consistent with the other areas of the *Church Manual* where we are just using the term "pastor." I move we accept this.

ELLA SIMMONS: [It was moved and seconded.]

KATHRYN PROFITT: In light of our vote on Wednesday, I respectfully request the General Conference consider appointing a commission or some other instrument, as they may choose, to develop guidelines or policies for women in ministry based on Scripture.

[The motion was approved.]

HARALD WOLLAN: We will go to an issue that we dealt with regarding the church board and its meetings.

There were some questions raised that brought this back to the committee. One of the objections mentioned was that it was felt that evangelism was moved further down on the priority list of the *Church Manual*. This was not the intention of the *Church Manual* Committee, because it was looked upon that the active discipleship plan involves outreach and evangelism. But in order to accommodate this, we have adjusted the numbering so we maintain the first item, which is "an active discipleship plan." The second item will be "evangelism in all of its phases."

The next small change is where it originally said "involve every member." Now it will say: "involving every member in proclaiming the gospel news and making disciples."

On the next page you will remember that in our discussion on that day, the question was Is there a mixture or discrepancy regarding the use of "leader" and "director"? When it comes to Adventure Club and Pathfinder Club, we are talking about director, but the rest of the leaders are actually to be named "leaders."

The new suggestion reads "Ambassador Club leader."

Then we have added "church school principal or head teacher," so the sentence reads, "Education secretary/church school principal or head teacher."

We have inserted the word "local," because it seemed to be misunderstood by some, and we wanted to clarify. So it reads "Train local church leadership in how to encourage intentional spiritual growth in themselves and others."

Then we have put in "laypersons" instead of "layperson" because it was felt in our discussion the other day that more than one should be involved in this, so we have taken care of that.

ELLA SIMMONS: [It was moved and seconded.]

BANGWATO SIKWA: Mine is really to seek for clarification. What is the difference between leader, director, and coordinator? Because this motion seems to be seeking to change some of the offices to be called leaders, while others are called directors. Thank you.

GILBERT CANGY: I will intervene here only if there is a need for further clarification on the distinction or differentiation between "leader" and "director" when

it pertains to youth ministry, but let me clarify anyway.

Generally speaking, individuals who are in leadership for youth ministry at the local church carry the designation of “leader,” hence Ambassador leader, Young Adults leader, as we used to have AY leader.

There is an exception for two entities that function as clubs. Traditionally we have used the term “director” for Adventurer director and Pathfinder director. It’s on their patches. It’s in the manual, and I believe that we should maintain this tradition and recognize that this is an exception to the rule.

[The motion was approved.]

HARALD WOLLAN: Thank you. The item we will deal with now is dealing with youth ministries. There were several things that were talked about as it was referred back. We have looked at the various issues. There are some editorial recommendations that were done without changing any of the meanings, for example, “towards”—it probably should be “towards the development of strong youth ministries.”

Then we have included, as requested from the floor, “ministries,” and that is actually a correct term, Young Adults Ministries Committee.

Then we have made a correction about the “public colleges and universities.”

So we talked about “Developing an intentional ministry with the purpose of caring for the special needs of college and university institutions not operated by the Seventh-day Adventist Church.”

We continue with “caring for the special needs of colleges.” The way it is written, we feel that it covers also private institutions, not only public.

So with these amendments as it’s presented to you now, I move acceptance of the document.

ELLA SIMMONS: There’s a second.

So the motion before us is to amend the *Church Manual* in Chapter 8 as presented.

[Clarification on age groups was asked by Henry Kanchanda.]

GILBERT CANGY: As I understand, 10 years ago a new level of youth ministry was embraced by the church; that is, Ambassadors that would cover the ages of 16 to 21. Previous to that, we had the whole Senior Youth covered under the age group 16 to 30. We used to have 35, but we cut it down to 30-plus. Technically our ministry is limited to 30. However, there are some who have been—who have invested so much in Senior Youth ministry that they’re wishing the desire to linger on and still be involved, as they are still young at heart.

We should put a full stop at 30, but the legal “plus” is an accommodation for the young-at-hearts who are beyond 30 years of age.

ISTRAHEL SCHOREA: I have a clarification. On page 114 I see Adventurer Club and Pathfinder Club. If I’m not mistaken, it missed Master Guide. In some countries it is a program, in other countries it is a club, but I don’t see it anywhere in the *Church Manual*. Is there a reason for that?

GILBERT CANGY: I realize that Master Guide is a very vital part of youth ministry. It is actually the main training platform for leaders who are going to reinvest in leadership for Adventurers and Pathfinders, which is a core ministry within the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

There is a distinction between levels of youth ministry, like Adventurers, Pathfinders, Ambassadors, Young Adults, Public Campus Ministry—there’s a distinction between those ministries and Master Guide. Master Guide is not a level of youth ministry. Master

Guide is a leadership development scheme to equip individuals to invest in leadership for Adventurers and Pathfinders.

WILLIAM FAGAL: I am in support of the changes that we’re suggesting here.

ELLA SIMMONS: It appears that we will close the session at this moment without completing this item or going to the others.

COLLEEN ZIMBEVA: [Prayer.]

ELLA SIMMONS, *Chair*  
AGUSTIN GALICIA, *Secretary*  
NILTON D. AMORIM, R. J. KLOOSTERHUIS, and CLAUDE SABOT, *Proceedings Editors*

## Session Actions

*Sixtieth General Conference Session*  
*July 10, 2015, 9:30 a.m.*

### CHURCH ORGANIZATION TODAY - CHURCH MANUAL AMENDMENT

VOTED, To amend the *Church Manual*, Chapter 3, Organization and Authority, pages 28 and 29, Church Organization Today, to read as follows:

#### Church Organization Today

The Seventh-day Adventist form of governance is representative, which recognizes that authority rests in the membership and is expressed through duly elected representatives at each level of organization, with executive responsibility delegated to representative bodies and officers for the governing of the Church at each separate level. The *Church Manual* applies this principle of representation to the operations of the local congregation. Issues of representation in organizations with mission status are defined by operating policies and in organizations with conference status by their constitution and bylaws. This form of governance recognizes also that ordination to the ministry is recognized by the Church worldwide.

“Every member of the church has a voice in choosing officers of the church. The church chooses the officers of the state conferences. Delegates chosen by the state conferences choose the officers of the union conferences, and delegates chosen by the union conferences choose the officers of the General Conference. By this arrangement every conference, every institution, every church, and every individual, either directly or through representatives, has a voice in the election of the men who bear the chief responsibilities in the General Conference.”—8T 236, 237.

The present organizational system of the Church resulted from a developing theological understanding of the mission of the Church, membership growth, and the Church’s geographic spread. Representatives of conferences met in 1863 to organize the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

There are several organizational levels within the Church leading from the individual believer to the worldwide organization of the work. Membership units in each of these levels periodically convene formal business sessions known as constituency meetings or sessions. (The constituency meeting or session of a local church is generally referred to as a business meeting.) In Seventh-day Adventist Church structure, no organization determines its own status, nor does it function as if it had no obligations to the Church family beyond its boundaries.

### GENERAL CONFERENCE THE HIGHEST AUTHORITY - CHURCH MANUAL AMENDMENT

VOTED, To call for the vote on referring the item, General Conference the Highest Authority - *Church Manual* Amendment, back to the *Church Manual* Committee.

### GENERAL CONFERENCE THE HIGHEST AUTHORITY - CHURCH MANUAL AMENDMENT

VOTED, To not refer the item, General Conference the Highest Authority - *Church Manual* Amendment, back to the *Church Manual* Committee.

### GENERAL CONFERENCE THE HIGHEST AUTHORITY - CHURCH MANUAL AMENDMENT

VOTED, To call for the vote on the item, General Conference the Highest Authority - *Church Manual* Amendment.

### GENERAL CONFERENCE THE HIGHEST AUTHORITY - CHURCH MANUAL AMENDMENT

VOTED, To amend the *Church Manual*, Chapter 3, Organization and Authority, page 31, General Conference the Highest Authority, to read as follows:

#### General Conference the Highest Authority

In the Church today the General Conference Session, and the General Conference Executive Committee between Sessions, is the highest ecclesiastical authority in the administration of the Church. The General Conference Executive Committee is authorized by its Constitution to create subordinate organizations with authority to carry out their roles. Therefore all subordinate organizations and institutions throughout the Church will recognize the General Conference Session, and the General Conference Executive Committee between Sessions, as the highest ecclesiastical authority, under God, among Seventh-day Adventists.

When differences arise in or between churches and conferences or institutions, appeal to the next higher constituent level is proper until it reaches an Annual Council of the General Conference Executive Committee or the General Conference Session. Between these meetings, the General Conference Executive Committee constitutes the body of final authority on all questions. The committee’s decision may be reviewed at a General Conference Session or an Annual Council. When differences arise in or between churches and conferences or institutions, matters that are not mutually resolved may be appealed to the next higher organization. If the matter does not get resolved at this level, the aggrieved entity may appeal to successively higher levels of organization. An organization to which an appeal is forwarded may choose not to hear the matter, in which case the decision of the highest organization involved in the dispute shall be final. When organizations review decisions of other organizations, they do not assume responsibility for the liabilities of any other organization. That conceded

“I have often been instructed by the Lord that no man’s judgment should be surrendered to the judgment of any other one man. Never should the mind of one man or the minds of a few men be regarded as sufficient in wisdom and power to control the work and to say what plans shall be followed. But when, in a General Conference, the judgment of the brethren assembled from all parts of the field is exercised, private independence and private judgment must not be stubbornly maintained, but surrendered. Never should a laborer regard as a virtue the persistent maintenance



## PROCEEDINGS/ACTIONS

of his position of independence, contrary to the decision of the general body.”—9T 260.

### LICENSED MINISTERS - CHURCH MANUAL AMENDMENT

VOTED, To call for the vote on the item, General Conference the Highest Authority - *Church Manual Amendment*.

### LICENSED MINISTERS - CHURCH MANUAL AMENDMENT

VOTED, To amend the *Church Manual*, Chapter 4, Pastors and Other Church Employees, page 34, Licensed Ministers, to read as follows:

Licensed Ministers—To give men Licensed Pastors—To give individuals an opportunity to demonstrate their call to the ministry, especially in the area of soul winning, prospective candidates are granted ministerial pastoral licenses by the conference. The granting of such licenses confers the opportunity to develop the ministerial gift.

Licensed pastors ministers are authorized to preach, to engage in evangelism, to lead out in outreach (missionary) work, and to assist in all church activities.

There are circumstances, however, where it is necessary for the conference to appoint a licensed pastor minister to carry responsibility as a pastor or assistant pastor of a church or group of churches. In order to open the way for a licensed pastor minister to perform certain pastoral functions, the church or group of churches being served must elect the pastor as a local elder. Then, since the right to permit the extension of a licensed pastor's minister's authority rests first with the division executive committee, it must approve the extension by specifically and clearly defining the additional functions licensed pastors ministers may perform. The extended functions are limited only to the church or group of churches where the pastor is assigned and is an elder. After the division committee acts, the conference committee may act. (See p. 74.)

The conference committee shall not extend the functions of a licensed pastor minister beyond what has been authorized by the division committee. It also shall not authorize a licensed pastor minister to perform the extended functions in any church beyond where the licensed pastor minister is assigned and is an elder. A conference committee action cannot be substituted for church election or ordination to gospel ministry.

### CHURCH BOARD AND ITS MEETINGS - CHURCH MANUAL AMENDMENT

VOTED, To not refer the item, Church Board and Its Meetings - *Church Manual Amendment*, back to the *Church Manual Committee*.

### CHURCH BOARD AND ITS MEETINGS - CHURCH MANUAL AMENDMENT

VOTED, To call for the vote on the item, Church Board and Its Meetings - *Church Manual Amendment*.

### CHURCH BOARD AND ITS MEETINGS - CHURCH MANUAL AMENDMENT

VOTED, To amend the *Church Manual*, Chapter 10, Services and Other Meetings, pages 124 and 125, Church Board and Its Meetings, to read as follows:

Church Board and Its Meetings

Definition and Function—Every church must have a functioning board whose members have been elected during a church business meeting. Its chief concern is

having an active discipleship plan in place, which includes both the spiritual nurture of the church and the work of planning and fostering evangelism. evangelism in all of its phases:

Included in church board responsibilities are:

1. An active discipleship plan.
2. Evangelism in all of its phases.
3. Spiritual nurturing and mentoring of members. nurture:
- 3: 4. Maintenance of doctrinal purity.
- 4: 5. Upholding of Christian standards.
- 5: 6. Recommending changes in church membership.
- 6: 7. Church Oversight of church finances.
- 7: 8. Protection and care of church properties.
- 8: 9. Coordination of church departments.

The gospel commission of Jesus makes evangelism, proclaiming the good news of the gospel, tells us that making disciples, which includes baptizing and teaching, is the primary function of the church (Matt. 28:18-20). It is, therefore, also the primary function of the board, which serves as the chief committee of the church. When the board devotes its first interests and highest energies to every member evangelism, involving every member in proclaiming the good news and making disciples, most problems are alleviated or prevented, and a strong, positive influence is felt in the spiritual life and growth of members.

The board is elected by the members at the time of the regular election of officers. (See pp. 70, 71.)

Spiritual Nurture—Christ's love for the Church needs to be manifested within the Church by His followers. True discipleship entails not only biblical teaching (Matt. 28:20), but also a passionate commitment to loving our fellow believers unconditionally. This was the heart of Christ's message to His disciples as He faced the cross (John 15:9-13). Christ's command to them applies to us: that we "love one another." Ellen G White's powerful insight into this historical scene is still vital for us: "This love is the evidence of their discipleship."—DA 677, 678.

Therefore, it is one of the primary functions of the board to ensure that members are nurtured and mentored in a personal, dynamic relationship with Jesus Christ.

Discipleship—The purpose of the Church as the body of Christ is to intentionally disciple members, so that they continue in an active and fruitful relationship with Christ and His Church.

Discipleship is based on an ongoing, lifelong relationship with Jesus. The believer commits to "abiding in Christ" (John 15:8), to being trained for fruitful discipleship by sharing Jesus with others, as well as to leading other members to also be faithful disciples.

The Church, individually and collectively, shares responsibility for ensuring that every church member remains part of the body of Christ.

Membership—In Membership—The board is elected by the members at the time of the regular election of officers. (See pp. 70, 71.) In addition to conference-appointed pastors, the church should elect a representative board that includes the following officers:

- Elders
- Head deacon
- Head deaconess
- Treasurer
- Clerk
- Interest coordinator

Adventist Community Services leader or Dorcas Society leader

- Adventist Men's coordinator
- Adventist Youth Ministries leader Society leader
- Adventurer Club director
- Ambassador Club leader director
- Bible school coordinator
- Children's ministries leader
- Church music coordinator
- Communication committee chairperson or communication secretary
- Community Services and/or Dorcas Society leader
- Education secretary/church school principal or head teacher secretary
- Family ministries leader
- Health ministries leader
- Home and School Association leader
- Pathfinder Club director leader
- Personal ministries leader and secretary
- Public Campus Ministries leader/coordinator
- Publishing ministries coordinator
- Religious liberty leader
- Sabbath school superintendent
- Stewardship ministries leader
- Women's ministries leader
- Young adults leader

In some cases, depending on the size of the membership, the board may not include all of this list or may add additional members. The pastor appointed by the conference to serve the church always is a member of the board.

Officers—The chairperson of the board is the conference-appointed - No change

Meetings—Because the work of the board is vital to the - No change

Work of the Board—1. The most important item on the agenda should be planning the evangelization of Board—The board is responsible to: 1. Ensure that there is an active, ongoing discipleship plan in place, which includes both spiritual nurture and outreach ministries. This is the most important item for the board's attention.

2. Study membership lists and initiate plans for reconnecting (reclaiming) members who have separated from the church.

3. Train local church leadership in how to encourage intentional spiritual growth in themselves and others.

4. Evangelize the outreach (missionary) territory of the church. In addition, once Once each quarter an entire meeting should be devoted to plans for evangelism. The board will study conference recommendations for evangelistic programs and methods and how they can be implemented locally. The pastor and the board will initiate and develop plans for public evangelistic meetings, campaigns:

2. 5. Coordinating outreach programs of departments. The church board is responsible for coordinating the work of all church departments. Each Coordinate outreach programs for all church departments, although each department develops its plans for outreach within its own sphere. To avoid conflict in timing and competition in securing volunteers timing, competition in securing volunteers, and to achieve maximum beneficial results, coordination is essential. Before completing and announcing plans for any program, each department should submit its plans to the board on the progress and results of their outreach programs. The board may suggest how

departmental programs can contribute to the preparation, conduct, and follow-up of a public evangelistic campaign.

3. 6. Encouraging Encourage the personal ministries department to enlist all members and children in some form of personal outreach (missionary) service. Training classes should be conducted in various lines of outreach ministry.

4. 7. Encouraging Encourage the interest coordinator to ensure that every interest is personally and promptly followed up by assigned laypersons. an assigned layperson:

5. 8. Encouraging Encourage each department to report at least quarterly to the board and to members at business meetings or in Sabbath meetings in regards to spiritual nurture and evangelism. meetings:

6. 9. Receiving Receive regular reports. The board should consider details of church business and receive regular reports of the treasurer on the church's finances. The board should study the membership record and inquire into the spiritual standing of all members and provide for visits to sick, discouraged, or backslidden members. Other officers should periodically report.

10. Promote Adventist education. Committees of the Board—The board should permit no other business - No change.

Ella S Simmons, Chair  
Agustin Galicia, Secretary  
Myron A Iseminger, Actions Editor  
Tamara K Boward, Recording Secretary

Point 4 is "Fornication, which includes, among other issues, promiscuity, homosexual activity, incest, sodomy, and bestiality."

We have moved something down to point 5, which reads on line 31, "The production, use, or distribution of pornographic material."

I move the whole section.

GEOFFREY MBWANA: The motion is to amend the Church Manual, Chapter 7, as presented. [Seconded and voted.]

ARMANDO MIRANDA: The next item is 426, definition of marriage. We consider it important because of the situation in different parts of the world. We need to be clear on what our definition of marriage is.

HARALD WOLLAN: There was a sentence on lines 26 and 27 with the amendment that "as such, marriage is a public, lawfully binding, lifelong commitment of a man and a woman to each other and between the couple and God." And there are references to Mark 10:2-9 and Romans 7:2.

Bear in mind that there is a definition there also regarding marriage, and it's more extended there. When we deal with the definition of marriage, we also need to take that into consideration, because we have already stated that marriage is defined as a public, lawfully binding, monogamous, heterosexual relationship between one man and one woman. And I move this.

To amend the Church Manual, Chapter 13, as presented.

GEOFFREY MBWANA: [Seconded and voted.]

ARMANDO MIRANDA: We still have four items, but we are considering that they could be contentious, and for that reason we consider it appropriate to move that we table these items in order to leave them to the next Church Manual Committee and just follow the regular process for the next GC session. I move.

GEOFFREY MBWANA: Thank you. And we want to thank you for the work that the Standing Committee has done. You have worked in sometimes difficult times, but we thank you for what you have processed.

ARMANDO MIRANDA: I would like to take the opportunity to thank the members of the Church Manual Committee for the work during the past quinquennium. Thank you so much, and God bless you.

BHAJU RAM SHRESTHA: I am coming from Nepal from the earthquake. I'd like to thank you on behalf of my country for being a part of the Adventist Church, which runs democratically and does what is best for the country and best for the church. So I would like to express my solidarity and my gratefulness to the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the world.

LAWRENCE GERATY: I can't say that I disagree with most of what has been voted this morning. But my heart is heavy because I sense a lack of compassion in the church for people whom God has created, many of them the way they are. And the Lord that I serve said that he who has not sinned can cast the first stone. Go and sin no more.

So I think the church should be clear about our teachings, but I also think that we have to recognize that there are people whom God has created who cannot always follow the dictates—

GEOFFREY MBWANA: Thank you.

LAWRENCE GERATY: —of the church.

KENDRA JO HALOVIK VALENTINE: There are reports coming in that Seventh-day Adventist women in various parts of our World Church who serve as commissioned ministers and ordained elders are, according to our

## Fifteenth Business Meeting

Sixtieth General Conference session, July 10, 2015, 1:59 p.m.

GEOFFREY MBWANA: At this time we will begin our afternoon session.

GARY KRAUSE: [Prayer.]

GEOFFREY MBWANA: We will request Armando Miranda to remind us of the item that was on the floor before lunch.

ARMANDO MIRANDA: The item is number 418 on page 111, the Youth Ministries.

GEOFFREY MBWANA: There is the motion before us to amend the Church Manual, Chapter 8, as presented. [Voted.]

ARMANDO MIRANDA: Item 405, on page 95, regards the reason for discipline.

HARALD WOLLAN: This we divided into two, so part of the previous 4 becomes 5, and then subsequently numbering changes also.

### LEGAL NOTICE OF THE QUINQUENNIAL SESSION OF CHRISTIAN RECORD SERVICES, INC.

Notice is hereby given that the Quinquennial Regular Members Meeting (constituency) for Christian Record Services, Inc. is called to convene on September 15, 2015 at the Mid-America Union Office (8307 Pine Lake Road), Lincoln, Nebraska at 8:30 a.m.

The purpose of the meeting will be to elect board members, for the board to elect officers for the next quinquennium, to receive reports, and to conduct such other business as might be relevant to Christian Record Services, Inc.



CHRISTIAN RECORD  
SERVICES FOR THE BLIND





current world church policy, being asked to resign their positions because of Wednesday's vote. Our vote Wednesday did not change our global policy on women serving as commissioned pastors or ordained elders.

I am requesting our president or our church leaders make an official worldwide statement.

GEOFFREY MBWANA: Allow me to go to the other items that we wish to bring. I would like to call upon Elder Myron Iseminger to present them.

MYRON ISEMINGER: Yesterday we voted an action with a request to the Steering Committee that the world church take time to study our hermeneutic, or our system of biblical interpretation.

The Steering Committee sees value in that request, and they have agreed to work with the Biblical Research Institute to address the issue. In fact, the Biblical Research Institute is already studying the issue and has plans to publish their findings in the form of a revised second edition of the book currently available on biblical interpretation.

GEOFFREY MBWANA: Thank you. With that, we have come to the end of our items. And at this point I will turn to Ted Wilson to make a statement.

TED N. C. WILSON: Let me make two statements here. One has to do with the item that was taken this morning, which I'm afraid caused some confusion regarding appeals that can be made. The wording used in the action that is in the *Church Manual* that was voted this morning is wording that is almost the same as is currently in the *Working Policy* in Section B, B-10-22. There is no secret agenda, no malicious intent to try to limit in any way the exercise of activity and authority on the part of the General Conference. The reason for the wording is to limit any frivolous appeals from coming up through the system.

However, there is no language that limits the General Conference from not becoming interested and involved in anything in the church. The General Conference uses its discretion. It uses an appropriate approach. It generally works through its divisions and through its different levels.

In fact, it is interesting. In the very constitution that begins in the very beginning of our *Working Policy*, it says, "The General Conference conducts much of its work through its divisions." It doesn't say it conducts all of its work through the divisions. It says "much of its work."

In the bylaws of that same constitution, it says at the very beginning that the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, hereinafter referred to as the General Conference, normally shall conduct its worldwide work through its divisions, each division to operate within a specified territory in harmony with General Conference policies.

So it normally does that. It does not rule out any option for the General Conference that if it feels there is a necessary reason to investigate, to try to work with a particular problem, that it cannot do so.

So please do not imagine things that, in my opinion and in my understanding, are never there.

If, in fact, we find out that becomes a problem, we will have to address that.

The second item that I would like to mention is one that in the Steering Committee this morning, we had a very lovely spirit, a very strong spirit, and I must tell you, a very committed spirit on the part of division presidents and officers to maintain, to adhere to, to uphold what the General Conference in session votes. It was a very gratifying and wonderful spirit. And I applaud all divisions for this spirit. And we appeal to

everyone as individuals to uphold that spirit as well.

However, what we voted on Wednesday was simply to not allow divisions to make a decision about ordination for women in their divisions. What the vote meant was that we maintain the current policy. The current understanding is intended that men be ordained.

Now, there are additional policies and provisions that have been voted by the Annual Council and have been accepted. Whether people agree with them or not, they are there. The vote on Wednesday did not have anything to do specifically with women being ordained as local elders.

Now, people may have differing opinions on that particular subject, but the vote on Wednesday was not pertaining to that. Neither was it pertaining to anything in policy regarding commissioned ministers.

So let us be clear on what was voted on Wednesday. We are now back to our original understanding. And I would strongly urge all to adhere by what has been voted. But do not place into the vote other things that were not listed in the vote. We need to be fair, we need to be open, and we all need to accept what is voted at a General Conference session.

I have asked the division presidents to care for specific items that come up within their division. But we will rely on the divisions to alert us to anything that we must consider at the General Conference level. Now, that doesn't preclude the General Conference from discovering information and from looking at that itself. But we want to count upon our system and our structure.

And again let me say that we had a very sweet spirit in our Steering Committee this morning, and I praise God for that.

Again I thank you for your graciousness, and I wish each of you a wonderful and a happy Sabbath.

GEOFFREY MBWANA: Thank you very much, Elder Wilson.

GARY KRAUSE: I'd like to move that we adjourn *sine die*.

[It was seconded and approved.]

GEOFFREY MBWANA: We are very grateful for each one of you who came back this afternoon, and we wish you God's blessings as we go into the Sabbath hours.

BHAJU RAM SHRESTHA: [Prayer.]

GEOFFREY G. MBWANA, *Chair*  
GARY D. KRAUSE, *Secretary*  
R. J. KLOOSTERHUIS, GARY B. PATTERSON, and  
CLAUDE SABOT, *Proceedings Editors*

**NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT #8**

VOTED, To approve the following partial report of the Nominating Committee:

Northern Asia-Pacific Division  
Secretary: Yutaka Inada

**Session Actions**

*Sixtieth General Conference Session*  
July 10, 2015, 2:00 p.m.

**YOUTH MINISTRIES—CHURCH MANUAL AMENDMENT**  
VOTED, To call for the vote on Youth Ministries - *Church Manual Amendment*.

**YOUTH MINISTRIES - CHURCH MANUAL AMENDMENT**  
VOTED, To amend the *Church Manual*, Chapter 8, Local Church Officers and Organizations, pages 100 to 105, Youth Ministries, to read as follows:

**Youth Ministries**

The various youth organizations of the church should work closely with the youth ministries department of the conference.

Adventist Youth Society (AYS)—The Ministries (AYM)—The church works for and with its youth through the AYM. AYS: Under the AYM, AYS leader youth are to work together in together, in cooperation with the wider church community, towards the development of a strong youth ministry that includes spiritual, mental, and physical development of each individual, Christian social interaction, and an active witnessing program that supports the general soul-winning plans of the church. The goal of AYM AYS should be to involve all youth in activities that will tie them closer to the church lead them to active church membership and train them for Christian service.

AYM Mission—To lead young people into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ and help them embrace His call to discipleship.

AYM Motto—The love of Christ compels us.

AYM Aim—The Advent Message to all the world in my generation.

The youth ministries program of the church comprises three broad categories, namely: Junior Youth (Adventurers: ages 6-9 and Pathfinders: ages 10-15), Senior Youth (Ambassadors: ages 16-21 and Young Adults: ages 22-30+), and Public Campus Students: ages 16-30+.

God said to Moses, "And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates" (Deut. 6:6-9).

The apostle Paul added, "Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity" (1 Tim. 4:12).

"We have an army of youth today who can do much if they are properly directed and encouraged. . . . We want them to be blessed of God. We want them to act a part in well-organized plans for helping other youth."—GCB, Jan. 29, 30, 1893, p. 24.

"When the youth give their hearts to God, our responsibility for them does not cease. They must be interested in the Lord's work, and led to see that He expects them to do something to advance His cause. It is not enough to show how much needs to be done, and to urge the youth to act a part. They must be taught how to labor for the Master. They must be trained, disciplined, drilled, in the best methods of winning souls to Christ. Teach them to try in a quiet, unpretending way to help their young companions. Let different

branches of missionary effort be systematically laid out, in which they may take part, and let them be given instruction and help. Thus they will learn to work for God.”—GW 210.

“With such an army of workers as our youth, rightly trained, might furnish, how soon the message of a crucified, risen, and soon-coming Savior might be carried to the whole world!”—MYP 196.

While there is to be an active Adventist Youth Ministries (AYM) AYS in every church, it is important that the youth program not be isolated from the rest of the church. In addition to their AYM AYS participation, youth should be integrated into responsible leadership and in all lines of church work. As young elders, deacons, and deaconesses, for example, they can work with and learn from experienced officers.

“In order that the work may go forward in all its branches, God calls for youthful vigor, zeal, and courage. He has chosen the youth to aid in the advancement of His cause. To plan with clear mind and execute with courageous hand demands fresh, uncrippled energies. Young men and women are invited to give God the strength of their youth, that through the exercise of their powers, through keen thought and vigorous action, they may bring glory to Him and salvation to their fellow men.”—GW 67.

Adventist Youth Ministries Committee—The Adventist Youth Ministries (AYM) Committee youth ministries committee is the umbrella organization in the church for the general planning of the youth ministry program. (See pp. 127, 128.) It includes the elected officers of the Adventist Youth Society (AYS). The AYM Committee includes the following church-elected officers: Young Adults leader, Public Campus Ministries leader/coordinator, Ambassador leader, Pathfinder director, Adventurer director, plus the personal ministries leader, youth Sabbath School school division leader, children’s ministries leader, health ministries leader, principal of the school, the AYM sponsor, and the pastor, Ambassador Club director, Pathfinder Club director, Adventurer Club director, principal of the school, the sponsor, and the pastor. The AYS leader, who is a member of the board, chairs this committee. The committee should meet as necessary to develop short- and long-range goals and plans for a successful ministry. (See Notes, #16, p. 171.)

If there are no distinct Ambassador ministry or young adults ministries established in the church, or until such time as they are established, the AYM Committee will plan for the senior youth ministry to include both age groups.

In parts of the world where there is no Pathfinder or Adventurer ministry, or until such time as they are organized, the AYM Committee will plan for appropriate activities for the junior youth.

The AYM leader (formerly known as the AYS director), who is a member of the board, chairs this committee. The committee should meet as necessary to develop short- and long-range goals and plans for a successful ministry. (See Notes, #16, p. 171.)

AYS Committee—The AYS committee is responsible for senior youth activities and works in coordination with the other youth entities through the Adventist youth ministries committee. If there is no Ambassador, Pathfinder, or Adventurer program, the AYS will include these younger members in a junior society.

AYS Officers—The Young Adults Ministries Committee—The Young Adults Ministries Committee is responsible for Young Adult activities and works in coordination with the Adventist Youth Ministries (AYM) Committee.

The church elects the following Young Adults Ministries officers: leader, associate leader, secretary-treasurer, assistant secretary-treasurer, and music director, these AYS officers: youth leader, associate youth leader, secretary-treasurer, assistant secretary-treasurer, chorister, pianist or organist, and sponsor (who may be an elder). Since music plays an important role in the formation of youth character, musicians should be as carefully selected as the other AYS officers. (See pp. 92, 96.) This group forms the nucleus for the Young Adults Ministries Committee, which appoints other officers for the respective activities. AYS committee, which in counsel with the youth appoints other officers. In smaller churches one person may carry several responsibilities.

Public Campus Ministries—Strengthening the Youth Ministries of the church, Public Campus Ministries (PCM), in collaboration with the Adventist Ministry to College and University Students (AMICUS), provides vision and strategic planning for ministry to and support for Seventh-day Adventist students (ages 16-30+) who attend college or university institutions not operated by the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Public Campus Ministries Leader/Coordinator—The church may appoint a Public Campus Ministries leader/coordinator to develop an intentional ministry with the purpose of caring for the special needs of college or university students in institutions not operated by the Seventh-day Adventist Church, in consultation with and support of the Adventist Youth Ministries Committee.

Ambassador Ministry—The Ambassador Ministry provides a specialized program to meet the needs of youth, ages 16 to 21. It offers young people in this age group organization and structure, and promotes their active involvement in the church, locally and globally. The ministry is designed to strengthen the current senior youth ministry of the Church. It challenges them to experience and share a personal relationship with

Christ, helps them develop a lifestyle that is consistent with the Seventh-day Adventist belief system, provides training in diverse vocational interests, and provides them with a safe environment for the wholesome development of lifelong friendships. Its activities are to be carried out in accordance with conference policies and in coordination with the AYM Committee of the local church.

Ambassador Committee—The Ambassador Committee is responsible for Ambassador activities and works in coordination with the Adventist Youth Ministries (AYM) Committee.

The church elects the following Ambassador officers: leader, associate leader, secretary-treasurer, assistant secretary-treasurer, and music director. This group forms the Ambassador Committee which appoints other officers for the respective activities.

Pathfinder Club—The Pathfinder Club provides a church-centered outlet for the spirit of adventure and exploration, in the context of spiritual development and soul-winning, for ages 10 to 15. Activities are carefully tailored to include outdoor living, nature exploration, crafts, hobbies, or vocations.

Pathfinder Committee—The Pathfinder Club director and deputy directors are elected by the church. (See pp. 105, 172.) If two deputy directors are elected, there should be one male and one female. One of the deputy directors may also serve as club secretary and treasurer. The director is a member of the board and the Adventist Youth Ministries (AYM) Committee.

Additional Pathfinder staff may include instructors of craft and nature classes and counselors who are each responsible for a unit of six to eight Pathfinders.

Resource materials are available from the conference youth ministries director.

Everyone involved in work with minor children must meet Church and legal standards and requirements,



A group of “Mission on the Move” participants wait for their cue to proceed to the GC Session platform on July 11. MARK FROELICH AR/ANN



## PROCEEDINGS/ACTIONS

such as background checks or certification. Local church leaders should consult with the conference, which will ascertain and advise as to what background checks and certifications are available and/or required. (See Notes, #7, pp. 168, 169.)

**Adventurer Club**—The Adventurer Club provides home and church programs for parents with 6-to-9-year-old children. It is designed to stimulate the children's curiosity and includes age-specific activities that involve both parents and child in recreational activities, simple crafts, appreciation of God's creation, and other activities that are of interest to that age. All is carried out with a spiritual focus, setting the stage for participation in the church as a Pathfinder.

**Adventurer Committee**—The church elects the club director and associates. (See pp. 104, 172.) Additional staff members are selected by the administrative staff of the club. The director is a member of the Adventist Youth Ministries (AYM) Committee.

Resource materials are available from the conference youth ministries director.

Everyone involved in work with minor children must meet Church and legal standards and requirements, such as background checks or certification. Local church leaders should consult with the conference, which will ascertain and advise as to what background checks and certifications are available and/or required. (See Notes, #7, pp. 168, 169.)

**The AYS leader AYM Officers**—The leaders/directors of the four youth ministry entities must exemplify Christlike graces and have a burden for soul winning and contagious enthusiasm. In helping motivate youth to work together and take responsibilities, the leader

leaders/directors will be in the background—guiding, counseling, and encouraging youth, helping them gain experience and the joys of achievement. The leader leaders/directors should study the youth profile of the church and seek to involve every eligible youth in the Adventist Youth Ministries (AYM), AYS:

The leader leaders/directors will keep in touch with the pastor, the sponsor, their respective sponsors, and the conference youth ministries director, taking advantage of opportunities for in-service training and leading the society their respective ministry into a cooperative relationship with the church and the conference.

The associate leader associate leaders/deputy directors (if needed) will assist the leader leaders/directors and will chair the AYS committee and perform leadership duties when the leader is leaders/directors are absent. The AYS committee respective committees may assign additional responsibilities to the associate leaders/directors, associate leader.

The secretary-treasurer secretary-treasurers will keep a record of AYS activities, the activities of their respective ministries, submit monthly reports on forms provided to the conference youth ministries director, and encourage youth to report their witnessing activities during the ten-minute personal ministries period.

The respective assistant secretary-treasurers (if needed) assist with the secretary-treasurers' secretary-treasurer (if needed) assists with the secretary-treasurer's work as assigned.

**AYM AYS Sponsor**—The Adventist Youth Ministries (AYM) AYS sponsor may be an elder or other person on the board who understands the objectives of the AYM, AYS; is sympathetic with youth and their involvement

in the church's ministries, and will serve as a valued counselor to the youth. The sponsor serves as a guide or counselor to AYM AYS officers and joins them regularly in the AYM Committee AYS committee meetings. The sponsor will work with the AYM leaders AYS leader to present the ministry's society's needs to the board.

The sponsor should become acquainted with the conference youth ministries director and keep the director informed of changes in officer personnel and other AYM AYS matters. Along with AYM leaders, AYS officers, the sponsor should attend conference youth training institutes to keep informed about developments in youth ministry.

For the sake of continuity, the sponsor, if possible, should serve multiple terms.

**Adventist Youth Features**—To help youth grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ, the youth ministries department arranges age-related programming that provides an environment for development of spiritual gifts.

Everyone involved in work with minor children must meet Church and legal standards and requirements, such as background checks or certification. Local church leaders should consult with the conference, which will ascertain and advise as to what background checks and certifications are available and/or required. (See Notes, #7, pp. 168, 169.)

**Resources**—For youth ministries resources, see Notes, #17, p. 171.

**Adventist Junior Youth Society (AJY)**—The objectives of AJY are the training of junior youth for Christian leadership and service and the development of members to their fullest potential.

In churches with schools the AJY is part of the curriculum and a teacher is AJY leader or sponsor. When the AJY is conducted in the school, each classroom is considered a society, with students in the lower elementary designated as preparatory members. Upper elementary students are regular members.

Everyone involved in work with youth must meet Church and legal standards and requirements, such as background checks or certification. Local church leaders should consult with the conference, which will ascertain and advise as to what background checks and certifications are available and/or required. (See Notes, #7, pp. 168, 169.)

**Ambassador Club**—The Ambassador Club provides a specialized program to meet the needs of youth, ages 16 through 21. It offers young people in this age group organization and structure, and promotes their active involvement in the church, locally and globally. The club is designed to strengthen the current senior youth/young adult ministry of the Church. It challenges them to experience and share a personal relationship with Christ, helps them develop a lifestyle that fits their belief system and vocational interest, and provides them with a safe venue for wholesome development of lifelong friendships. Its activities are to be carried out in accordance with conference policies and in coordination with other youth/young adult ministries of the local church. The Ambassador Club has a director and associate director(s). The associate director(s) may also serve as the secretary and treasurer. The director is a member of the Adventist Youth Society committee.

**Pathfinder Club**—The Pathfinder Club provides a church-centered outlet for the spirit of adventure and exploration found in junior youth. This includes carefully tailored activities in outdoor living, nature exploration, crafts, hobbies, or vocations beyond the possibilities in an average AJY. In this setting spiritual emphasis is well received, and the Pathfinder Club has demonstrated its soul-winning influence. In many

## SESSION SNAPSHOT



Riverboat riders listen to an international musical group singing for the Faith and Freedom Concert held along San Antonio's River Walk. SETH SHAFFER AR/ANN

churches Pathfinder Clubs have replaced the traditional AJY. If there is a school, the Pathfinder Club should supplement the work of the AJY.

The Pathfinder Club director and deputy directors are elected by the church. (See pp. 105, 172.) If two deputy directors are elected, there should be one of each gender. One of the deputy directors may also serve as club scribe and treasurer. The director is a member of the board and the Adventist youth ministries committee.

Additional Pathfinder staff may include instructors of craft and nature classes and counselors who are each responsible for a unit of six to eight Pathfinders.

Resource materials are available from the conference youth ministries director.

Everyone involved in work with minor children must meet Church and legal standards and requirements, such as background checks or certification. Local church leaders should consult with the conference, which will ascertain and advise as to what background checks and certifications are available and/or required. (See Notes, #7, pp. 168, 169.)

Adventurer Club—The Adventurer Club provides home and church programs for parents with 6- through 9-year-old children. It is designed to stimulate the children's curiosity and includes age-specific activities that involve both parent and child in recreational activities, simple crafts, appreciation of God's creation, and other activities that are of interest to that age. All is carried out with a spiritual focus, setting the stage for participation in the church as a Pathfinder.

The church elects the club director and associates. (See pp. 104, 172.) Additional staff members are selected by the administrative staff of the club. The director is a member of the Adventist youth ministries committee. Resource materials are available from the conference youth ministries director.

Everyone involved in work with minor children must meet Church and legal standards and requirements, such as background checks or certification. Local church leaders should consult with the conference, which will ascertain and advise as to what background checks and certifications are available and/or required. (See Notes, #7, pp. 168, 169.)

Resources—For youth ministries resources, see Notes, #17, p. 171.

## REASONS FOR DISCIPLINE - CHURCH MANUAL AMENDMENT

VOTED, To amend the *Church Manual*, Chapter 7, Discipline, pages 61 and 62, Reasons for Discipline, to read as follows:

Reasons for Discipline

The reasons for which members shall be subject to discipline are:

1. Denial of faith in the fundamentals of the gospel and in the - No change
2. Violation of the law of God, such as worship of - No change
3. Violation of the commandment of the law of God, which reads, "You shall not commit adultery" (Ex. 20:14, Matt. 5:27-28), as it relates to the marriage institution and the Christian home, biblical standards of moral conduct, and any act of sexual intimacy outside of a marriage relationship and/or nonconsensual acts of sexual conduct within a marriage, whether those acts are legal or illegal. Such acts include but are not limited to child sexual abuse, including abuse of the vulnerable. Marriage is defined as a public, lawfully binding,

monogamous, heterosexual relationship between one man and one woman. Violation of the seventh commandment of the law of God as it relates to the marriage institution, the Christian home, and biblical standards of moral conduct.

—4. Fornication, which includes among other issues, promiscuity, homosexual activity, incest, sodomy, and bestiality.

—4. 5. Sexual abuse of children, youth, and vulnerable adults, fornication, promiscuity, incest, homosexual practice, the production, use, or distribution of pornographic material, pornography, and other sexual perversions.

—5. 6. Remarriage of a divorced person, except the spouse who has - No change

6. 7. Physical violence, including violence within the - No change

7. 8. Fraud or willful misrepresentation in - No change

8. 9. Disorderly conduct which brings reproach upon the - No change

9. 10. Adhering Adherence to or taking part in a divisive or disloyal movement or organization. (See p. 59.)

10. 11. Persistent refusal to recognize properly constituted church authority - No change

11. 12. The use, manufacture, or sale of alcoholic - No change

12. 13. The use, manufacture, or sale of tobacco in any of its forms - No change

13. 14. The use or manufacture of illicit drugs or the use, misuse, or sale of narcotics or drugs without appropriate medical cause and license, misuse of, or trafficking in, narcotics or other drugs.

## MARRIAGE —CHURCH MANUAL AMENDMENT

VOTED, To call for the vote on Marriage - *Church Manual Amendment*.

## MARRIAGE - CHURCH MANUAL AMENDMENT

VOTED, To amend the *Church Manual*, Chapter 13, Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage, pages 148 to 150, Marriage, to read as follows:

Marriage

Marriage is a divine institution established by God Himself before the Fall, when everything, including marriage, was "very good" (Gen. 1:31). "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh" (Gen. 2:24). "God celebrated the first marriage. Thus the institution has for its originator the Creator of the universe. 'Marriage is honourable'; it was one of the first gifts of God to man, and it is one of the two institutions that, after the fall, Adam brought with him beyond the gates of Paradise."—AH 25, 26.

God intended the marriage of Adam and Eve to be the pattern for all future marriages, and Christ endorsed this original concept: "Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate" (Matt. 19:4-6). Marriage, thus instituted by God, is a monogamous, heterosexual relationship between one male and one female.

Marriage is a lifelong commitment of husband and wife. As such, marriage is a public, lawfully binding lifelong commitment of a man and a woman to each

other and between the couple and God (Mark 10:2-9; Rom. 7:2). Paul indicates that the commitment that Christ has for the church is a model of the relationship between husband and wife (Eph. 5:31, 32). God intended marriage to be as permanent as Christ's relationship with the church.

Sexual intimacy within marriage is a sacred gift from God to the human family. It is an integral part of marriage, reserved for marriage only (Gen. 2:24; Prov. 5:5-20). Such intimacy, designed to be shared exclusively between husband and wife, promotes ever-increasing closeness, happiness, and security, and provides for the perpetuation of the human race.

Unity in marriage is achieved by mutual respect and love. No one is superior (Eph. 5:21-28). "Marriage, a union for life, is a symbol of the union between Christ and His church. The spirit that Christ manifests toward the church is the spirit that husband and wife are to manifest toward each other."—7T 46. God's Word condemns violence in personal relationships (Gen. 6:11, 13; Ps. 11:5; Isa. 58:4, 5; Rom. 13:10; Gal. 5:19-21). It is the spirit of Christ to love and accept, to seek to affirm and build others up, rather than to abuse or demean them (Rom. 12:10; 14:19; Eph. 4:26; 5:28, 29; Col. 3:8-14; 1 Thess. 5:11). There is no room among Christ's followers for tyrannical control and the abuse of power (Matt. 20:25-28; Eph. 6:4). Violence in the setting of marriage and family is abhorrent (see AH 343).

"Neither husband nor wife is to make a plea for rulership. The Lord has laid down the principle that is to guide in this matter. The husband is to cherish his wife as Christ cherishes the church. And the wife is to respect and love her husband. Both are to cultivate the spirit of kindness, being determined never to grieve or injure the other."—7T 47.

The entrance of sin adversely affected marriage. When Adam and Eve sinned, they lost the oneness that they had known with God and with each other (Gen. 3:6-24). Their relationship became marked with guilt, shame, blame, and pain. Wherever sin reigns, its sad effects on marriage include alienation, unfaithfulness, neglect, abuse, sexual perversion, domination of one partner by the other, violence, separation, desertion, and divorce.

Marriages involving more than one husband and one wife are also an expression of the effects of sin on the institution of marriage. Such marriages, though practiced in Old Testament times, are not in harmony with the divine design. God's plan for marriage requires His people to transcend the mores of popular culture that conflict with the biblical view.

The Christian concept of marriage includes the following:

1. Divine Ideal to Be Restored in Christ—In redeeming the world from - No change
2. Oneness and Equality to Be Restored in Christ—The gospel - No change
3. Grace Available for All—God seeks to restore to wholeness - No change
4. Role of the Church—Moses in the Old Testament and Paul - No change

Geoffrey G Mbwana, Chair  
Gary D Krause, Secretary  
Myron A Iseminger, Actions Editor  
Wendy Trim, Recording Secretary



# BULLETIN INDEX

## Business Meetings—Proceedings and Actions

First Business Meeting, July 2, 9:21 a.m. . . . .	2:38
Session Actions . . . . .	2:44
Second Business Meeting, July 2, 4:28 p.m. . . . .	2:46
Session Actions . . . . .	2:47
Third Business Meeting, July 3, 9:23 a.m. . . . .	3:38
Session Actions . . . . .	3:42
Fourth Business Meeting, July 3, 2:06 p.m. . . . .	3:43
Session Actions . . . . .	3:47
Fifth Business Meeting, July 5, 9:26 a.m. . . . .	4:34
Session Actions . . . . .	4:39
Sixth Business Meeting, July 5, 2:00 p.m. . . . .	4:39
Session Actions . . . . .	4:46
Seventh Business Meeting, July 6, 9:30 a.m. . . . .	5:34
Session Actions . . . . .	5:38
Eighth Business Meeting, July 6, 1:51 p.m. . . . .	5:41
Session Actions . . . . .	5:45
Amended Session Actions. . . . .	8:30
Ninth Business Meeting, July 7, 9:25 a.m. . . . .	6:38
Session Actions . . . . .	7:42
Tenth Business Meeting, July 7, 2:00 p.m. . . . .	6:41
Session Actions . . . . .	6:44
Eleventh Business Meeting, July 8, 9:29 a.m. . . . .	7:43
Twelfth Business Meeting, July 8, 1:59 p.m. . . . .	7:46
Session Actions . . . . .	7:54
Thirteenth Business Meeting, July 9, 9:30 a.m. . . . .	8:30
Session Actions . . . . .	8:33
Fourteenth Business Meeting, July 10, 9:30 a.m. . . . .	8:37
Session Actions . . . . .	8:39
Fifteenth Business Meeting, July 10, 1:59 p.m. . . . .	8:41
Session Actions . . . . .	8:42

## Nominating Committee

Nominating Committee Report #1 . . . . .	3:42
Nominating Committee Report #2 . . . . .	3:47
Nominating Committee Report #3 . . . . .	4:47
Nominating Committee Report #4 . . . . .	5:47
Nominating Committee Report #5 . . . . .	6:47
Nominating Committee Report #6 . . . . .	8:35
Nominating Committee Report #7 . . . . .	8:37
Nominating Committee Report #8 . . . . .	8:42

## Devotionals (in order of appearance)

Hlathwayo, Sikhu, Tomorrow's Headlines Today, Friday Morning, July 3. . . . .	2:14
Schofield, Neale, Here He Comes!, Sunday Morning, July 5. . . . .	3:16
O'Connor, Shian, Faithful End-time Living, Monday Morning, July 6. . . . .	4:16
Frey, Mathilde, Never Alone, Tuesday Morning, July 7. . . . .	5:16
Coralie, Alain, Through Trials to Triumph, Wednesday Morning, July 8. . . . .	6:16
Paclee, Taj, Into All the World, Thursday Morning, July 9. . . . .	7:24
Smith, Ron C., Home at Last, Friday Morning, July 10. . . . .	8:18

## Delegates

GC Delegate List . . . . .	1:49
----------------------------	------

## Reports

Archives, Statistics, and Research Report, David Trim . . . . .	3:20
East-Central Africa Division Report, Blasious M. Ruguri. . . . .	3:26
Euro-Asia Division Report, Guillermo E. Biaggi. . . . .	3:32
Inter-American Division Report, Israel Leito . . . . .	4:30
Inter-European Division Report, Bruno Vertallier . . . . .	4:26
Middle East and North Africa Union Mission Report Homer W. Trecartin . . . . .	2:35
North American Division Report, Daniel R. Jackson . . . . .	2:24
Northern Asia-Pacific Division Report, Jaiyong Lee . . . . .	5:26
Secretary's Report, G. T. Ng . . . . .	2:18
South American Division Report, Erton Kohler. . . . .	5:30
South Pacific Division Report, Barry Oliver . . . . .	6:26
Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division Report, Paul Ratsara . . . . .	6:19
Southern Asia Division Report, John Rathinaraj . . . . .	7:20
Southern Asia-Pacific Division Report, Alberto C. Gulfan . . . . .	6:32
Trans-European Division Report, Raafat A. Kamal. . . . .	7:30
Treasurer's Report, Robert E. Lemon. . . . .	2:28
West-Central Africa Division Report, Gilbert Wari . . . . .	7:38

## San Antonio 360°

Bulletin 2 . . . . .	2:22
Pieter Damsteegt, Josef Kissinger, Seth Shaffer, Tor Tjeransen, photographers . . . . .	
Bulletin 3 . . . . .	3:25
Pieter Damsteegt, Mark Froelich, Josef Kissinger, Seth Shaffer, Elsie Tjeransen, Dominik Zeh, Josafat Zemleduch, photographers . . . . .	
Bulletin 4 . . . . .	4:24
Pieter Damsteegt, Mark Froelich, Seth Shaffer, David B. Sherwin, Tor Tjeransen, Dominik Zeh, Josafat Zemleduch, photographers . . . . .	
Bulletin 5 . . . . .	5:24
Pieter Damsteegt, Josef Kissinger, Seth Shaffer, Tor Tjeransen, Dominik Zeh, Josafat Zemleduch, photographers . . . . .	
Bulletin 6 . . . . .	6:24
Ken Dixon, Dick Duerksen, Seth Shaffer, Elsie Tjeransen, Tor Tjeransen, Josafat Zemleduch, photographers . . . . .	
Bulletin 7 . . . . .	7:28
Pieter Damsteegt, Mark Froelich, Josef Kissinger, Seth Shaffer, Elsie Tjeransen, Tor Tjeransen, Dominik Zeh, photographers . . . . .	
Bulletin 8 . . . . .	8:25
Pieter Damsteegt, Mark Froelich, Dick Duerksen, Josef Kissinger, Seth Shaffer, David B. Sherwin, Tor Tjeransen, Dominik Zeh, photographers . . . . .	

## Speakers, Writers

Baioni, Juliana . . . . .	
Twelve Gates . . . . .	8:16
United. . . . .	6:36
Your Story Hour . . . . .	5:22
Beach, Bert B., A Backward Glance—1946-2015. . . . .	1:44
Biaggi, Guillermo E. . . . .	
Time for Action . . . . .	3:32
Blackmer, Sandra . . . . .	
3 New and 3 Incumbent GC Vice Presidents Elected . . . . .	4:03
A Day in the Life of a Nominating Committee Member. . . . .	3:05
Daily Bible Study Expands to Include Ellen G. White . . . . .	5:09
He Found a Friend in Jesus . . . . .	4:20
Kettering Adventist Healthcare . . . . .	3:22
Local Baptist Church Offers Helping Hands . . . . .	6:10
NewsKids: The <i>Adventist Review's</i> Young Faces . . . . .	5:10
Outpost Centers International . . . . .	6:30
Special Sabbath Offering to Go to Young People . . . . .	7:07
Two Firsts for Deaf Ministries at GC Session . . . . .	8:26
What Are Early Missionaries Telling Us? . . . . .	6:23
World Church Launches 'United in Prayer' . . . . .	2:10
Caesar, Lael . . . . .	
Ellen, the Person . . . . .	4:20
Ten Days in San Antonio . . . . .	1:46
Campbell, Michael W., First Ever Historical Drama Tells Adventist Story . . . . .	8:23
Newly Elected Church Leaders Speak Out . . . . .	5:06
Songs of Zion . . . . .	8:27
The Must-Have App for GC Session . . . . .	2:13
Chavez, Stephen . . . . .	
Adventist Review App Unveiled . . . . .	6:10
Delegates Reinforce "Man and Woman" Definition of Marriage . . . . .	8:05
Free Health Care Paves Way for Headlines . . . . .	5:08
Friendships for Hope . . . . .	7:34
Largest Chinese Delegation Ever at GC Session . . . . .	4:09
New Hampshire Experiences . . . . .	4:20
Nominating Committee Chooses Continuity and Change . . . . .	2:09
Our First Missionary . . . . .	5:23
Six Newcomers Among 13 Division Presidents . . . . .	4:06
The Beehive International. . . . .	8:22
Pageant of Progress and Challenge . . . . .	8:11
Coralie, Alain . . . . .	
Through Trials to Triumph . . . . .	6:16
Fowler, John M. . . . .	
The Embrace of Love and the Adventist Church . . . . .	4:05
Frey, Mathilde, Never Alone . . . . .	5:16
Gulfan, Alberto C., Shine On Till Jesus Comes! . . . . .	6:32
Hlathwayo, Sikhu, Tomorrow's Headlines Today . . . . .	2:14
Iacob, Norel, Stimme der Hoffnung . . . . .	5:20
Jackson, Daniel R., A Message of Hope and	

Wholeness . . . . .	2:24
Kamal, Raafat A., Lighting the Way to Salvation . . . . .	7:30
Karimabadi, Wilona . . . . .	
12 Directors Elected to GC Departments. . . . .	4:07
A Brief Look at San Antonio's History . . . . .	1:22
Adventist Women Find a Message All Their Own . . . . .	7:08
Children Look for Same Things as Adults at Session . . . . .	3:29
Delegates Like to Eat, Too . . . . .	5:12
Good Eats. . . . .	1:26
Scheer Memorial Hospital. . . . .	4:19
Kent, Anthony, A True Hero of Faith . . . . .	3:36
Klingbeil, Gerald A. . . . .	
The Day After. . . . .	7:09
The Tale of Two Cities. . . . .	4:21
Knott, Bill . . . . .	
It's a Movement . . . . .	1:36
"It's a Very Humbling Experience" . . . . .	2:05
Knott, Evan . . . . .	
Adventist Membership Surges in San Antonio Despite Daunting Rain . . . . .	6:08
Adventist World Radio . . . . .	7:36
Bright New World . . . . .	6:11
Kohler, Erton, Extreme Mission!. . . . .	5:30
Kovacs-Biro, Janos, History's Glorious Climax . . . . .	1:32
Lee, Jaiyong, Mission First in the Most Challenging Field. . . . .	5:26
Leito, Israel, How Great Thou Art . . . . .	4:30
Lemon, Robert E. . . . .	
God Is Faithful—His Promises Are Sure . . . . .	2:28
Maran, Kimberly Luste . . . . .	
12 Directors Elected to GC Departments. . . . .	4:07
Breath of Life GC Session . . . . .	4:22
Davy Crockett's Adventist Descendant Takes Stand at Alamo . . . . .	7:12
High Temps, Overgrown Yards No Match for Impact Delegates. . . . .	7:10
San Antonio on a Budget . . . . .	1:27
Seven GC Officers Elected . . . . .	3:03
Young Adventists Hug the City . . . . .	6:09
McChesney, Andrew . . . . .	
Church President Appeals to Members to Unite in the Church's Mission . . . . .	6:04
Delegates Approve Landmark Update of Fundamental Beliefs . . . . .	5:03
GC Delegates Approve Record 35 New Union Conferences . . . . .	2:12
GC President Says Ordination Vote Doesn't Change Current Policy . . . . .	8:07
No Free Camel Rides at GC Session . . . . .	1:16
San Antonio Mayor Grateful for GC Session and Steps to Christ . . . . .	8:08
Ted N. C. Wilson Re-elected GC President in Resounding Vote . . . . .	2:03
What You Need to Know About the Adventist Church's New Strategy . . . . .	3:12
Wilson Calls for Unity in Adventist Mission . . . . .	8:03
Your Guide to the GC Session Agenda . . . . .	1:12
Moore, Larry R., Welcome to the Southwestern Union . . . . .	1:04
Müller-Bulich, Marlene, Coming Prepared . . . . .	1:45
Ng, G. T., From Confusion to Commission . . . . .	2:32
To Every Nation . . . . .	2:18
O'Connor, Shian, Faithful End-time Living. . . . .	4:16
Oliver, Barry, Changing History One Heart at a Time . . . . .	6:26
Paclee, Taj, Into All the World . . . . .	7:24
Paseggi, Marcos . . . . .	
12 Directors Elected to GC Departments. . . . .	4:07
2,500 Adventists Run for Their Lives in San Antonio . . . . .	3:09
A Peek Behind the Scenes at GC Session . . . . .	7:03
Church President Appeals to Members to Unite in the Church's Mission. . . . .	6:04
Church to Restudy Biblical Principles of Interpretation . . . . .	8:07
From Sailor to Sabbath Keeper. . . . .	7:35
Peruvian Union University. . . . .	6:22
Presidential Support . . . . .	5:09
Seven GC Officers Elected . . . . .	3:03

Quintana, Heather  
 7 Things You Don't Want to Miss at GC Session . . . 3:13  
 GC Session: One Photo at a Time . . . 7:14  
 Two Degrees of Separation . . . 8:14  
 Rathinaraj, John, Trusting God to Lead the Way . . . 7:20  
 Ratsara, Paul, A Playground and a Battlefield for Souls . . . 6:19  
 Ruguri, Blasius M., The Flight of Faith . . . 3:26  
 Schofield, Neale, Here He Comes! . . . 3:16  
 Sedlacek, David, Beyond Forgiveness to Reconciliation . . . 6:12  
 Stevens, Libna  
 GC Session Bigger Than Life for Three Delegates 4:10  
 Smith, Ron C., Home at Last . . . 8:18  
 Tapeceeria, Aimee Grace  
 550 Young Adventists Gear Up to Change San Antonio . . . 4:12  
 Trecartin, Homer  
 A Serious Calling . . . 1:18  
 Mingle, Meet, Invite . . . 2:35  
 Trim, David  
 Membership Audits and Losses . . . 3:20  
 The Spirit of '63 . . . 1:08  
 Vergel, Alfredo, San Antonio's Adventist Heritage . . . 1:23  
 Vertallier, Bruno, A Mission Among Challenges . . . 4:26  
 Walemba, Kelvin Nathan, A Young Perspective . . . 1:45  
 Wahlen, Gina  
 Seton Survived Ebola, But 12 Missionaries Gave Their Lives . . . 3:10  
 Wari, Gilbert, A Time of Challenge and Growth . . . 7:38  
 Wilson, Ted N. C.  
 A Warm Welcome to All . . . 1:03  
 Presidential Report . . . 1:38  
 Zinke, Ed  
 What Got Changed in the Fundamental Beliefs . . . 5:05

## Stories, News, Analysis

12 Directors Elected to GC Departments . . . 4:07  
 2,500 Adventists Run for Their Lives in San Antonio 3:09  
 3 New and 3 Incumbent GC Vice Presidents Elected 4:03  
 550 Young Adventists Gear Up to Change San Antonio . . . 4:12  
 7 Things You Don't Want to Miss at GC Session . . . 3:13  
 A Backward Glance—1946–2015 . . . 1:44  
 A Brief Look at San Antonio's History . . . 1:22  
 A Message of Hope and Wholeness . . . 2:24  
 A Mission Among Challenges . . . 4:26  
 A Peek Behind the Scenes at GC Session . . . 7:03  
 A Playground and a Battlefield for Souls . . . 6:19  
 A Serious Calling . . . 1:18  
 A Time of Challenge and Growth . . . 7:38  
 A True Hero of Faith . . . 3:36  
 A Warm Welcome to All . . . 1:03  
 A Young Perspective . . . 1:45  
 Adventist Membership Surges in San Antonio  
 Despite Daunting Rain . . . 6:08  
 Adventist Review App Unveiled . . . 6:10  
 Adventist Women Find a Message All Their Own . . . 7:08  
 Adventist World Radio . . . 7:36  
 Beyond Forgiveness to Reconciliation . . . 6:12  
 Breath of Life GC Session . . . 4:22  
 Bright New World . . . 6:11  
 Changing History One Heart at a Time . . . 6:26  
 Church President Appeals to Members to Unite in the Church's Mission . . . 6:04  
 Church to Restudy Biblical Principles of Interpretation . . . 8:07  
 Coming Prepared . . . 1:45  
 Daily Bible Study Expands to Include Ellen G. White 5:09  
 Davy Crockett's Adventist Descendant Takes Stand at Alamo . . . 7:12  
 Delegates Approve Landmark Update of Fundamental Beliefs . . . 5:03  
 Delegates Like to Eat, Too . . . 5:12  
 Delegates Reinforce "Man and Woman" Definition of Marriage . . . 8:05  
 Elected CG Department Officers and Division Leaders  
 Ellen, the Person . . . 4:20  
 Extreme Mission! . . . 5:30  
 Faithful End-time Living . . . 4:16  
 First Ever Historical Drama Tells Advent Story . . . 8:23  
 Free Health Care Paves Way for Headlines . . . 5:08  
 Friendships for Hope . . . 7:34

From Confusion to Commission . . . 2:32  
 From Sailor to Sabbath Keeper . . . 7:35  
 GC Delegates Approve Record 35 New Union Conferences . . . 2:12  
 GC Delegates Drop E-Vote . . . 3:08  
 GC President Says Ordination Vote Doesn't Change Current Policy . . . 8:07  
 GC Session Bigger Than Life for Three Delegates . . . 4:10  
 GC Session: One Photo at a Time . . . 7:14  
 God Is Faithful—His Promises Are Sure . . . 2:28  
 Good Eats . . . 1:26  
 He Found a Friend in Jesus . . . 4:20  
 Here He Comes! . . . 3:16  
 High Temps, Overgrown Yards No Match for Impact Delegates . . . 7:10  
 History's Glorious Climax . . . 1:32  
 Home at Last . . . 8:18  
 How Great Thou Art . . . 4:30  
 If You Can Spend a Bit More . . . 1:30  
 Into All the World . . . 7:24  
 It's a Movement . . . 1:36  
 "It's a Very Humbling Experience" . . . 2:05  
 Kettering Adventist Healthcare . . . 3:22  
 Largest Chinese Delegation Ever at GC Session . . . 4:09  
 Lighting the Way to Salvation . . . 7:30  
 Local Baptist Church Offers Helping Hands . . . 6:10  
 Mingle, Meet, Invite . . . 2:35  
 Mission First in the Most Challenging Field . . . 5:26  
 Never Alone . . . 5:16  
 New Hampshire Experiences . . . 4:20  
 Newly Elected Church Leaders Speak Out . . . 5:06  
 NewsKids: The Adventist Review's Young Faces . . . 5:10  
 No Free Camel Rides at GC Session . . . 1:16  
 Nominating Committee Chooses Continuity and Change . . . 2:09  
 Our First Missionary . . . 5:23  
 Outpost Centers International . . . 6:30  
 Pagaent of Progress and Challenge . . . 8:11  
 Peruvian Union University . . . 6:22  
 Presidential Report . . . 1:38  
 Presidential Support . . . 5:09  
 San Antonio's Adventist Heritage . . . 1:23  
 San Antonio Mayor Grateful for GC Session and Steps to Christ . . . 8:08  
 San Antonio on a Budget . . . 1:27  
 Scheer Memorial Hospital . . . 4:19  
 Session Highlights . . . 1:43  
 Seton Survived Ebola, But 12 Missionaries Gave Their Lives . . . 3:10  
 Seven GC Officers Elected . . . 3:03  
 Shine On Till Jesus Comes! . . . 6:32  
 Six Newcomers Among 13 Division Presidents . . . 4:06  
 Songs of Zion . . . 8:27  
 Special Sabbath Offering to go to Young People . . . 7:07  
 Stimme der Hoffnung . . . 5:20  
 Ted N. C. Wilson Reelected GC President in Resounding Vote . . . 2:03  
 Ten Days in San Antonio . . . 1:46  
 The Beehive International . . . 8:22  
 The Day After . . . 7:09  
 The Embrace of Love and the Adventist Church . . . 4:05  
 The Must-Have App for GC Session . . . 2:13  
 The Other Side of GC Session . . . 1:24  
 The Spirit of '63 . . . 1:08  
 The Tale of Two Cities . . . 4:21  
 Through Trials to Triumph . . . 6:16  
 Time for Action . . . 3:32  
 To Every Nation . . . 2:18  
 Tomorrow's Headlines Today . . . 2:14  
 Trusting God to Lead the Way . . . 7:20  
 Twelve Gates . . . 8:16  
 Two Degrees of Separation . . . 8:14  
 Two Firsts for Deaf Ministries at GC Session . . . 8:26  
 United . . . 6:36  
 Welcome to the Southwestern Union . . . 1:04  
 What Got Changed in the Fundamental Beliefs . . . 5:05  
 What You Need to Know About the Adventist Church's New Strategy . . . 3:12  
 Wilson Calls for Unity in Adventist Mission . . . 8:03  
 World Church Launches 'United in Prayer' . . . 2:10  
 Young Adventists Hug the City . . . 6:09  
 Your Guide to the GC Session Agenda . . . 1:12  
 Your Story Hour . . . 5:22

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