



General Conference Executive Committee Newsletter

An informative publication for members of the General Conference Executive Committee as a service through the office of the Chair

JULY - SEPTEMBER 2022

Look closely at a glass

of water and an ice cube. Both are composed of water, have the same molecule and the same density, but in practice they are different. The shape of the liquid is variable and adapts quickly into its container. The ice cube also has water, but in a solid state. Its constant form doesn't mold itself into the place where it is.

The apostle Paul challenges us not to “be conformed to this world” (Rom. 12:2), not to assume the form of our surroundings. It is an invitation to be ice cubes that do not melt in the face of what American theologian Eugene Peterson calls the New Contemporary Trinity—“My holy feelings, My holy desires, and My holy needs”—that shapes religion to the selfish interests of the heart. Our hearts need to be guided, not followed.

Seduction to conform to this world is intense. It's on our cell phones, computers, TV screens, books, magazines, and videos. But our call is to be the voice of God, not the echo of culture. We believe that “One sentence of Scripture is of more value than ten thousand of man's ideas or arguments” (7T 71).

Our example is Jesus, who was in the world but not of the world (John 17:15-16). We need to immerse the mind in the transforming water of the Word of God. Only the Scripture can purify our hearts, making us solid and consistent.

ERTON C. KÖHLER,
GC EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

EDITORIAL



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BUILD ON A SURE FOUNDATION: THE LIVING WORD OF GOD

BY TED N. C. WILSON, PH.D.

PRESIDENT, GENERAL CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

One of the biggest battles we will ever face is over the authority of the Word of God. The devil has always hated God's Word and does everything he can to neutralize its effect. Our sacred responsibility as Seventh-day Adventists is to protect, lift up, and promote the lifesaving power of God's sure Word—the Bible.¹ The world around us is falling apart. People are distraught about security and personal safety. Life has become uncertain. What is needed is not a political, military, or social solution, but a return to a solid foundation—God's sure Word.

Peter shared tremendous certainty in God's word as he faced his approaching death: “For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitness for His majesty. . . . And so we have the prophetic word confirmed [“a more sure word of prophecy” (KJV)], 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 1:16-19).

The Word of God has always been a light shining in a dark place. The Bible is authoritative.

It is our handbook for living, not just something to put on a table or analyze for academic purposes.

Peter went on to write: “Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit” (verses 20, 21).

People have always needed a sure foundation. The sure word of prophecy is something we can count on. It points to Christ, His righteousness, His salvation, His ministry in the most holy place, and His final redemption of His people at His second coming. It is our enormous privilege to share it through the power of the Holy Spirit.

But sadly, the Word of God is frequently ignored. Some misinterpret and misapply that which is plainly taught in Scripture. The Bible is reinterpreted by those who participate in higher criticism or the historical-critical approach to Scripture; those who place themselves above Scripture as they interpret it according to their own standards and approaches.

AS IT READS

We Seventh-day Adventists faithfully follow and promote the historical-biblical method of interpreting Scripture, allowing the Bible to interpret itself. [The Methods of Bible Study document](#), voted by representatives of the world church,² outlines how to study God’s Holy Word, following the historicist view of prophecy

and biblical understanding. Ellen White wrote: “If we would not build our hopes of heaven upon a false foundation we must accept the Bible as it reads and believe that the Lord means what He says.”³

As we face the last days of earth’s history, there will be determined efforts by Satan to destroy the effectiveness of the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. We see the neutralization of God’s authoritative Word all around us. It is Satan’s plan to undermine God’s plain “Thus saith the Lord,” knowing that if he can get God’s people to look to themselves and their own opinions he can bring in dissension, disunity, and tension. It is one of his greatest tools against the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The Word of God is the product of heavenly inspiration and provides an accurate account of the great controversy between good and evil—between Christ and Satan. This is why the devil is determined to destroy the truth found in the Bible, but he will not succeed.

God is faithful. Through His power let’s respond in faithfulness to Him. There are absolutes, and they are found in the Word of God.

THE BEREANS

We read about the Bereans in Acts 17. “And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews. These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received

the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so” (vss. 10, 11, KJV).

Many of the Jews in Thessalonica were jealous of Paul and Silas’ popularity and were unwilling to dig deeply into the Word, allowing the gospel to transform their lives. Instead, they succeeded in putting the city into an uproar. To avoid further violence, the believers sent Paul and Silas to Berea. There they found open-minded Jews who were willing to listen and dig into the Scriptures to prove whether or not what they heard was right. The truth became real to them.

Ellen White observed: “Daily they searched the inspired records, and as they compared scripture with scripture, heavenly angels were beside them, enlightening their minds and impressing their hearts.”⁴ Today heavenly angels are by our sides, opening our minds as we prayerfully study the Scriptures, and the Holy Spirit brings conviction and conversion.

DANGERS AND DISTRACTIONS

We are living in the Laodicean last-day period when Christianity is often superficial. The devil will try everything to distract us from the Bible and the truth, using every possible means to take us away from God’s Word.

Another great danger we face is living in an age of “experiential religion.” People claim you have to “feel” the spirit, asserting religion must be “experienced” to be real. Emphasis is placed more on feeling, similar to the Thessalonians, rather than on searching the Scriptures, as the Bereans did.

Ellen White warned: “In the last



The Bible reveals that salvation is possible only through complete reliance on Christ.

days, the earth will be almost destitute of true faith. Upon the merest pretense, the Word of God will be considered unreliable, while human reasoning will be received, though it be in opposition to plain Scripture facts.”⁵ Feelings lie, but truth is based on the authority of Scripture. God’s Word never lies.

HIDDEN TREASURE

There are physical and mental benefits from studying the Bible and focusing on eternal values, as opposed to spending time on trivial things. We are promised, “The Bible is the book of books. It will give you life and health. It is a soother of the nerves, and imparts solidity of mind and firm principle.”⁶

The Word of God is like hidden treasure, as illustrated by Christ’s parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field” (Matt. 13:44).

Reflecting on this, Ellen White observed: “In the parable the field containing the treasure represents the Holy Scriptures. And the gospel is the treasure. The earth itself is not so interlaced with golden veins and filled with precious things as is the Word of God.”⁷

The Bible reveals that salvation is possible only through complete reliance on Christ. It tells us the Sabbath is Christ’s special seal and covenant with His commandment-keeping people. It confirms our belief and hope in a soon, literal second coming

of Christ.

While the church will be deluged with apostasies and false doctrine, the Word of God stands sure. “All should see the necessity of understanding the truth for themselves. . . . Apostasies have occurred and the Lord has permitted matters of this nature to develop in the past in order to show how easily His people will be misled when they depend upon the words of men instead of searching the Scriptures for themselves, as did the noble Bereans, to see if these things are so.”⁸

Only in following the lead of the Bereans will we be able to stand the final test, since the Bible is the only foundation on which to build. Satan will seek to destroy confidence in the landmark biblical truths we hold dear, but he will not succeed.

Jesus is coming soon! Be a Berean, searching the Scriptures daily to know the Word. Cherish it, believe it, love it, share it.

¹ This article was first published in *Adventist World*, January 2, 2020.

² Voted at Annual Council, Oct. 12, 1986, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

³ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1948), vol. 5, p. 171.

⁴ White, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1911), p. 231.

⁵ White, *The Spirit of Prophecy* (Battle Creek: Seventh-day Adventist Pub. Assn., 1870), vol. 1, p. 89.

⁶ White, *Counsels on Sabbath School Work* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1938), p. 22.

⁷ White, *Christ’s Object Lessons* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1900, 1941), p. 104.

⁸ White, *Selected Messages* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1958), book 2, pp. 392-394.

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Historical Background of Statements of Affirmation for the **HOLY BIBLE AND THE WRITINGS OF ELLEN WHITE**

During the 61st General Conference Session held in St. Louis, Missouri, a “Resolution on the Holy Bible” and a “Statement of Confidence in the Writings of Ellen G. White” were voted following considerable discussion during the Business Session on Thursday afternoon, June 11, 2022. To gain an historical overview of the voting of such documents during GC Sessions, we turned to David Trim, Ph.D., Director of the GC Office of Archives, Statistics and Research.

ECN: When were such statements affirming our confidence in the Bible and the writings of Ellen G. White first voted at a GC Session, and how often have they been voted?

David Trim: This was a difficult question to answer because the same language has not always been used, which complicates the research. However, having spent time in GC Session proceedings, I believe I have a good sense now of the general history of these two resolutions.

First, I should say that early GC Sessions (in the 19th century) regularly voted resolutions urging that Ellen

White’s writings be more widely circulated and that members be encouraged to read them, and the language of these resolutions tends to include language affirming the value of her writings. But there is nothing that could be called an explicit “Statement of Confidence in the Writings of Ellen G. White” or “Resolution on the Spirit of Prophecy.”

When were such resolutions first approved by GC Sessions?

The **1946 GC Session** voted a statement on the Spirit of Prophecy, and the way that church leaders treated it (the 1947 Annual Council called for it to be circulated



GC ARCHIVES

The 1946 GC Session held in Sligo Church in Takoma Park, Maryland, was the first to vote a statement on the Spirit of Prophecy.

as widely as possible among members and several church papers reprinted it) suggest that **this was the first such statement.**

Thereafter, some kind of resolution or statement on the Spirit of Prophecy (different terminology was used) was a regular at Sessions. Other wordings include, e.g., 1985, “Statement on the Spirit of Prophecy”; 1990 “Resolution on the Spirit of Prophecy”; 1995 “Statement of Confidence in the Spirit of Prophecy.”

The 1980 Session voted a “Statement on Prophetic Guidance for the Remnant Church,” and that wording goes beyond the Spirit of Prophecy, at least in theory; and it concluded: “We, the delegates . . . reaffirm our confidence in the prophetic guidance so graciously provided by the unfailing Word of God and the counsels from the pen of Ellen G. White.” This could thus be seen as being about the Bible

as well as about Ellen White’s writings, but the statement is overwhelmingly about the latter, so I don’t see this really as being a statement about the Bible.

The 2000 Session voted to adopt a “Resolution on the Gift of Prophecy through the Ministry of Ellen G. White,” but when it was brought for discussion, it prompted requests from the floor “that a resolution be prepared supporting the Bible.” This was referred to the Session planning committee which brought back a proposed “Resolution on Scripture” later in the 2000 Session, which was then approved, so the **GC Session in 2000 is the start of a resolution on the Bible.**

At subsequent GC Sessions, both items were voted:

- the 2005 Session voted a “Resolution on the Holy Bible” and a “Resolution on the Spirit of Prophecy.”

- the 2010 Session voted a “Resolution on the Holy Bible” and a “Resolution on the Spirit of Prophecy as Manifested in the Ministry and Writings of Ellen G. White.”

- the 2015 Session voted a “Resolution on the Holy Bible” and a “Statement of Confidence in the Writings of Ellen G. White.”

- the Session in 2022 voted a “Resolution on the Holy Bible” and a “Statement of Confidence in the Writings of Ellen G. White.”

In Summary

Some kind of resolution or statement on the Spirit of Prophecy dates back to 1946 (recognizing that more specific resolutions about the EGW writings were not uncommon in the early days of small, annual sessions); and the resolution on the Bible dates back to 2000.



The 2000 GC Session in Toronto, Canada, was the first to vote a resolution on the Bible.

The following RESOLUTION ON THE HOLY BIBLE was voted by the General Conference Executive Committee at its 2019 Annual Council, recommending it to the 61st General Conference Session, where it was subsequently voted on June 11, 2022.



RECOMMENDED, To approve the Resolution on the Holy Bible, which reads as follows:

RESOLUTION ON THE HOLY BIBLE

As delegates to the 2022 General Conference Session in St Louis, Missouri, we express our conviction that the Bible is the inspired and revealed Word of God. Through the Holy Scriptures, God has revealed Himself and His will to humanity. The whole Bible is inspired and must be understood as a whole in order to arrive at correct conclusions as to the truth on any revealed topic. The Bible is reliable in what it affirms. Its record of creation in six literal days, the fall of human beings, a global flood to destroy wickedness and preserve a remnant, Christ's earthly life, death, and resurrection, as well as God's numerous interventions in history for the salvation of human beings are trustworthy reports of God's acts in history (Luke 24:27; Heb 1:1, 2; 2 Pet 1:21). Prophetically, the fulfillment of predicted events in accordance with prophetic time periods establishes confidence in the Bible as a unique witness to divine truth unlike any other religious book (Isa 46:9, 10; Dan 2, 7, 8; Luke 24:44; 2 Pet 1:19, 20).

We believe that the Bible is the prophetic Word of God and through the prophets of the Old Testament, the apostles of the New Testament, and especially through His Son, Jesus Christ, God has revealed how He will act for the salvation of human beings and execute judgment on wickedness.

We commit ourselves to prayerfully study and follow the Bible, the living and effective Word of God. It is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness. It stands forever as a witness to God's will, His law, His thoughts, and His purposes for human beings and for our world, and contains the treasures of eternal wisdom and grace (Isa 40:8; 1 Thess 2:13; 2 Tim 3:16, 17). Its principles and teachings are applicable in all times, all places, all languages, and all cultures for all people. It speaks credibly and relevantly today as it has in the past and will continue to speak as long as time shall last.

We also believe that the Bible leads us to a living relationship with God through Jesus Christ. And by the Holy Spirit the Bible speaks directly to each person to reveal the plan of salvation and restore believers into the image of God. Thus, the Bible stands as the norm for all religious experience inasmuch as it reveals and teaches the truth and explains how its effects are manifested on the intellect, feelings, and affections (Heb 4:12; Gal 5:22-23).

We express our deep gratitude to the Lord because in the Scriptures we find hope to live amidst the challenges of the world. The Bible tells of God's plan to bestow immortality on His people at the second coming of Christ and ultimately, after the millennium in heaven, to put an end to sin and sinners forever and establish righteousness in the new earth (Ps 119:105; Rom 15:4; Heb 4:12; James 1:18).



The following STATEMENT OF CONFIDENCE IN THE WRITINGS OF ELLEN G. WHITE was voted by the General Conference Executive Committee at its 2019 Annual Council, recommending it to the 61st General Conference Session, where it was subsequently voted on June 11, 2022.

RECOMMENDED, To approve the Statement of Confidence in the Writings of Ellen G White, which reads as follows:

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENCE IN THE WRITINGS OF ELLEN G WHITE

As delegates to the 2022 General Conference Session in St Louis, Missouri, we express our deep gratitude for God’s prophetic guidance of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Aiming to live “by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God” (Matt 4:4, NKJV; cf. Luke 10:16), we take seriously the biblical passages that teach the abiding nature of the gift of prophecy (Rom 12:6; 1 Cor 12:10, 28; Eph 4:11-14) and promise its end-time manifestation (Joel 2:28-31; Rev 12:17; 19:10; 22:9). We recognize the gift of prophecy in the life and ministry of Ellen G White (1827-1915).

We believe that the writings of Ellen G White were inspired by the Holy Spirit and are Christ centered and Bible based. Rather than replacing Scripture, they uplift its normative character, safeguard the Church from “every wind of doctrine” (Eph 4:14), and offer an inspired guide to Bible passages without exhausting their meaning or preventing further study. They also help us to overcome the human tendency to accept from the Bible what we like and to distort or disregard what we do not like.

We commit ourselves to prayerfully study the writings of Ellen G White with hearts willing to follow the counsels and instructions found therein. Whether individually, in the family, in small groups, in the classroom, or in the church, we believe that the study of her writings brings us closer to God and His infallible Word—the Scriptures—providing us a transforming and faith-uplifting experience.

We rejoice in the Lord for what has already been accomplished in the global and local circulation of the writings of Ellen G White in both printed and electronic formats, including egwwritings.org and related apps. We encourage the continued development of both worldwide and local strategies to foster the circulation and study of her writings in as many languages as possible. The study of these writings is a powerful means to strengthen and prepare God’s people to face the challenges of these last days as we approach Christ’s soon return.

POWER IN THE WORD OF GOD

The Bible contains all the principles that men need to understand in order to be fitted either for this life or for the life to come. And these principles may be understood by all. No one with a spirit to appreciate its teaching can read a single passage from the Bible without gaining from it some helpful thought. But the most valuable teaching of the Bible is not to be gained by occasional or disconnected study. Its great system of truth is not so presented as to be discerned by the hasty or careless reader. . . .

The truths that go to make up the great whole must be searched out and gathered up, "here a little, and there a little." Isaiah 28:10. . . .

Every principle in the word of God has its place, every fact its bearing. And the complete structure, in design and execution, bears testimony to its Author. Such a structure no mind but that of the Infinite could conceive or fashion. . . .

As a means of intellectual training, the Bible is more effective than any other book, or all other books combined. The greatness of its themes, the dignified simplicity of its utterances, the beauty of its imagery,

quicken and uplift the thoughts as nothing else can. No other study can impart such mental power as does the effort to grasp the stupendous truths of revelation. The mind thus brought in contact with the thoughts of the Infinite cannot but expand and strengthen. . . .

He who with sincere and teachable spirit studies God's word, seeking to comprehend its truths, will be brought in touch with its Author; and, except by his own choice, there is no limit to the possibilities of his development. . . .

The creative energy that called the worlds into existence is in the word of God. This word imparts power; it begets life. Every command is a promise; accepted by the will, received into the soul, it brings with it the life of the Infinite One. It transforms the nature and re-creates the soul in the image of God.

The life thus imparted is in like manner sustained. "By every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4) shall man live.

The mind, the soul, is built up by that upon which it feeds; and it rests with us to determine upon what it shall be fed.

—*From Education, pp. 123-124, 126*





Delegates to the 2022 General Conference Session use their computers and phones to vote. [Josef Kissinger/AR]

PLANS VOTED FOR 62ND GC SESSION

Feedback from 61st Session Made Impact

By Rachel Ashworth, ANN*

The General Conference Executive Committee met on August 9, 2022. The main agenda item was to discuss and determine the direction of the 62nd General Conference Session set to be held in St. Louis, Missouri, in 2025.

In consultation with division and attached field officers, the Executive Committee adopted a four-part plan that will see the General Conference Session continue as a 10-day event.

The motion, voted and accepted during the Executive Committee, reads as follows:

“Due to the General Conference Executive Committee action taken on March 19, 2020, (GCC 2-7) the General Conference administration, in consultation with division and attached field officers, reviewed the configuration of the postponed 2020 General Conference Session when

it convened in 2022, and is making the following recommendations regarding the 2025 General Conference Session.

To adopt the following plans for the 2025 General Conference Session:

1. That the initial dates of July 3-12, 2025, be kept for the 2025 General Conference Session to take place in St. Louis, Missouri, USA.
2. That the 2025 General Conference Session be held as an on-site event. A hybrid event will only be considered if there are world conditions such as a global public health issue that would preclude an on-site event.
3. That a limited number of special guests be invited to the 2025 General Conference Session.

4. That both the exhibits/booths and ancillary meetings be reintroduced to the 2025 General Conference Session.

Hensley Mooroooven, General Conference undersecretary, explains that the four items pertaining to the 2025 General Conference Session “were based on information gleaned from several debriefing sessions and backed by data collected from the survey administered to the General Conference Session delegates who served in 2022.” Mooroooven continued, “We want our delegates to know that they were heard.”

According to the survey in which 58 percent of delegates responded, the most significant factor which prevented their attendance at business sessions was the overcrowded schedule during GC Session 2022. As the business

sessions are a necessary component of GC Session, this had to be addressed in the planning process.

The second major factor preventing attendance at business sessions was the experience of jet lag many of our international delegates experienced. Returning to the ten-day session event will allow them time to adjust to local time zones and a more reasonable schedule. These changes will enable the delegates to better focus on the business sessions while also enjoying the event's social, spiritual, and service aspects.

IMPACT ON DELEGATES AND MEMBERS

Moving forward with an in-person event allows the exhibition hall to be brought back for delegates,

their families, and visitors to enjoy. Exhibit hall visitors will enjoy learning more about their favorite ministries and organizations while discovering new resources and information from around the world.

With the exhibition hall and ancillary meetings reintroduced, attendees will have the added benefit of the camp meeting experience of sessions past. Mooroooven commented, "GC Session is a place to conduct the church's business, and it is also a huge camp meeting. The ancillary meetings give us this exquisite balance between the business meetings and the camp meeting experience."

These ancillary meetings include training sessions, musical performances, and special programs

hosted by ministries providing specific programming to women, children, families, and more. Combined with the prayer room and worship programs, these ancillary meetings add a necessary spiritual aspect to the otherwise business-focused gathering.

As a ten-day event, members will have many opportunities to attend business sessions, special ancillary programming, and worship services throughout the weeks and two weekends at The Dome at America's Center. Members are encouraged to make plans to attend by saving the dates: July 3-12, 2025.

*Adapted from ANN article, "62nd General Conference Session Set for July 3-12, 2025," Aug. 18, 2022, adventist.news/news/gc-session-2025-decision.



Conducting the Business of God's Church: Rules of Order Provide Structure

Welcome to new and returning members of the General Conference (GC) Executive Committee. We appreciate your service as dedicated committee members to the Lord and His Church.

What follows is a helpful guide regarding the *General Conference Rules of Order: Procedural Rules for Meetings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church*, 6th edition. While every GC Executive Committee member should have received a copy of this booklet, published in English, Spanish, French, and Portuguese, we hope the following Q & A will provide a quick overview regarding the history and purpose of these rules. The answers are taken directly from the *General Conference Rules of Order* booklet.

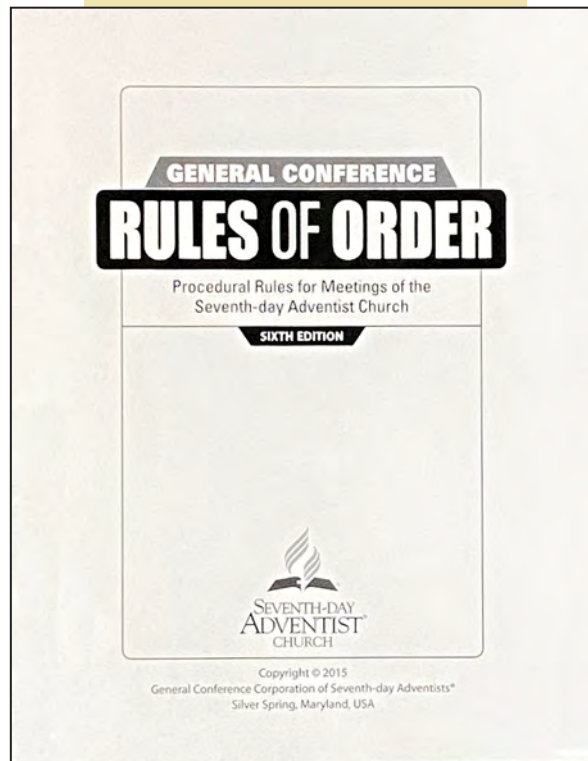
When were the GC Rules of Order established?

At the 1985 General Conference Session in New Orleans, a number of delegates expressed the desire for more precise and written rules of order for General Conference Sessions. In harmony with the wishes of the Session, the General Conference Executive Committee subsequently appointed a subcommittee to study the matter and draw up such rules of procedure.

What was the purpose?

In its work, this committee was guided by the desire to prepare rules of order for the Church which are in harmony with the Spirit of Prophecy instruction and Seventh-day Adventist policy and reflect a sensible approach to session and committee efficiency based on tried and true working methods.

The purpose of this short compendium of rules of order is to guide church leaders and other participants



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[The purpose] is to guide church leaders and other participants so that the work of church sessions and committees can move along smoothly, expeditiously, and fairly.

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Who approved the GC Rules of Order?

The General Conference Executive Committee ratified the work of the subcommittee and the *General Conference Rules of Order* were approved. The current edition was updated for the 2015 General Conference Session to assure consistency with the rules and for clarity.

What is the aim of these rules?

A fundamental aim of these rules is to facilitate the participation by delegates and committee members in discussions and debates, and in the decision-making process. Rules of procedure are set up to facilitate free participation and are not set in theological concrete.

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The Church is a voluntary society of those who have accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. She is the body of Christ. She is not a parliamentary body, a political forum, a service club, or a business corporation. When Seventh-day Adventists meet to transact the business of the Church, they are meeting with God. In the final analysis, it is the Holy Spirit who leads and guides.



How does the Church differ from political or governmental bodies in doing business?

The Church is a voluntary society of those who have accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. She is the body of Christ. She is not a parliamentary body, a political forum, a service club, or a business corporation. When Seventh-day Adventists meet to transact the business of the Church, they are meeting with God. In the final analysis, it is the Holy Spirit who leads and guides.

“If your committee meetings and council meetings,” wrote Ellen G. White, “are not under the direct supervision of the Spirit of God, your conclusions will be earth-born, and worthy of no more consideration than are any man’s expressions” (Letter 81, 1896, pp. 8, 9).

The delegates at church sessions and especially the General Conference Session are legislating, not to satisfy personal or party interests, not to cater to nationalistic or regional ambitions, but to work “for time and eternity” and participate in the divine mission for the salvation of the world (see 7T, pp. 258, 259). Delegates and committee members are warned against a spirit of selfishness, self-exaltation, and pomposity in council and committee meetings (see Ms. 29, 1895, p. 8).

What is the main purpose of church sessions and committee meetings?

The overarching concern of church sessions and committees is to discover and understand God’s will regarding the issues, plans, and appointments to be considered. In the light of this purpose, the object of rules of order is to facilitate accomplishing the will of God.

How are the GC Rules of Order to be used?

These rules of order are intended to be used with a sense of reverence for the divine purpose. They are not intended to provide for quick or dilatory parliamentary maneuvers to gain a point, gain undeserved attention, gain advantage by suppressing the wishes of others, or to confuse the chair, fellow delegates, or committee members. These rules should not be used in such a way as to become an excuse for procedural wrangling which could keep sessions or committees from moving forward with dispatch. Ellen G. White counsels that there should be “constant effort for brevity in business meetings” (Ms 3, 1890, p. 9).

As a member of the GC Executive Committee, if you have not yet received a copy of the *General Conference Rules of Order*, contact the office of the GC Secretariat.

Coming Up at the 2022 Annual Council

- 
- The LEAD (Leadership and Development) Conference, coordinated by GC Secretariat and Treasury
 - Orientation for new GC Executive Committee members
 - GC Executive Secretary's Report
 - GC Treasurer's Report
 - New Initiative Featured: "Back to the Altar"
 - *I Will Go* strategic plan reports from IAD, ESD, EUD, CHUM, and two Global Mission Centers. Other GC Divisions and Global Mission Centers will present at upcoming Annual Councils
 - Three Angels' Messages feature
 - Appointments to be voted:
 - Director of the Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research
 - Director and Associate Directors of the Biblical Research Institute
 - Director and Research Scientists of the Geoscience Research Institute
 - Editors and Associate Editors for the "principal denominational journals prepared at the General Conference" (GC Constitution, Article VII)
 - Membership of standing committees and various operating boards which have been established and filled by GC Executive Committee appointment
 - Regular constituency meetings for Hope Channel, Adventist World Radio, and ADRA (Adventist Development and Relief Agency)
 - Advent Health report and more

WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH REVEAL?*

Because most Seventh-day Adventists choose a healthier lifestyle than the general public, the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH) funded research on the health habits of Adventists (known as the Adventist Health Study).

Loma Linda University is conducting the Adventist Health Study 2, funded by NIH, which includes more than 90,000 members throughout North America.

Earlier studies found that Adventists as a group have less heart disease, lower rates of many cancers, and live significantly longer than the general population. The first Adventist Health Study revealed a number of significant findings:

Researchers found five lifestyle behaviors among Adventists that increased longevity by up to 10 years:

- Not smoking
- Eating a plant-based diet
- Eating nuts most days of the week
- Getting regular physical activity
- Maintaining a healthy body weight

The Adventist Health Study-2 has observed additional health advantages of a primarily plant-based diet. Compared to non-vegetarians, Adventist vegetarians have:

- Less obesity (weighing on average about 30 pounds less than non-vegetarians).
- Less diabetes (about a 55 percent lower rate).
- Less hypertension (a 42 percent lower rate).
- Lower cholesterol levels (about a 55 percent lower rate).
- Less cancer (about half the rate for colon cancer).
- Less heart disease (a 30-50 percent lower rate for heart attacks).
- Lower total mortality (a 12 percent lower risk of death from any cause based on the latest research).

If you haven't already done so, now is a great time to consider eating a plant-based diet!

* From *Adventists and Health Living*, booklet produced by Adventist Health Ministries.



TEARS OF JOY IN MONGOLIA

By Andrew McChesney

Mongolia Mission president SukHee Han, right, and a local Mongolian pastor, L. MunkhOrgil, raise a newly baptized believer out of the water as GC president Ted N.C. Wilson watches on Sabbath, August 27, 2022, at a youth camp on the outskirts of Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. [HENRY STOBER]



Tears filled Joanne Kim's eyes as she watched the first three Mongolians get baptized and join the fledgling Seventh-day Adventist Church in Mongolia in 1993.

Her eyes again filled with tears as she watched 155 Mongolians get baptized on August 27 on the 30th anniversary of the first church that she helped plant in Mongolia.

"As one of the pioneer missionaries who helped plant the Adventist Church in Mongolia, I remember the first baptism and many of the following ones, and I'm always tearful and joyful when we hold a baptism," said Kim, an American who attended the baptismal ceremony at a youth camp on the outskirts of Mongolia's capital, Ulaanbaatar.

The baptisms capped August 20-27 evangelistic meetings at 21 sites across the remote country as General Conference president Ted N.C. Wilson, Kim, and hundreds of other church members celebrated the 30th anniversary of the first Adventist church plant in September 1992 with a whirlwind of activities, including visits with Mongolia's deputy prime minister and the U.S. ambassador to Mongolia.

The anniversary celebrations also offered a welcome boost in morale for a church that has struggled amid COVID-19 restrictions and a decline in crucial financial support from abroad, church leaders said.

Wilson, making the second visit by a General Conference president to Mongolia since Robert S. Folkenberg conducted the first three baptisms in October 1993, expressed joy at seeing God's power first-hand in Mongolia.

"What a privilege it has been to get acquainted with our people and God's work in Mongolia and to see the increase from no members in 1992 to about 3,200 members and several institutions by 2022," said Wilson, who led one of the 21 evangelistic meetings with his wife, Nancy.

"Despite the 10/40 Window setting with a very small minority of Christians in the country, God is blessing the strong work of Seventh-day Adventists to grow and proclaim the three angels' messages," he said.

TOUGH BEGINNINGS

Adventists first brought the gospel to Mongolia in the 1920s, but there was no Adventist presence in the country in the post-communist days of the early 1990s, when Kim joined fellow American missionaries Cathie (Jolly) Hartman and her husband, Brad, who had arrived earlier.

"Life was much harder back in the early 1990s," said Kim, now education director of the Adventist Church's Mongolia Mission.

Amid financial and other difficulties, the efforts by Kim, the Jollys, and others bore fruit with the planting of the first church with the three baptisms in 1993. Kim said that the early church, although small in size, was large in love for God and self-sacrifice. She and her husband, Jon, a dentist, hope that the 2022 anniversary celebrations help rekindle a similar spirit in the post-COVID era.

"I pray for that spirit of unity and self-sacrifice to be renewed in today's much larger church organization," she said in an interview. "Jon and I want to bring back the spirit of the early church from the 1990s."

To read the rest of the story, visit: bit.ly/AdventistsMongolia



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1 Students and staff at Holbrook Indian School in **Holbrook, Arizona**, recently mourned the tragic death of student Kiarra Alma Gordon, 17. Gordon was killed and six others injured in an accident August 28, involving the Holbrook school bus and a semi-truck. The bus, transporting staff and students on a field trip to New Mexico, was hit by the semi-truck from behind and pushed into the vehicle in front. Holbrook Indian School is a first- through twelfth-grade boarding academy providing Native American children and youth a safe place to live, learn, and grow for more than 75 years. The school is operated by the Pacific Union Conference.

2 What started as a dispensary in Cap-Haïtien, in the northern region of **Haiti** more than 12 years ago, has grown into a clinic providing healthcare services to hundreds of people every month. The dispensary was originally created by a

group of health professionals and church member volunteers from Puerto Rico who provided medical supplies after the 2010 earthquake. Today, the dispensary, renamed Galaad Healthcare Center, has a staff of five, including a medical doctor, two nurses, an accountant, and a pharmacist.

3 The Seventh-day Adventist Church in **Alcântara, Brazil**, has intentionally embraced the Adventist Possibility Ministries mindset in encouraging accessibility for all. Members are encouraged to take a LIBRAS (Brazilian Sign Language) class to better facilitate communication with deaf people both within and outside of the church. Earlier this year, two deaf young people and an autistic youth were part of a group of eight baptized at the Alcântara church.

4 Approximately 200 Pathfinders from Poland and Ukraine enjoyed

camping together at the Waszeta Recreation Centre in the picturesque region of **Mazury, Poland**. Sponsored by the Polish Union, local Adventist churches, and the Polish Children’s Aid Foundation, the young people enjoyed a full range of summer camp activities. The camp ended with the baptism of 18 Ukrainian teens.

5 Following devastating floods in **Pakistan**, ADRA emergency response teams are on the ground performing needs assessments and providing food packages and other supplies to help the vulnerable. In addition, ADRA is collaborating with **Karachi** Adventist Hospital to ensure communities have access to medical care.

6 The Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division (SID) launched an Adventist World Radio online radio

station earlier this year at the Division headquarters in **Centurion, South Africa**. Powered by SIDmedia, the station is seen as a “game changer in evangelism” and complements the “I Will Go” strategic plan. The station’s programming features live broadcasts and interviews in addition to its regular programs.

7 A specialist at the **Sydney** Adventist Hospital in **Australia** is leading a project using 3D print technology to assist children with ear deformity. The innovative project, called NEW EARS (iNtegrated nEtWorks for Ear Additive Reconstructive Science), is an Australian first for hybrid bio-printed ear reconstruction, achieved by integrating the science of 3D printing, cell biology, and materials engineering. This new technology, which is in the testing phase promises to offer hope for many.