

Official press release from the
World Headquarters of the
Seventh-day Adventist® Church

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

70,000 Seventh-day Adventists Expected at 2010 World Session in Atlanta, Georgia

Silver Spring, Maryland, United States ... The world session of the Seventh-day Adventist Church will bring additional international flavor to the already diverse city of Atlanta, Georgia, business meeting planners said.

"Atlanta is well known for its rich cultural diversity, heritage, and Southern hospitality throughout the United States," said Sheri Clemmer, associate session meeting planner for the Adventist Church. "Atlanta has a long history of hosting national religious organizations and gatherings."

This session gathering will be representative of the more than 25 million Adventist families from around the globe, with the theme "Proclaiming God's Grace."

"Grace is a powerful, living force; it changes and animates us," said Jan Paulsen, president for the Adventist world church. "When God's grace reaches into our lives – and into the life of our church – it's impossible to go on with business as usual. It opens our eyes to needs around us; it compels us to go into our communities. By focusing on this theme, we're acknowledging that the experience of grace is absolutely central in the life of each believer, and we're asking: 'How can we as Seventh-day Adventists reflect more clearly its depth, breadth, and transforming power?'"

The Session, scheduled for June 23 to July 3, is primarily a business meeting for the global Adventist Church. Denominational leaders are elected, church business is attended to, and policy decisions are made. Because the core "business" of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ, that challenge will permeate activities at the Atlanta 2010 convocation, Paulsen said.

"This coming session in Atlanta will be known for its creative use of technology and its strong presence in the media," said Rajmund Dabrowski, director of Communication for the Adventist Church. "We want the Atlanta community to feel and know that the Seventh-day Adventists are in town, and we are hoping this session will break all records for attendance," Dabrowski added.

Organized by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, the administrative body of the world church, the quinquennial world session will be the 59th for the denomination since 1863.

The Atlanta convocation marks the second time Adventists have held a worldwide gathering in the United States in 20 years. Daily attendance at the event is expected to average more than 35,000 people; on the two weekends, more than 70,000 are expected to attend.

Some 2,400 voting delegates from all over the world will gather at the Georgia Dome in downtown Atlanta to participate in meetings that will determine many of the church's administrative actions for the next half decade. They will receive reports on the church's growth in those parts of the world where the Christian message is reaching the unreached, and have the opportunity to meet fellow believers and church workers from other world regions.



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Hundreds of personnel will assist Session managers George Egwakhe and Sheri Clemmer in staging the event. The world church will be working with leaders from its North American region as well as the staff at the Georgia Dome and Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta, to handle the logistics involved in bringing delegates and visitors to the event, as well as housing and feeding them. As during previous events, Session participants will eat at what might be the largest vegetarian restaurant in operation.

Evening meetings will include international programs, featuring reports from all over the world. These reports will be translated into 15 different languages, as well as American Sign Language for the hearing impaired. Other special events associated with the Session will aim at creating a global awareness and sensitivity to the world community, which is a part of the Adventist mission to the world. In the exhibitor hall, church departments and entities will host booths and interactive displays. Exhibitors include the Adventist Development and Relief Agency, Women's Ministries, Adventist colleges and universities from around the world and many more.

Organizers are planning to use the media to bring the Atlanta 2010 event to viewers of Hope Channel (www.hopetv.org) and listeners of the Atlanta 2010 Today podcast, as well as other Web-based media. Regular reports will be available to Session delegates and church members around the world through the church's weekly magazine, Adventist Review, and the worldwide press coverage of the Adventist News Network.

The meetings are open to the general public. More information can be found at www.gcsession.org.

Around the world, the Adventist Church is among the fastest-growing denominations today. Adventists are present in 204 of the 232 countries and areas recognized by the United Nations, and communicate in more than 880 languages through print and audio ministries. Adventists operate one of the largest Protestant educational networks in the world, with 7,500 elementary through university-level schools worldwide, and nearly 1.6 million students enrolled. Of those, 107 are colleges and universities.

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