Jesus is coming! Get involved!
61st Session of the General Conference of Seventh-Day Adventists

June 6-11, 2022

The Dome
America’s Center
Convention Complex

St. Louis, Missouri
NOTICE

The 61st Session of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists is being livestreamed on the internet and recorded for internal and archival purposes. Any other recording is unauthorized.
61st Session of the
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INFORMATION FOR YOUR SAFETY AND SECURITY

Although it is unlikely that a major crisis would disrupt the General Conference Session (GCS), it is always a possibility when thousands of people are gathered together. We rely on God’s protective power and prepare with the Holy Spirit’s guidance. Please note that the America’s Center Dome will be referred to as “ACD” and the America’s Center Convention Center will be referred to as “ACCC.”

EMERGENCIES – ACD and ACCC: (314) 342-5081

BUILDING EVACUATION PROCEDURES

Building management handles all evacuation procedures. Listen for public address announcements and follow the instructions given. Help others near you if they do not understand English.

LOST & FOUND

Lost & Found is located in the Security Dispatch Office, Room 182.

MEETING POINT

Each family should determine a designated meeting point in the ACD and in the ACCC should they become separated.

PERSONAL SECURITY

1. Please note that the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, General Conference Session Management, the America’s Center Dome, and the America’s Center Convention Center are not responsible for the safety of your family. Keep your children in your care at all times.
2. Stay out of surrounding bodies of water found in fountains, ponds, and/or similar. These bodies of water are not for recreational purposes.
3. As you leave the ACD or ACCC remove your badge, as the badge will identify that you are a tourist and are unfamiliar/uncertain of the area.
4. As in any big city, use caution when walking alone at any time, day or night.
5. When returning to your hotel at night, arrange to walk with someone.
6. Use all the door locking devices your hotel offers.
7. Never open your hotel room door to anyone until you identify him/her through the peephole. If someone at your door claims to be a hotel representative and you have not called for services, call the front desk to verify their identity.
8. Do not carry large amounts of cash or valuables.
9. Do not give your hotel room number to strangers.
10. Wash your hands frequently.
11. Carry a copy of the vital information page of your passport with you at all times.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

1. If you are injured on site or need immediate medical attention, go to the First Aid Station, ACCC, Level 1, Plaza First Aid Room.
2. The Visitor and Volunteer Services team is a hospitality and public safety group that patrols downtown and assists visitors with helpful information about the city and provides emergency assistance. They will be wearing easily recognizable red shirts that say, “EXPLORE ST LOUIS”. They patrol on foot around the America’s Center Convention Complex.
3. Additional Safety & Security information is available on the General Conference Session app, GC Session 2022.

RED PHONES

In an emergency, call ACD and ACCC Dispatch (314) 342-5081.

SUSPICIOUS ITEMS

If you find suspicious items left lying in hallways or meeting rooms, call ACD and ACCC Dispatch (314) 342-5081 to report the item. Do not touch or move it and move away from the item while dialing a cell phone.

CRIME/THEFT/HARASSMENT

If someone reports they are or have been the victim of a crime, harassment, or theft, call America’s Center Public Safety Dispatch (314) 342-5081 to report the incident. Delegates and technical staff should also report the theft for claims purposes to Adventist Risk Management (240) 472-9678 ACCC, Level 1, Room 105.

DISPATCH FOR ALL EMERGENCIES: ACD and ACCC: (314) 342-5081

ACCC Session Management: (314) 342 5501, Level 2, Room 255
ACD Session Management: (314) 342-5504 and (314) 342-5505, Level 1, Room 143-144
MEDICAL EMERGENCIES: ACD and ACCC: (314) 342-5081
911: Use in emergencies OUTSIDE of the ACD or ACCC

“IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING.”
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TECHNOLOGY INFORMATION

Secure Wireless

A secure wireless (Wi-Fi) has been provided for the delegates in the delegate seating area in the Dome, as well as in the Nominating Committee rooms in the Convention Center. This Wi-Fi connection is solely for delegate business use, for voting and receiving electronic materials. The Wi-Fi password will be sent to you by email. Please do not share it.

Unsecured Wireless

A free, unsecured wireless (Wi-Fi) is provided for guests throughout the Dome and Convention Center. No password is required for this Wi-Fi connection.

Portable Power Bank

A portable power bank has been provided to extend the power for your electronic devices. Please note the instructions included in the box that you will receive during on-site registration.

GC Session Event App

A specially developed GC Session app contains the program guide, business session agenda, maps, transportation information, food menus, emergency information, virtual exhibitor information, etc. This app, called GC Session 2022, is downloadable from the Apple and Android stores.
MICROPHONE STATION INSTRUCTIONS

FOR ON-SITE DELEGATES

To Address the Chairperson

1. Approach the attendant at the nearest microphone station.
2. Give the attendant your badge (they will keep it until you leave the line).
3. You may speak when you are acknowledged by the chairperson.
4. When you have finished speaking, the attendant will return your badge to you.

Note: If you would like to leave the line before speaking, tell the attendant who will return your badge to you.

To Raise a Point of Order

1. Approach the attendant at the nearest microphone station.
2. Tell the attendant you desire to raise a point of order.
3. Give the attendant your badge (they will keep it until you leave the microphone).
4. You may speak when you are acknowledged by the chairperson.
5. When you have finished speaking, the attendant will return your badge to you.

Note: If you would like to withdraw your point of order before speaking, tell the attendant who will return your badge to you.

FOR ONLINE DELEGATES

Specific instructions will be given to online delegates on how to address the chairperson should they wish to speak or raise a point of order. This information will be made available on the General Conference Session website and on Zoom ten minutes prior to the beginning of program each morning.
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OFFICER ASSIGNMENTS FOR
BUSINESS MEETINGS

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Chair</th>
<th>Secretary</th>
<th>Editor</th>
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<td>Monday, June 6</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10:00 am - 12:30 pm</td>
<td>Artur A Stele</td>
<td>Gerson P Santos</td>
<td>Hensley M Moorooven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00 pm - 5:30 pm</td>
<td>Ella S Simmons</td>
<td>Karen J Porter</td>
<td>Hensley M Moorooven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:00 pm - 8:45 pm</td>
<td>Abner De los Santos</td>
<td>Claude J Richli</td>
<td>Hensley M Moorooven</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, June 7</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:15 am - 12:30 pm</td>
<td>Thomas L Lemon</td>
<td>Gerson P Santos</td>
<td>Hensley M Moorooven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00 pm - 5:30 pm</td>
<td>Guillermo E Biaggi</td>
<td>Gary D Krause</td>
<td>Hensley M Moorooven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:00 pm - 8:45 pm</td>
<td>Geoffrey G Mbwana</td>
<td>Elbert Kuhn</td>
<td>Hensley M Moorooven</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, June 8</td>
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<td>9:15 am - 12:30 pm</td>
<td>Ella S Simmons</td>
<td>Karen J Porter</td>
<td>Hensley M Moorooven</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:00 pm - 5:30 pm</td>
<td>Artur A Stele</td>
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<td>Hensley M Moorooven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:00 pm - 8:45 pm</td>
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<td>Elbert Kuhn</td>
<td>Hensley M Moorooven</td>
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<td>Thursday, June 9</td>
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<td>Guillermo E Biaggi</td>
<td>Gary D Krause</td>
<td>Hensley M Moorooven</td>
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<td>Thomas L Lemon</td>
<td>Karen J Porter</td>
<td>Hensley M Moorooven</td>
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61st Session of the
General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

GENERAL CONFERENCE SESSION MANAGEMENT

Session Manager George O Egwakhe
Associate Session Manager Silvia L Sicalo
Assistant Session Manager Sheri Clemmer

AGENDA

Agenda Development

Agenda Secretary Hensley M Moorooven
Assistant Laurie J Schmidt

Master Agenda Control Tamara K Boward

Preparation of Agenda Materials Laurie J Schmidt

MINUTES AND EDITORIAL ASSIGNMENTS

Minutes Production

Recording Secretaries Tamara K Boward
Joanne Stango

Editorial Secretary Hensley M Moorooven

Editors of Actions Gary D Krause/Elbert Kuhn/
Daisy J F Orion/Lissy Park/Magdiel E Perez Schulz/
Karen J Porter/Claude J Richli/Gerson P Santos

Minutes Approval Hensley M Moorooven/Lissy Park

61st Session of the
General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

SESSION RECORDING & SUPPORT MATERIAL

Session Transcription Director
Karen J Porter

Assistants
Muriel Bello
Gabriella Iannella
Sarah Kannanaikkel
Michael Porter

Material Distribution Coordinator
Dan E Herzel
Audiovisual Broadcast Committee
Guillermo E Biaggi, Chair

Business Center Director, Committee Room Scheduling, and Spot Announcements
Cheryl A Show

Delegate Bag Coordinator
Gerson P Santos

Interpretation Coordinator
Roger Esteves

Platform Committee
Thomas L Lemon, Chair

Program Committee
Ted N C Wilson, Chair

Projection Coordinator
Sherri Ingram-Hudgins

Registration Director
Hensley M Moorooven
Registration Coordinator
Emmi Ott
Assistant
Leticia De los Santos

Secretariat Services and Material Approval
Hensley M Moorooven
This explanation is to help you use the 61st Session of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists agenda and support material.

1. The agenda lists the items of business that are to be considered at the Business Meetings of the General Conference Session.

2. If an agenda item has support material, you will find a number at the end of the agenda title. That is the page number where the support material will be found.

3. Many agenda items have a code that precedes the agenda title. Each code has five digits followed by one or more letters. This is a computer identification code which is used to keep track of the item. You will find the same code on any corresponding support material.

4. Just above the title on the first page of the support material for each item, you will find what is known as a reference line. This line identifies the source(s) and traces the history of the item, and also shows its routing. The glossary on pages 13-15, will help you discover which organizations and committees have given prior consideration to a particular item and where it will be considered next. The series of acronyms to the left of the word “to” traces the past history of the item. To the right appear the initials of the General Conference Officer who is responsible for presenting the item. Occasionally, its future routing is suggested also.

5. If a computer identification code number appears in the reference line, it shows that the item has been considered during a previous administrative year. An administrative year extends from the close of one Annual Council to the close of the next Annual Council.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>AAIM</td>
<td>Adventist AIDS International Ministry</td>
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<td>AC</td>
<td>Annual Council</td>
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<td>ACM</td>
<td>Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries</td>
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<td>ADCOM</td>
<td>Administrative Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>ADRA</td>
<td>Adventist Development and Relief Agency</td>
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<td>AIIAS</td>
<td>Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>AM</td>
<td>Adventist Mission</td>
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<td>APM</td>
<td>Adventist Possibility Ministries</td>
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<td>ARM</td>
<td>Adventist Risk Management</td>
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<td>ASTR</td>
<td>Archives, Statistics, and Research</td>
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<td>AU</td>
<td>Andrews University</td>
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<td>AUA</td>
<td>Adventist University of Africa</td>
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<td>AVS</td>
<td>Adventist Volunteer Services</td>
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<td>AWR</td>
<td>Adventist World Radio</td>
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<td>BRI</td>
<td>Biblical Research Institute</td>
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<td>CHM</td>
<td>Children’s Ministries</td>
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<td>CHUM</td>
<td>Chinese Union Mission</td>
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<td>COM</td>
<td>Communication</td>
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<td>ECD</td>
<td>East-Central Africa Division</td>
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<td>EDU</td>
<td>Education</td>
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<td>ESD</td>
<td>Euro-Asia Division</td>
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<td>EUD</td>
<td>Inter-European Division</td>
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<td>FM</td>
<td>Family Ministries</td>
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<td>GC</td>
<td>General Conference</td>
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<td>GCAS</td>
<td>General Conference Auditing Service</td>
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<td>GCC</td>
<td>General Conference Executive Committee</td>
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<td>GCDO</td>
<td>General Conference and Division Officers</td>
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<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<td>GCS</td>
<td>General Conference Session</td>
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<tr>
<td>GRI</td>
<td>Geoscience Research Institute</td>
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<td>HCI</td>
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<td>Health Ministries</td>
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<td>HR</td>
<td>Human Resources</td>
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<td>IF</td>
<td>Israel Field</td>
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<td>IAD</td>
<td>Inter-American Division</td>
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<td>IPRS</td>
<td>International Personnel Resources and Services</td>
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<td>IWM</td>
<td>Institute of World Mission</td>
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<tr>
<td>LLU</td>
<td>Loma Linda University</td>
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<td>MENAUM</td>
<td>Middle East and North Africa Union Mission</td>
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<td>MIN</td>
<td>Ministerial Association</td>
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<td>MPPC</td>
<td>Mission Personnel Processing Committee</td>
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<td>NAD</td>
<td>North American Division</td>
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<td>NSD</td>
<td>Northern Asia-Pacific Division</td>
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<tr>
<td>OGC</td>
<td>Office of General Counsel</td>
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<td>PARL</td>
<td>Public Affairs and Religious Liberty</td>
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<td>PRE</td>
<td>Presidential</td>
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<td>PreC</td>
<td>Presidents Council (General Conference and Division Presidents)</td>
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<tr>
<td>PREXAD</td>
<td>President’s Executive Administrative Council</td>
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<td>PUB</td>
<td>Publishing Ministries</td>
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<td>RHPA</td>
<td>Review and Herald Publishing Association</td>
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<td>SAD</td>
<td>South American Division</td>
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<td>SEC</td>
<td>Secretariat</td>
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<td>SecC</td>
<td>Secretaries Council (General Conference and Division Secretaries)</td>
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<td>SID</td>
<td>Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division</td>
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<td>SM</td>
<td>Spring Meeting</td>
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<td>SPD</td>
<td>South Pacific Division</td>
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SSD  Southern Asia-Pacific Division
SSPM  Sabbath School and Personal Ministries
STW  Stewardship Ministries
SUD  Southern Asia Division
TED  Trans-European Division
TRE  Treasury
TreC  Treasurers Council (General Conference and Division Treasurers)
TRS  Planned Giving and Trust Services
UUC  Ukrainian Union Conference
WAD  West-Central Africa Division
WHT  Ellen G White Estate, Inc.
WM  Women’s Ministries
YOU  Youth Ministries
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GENERAL AGENDA

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ECK 103. Rules of Order and Parliamentarian
ECK 104. Mission Statement of the Seventh-day Adventist Church [24]
ECK 105. Adoption of the Daily Program
ECK 106. Adoption of Session Agendas
ECK 107. 115-22GS Steering Committee—General Conference Session - 2022 [25]
ECK 108. 116-22GS Standing Committees—General Conference Session - 2022 [26]
ECK 109. Appointment of the Nominating Committee
TNCW 110. President’s Report
HMM 111. 106-22GS Zimbabwe Central Union Conference, Zimbabwe East Union Conference, and Zimbabwe West Union Conference—New Union Conferences [27]
GPS 112. 107-22GS Belize Union Mission—New Union Mission [28]
GPS 113. 110-22GS Northern Ghana Union Conference—New Union Conference [29]
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<td>PHD</td>
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<td>TNCW</td>
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<td>General Conference Corporation Members Meeting (2:00 pm, Wednesday, June 8, 2022)</td>
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<td>TNCW</td>
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<td>General Conference Corporation Members Meeting (2:00 pm, Thursday, June 9, 2022)</td>
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HMM 202. 207-22GSE  Departments and Associations—Directors/Secretaries, Associates, and Assistants - Constitution and Bylaws Editorial Amendment (Bylaws Article X) [37]

HMM 203. 211-22GSE  Use of “Telephone Conference” - Constitution and Bylaws Editorial Directive [38]

HMM 204. 208-22GS  General Conference Undersecretary and Associate Secretaries - Constitution and Bylaws Amendment (Bylaws Article IV) [39]

HMM 205. 209-22GS  General Conference Undertreasurer and Associate Treasurers - Constitution and Bylaws Amendment (Bylaws Article V) [40]

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HMM 207. 205-22GS  General Conference Executive Committee - Constitution and Bylaws Amendment (Bylaws Article XIII) [43]

HMM 208. 202-22GSa  General Conference Sessions - Constitution and Bylaws Amendment (Constitution Article V) [46]

HMM 209. 202-22GSb  Session Committees - Constitution and Bylaws Amendment (Bylaws Article II) [48]

HMM 210. 206-22GSa  Director of Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research - Constitution and Bylaws Amendment (Bylaws Article XII) [50]

HMM 211. 206-22GSEb  Appointment - Constitution and Bylaws Editorial Amendment (Constitution Article VII) [51]

HMM 212. 210-22GS  Use of “Union Mission” and “Local Mission” - Constitution and Bylaws Directive [52]
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302. East-Central Africa Division Elected Staff
303. Euro-Asia Division Elected Staff
304. Inter-American Division Elected Staff
305. Inter-European Division Elected Staff
306. North American Division Elected Staff
307. Northern Asia-Pacific Division Elected Staff
308. South American Division Elected Staff
309. South Pacific Division Elected Staff
310. Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division Elected Staff
311. Southern Asia Division Elected Staff
312. Southern Asia-Pacific Division Elected Staff
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314. West-Central Africa Division Elected Staff
315. General Conference Corporation Board of Directors
316. General Conference Auditing Service Board
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<td>GPS</td>
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<td>Meetings (Church Board and its Meetings) - <em>Church Manual Amendment</em> (CM 131) [57]</td>
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<td>GPS</td>
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<td>Ordination Service for Deaconesses - <em>Church Manual Amendment</em> (CM 78) [60]</td>
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<td>To Foster Bible Study, Prayer, and a Relationship with Jesus (Elders) - <em>Church Manual Amendment</em> (CM 75) [68]</td>
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<td>Relationship to the Pastor (Elders) - <em>Church Manual Amendment</em> (CM 73-74) [69]</td>
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<td>412. 436-22GSa</td>
<td>Nominating Committee and the Election Process - <em>Church Manual Amendment</em> (CM 110-113) [70]</td>
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<td>GPS</td>
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<td>Term of Office - <em>Church Manual Amendment</em> (CM 72) [73]</td>
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<td>GPS</td>
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<td>Use of “Reelect” - <em>Church Manual Directive</em> [74]</td>
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22GCS Church Manual Agenda

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GPS 416. 437-22GSb  
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GPS 417. 437-22GSc  
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SATISFACTION OF CONSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

In compliance with the General Conference Constitution, Article V, Sec. 1, the following notice appears in the February online edition, and the March, April, May, and June print editions of *Adventist Review* and *Adventist World*.

**2022 GENERAL CONFERENCE SESSION**

Official notice is hereby given that the postponed sixty-first session of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists will be held June 6-11, 2022, in the America’s Center in St. Louis, Missouri, United States. The first meeting will begin at 8:00 am, June 6, 2022. All duly accredited delegates are urged to be present at that time. This Session will also be accessible for delegates remotely by electronic means.

**Ted N C Wilson,** General Conference President  
**Erton C Köhler,** General Conference Secretary
MISSION STATEMENT
OF THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

Our Mission—Make disciples of Jesus Christ who live as His loving witnesses and proclaim to all people the everlasting gospel of the Three Angels’ Messages in preparation for His soon return (Matt 28:18-20, Acts 1:8, Rev 14:6-12).

Our Method—Guided by the Bible and the Holy Spirit, Seventh-day Adventists pursue this mission through Christ-like living, communicating, discipling, teaching, healing, and serving.

Our Vision—In harmony with Bible revelation, Seventh-day Adventists see as the climax of God’s plan the restoration of all His creation to full harmony with His perfect will and righteousness.
RECOMMENDED, To approve the 2022 General Conference Session Steering Committee, as follows:

STEERING

Ted N C Wilson, Chair
Hensley M Moorooven, Secretary

Members: Kyoshin Ahn, Timothy H Aka, Stanley E Arco, Guillermo E Biaggi, Mario A Brito, G Alexander Bryant, Sheri Clemmer, Abner De los Santos, Paul H Douglas, Karnik Doukmetzian, George O Egwakhe, Larry R Evans, Mark A Finley, Elie Henry, Raafat A Kamal, Mikhail F Kaminskiy, Si Young Kim, Ertom C Kohler, Gary D Krause, Elbert Kuhn, Ezras Lakra, Thomas L Lemon, German A Lust, Solomon Maphosa, Geoffrey G Mbwana,

Invitees: Tamara K Boward, Williams S Costa Jr, William M Knott
RECOMMENDED, To approve standing committees for the 2022 General Conference Session, as follows:

**CHURCH MANUAL**

Guillermo E Biaggi, Chair
Abner De los Santos, Vice-chair
Gerson P Santos, Secretary
Tamara K Boward, Recording Secretary


**CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS**

Ted N C Wilson, Chair
Geoffrey G Mbwana, Vice-chair
Hensley M Mooroven, Secretary
Laurie J Schmidt, Recording Secretary


Invitee: Tamara K Boward.

106-22GS  ZIMBABWE CENTRAL UNION CONFERENCE, ZIMBABWE EAST UNION CONFERENCE, AND ZIMBABWE WEST UNION CONFERENCE—NEW UNION CONFERENCES

RECOMMENDED, 1. To recognize and record the reorganization of the former Zimbabwe Union Conference into three union conferences known as the Zimbabwe Central Union Conference, the Zimbabwe East Union Conference, and the Zimbabwe West Union Conference, effective January 1, 2018.

2. To accept the Zimbabwe Central Union Conference (SID) into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

3. To accept the Zimbabwe East Union Conference (SID) into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

4. To accept the Zimbabwe West Union Conference (SID) into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
RECOMMENDED,

1. To recognize and record union mission status for the Belize Union of Churches Mission, effective October 13, 2019.

2. To accept the Belize Union Mission (IAD) into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
ADCOM/ADCOM/GCDO21AC/21AC/139-21GS to GPS-22GCS

110-22GS  NORTHERN GHANA UNION CONFERENCE—NEW UNION CONFERENCE

RECOMMENDED,

1. To recognize and record union conference status for the Northern Ghana Union Mission, effective October 10, 2021.

2. To accept the Northern Ghana Union Conference (WAD) into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
2 105-21GS to CJR-22GCS
3
4 105-22GS  NETHERLANDS UNION OF CHURCHES CONFERENCE—
5 NEW UNION OF CHURCHES CONFERENCE
6
7 RECOMMENDED,  1. To recognize and record union of churches conference status for the
8 Netherlands Union Conference, effective May 5, 2017.
9
10  2. To accept the Netherlands Union of Churches Conference (TED) into the world
11 sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
1. To recognize and record the reorganization of the former Southeast Asia Union Mission into two union missions known as the Malaysia Union Mission and the Southeastern Asia Union Mission, effective December 31, 2021.

2. To accept the Malaysia Union Mission (SSD) into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

3. To accept the Southeastern Union Mission (SSD) into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
1. To recognize and record the reorganization of the former Ethiopian Union Mission into two union missions known as the Eastern Ethiopia Union Mission and the Western Ethiopia Union Mission, effective November 17, 2019.

2. To accept the Eastern Ethiopia Union Mission (ECD) into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

3. To accept the Western Ethiopia Union Mission (ECD) into the world sisterhood of unions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
RECOMMENDED, To recognize and record the dissolution of the former Trans-Caucasus Union of Churches Mission in the Euro-Asia Division, effective January 1, 2021. The Division has reorganized the territory.
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).
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.
EDITORIAL AMENDMENT

RATIONALE: This editorial amendment clarifies that the General Conference Executive Committee approves recommendations from divisions regarding their representation on the Committee.

RECOMMENDED, 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 - No change

Sec. 2. The following shall be approved by vote of the General Conference Executive Committee at a subsequent meeting, following recommendations from the divisions:

Other persons to serve as members of the General Conference Executive Committee as provided for in Article VIII, Sec. 1. b.
RATIONALE: This editorial amendment alphabetizes the names of the departments.

RECOMMENDED, To amend the General Conference Constitution and Bylaws, Bylaws Article X—Departments and Associates—Directors/Secretaries, Associates, and Assistants, to read as follows:

ARTICLE X—DEPARTMENTS AND ASSOCIATIONS—DIRECTORS/SECRETARIES, ASSOCIATES, AND ASSISTANTS

Sec. 1. Departmental and association directors/secretaries and associate directors/secretaries shall be elected by the General Conference Session and assistants shall be appointed as determined by the General Conference Executive Committee to serve the world Church through the Ministerial Association and the following departments: Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries, Children’s Ministries, Communication, Education, Family Ministries, Health Ministries, Planned Giving and Trust Services, Public Affairs and Religious Liberty, Publishing Ministries, Sabbath School and Personal Ministries, Stewardship Ministries, Planned Giving and Trust Services, Women’s Ministries, and Youth Ministries

Should changes to the departmental structure of the General Conference be deemed necessary, such changes may be approved and implemented by action of the General Conference Executive Committee in Annual Council and continued, subject to ratification at the next General Conference Session. When additions or changes to department or association structures are implemented at times other than in connection with a General Conference Session, the General Conference Executive Committee at an Annual Council shall also address the staffing needs involved until the next General Conference Session.

Sec. 2. The departmental, association, agency, and service directors/secretaries - No change

Sec. 3. The term “associate director/secretary” shall be used to designate those - No change

Sec. 4. The term “assistant director/secretary” shall be used to designate those - No change

Sec. 5. Departmental and association directors/secretaries, associates, and - No change
SEC/Con&By/ADCOM/SecC/GCDO20AC/20AC/214-20GSE/210-21GSE to HMM-22GCS

211-22GSE USE OF “TELEPHONE CONFERENCE” - CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS EDITORIAL DIRECTIVE

RATIONALE: This directive allows for electronic conference and makes the terminology consistent with what is found in General Conference Working Policy.

RECOMMENDED, To approve a directive to amend the General Conference Constitution and Bylaws, where appropriate, by deleting “telephone conference” and replacing it with “electronic conference.”
RATIONALE: This amendment accomplishes the following:

1. Reflects that, in an effort to be consistent with other divisions, the secretary of the North American Division will no longer be an associate secretary of the General Conference (lines 26-27).

2. Replaces the name of “interdivision employees” with “international service employees” to be consistent with changes that have been made in General Conference Working Policy (lines 35-38).

RECOMMENDED, To amend the General Conference Constitution and Bylaws, Bylaws Article IV—General Conference Undersecretary and Associate Secretaries, to read as follows:

ARTICLE IV—GENERAL CONFERENCE
UNDERSECRETARY AND ASSOCIATE SECRETARIES

Sec. 1. An undersecretary and associate secretaries shall be elected to share - No change

Sec. 2. The secretary of the North American Division, by virtue of election to that responsibility, shall also be an associate secretary of the General Conference.

Sec. 3. Sec. 2. The role of the General Conference undersecretary and associate secretaries, in relationship to the divisions, includes the following:

a. To serve as liaisons with division secretaries as assigned by the General Conference secretary.

b. To facilitate the processing of calls for interdivision employees, international service employees.

c. To recruit interdivision employees, international service employees to fill the needs of the divisions.

d. To assist the divisions with personnel and policy matters.
RATIONALE: This amendment reflects that, in an effort to be consistent with other divisions, the treasurer of the North American Division will no longer be an associate treasurer of the General Conference.

RECOMMENDED, To amend the General Conference Constitution and Bylaws, Bylaws Article V—General Conference Undertreasurer and Associate Treasurers, to read as follows:

ARTICLE V—GENERAL CONFERENCE
UNDERTREASURER AND ASSOCIATE TREASURERS

Sec. 1. An undertreasurer and associate treasurers shall be elected to - No change

Sec. 2. The treasurer/chief financial officer of the North American Division, by virtue of election to that responsibility, shall also be an associate treasurer of the General Conference.

Sec. 3. Sec. 2. The role of the General Conference undertreasurer and - No change
RATIONALE: This amendment accomplishes the following:

1. Removes Christian Record Services from the list of General Conference-sponsored entities, as it is now sponsored by the North American Division (page 1, line 36),

2. Clarifies that the position of editor for *Adventist Review* and *Adventist World* is the same person (page 1, line 40).

3. Defines the term “frontline employee” with the use of examples (page 2, lines 3-4).

4. Provides an approval process for the minutes of the General Conference Executive Committee, including Annual Council and Spring Meeting (page 2, lines 14-18).

RECOMMENDED, 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 in - No change

2) Presidents of unions, past presidents of the General - No change

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*, *Adventist Review/Adventist World*, *Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*, *Ministry*.

5) The director of each of the following - No change

6) The president and board chair of Ellen G White - No change
b. Elected Members—1) Three laypersons and one church pastor from each division without regard to membership size up to 500,000 members. One additional church pastor or other frontline denominational employee, such as Bible worker, health care professional, literature evangelist, teacher, etc, for each additional 500,000 members or major portion thereof. The above laypersons, pastors, and other denominational employees shall be selected by each division executive committee from individuals recommended by the union executive committees and shall be Seventh-day Adventists in regular standing.

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

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

Sec. 2. Minutes of the General Conference Executive Committee, including those of Annual Council and Spring Meeting, shall be approved during a meeting of the General Conference Administrative Committee, after such minutes have been distributed to the Executive Committee members at least one week prior to the meeting of the General Conference Administrative Committee.
RATIONALE: This amendment accomplishes the following:

1. Allows for removal from membership on the General Conference Executive Committee “for cause,” while adding to the definition of “for cause,” in order to stay consistent with General Conference Working Policy B 45 20 (page 2, lines 1-2 and page 2, lines 6-7).

2. Adds the executive officers to the list of elected positions requiring a quorum of 40 members (page 2, lines 26-27).

3. Removes local conference/mission/field presidents from being invited to attend Annual Council meetings of the General Conference Executive Committee. The General Conference Executive Committee meetings are open for everyone to attend on-site and are generally livestreamed. Previously, such meetings were regularly held in the different world divisions once per quinquennium. At the present time, with the introduction of electronic meetings and due to budgetary constraints, meetings of the General Conference Executive Committee are mostly held at the General Conference headquarters. Local conference/mission/field presidents were invited to attend when meetings were held in their division territory. They were extended the privilege of participation in all discussions of the meeting, but without vote.

In a desire to treat all divisions equally, and with the ability to observe the meetings virtually, Art. XII Sec. 7. of the Constitution is being deleted (page 2 lines 34-38).

4. Amends the notification requirements for meetings of the Executive Committee called during a General Conference Session (page 3, lines 2-5).

RECOMMENDED, 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 of the General - No change

b. The General Conference Executive Committee shall - No change

c. The General Conference Executive Committee shall have power to elect or remove, for cause, officers, directors, and associate directors of departments/associations/services and committee members, and to fill for the current term any vacancies that may occur in its offices, boards, committees, or agents due to death, resignation, or other reasons. The phrase
“for cause,” when used in connection with removal from an elected or appointed position, or from membership on the General Conference Executive Committee, shall include but not be limited to 1) incompetence; 2) persistent failure to cooperate with duly constituted authority in substantive matters and with relevant employment and denominational policies; 3) actions which may be the subject of discipline under the Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual; or 4) failure to maintain regular standing as a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church; 5) theft or embezzlement; or 6) conviction of or guilty plea for a crime.

d. The General Conference Executive Committee shall have - No change

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

f. The General Conference Executive Committee shall have - No change

Sec. 2. a. A meeting of the General Conference Executive - 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 Executive Committee, including an officer of the General Conference, shall constitute a quorum of the Executive Committee for the disposition of routine items, and shall be empowered to transact business that is in harmony with the general plans outlined by the Executive Committee. A quorum of forty members is required for the disposition of non-routine items such as major financial decisions, the dismissal of elected and appointed employees, and the election of General Conference president, secretary, treasurer/chief financial officer, and vice presidents, presidents of divisions and of general vice presidents. All meetings require notice to members as per Sec. 8, Sec. 7, below.

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 to attend Annual Council meetings of the General Conference Executive Committee when it is held within the territory of their division. Unless an executive session, which consists of members only, is called, such invitees shall be extended the privilege of participation in all discussions of the meeting, but without vote.

Sec. 8. Sec. 7. Notice as to time, place, and any other requirements under these Bylaws of all General Conference Executive Committee meetings shall be provided to all members in a reasonable manner at least three (3) days prior to the meeting if the meeting is to take place by
telephone electronic conference or similar communications, or at least fourteen (14) days if it is
to take place in person, unless the meeting is held during a General Conference Session. If
General Conference Executive Committee meetings are called during a General Conference
Session, notice given during a business session shall constitute notice to all members, and all
other notice requirements are waived. These notice requirements are waived in the case of a
General Conference Executive Committee meeting convened during a General Conference
Session since all General Conference Executive Committee members are expected to be in
attendance at the Session.
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 or Adventist World or other publications voted by the General Conference Executive Committee in three consecutive 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 one year. This postponement may be reviewed and extended by the General Conference Executive Committee as world conditions necessitate, giving notice to all constituent organizations. In the event that the General Conference Executive Committee exercises its authority to postpone a Session, it shall also have the authority to set the subsequent regular Session at such time and place as it shall see fit, not to exceed five calendar years from the date of the postponed Session.

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. Generally, regular or specially called General Conference Sessions are to be held...
in person and onsite. However, when requested by the General Conference Executive Committee, delegates may participate by means of an electronic conference or similar communications by which all persons participating can hear each other at the same time, and participation by such means shall constitute presence in person and attendance at such a meeting. Votes cast remotely shall have the same validity as if the delegates met and voted onsite.

Sec. 5. The election to any office enumerated in Article VI, Sec. 1. and all other voting shall be as defined by the General Conference Rules of Order. Voting electronically or by secret ballot must be in a manner that ensures the highest integrity, privacy, and confidentiality, as verified by General Conference Secretariat and General Conference Auditing Service, in consultation with the General Conference’s legal counsel.

Sec. 6. Minutes of the General Conference Session shall be approved at the first Annual Council of the General Conference Executive Committee following a regular or special session.

See 5. Sec. 7. The delegates to a General Conference Session shall be - No change

See 6. Sec. 8. Regular delegates shall represent the General Conference’s - No change

See 7. Sec. 9. Regular delegates shall be allotted on the following - No change

See 8. Sec. 10. Delegates at large shall represent the General - No change

See 9. Sec. 11. Division administrations shall consult with unions to ensure - No change

See 10. Sec. 12. Credentials to sessions shall be issued by the - No change

See 11. Sec. 13. Calculations for all delegate allotments, as provided - No change

Sec. 14. Parliamentary Authority: The parliamentary authority pertaining to all rules and procedures for General Conference Sessions not covered by its constitution and bylaws shall be based on the General Conference Rules of Order.
ARTICLE II—SESSION COMMITTEES

Sec. 1. At each regular session of the General Conference, such - No change

Sec. 2. Session committees may convene by means of an electronic conference or similar communications by which all persons participating can hear each other at the same time.

Sec. 3. Church Manual Committee: The chair of the Church Manual - No change

Sec. 4. Constitution and Bylaws Committee: The chair of the - No change

Sec. 5. Nominating Committee: a. The membership of the - No change

b. The members of the Nominating Committee - No changes

c. Each group (named in Sec. 4. b. 1) and 2) above) - No change

d. Those chosen as members of the Nominating Committee must be duly credentialed delegates accredited delegates in attendance at the General Conference Session.

e. Delegates holding elected positions under the - No change

f. No delegate shall nominate more than one person - 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. Sec. 6. Steering Committee: The Steering Committee shall be - No change
RATIONALE: In June 2011, the Office of Archives and Statistics became Archives, Statistics, and Research. This amendment is adding the research function to the description of this office.

RECOMMENDED, To amend the General Conference Constitution and Bylaws, Bylaws Article XII—Director of Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research, to read as follows:

ARTICLE XII—DIRECTOR OF OFFICE OF ARCHIVES, STATISTICS, AND RESEARCH

At the first Annual Council of the General Conference Executive Committee following a regular session, the General Conference shall appoint a director of Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research whose duties shall be to administer the General Conference Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research and the records management program of the world headquarters, to compile and report the statistics of the world work, Church, and to conduct research projects globally on behalf of General Conference administration, and who shall serve under the direction of the General Conference secretary and the General Conference Executive Committee.
EDITORIAL AMENDMENT

RATIONALE: This is an editorial amendment removing “Office” from Archives, Statistics, and Research.

RECOMMENDED, To amend the General Conference Constitution and Bylaws, Constitution Article VII—Appointment, to read as follows:

ARTICLE VII—APPOINTMENT

The following shall be appointed at the first Annual Council of the Executive Committee following a regular session: a director of Archives, Statistics, and Research, a director and associate directors of the Biblical Research Institute, a director and research scientists of the Geoscience Research Institute, editors and associate editors for the principal denominational journals prepared at the General Conference, and any other non-departmental positions which have been established and filled by General Conference Executive Committee appointment. This Annual Council shall also appoint the membership of standing committees and various operating boards which have been established and filled by General Conference Executive Committee appointment.
RATIONAL: In areas where the word “mission” is a point of sensitivity which would inhibit the work of the Church, the word “section” may be substituted in the name of either a local field or a union. In such cases, it is understood that section carries the same meaning as mission and that in all cases where the Constitution and Bylaws refer to a local mission or union mission, the same also applies to a local section or union section. Another English-language alternative for a local mission is “field.”

RECOMMENDED, To approve a directive to amend the General Conference Constitution and Bylaws, where appropriate, by including “section” as a substitution for “mission” when referencing “union mission” or “local mission/field.” For example, “union mission” would become “union mission/section,” “local mission/field” would become “local mission/field/section,” and “conference/mission/field” would become “conference/mission/field/section.”
RATIONAL: This item clarifies who may be invited to speak in the church and addresses confusion caused by the implication that a layperson could not preach because they do not hold credentials.

RECOMMENDED, To amend the Church Manual, Chapter 10, Services and Other Meetings, pages 120-121, Unauthorized Speakers, to read as follows:

Unauthorized Speakers—Under no circumstances should a pastor, elder, or other officer invite strangers or any unauthorized persons to conduct services. Individuals who have been removed from the ministry or who have been removed from membership in other places, or designing persons who have no authority from the church, should not be given access to the pulpit. Those worthy of confidence will be able to identify themselves by producing proper credentials.

Authorized Speakers—Only speakers worthy of confidence will be invited to the pulpit by the local church pastor, in harmony with guidelines given by the conference.* The local elders or church board may also invite speakers, in consultation with the pastor, and in harmony with conference guidelines. Individuals who are no longer members, or who are under discipline, should not be given access to the pulpit.

At times it is acceptable for government officials or civic leaders to address a congregation, but all others should be excluded from the pulpit unless permission is granted by the conference. Every pastor, elder, and conference president must enforce this rule. (See pp. 34, 118, 119.)

* See “Terms Used in the Church Manual” p. 18
AMENDMENT

RATIONALE: This amendment removes the confusing term “union school board” and replaces it with “multiconstituent school board” to be more consistent with the rest of the section.

RECOMMENDED, To amend the *Church Manual*, Chapter 8, Local Church Officers and Organizations, pages 90-92, Church School Board, to read as follows:

Church School Board—The administrative body of every elementary (primary) school and junior academy (partial high school) operated by one church shall be a church school board elected by the church or a school committee appointed by the church board. Thus this body may be a separate school board, the church board, or a school committee of the church board appointed for this purpose. Division working policies explain the functions of school boards.

School board members should be chosen for their consecration, their belief in and loyalty to the principles of Christian education, their good judgment and tact, their experience in school matters, and their financial judgment and ability. They should believe in and be willing to follow denominational educational policies and recommendations.

If two or more churches jointly operate what is known as a multiconstituent school, the administrative body shall be drawn from the constituent churches.

One or more members of the school board should be chosen from among the members of the church board, so that the school board may be closely related to the church board. The pastor should be a member of the school board. If the school is operated by more than one church, generally the pastors of the participating churches concerned are members of the board.

In junior academies and elementary schools, the principal or head teacher should be a member of the board.

Some members of the board may be parents of children attending the school, so the board may profit from parental viewpoints and counsel resulting from close observation and experience.

The school board officers shall be a chairperson and a secretary. If the school is operated by one church, the church elects the chairperson.

In multiconstituent school boards, additional officers shall include a treasurer, a vice chairperson, and an assistant secretary. At its first meeting after its election, a union multiconstituent school board elects its own chairperson from among its members. In the event that agreement between the churches is not possible, the appointment will be made by the
Any action of a multiconstituent school board that involves the supporting churches in financial obligations must be submitted to their respective boards for approval.

Where a separate school board is elected, one of two plans may be followed to establish time of election and term of office: (1) all the members may be elected at the close of the calendar or fiscal year and function for one year; (2) the members of the first board may be chosen for terms of one, two, and three years, respectively, with replacement members being chosen each succeeding year for a term of three years. The purpose of this plan is to have a nucleus of experienced members on the board to ensure a continuity of policy. When a midterm vacancy is filled, the new member serves the remainder of the original term.

The school board or school committee should meet at a regular time and place at least once each month during the school year.

The school board chairperson calls meetings, presides, sees that the actions of the board are carried out, and countersigns all financial orders issued by the secretary. The chairperson is a member ex officio of the elementary school and junior academy inspection committee, which surveys and evaluates the school and its work.

The secretary keeps a permanent record of meetings, issues orders for money to pay accounts or obligations, and carries on correspondence for the board.

Where one church operates a school, the work of the treasurer is usually carried by the church treasurer or an assistant church treasurer, who receives tuition and other money, pays out money on the order of the secretary (countersigned by the chairperson), keeps a careful account of all transfers, and at each monthly meeting gives a detailed report to the board. In a multiconstituent board, a treasurer is appointed by the union board.
404-22GS USE OF “BAPTISMAL CEREMONY” - CHURCH MANUAL DIRECTIVE

RATIONALE: This directive will make the terminology more consistent throughout the Church Manual.

RECOMMENDED, To approve a directive to amend the Church Manual where appropriate, by replacing “baptismal ceremony” with “baptismal service.” In areas of the world where “baptismal ceremony” is preferred due to differences in other languages, “baptismal ceremony” may be retained as long as the term is used consistently throughout the text of the Church Manual.
RATIONALE: This amendment allows for electronic participation in church board meetings.

RECOMMENDED, To amend the *Church Manual*, Chapter 10, Services and Other Meetings, page 131, Meetings, to read as follows:

Meetings—Because the work of the board is vital to the life, health, and growth of the church, it is recommended that it meet at least once each month, more frequently if needed. It is well to fix the monthly meeting time for the same week and the same day each month.

The board meeting is announced at the regular Sabbath worship service, and all board members are urged to attend.

Each church should determine at a business meeting the number of board members who must be present to constitute a quorum at future meetings. Where allowed by local law, board members may participate in meetings by means of an electronic conference or similar communication by which all persons participating can communicate with each other at the same time, and participation by such means shall constitute presence in person at such a meeting.

Votes by proxy or letter are not permitted.
RATIONALE: This amendment clarifies some of the organizational aspects of the church business meeting.

RECOMMENDED, To amend the *Church Manual*, Chapter 10, Services and Other Meetings, page 128, Business Meetings, to read as follows:

**Business Meetings**

The local church operates within defined roles in Seventh-day Adventist Church structure. Within the context of those roles, the business meeting is the constituency meeting of the local church. (See p. 27) Members in regular standing are encouraged to attend and are entitled to vote. A member under censure has no right to participate by voice or vote.

Business meetings shall be held at least once a year. The pastor, or the board in consultation with and support of the pastor, calls the meeting. Business meetings should be typically announced a week or two in advance at the regular Sabbath worship service, with detail as to time and place. The pastor, an elder arranged chosen by the pastor, or, in some cases, the conference president, or his designee, serves as chairperson of the business meeting.

Each church decides what the quorum will be for future meetings.

Votes by proxy or letter are not permitted.

Major items should be decided at a regular or specially called business meeting.

The business meeting has authority over the board and may delegate responsibilities to the board in addition to those already assigned by the *Church Manual*. (See pp. 129-132.)

The business meeting agenda should include reports about the work of the church. At least once a year the agenda should include reports covering church activities. Based on those reports, a proposed plan of action for the next year, including an annual budget, should be presented for approval. When possible, reports and plans for the next year should be presented in writing. (See Notes, #7, pp. 183, 184.)

In order to maintain a spirit of cooperation between the church and conference, the church shall secure counsel from conference officers on all major matters.

Conference and union officers (president, secretary, treasurer) or their designee may attend without vote (unless granted by the church) any business meeting of any church in their territory. An action to allow voting is not required if the officer is currently a member of that congregation.
ORDINATION OF ELDERS - CHURCH MANUAL

AMENDMENT

RATIONALE: This amendment allows for consistency of wording between the sections on elders and deacons/deaconesses and addresses some confusion in areas where women are ordained as elders.

RECOMMENDED, To amend the Church Manual, Chapter 8, Local Church Officers and Organizations, page 73, Ordination of Elders, to read as follows:

Ordination of Elders—Election to the office of elder does not in itself qualify one as an elder. Ordination is required before an elder has authority to function. When a church in a business meeting votes the election of new elders, it also authorizes their ordination. Between election and ordination, the elected elder may function as church leader but not administer the ordinances of the church.

The ordination service is performed only by an ordained pastor currently credentialed by the conference. As a courtesy, a visiting ordained pastor may be invited to assist. However, only on the specific request of conference officers would a visiting ordained pastor or a retired ordained pastor conduct the ordination.

The sacred rite of ordination should be simply performed in the presence of the church and may include a brief outline of the office of elder, the qualities required, and the principal duties the elder will be authorized to perform. After the exhortation, the ordained pastor, assisted by other ordained pastors and/or local elders who are participating in the service, will ordain the elders by prayer and the laying on of hands. (See p. 37.)

Once ordained, elders need not be ordained again if reelected, or upon election as elders of other churches, provided they have maintained regular membership status. They are also qualified to the deaconate, serve as deacons.
ORDINATION SERVICE FOR DEACONESSES -

CHURCH MANUAL AMENDMENT

RATIONALE: This change is being recommended in order to keep the text in line with the Church Manual, Chapter 8, Local Church Officers and Organizations, page 78, Deacons Must Be Ordained.

RECOMMENDED, To amend the Church Manual, Chapter 8, Local Church Officers and Organizations, page 80, Ordination Service for Deaconesses, to read as follows:

Ordination Service for Deaconesses—Such a service, like the ordination of deacons, would be carried out by an ordained pastor currently credentialed by the conference. The ordination service should be characterized by simplicity and performed in the presence of the church.

If they retain church membership, deaconesses do not have to be ordained again if they move their memberships to other churches. When the term for which they were elected expires, they must be reelected if they are to continue to serve as deaconesses.

Elders subsequently elected as deaconesses should not be ordained as deaconesses because ordination as elder covers this office.
Pastors and Other Church Employees

A Divinely Appointed Ministry

Seventh-day Adventist ministers bear the God-given responsibility of proclaiming the everlasting gospel, making disciples, and equipping the saints according to their spiritual gifts in order to equip them for service (Eph. 4:11, 12; 2 Tim. 4:2). As Ellen G. White stated: “It was at the very beginning of His ministry that Christ began to gather in His helpers. This is a lesson to all ministers. They should constantly be looking for and training those who they think could help them in their work. They should not stand alone, trying to do by themselves all that needs to be done” (Letter 53, 1905). In addition, pastors are commanded to do the work of an evangelist, reading God’s word publicly and teaching obedience to it (1 Tim. 4:13; 2 Tim. 2:24-26; 4:2, 5). They are to encourage and exhort the believers (1 Tim. 5:1, 2; 6:2), and rebuke sinners (1 Tim. 5:20); ordain elders (1 Tim. 5:22; Titus 1:5); uphold the truth and take a firm stance against false doctrines (1 Tim. 1:3, 4; 4:7; 6:20, 21; Titus 1:9). They should be examples to the believers in all matters of faith and practice (1 Tim. 4:12; 1 Peter 5:3). Another important part of the pastoral work is the visitation ministry. Ellen G. White stated: “Remember that a minister’s work does not consist merely in preaching. He is to visit families in their homes, to pray with them, and to open to them the Scriptures. He who does faithful work outside the pulpit will accomplish tenfold more than He who confines his labors to the desk” (9T 124).

“Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock” (1 Peter 5:1-3).

All believers have the privilege of being part of “a royal priesthood” that proclaims “the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light” (1 Peter 2:5-9). To support and guide this work God “gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ” (Eph. 4:11-13).
The New Testament describes how the leadership of the church was established. During His ministry on Earth, Jesus appointed twelve apostles to accompany Him on His travels and sent them out to preach the Gospel and heal the sick (Mark 3:14, 15; Luke 6:13). He also sent out a larger group of seventy (Luke 10:1-23). This indicates that the organization of the church was initiated by Jesus Christ Himself in order to fulfill the mission of making disciples and teaching Bible truth (Matt. 28:18-20; Luke 24:44-49; Acts 1:8).

Soon after Christ’s ascension, the apostles faced increasing demands with the fast-growing church in Jerusalem. To cope with these challenges, they divided the leadership responsibilities in the local church into different areas. Seven men were chosen to “serve tables,” caring mainly for the practical and material needs of the church, while the apostles confined themselves “to prayer and the ministry of the Word” (Acts 6:2, 4). Both leadership groups were involved in serving or ministering, but the manner of their involvement differed significantly. These avenues of ministry reflect the offices of deacon and elder/overseer described in Paul’s writings (Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:6-9). While most elders and deacons ministered in local settings, some elders, such as Timothy and Titus, were itinerant and supervised greater territory with multiple congregations (1 Tim. 1:3, 4; Titus 1:5).

In harmony with the leadership model of the Jerusalem church, the apostles appointed elders as spiritual leaders in every church (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5). This practice explains why apostles, when they left Jerusalem to preach the Gospel, did not leave a leadership vacuum in this major center of the early church. Several years later, Barnabas and Saul delivered to the elders the relief contributions they had collected from far-flung churches for the needy believers in Judea (Acts 11:29, 30). As Ellen G. White indicates, the “organization of the church at Jerusalem was to serve as a model for the organization of churches in every other place where messengers of truth should win converts to the Gospel.”—AA 91.

These New Testament principles of church organization guided Seventh-day Adventists in the years prior to and the decades following its official organization as a church in 1863. During this time, ministers were employed by the various conferences as administrators and evangelists, raising up churches, and visiting established churches that needed counsel. Following the model of ministry of Timothy and Titus, Conference-employed ministers almost never functioned as resident or “settled” pastors of a local church, in contrast to the practice in most Protestant churches then and now. In this regard, Ellen G. White wrote: “Instead of keeping the ministers at work for the churches that already know the truth, let the members of the churches say to these laborers: ‘Go work for souls that are perishing in darkness. We ourselves will carry forward the services of the church. We will keep up the meetings, and, by abiding in Christ, will maintain spiritual life. We will work for souls that are about us, and we will send our prayers and our gifts to sustain the laborers in more needy and destitute fields.’”—6T 30. “As a general rule, the conference laborers should go out from the churches into new fields, using their God-given ability to a purpose in seeking and saving the lost.”—Ev 382.
As a divinely appointed ministry, ministers are “to sow the seeds of truth. Place after place is to be visited; church after church is to be raised up. Those who take their stand for the truth are to be organized into churches, and then the minister is to pass on to other equally important fields.”—7T 20 “Just as soon as a church is organized, let the minister set the members at work. They will need to be taught how to labor successfully. Let the minister devote more of his time to educating than to preaching. Let him teach the people how to give to others the knowledge they have received. While the new converts should be taught to ask counsel from those more experienced in the work, they should also be taught not to put the minister in the place of God. Ministers are but human beings, men compassed with infirmities. Christ is the One to Whom we are to look for guidance.”—7T 20. “Our ministers should plan wisely, as faithful stewards. They should feel that it is not their duty to hover over the churches already raised up, but that they should be doing aggressive evangelistic work, preaching the Word and doing house-to-house work in places that have not yet heard the truth. . . . They will find that nothing is so encouraging as doing evangelistic work in new fields.”—Ev 382.

These inspired counsels remain just as relevant today. Our ministers have the solemn responsibility of leading their congregations in the mission of reaching others for Christ. As Ellen G. White stated, “The work of God in this earth can never be finished until the men and women comprising our church membership rally to the work and unite their efforts with those of ministers and church officers.”—9T 117. And “when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away” (1 Peter 1:4).

“God has a church, and she has a divinely appointed ministry. ‘And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. . . . ’

“Men appointed of God have been chosen to watch with jealous care, with vigilant perseverance, that the church may not be overthrown by the evil devices of Satan, but that she shall stand in the world to promote the glory of God among men.”—TM 52, 53.

Conference President—The conference president should be an ordained pastor of experience and good report. He stands at the head of the gospel ministry in the conference and is the chief elder, or overseer, of all the churches. He works for their spiritual welfare and counsels them regarding their activities and plans. He has access to all the churches and their services, business meetings, and boards, without vote unless granted by the church, or unless he is a member of that congregation. He may, by virtue of his office, preside over any meeting of any church when necessary. He has access to all church records.

The conference president does not have authority to set aside the duly elected officers of the church, but will work in cooperation with them. They in turn are bound, in recognition of the
ties of conference fellowship, to counsel with him over all that pertains to the welfare of the church. They should not attempt to exclude him from a proper discharge of his duties.

Conference Departmental Directors—Conference departmental directors foster important lines of denominational work under the general direction of the conference committee in consultation with the conference president. In order to successfully carry on the work assigned to them, these employees must have access to the churches so they can present and develop their plans. These employees will have sympathetic consideration for all church plans, even outside their respective departments.

Departmental directors are not vested with administrative or executive authority, so their relation to local churches is advisory. Their work does not bear the same relationship to the churches as that of the conference committee or president. In the promotion of their specific kinds of work, they labor throughout the entire conference. However, they are not expected to counsel churches regarding elections and other administrative duties or any other line of service, unless especially requested to do so by the conference president.

Ordained Pastors—Ordained pastors appointed by the conference committee - No change

Licensed Pastors—To give individuals an opportunity to demonstrate their - No change

Bible Instructors—The conference may employ Bible instructors and assign - No change

Conference President—The conference president should be an ordained pastor of experience. He stands at the head of the gospel ministry in the conference and is the chief elder, or overseer, of all the churches. He works for their spiritual welfare and counsels them regarding their activities and plans. He has access to all the churches and their services, business meetings, and boards, without vote unless granted by the church, or unless he is a member of that congregation. He may, by virtue of his office, preside over any meeting of any church when necessary. He has access to all church records.

The conference president does not have authority to set aside duly elected officers of the church but will work in cooperation with them. They in turn are bound, in recognition of the ties of conference fellowship, to counsel with him over all that pertains to the welfare of the church. They should not attempt to exclude him from a proper discharge of his duties.

Conference Secretary—The conference secretary, associated with the conference president as an executive officer, should be a person with ministerial and denominational experience. The conference secretary, for example, is responsible for keeping the minutes of the proceedings of the conference constituency sessions and meetings of the conference executive committee, publishing official notices of key meetings, maintaining correspondence with local churches, and overseeing conference records and collecting statistical data and conference
membership records. The conference secretary also fosters mission for the expansion of God’s kingdom.

Conference Treasurer—The conference treasurer, associated with the conference president as an executive officer, is the chief financial officer of the conference and should have appropriate finance-related experience. The conference treasurer is responsible for keeping the accounts, financial records and investments of the conference, and to keep safe all monies which may be deposited with it. These monies consist of the tithes and offerings received from individuals through the local congregations of the conference, which are remitted by local church treasurers at regular intervals, and of gifts, legacies, and bequests made to the conference.

Conference Departmental Directors—Conference departmental directors foster important lines of denominational work under the general direction of the conference committee in consultation with the conference president. In order to successfully carry on the work assigned to them, these employees must have access to the churches so they can present and develop their plans. These employees will have sympathetic consideration for all church plans, even outside their respective departments.

Departmental directors are not vested with administrative or executive authority, so their relation to local churches is advisory. Their work does not bear the same relationship to the churches as that of the conference committee or president. In the promotion of their specific kinds of work, they labor throughout the entire conference. However, they are not expected to counsel churches regarding elections and other administrative duties or any other line of service, unless especially requested to do so by the conference president.

Conference Directs Church Employees—The conference president in - No change

Credentials and Licenses

God’s work is to be jealously safeguarded by responsible leaders from the local church to the General Conference. Official credentials and licenses are issued to all authorized full time Church employees and are granted by controlling committees for limited periods.

In a local conference, the committee confers authority upon individuals to represent the Church as pastors and gospel workers. This authority is represented by the granting of credentials and licenses, which are written commissions, properly dated and signed by the officers of the conference. The authority thus conveyed is not personal or inherent in the individual but is inherent in the granting body, which may recall the credentials for cause at any time. Credentials and licenses granted employees are not their personal property and must be returned when employment is terminated or at the request of the organization that issued them.
Only speakers worthy of confidence will be invited to the pulpit by the local church pastor, in harmony with guidelines given by the conference. The local elders or church board may also invite speakers, in consultation with the pastor, and in harmony with conference guidelines. No one should be allowed to speak to any congregation unless he/she has been invited by the church in harmony with guidelines given by the conference. It is recognized, however, that there are times when congregations may be addressed by government officials or civic leaders; but all unauthorized persons shall not be given access to the pulpit. (See pp. 118-121.)

Expired Credentials and Licenses—Credentials and licenses are granted - No change

Retired Employees—Retired employees deserve honor and consideration - No change

Former Pastors Without Credentials—Individuals previously ordained as - No change

*See “Terms Used in the Church Manual” p. 18.
Min/ChManSub/ChMan/ADCOM(Steering)/18AC/423-18GS/423-19GS/423-20GS/422-21GS
to GPS-22GCS

422-22GS BOARD OF ELDERS - CHURCH MANUAL ADDITION

RATIONALE: The Church Manual references a board of elders, but there has been no additional
information or definition. This new section explains the organization and purpose of this board.

RECOMMENDED, To add a new section, Board of Elders, to the Church Manual, Chapter 8,
Local Church Officers and Organizations, following Religious Leaders of the Church, on page
73, to read as follows:

Board of Elders—Where a church has a number of elders, it should organize a board of
elders chaired by the pastor or his/her designee and with the first elder or another elder serving as
secretary. Such a body provides a way to distribute responsibility and coordinate their
contributions for the well-being of the congregation. It also provides a training ground where
eylers are instructed in their duties. The board of elders is accountable to the church board.
433-22GS TO FOSTER BIBLE STUDY, PRAYER, AND A RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS (ELDERS) - CHURCH MANUAL AMENDMENT

RATIONALE: This amendment encourages elders to focus on the nurture and spiritual growth of members.

RECOMMENDED, To amend the Church Manual, Chapter 8, Local Church Officers and Organizations, page 75, To Foster Bible Study, Prayer, and a Relationship with Jesus (Elders), to read as follows:

To Foster Bible Study, Prayer, Nurture, and Spiritual Growth of Members—As and a Relationship With Jesus—As spiritual leaders, elders are responsible for encouraging members to develop a personal relationship with Jesus by strengthening their habits of personal Bible study and prayer. Elders should model a commitment to Bible study and prayer and should support all ministries and promote programs of the local church and the local conference. They should also be committed to nurture and to inspire the spiritual growth of church members. An effective personal prayer life of every member, supporting all ministries and programs of the local church, and the local conference, will enhance the church’s mission. Elders may ask the board to appoint a council to assist in this role of development and encouragement.
441-22GS RELATIONSHIP TO THE PASTOR (ELDERS) - CHURCH MANUAL AMENDMENT

RATIONALE: This amendment clarifies the process by which an elder can chair the church board.

RECOMMENDED, To amend the Church Manual, Chapter 8, Local Church Officers and Organizations, pages 73 and 74, Relationship to the Pastor (Elders), to read as follows:

Relationship to the Pastor—If the conference committee assigns a pastor or pastors to the congregation, the pastor, or senior pastor if more than one, should be considered the ranking officer and the local elders as assistants. Since their work is closely related, they should work together harmoniously. The pastor should not assume all lines of responsibility, but should share these with the elders and other officers. The pastor regularly serving the church acts as the chairperson of the board. (See pp. 32, 131.) There may be circumstances, however, when it would be advisable for an elder to act as chairperson, with the approval of the pastor or, if the church is without a pastor, the conference president. The pastoral work of the church should be shared by the pastor and the elders. In counsel with the pastor, the elders should visit members, minister to the sick, foster prayer ministries, arrange or lead out in anointing services and child dedications, encourage the disheartened, and assist in other pastoral responsibilities. As undershepherds, elders should exercise constant vigilance over the flock.

If the pastor is a licensed minister, the church or churches served should elect the pastor as an elder. (See p. 33.)

Because the pastor is appointed to the position in the church by the conference, the pastor serves the church as a conference employee, is responsible to the conference committee, and maintains a sympathetic and cooperative relation to and works in harmony with all the plans and policies of the local church. Elders, who are elected by the church, are responsible to that body and to its board. (See below.)
Nominating Committee and the Election Process

Officers are elected every one or two years (see p. 72) through an appointed nominating committee. In exceptional circumstances, and in consultation with the conference, the term of office may be extended an additional year. This committee brings its report to the church, which then votes on the names presented. This procedure enables the church to give careful study to each name prior to election and avoids the competitive element that may arise when nominations are made from the floor.

The nominating committee shall study the needs of the church and inquire into the fitness of members to serve in the different offices. This is another reason officers shall not be nominated from the floor or by general ballot.

The church may decide based on its needs that it would be best served with a standing nominating committee. As such, it may appoint such a committee which would function year-round to make nominations for vacancies or to fill regular positions identified in the Church Manual.

The size of the nominating committee will range from five members in a small church to a larger number in a large church. The number to be chosen is left to the discretion of each church and should be studied by the board. A suitable recommendation then will be brought to the church, using a minimum of time in the Sabbath worship hour.

Quorum—The quorum for the nominating committee may be determined by the church at the same time the committee is elected. (See pp. 128, 131.)

When and How the Nominating Committee Is Appointed—The nominating committee should be appointed early in the closing quarter of the church year and should report at least three weeks before the final Sabbath of the church year, except in the case of a standing nominating committee, which functions year-round, year.

The pastor or district leader or, in the absence of the pastor or district leader, the elder should bring the matter to the attention of the church. The church shall then appoint an organizing committee responsible to nominate the nominating committee. This organizing committee may be chosen in one of two ways:
1. By nominations, verbal or written, from the floor. If verbal nominations are made, no member may nominate more than one person. The effort of one individual or a small group to dictate to the entire membership is disapproved. Every effort should be made to ensure fair representation in the composition of the organizing committee. Everything of a political nature should be avoided. The pastor or district leader shall serve as chairperson of this organizing committee. If a pastor or district leader has not yet been appointed to serve as church leader, the chairperson of this organizing committee shall be appointed by the board from among the members of the organizing committee. The size of the organizing committee should be five to seven more than the number of board members.

2. By the church authorizing the board, together with five to seven additional persons chosen by the church (see preceding paragraph), to function as the organizing committee. If this method is adopted, the chairperson of the board normally serves as chairperson of the organizing committee (see p. 32).

3. In the case of a standing nominating committee, the board may fill any vacancies in their membership, or the organizing committee may choose to nominate a new list of members for the nominating committee.

How the Process Works—The steps of the nominating process are:

1. The church appoints by vote an organizing committee by one of the two methods listed above.

2. The organizing committee recommends names to the church for the nominating committee, with a recommendation for secretary. Every effort should be made to ensure fair representation in the composition of the nominating committee representing a range of age groups and both genders and limiting familial representation to one or two members from the same family committee.

3. By vote, the church appoints the nominating committee and the secretary.

4. The pastor or district leader is an ex officio member and serves as chairperson of the nominating committee. Should the pastor or district leader choose not to serve as chairperson, or if a pastor or district leader has not been appointed to the church, the organizing committee shall recommend the name from the proposed nominating committee to serve as chairperson.

5. The nominating committee meets to prepare the list of officers that it will present to the church for approval.
6. By vote, the church appoints its officers for the ensuing year(s) who continue to serve until their resignation, replacement, or the beginning of the new term. Year.

Who Should Be Members of the Nominating Committee—Only members - No change

Work of the Nominating Committee—The chairperson should call - No change

Nominating Committee to Get Consent of Prospective Officers—Having - No change

Members May Appear Before the Nominating Committee—Members - No change

Nominating Committee Discussions Are Confidential—All inquiries - No change

Reporting to the Church—The nominating committee’s report is presented - No change

Objections to the Report of the Nominating Committee—Members may - No change

Filling Vacancies Between Elections—If an office of the church becomes vacant during the term of office because of death, removal, resignation, or any other reason, and there is no standing nominating committee to fill the nominations, the board may nominate a successor to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term of office and submits the nomination to the church for election.
436-22GCS TERM OF OFFICE - CHURCH MANUAL AMENDMENT

RATIONALE: This amendment allows for three-year terms of office in exceptional circumstances, if approved by the conference.

RECOMMENDED, To amend the Church Manual, Chapter 8, Local Church Officers and Organizations, page 72, Term of Office, to read as follows:

Term of Office

The term of office for officers of both the church and its auxiliary organizations shall be one year, except where the church in a business meeting votes to have elections every two years in order to facilitate continuity and development of spiritual gifts and eliminate the work involved in having yearly elections. In exceptional circumstances, and in consultation with the conference, the term of office may be extended an additional year.

While it is not advisable for one person to serve indefinitely in a particular position, officers may be reelected.
442-22GS USE OF “REELECT” - CHURCH MANUAL DIRECTIVE

RATIONALE: Since there is no “reelection” with the church, this directive removes this terminology.

RECOMMENDED, To approve a directive to amend the Church Manual where appropriate, by replacing “reelect” with “elect to a new term of office.”
DUTIES OF DEACONS - CHURCH MANUAL AMENDMENT

RATIONALE: This amendment encourages deacons to assist members with special needs.

RECOMMENDED, To amend the Church Manual, Chapter 8, Local Church Officers and Organizations, page 79, Duties of Deacons, to read as follows:

Duties of Deacons—The work of deacons involves a wide range of services for the church, including:

1. Assistance at Services and Meetings—Deacons are usually - No change

2. Visitation of Members—In many churches, visitation is arranged by distributing membership by districts and assigning a deacon to each district with the expectation that he will visit each home at least once a quarter.

Deacons should also assist members with special needs. It is important to learn how to effectively communicate with them and where needed church facilities and transportation should be made accessible. When those with special needs are not able to attend services, they should be visited in their homes.

3. Preparation for Baptismal Services—Deacons make necessary - No change

4. Assistance at Communion Service—At the service of foot - No change

5. Care of the Sick and Aiding the Poor and Unfortunate—Deacons - No change

6. Care and Maintenance of Property—In churches where the responsibility for the care and maintenance of church property is not assigned to a building committee, deacons and deaconesses have this responsibility. (See Notes, #3, p. 173.) (See Notes, #4, pp. 173-174.)
DUTIES OF DEACONESSES - CHURCH MANUAL

AMENDMENT

RATIONALE: This amendment encourages deaconesses to visit members and to assist members with special needs.

RECOMMENDED, To amend the Church Manual, Chapter 8, Local Church Officers and Organizations, page 81, Duties of Deaconesses, to read as follows:

Duties of Deaconesses—Deaconesses serve the church in a wide variety of activities, including:

1. Greeting and Visiting Guests and Members—In many

2. Visitation of Members—In many churches, visitation is arranged by distributing membership by districts and assigning a deaconess to each district with the expectation that she will visit each home at least once a quarter.

Deaconesses should also assist members with special needs. It is important to learn how to effectively communicate with them and where needed church facilities and transportation should be made accessible. When those with special needs are not able to attend services, they should be visited in their homes.

2. Assistance at Baptisms—Deaconesses ensure that female candidates

3. Arrangements for the Communion Service—Deaconesses and

4. The Care of the Sick and the Poor—Deaconesses assist deacons in

5. Care and Maintenance of Property—In churches where the
MIN/ChManSub/ChMan/ADCOM(Steering)/19AC/439-19GSc/439-20GSc/437-21GSc to GPS-22GCS

437-22GSc ORGANIZING A COMPANY - CHURCH MANUAL

AMENDMENT

RATIONALE: Since a company does not ordain deacons and deaconesses, this amendment provides guidance for these leadership positions.

RECOMMENDED, To amend the Church Manual, Chapter 5, Organizing, Uniting, and Dissolving Churches and Companies, pages 37 and 38, Organizing a Company, to read as follows:

Organizing a Company

Where a number of isolated believers reside near one another or where they belong to a small group, house church, or church planting core group, they should consider forming a company of believers for fellowship, worship, and mission with the objective of growing into an organized church or multiplying house churches in that geographical area.

Company status is approved by vote of the conference committee, which, should it become necessary, may subsequently dissolve the company. The division and/or conference should have written guidelines for organizing companies within its territory.

Church members who are part of small groups or house groups may form the nucleus of a new company. Membership of all those who want to be part of a company should be held in either the conference church or a local church (mother church). If membership for those who want to be part of a company is to be held in the conference church, the conference committee will vote their membership transfers to the conference church and indicate that they are part of the new company.

When the conference committee approves establishment of a company, a leadership team should be appointed, including a leader, a clerk, and a treasurer. The appointment should be carried out by the district pastor, or other pastor appointed by the conference committee, in counsel with the group being established as a company.

All other company appointments should be made by vote of those who are part of the group that is forming the company. The district pastor or other person authorized by the conference committee shall preside at such a meeting. Only members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in regular standing shall be appointed.

The leader of a company shall not be ordained to that office and does not have the authority to perform those functions that are vested in an elder of a church. However, where exceptional circumstances warrant, the conference committee may appoint a person of church experience and leadership ability to serve as elder of the company.
Since ordination does not take place in companies, deacons and deaconesses should not be elected, but men and women should be voted in the local congregation as “company assistants.” Their duties will be similar to those performed by the deacons and deaconesses of organized churches where activities do not require ordination. (See p. 79.)

The clerk of the company shall keep record of all activities and meetings of the company and shall send regular statistical reports to the mother church or the conference executive secretary. These reports should include statistics on attendance and activities of the company, including outreach ministries conducted during the week or on Sabbath.

The treasurer of the company shall keep record of all money received and disbursed and shall send promptly, at the time established by the conference, all tithes and offerings, other than funds collected for local purposes, to the conference treasurer, who also is treasurer of the conference church.

If the members of an organized company are members of the conference church, the company does not possess the right to administer discipline or transfer or receive members. All such matters must be referred to the conference committee, which constitutes the board of the conference church. The conference president is the elder of the conference church.

If the conference organizes a company through a neighboring mother church instead of through the conference church, the functions listed above (such as reporting and membership) would be cared for by/through the mother church.

Since a company should want to grow and eventually be recognized as a church, its leadership should prepare members for church status by promoting all activities generally carried on by a church.
RATIONALE: This addition to the *Church Manual* emphasizes the importance of the Spirit of Prophecy and creates the position of a Spirit of Prophecy Writings Coordinator in the church.

**RECOMMENDED,** To add a new section, Spirit of Prophecy, to the *Church Manual*, Chapter 8, Local Church Officers and Organizations, following Personal Ministries, on page 102, to read as follows:

**Spirit of Prophecy Writings**

The Scriptures testify that one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is prophecy. This gift is an identifying mark of the remnant church and we believe it was manifested in the ministry of Ellen G. White. Her writings speak with prophetic authority and provide comfort, guidance, instruction, and correction to the Church. They also make clear that the Bible is the standard by which all teaching and experience must be tested. (Num. 12:6; 2 Chron. 20:20; Amos 3:7; Joel 2:28, 29; Acts 2:14-21; 2 Tim. 3:16, 17; Heb. 1:1-3; Rev. 12:17; 19:10; 22:8, 9.)

**Spirit of Prophecy Writings Coordinator**—The church elects a Spirit of Prophecy writings coordinator with the responsibility of promoting the importance and right use of the Spirit of Prophecy writings, in collaboration with the publishing ministries coordinator.
RATIONALE: This addition to the Church Manual emphasizes the importance of including all church members in ministry.

RECOMMENDED, To add a new section, Adventist Possibility Ministries, to the Church Manual, Chapter 8, Local Church Officers and Organizations, following Departments and Other Organizations, on page 87, to read as follows:

Adventist Possibility Ministries

The Adventist Possibility Ministries initiative was established to extend the compassionate and inclusive ministry of Jesus and seeks to inspire, equip, and mobilize those with special needs and those who are deaf. These opportunities are defined as deafness, blindness, physical mobility limitations, and mental/social development. It also includes ministry for orphans and vulnerable children, widows and widowers, and caregivers. The goal is to foster understanding with the exploration of ministry possibilities for those with special needs and the Deaf.

All are in search of wholeness. All are gifted, needed, and treasured. All are created in the image of God with an inherent dignity regardless of any limitation they may have. This global initiative encompasses a ministry for those with special needs and the Deaf, along with seeking opportunities to minister with them. While some disadvantages may be present, greater emphasis is placed upon their possibilities. This educational mission of the Church strategically gives focus to three main values: awareness of needs; acceptance of the individuals who are deaf or who have special needs; and the development of specific action plans to be implemented to provide opportunities for these individuals to find purpose and fulfillment in life and ministry.

The following statement by Ellen G. White underscores the importance of this work, “I saw that it is in the providence of God that widows and orphans, the blind, the Deaf, the lame, and persons afflicted in a variety of ways, have been placed in close Christian relationship to His church; it is to prove His people and develop their true character. Angels of God are watching to see how we treat these persons who need our sympathy, love, and disinterested benevolence. This is God’s test of our character.”—3T 511.

The Deaf as a Unique Culture—The Deaf are internationally recognized as having their own set of social beliefs, behaviors, art, history, literary traditions, values, and languages just as other cultures. While they are often considered as having “special needs,” the Church recognizes their deafness as more of a cultural characteristic than of a disability.

Adventist Possibility Ministries Leader—It is recommended that the board appoint a local possibility ministries leader. While it is preferable for the leader to have direct experience
or education with possibility ministries, it is not mandatory. It is best if the leadership for this
ministry is chosen from within the groups they represent. While working together with other
leaders, it is critical that planning be done by the groups themselves. This is done so they may
serve God and community as expressed in the mission statement of the Seventh-day Adventist
Church. It is imperative for the leader to be compassionate, and to serve with an approach that
fosters empowerment and participation.

Adventist Possibility Ministries Committee—The church board should establish a
committee for possibility ministries to encourage members with special needs and to learn how
to effectively communicate with them. It should create witnessing programs, recommend how to
make church facilities more accessible, help solve transportation programs, and recommend
ways to assist in the discovery of roles or ministries that bring a sense of meaning and
fulfillment. The committee is chaired by the possibility ministries leader(s). If not serving as the
chairperson, the pastor should be an ex officio member.

Resources—For possibility ministries resources, see Notes #9, pp. 175.
MINISTRY TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES - CHURCH MANUAL DELETION

RATIONALE: A new section on Adventist Possibility Ministries is being added resulting in this section being deleted.

RECOMMENDED, To delete from the Church Manual the section, Ministry to People with Disabilities, Chapter 8, Local Church Officers and Organizations, page 102, which reads as follows:

Ministry to People With Disabilities—This ministry functions under the personal ministries council and develops programs for members and others with disabilities. It should create witnessing programs, recommend how to make church facilities more accessible, help solve transportation problems, and recommend ways to involve members with disabilities. The coordinator of Ministry to People With Disabilities serves as a liaison with organizations providing services for people with disabilities, such as Christian Record Services, and promotes Christian Record Services programs.
YOU/ChManSub/ChMan/ADCOM(Steering)/20AC/445-20GS/443-21GS to GPS-22GCS

443-22GS YOUTH MINISTRIES - CHURCH MANUAL AMENDMENT

RATIONALE: This amendment is coming as a recommendation from General Conference Youth Ministries in consultation with the divisions

RECOMMENDED, To amend the Church Manual, Chapter 8, Local Church Officers and Organizations, pages 104-109, to read as follows:

Adventist Youth Ministries

The various youth organizations of the church should work closely with the youth ministries department of the conference. The church works for and with its youth through Adventist Youth Ministries (AYM). Under the AYM, youth are to work 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. In the quest for discipleship, the goal of AYM should be to bring all youth to a saving relationship with Christ, build them up in His Word to reflect a Christ-like character, train them how to serve the church and communities using their spiritual gifts, and send them out to reach the communities in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Adventist Youth Ministries (AYM)—The church works for and with its youth through the AYM. Under the AYM, youth are to work 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 should be to involve all youth in activities that will 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) in every church, it is
important that the youth program not be isolated from the rest of the church. In addition to their
AYM 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 is the umbrella organization in the church for the general planning of the youth
ministry program. (See pp. 133, 134.) 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 division leader, children’s ministries leader, health ministries leader, principal of
the school, the AYM advisor, sponsor, and the pastor. The Young Adults leader, Ambassador
leader, Pathfinder director, Adventurer director, and Public Campus Ministries leader are members of the church board representing Adventist Youth Ministries.

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 Young Adults leader may chair the AYM Committee. The committee should meet as necessary to develop short- and long-range goals and plans for a successful ministry. (See Notes, #18, pp. 177, 178.)

Young Adults Ministries Committee—The Young Adults Ministries - No change

Public Campus Ministries—Strengthening the Youth Ministries - No change

Public Campus Ministries Leader/Coordinator—The church may - No change

Ambassador Ministry—The Ambassador Ministry provides - No change

Ambassador Committee—The Ambassador Committee is responsible - No change

Pathfinder Club—The Pathfinder Club provides a church-centered - No change

Pathfinder Committee—The Pathfinder Club director and deputy directors are elected by the church. (See pp. 105, 179.) 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, 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, 178.) 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, #8, pp. 174, 175.)

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. The five leaders/directors are members of the church board. In helping motivate youth to work together and take responsibilities, the leaders/directors will be in the background—guiding, counseling, and encouraging youth, helping them gain experience and the joys of achievement. The leaders/directors should study the youth profile of the church and seek to involve every eligible youth in the Adventist Youth Ministries (AYM).

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

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

The secretary-treasurers will keep a record of 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’ work as assigned.

Contd

Revised 03-29-22tkb
AYM Advisor—The Adventist Youth Ministries (AYM) advisor

Sponsor—The Adventist Youth Ministries (AYM) sponsor may be an elder or other person on the board who understands the objectives of the AYM, is sympathetic with youth and their involvement in the church’s ministries, and will serve as a valued counselor to the youth. The sponsor advisor serves as a guide or counselor to AYM officers and joins them regularly in AYM Committee meetings. The sponsor will work with the AYM leader to present the ministry’s needs to the board.

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

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

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.
434-22GS MEMBERSHIP (CHURCH BOARD AND ITS MEETINGS) -

CHURCH MANUAL AMENDMENT

RATIONALE: This proposed amendment updates the membership list of the church board in accordance with other Church Manual additions and amendments being brought to the 2022 General Conference Session.

RECOMMENDED, To amend the Church Manual, Chapter 10, Services and Other Meetings, pages 130 and 131, Membership (Church Board and Its Meetings), to read as follows:

Membership—The board is elected by the members at the time of the regular election officers. (See pp. 71, 72.) 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 Possibility Ministries leader
Adventist Youth Ministries
    Adventurer Club director
    Ambassador Club leader
    Pathfinder Club director
    Public Campus Ministries leader/coordinator
    Young Adults leader
Adventist Youth Ministries leader
Adventurer Club director
Ambassador Club leader
Bible school coordinator
Children’s ministries leader
Church music coordinator
Communication committee chairperson or communication secretary
Education secretary/church school principal or head teacher
Family ministries leader
Health ministries leader
Home and School Association leader
Pathfinder Club director
Personal ministries leader and secretary
Public Campus Ministries leader/coordinator
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.
RATIONALITY: This amendment adds a direct quotation from the referenced text.

RECOMMENDED, To amend the Church Manual, Chapter 2, Church of the Living God, pages 20 and 21, No Wall of Partition, to read as follows:

No Wall of Partition

Christ sought by precept and example to teach the truth that with God there was to be no dividing wall between Israel and other nations (John 4:4-42; 10:16; Luke 9:51-56; Matt. 15:21-28). The apostle Paul writes, “The Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel” (Eph. 3:6).

Nor is there to be among Christ’s followers any preference of caste or nationality or race or color, for all are of one blood. The elect of God are a universal brotherhood, a new humanity, “all saved by the blood of Christ, which is available to all. “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Gal. 3:28).

“Christ came to this earth with a message of mercy and forgiveness. He laid the foundation for a religion by which Jew and Gentile, black and white, free and bond, are linked together in one common brotherhood, recognized as equal in the sight of God. The Savior has a boundless love for every human being.”—7T 225.

“No distinction on account of nationality, race, or caste is recognized by God. He is the Maker of all mankind. All men are of one family by creation, and all are one through redemption. Christ came to demolish every wall of partition, to throw open every compartment of the temple, that every soul may have free access to God. . . . In Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free. All are brought nigh by His precious blood.”—COL 386.
AMENDMENT

RATIONALE: This amendment removes the confusing term, “retired membership list,” and clarifies that there should only be one membership record.

RECOMMENDED, To amend the *Church Manual*, Chapter 6, Membership, page 55, Membership Record, to read as follows:

Membership Record—The church should have one current, regularly updated membership record. Names are added or removed only on the vote of the church, at death, or at the member’s request. (See pp. 81, 82.) Under no circumstances should a church keep a retired membership list.
RATIONAL: This amendment simplifies the language of this section.

RECOMMENDED, To amend the Church Manual, Chapter 7, Discipline, page 65, Church Board Cannot Remove Members, to read as follows:

Church Board Cannot Remove Members—The board may recommend to a business meeting the removal of members, but under no circumstance does the board have the right to take final action, except to record removal at death or at the member’s request. (See pp. 55, 66, 81-82.) action. Except in the case of the death of members, the clerk can remove a name from the records only after a vote of the church in a business meeting.
Church Board Cannot Grant Letters—A board has no authority to vote letters of transfer or to receive members by letter. The board’s authority is limited to making recommendations to the church. Action on all transfers of membership, favorable or otherwise, must be taken by the church. (See pp. 51, 52.) The clerk has no authority to remove names from or add names to the membership record except by vote of the church, unless a member requests in writing to be removed from church membership, in which case the church board must act on the request. The church may be informed of the member’s request, but no discussion will take place. Efforts should be made to restore the individual to the church family. When a member dies, the clerk records the date of death in the membership record, and no action by the church is necessary.
RATIONALE: This new section on redemptive membership auditing is being added as a recommendation of the Nurture and Retention Committee.

RECOMMENDED, To add a new section, Redemptive Membership Auditing, to the Church Manual, Chapter 6, Membership, following Membership Record, on page 55, to read as follows:

Redemptive Membership Auditing—Membership records are kept up to date by the local church. They are subject to audit by the next higher organization. This rule, which also applies to every entity or level of the organization, provides the maximum privacy of members’ personal information and shall comply with legal requirements. (See p. 82.)

In the Bible we find the words, “[N]ot forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorted one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching (Heb. 10:25). There is great need to seek for those who are far away. Ellen G. White says, “If the lost sheep is not brought back to the fold, it wanders until it perishes. And many souls go down to ruin for want of a hand stretched out to save” (COL 191). It is a most needed ministry to review the membership records and to approach this exercise in a Christ-like redemptive way.
426-22GS  CHURCH RECORDS - CHURCH MANUAL AMENDMENT

RATIONALE: This amendment provides for the auditing of church membership records.

RECOMMENDED, To amend the Church Manual, Chapter 8, Local Church Officers and Organizations, page 82, Church Records, to read as follows:

Church Records—The clerk keeps church records, which should be carefully preserved. All records and account books of all officers are the property of the church and are to be surrendered to the newly elected clerk at the expiration of the term of office of the previous clerk, or to the church at any time during the term on request of the pastor or elders. Church records, within the privacy limitations of local law, are subject to audit by the next higher organization. (See p. 55.)
429-22GSa  MAKING DISCIPLES - CHURCH MANUAL ADDITION

RATIONALE: This is a new chapter on the importance of discipleship.

RECOMMENDED, To add a new chapter to the Church Manual, Chapter 6, Making Disciples, following Chapter 5, Organizing, Uniting, and Dissolving Churches and Companies, on page 43, to read as follows:

Making Disciples

Making disciples is a continuous process by which a person becomes a disciple of Jesus Christ, matures as His disciple, and makes more disciples. Baptism is an essential part of the discipleship process, but it is not the end result of that process.

Seventh-day Adventists accept with honor and humility the command of Jesus contained in the Gospel Commission to “go therefore and make disciples of all the nations” (Matt. 28:19). We are to obey this Commission, as we live in these last days, within the context of the Three Angels’ Messages (Rev. 14:6-12).

The Gospel Commission’s main emphasis to “make disciples” contains three parts:

1. “Go therefore” is more literally translated as “going therefore.” Making disciples should be our way of life. We are to make disciples “as we are going” about our lives in our homes, our work, our schools, and in our everyday interactions with others. We are to make disciples of every nation, tribe, tongue, and people. The goal of witnessing and evangelism is disciple-making.

2. “Baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,” is not the end goal but an important part in the process of discipleship as people acknowledge Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, become part of His church, and commit to making more disciples. Disciples are baptized into Christ’s body, the church. Their commitment to obey Christ in making disciples should be demonstrated before baptism.

3. “Teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you,” indicates that teaching is a vital and ongoing experience of maturing in the experience of discipleship. “Teaching” should take place before and after baptism.

Making disciples is a continuous process with its purpose being grown “in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18) into Christian maturity and multiplication of disciples.

Growing as a disciple and making disciples to prepare them for the second coming of Jesus, is not optional; it is the essence of our last-day commission as Seventh-day Adventists.

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Genuine discipleship only happens as a result of the amazing grace of Jesus Christ. We can take comfort that all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Him, and He promises to be with us to the end of the world (Matt. 28:18, 20). Further, He promises us the Holy Spirit as our Teacher, Guide, and Power (John 16:7-16; Luke 24:46-49; Acts 1:4, 5, 8; 2:37-39).

What is a Disciple?

In Jesus’ time, disciples were followers whose instruction was wholistic and comprehensive. The disciples of Jesus spent so much time with Him that they received His teachings and learned valuable lifestyle lessons. A disciple is one whose choices, decisions, and worldview are being transformed by the Holy Spirit through the Word of God.

Christian disciples pattern their faith, character, and mission after the faith, character, and mission of their Teacher, Jesus. A disciple is one who has made a commitment to follow Christ and bring their life under the Lordship of Christ.

A disciple is a person who is becoming more like Jesus Christ in every way (Eph. 4:15). The process of disciple-making is a continuous process. It also entails teaching new believers how to bring their lives into conformity with the Word of God through various programs such as mentoring, small group ministries, Bible studies, service, etc.

1. Thus, discipleship impacts every area of our lives: our beliefs, character, lifestyle, relationships, work, entertainment, finances, health, witness, and our burden to see others in God’s kingdom.

2. “Is becoming” indicates that discipleship is an ongoing activity of following Jesus.

3. “More like Jesus Christ” means that Christ is our Savior and Lord and the only perfect example for us to follow.

Growth of a Disciple

The discipleship journey starts when one takes the first steps toward Jesus (see John 1:35-2:2). Abiding in Him daily and following His Word, one can continue to grow in Christlikeness. Some of the key areas in which Scripture indicates disciples must mature in personal development, as well as part of a community of believers, are listed below:

1. Worship/Personal Devotion: “You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind” (Matt. 22:37 ESV). Worship is our response to God’s initiating work in our lives. True worship is not focused on us but on God (Ps. 150:6; John 4:23; Rev. 14:7).
“We need to cherish and cultivate a spirit of true worship, a spirit of devotion upon the Lord’s holy, sanctified day. We should assemble together believing that we shall receive comfort and hope, light and peace from Jesus Christ.”—FLB 35.

“Personal religion will reveal itself in bearing good fruit, sanctification is not the work of a day, but a lifetime. . . . There should be in the heart of everyone grace which can bloom in the garden of God. Selfishness will cut out every precious likeness of Christ, will expel humility and self-denial and devotion.” —PM 91.

2. Ministry to Others: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Matt. 22:39 ESV). Every disciple is called and gifted by God for the benefit of the church and to take the gospel message to the world (1 Peter 2:9; 4:10).

“[The disciples’] office was the most important to which human beings had ever been called, second only to that of Christ Himself. They were to be workers together with God for the saving of men.”—AA 19.

3. Witnessing/Need-Based Evangelism: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations . . . .” (Matt. 28:19 ESV). Witness and evangelism happen best when following Christ’s method of ministry to the whole person.

“Christ’s method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, ‘Follow Me.’”—MH 143.

4. Obedience: “. . . teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you” (Matt. 28:20 ESV). A primary indication of true discipleship is faithfulness to Christ and His Word and submission to Him as our Lord. Jesus said, “If you love Me, you will keep My commandments” (John 14:15 ESV).

“Obedience—the service and allegiance of love—is the true sign of discipleship. Thus, the Scripture says, ‘This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments’”—SC 60.

A faithful disciple is one who recognizes the Shepherd’s voice and continually seeks to learn in order to obey more completely. Reflecting Christ’s character and laboring for the enlargement of His kingdom is to be our overriding passion. This includes growth in character, stewardship and service (Eph. 4:13-15; Rom. 8:29; 2 Cor. 3:17, 18; 1 John 3:2).

5. Community/Outreach: “. . . baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matt. 28:19 ESV). True discipleship only happens within a community that is built on the foundation of Jesus Christ and His Word, where worship, ministry, evangelism, and obedience are given the highest priority (Rev. 14:6-12).
“Let small companies assemble in the evening, at noon, or in the early morning to study the Bible. Let them have a season of prayer, that they may be strengthened, enlightened, and sanctified by the Holy Spirit. This work Christ wants to have done in the heart of every worker. If you yourselves will open the door to receive it, a great blessing will come to you. Angels of God will be in your assembly. You will feed upon the leaves of the tree of life. What testimonies you may bear of the loving acquaintance made with your fellow workers in these precious seasons when seeking the blessing of God.”—7T 195.

Practical Steps

The grace of Jesus Christ is not cheap. It cost Him His life. Anyone who accepts Jesus Christ as both Lord and Savior needs to know that being His disciple also comes at a cost. “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me” (Mark 8:34, NIV).

Disciples grow Christlike in character amid the routines of day-to-day life. Through the intentional practices of daily Bible study, prayer, service, and mission, we grow ever deeper in our discipleship commitment. A fully committed disciple continually “walks” with Christ, being with Him, modeling one’s life after Him, and obeying Him in one’s ordinary daily activities.

The work of making disciples is ongoing. “The Saviour’s commission to the disciples included all the believers. It includes all believers in Christ to the end of time.”—DA 822. Therefore, patterning one’s life after Jesus’ example is a personal responsibility as well as a teaching responsibility that every church member owes to those who are young in the faith. Church membership and even church activity by themselves are insufficient. Ongoing personal growth as a disciple is necessary to have an impactful and lasting relationship with God.

Love, The Defining Mark of a Disciple

Loving others as God loves us, which is intimately connected to unity, is the ultimate indication of true discipleship. “By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love one for another” (John 13:35, ESV).

“Christ has given us a pattern in his own example. He would bind his followers to one another and to himself. Their oneness with Christ makes them love one another, for love is the sure fruit of unity with Christ. Christ declared that their love for one another was a sure badge of their discipleship”—Ms 51, 1894.

True love for Jesus means more than His disciples loving each other; they must share God’s love with others. If we love God, we will obey his command to “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations. . . .” (Matt. 28:19).
God’s love is the defining mark of a disciple because in love all other characteristics of discipleship are complete. Christ “mentioned only one condition of discipleship and service. ‘Lovest thou Me?’ He said. This is the essential qualification”—DA 815. “The love of Christ is not a fitful feeling, but a living principle, which is to be made manifest as an abiding power in the heart. . .”—RC 345.
Discipleship  Disciple-making 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.
RATIONALE: This amendment simplifies the language of this section.

RECOMMENDED, To amend the Church Manual, Chapter 7, Discipline, page 64, No Additional Tests of Fellowship, Process of Discipline, to read as follows:

No Additional Tests of Fellowship—The authority to establish tests of fellowship rests with the General Conference Session. Fellowship—No minister, congregation, or conference has authority to establish tests of fellowship. This authority rests with the General Conference Session. Anyone seeking to apply tests other than those herein set forth does not, therefore, properly represent the Church. (See 1T 207.)
RATIONALE: This amendment clarifies that written notice should be given prior to both the church board meeting and church business meeting before voting to discipline a member.

RECOMMENDED, To amend the Church Manual, Chapter 7, Discipline, page 65, Fundamental Rights of the Members, to read as follows:

Fundamental Rights of the Members—Members have a fundamental right to prior notification of the disciplinary meetings (see p. 128) and the right to be heard in their own defense, introduce evidence, and produce witnesses. No church should vote to discipline a member under circumstances that deprive the member of these rights. Written notice must be given at least two weeks before the meeting church board meeting and two weeks before the business meeting and include the reasons for the disciplinary hearing.
RATIONALE: This amendment adds a direct quotation from the referenced text.

RECOMMENDED, To amend the Church Manual, Chapter 12, Standards of Christian Living, pages 144 and 145, Sabbathkeeping, to read as follows:

Sabbathkeeping

The Sabbath is a token of God’s love to humanity. It is a memorial of God’s power in the original creation and also a sign of His power to re-create and sanctify our lives (Eze. 20:12), and its observance is an evidence of our loyalty to Him and of our fellowship with Him.

The Sabbath holds a special place in our lives. The seventh day of the week, from sunset Friday to sunset Saturday (Lev. 23:32), is a gift from God, a sign of His grace in time. It is a privilege, a special appointment with the One who loves us and whom we love, a sacred time set aside by God’s eternal law, a day of delight for worshipping God and sharing with others (Isa. 58:13). We welcome the Sabbath with joy and gratitude.

“The Sabbath—oh!—make it the sweetest, the most blessed day of the whole week.”—FLB 36.

“The Sabbath . . . is God’s time, not ours; when we trespass upon it we are stealing from God. . . . God has given us the whole of six days in which to do our work, and has reserved only one to Himself. This should be a day of blessing to us—a day when we should lay aside all our secular matters and center our thoughts upon God and heaven. . . .

“We are not to teach our children that they must not be happy on the Sabbath, that it is wrong to walk out of doors. Oh, no. Christ led His disciples out by the lakeside on the Sabbath day and taught them. His sermons on the Sabbath were not always preached within enclosed walls.”—HP 152.

“God’s love has set a limit to the demands of toil. Over the Sabbath He places His merciful hand. In His own day He preserves for the family opportunity for communion with Him, with nature, and with one another.”—Ed 251.

The Sabbath hours belong to God and are to be used for Him alone. Honor God by “not going your own way and not doing as you please or speaking idle words” on the Sabbath day (Isa. 58:13 NIV). Our own pleasure, words, business, and thoughts should find no place in the observance of the Lord’s day (Isa. 58:13). Let us gather in the family circle at sunset and welcome the Sabbath with prayer and song, and let us close the day with prayer and expressions of gratitude for His wondrous love. The Sabbath is a special day for worship in our homes and churches, a day of joy to ourselves and our children, a day in which we can learn more of God
through the Bible and the great lesson book of nature. It is a time we can visit the sick and work
for the salvation of souls. We should lay aside the ordinary affairs of the six working days and
perform no unnecessary work. We should not let secular media occupy our time on God’s holy
day.

“The Sabbath is not intended to be a period of useless inactivity. The law forbids secular
labor on the rest day of the Lord; the toil that gains a livelihood must cease; no labor for worldly
pleasure or profit is lawful upon that day; but as God ceased His labor of creating, and rested
upon the Sabbath and blessed it, so man is to leave the occupations of his daily life, and devote
those sacred hours to healthful rest, to worship, and to holy deeds.”—DA 207.

A program of activities in harmony with the spirit of true Sabbathkeeping will make this
blessed day the happiest and best of all the week for ourselves and for our children—a veritable
foretaste of our heavenly rest.
RATIONALE: This addition to the *Church Manual* emphasizes the importance of premarital education/counseling.

RECOMMENDED, To add a new section, Premarital Education/Counseling, to the *Church Manual*, Chapter 13, Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage, following Courtship, on page 154, to read as follows:

Premarital Education/Counseling

Considering that marriage is the most important and challenging of all relationships, premarital education/counseling is designed to help couples planning to marry to be better prepared for this important step in their lives. The main purpose of premarital education/counseling is to prepare couples for the challenges they will encounter in married life. Premarital education/counseling is also to strengthen and improve the future happiness of married couples and reduce the potential rate of divorce. Premarital education/counseling should be offered by a professional counselor or specifically trained individuals, including specifically trained spiritual leaders. (For more detailed information regarding premarital education/counseling see the *Elder’s Handbook.*
PURPOSES OF ORGANIZATION - CHURCH MANUAL

AMENDMENT

RATIONALE: This amendment expresses the importance of finding new ways to reach the varied and diverse cultures of the world with the Seventh-day Adventist message, including the forming of new mission groups.

RECOMMENDED, To amend the Church Manual, Chapter 3, Organization and Authority, pages 25 and 26, Purposes of Organization, to read as follows:

Missionary Purposes of Organization

Our mission remains unchanged wherever we find ourselves in the world. The Seventh-day Adventist Church has been organized for the purpose of mission. However, the way in which we fulfill that mission will of necessity take a variety of forms due to different cultural and societal norms. As we seek to share the gospel in cross-cultural contexts, we will encounter societies where particular religious bodies deem other writings as sacred, where restrictions to religious freedom sometimes exist, where diverse points of view and practices occur, as well as other challenges. To fulfill the mission in such diverse contexts, we rely on the guidance of the Holy Spirit and employ a flexible approach to sharing God’s love in a manner that reaches hearts, while preserving our unique calling and identity as Seventh-day Adventists.

The conditions Seventh-day Adventists face in sharing the message of Jesus to people of other religions largely parallel those that the apostles encountered. How they went about the mission is instructive for us today. Although they modified their approach in keeping with the audience, they never deviated from proclaiming the uniqueness of Jesus as the hope of the world. They never suggested that they had come to help their hearers find a deeper spiritual experience within their own religions; on the contrary, they challenged them to turn to the salvation provided in Christ.

Groups should be formed to lead the people from a non-Christian religion into the Seventh-day Adventist Church. In forming such groups, a theologically sound, culturally informed plan of action should be prayerfully developed and followed to guide these new believers into membership. These groups should be established and nurtured in collaboration with local administration and guidelines of the world Church. Leaders of these groups should make every effort to lead the people into membership in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The church is a missionary community and it exists to fulfill this purpose.

“As our numbers increased, it was evident that without some form of organization there would be great confusion, and the work would not be carried forward successfully. To provide for the support of the ministry, for carrying the work in new fields, for protecting both the churches and the ministry from unworthy members, for holding church property, for the
publication of the truth through the press, and for many other objects, organization was indispensable.”—TM 26.

“As members of the visible church, and workers in the vineyard of the Lord, all professed Christians should do their utmost to preserve peace, harmony, and love in the church. Mark the prayer of Christ: ‘That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.’ The unity of the church is the convincing evidence that God has sent Jesus into the world as its Redeemer.”—5T 619, 620.
402-22GS PROPER METHOD FOR PAYMENT OF MONEY BY
MEMBERS - \textit{CHURCH MANUAL} AMENDMENT

RATIONALE: This amendment includes the use of electronic payments as a proper method of
returning tithes and offerings.

RECOMMENDED, To amend the \textit{Church Manual}, Chapter 8, Local Church Officers and
Organizations, pages 84 and 85, Proper Method for Payment of Money by Members, to read as
follows:

Proper Method for Payment of Money by Members—The treasurer should urge that all
money paid in by members, other than the regular church collection, be placed in tithe and
offering envelopes, unless an alternative method approved by the conference, such as electronic
payments, has been implemented. Members should list the various items and amounts on the envelope as indicated and to make sure that the
money enclosed equals the total shown. They should also sign their names and give their
addresses, and place the envelopes in the offering plate or hand them to the treasurer, who should
preserve the envelopes to serve as vouchers until all accounts are checked by the conference
auditor.

Members who return their tithes and offerings by check or postal notes should, where
legally possible, make such checks or notes payable to the church, rather than to any individual.
MIN/ChMan/ADCOM(Steering)/17AC/420-17GS/419-18GS/419-19GS/419-20GS/418-21GS to GPS-22GCS

418-22GS TERMS USED IN THE CHURCH MANUAL - CHURCH MANUAL AMENDMENT

RATIONALE: This amendment allows for the counsels and principles addressed in the Church Manual to be followed by a company, in the same manner as in the local church, without the need to repeat “company” throughout the Manual.

RECOMMENDED, To amend the Church Manual, Chapter 1, Why a Church Manual?, pages 18 and 19, Terms Used in the Church Manual, to read as follows:

Terms Used in the Church Manual

Church—For editorial and printing economy, “Church,” with a capital C, in these pages is used in place of the full term “Seventh-day Adventist Church” and refers to the overall Church organization rather than to a local church or congregation, with the exception of when it is referred to within a quotation. References to a local church will also generally apply to a company.

Conference, mission, section, delegation, field, union of churches—For purposes of editorial and printing economy, “conference” in these pages means “conference, mission, field, section, delegation, or union of churches,” as the administrative context indicates. Generally, each congregation is a member of the sisterhood of churches known as a conference, but until the local organization achieves conference status, under General Conference Working Policy it may be identified as a mission, section, delegation, or field. In some world divisions, unions of churches in a particular country function as a conference for local-church purposes and as a union for other Church organizational purposes. (See Chapter 3, “Organization and Authority.”)

Pastor and minister—Most areas of the world Church use “pastor” to identify a member of the clergy, so that term is used in these pages rather than “minister,” regardless of the responsibilities assigned by the local conference. Use of the term here is not intended to mandate that usage where the custom is to use “minister.” Pastors referred to in this manual are those who have been appointed by the conference to oversee the affairs of the local church or district.

Abbreviations of Ellen G. White’s books are identified on p. 186.

Scripture quotations are taken from the New King James Version unless otherwise indicated, with the exception of when referred to within a Spirit of Prophecy quotation.