



# Garden Grove Seventh-day Adventist Church

## Pastor Dan's Communiqué



October 10, 2014

Dear GGSDA Saints--

It is just minutes until our big weekend starts. We have been planning for this for a long time, and we are thrilled that the Heritage Singers were willing to try this with us--3 shorter concerts over one weekend, with very short evangelistic, Gospel messages embedded inside, before the Singers come back for their Grand Finale each concert. We hope that you will come to all 3, and if the Spirit places a name on your heart, or a face in your mind--give them a call or text and invite them! We're even giving free CD's to the first ten each night who bring a new non-Adventist to the concert!

### WEEKEND SCHEDULE:

#### FRIDAY NIGHT:

Dinner: 6:30 pm, Fellowship Hall

Concert: 7:30 pm

THE WAY is canceled tonight.

#### SABBATH:

FIRST SERVICE: 9:30 am, Sanctuary, Pastor Tony

SABBATH SCHOOLS: 10:30 am in the usual places

SECOND SERVICE: 11:30 am, Heritage Singers, Homily--Pastor Dan

POTLUCK: For special visitors and the Heritage Singers

EVENING: DINNER 6:30, CONCERT 7:30

FILIPINO FELLOWSHIP: SS at 10:30, plus Potluck 1:00 pm, meetings and Bible study

VIETNAMESE FELLOWSHIP: 4:00pm Youth Chapel

MONDAY NIGHT: Pastor Dan's Small Group, 7:30 pm, going through Gospel of John

NEXT SABBATH: Special guest, Pastor Jon Henderson, campus chaplain, Pacific Union College. 9:30 am, 11:30 am, 3:00 pm, 3 separate sermons

FRIDAY NIGHT: Special Creative Worship, 7:30, Fellowship Hall

Dinner: 6:30

God bless, have a great weekend! If you have time, please read the following two notes we have included:

**NOTE ABOUT OUR FACILITY:** We want to encourage everybody to be careful when you leave wherever you were in the church--to turn off lights, turn off the AC, turn off the stove, empty trash--leave it pristine. AND--make sure all doors are securely closed and locked. We keep coming into rooms with AC on, and outside doors left unlocked. We are buying two new doors for the front on the 9th street side, but in the meantime take special care to lock everything. It will honor God!

## NOTE ABOUT THE ANNUAL MEETING, GENERAL CONFERENCE.

(Understand that Adventist Today is not an official source! But it will give you some of the agenda for some very important discussions this week!)

### Adventist Governing Body Starts Meeting Thursday

By Adventist Today News Team, October 8, 2014

**Updated October 10**

The governing body of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination is the General Conference (GC) executive committee. Its Annual Council begins tomorrow (October 9) and continues through next Wednesday (October 15). A number of important issues are on the agenda for discussion by the more than 300 members from around the world, as well as the usual planning documents, policy adjustments and reports.

Two issues dominate the agenda. One is the revision of paragraph six in the denomination's statement of fundamental beliefs. It says in part, "God is Creator of all things and has revealed in Scripture the authentic account of His creative activity. In six days the Lord made 'the heavens and the earth' and all things upon the earth, and rested on the seventh day of the first week."

The leaders of the denomination will present a proposed revision that spells out more specifically what the days and week are. It will include language about days being twenty-four literal hours in a recent past. It will not allow for any ambiguity in the interpretation of this doctrine.

There may be controversy about the fact that some words not directly quoted from the Bible will be introduced. The actual vote to adopt this revised paragraph cannot be taken until next summer in San Antonio when the GC Session convenes. The fundamental beliefs document can only be amended by a GC Session, not the GC executive committee. Anything voted in the coming week will only be a recommendation to the delegates next summer.

The theology of ordination is probably the most discussed issue on the agenda. An entire day (next Tuesday) has been set aside for this item. The key to this issue is the question of whether women who are employed as Adventist ministers may be ordained just as are men employed as clergy. In 1881 the delegates at the GC Session voted the concept with no objections, but for reasons that remain unclear the policy was never implemented except for the fact that denominational cofounder Ellen G. White was issued credentials as an ordained minister for many decades. (For more information about the 1881 resolution, look [here](#).)

In the early 1970s steps were taken toward the ordination of women and in the 1980s the Adventists in China began the practice. In the last two years several union conferences in North America and Europe have also voted this step despite admonitions from Pastor Ted Wilson, president of the GC.

In the last two decades opposition to the concept has grown, often rooted in a doctrine of "male headship" originated by Baptists and other Fundamentalist Christians in the United States. In some nations where the traditional role of women is quite conservative there also happen to be large numbers of Adventists and opposition to the concept is strong. Among younger church members in developed, urban areas of the world, it is considered a major failure of social ethics that the denomination has not made the status of men and women in the clergy equal.

A report from a study committee made up of Bible scholars and church administrators will be considered at the Annual Council. A decision must be made as to what recommendation may be voted by the GC executive committee to pass on to the delegates at the GC Session next summer. Great fears have been expressed by many regarding unity in the denomination if the debate becomes too heated or significant segments feel left out.

On page 12 of the report from the study committee three options are listed. **Option 1:** "Ordaining/Commissioning only qualified men to the office of pastor/minister throughout the world Church." **Option 2:** "Each entity responsible for calling pastors/ministers be authorized to choose either to have only men as ordained pastors or to have both men and women as ordained pastors." **Option 3:** "Denominational leadership at a proper level be authorized to decide, based on biblical principles, whether such an adaptation

[permission to ordain both men and women] may be appropriate for their area or region.”

Whoever chairs the meeting on Tuesday faces an impossible task. The debate should be about whether women can be ordained or not which was the original request. But with the introduction of option 1 the debate becomes whether women can serve as pastors and local elders. However, the Adventist denomination has already voted in 1990 that women can serve as local elders and pastors.

If Option 1 were to be voted an additional vote would need to be taken officially rescinding the policies allowing women to serve as local elders and pastors. So there are really two competing topics on the day's agenda. Can women be ordained as pastors and can women actually function as local elders or pastors, as thousands are currently doing around the world?

An Adventist Today editor spoke to one of the GC vice presidents about how the discussion will be led next Tuesday. He assured the editor that only ministerial ordination will be open for discussion. This means the chair, if he or she is to be true to that guideline, will be ruling committee members out of order if they attempt to speak to "headship theology" and why women should not serve as local elders or pastors.

Dr. J. David Newman, the editor of Adventist Today, has sent to many of the committee members a fourth option. The three options in the committee report are all win-lose scenarios. Newman is proposing a win-win scenario by eliminating ordination from Adventist practice all together. In his paper he argues that the three levels of ordination currently practiced in the Adventist denomination (pastor, elder, deacon) cannot be found in the New Testament. Readers can access his paper at [http://j davidnewman.us/uploads/Fourth\\_Option.pdf](http://j davidnewman.us/uploads/Fourth_Option.pdf).

“I would encourage each church member, and certainly each representative at the Annual Council and those who will be delegates to the General Conference Session, to prayerfully review [the work of the study committee] and then ask the Holy Spirit to help them know God's will,” Wilson said in an interview last month.

Also on the agenda is an October 15 constituency meeting of Oakwood University, a historically black university in Huntsville, Alabama. It has operated as an institution affiliated with the GC since its establishment in 1896. Constituents will vote whether or not to accept a request from the university's board to transfer its connection to the denomination's North American Division (NAD).

“Oakwood University would join the emerging NAD portfolio of major institutions, such as Pacific Press Publishing Association, whose missions specifically focus on the advancement of the Seventh-day Adventist Church's work in North America,” said Dr. Leslie Pollard, the university president.

In other business, a Council on Evangelism and Witness will meet to hear reports of outreach projects in each of the denomination's 13 world divisions; the denomination's second officer, Dr. G. T. Ng will deliver the annual report on membership and an analysis of growth trends; and a leadership development workshop will focus on the stewardship of church offices.

Key church administrators around the world will come to the end of their five-year terms of office next year and the workshop will seek to encourage an appropriate perspective on what it means to hold one of these elected positions. “Elections are often a taboo subject, but we need to think about our term of office as one we are to vacate,” Ng said in an interview with the Adventist News Network. “For those who are then elected to the same office, it is considered a new term.”

Adventist Today has confirmed that Pastor Sandra Roberts, the president of the Southeastern California Conference, was not invited to the meeting as a committee member. She is the only woman serving in the role of conference president in the denomination and the GC officers have refused to recognize her election because she is a woman and in an indirect fashion the GC Working Policy blocks women from serving as conference presidents. Roberts will be attending the meeting simply as an observer "as if she were a lay person walking in off the street."