

# Adventist News Network

A Guide to Connecting and Reflecting  
a Global Community of Faith



GENERAL CONFERENCE COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT



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Established in 1994, Adventist News Network is the official news agency of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It is produced by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, the Adventist Church's world headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States.

Regional offices are located throughout the world;

- Nairobi, Kenya
- Berne, Switzerland
- Moscow, Russia
- Miami, United States of America
- Silver Spring, United States of America
- Koyang City, Korea
- Harare, Zimbabwe
- Brasilia, Brazil
- Wahroonga, Australia
- Tamil Nadu, India
- Cavite, Philippines
- St. Albans, England
- Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire





*The mission of Adventist News Network is to connect and reflect the Adventist community of faith around the world. ANN serves the Adventist Church by being a reliable and credible source of news about the international church, for both internal and external publics.*

**1** **Credibility is the first casualty of a promotional style of news reporting.** While treating institutional interests carefully and staying clear of mudslinging, ANN strives for objectivity and honesty in reporting news. While the vast majority of our news reports deal with positive topics, ANN also tackles more controversial issues: women’s ordination, off-shoot movements, racial tensions, financial failure of institutions and apostasy rates.

**2** **When attempting to communicate to a broader, non-Adventist audience—and especially the mainstream media—we have to speak in a language that will be understood.** There is nothing more profoundly alienating than hearing someone speak an in-house jargon that you don’t understand.

Adventist News Network distributes its weekly news bulletins by e-mail to more than 7,000 subscribers around the world. The vast majority of these are Adventist Church members. But many are not members of the church, including news editors of major international news outlets, religion reporters with secular print and electronic media, and non-Adventist religious media, such as Christianity Today, Religion News Service, Ecumenical News Service, etc.

Adventist News Network is also featured on the front page of the Adventist Church’s Web site at [www.adventist.org](http://www.adventist.org). This Web site is often the starting point for journalists who are researching some aspect of the Adventist Church. The site also attracts individuals who are merely curious about the church and its beliefs.

**3** Through its use of the news format, ANN strives to help break down barriers of mistrust within the broader community. In being content to merely speak among themselves, Adventists have sometimes unintentionally raised barriers of mistrust within the broader community. The Church is often misunderstood and marginalized.



Packaging information about the Adventist Church in the news format is one way to reflect a more mainstream image of the church to those inclined to dismiss Adventism as irrelevant or fringe. The news format is almost universally recognized and accepted; it is non-threatening and it implies credibility. The news format speaks to audiences who may never read Adventist evangelistic material.



### **WHAT ADVENTIST NEWS NETWORK IS:**

- Adventist News Network is a news service. It releases a weekly news bulletin (each Tuesday) to some 7,000 subscribers. In between, ANN feeds news to the Adventist Church's Web site.
- ANN speaks to two primary audiences: Adventist Church members and members of the external media.
- ANN aims to provide its audiences with accurate, timely news about the global Adventist community.
- ANN has a special role in representing the voice of Seventh-day Adventist leaders.
- ANN is primarily an online news service, with e-mail and the Internet as the preferred means of distribution.

### **WHAT ADVENTIST NEWS NETWORK IS NOT:**

- ANN is not a promotional vehicle that advertises upcoming events.
- ANN is not a forum for gratuitously airing controversial issues.
- ANN is not the church's "propaganda machine."
- ANN is not a print publication; it does not seek to replace established church publications, but rather to complement them by providing news stories they can reproduce.



## WHY PARTNER WITH ANN?

Adventist News Network will only fulfill its potential and mission to the extent that it develops a strong partnership with each of the church's world regions. ANN provides the church's world regions with an avenue to:

- Share successes and challenges with the broader Adventist community.
- Challenge Adventists around the world to see the diversity and global nature of the Adventist community.
- Help present a vivid and faithful picture of the Seventh-day Adventist Church to ANN's external audiences.
- Raise awareness of the activities and programs of your church's world region.
- Have greater input and control in how news from your church's world region is presented, especially with sensitive issues.
- Complement your regional church's media relations strategy.
- Foster a community of Adventist communicators within your region by developing a network of ANN correspondents.



# ANN AND ADVENTIST MEDIA RELATIONS

Adventist News Network is the Adventist Church's news voice among secular and religious media. Although ANN is not directly involved in pitching specific news stories to the press or sending out PR-style news releases, ANN complements the Seventh-day Adventist's media relations efforts by:

- **Raising name awareness of the Adventist Church among major news entities.**
- **Providing Adventist news resources for other news agencies**
- **Providing news coverage of media events.** ANN becomes another delivery system for information about media events; e.g. Adventist World Church Session (Note: this is distinct from pre-event public relations and promotion.)

## CHURCH'S WORLD REGION MEDIA RELATIONS

### Getting Two-For-One

Many stories that fit ANN's news values will also meet the news values of the secular media in your local area. Thus, investing time, effort, and research in writing for ANN often results in a ready-crafted news release that can also be pitched to local media outlets.

### Complementing the Church's World Region's Media Relations Initiatives

In the same way ANN complements the Adventist World Church's media relations activities, it can also assist regional church media relations.

- Raising name awareness of the Adventist Church among major news entities within a church world region.





## WHAT MAKES AN EVENT NEWSWORTHY?

Timeliness ■ Impact ■ Proximity

**1 Timeliness.** Often referred to as the most important news characteristic, timeliness means information that is either fresh (for a weekly bulletin such as ANN, this means within one week of its occurrence) or related to an ongoing current issue that has continuing significance to the public.

**2 Impact.** Significance—any event or decision that affects a large group of people has news value. A mass baptism is more “newsworthy” than just one or two people; a rally attended by thousands is more likely to get newspaper space than a Sabbath morning service attended by 20. (ANN examples: “Dramatic Church Growth Continues in Mexico” (report of 4,000 baptized on one day).

**Prominence**—the difference between a news event and a non-event often depends on who’s doing the talking. Generally, the words of a celebrity or politician have more news value than those of someone from the general public. Similarly, an event that relates to a well-known person immediately gains news value.

**Uniqueness**—Events that are out of the ordinary, or that have an unusual “twist” have intrinsic news value. ANN’s report on the more than 4,500 Adventist young people in Romania who wrote out the Bible from memory is an example of this. Also in this genre are “firsts,” such as a report on the first women in Papua New Guinea to receive an Adventist theology degree, or a story on the first postage stamp honoring Adventists to be issued in North America.

**Conflict**—Dissension, violence, and controversy are the staples of news. People are interested in reading about clashes between institutions or people. In ANN, if a conflict or controversy fulfills the other news values, we believe we have a responsibility to report on that issue or event. When reporting conflict, we aim for accurate, neutral, non-inflammatory, responsible reporting.

**3 Proximity.** Proximity means that the news must have impact on readers in the area in which the news is circulated. For newspaper editors, proximity relates to geography; the area in which the newspaper has circulation. The news must have significance for the people in a specific geographical area.

For an international news service, such as Adventist News Network, there is no common geographical factor. Instead, the common link between readers, which makes a story “proximate,” is a shared “spiritual geography”—a community linked by faith. For a story to be proximate, then, it must be related to themes or ideas that are important to those within this “spiritual geography.”





***“Have something to say, and say it as clearly as you can. That is the only secret of style.”—Matthew Arnold***

**THE BASICS OF ANN STYLE ARE:**

Accuracy, Objectivity, the the five Ws and the H, the “inverted pyramid,” and avoiding Adventist jargon.

**1 Accuracy.** Time pressures, deadlines, staffing shortages, or difficulty in contacting primary sources of information, all contribute to inaccurate reporting. But accuracy remains the single most important aspect of news writing. Verifying information and double-checking quotes is fundamental.

**2 Objectivity.** For news to have value, it must be perceived as objective. A reporter cannot make subjective or promotional statements without irreversibly damaging the credibility of his or her news report.

With the correct use of quotes, subjective ideas can be included in an article without compromising objectivity. While a reporter cannot say, “We praise God for His leading in this moment of crisis,” a reporter can quote a leader or participant making such a statement.

**3 Tell What, Why, When, How, Where and Who.** As a general rule, every news story must answer the questions, “What, Why, When, How, Where, and Who.” Don’t assume that your audience is already familiar with the context of the story or basic background information. Be concise, but be sure to include all essential information.

## 4 The “Inverted Pyramid.”

***“A good lead sentence is like ice—so slick that, before they realize it, readers have slid into the middle of your story.”—Professor Carl Sessions Stepp, University of Maryland***

The basis of the so-called “inverted pyramid” style of news writing is arranging information and facts in descending order of importance within the article.

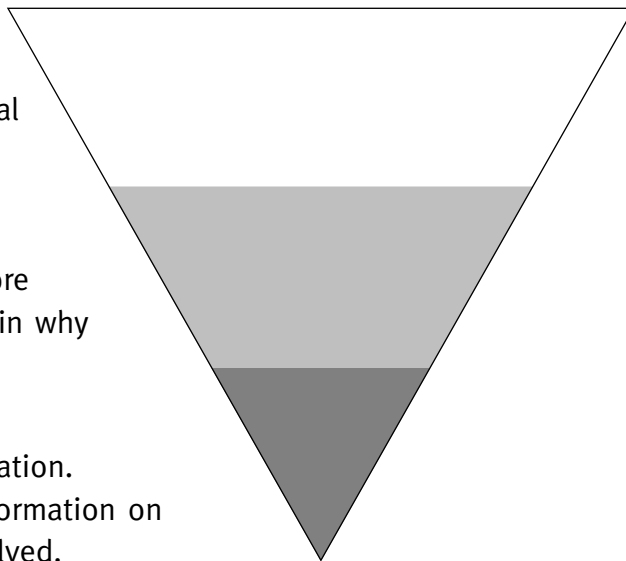
Therefore, the lead, or introductory sentence, should draw out the most significance aspect or facts. The lead sentence must tell readers why this story is important and why they should keep reading.

### **Lead sentence/first**

**paragraph:** Most significant aspect of the story and essential information. What, when, who.

**Middle:** Develop story with more information. Use quotes. Explain why and how.

**Tagline:** Least essential information. Often provides background information on the people or institutions involved.



## 5 **Avoiding Adventist Jargon.** Using Adventist jargon is one of the quickest ways to alienate an audience unfamiliar with religious terms or the administrative jargon of the church.

These phrases can invade the work of any Adventist writer, raising communication barriers that obscure the main message. Effective communicators make the effort to recognize and translate “Adventist-speak” in their writing.

<b>Adventist-speak</b>	<b>Translation</b>
South Pacific Division	<i>South Pacific region</i>
General Conference	<i>Seventh-day Adventist Church world headquarters</i>
Elder Jan Paulsen	<i>Jan Paulsen, Adventist Church world president</i>
Evangelistic crusade	<i>Evangelistic outreach program; evangelistic event</i>
SDA	<i>Seventh-day Adventist Church (use “Adventist Church” on second reference)</i>
TED	<i>Adventist Church in the trans-European region</i>
Adventist “worker”	<i>Minister, teacher, evangelist, administrator</i>
British Union Women’s Ministries director	<i>Women’s ministries leader for the Adventist Church in Britain</i>
Elder Mark Finley	<i>Pastor Mark Finley; or, Adventist evangelist Mark Finley</i>

## **OTHER STYLE POINTS**

- **Avoid sexist language, such as using “he” or “his” as generic for both men and women.**
- **Acronyms should be spelled out in full when first used in an article.** The acronym alone is sufficient for all subsequent usages, e.g. the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA).



# BYLINES AND CREDITS

## ANN'S BYLINE POLICY

- 1** Personal bylines are used so the person who wrote the report and who is responsible for its accuracy can always be identified.
- 2** The person listed first in the byline is always the primary writer of the article.
- 3** The joint credit system (e.g. Harlan Frubert/Ray Dabrowski) is used when the first person listed is always the person who wrote or compiled the report and who is responsible for its accuracy. A contributor who obtained minor fact can be given credit after the story “—additional reporting by Henrique Gonzalez.”
- 4** When a pre-written story is received from another source, but needs heavy editing, rewriting, or additional information, the byline is still given to the person who submitted the story, followed by the phrase “ANN Staff.”

## ANN'S CREDIT POLICY

When a news story is obtained from another news agency or publication, that source is acknowledged in the byline/credit line.

- 1** The byline is given to the author, whenever a specific author can be identified.
- 2** The name of the source agency or publication immediately follows the byline, which is followed by “ANN.”

## REPRODUCTION REQUIREMENTS

Adventist News Network encourages wide distribution of its news stories, either electronically or by print. Our articles are intended as a news resource: they can be reproduced in full, in shortened form, or as one of a number of different sources used to construct a news story. But it is important to note that ANN'S material is copyrighted. When reproducing ANN stories, our only requirement is that Adventist News Network is properly acknowledged.

## PRINTED MATERIAL

When reproducing Adventist News Network articles, in full or in part, the words "Adventist News Network" must appear either under the headline or immediately following the article.

When sources other than Adventist News Network are also used, the words "Adventist News Network" must be given equal prominence to each other source acknowledged.

## PHOTOGRAPHS



*Adventist Church leader Victor Vitko speaks at the October 7 dedication of a monument to 140 Adventists executed during the rule of Josef Stalin in the late 1930s. More than 100 people gathered for the ceremony at the Levashovsky Cemetery in St. Petersburg, Russia. [photo: courtesy ESD]*

Photographs should be accompanied by a caption that contains two sentences: the first sentence describes the photo in the present tense and includes a date. The second sentence gives background of the news event. When reproducing photographs provided by Adventist News Network to accompany specific stories, please include the words "(Photographer's name, if available)/Adventist News Network" on the photograph, or immediately underneath the photograph. If you wish to reproduce a photograph without also reproducing the accompanying Adventist News Network article, please e-mail [adventistnews@gc.adventist.org](mailto:adventistnews@gc.adventist.org) for permission.



# NEWS-TIPS CHECKLIST

## **WHEN SENDING NEWS TO ANN, CONSIDER:**

- Whether the story is timely. Stories more than two weeks old are generally too “stale” for publication.
- Whether it deals with a theme or event that has impact beyond just local interest. Is it a “first,” or a unique event? Does it involve a significant number of people? Does it involve well-known people or institutions?
- Whether it is news or just a promotional item. A story announcing an upcoming religious liberty conference and inviting people to attend is promotional; an article reporting on what took place at the religious liberty conference might be news.

## **INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:**

- What happened?
- When did it happen?
- Who was involved?
- Why is this significant? What impact did this event have?
- Quotes from people expressing opinions about the event or explaining more about its significance. Include the individual’s first and last names.
- Statistics, where necessary. How many people attended the event.

## **ARE THERE PHOTOS?**

- E-mail photos to ANN in a JPG format. Where possible, make sure resolution of photos is at least 300 dpi.

## **E-MAIL NEWS AND PHOTOS TO:**

- [adventistnews@gc.adventist.org](mailto:adventistnews@gc.adventist.org).





## 0,1,2,3...

**10/40 Window** A term used to describe a geographical rectangle in the eastern hemisphere between the 10 and 40 northern lines of latitude, where more than 60 percent of the world's population live, most of whom have not yet been reached with the Gospel message.

## A

**Adventist Book Center** Often used to describe church-owned retail establishments offering Christian literature and health foods. *ABC* is acceptable on second reference.

**Adventist Church** Always use **Seventh-day Adventist Church** on first reference, capitalizing "C" for the world church. Use a lower case "c" for local congregations, church members, etc.

**Adventist Church world headquarters** Do not use *General Conference* or *GC*.

**Adventist Development and Relief Agency** *ADRA* is acceptable on second reference or in headlines. International headquarters is in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States.

**Adventist world church** a global Christian faith community of more than 15 million members.

**Adventist World Radio** *AWR* is acceptable on second reference. Headquarters is in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States.

**Andrews University** Located in Berrien Springs, Michigan, United States.

**Annual Council** one of two biannual meetings of the Adventist world church's executive committee usually held at the world church headquarters in autumn. See also **Spring Meeting**.

**approximately** Use *about* instead.

**Adventist-laymen's Services and Industries** *ASI* is acceptable on second reference. An association of lay members in business and the professions, as well as of lay supporting ministries, all dedicated to sharing Christ in the marketplace. Headquarters is in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States.

**ASI** See **Adventist-laymen's Services and Industries**.

**communication** No "s" – do not use "Communications Department."

**conference** A local area consisting of a number of church congregations. Instead, name or describe the area. *Smith is youth director for the church in Northern California.* See also **union**.

**crusade** Never use when describing an evangelism event. Also, avoid *campaign*. Use *meeting*, *series*, or *public evangelism outreach*.

## B

**Biblical Research Institute** *BRI* is acceptable on second reference. It provides biblical studies, reviews documents, and answers questions on biblical matters. Located in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States.

## C

**campaign** See "crusade."

**Children's Ministries** Adventist world church department dedicated to Christian child development.

**colporteur** see **literature evangelist**.

## D

**dateline** use city, state (province), and country. When referring to one of the international cities cited in the Associated Press *Stylebook*, just use the city. (i.e. no location explanation needed for well-known cities such as London, Tokyo, etc.)

**department director** Capitalize the name of the department. *Heather-Dawn Small, Women's Ministries director.*

**Division** Use *region* instead. *West-Central Africa region of the church* or *president of the church in West-Central Africa.*

# E

**Ellen G. White** Do not abbreviate. One of the church's founders, who exercised the gift of prophecy during her 70-year ministry. Describe as a church co-founder.

**elder** Title of a local church lay leader. For ordained clergy, particularly leadership, the preferred term is *Pastor*, e.g., *Pastor Jan Paulsen*.

**Education** Church department aiding development of the Adventist school/university system; a core church program.

# F

**Family Ministries** Church department centered on supporting and developing better family life.

**field** In-house term for a geographic area in which Adventist pastors and lay members work to advance the Gospel message. Use the actual geographic designation, e.g., *Israel* and not "Israel Field."

# G

**GC** see **General Conference**.

**GC president** Use *Adventist world church president*.

**General Conference** Use *Adventist Church world headquarters*.

**General Conference Session** Use *Adventist Church world session*.

**Great Disappointment** an event in the early history of several Christian denominations, including Adventism, when Jesus did not to return to Earth on October 22, 1844 as some expected. Between 1831 and 1844, Baptist preacher William Miller launched the "great second advent awakening." Based on his study of Daniel 8:14, Miller calculated Jesus would return sometime between 1843 and 1844. Others calculated a specific date of October 22, 1844. When Jesus did not appear, Miller's followers experienced what came to be called "the Great Disappointment." See also **Millerite movement**. (Definition adapted from *Wikipedia.org*.)

# H

**Health Ministries** Church department promoting healthy lifestyles, a core church program.

**health message** Instead, mention Adventist emphasis on healthy living.

**Home Study International** The recognized extension division in distance education for the Adventist church. Offers preschool, kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade, and college degrees.

## I

**International Religious Liberty Association** *IRLA* is acceptable on second reference.

## L

**literature evangelist** One who goes door-to-door selling religious materials.

## M

**Millerite movement** Founded by Baptist preacher William Miller to publicize the soon return of Jesus Christ, precursor to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. See also **Great Disappointment**.

**Ministerial** The Ministerial Association of the Adventist world church serves the global Adventist through services to pastors, pastors' families, local church elders and company leaders, and Seventh-day Adventist Ministerial Association secretaries.

## N

**North American Religious Liberty Association** *NARLA* is acceptable on second reference.

## O

**Office of Adventist Mission** dedicated to reach people in areas of the world where the church has not been established or only recently established. Based at the Adventist Church world headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States.

## P

**Pacific Press Publishing Association** an Adventist publishing house in Nampa, Idaho, United States; commonly referred to as *Pacific Press*.

**Pastor** Capitalize when used immediately before a name on first reference: *Pastor Phillip Lizzi*. Otherwise, lowercase: *Sam McKee is pastor of the Sunnyvale Adventist church*. On second reference, use only last name. See also **elder**.

**Pathfinders** a youth activity organization.

**PARL** Use as an abbreviation of a department of **Public Affairs and Religious Liberty** on second reference

**Pen of inspiration** Colloquial phrase used to describe the writings of Ellen G. White, and should *not* be used when writing for the public.

**Personal Ministries** Church department focusing on personal involvement in faith-sharing.

**President** Capitalize only when used as a title before a name: *President Jan Paulsen*. Otherwise, lowercase: *Erton Kohler is president of the church in South America*.

**Public Affairs and Religious Liberty** *PARL* is acceptable on second reference.

**Publishing ministries** Church department focused on production and distribution of religious materials including books, magazines and multimedia.

## R

**Regional conferences** Church associations which have historically represented African-American congregations.

**Remnant** or **Remnant Church** Internal term used to describe the Seventh-day Adventist movement. Should not be used when writing for public.

**Review and Herald Publishing Association** an Adventist publishing house in Hagerstown, Maryland, United States, often referred to as the Review and Herald.

## S

**Sabbath school** Bible discussion group meeting at churches; classes are held for people of all ages.

**SDA** Do not use as those not familiar with the Adventist Church may not know what it is (it could be Soap and Detergent Association). The shortened version of **Seventh-day Adventist** is *Adventist*, which is the preferred term on second reference.

**Second Coming** Refer to as the **Second Coming of Jesus**.

**Seventh-day Adventist** Do *not* abbreviate — those unfamiliar with the Adventist Church may not know what “SDA” is (could be Software Dealers Association). The shortened version is *Adventist*, which should be used on *second* reference.

**Seventh-day Adventist Church** See also **Adventist Church**.

**Seventh-day Adventist world church** See also **General Conference**.

**Spirit of Prophecy** Books and articles written by Ellen G. White, one of the founding pioneers of the church.

**Spring Meeting** One of two biannual meetings of the world church's executive committee held at the church's world headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States. See also **Annual Council**.

**states** Do not abbreviate U.S. states.

**Stewardship** Christian management of resources; Church department that develops and promulgates a biblical approach to stewardship ministries.

## T

**Three Angels' Message** Add a reference to the Book of Revelation, chapter 14.

**Twenty-eight fundamental beliefs** The church's understanding and expression of the teaching of the Bible.

**Trust services** assistance to church members in making provision for bequests and in managing their estate.

## U

**United States** U.S. on second reference.

**Union** Internal term for a federation of churches or **conferences**. Use a geographic designation instead: *Adventist Church in Mid-America*, *Adventist Church in France*.

## W

**White, Ellen G.** Do not abbreviate. One of the church's founders who exercised the gift of prophecy during her 70-year ministry.

**Women's Ministries** Church department focusing on women's issues and spiritual development.

**worker** Antiquated term for a Seventh-day Adventist pastor or employee. Instead, use actual job title/position: *pastor* or *Bible teacher*.

## Y

**Youth** Use *young people*.