



General Conference Executive Committee Newsletter

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

FEBRUARY 2020

For more than 70 years,
Ellen G. White served as God's prophetic messenger and had a profound impact upon the Seventh-day Adventist Church. From its formative years to growth as a world-wide movement, the counsel given through Ellen White has guided this movement in a tremendous way.

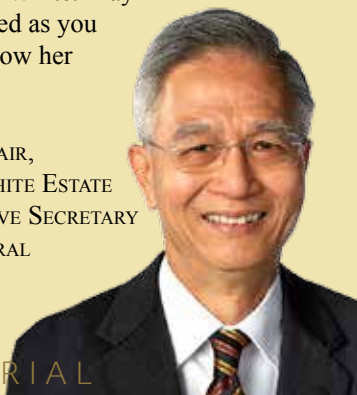
Today, millions of people are accessing her writings. Last year alone, 24 million unique visitors came to the egwwritings.org website, with 1.5 billion search queries! Last month, more than 4 million visitors from 190 countries visited the website, with the second largest visitor growth coming from China (after the USA). The biggest explosion has been in EGW audiobooks, with 76.3 million download requests.

These astounding statistics illustrate a thirsting and hungering after righteousness. People around the world are searching for hope and inspiration. Praise the Lord for the gift of prophecy through His servant Ellen White.

In her divinely inspired writings we find deep insights and God-given counsel for leaders. And as we follow that counsel, we are blessed. "Believe in the Lord your God, and you shall be established; believe His prophets, and you shall prosper" (2 Chron. 20:20).

In this ECN, we are focusing on the writings of Ellen White. May you be blessed as you read and follow her counsel.

G.T. NG, CHAIR,
ELLEN G. WHITE ESTATE
AND EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
OF THE GENERAL
CONFERENCE



EDITORIAL



TRUTH TO BE MAINTAINED A LASTING MESSAGE FOR TODAY'S LEADERS

BY ELLEN G. WHITE

*Editor's Note: While the following message was written by Ellen White in 1908 during the Kellogg crisis, we believe this inspired counsel is still helpful for leaders today.**

I have warnings to give to our people. There must be greater spiritual life and character given to our exposition of the Scriptures. In every church there should be held solemn seasons of earnest prayer to heaven for special revelations of the grace of God. Let every teacher humble his own heart . . . There is to be a more direct unveiling of truth. He who presents the truth of the prophecies in the right way will use Scripture

to explain Scripture. He will make the Bible its own expositor.

The enemy is wise in the work of leading men into false paths . . . to call the mind away from the truth and lead men to give time and thought to the study of theories that confuse the mind and leave an indistinct understanding of the way of the Lord.

I am instructed to say, Repeat not these errors or false teachings,

—continued, next page

but write the truth, speak the truth. Let the Word of God speak in every place, vindicating the truth for this time. The truth will triumph. When objectionable sentiments are introduced, repeat them not in your discourses, but hold to the affirmative. The message I am instructed to give at this time is one that I have been charged again and again for many years to give. It is this: Advance the truth.

IMPORTANCE OF SPIRIT OF PROPHECY

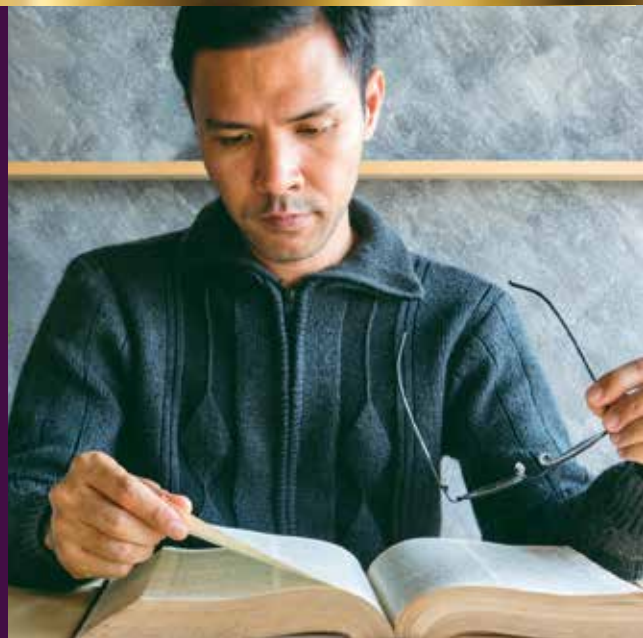
Satan has been well pleased with the work of those men and women who have used their influence to undermine the confidence of our people in the messages the Lord is sending through the Spirit of prophecy. I have been instructed that those who have engaged in such a work should not be chosen to occupy positions as leaders; for the influence they exert, and their misstatements concerning this agency in which they have no faith, will result in making unbelief popular in our churches.

Let no man or woman be entrusted with responsibility in the church who will use the advantages such a position would give them to advocate sentiments of unbelief, thus sowing the tares of heresy among believers. And it has sometimes been the case that when men have been reproved for this kind of work, they have begun a warfare against the messages sent, by making light of the warnings and reproofs. . . .

Great and wonderful changes are taking place in the world. Wonderful changes are also taking place among God's professing

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people; and these changes God foresaw. The minds of men who once were led by the wisdom of the Word of truth are passing through dark experiences. They have followed the imagination of unsanctified wills, and that which was once accounted as precious they no longer value. They have lost their bearings. The suppositions of the great deceiver have been greedily received, because they were in accordance with their own hearts and judgment. The judgment of those who have thus allowed themselves to be deceived is no longer reliable. . . .

CONVERTING POWER OF GOD

Our brethren in positions of responsibility need to experience daily the converting power of God upon heart and mind and soul, before they can hope to advise and labor unselfishly. The kind of planning that would make one man a center and pattern cannot be carried out. This is not the way in which the Lord works. He works

through different individual minds to accomplish His purposes, and in the simplest ways, that they may reflect the great outshining of His love. When one man thinks that his mind is to outline the large moves in the work of God, that his abilities are to accomplish the greatest work, he limits the power of God to fulfill His purposes in the earth.

God would have the truths of the third angel's message firmly established in the hearts of His people. Not one pin or pillar of the faith He has so graciously given is to be moved. The wily foe will bring in specious arguments to substantiate the theories he desires to have take the place of truth in the minds of the people. Assertions will be made that have no foundation in truth. The words of Scripture interwoven with a mass of error will be brought forward to confuse the mind. But we might be held in controversy as long as time should last if we were to listen to all the applications of Scripture that might be made to substantiate erroneous theories.

God has not given the Scriptures that they may be used to uphold a false position that would unsettle minds regarding light that He has clearly given. If men depart from the faith they have once held, and use the Word, which once they used in confirming their faith, now to support error, they do so to their own destruction. . . .

ADVANCE THE TRUTH

The Lord would have all the workers now come into line to advance the truth as it is proved by the Word of God, and by the providence of God in His continual vindication of it.

I am instructed to warn our people against placing in high positions of trust those men and women who seem to be adrift on any points of the faith and who, if our writings did not stand as faithful witness as to what constitutes truth, would lead away from the faith. . . . When new and strange theories are introduced, it is time to call a halt and to revive the past workings of the Lord's grace and power among us as a people. . . .

We are ever to seek to keep the evidences of the past before us. We must not give heed to the voice of those who would lessen the force of the testimony which God has given to His servants to communicate to men.

To the younger men and women I would say: If the truth of God is stamped on heart and mind and soul, you will regard the old waymarks; you will never lose sight of the grand truths that have made us what we are. Let the light shine forth in distinct rays to the world.

The Lord calls for thoroughly converted men who are students of the Word and who will give the truth to the people in pure doctrine. The missionary spirit needs to be revived in all our churches. Every church member should feel the burden of a special work, a special commission from the One who gave Himself a living sacrifice for the salvation of the world. The Son of God has pledged Himself to be the efficiency of every one who will unite with Him in the work of saving souls.

—This article is abridged from *Manuscript 27, 1908*.

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Introducing Ellen White to a New Generation

BY CHANTAL KLINGBEIL

Maybe you've noticed—many of the younger generation aren't reading Ellen White. Often, the problem is that, to them, her writings have lost their relevance. So how can church leaders encourage young people to read her books?

Here are some practical suggestions for introducing Ellen White to the young people you serve:

1. You are the introduction!

People associate the message with the messenger. If you project a sad, angry, or judgmental attitude, unconsciously young people will project this onto Ellen White's writings. They will also pick up on your nonverbalized attitudes. Make sure the introduction is positive. No one should be introduced to Ellen White with, "Ellen White says you shouldn't..."

2. The guilt trip probably won't work.

The younger generation has much to keep them entertained. For many, reading is difficult, as they are tuned to visual stimuli. They need to be shown the

relevance of her writings in order for them to make the effort to explore her writings.

3. Share your experience. One way you can show relevance is by sharing your experience. How did an Ellen White book bring you closer to God? How did it help you in a crisis? What practical advice from her writings helped you solve a problem?



People associate
the message with
the messenger.

4. Share a favorite quote.

While the younger generation may not be into lengthy reading, they are quick to latch on to short relevant quotes. Short quotes, preferably one to two lines, will go further and have more of an impact than longer paragraphs. The challenge is to not take these quotes out of context. It is also important to select positive, Christ-centered quotes. Yes, Ellen

White has many pointed things to say about sin and sinful practices but, until a young person has their own personal relationship with Jesus, these statements will be more likely to repel than draw them.

5. Tell human interest stories.

For some, Ellen White seems to be a kind of Adventist saint – far removed from our daily struggles. Leaders have sometimes been embarrassed to tell of her struggles and victories thinking that these would somehow discredit her to a younger generation. In fact, it does the opposite. Knowing she had struggles and challenges makes her relatable and demonstrates God's ability to carry each of us through life's challenges.

6. Give a book. Encourage the practice of giving a high quality (not a cheap paperback) book such as *Steps to Christ* for special occasions. Baptisms, birthdays, graduations can be important moments to gift a book. Be sure the young person knows this is personal (perhaps with their name engraved) and not some sort of mass advertising.

7. Positively role model advice. This is perhaps the most difficult but also the most effective way to get young people reading Ellen White's writings. They are looking and wondering if her writings really make a difference. Are the leaders who quote Ellen White the nicest or nastiest Christians? Do they have happy, healthy marriages? What is their relationship to their children? Do they loudly promote a vegetarian diet and just as loudly announce that they hardly ever get more than four hours sleep a night because they are so busy

working? Young people are not looking for perfection, but authenticity.

8. Let's not ever use Ellen White as a weapon or a club to beat a young person into submission or try to control others. The first application of her advice should always begin with us.

Ellen White's writings have much to offer. By God's grace, let's help young people discover in her writings biblical principles, timeless advice, and a saving relationship with Jesus.



WORDS OF A PROPHET

Ellen White, along with her husband, James, were featured speakers at General Conference Sessions from the earliest days of this movement. Often she shared her testimony or latest vision. Sessions were not always easy occasions requiring strong words of rebuke or counsel. Below are a few words she shared at various Sessions. As we move closer toward the 2020 General Conference Session, these words can still find meaning today.

1879: Some things were shown me in reference to institutions among us and the duties and dangers of those who occupy a leading position in connection with them. I saw that these men have been raised up to do a special work as God's instruments, to be led, guided, and controlled by His Spirit. . . . This is a dangerous age for any man who has talents which can be of value in the work of God; for Satan is constantly plying his temptations upon such a person.— *Testimonies to the Church*, vol. 4, pp. 537, 538.

1888: We know not the future, but we feel that Jesus stands at the helm and we shall not be shipwrecked.
—*Selected Messages*, Book 3, pp. 177-178

1901: Every soul in every conference, in every part of the Lord's vineyard, has the privilege of knowing the truth. But truth is not truth to those who do not practice it. Truth is only truth to you when you live it in daily life, showing the world what those people must be who are at last saved.

—*General Conference Bulletin*, April 3, 1901

1903: I know that if the people of God had preserved a living connection with Him, if they had obeyed His Word, they would today be in the heavenly Canaan.—*Evangelism*, p. 694

1905: The time is coming when there will be as many converted in a day as there were on the day of Pentecost, after the disciples had received the Holy Spirit. —*Evangelism*, p. 692

1909: Let us go forward in the strength of the Mighty One, considering the joy that is set before us of seeing His face in the kingdom of God and of going out no more forever. Let us remember that we are to be partakers of the divine nature, and that angels of God are right around us, that we need not be overcome by sin. Let us send our petitions to the throne of God in time of temptation, and in faith lay hold of His divine power. —*Ellen G. White Biography*, vol. 6, p. 197



BY DR. ZENO CHARLES-MARCEL, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, GENERAL CONFERENCE HEALTH MINISTRIES

Who guided our pioneers to emphasize health in these last days? Can anyone cite Bible references that instruct Christ's followers to develop sanitariums, dispensaries, clinics and hospitals? How about nursing, medical and other health professional training schools? Where in the Bible is instruction about these or the development of hygienic restaurants, treatment rooms, food factories, health books and magazines?

When the Seventh-day Adventist Church was officially incorporated, the germ theory was not fully accepted, poisons were used as medicines and what we know today as a heart attack was ironically attributed to the stomach! Hospitals were places where people went to die. Surgery was done with dirty instruments and without anesthesia or anti-sepsis! Life in the 1800s was devoid of real country-wide sanitation—open sewers, animal droppings, and the avoidance of baths, fresh air and sunlight was normal. The medical practice of the day included blood-letting, drugging and purging! Analysis of obituaries in the *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* between 1857 and 1863 reveal that 25 percent of Adventist children died before seven years of age, and about 5 percent of the recorded deaths among believers occurred before age 30! So, why we are listed among the “Blue Zones” and are thought,

by *U.S. News & World Report*, to follow and promote a healthy lifestyle that is advisable to copy?

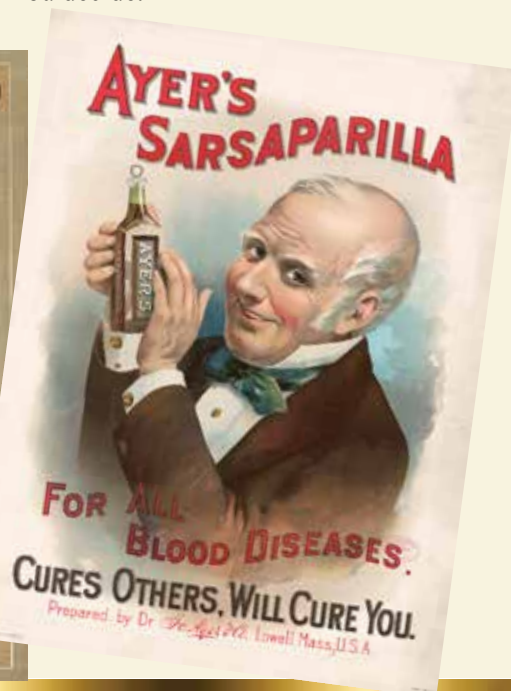
Nineteenth century medical science was characterized by a cacophony of pseudo-scientific schools of thought, beliefs, and practices by today's standards. Some concepts converged and competed with newer theories that later proved to be equally

wrong. How could anyone navigate through all this and end up with a reasonable combination of concepts and principles that withstand vigorous scrutiny, and criticism and that yet remains valid even in the twenty-first century?

In 1848, 1863, and 1865, counsel given to the Sabbath-keeping believers was not consistent with the science of the day. In essence, it was “**non-science**,” and to many who considered the credentials of the spokesperson—a poorly educated, allegedly brain-damaged, disappointed (deluded) Millerite woman zealot—this was **nonsense**! But was it? Here are four counsels that are considered contemporary health science breakthroughs:

- **Intermittent fasting**: “two-meals per day eating plan”
- **Epigenetics**: parental actions and attitudes before and during pregnancy affects successive generations
- **Psychoneuroendocrinoimmunology**: the mind-body-spirit interconnection
- **Chronobiology**: regularity in eating and sleeping is beneficial

Her preposterous ideas prevailed while the science of the more erudite did not—why? Were they nonsense or advanced science? You decide.



HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS SELL BOOKS TO MONASTERY

BY SÂNZIANA CONSTANTIN AND TÂRGU MUREȘ, ROMANIA

Each Monday through Thursday students from Integritas International High School (*Liceul Internațional Integritas*) in Târgu Mureș, Romania, engage in academic courses such as science, foreign languages, social studies, music, and Bible. They are also involved in practical programs, in which they learn about different occupations and gain life skills in agriculture, beekeeping, healthful cooking, woodworking, tailoring, auto mechanics, and more.

During their daily practical work, groups of students are involved in missionary activities, such as canvassing, health caravans, literacy, visits to the hospital or homes of the elderly, and interacting with children from local neighborhoods.

Canvassing continues to be a basic activity at Integritas. Students enjoy trying different methods: door-to-door visits in apartment blocks, house-to-house visits in the countryside, as well as in shops, offices, and other local businesses. They conduct health seminars for children in schools, health booths, and seminars in different institutions.

One day after prayer, I accompanied students Emina Pohrib, Dora Ceatariș, and Sebastian Popescu to the outskirts of the city, stopping by different businesses without making any sales. We eventually decided to call on a motel, but came across a sign leading to a monastery on the way. We decided to go there. We were welcomed by a nun, who told us that the abbess (Mother Superior) was attending a sermon. She invited us inside to wait and talk with the abbess when she was available. We settled quietly in the church and listened to music for more than 20 minutes. I prayed the entire time for our visit to be productive.



LEAVING NO DOOR BEHIND: Sânziana Constantin (second from left) is a teacher and literature evangelist leader at Integritas International High School. She is pictured above with her students Emina, Dora, and Sebastian.

We were then presented to the 85-year-old abbess. We told her we were from a local high school, working on our practicums. We were offering to help the community by taking blood pressure, measuring body fat, and taking oxygen saturation readings. At first she thought we needed help. When she finally understood our intention, she was glad and surprised to know of a school in which students are taught to serve society. She asked a sister to prepare a room immediately so that we could attend to the other sisters.



When she found out what type of books we had, she sent the treasurer to take one copy of each to show her. She was so delighted with all the health books that she ordered two copies of most of them. Finally, we presented to her the *The Desire of Ages* and *The Great Controversy*. She listened carefully when we told her about *The Great Controversy* and sounded especially interested. She received both of them happily, stating that we attend a very special high school.

We realized that God has precious, honest souls in monasteries who search for Him and are preparing to meet Jesus. God took us to this place where His angels had done the work of preparing the hearts of the sisters before our arrival.

Please pray for the sisters, that God will call workers to take the gospel to them and others. Pray also for courageous young people to stand for the truth, even though the heavens are shaken!

—Reprinted with permission from *“Snapshots of Hope: Inspiring Stories of People Touched by the Literature Ministry.”*

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PUBLISHING WORK MOVING FORWARD


30 MILLION
PEOPLE VISITED
BY STUDENT AND REGULAR LITERATURE EVANGELISTS



WORLD PUBLISHING CONGRESS: JUNE 2019

Publishing Managers share the cost of producing books in Hebrew and Arabic, allowing books to be distributed by church members in Israel.



2019 MISSIONARY BOOK

Printed in
58 LANGUAGES

IAD and SAD
distributed more than
33 MILLION COPIES

2020 MISSIONARY BOOK

Printed in
60
Languages



Hope's End-Time Secrets
copies launched in
English, Portuguese, Spanish

200,000



THE BACK PAGE

Directions: For more information on an item, click on the corresponding number on the map.

1 More than 100 people from diverse faith traditions attended the second annual Religious Freedom Prayer Breakfast hosted by the North American Division in **Columbia, Maryland**. The January 16 event recognized Religious Freedom Day in the U.S. (dating back to 1786), and prayers were said for elected officials, the community, the nation, for places of worship, unity of Spirit, and peace.

2 A select group of Seventh-day Adventist pastors' kids from across Inter-American Division (IAD) gathered for the first-ever territory-wide Pastors' Kids Retreat February 8-9, in **Miami, Florida**. Hosted by IAD's Ministerial Association, the event drew more than 200 young people, aged 12 to 23, for two full days of activities. Themed "Heirs of the Promise," the retreat featured talks on leadership, health, social media, how to deal with criticism, mental health, and more.

3 Approximately 20,000 people packed a **Kumasi, Ghana** arena for worship service, on February 1, celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Central Ghana Conference, the first black conference in Africa. During the service, church leaders described how God has led the conference from its beginnings and how He has blessed Ghana today with two unions composed of 19 conferences and three missions. The continent's first conferences, located in southern Africa, were white, and the Central Ghana Conference became the first black conference upon its formation in 1970. To obtain the status of conference, a church entity must be completely self-supporting.

4 Delegates from the 11 countries of the East-Central Africa Division (ECD), joined together in **Kampala, Uganda**, to celebrate mission achievements in the

region. Prior to the Mission Extravaganza, led by division president Blasius Ruguri, a two-week evangelistic meeting series was held in multiple sites in Kampala and surrounding towns, resulting in the baptism of more than 3,000 people. Several ministries organized activities leading into the Mission Extravaganza program.

5 A GC proposal to establish an institute focused on leadership, innovation, and mission at the church's headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland, was enthusiastically endorsed by participants at the church's 13th Global Leadership Summit in **Cape Town, South Africa**. The institute could oversee existing leadership programs such as the Global Leadership Summit, General Conference departmental advisories, and the LEAD conference. World church leaders at the summit said the church can

do more to train young church leaders and others, and to provide ongoing training for its current leadership. It could also provide invaluable training for leaders of the hundreds of urban centers of influence that the church operates worldwide.

6 Seventh-day Adventists worldwide are praying for the global health challenge of the coronavirus. As of February 9, 2020, the coronavirus death toll in China has risen to 811 with two additional confirmed deaths, one in Hong Kong and one in the Philippines. The outbreak has sickened 40,200 people in China and in 24 other countries. According to Bob Folkenberg, Jr., president of the Chinese Union Mission, at least one Adventist in **Wuhan, China**, has died, and five others, including the head elder of the Wuhan Adventist Church, and his wife, are battling the disease.