

Seventh-day Adventist Church 160th Anniversary

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1940年，拉魯阿（La Rue）與亞伯拉罕·安德森（Abraham Anderson）共同創立了「拉魯阿-安德森」（La Rue-Anderson）公司，專門生產各種類型的保險箱。該公司最初在紐約市成立，後來搬遷到賓夕法尼亞州的匹茲堡。拉魯阿和安德森在保險箱行業擁有豐富的經驗，他們的公司迅速成為該行業的領導者之一。

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2000年，美国国家科学基金会（NSF）启动了“国家科学教育标准”（NSES）项目，旨在为K-12年级的学生制定一套科学教育的标准。这一标准的制定过程非常复杂，涉及了广泛的科学教育专家、教师、家长以及政策制定者的参与。标准的制定过程包括多次公开听证会、广泛的咨询以及反复的修订。最终，NSES在2001年发布，成为美国科学教育领域的一个重要里程碑。

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Isaiah's Call: A Call for Mission
160 Years of Adventism: Chosen For Mission
Sabbath Celebration – May 20, 2023
by Felixian T. Felicitas
Southern Asia-Pacific Division

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The Seventh-day Adventist Church was not born from a vacuum. It is a Church with a prophetic mandate. A church called with a special purpose in the last days of earth's history -to preach the everlasting gospel in the context of Revelation 14:6-14. It is the remnant church presented in the book of Revelation. It is not just another denomination. It is a church, a people with a unique identity and a deep sense of mission.

From the great disappointment experience of the Millerites on October 22, 1844, to the early doctrinal developments of the church and to the birthing pangs of the "Sabbatarian Adventists," the year 1848-1863 was the era of the early organizational development of the church. On October 1, 1860, a name was chosen to identify themselves. Commenting on the voted name, Ellen G. White writes: "The name Seventh-day Adventist carries the true features of our faith in front, and will convict the inquiring mind." (1T 224). In the year 1862, clusters of Seventh-day Adventist churches were organized into seven conferences: Southern Iowa, Northern Iowa, Vermont,

Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and New York. The following year, May 20-23 of 1863, representatives of these conferences met, and the "General Conference" of the Seventh-day Adventist was organized, with 3500 members and about 30 ministers.

Today, 160 years have passed, and the Adventist Church is among the fastest-growing denomination, with 22,234,406 members and 21,376 ministers (statistics as of December 2022). The Adventist work is now established in 212 of the 235 countries recognized by the United Nations. Talk about identity and mission.

It is because of this sense of mission that Abraham La Rue, a mariner turned colporteur, pioneered the Adventist work in Asia, arriving in Hong Kong from the United States on May 3, 1888. He was a self-supporting missionary (also known as a "tent-making" missionary, liken to that of the apostle Paul) who turned the harbors of Hong Kong into his mission field. La Rue has traveled to Japan, mainland China, Singapore-Malaysia, and Sri Lanka to bring the printed pages of the Advent Message. It was not until 1901 that Asia came onto the map of the Adventist Mission, and in 1902, Jacob Nelson Anderson arrived in China on February 2. Anderson is known as the first missionary officially sent by Seventh-day Adventist Church to Asia. And the rest is history.

God calls people in desperate times. The Bible is replete with people called to do God's errands. The call of Isaiah is not simply a call to the prophetic office but to the mission.

Observe that Isaiah was called in one of the difficult times in the history of God's people in the Old Testament. The book of Isaiah is also known as the "visions of Isaiah." The book is primarily concerned with the plight of God's people, highlighting Judah and Jerusalem. The ministry of the prophet Isaiah was extensive. His ministry spans in the reign of four monarchs: Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah (Isaiah 1:1).

The historical background is complex. Assyria, at that time, was at the height of its power under Tiglath-Pileser III. The Assyrians were known to be ruthless and inhumane in their attitude toward those whom they had conquered. Shalmaneser V, the successor of Tiglath-Pileser III, conquered the northern kingdom of Israel. It was during his reign that he was adamant about the alliance that God's people were forging with Egypt to overthrow the Assyrians. Because of this, he ordered that Samaria be besieged. This resulted in social unrest and a spiritual plateau of God's people. There were refugees from the north seeking refuge with Judah, but Judah was callous to the predicament of their brothers and sisters. They were unaffected by the conditions and concerns of the northern kingdom of Israel. Not to mention that the Assyrians were the instrument of God's judgment toward His people.

It was in these morbid circumstances that Isaiah received his call. Let us consider some spiritual gleanings from Isaiah chapter 6, the call and commissioning of Isaiah.

Isaiah was in the temple (v. 1). This reveals an attitude that is worthy to be emulated. When complex problems arise, we, too, like Isaiah, must seek the guidance of the Lord. He was in the temple, praying! "Seek the LORD while He may be found; Call upon Him while He is near." (55:6, NASB) It is not far fetched that Isaiah received his vision during the Day of Atonement. A day wherein the Lord reveals that He is the God of Salvation. This is a motif that is important in the entire book of Isaiah. Isaiah made this clear, "God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid; For the LORD God is my strength and song, and He has become my salvation." (12:2)

Notice the first of our three gleanings.

A Vision of God (6:1-4).

"In the year of King Uzziah's death I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe

filling the temple. Seraphim stood above Him, each having six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called out to another and said, "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts, The whole earth is full of His glory." And the foundations of the thresholds trembled at the voice of him who called out, while the temple was filling with smoke. Then I said, "Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I live among a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts." (Vv. 6-4)

It is when we recognize who God is that there will be a paradigm shift in our way of thinking. A worldview overhaul. It is not man (humanity) who is in control but God, "who is sitting on his throne." God's holiness is integral to the recognition of who God is. Our God is holy, and we too are to be holy, to live a life that is holy, to worship on Sabbath—God's holy day, to be a beacon of His holiness. Recognizing as well that God is His Holy temple -meditating for us, and He is to come. But holiness is not a magic cloak that we put on. We, like Isaiah, must recognize that we are filthy sinners, no different from the Assyrians, uncaring and uninvolved. Unholy with "unclean lips." Remember, ver 5-6, "Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I live among a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts."

Yet, God called Isaiah a man of "unclean lips." A sinner like you and me. We, too, must have a vision of who God is. Isaiah was chosen not because he is perfect but because he has recognized that he is imperfect in the presence of a perfect and holy God. Talk about potentials. "There is no limit to the usefulness of the one who, putting self aside, makes room for the working of the Holy Spirit upon his heart, and lives a life wholly consecrated to God." (*Testimonies for the Church*, 9:19) Talk about what God can do with our lives. Let us consider the next gleaning.

A Touch from God (6:6-7)

"Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a burning coal in his hand, which he had taken from the altar with tongs. He touched my mouth *with it* and said, "Behold, this has touched your lips; and your iniquity is taken away, and your sin is forgiven." (vv. 6-7)

It is only when we recognize our own inadequacy and sinfulness that we can be of use to God's ministry and mission. God is not in need of those untouched by His holiness. These are those who are self-righteous, self-sufficient, and self-centered. It is only when God has touched us that our self-righteousness, self-sufficiency, and self-centeredness will be turned into an experience of having God's righteousness, dependency on God, and a life that is Christ-centered. We are only ready for a mission if we have been "touched by God" - healed from our sickness called sin (cf. Jer 1:9; Luke 6:19; 8:46; Matt 17:7). "He touched my mouth *with it* and said, "Behold, this has touched your lips; and your iniquity is taken away, and your sin is forgiven." Ellen White has an insightful comment, it reads "Standing, as it were, in the full light of the divine presence within the inner sanctuary, he realized that if left to his own imperfection and inefficiency, he would be utterly unable to accomplish the mission to which he had been called." (*Prophets and Kings*, 309.) We need to come to the presence of God and be touched by His mighty healing hands, and be ready for mission. Talk about the experience of forgiveness and salvation. Observe the last of our gleanings:

A Mission from God (6:8)

"Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?" Then I said, "Here am I. Send me!" (V. 8)

God's Word is emancipating. God's Word is enabling. God's Word

is also missiological. God is a God of mission (Missio Dei). God's mission is integral to who He is and to what He does - the work of salvation. In the same way, Isaiah received repentance from God, He has a message of repentance as well (vv 9-13). This call for repentance is no trivial thing. It was to address the core of the very being of man. Notice that verses 9-10 present a projection of the magnitude of the sin problem -"listening," "looking," and "feeling/hearts." This does not deter Isaiah from following God, who has commanded Him to "Go, and tell this people (v. 9)."

Isaiah remained unmoved by his mission mandate. "The prophet's duty was plain; he was to lift his voice in protest against the prevailing evils." (*Prophet and Kings*, 309.) We are to bring the same message of hope to a world in chaos. Amidst the turmoil, we are to bring tranquility and rest in a restless world. This is the same missiological mandate given to us. To preach the everlasting gospel in the context of Revelation 14 in these last days. Talk about our missiological mandate.

An appeal.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church has grown in the past 160 years for this, and we praise the Lord. But our work is not yet ended. The Mission continues. Each member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is to be like the prophet Isaiah "called for a mission." You and I stand on the threshold of Earth's history. God is calling, "Whom shall I send?" May we respond with resolve -"Here I am, send me!" This is Mission Refocus.

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EVENT TITLE

160th Anniversary Celebration of the Seventh-day Adventist Church

THEME

“Chosen for Mission”

BACKGROUND

The office of Archives, Statistics, and Research of the General Conference, through GC secretary Erton Köhler and director David Trim, shared important facts about the Seventh-day Adventist Church beginnings and legacy, in celebration of its 160th anniversary.

On Wednesday, May 20, 1863, 20 leaders called “the embryonic Seventh-day Adventist movement” gathered in Battle Creek, Michigan. There were 18 delegates from five of the existing six state conferences: Michigan, New York, Illinois and Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Iowa. The Vermont Conference dispatched no delegates to Battle Creek, but two delegates were sent from the Seventh-day Adventist churches in Ohio, which had yet to organize into a conference. Some members of the local Battle Creek Adventist church, including Ellen G. White, attended as onlookers. “They were not official delegates ... but were interested observers of proceedings.”

On the record, the first action of the 20 delegates was to elect a temporary chairman and a secretary. They elected Jotham M. Aldrich as chairman and Uriah Smith as secretary. Aldrich was 35 years old and had only converted in 1860. He had not been a Millerite. Smith was just 31, and, remarkably, was not a delegate. Those two facts gave important insights into the founding of the Adventist Church. Then a three-delegate committee inspected and verified the credentials of the delegates. The GC founders valued proper procedure and committees.

It was also recorded that the delegates and onlookers joined in singing Hymn 233, “Long Upon the Mountains,” from the new hymnbook James White had published in 1861.

The theme for 2023 is “Chosen for Mission,” celebrating the GC

legacy for unity, identity, and mission. It highlights God's leadings from the original 3,500 church members and six conferences in 1863 to the 22.2 million baptized members in 212 countries, the 97,811 churches, and the current 753 conferences and missions.

OBJECTIVES:

We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history. – EG White

1. To revisit how God guided our early leaders and pioneers in the organization of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
2. To promote the spirit of Unity, Identity, and Mission as we move into the future, toward the goal of preparing people for the Second Advent.
3. To encourage all leaders and church members to intentionally carry the mission of the church to preach the everlasting gospel and lead many people to Jesus.

LOCATIONS OF CELEBRATION:

To inspire and inform church members to Adventist history, "160" celebrations are encouraged in the following:

1. Union, Conferences, and Mission Headquarters
2. Educational Institutions
3. Hospitals, and Health Care Institutions
4. Publishing Houses
5. All Local Churches
6. Other Institutions

DATES FOR CELEBRATION/COMMEMORATION

Preferably on May 20 and 21, 2023, the actual founding dates of the Adventist Church organization, or any Sabbath weekend

within the year.

PLANS AND SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

1. **Communications Dept.** Promote the 160th celebration through Hope Channel, Facebook, YouTube and other social media platforms.
 1. Produce a video highlighting Adventist World Church History.
 1. Include a glossary of References, Resources (e.g., *Lest We Forget* by George Knight, books on Adventist History and pioneers by James Nix, "Tell the World," the movie; that are easily downloadable (QR, links to be provided)
 1. Produce posters and 160 logo Frames for FB, Instagram, etc.
2. **Dr. Ian Felicitas** to prepare the Chosen for Mission sermon for the May 20 Divine Worship to be downloaded to all local churches.
3. **Ministerial department** is in charge for the translation of the sermon.
4. Play sections of Tell the World, the movie at AY, or in its entirety as a church movie night.
5. **ChM Dept.** prepare children's homily material for Divine Service.
6. **Danita Caderma** to provide a selection of anniversary hymns (from the old hymns), and recommend hymns to be sung on the 160 event.

Suggested Hymns:

- I Know Whom I Have Believed
- Watchman Blow the Gospel Trumpet
- We Are Nearing Home
- Rise Up, O Church

- **Sabbath School department** to provide special feature highlighting the history of the SDA organization.
- **Special Sabbath afternoon program** featuring the Adventist pioneers using presentations, drama, videos, and other art forms.
- **Promotion of special offering** in support of local church mission work.

1. Organize **special outreach and community activities**:
2. Reach out and reclaim inactive and former members in all missions and conferences.
3. Baptize Bible interests or more per district/area.
4. Health Expo, medical outreach, tracts distribution

Reporting:

The Communication department is in charge of the reporting and documentation of the celebration held in different Unions and institutions.

Closing Prayer: Dr. Ben Mergal

160th Anniversary Celebration Committee

Chair: Arnel Gabin

Members: Joni Oliveira, Danita Caderma, Heshbon Buscato, Ron Genebago, Angie Pagarigan, Jo

Ann Amparo, Lhalaine Alfanoso, Virginia Baloyo (recording secretary), Segundino

Asoy (invitee)