

Motion to Reaffirm our Faith (similar motion voted by dozens of churches world-wide and 2 Conf Excoms)

Publicly reject, through a letter to the governing bodies of our church, the inclusion of peer-reviewed Science as an authority for church beliefs. This includes voicing our rejection of official statements on immunization in [2015](#) and [2021](#), and the [official statement on climate change in 1995](#).

Background

We as a church need to re-affirm church beliefs:

1. **The infallible, supreme authority of God's Word:** The Holy Scriptures, Old and New Testaments, are the written Word of God, given by divine inspiration. The Holy Scriptures are the supreme, authoritative, and the infallible revelation of His will. They are the standard of character, the test of experience, the definitive revealer of doctrines, and the trustworthy record of God's acts in history.

Summarised from Fundamental Belief 1. (see: <https://www.adventist.org/holy-scriptures/>)

2. **Belief in the church:** The church is the community of believers who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. The church is God's family; adopted by Him as children, its members live on the basis of the new covenant. The church is the body of Christ, a community of faith of which Christ Himself is the Head. Who is in charge of the church? The ultimate authority of the church is Jesus Christ, who is the cornerstone of the church.

Summarised from Fundamental Belief 12. (see: <https://www.adventist.org/the-church/>)

3. **Belief in church unity:** The church is one body with many members, called from every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. We are all equal in Christ, who by one Spirit has bonded us into one fellowship with Him and with one another; we are to serve and be served without partiality or reservation. Through the revelation of Jesus Christ in the Scriptures we share the same faith and hope, and reach out in one witness to all.

Summarised from Fundamental Belief 14. (see: <https://www.adventist.org/unity-in-the-body-of-christ/>)

4. **Belief in the inspired writings of Ellen White:** 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.

Summarised from Fundamental Belief 18. (see: <https://www.adventist.org/gift-of-prophecy/>)

5. **Our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit:** We are to care for our bodies intelligently. This includes: adequate exercise and rest, healthful diet, and abstinence from the unclean foods, alcoholic beverages, tobacco, and irresponsible use of drugs and narcotics. The SDA health emphasis is a matter of fundamental belief, and the SDA health emphasis is based on the Bible only (and by extension the gift of prophecy).

Summarised from Fundamental Belief 22 (see: <https://www.adventist.org/christian-behavior/>)

Issues for Discussion

1. **Conflict between our Biblically inspired beliefs (above) and the church's official statements** which are listed under beliefs on the church's official <https://www.adventist.org/> website.
2. **The need to publicly address statements** that are publicly available to ensure an accurate reflection of our beliefs to the world and warn of error as per Bible instruction.
3. **A need to increase church unity** under the banner of Biblical truth and leadership

Explanation of the Issues for Discussion

1. Conflict between Biblically inspired beliefs and the church's official statements

i. How these official church statements conflict

- They are listed, along with the fundamental beliefs, under 'beliefs' on [official church website](#)
- They claim to represent the beliefs of the entire church body
- They make statements on what is our dogma and doctrine
- They **include peer-reviewed science** as a source of our **beliefs**
- They have already been used by church entities, private enterprise, and governments to deny freedom of conscience and religion and to persecute church members

ii. First example of official church statement in conflict – [Immunization Statement 2015](#)

"The Seventh-day Adventist Church places strong emphasis on health and well-being. **The Adventist health emphasis is based on biblical revelation, the inspired writing of E.G. White (co-founder of the Church), and on peer-reviewed scientific literature.** As such, we encourage responsible immunization/vaccination, and have no religious or faith-based reason not to encourage our adherents to responsibly participate in protective and preventive immunization programs. We value the health and safety of the population, which includes the maintenance of "herd immunity."

"We are not the conscience of the individual church member, and recognize individual choices. These are exercised by the individual. The choice **not** to be immunized is **not** and should not be seen as the **dogma** nor the **doctrine** of the **Seventh-day Adventist Church.**"

The above is a **direct quote** of the **full** Immunization, Official Statement April 15, 2015

****PLEASE NOTE****

a) The **inclusion of peer-reviewed scientific literature** as being of **equal authority** to the Bible and the inspired writing of E. G. White.

b) The statement can only be based on peer-reviewed science because:

- b.1 The Bible is silent on immunization/vaccination
- b.2 Ellen White is silent on immunization/vaccination.

From Ellen White estate: "Ellen White had much to say about many things relating to health, but she did not provide any specific counsel on vaccinations." (<https://whiteestate.org/about/issues/vaccinations/>)

c) The link between the statement and our dogma and doctrine

d) The double negative, which when normal rules of grammar are applied, would imply that the **positive is true**: that it *is* the dogma and doctrine of the church to be immunized because of peer-reviewed science

What is peer-reviewed science

1. Research papers that have been submitted to a journal by a scientist to be reviewed by peers (who have conducted similar research or work in the industry in question) for their review
2. The peers are selected by the journal that the research paper has been submitted to
3. It costs the researcher several thousands of dollars to have their research published (e.g. The British Medical Journal publication fee is £2500 (~\$5000 Au) (see: [Open access publication fees at the BMJ](#))

iii. Dangers of peer-reviewed science informing our beliefs

1. Peer-reviewed science is not the Bible or the inspired writings of Ellen White.

The inclusion of “peer-reviewed scientific literature” is not consistent with the 28 Fundamental Beliefs. It contradicts the preamble to our Fundamental Beliefs. It states that our beliefs are supported by the Bible alone, in keeping with the Protestant principle of *sola scriptura*. Jesus said in Matthew 4:4 “It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.” God’s words are superior to man’s words – “The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tested in a furnace of earth, purified seven times” – Psalms 12:4. Man’s words are never tested to that degree.

Ellen White Quote 1: “To the law and to the testimony. If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” [Isaiah 8:20.] The people of God are directed to the **Scriptures** as their safeguard against the influence of false teachers and the delusive power of spirits of darkness...By their testimony **every statement** and every miracle must be tested.” GC88 593.1

2. The Bible is not consulted

Ellen White Quote 2: “the study of the sciences is not to be neglected. Books must be used for this purpose: but they should be in harmony with the Bible, for that is the standard.” SpTEd 56.2.

3. It rejects God’s Intervention

Ellen White Quote 3: “Noah, they said, was insane. **Reason, science, and philosophy assured them Noah was a fanatic.** None of the wise men and honored of the earth believed the testimony of Noah. If these great men were at ease and had no fears, why should they be troubled?” Ms. 5, 1876

4. It is questionable, changeable and contradicts itself (two bodies of research can contradict each other)

Research states up to 44% of published peer-reviewed research is fraudulent (see: article by former editor of [British Medical Journal](#) and article in the [Journal of Anaesthesia](#))

Ellen White Quote 4: (She spoke against the Medical Science of her day. Mercury was only identified as unsafe for medicinal use in the 1940s) “Calomel should never be introduced into any human being. Mercury, calomel, and quinine have brought their thousands to untimely graves. There are herbs that are harmless, the use of which will do tenfold more good.” Selected Messages, Book 2, p. 443

5. It advocates error: Peer-reviewed medical science advocates / legitimizes

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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Evolution | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use of Mind-Altering Substances e.g. Marijuana, psilocybin (magic mushroom) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Voluntary Assisted Dying (Euthanasia) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gaia (mother-earth) being offended (climate change) as a cause of disease (including Covid-19) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Benefits of affirming species dysphoria (identifying as an animal) | (Research articles can be made available on request) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender dysphoria (LGBTQ+ identity) | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Benefits of wine | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Late-term abortions resulting in babies born alive and left to die | |

Paul wrote in 1 Timothy 6:20-21 “O Timothy, keep that which is committed to your trust, avoiding profane and vain utterances, and oppositions of **what is falsely called science** (knowledge). Which some professing have erred concerning the faith.” Science is often treated as a higher authority than the Bible when they conflict.

Ellen White Quote 5 “In the future, truth will be counterfeited by the precepts of men. Deceptive theories will be presented as safe doctrines. **False science is one of the agencies that Satan used in the heavenly courts, and it is used by him today... Do not present theories or tests that have no foundation in the Bible.** We have grand, solemn tests to present. “It is written” is the test that must be brought home to everyone. Evangelism p.600

6. **Prioritization and publication of research biased by funding sources:**

See the following research articles:

- [Medical Journals Are an Extension of the Marketing Arm of Pharmaceutical Companies](#)
- [Industry sponsorship and research outcome](#)
- [Relationship between funding source and conclusion among nutrition-related scientific articles.](#)
- [The most transformative drugs of the past 25 years: a survey of physicians](#)
- [The Mass Production of Redundant, Misleading, and Conflicted Systematic Reviews and Meta-analyses](#)

7. **All church institutions and individuals have to abide by the peer-reviewed science:** Our hospitals, schools, and churches would all have to abide by the recommendations of peer-reviewed where the Bible and E.G. White remain silent on issues.

****The Immunization, Official Statement April 15, 2015 was reaffirmed by the General Conference of the Adventist Church in 2021****

Please read the full reaffirmation statement here: [Reaffirming Adventist Church Response to COVID-19, 2021](#) but please note the following statements taken from this reaffirmation statement

“Public Affairs and Religious Liberty department of the General Conference (PARL) provides support and assistance for members who are standing for the religious teachings and doctrines of the Church, as expressed in its **system of beliefs and policy statement** (and also for other faith groups).”

“Claims of religious liberty are not used appropriately in objecting to government mandates or employer programs designed to protect the health and safety of their communities.”

****PLEASE NOTE****

The **system of beliefs and policy statements** are what they advocate drawing upon for deciding whether something is a religious liberty issue and whether a church member should be defended. This understanding is dangerous when peer-reviewed science is included as part of our system of beliefs. Peer-reviewed science advocates a number of erroneous things that are deemed appropriate for the protection of the health and safety of our communities (see points under ‘dangers of peer-reviewed science’).

iv. Additional example of official church statements in conflict - [The Dangers of Climate Change, Official Statement, 1995](#) (Please read the entire statement at this link)

The statement begins with: “**Scientists warn** that...[there are dangers from climate change]” The statement includes: “Despite the clear risks, governments appear slow to act. **The world membership of the Seventh-day Adventist Church requests that the governments** concerned take steps necessary to avert the danger:

1. “By fulfilling the agreement reached in Rio de Janeiro (1992 Convention on Climate Change) **[Agenda21]** to stabilize carbon dioxide emissions by the year 2000 at 1990 levels,
2. “By establishing plans for further reductions in carbon dioxide emissions after the year 2000, and
3. “**By initiating more forcefully public debate** on the risks of climate change.”

PLEASE NOTE

a) **The statement’s basis is on science:** Agenda 21 is based on peer-reviewed science in areas like sustainable development and environmental conservation ([United Nations, 1992](#)).

b) **Inclusion of the world membership as agreeing to this statement, when it was not decided by a General Conference in Session (which would reflect the entire membership)**

b) **The church requests governments – an attempt to have authority over state affairs**

c) **Acceptance of Agenda 21:** Accepting the Rio conventions / Agenda 2021, which focuses on sustainable development at the local level, inherently leads to the acceptance of Agenda 2030, as both frameworks are interconnected in promoting global sustainability goals ([United Nations, 2015](#)).

FURTHER Dangers with peer-reviewed science informing our beliefs

1. **Pope Francis encyclical on climate change “[Laudato Si](#)” advocates Sunday-keeping** as a morally and scientifically legitimate method of dealing with climate change.
2. **Climate Sundays are being justified by peer-reviewed science:** They cite the climate benefits from the anthropause (lockdowns) of COVID19 (see: [Article 1](#), [Article 2](#), [Article 3](#), [Green Sabbath Project](#) and their [Article in Religion and Nature Conservation](#); many more articles can be made available on request)
3. **With science as the basis of our beliefs it can be used to justify the recommendations to keep Sunday:** this will lead to persecution of those who wish to only keep Sabbath as per the 10 Commandments.

2. Need to Publicly* Address Statements and Warn of Error in a Biblical Way

*It needs to be noted that the use of the word publicly is not referring to addressing this statement outside of the church forum and structures.

- i. **Errors in public statements need to be addressed publicly:** The Biblical principal is that private sin is to be rebuked privately (Matthew 18:15-19) and public sins are to be rebuked publicly (1 Corinthians 5:1-11; 1 Timothy 5:20; Galatians 2:11-14).

Ellen White Quote 6 (how to address public wrongs) *“that which had been reprov’d publicly was public wrongs which threatened the prosperity of the church and the cause” 2T 15.2*

- ii. **Public statements of belief that include error undermine our evangelistic effectiveness**
- iii. **Public inclusion of peer-review science as a basis of our beliefs creates disunity in the church:** Unity can only be achieved through establishing our beliefs on God’s Truth – His Word (John 17)
- iv. **Failure to address errors causes us to have ‘blood on our hands’:** God said by the pen of Ezekiel, “When I say to the wicked, ‘You shall surely die,’ and you give him no warning, nor speak to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life, that same wicked *man* shall die in his iniquity; **but his blood I will require at your hand.** Yet, if you warn the wicked, and he does not turn from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you have delivered your soul” (Ezekiel 3:18-19)

Ellen White Quote 7 **“The Gospel message admits of no neutrality.** It counts all men as decidedly for the truth or against it” Sketches from the life of Paul, p. 240

- i. **The General Conference Administrative Committee (Adcom) needs to be directly communicated with:** It is not the local church, conference, union or division that has made this statement. It was made by Adcom. There is no defined mechanism for addressing this statement outlined in the Church Manual. Thus we need to follow the Biblical principle of Matthew 18:15-16 and address Adcom directly.
 - ii. **This is a call to reformation in our church to return to Sola Scriptura:** We have a precedent in the protestant church taken from Martin Luther nailing his 95 Theses to the church door in Wittenburg. This is our opportunity to continue the protest when men’s wisdom is equated with Biblical wisdom.
- ## **3. Need to increase church unity under the banner of Biblical truth and leadership.**
- i. **God’s duly appointed methods of church decision-making on beliefs were not used:** The statements have been written and voted on by Adcom. It’s 58 members are in the United States and are high-level officials in the Seventh-day Adventist church and its affiliated organisations. They do not have the authority to write our beliefs.

Ellen White Quote 8 “God has ordained that the representatives of His church from all parts of the earth, when assembled in a General Conference, shall have authority.” Testimonies, Vol. 9, p. 261

Ellen White Quote 9 “At times, when a small group of men entrusted with the general management of the work have, in the name of the General Conference, sought to carry out unwise plans and to restrict God’s work, I have said that I could no longer regard the voice of the General Conference, represented by these few men, as the voice of God. But this is not saying that the decisions of a General Conference composed of an assembly of duly appointed, representative men from all parts of the field should not be respected. God has ordained that the representatives of His church from all parts of the earth, when assembled in a General Conference, shall have authority. The error that some are in danger of committing is in giving to the mind and judgment of one man, or of a small group of men, the full measure of authority and influence that God has vested in His church in the judgment and voice of the General Conference assembled to plan for the prosperity and advancement of His work. 9Testimonies p260.2

- ii. **The ‘lording’ over church membership is an error and needs to be addressed:** Jesus said, “But Jesus called them to Himself and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave— just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.” (Matthew 20: 25-28)
- iii. **Directly addressing the leadership demonstrates a desire to work with the church leaders**
- iv. **Division is not caused by discussion, but by apostasy (departure from the truth):** Jude wrote, “But you, beloved, remember the words which were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ: how they told you that there would be mockers in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts. These are sensual persons, who cause divisions, not having the Spirit.” (Jude 1:17-19)

Ellen White Quote 10 “The **greatest want** of the world is the want of men,--men [and women] who will not be bought or sold; men who in their inmost souls are **true and honest**; men who **do not fear** to **call sin by its right name**; men whose conscience is as **true to duty** as the needle to the pole; **men who will stand for the right though the heavens fall.**”--Education, p. 57.