

Constitution and Bylaws of the Adventist Theological Society

CONSTITUTION

Article I: Name

This organization shall be known as the Adventist Theological Society, hereinafter referred to as the Society or ATS.

Article II: Mission Statement

The Adventist Theological Society is an international, professional, nonprofit organization established as a resource for the Seventh-day Adventist Church to foster biblical, theological, and historical studies supportive of the Church's message and mission.

Article III: Core Values

Sec. 1. The Adventist Theological Society accepts the Bible as the foundational authority in matters of faith and life and upholds Christ as the only Savior of the world. It affirms the "Fundamental Beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church" as its theological position and adheres to the "Methods of Bible Study" document as voted by the General Conference Executive Committee at the Annual Council Session in 1986 (first published in the *Adventist Review*, January 22, 1987, and later included in *Statements, Guidelines, and Other Documents: A Compilation*, Communication Department, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2000) as its hermeneutical position. The centrist focus of the Society places it against all forms of theological extremism, avoiding theological liberalism and legalistic or literalistic interpretations of the Scriptures.

Sec. 2. The Society seeks to accomplish its mission by emphasizing the following doctrinal points of the Seventh-day Adventist Church which have been challenged in recent discussions:

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- a. The Society affirms that Christ's substitutionary death on the cross was both the supreme revelation of God's love for humankind and an atoning sacrifice for sin and that His life provided a perfect example for His people to imitate. His substitutionary death pays the penalty for sin, provides forgiveness, and creates gratitude and saving faith in all who receive Him. The cross is central to every aspect of life and work, of witness and outreach, of research and doctrine.
- b. The Society affirms that the Bible is the Word of God—the inspired, infallible revelation of truth in written form. The Bible is its own interpreter, provides the foundation and context for scholarship and the totality of life, and is the unerring standard for doctrine and experience.
- c. The Society endorses a biblical hermeneutic that employs the historical-grammatical method in the study of Scripture, recognizing the necessity of the Holy Spirit's aid in so doing. It rejects the use of any method in biblical study “that retains the principle of criticism which subordinates the Bible to human reason” (Methods of Bible Study Committee Report, Preamble), tradition, or experience.
- d. The Society affirms the literal reading and meaning of Genesis 1-11 as an objective, factual account of earth's origin and early history; that the world was created in six literal, consecutive, contiguous 24-hour days (Exodus 20:8-11); that the earth was subsequently devastated by a literal global flood, and that the time elapsed since creation week is to be measured in terms of a short chronology of a few thousand years.
- e. The Society affirms a real sanctuary in heaven and the pre-advent judgment of believers beginning in 1844, based upon the historicist view of prophecy and the year-day principle as taught in Scripture.
- f. The Society believes that the writings of Ellen G. White possess more than pastoral authority and that in them God has spoken as He did through prophets and apostles of old to instruct His people concerning His will and the course He would have His people pursue. The Bible alone is the only foundation of Seventh-day Adventist doctrine; Ellen White's writings, while subject to and judged by the Scriptures, are an invaluable tool for illuminating Scripture and confirming church teaching.
- g. The Society affirms the identification of the Seventh-day Adventist Church as the remnant movement called by God to proclaim the three angels'

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messages of Revelation 14, which prepare the world for the soon return of Christ.

- h. The Society affirms its faithfulness to the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and each member pledges to continue supporting it through tithes, offerings, personal effort, and influence.

Article IV: Goals

Sec. 1. Specific goals of the Society are to:

- a. Promote sound biblical scholarship and interpretation among Seventh-day Adventist scholars, theologians, teachers, pastors, and students.
- b. Explore revealed truth in order to better comprehend it.
- c. Create a spiritual and intellectual atmosphere for fellowship and dialogue among members and offer them moral support and collegiality.
- d. Uphold the fundamental beliefs and piety of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in education, in church life, and in the completion of its mission.
- e. Sponsor Bible symposia and conventions in different parts of the world and provide opportunities for the reading, discussion, and dissemination of scholarly papers.
- f. Interact with Bible scholars and theologians beyond the Seventh-day Adventist community of faith.
- g. Publish theological literature.
- h. Be a positive voice in the Church and society at large.

Article V: Categories of Membership

Sec. 1. Professional membership in the Society is open to Seventh-day Adventist scholars, pastors, administrators, and educators with a master's or doctoral degree who by academic training or professional practice are, or have been, engaged in theological education or church leadership, and who uphold and promote the beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Sec. 2. Associate membership in the Society is open to anyone who has special interest in theological issues and upholds and promotes the beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

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Article VI: Executive Committee and Officers

- Sec. 1. All Officers, Editors, and Trustees of the Society must be members in good standing of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the Society.
- Sec. 2. All Officers and the Editor of the *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society (JATS)* must hold professional membership.
- Sec. 3. The Executive Committee of the Society shall consist of the Officers, Editor of *JATS*, Editor of *Perspective Digest (PD)*, past-Presidents, and Trustees.
- Sec. 4. The Officers of the Society shall be the President, the President-elect, the Treasurer, the Executive Secretary, the Vice President for Publications, and the Vice President for Global Outreach.
- Sec. 5. The President shall serve for a two-year term. The President-elect shall serve for a two-year term, whereupon he/she shall serve as President. The Treasurer shall serve for a five-year term. The Executive Secretary, the Vice Presidents, the Editors, and each Trustee shall serve for a four-year term. All terms commence in January and end in December. All Officers, Editors, and Trustees can be re-elected, but the President only after at least one term out of office.
- Sec. 6. Honorary Trustees may be appointed by the Executive Committee, which shall determine their number and term of service.

Article VII: Chapters of the Society

- Sec. 1. All chapters of the Society are organized under the guidance of the Executive Committee and are responsible to it.
- Sec. 2. The Collegiate Adventist Theological Society (CATS) chapters and other ATS youth events are part of the Society's resource for the Church to foster sound biblical and theological studies and revival among the Seventh-day Adventist youth.

BYLAWS

Article I: Membership

- Sec. 1. Candidacy for membership shall be based upon receipt by the Society office of:
- a. The signed Society Membership Form, indicating acceptance of the Society's Constitution and Bylaws, unreserved commitment to the mission of

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the Society, and active support of the core values and goals of the Society; and

b. The membership fee.

The Executive Committee reserves the right to deny membership to candidates when deemed advisable.

Sec. 2. Under currency exchange difficulties, the Executive Committee may waive membership fee requirements.

Sec. 3. Membership is reconfirmed annually upon the signing of the Annual Reaffirmation form and the payment of the membership fee. If reaffirmation forms are not received for two consecutive years, membership will be considered terminated.

Sec. 4. A member may be disaffiliated for not upholding the Constitution and Bylaws of the Society or for misrepresenting ATS. Such action requires a two-thirds majority vote of the Executive Committee. A disaffiliated person may appeal to the Executive Committee. If the Executive Committee, after review, upholds its previous action, the disaffiliated person may request that the Executive Committee bring the matter to a duly called business meeting. A two-thirds majority vote of members present and voting at the business meeting is necessary for reinstatement to membership.

Sec. 5. As the work of the Society is a church-related function with voluntary membership and in no sense has to do with civil or legal procedure, any disaffiliation appeal to the Executive Committee will involve only the disaffiliated person and the Executive Committee. If an appeal goes to a business meeting, it will be considered only by members of the Society in their capacity as members.

Article II: Business Meetings

Sec. 1. Business meetings shall be called by the Executive Committee and announced by the President no later than one month in advance of the meeting date and are open to members in regular standing.

Sec. 2. Fifteen members shall constitute a quorum for the conduct of business, three of whom must be Society Officers, including either the President or the President-elect.

Sec. 3. Officers, Editors, and Trustees of the Society shall be elected by vote of the members at the general annual business meeting of the Society.

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Article III: Executive Committee

Sec. 1. The Executive Committee of the Society shall establish policies and carry out actions on behalf of the Society. It shall appoint committees and fix the time, place, and programs of all business meetings, including the general annual business meeting. It shall constitute the Nominating Committee and shall nominate all Officers, Editors, and Trustees. It shall set the amount of membership fees, subscription rates, and like matters and receive an accounting by the Treasurer of the financial activities and status of the Society.

Sec. 2. If the need arises to replace an Officer, Editor, or Trustee as the result of resignation, illness, or death, or to terminate the services of such for not upholding the Society's Constitution and Bylaws, or for misrepresenting the Society, this shall be expedited by a two-thirds majority vote of the Executive Committee. Such an appointment shall be for the interim period until the next general annual business meeting, at which time the serving individual may be a candidate, along with others, for election to fill the vacancy for a full term.

Sec. 3. A quorum of the Executive Committee shall consist of seven, including either the President or the President-elect.

Article IV: Amendments

Proposed amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws of the Society may be submitted to the Executive Committee for study and, if approved by the Executive Committee, distributed to the membership for study at least two months before the next general annual business meeting. Adoption of any such amendments shall require a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting.

Article V: Dissolution

If ever deemed necessary, dissolution of the Society shall be according to the Tennessee Code Annotated Sections 48-64-101 et. seq., that govern non-profit organizations.