

Adventist Theological Society

Constitution

The fundamental principles that guide us and shape our community

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:
 - 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 holds 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 the use of historical-grammatical, biblical interpretation of the Scripture, recognizing the necessity of the Holy Spirit's aid in so doing. We reject 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; 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' messages of Revelation 14:6-13, which prepare the world for the soon return of Christ.
- h. The Society affirms its faithfulness to the Seventh-day Adventist Church and 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 uphold and promote the beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and have a special interest in theological issues.
- 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.

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, the Editor of Perspective Digest (PD), the 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.