

What Seventh-day Adventists Believe

This brochure is written to help you understand who Seventh-day Adventists are and why we care deeply about the people in our community.

Our ultimate desire as a church is to share God's life-transforming love. That is why Seventh-day Adventists are focused on life-change. We believe that what we share with the world is life-transforming in positive ways and that it is a privilege to share it with others.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is one of many that follow Jesus. Our name comes from our observance of the seventh-day Sabbath and our belief in the soon second coming (Advent) of Jesus.

The Adventist Church welcomes all people to their worship services regardless of their religious background or persuasion - or lack thereof. That's why our name says that we are a "community church" with Adventist beliefs and roots. The Bible is the source of our beliefs - the source of our understanding about God and his will for our lives.

We learn how to live from Jesus' teachings, example, and His Word, the Bible. He teaches us how to love God, to love and respect each other and ourselves. He eagerly gives us the gift of His love to make such love possible.

In His Ten Commandments, God explains to humanity how we can have a healthy relationship with Him and with each other. The Commandments are a trustworthy basic guide for living an abundant life. The first four guide us in our relationship with God, the remaining six remind us to treat our fellow human beings with love and respect.

Seventh-day Adventists do not believe that we are the only committed followers of Jesus; neither do we believe that we are the only church that God is using on this earth. We do believe that we are a people with a God-inspired mission in life - to acquaint people with what God is really like, to introduce them to a personal relationship with Him, and to tell the world that he is returning soon to earth in triumph.

Formal membership in the Seventh-day Adventist Church includes baptism by immersion which symbolizes our union with God, the forgiveness of our

sins, and our desire to enter into a new life. In baptism, we intentionally choose a new beginning and make God the Lord of our lives as we accept his forgiveness for our rebellion.

Adventists believe the Bible's account of creation which tells us that God made everything—the heavens, the earth, the sea and every living thing from nothing. In the beginning, his creation was glorious and perfect in every detail. The Bible says, “God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good.”(Genesis 1:31) His crowning work was the creation of man and woman—formed in His very own image. God did not force His children's love and obedience, but gave them the freedom to obey or disobey Him.

Sadly, the first humans on earth, Adam and Eve, chose to rebel against Him - what the Bible calls “sin.” As a result, we experience the effects of their choice, and ours since then. Our rebellion distances us from our Creator. When Adam and Eve sinned, the trust relationship was damaged, and they could no longer communicate with Him face-to-face. The earth, once a place of life, joy, peace and love, would now experience death, disease, suffering, sorrow, broken relationships and misery. That's how the human story began.

There was a price for humanity's rebellion against God; the “wages” for our freely made choice are death - initially we experience the death all humanity experiences on this earth, and eventually, eternal separation from God, the source of all life.

But that's not how the story ends, because there is good news, really good news! Even before Adam and Eve made their fatal choice, God had prepared a plan to bring back perfect harmony. Jesus would come to earth and die to ransom us from Satan's clutches.

The death of Jesus teaches us that sin is best understood, not simply as breaking a law, but rather as breaking the relationship between us and God and between us as humans. The death of Jesus ransoms us from Satan's Kingdom of Darkness and teaches us that God's love is so great that He will do whatever it takes to restore our eternal friendship with Him. God gave us the ultimate gift of His Son. He continues to give us new life daily through the power of His Holy Spirit - what the Bible calls “Salvation.”

Salvation and new life are gifts from Jesus, who is God, expressing Himself in human form. Because He is fully God, He has the power and authority to forgive and save us. Because He is man, miraculously born of a virgin, he experiences our joys and sorrows.

The Bible tells us that after God created the world in six days He rested on the first Sabbath day, not because He was exhausted from His work of creation, but because He was deeply satisfied with what he had accomplished. To celebrate His Creation, He set the seventh day apart as weekly anniversary of what He had done. In the Fourth Commandment he reminds us of that gift and asks us to celebrate it with Him every week.

That is why we choose to observe the “Sabbath” - a 24 hour period from sundown Friday evening to sundown Saturday evening. We put aside our normal work, the clamor and pressures of every day life and our self-interests and focus on worship, fellowship, rest and relaxation, helping others and studying the Bible. We find that God’s promise in Isaiah 58:13 is really true and that when we begin to delight in the Sabbath it opens the door to a delightful relationship with him we experience in no other way. That’s why we love to share about Sabbath with others!

Adventists believe that Jesus will return to this earth in glory to once and for all deliver His people from the presence and power of sin. When He does, he will restore all things to what they were in the beginning. “I am going there to prepare a place for you,” Jesus said. “When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am.”

We don’t know all the details about heaven, but we believe it is a very real place - a place where people from every generation, every culture, and every nation on earth will experience everlasting life, love, and joy in fellowship with one another and with our Lord. When Jesus returns to this earth, the entire universe will know beyond a doubt that God is indeed a God of forgiveness and love and that His ways are best. Loved ones who have rested asleep in their graves will be called back to life to join us in our new home in a perfect new world—a world free from pain, suffering and death.

Seventh-day Adventists look forward to the day when Jesus returns to this earth restore it. In the meantime we believe that God wants us to experience the most abundant life possible.

That is why Seventh-day Adventists believe that a wholesome lifestyle. This includes good physical, mental and spiritual health. So we try to eat the healthiest diet we can get, exercise on a regular basis, drink plenty of good fresh water, get lots of fresh air, sunshine and sleep and avoid those things that are destructive to our minds and bodies. And it works!

Seventh-day Adventists also take seriously the idea that God goes to extraordinary lengths to communicate with people on earth. We believe in the power of prayer and that when we pray, we cooperate with God and free Him to work in ways He could not otherwise.

We also believe that in these last days of earth's history He speaks, and will speak through dreams and visions to his people - just as he spoke prophetically in the past.

One instance of this occurring, we believe, is through the ministry of Ellen White. We believe that she wrote and spoke for God when our church was founded - providing encouragement, guidance and spiritual and organizational accountability.

We also firmly believe, to quote her, that anything she wrote was not to be considered to be equal with or to replace the Bible. She wrote to encourage us to read and to study the Bible ourselves to discover God's will for our lives. She was, to use her terminology, a "lesser light" to point us to the "greater light" of the Bible. Ellen White led people to Jesus and focused on living a life abundantly filled with a personal relationship with God.

Finally, Seventh-day Adventists are a people committed to serving others above self. We operate a very large hospital and clinic system spread around the world; We are firmly committed to Christian education and sponsor a string of Christian schools and universities covering the globe; and ADRA, the Adventist Development and Relief Agency is one of the most respected disaster and development agencies in the world. Locally, most Seventh-day Adventist churches operate "community service centers" where we provide food, clothes and other necessities for those in our communities who are experiencing hardship.

Seventh-day Adventists believe in Salvation through Jesus Christ alone. We do not believe that you have to be a part of our church family to be saved. But, if you would like to become part of one of the fastest growing churches on the planet and to join us in God's plan to transform our world, one person at a time by serving them and introducing them to God through the life of Jesus, we would love to have you join us. There's always room for one more in the family!

If you have any questions about the God we love and serve, the life He has called us to, or the Auburn Seventh-day Adventist Church, please don't hesitate to contact us. We'd love to share the abundant life He offers, with you.

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