



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about the Global Adventist Pastors' Survey

Brief description of the research project

The development, implementation, and analysis of the world Church's 2022–2023 Global Pastors' Survey for the Future Plans Working Group (FPWG) of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. This research project is managed by the Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Geographical scope/Target audience(s)

Adventist pastors currently employed in local churches in all the Divisions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Purpose/objectives of the research

The research objective is to design and implement a Pastoral Survey instrument focused on the following areas:

- Pastors' priorities in and attitude to mission,
- The spiritual life of pastors,
- Pastors' attitude to the Adventist Church's Fundamental Beliefs,
- Pastors' attitude to church authority, relationship to the conference/union/division/GC, and pastors' role in decision-making,
- The Adventist message they preach (Do they preach the full message of the Adventist Church?),
- Pastors' attitude to discipleship (Do they have the right balance of church programs?),
- Existence or absence of contingency plans for the local church against a pandemic or similar crisis in the future, and,
- Pastors' attitude to and experience of Adventist Education industries.

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How can we guarantee confidentiality?

No individual will ever be identified in any report. In any case, it will not be possible to identify participants from the answers that are provided. The research team is interested in overall patterns of responses, not individual responses. Of course, we cannot find overall patterns unless individuals participate, so your response is important.

We can guarantee confidentiality because:

- Your survey will be one of several thousand that will be in an anonymous data file. We will only look at the overall pattern of results, not at the answers provided by any one individual,
- Data entry will be done by you as you work through the Survey on the internet, or (if you fill in a paper survey) by somebody who will not know you are, who will either be manually entering your responses into SurveyMonkey or will be using a scanner and a computer-based reader, and,
- To maintain confidentiality, we will report only the responses of subgroups that are large enough to prevent anybody from being identified.

What types of questions are in the survey?

The questions in the survey will ask you what you think a minister should be doing, about your experience as a minister, some details about yourself (e.g.: age, education), and what you think about various theological ideas. To keep the survey shorter, the questions have been broken into three groups, and participants will be randomly assigned to the different sets of questions.

The questions come from a variety of **sources**, such as:

- The 2013 Global Adventist Pastors' Survey,
- Research into the experience of pastors (e.g.: <https://www.pastoralcareinc.com/statistics>),
- Other surveys conducted at the behest of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists (e.g.: the Institutional Worker's Survey, the Global [SDA] Members Survey),
- The Australian Church Life Survey. The research team thanks Australian Church Life for permission to use a question from their pastor's survey,
- The Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life / U.S. Religious Landscape Survey (a survey conducted in the US and internationally covering all belief systems, and including over 30,000 interviews),
- Some questions were used from the following: The Quest Scale (Alberto Voci, Giulia L. Bosetti, Chiara A. Veneziani, "Measuring Religion as End, Means, and Quest: The Religious Life and Orientation Scale," *TPM-Testing, Psychometrics, Methodology in Applied Psychology* 24 [2017]: 83-98); the Religious Fundamentalism Scale (Bob Altemeyer and Bruce Hunsberger, "A Revised Religious Fundamentalism Scale: The Short and Sweet of It," *The International Journal for the Psychology of Religion* 14 (2004) 47-54); and the Intrinsic / Extrinsic Religious Orientation Scale (Panagiota Darvyri, Michael Galanakis, Adamantios G. Avgoustidis, Niki Pateraki, Spyros Vasdekis, Christina Darviri, "The Revised Intrinsic/Extrinsic Religious Orientation Scale in a Sample of Attica's Inhabitants," *Psychology* (2014): 1557-1567),

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- A few questions are based on items found in some of the scales featured in the publication by Peter C. Hill and Ralph W. Hood, Jr., eds., *Measures of Religiosity* (Birmingham, AL: Religious Education, 1999),
- The research publications of the Barna group have also given the basic ideas for a few questions, and,
- Two questions were adapted from the survey instrument of Randall L. Haffner, "Identification of Seventh-day Adventist Health Core Convictions: Alignment with Current Healthcare Practice," PhD Dissertation, Andrews University 2006.

Who will be invited to participate?

Participants will be drawn from the pool of Seventh-day Adventist pastors working in local churches in the 13 Divisions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Given that we wish to be able to report at Division level, or even union level, and we wish to both generate valid statistical inferences and reports that will not identify individuals, it means that in many parts of the Church we will need to use the total number of pastors based in local churches as the sample. In places where there are large numbers of pastors working in local churches in a given Conference, we will use a randomized process to select those pastors approached to participate in the survey.

What will be done with the Results of the Surveys?

Preliminary and final reports will be shared with the Future Plans Working Group of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists according to a pre-defined timeline, and the officers of the Divisions where data has been collected. Papers will be presented at conferences both in the academic and church arenas, and articles will be submitted to peer-reviewed journals for publication. It is likely that one or more books will be published on the basis of the survey data. It is expected that these books will be available through Amazon.com.

Who are the researchers?

Lead Investigator:

- Robert K. McIver, BSc, BA(Theol), BD(Hons), MA, PhD; Professor, Avondale Seminary, Avondale University; Director of the Avondale Scripture Spirituality and Society Research Center. Wk ph +61 2 4980 2233.

Team members:

- Wendy Jackson, BHB, MBChB, Dip Paeds, FRACP, MDiv, PhD. Head of School, Avondale Seminary, Avondale University.
- Erika Puni, MA (Rel), MA (Missiology), PhD. Lecturer in Church Ministry and Ministry Practicum Director; Avondale Seminary, Avondale University.
- Brendan Pratt, BA(Theol), MTh, PhD. Director, Ministerial Association, Australian Union Conference.
- Steven Currow, BA(Theol), MA, DMin. President Newbold College, United Kingdom.

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- The General Conference Office of Archives and Statistics,
- Avondale's Spirituality and Worship Research Centre, and,
- The Avondale Scripture, Spirituality and Society Research Centre.

What do I do if I have a complaint?

If you have a complaint or concern about this research project or the way it is conducted, contact the Secretary, Human Research Ethics Committee, Avondale University, PO Box 19, Cooranbong NSW 2265, Australia, phone +61 2 4980 2121, fax +61 2 4980 2117, or email: researchoffice@avondale.edu.au.

You can also alternatively contact one of the following researchers:

- Dr Robert McIver: email (rob.mciver@avondale.edu.au); ph. (+61 2 4980 2233); fax (+61 2 4980 2118);
- Dr Wendy Jackson: email (Wendy.Jackson@avondale.edu.au); ph. (+61 2 4980 2229)

Any of the researchers may be contacted by mail as well at Avondale University, PO Box 19, Cooranbong NSW 2265, Australia.

We would be very pleased if you could help us with this important research.

Many thanks for taking the time to complete the survey,

Rob, Wendy, Erika, Brendan, and Steve.

Robert K. McIver, PhD

Professor, Avondale Seminary

Director Scripture Spirituality and Society Research Centre

Editor, Avondale Academic Press <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1710-7790>



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582 Freemans Drive (PO Box 19), Cooranbong NSW 2265, Australia

Telephone: +61 2 4980 2233 | Fax: +61 2 4980 2118

ACN: 108 186 401 | ABN: 53 108 186 401 | CRICOS: 02731D | RTO 91191 | TEQSA: PRV12015 www.avondale.edu.au