

 **ANN**<sup>®</sup>  
**STYLEGUIDE**  
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SEVENTH-DAY  
ADVENTIST CHURCH

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# ADVENTIST NEWS NETWORK

Edited by Ansel Oliver and Elizabeth Lechleitner  
**AdventistNews@gc.adventist.org**

Designed by Tanya Holland

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*"Companies that are deprived of great storytellers can't hope to capture the imagination of their customers, employees, or people who invest in them."*

- Chet Holmes

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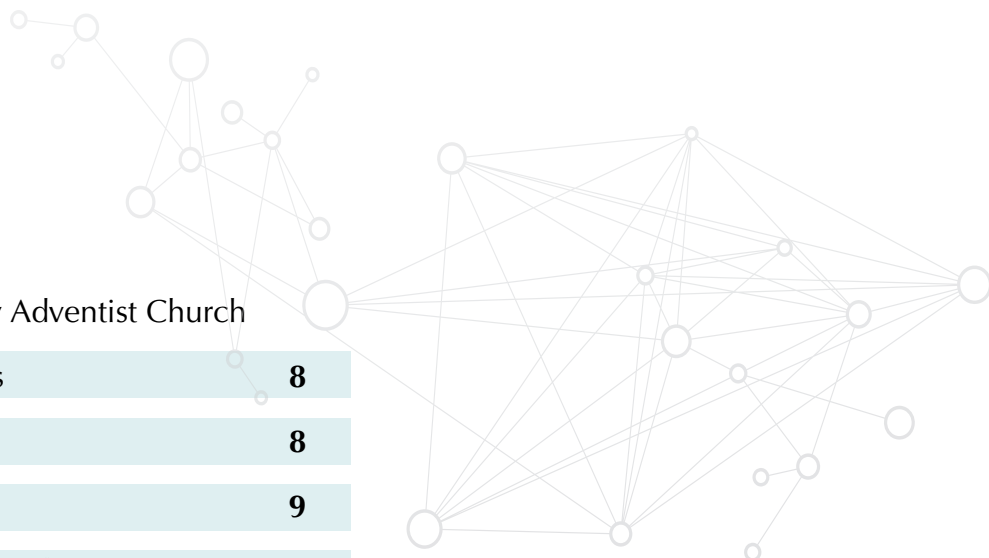
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## i. Foreword

### Why ANN?

The news format is almost universally recognized and accepted. A church official once said that some people read news more than their Bible. “If so, we would rather it be our news,” he said.

News reflects and connects the global faith community of some 18 million members. News also speaks to audiences who may never read Adventist evangelistic material.

Adventist News Network was established in 1994 and is the official news service of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. ANN provides content for websites, publications, broadcasters and social media accounts around the world. It is produced by the Communication department at the church’s world headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States.

ANN is the Adventist Church’s news voice among the mainstream media. Many stories that fit ANN’s news values will also meet the news values of the media worldwide and in your local area.

While the majority of ANN’s stories report positive topics, it also strives to cover more challenging issues: proposed changes in church policy, off-shoot movements, racial tensions, financial failure of institutions and apostasy rates.

When attempting to communicate to a broader audience in the community—especially the media—the church must speak a language that will be understood. Using in-house jargon can be alienating.

ANN follows the writing style of the Associated Press Stylebook. In addition, the ANN Glossary in this Styleguide is used when describing church matters to offer a better understanding of the church, its doctrines and administrative structure.

While ANN serves the world church, it is hoped that each regional administration—conferences, unions and divisions—will commit to keeping members and publics informed of news in their area with their own news service. ANN will only fulfill its potential and mission to the extent that it develops a strong partnership with each of the church’s world regions. Those that commit whole-heartedly to this ministry will hire experienced journalists and public relations professionals on their Communication department staff.

Two quotes perhaps illustrate the need for doing so:

*“Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.”*

—Acts 6:3 (NKJV)

The book of Acts notes that the growing church needed other people to fulfill the Dorcas ministry so pastors could focus on their work of studying the Bible and ministering. Certainly, ministers are the key employees of the denomination, but other Spirit-filled people with specialized professional skill sets are needed to offer support for ministers and the church.

*“Let the press be utilized, and let every advertising agency be employed that will call attention to the work. This should not be regarded as nonessential.”*

—from the book "Evangelism" (Ev 103.1)

That was Adventist Church co-founder Ellen G. White's advice written in 1875. Today, qualified professionals are still needed and communicators will help advance the church's mission.

The need for hiring experienced journalists goes back to the church's earliest roots in Communication ministry. In 1912, the Adventist Church world headquarters hired Baltimore Sun newspaper reporter Walter Burgan to establish the Bureau of Press Relations, the precursor to today's Communication department. Church administrators realized they needed help in responding to the media's attacks on church doctrines. Leaders realized the importance of having a specialized professional to respond to media—someone who could speak their language.

It is our hope that experienced journalists and public relations professionals will be appointed as Communication directors in church administrative units worldwide to help the church fulfill its mission.

Additionally, we are grateful for the help and support of volunteer professionals who give of their time in regions where the church has yet been unable to commit to this ministry.

## *ii. Overview*

# The Seventh-day Adventist Church

The church's mission is to show people the character of God's love, to invite them to accept His gift of salvation and to worship their Creator in a community of fellow believers.

The Adventist Church is committed to the development of minds and characters through education and joyous living in celebration of health. The denomination promotes healthful living and operates the largest Protestant network of hospitals and schools worldwide.

Adventists also strive to defend religious freedom of belief. The denomination launched in 1893 what is now the International Religious Liberty Association ([irla.org](http://irla.org)), a non-sectarian organization promoting freedom of conscience for all people everywhere. The church also provides disaster relief and community development projects worldwide through the Adventist Development and Relief Agency ([adra.org](http://adra.org)).

## 1. Writing News

News writing answers six questions: Who? What? When? Where? Why? and How?

Write the most significant information first, and leave less significant details for later in the story. Most readers won't read much of your story, so serve them by giving them the most important details first.

Think, "If I had only one sentence to tell this story, what would I write?" That sentence is your lead sentence.

Use quotes from your subjects and insert them into the story to validate a statement.

Try to use at least three sources for your story—people, charts, videos, policy books, etc.

Keep reading and see how other sections in this Styleguide will make your writing stronger.

## 2. What Stories to Report

Here are some stories you can report whether you're reporting for a local church, conference, union, division or the Adventist Church headquarters:

- Speeches from church officials (click link to see examples)

[president](#) (click to open links)

[secretary](#)

[treasurer](#)

- Significant actions of committees, boards or constituency meetings.
- Trends in the denomination locally—membership, attendance, school enrollment, etc.
- Financial matters—how much is contributed and how it's being spent.
- Religious liberty developments – encouraging or otherwise.
- New personnel.
- Awards.
- New methods of outreach.
- Church's response or statement on social issues.
- Deaths of leaders and prominent members.
- Fun features about quirky ministries and personalities.



### 3. Paragraph Length

How long should a paragraph be in newswriting? Generally, one or two sentences. Sometimes three. And once in a while, four.

There's a saying: "How do you eat an elephant?" The answer is, "One bite at a time." Give readers lots of little bites instead of plunking a huge chunk of text in front of them.

Make it easy for readers to want to read at least a few sentences of your story by showing small "bites" of text. Top tier news agencies know this and do it, too.

For example, which of the two following stories are you more likely to want to start reading?:

Seventh-day Adventists were some of the first responders to a commercial factory building collapse in Savar, Bangladesh, that has captured international media attention and sparked debate over building standards.

Ten Adventist youth trained in earthquake preparedness and potential building collapse situations were some of the first onsite after the Wednesday, April 24 collapse and helped bring out 30 victims, four of whom were still alive.

Another group of 125 Adventist young people went to the disaster site on Saturday, April 27 to assist rescue teams. The group helped recover three women as well as several bodies. They also provided food and water to survivors.

The eight-story commercial building is known as Rana Plaza and is located approximately 45 kilometers from the capital city of Dhaka.

The building housed five garment factories, production lines, banks and hundreds of shops. An estimated 3,500 people were in the building at the time of the collapse, the majority of whom were female factory workers under the age of 25. To date, approximately 400 bodies have been recovered and 2,444 injured people have been rescued, but hundreds are still unaccounted for.

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It's the same story shown with short paragraphs and long paragraphs. Use short paragraphs to make it easy for the reader to want to keep reading instead of having to slog through huge blocks of text.

## 4. Prove your News is Newsworthy

University of Maryland journalism professor John Franklin said the job of a journalist is to report:

- What happened
- What it means

A good journalist tells the news, but also proves to the reader why it's significant and worth reporting.

Also, many readers will only read a sentence or two of a news story. So if they only read one sentence, serve them by making your leads tight and giving them the most important information: 1. What happened and 2. What it means (the significance).

Here is a great example, which is found in a story from the archives of the Southern Judea Union Tidings:

*HEADLINE: Philistine army flees after top soldier killed*

*SUBHEAD: Teen's slaying of giant ends bid to occupy Hebrew territory*

*The Philistines' tallest and most feared soldier, who for days had mocked the Hebrew army, was killed by a teen shepherd yesterday, likely ending the Philistines' attempted occupation of Israel.*

Notice how this pattern appears effectively both in the lead, as well as in the headline and subhead. The headline says what happened and the subhead says what it means. The lead sentence also says both the news and the significance. And notice how that lead sentence does that: It tells what happens, and then a comma appears before the explanation of the significance. A writer shouldn't do this every time, but it's done often in many top news organizations.

Here's another lead, this one from the Jerusalem News & Views magazine archives:

*A man walked out of his tomb three days after dying by crucifixion, giving strong credence to his claim of being the Messiah.*

Many top news organizations split their leads with a comma to underscore the news and its significance. Here are some phrases that can often follow that comma:

- , a move that underscores
- , the first time a...
- , the latest sign...
- , potentially setting the stage for...
- , forcing a debate...
- in a move that highlights (no comma)...
- , reflecting an increase...
- , marking the beginning...
- , offering evidence...
- , quickening the pace of...

## 5. How to keep your readers' attention covering meetings and speeches

An unfortunate pattern we sometimes see with beginners (Not to criticize, we were beginners once, too) is to report on a meeting or a speech.

Meetings and speeches are not news—what is **voted** at the meeting and what is **said** at the speech is news.

In the future, think: “Here I am at this meeting or speech. What is the real issue here?” Report on that—either what was accomplished or voted at the meeting, or the speaker's key points.

Too often we see headlines such as:

*Leaders meet to discuss issues*

or

*Conference president speaks Saturday afternoon*

These headlines and their subsequent story do not answer the question of “Why?” A reporter needs to explain what leaders accomplished, why the issue was worth discussing, or why the conference president spoke.

More effective headlines would report the *issue*, not the façade of the meeting or speech. Better headlines for the above examples would be:

*Leaders vote to reduce spending by 5%*

or

*Conference president calls for renewed community outreach emphasis*

In professional news media, you'll never see headlines that read:

*Red Sox Play Yankees*

or

*Court Conducts Case*

The above ineffective headlines report meetings. Remember, effective headlines report results:

*Sox's 9th-inning Homer Beats Yankees*

or

*Smith Found Guilty*

Here's a classic example of how the untrained writer covers a speech, particularly for a religious publication. Consider the following ineffective lead:

*On June 3, thousands gathered at the Southern Judea Conference retreat center to hear Jesus of Nazareth speak on the weekend's theme "Sermon on the Mount."*

*He spoke and satisfactorily answered questions on topics such as spiritual weakness, grieving people, and salt. Conference attendees came from Cyrene, Antioch, Jerusalem, Corinth, Tyre and other parts of the Southern Judea Union.*

*"This was a great speech, all of us were truly blessed," said Saul Lubstein, Southern Judea Union president.*

This type of lead makes your readers want to scream, "WHAT DID THE SPEAKER ACTUALLY SAY???"

Suggestions:

Delay the date. While the question "When" is important, it's not as important as "What" or "Who" and should generally not lead a first sentence. This ineffective lead begins with the date and the meeting. To better see beyond the meeting façade, lead with "Who" or "What." Example:

[Northern California Men's Choruses from California Minister Through Song](#) (click to open link)

The subject's name isn't as important as who he is—offer a title or some context first. Say "Actor Meryl Streep" or "News anchor Brian Williams." ex:

[City of Atlanta welcomes Adventists during press conference](#) (click to open link)

Most importantly, first report the answers given instead of just the topics or questions asked. For example:

[Website coordinates worldwide prayer for church business session](#) (click to open link)

[In East-Central Africa, Adventist president urges 'ownership' of church](#) (click to open link)

[How are General Conference Session delegates selected?](#) (click to open link)

Now see how cutting through the façade of a meeting allows you to identify the real news with a more effective lead:

*A Nazarene carpenter claiming to be the Messiah is turning religious tradition on its head by accusing leaders of worshipping rules instead of the loving Creator behind them.*

*Jesus of Nazareth blessed the mentally weak and grieving at the Southern Judea Conference retreat center on June 3, saying that they, not religious zealots, would inherit salvation.*

*"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven," Jesus told the crowd of roughly 5,000.*

Now an example of how to report a meeting. First, let's look at how not to report a meeting. Note the following ineffective lead:

*Yesterday, more than 15 members of the Tierra del Fuego Central Adventist Church board met for this month's board meeting. It was an opportunity to vote on agenda items and hear long-winded reports of various ministries.*

*Brother Ron Genebago began the meeting with opening prayer, and board members also prayed in groups of twos and threes. Then the Pathfinder pledge was led by 13-year-old Malou Escasa.*

*Board members then went through the agenda, carefully considering each item and talking at length about...*

This type of lead is ineffective and leaves your readers wondering: "WHAT REALLY HAPPENED, WHAT CAME OUT OF THIS MEETING?!!!"

Instead, an effective lead immediately starts with results:

*The Tierra del Fuego Central Adventist Church board last night voted to build a school to serve some 200 Adventist students currently enrolled in nearby public schools.*

*Board members approved \$900,000 over the next two years to begin construction of the school on church property.*

*“I’m glad we have the resources to invest in our kids,” said Board Chair Jefferson Kern. “This is something we’ve needed for a long time.”*

*The board also voted to . . .*

We will offer more suggestions along this perspective in upcoming chapters, but for now, think: “What can I do to see beyond the façade of this meeting or speech? What is the real issue or result that should lead my story?”

## 6. Photographing news

Church photojournalism is similar to government photojournalism or business photojournalism. It's sometimes kind of a cliché, but often your pictures will fit into one of four categories:

- 1 People at microphones
- 2 Portraits
- 3 File photo of institution
- 4 People actually doing stuff

Let's look at these one-by-one:

### 1 People at microphones.

This shows a person speaking to a group, often with a microphone in their face. As mentioned in a previous chapter on keeping your readers' attention, your job is to report what that person is saying. So show them saying it. Here are some examples:



Homer Trecartin  
Joseph Kissinger/ANN

ANN  
Gerry Chudleigh/ANN

Robert East/ANN  
ANN

## 2 Portraits

This type of picture is often employed when you are introducing someone—perhaps you have a new division president or school director, or someone has won an award.



David Fournier  
ANN

Ansel Oliver/ANN  
ANN

ANN  
ANN

## 3 File photos of institutions

Many of your stories will come out of meetings. But instead of reporting on the meeting, report on the key outcomes from the meeting. The results.

Often, boards and committees take actions on an institution. So instead of showing readers a picture of a boring meeting, show them the institution over which they took action. But don't just show a boring



Grayloc Partners  
Patuxent Capital Consulting

Sekoya Capital  
Eliot Management Publications

Bloom Burg News  
Daily Business Investor



picture of a building—let your picture tell a story. Capture some wording from a sign, and make sure to capture some real, live humans doing something. A picture void of people lacks a human touch and doesn't tell much of a story. These file photos of institutions are common in business and government photojournalism:

And you can do this for church journalism, too:



Ansel Oliver  
Lesna Revilo

Belle Dollar-Bill  
ANN

ANN  
Levon Kontanko

#### 4 People actually doing stuff.

OK, we admit, this is kind of a “catch-all” category, but it has to do with people actually engaging in the event or newsworthy activity:



ANN  
Edwin Garcia/ANN

Johnstone Muguro  
Dallas Christian Academy

David Turner  
Jaime Vilcapoma

## 7. How and why to write great captions

Writers with a service mentality take the time to write effective captions for readers. Most readers aren't going to read your entire story, and many won't even start reading. But some eye-tracking studies suggest that a caption is likely to be the text that's read word-for-word on your page. That's because it appears below the thing a reader's eye is drawn to first—a picture.

Associated Press style suggests news photo captions—or “cutlines”—should generally contain two sentences:

First sentence—uses present tense to describe what's happening in the picture. It also includes the location and date the picture was taken.

Second sentence—uses past tense to offer context by describing why the photo is newsworthy.

For example:

*Gyula Halasz smiles big while showing his reddened stomach, much to the envy of nearby dejected Belly Flop contestants at the Eastern Conference retreat center pool in Towny, Statesville, on June 19. Amid increasing competition, Halasz put on 15 pounds in the off-season to maintain his champion status, winning the competition for the fifth consecutive year. [photo: Francis Matos]*

Note how specifically the first sentence is written. It tells what's happening in the picture as if you can't even see it—in fact you can't, but it's easy to imagine how it might appear. Think of yourself as needing to explain the picture to a blind person. A concise, engaging explanation brings the scene alive.

Also, look how easy it is to tack on a location and date at the end of the first sentence.

Of course, there are exceptions. If there isn't space, a caption writer must combine content from the two sentences into one sentence. Also, when the picture is an older file photo, the two sentences can be reversed and the date less specific. For example:

*Adventist Risk Management is urging church leaders to reassess their insurance policies on all properties. Here, the British Union Conference building after a fire in 2009. [photo: Ann Leibowitz]*

Most readers won't even notice you're using a formula for your caption writing—they'll just receive information clearly without even realizing what made the caption effective.

Here are some more examples of good captions:

*Adventist Church Treasurer Robert E. Lemon reports yesterday to Spring Meeting delegates that the Adventist world church received the same amount in tithe as the previous year. Financial reports also unveiled a new funding structure for the church's auditing service, with organizations to pay for a portion of their audits. [photo: Henry Carter-Brandan]*

*Palan Mulonda, Zambia's Ambassador to the United States, commends the Adventist Church's humanitarian work and educational development at a reception at the denomination's world headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States, on April 1 while Adventist Church President Ted N. C. Wilson, right, listens. There are more than 800,000 Adventists in Zambia. [photo: Aunz L. Adams]*

*Adventist Church members in Ireland carry an EndItNow banner during the Galway St. Patrick's Day parade last weekend. The Adventist world church sponsors a worldwide Abuse Prevention Sabbath the fourth Sabbath of every August. [photo: Dorth Elain]*

## 8. Writing effective headlines

Make sure your headlines contain a verb. Please don't write headlines that say "Sabbath School Ministries" or "Pathfinder Bake Sale."

An Adventist college newspaper recently published a story with the headline:

*Library introduces new search engine to students*

While it's a fairly good headline, it leaves the question unanswered, "What's it called," or "Why?"

A bit better headline could have offered more detail—its name, what it does, or a critique. Here are some good examples:

*Library introduces search engine Geegle*  
*Geegle offers search of all library content*  
*New Geegle search engine delivers, but bugs still remain*

Also, when announcing a new person in a job, tell who they are. The following headlines hints at the news, but don't quite fulfill the role of a headline:

*New leader selected for conference president*  
*Beach ministry announces new director*

These are close, but they don't say who the person actually is. The first thing a headline should do is reveal the most important part of the story. In addition to saying a position has been filled, a headline should actually say who that person is—maybe even something about them. Better examples:

*Jones selected as new conference president*  
*Deputy Director Smith tapped as new beach ministry director*

Similarly, when reporting a speech, instead of just reporting that the person spoke, tell what their main point was. So instead of reporting this vague headline:

*Conference president speaks at church Sabbath afternoon*

Try something more thorough. Here are better examples:

*Conference president urges more community outreach*  
*Fritz calls for more sauerkraut at potlucks*

Here are some verbs that generally shouldn't be used in headlines. It's not that they're wrong, it's just that they are overused by inexperienced reporters.

*Speaks*

[Fill in the blank] *issues discussed*

*Gathered*

*Held*

[Name of meeting "theme"]

*Hosts*

*Assembles*

*Convene*

*Meets*

If you have any of these words in your headline, you've likely missed the issue in the story. Go back and look beneath the façade of a meeting or speech and report the real issue, conclusion or what was accomplished. For more on this topic, see chapter 5: "How to keep your readers' attention."

## 9. On obituaries

Show a picture of the person in their prime. That's who they were and what their life represented. Don't show a picture of the person as they appeared a few days before their death. That's not who they were.

It's fine when a family sends you a headshot picture of their loved one, but be sure to ask for some pictures of them in their prime doing what they loved and were known for. Ask for several pictures, and then you'll have more to choose from.

Also, don't start your story with where they were born. Begin by reporting their accomplishments and what their life came to represent. Only about halfway through the story do you need to go back to the beginning of where their life began.

Overall, remember, an obituary focuses on a person's life, not death.

Great examples:

[Gary Carter, Hall of Fame baseball catcher, dies at 57 \(click to open link\)](#)

[Betty Skelton, 'fastest woman on Earth,' dies at 85 \(click to open link\)](#)

[Remembrance: Persuasive bookseller Ramirez, 93 was first Hispanic GC director \(click to open link\)](#)

## 10. Which camera to use

During training workshops, we get asked this question all the time: “What kind of camera should I buy?” Our answer: “One you know how to use.”

We don't say that to evade the question. A good photographer can get great photos with a simple camera, but a rookie won't be helped much by a fancier camera.

What's more important is to know the elements of a good photograph and how a camera works. To learn, take a class, or teach yourself by doing an online search for “photography tips” or study books at the library. A great book to start with is the “National Geographic Photography Field Guide.”

Another way to respond to the above question is telling the story of “National Geographic” photographer Sam Abell. Many of the world's top photographers have lots of cameras and lenses for different situations. Sam Abell uses a simple camera with a 28 mm prime lens—no zoom. When he teaches workshops, he hardly mentions equipment. He instead talks about emotions and anticipation. Check out his great book, “Stay This Moment.”

OK, having said all that, if you really want a camera recommendation, a great little camera is the Nikon CoolPix S9500 or the Canon Powershot SX280. Both are small point-and-shoot cameras, but they have a decent size lens.

If you have a larger budget and want a single lens reflex camera, try the Nikon d90 or the Canon 60d.

Even nicer cameras are the Nikon d7100 or the Canon 7d.

If you have a really big budget, you can get a camera with a full-frame sensor (such as the Nikon d600) with f/2.8 lenses.

Then again, you might already have a good enough camera in your pocket: your smartphone. You'd surprised how many excellent ANN photos were shot with a smartphone.

Remember, the talent you develop matters more than the type of camera you have.

*(Note: ANN does not endorse any brand and is not connected to any company. The above recommendations are simply offered as a guide. Many similar quality cameras are also produced by other companies)*

## 11. Commandments for photographers

- I. When shooting a speech or sermon, thou shalt not maketh a spectacle of thyself. Shooteth pictures for 2 to 5 minutes when the speaker begins speaking. Then be done with it and shooteth not pictures the rest of the speech.
- II. Thou shalt not useth flash during a speech. Draweth not attention nigh and away from the speaker.
- III. Thou shalt wear Dark or Neutral clothing, avoiding big lettering or logos. If ye wearest a Vest with bold lettering identifying thyself as a member of the press, thy friends shalt maketh fun of thee.
- IV. Thou shalt shooteth news and readeth chapter 6. Thy readers grow weary of seeing group photos.
- V. Thou shalt take many pictures from many angles, thus giving thy editor abundant pictures from which to chooseth. Then readers shall see the event and say it was good.
- VI. Thou shalt study photography. Thou shalt also developeth some thick skin and seeketh a good photographer to critique thy photos, for ye must continually improveth thy talent. Some day — after thou gaineth much talent and wisdom — ye shall serveth others as a kind and helpful critic.

If thou hast broken any of these commandments, fear not, but take comfort in knowing professionals were once beginners, too.

## 12. Advanced tip: perspective behind a story

*On location in the hills of the Southern Philippines, ANN reporter Ansel Oliver learns to ask "Why" five times.*

I was hiking through a hillside jungle of Southeast Asia last year when I decided to employ an investigative technique outlined by the world's largest automaker. You can use it too:

Take your stories to the next level by asking "Why" five times. If you get stuck, you can substitute one or all five with "So what?"

I got this idea from a book about the Toyota Motor Corporation. Their historically impressive reliability is rooted in their management principles, a science that doesn't earn enough recognition. If something were to go wrong they would go beyond the surface explanation and probe for a possible underlying reason by asking "Why" five times.

For example: One out of three windshields that were installed by Sally on the assembly line are cracked within a day. Instead of firing her, ask “Why” five times:

1. Why: Because she bumps them when installing them. She isn’t able to control the installer well.
2. So What: She thought she was clumsy, but now when her manger tries, he has the same problem with her machine.
3. Why: Because last month the machine was serviced improperly. The technician, Bob, inadvertently installed the wrong size replacement screw.
4. Why: Because he unknowingly pulled a 3/8-inch size screw from a drawer labeled 1/4.
5. Why: Because Jared, whose job it is to manage the replacement shop facility, has been sloppy in his work and had mislabeled the drawer.

As we can see, Jared is the employee who needs to be reprimanded and cited for sloppy work. But without asking “Why” or “So what” five times, good workers such as Sally on the assembly line or maintenance worker Bob might have been wrongly criticized.

I took to heart this lesson of asking “Why” five times when I reported a story in the hills of Southern Mindanao in the Philippines. The Adventist Church’s Southern Asia-Pacific Division officers told me that something interesting had been happening in the south in recent years: some 40 Protestant pastors from other denominations had converted to the Seventh-day Adventist faith, along with many of their congregations. So I took the one-hour flight to General Santos City and met up with a guide.

But instead of doing a story about how wonderful this was and parading the Adventist faith as the “true” faith with 40 pastors now proving it, I decided I wanted to go deeper.

I took lots of pictures and constantly scribbled notes while bouncing in a car along hilly, rural roads and while hiking up and down steep trails through mountainside jungles and farms. At one little thatch-roofed church, I happened to take a picture of a girl sitting next to me. She was holding a baby—her little sister, or so I thought. My guide later told me that it wasn’t her little sister, but her daughter. I was surprised because the mother couldn’t have been more than 15 years old. My guide said that early marriage is common in the region.

That’s when it clicked for me. I remembered writing notes about two hours earlier about how Adventist leaders in the region want to get kids of the newly Adventist congregations into schools. Other denominations don’t have the educational focus and infrastructure that Seventh-day Adventists do.

With that, I knew I had my lead, and I asked more questions to confirm it. “The parents push their daughters to get married so they can receive a dowry,” my guide said. “Now we hope these parents who are becoming Adventist along with their ministers will instead push their daughters to finish school.”



So instead of a story about 40 pastors converting to the Adventist faith, I did a story about the same thing, but I focused it on how it's going to change the lives of many of their parishioners. Essentially, I had subconsciously asked "So what" several times.

The story is here:

[In the Philippines, faith conversion offers spiritual reassurance, practical hope](#) (click to open link)

Legendary reporter Jimmy Breslin approached stories in a similar way. He wanted to cover major events focusing on how they affected the "common man."

On the day of United States President John F. Kennedy's funeral, every reporter in Washington D.C. was along Pennsylvania Avenue covering the event the same way. Not Breslin. He was across the Potomac River at Arlington Cemetery interviewing the man who was digging JFK's grave. The next day, Breslin's story stood out among the rest.

So before reporting a story, you might now choose to ask "Why" or "So what" several times. Also, ask, "Whom does this really affect?" It will likely give you options for reporting a more unique and interesting angle in an otherwise predictable storyline.

## 13. ANN byline policy

Personal bylines are used so the person who wrote the report and who is responsible for its accuracy can always be identified.

The double byline (Sam Clemens and Vicky Hugo/ANN) is used when two people were responsible for gathering the content and writing the story.

A contributor who obtained a minor fact or who offered language translation to help report the story is given a "tag" at the end of a story in italics:

—*additional reporting by Eric A. Blair*

or

—*Winston Smith contributed to this story*

When a story is received from another source but needs heavy editing, rewriting, or additional information, the byline is given to the author, followed by the phrase "ANN staff":

—*Carl Woodward/ANN staff*

## 14. Reproduction requirements

ANN encourages distribution of its stories. Its articles are intended as a resource and can be reproduced in full, shortened, or used as one of several sources to construct a story. Note that ANN's material is copyrighted. When reproducing ANN stories or quoting them, it is required to properly acknowledge ANN as the source.

## 15. How to get into the business—write about other people

We're often told to consider a specific college student or a recent graduate as a potential candidate for a freelance reporter, usually from a well-meaning relative of that person. Upon further investigation, we find that while they are a good writer, they have only written about themselves – their own opinions, their own devotional thoughts, their own worship essays, things about history that interest them, a mission trip they went on, their first triathlon, etc...

Journalism is about *other people*. Tell the reader someone else's story.

If you're in college, then do what you can to dominate your campus newspaper. Make yourself the "go-to" reporter. Become the best you can there. Serve others and your editor.

Then find the nearest small-town paper or city blog, go in and show them a bunch of your clips and offer your services as a freelance writer. Don't worry about the pitiful payment. What you're after are published clips. If you're good, the money will come later.

Once you can dominate larger and larger newsrooms, you just might find yourself at a major market daily newspaper or prominent magazine or blog. You work your way up. As you seek to step up to each new level, your goal is to get published clips—initially they're worth more than money.

So to summarize, serve your editor by making yourself the go-to person. Write stories so that people in the community or campus will recognize themselves and others they know.

This will happen when you tell the stories of other people, not yourself.

# ANN Glossary

Help ensure clear communication with all audiences by using the Associated Press Stylebook and the ANN Glossary below.

## A

**Adventist Book Center** Church-owned retail establishments and website offering Christian literature and health foods. *ABC* is acceptable on second reference.

**Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries** Church department established in 1985. It places and supports Adventist chaplains on school campuses, in community agencies, correctional institutions, healthcare facilities, military forces and the workplace. Use *ACM* on second reference.

**Adventist Church** Always use *Seventh-day Adventist Church* on first reference, capitalizing "C" for the word "Church." Use a lower case "c" when describing local congregations without a proper name: *Jim helped build an Adventist church.* See **Seventh-day Adventist Church** and **Seventh-day Adventist world church**.

**Adventist Church world headquarters** Use instead of General Conference or GC.

**Adventist Development and Relief Agency** ADRA is acceptable on second reference or in headlines. International headquarters is in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States.

**Adventist Health International** A management organization that partners with health care services in developing countries. Headquartered in Loma Linda, California, United States.

**Adventist Heritage Ministry** Church corporation that preserves four sites pertaining to the denomination's founding in the United States: Historic Adventist Village in Michigan, the William Miller and Hiram Edson Farms in New York, and Joseph Bates' boyhood home in Massachusetts. Legal name is "Adventist Historic Properties, Inc."

**Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies** Graduate school for religious studies located in Silang, Cavite, Philippines. Affiliated directly with the Adventist Church world headquarters. Initials *AIIAS* acceptable on second reference.

**Adventist Mission** Church organization at the world headquarters that promotes mission service. Includes Global Mission. Established in 1990.

**Adventist Review** Founded in 1849 by church co-founder James White as "The Present Truth." It remains the flagship journal of the denomination and serves the church in North America. Adventist World magazine, launched in 2005, serves the world.

**Adventist Risk Management, Inc.** Corporation that provides risk assessment services and insurance for Adventist Church institutions. *ARM* acceptable on second reference. Established in 1936 following the advice of Adventist insurance professional William A. Benjamin, who suggested the denomination could better protect its properties and save money by operating its own insurance company. Based in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States, with offices worldwide.

**Adventist world church** Use this term when describing the global denomination on second reference. On first reference, use *Seventh-day Adventist world church* ("world church" is lowercase) or Seventh-day Adventist Church ("Church" is capitalized).

**Adventist World Radio** The radio ministry arm of the Adventist Church. AWR is acceptable on second reference. Headquartered in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States.

**Andrews University** Located in Berrien Springs, Michigan, United States. Home of the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary. Named after John Nevins Andrews, the church's first official overseas missionary.

**Annual Council** One of two biannual meetings of the Adventist world church's Executive Committee, usually held at the world church headquarters in October. See also **Spring Meeting**.

**Adventist-laymen's Services and Industries** *ASI* is acceptable on second reference. An association of lay members in business and professions, including lay supporting ministries, all dedicated to sharing Christ in the marketplace. Headquartered in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States.

**ASI** See **Adventist-laymen's Services and Industries**.

**Auditing Service** See **General Conference Auditing Service**.

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## **B**

**Biblical Research Institute** Provides biblical studies, reviews documents and answers questions on biblical matters. *BRI* is acceptable on second reference. Located in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States, with offices worldwide.

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## C

**campaign** Use this term instead of "crusade" when describing evangelistic outreach. See **crusade**

**Christian Record Services for the Blind** Service organization offering free inspirational publications in Braille and large print, as well as audio materials for people with visual impairments. On second reference use shortened version *Christian Record* or abbreviation *CRSB*. Legal name is "Christian Record Services, Inc." Affiliated directly with the Adventist Church headquarters. Located in Lincoln, Nebraska, United States.

**Communication** Church department dedicated to internal and external media outreach. No "s"—do not use "Communications department." Established in 1912 as the Bureau of Press Relations when administrators at the world church headquarters hired Baltimore Sun newspaper reporter Walter Burgan to help respond to attacks on the church in the media.

**conference** A local administrative area consisting of a number of church congregations and schools.

**crusade** Never use this reference to 12th-century Christian military campaigns against Muslims when describing an evangelism event. Instead, use *meeting*, *series*, *campaign* or *public evangelism outreach*.

**Children's Ministries** Church department dedicated to the spiritual development of children. Established in 1995.

**Church official/s** Highest ranking of Adventist Church administration. Includes president, secretary and treasurer, as well as their associates: vice president, undersecretary, associate secretary, undertreasurer and associate treasurer. See **Church leader/s**.

**Church leader/s** Department director and associate director. Communication director or associate should be identified as such, but may also be referred to as a *spokesman* or *spokeswoman* when speaking to media on behalf of the denomination. See **Church official/s**.

**colporteur** See **literature evangelist**.

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## D

**dateline** Use city, state (province) and country. When referring to one of the international cities cited in the Associated Press Stylebook, just use the city. (i.e. no location explanation needed for well-known cities such as London, Tokyo, etc.)

**delighted** Overused in quotes, usually in response to a question about how someone feels about a new employee or program. Instead, have the source talk about what skills the employee brings or what the program will accomplish.

**department** Church office at each level of administration: world church headquarters, division, union, conference and local congregation.

**department director** Capitalize the name of the department. "...said Heather-Dawn Small, Women's Ministries director."

**division** One of 13 administrative regions of the world church. *Trans-European Division*. Lowercase "division" when not referencing a specific division, or on second reference.

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## E

**elder** Title of a local church lay leader. For ordained clergy, particularly leadership, the preferred term is Pastor. ex. *Pastor Nate Hawthorne*.

**Ellen G. White Estate** The estate of church co-founder Ellen G. White, who exercised the gift of prophecy. Refer to as the *Ellen G. White Estate* on first reference and the *White Estate* or *the estate* on subsequent references. Located in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States. Established in 1915 and incorporated in 1933.

**Education** Church department established in 1902 to support development of the Adventist school/university system.

**Executive Committee** The second-highest governing body in the denomination, following the delegates of the General Conference in Session. It's comprised of General Conference officers, department directors, officers from the 13 world divisions and other attached fields, union presidents, presidents of General Conference institutions, three lay members from each division, one pastor from each division, one addi-

tional front-line employee for every 500,000 members or portions thereof for divisions with more than 500,000 members, and 30 members at large.

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## F

**Family Ministries** Church department centered on supporting and developing relationships in families. Established in 1975.

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## G

**GC** see General Conference

**GC president** Use *Seventh-day Adventist world church president*.

**General Conference** Title of church's world headquarters and name of legal entity "General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists." In print, instead use *Seventh-day Adventist Church world headquarters*.

**General Conference Auditing Service** Provides auditing service to the denomination from the church's headquarters with offices worldwide. Use *GCAS* on second reference.

**General Conference Corporation of Seventh-day Adventists** The legal name of the global denomination, based in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States.

**General Conference Session** The church's highest governing body, which meets every five years for a global spiritual gathering and business meeting.

**Geoscience Research Institute** Church organization founded in 1958 to research both science and the biblical account of creation to address the question of origins. Directly affiliated with the Adventist Church world headquarters. Located in Loma Linda, California, United States.

**Great Disappointment** An event in the early history of several Christian denominations, including Adventism, when Jesus did not return to Earth on October 22, 1844, as some has expected. Between 1831 and 1844, Baptist preacher William Miller launched the "great second Advent awakening." Based on his study of Daniel 8:14, Miller calculated that Jesus would return sometime between 1843 and 1844. Others calculated a specific date of October 22, 1844. When Jesus did not appear, Miller's followers experienced what came to be called "the Great Disappointment." See also **Millerite movement**.

**Griggs University/Griggs International Academy** An institution providing distance education programs for the Adventist Church. Offers preschool, K-12, college, and graduate programs and degrees. Formerly known as Home Study International. Established in 1909 and located in Berrien Springs, Michigan, United States.

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## H

**Health Ministries** Church department promoting healthy lifestyles. Reorganized to current form in 1980.

**health message** Insider jargon for the church's counsels on health. Instead, mention Adventist emphasis on healthful living.

**Hope Channel** Official television network of the Adventist Church. Offers culturally contextualized programming worldwide in multiple languages online and via satellite over multiple channels. Use only *Hope Channel*, not "the Hope Channel," "Hope TV" or "Hope." Based in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States.

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## I

**Institute of World Mission** Provides cross-cultural training for new full-time, short-term and volunteer missionaries working in a foreign country, and facilitates their re-entry to their home country. Located in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States. Launched in 1966.

**intentional** Overused word in religious management. Omit unless part of a quote, or use the word "deliberate."

**International Religious Liberty Association** Launched by the church in 1893 as NRLA (National), the non-sectarian organization is now the world's largest forum solely dedicated to religious freedom. *IRLA* is acceptable on second reference.

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## L

**literature evangelist** One who goes door-to-door selling religious materials.

**Loma Linda University Adventist Health Sciences Center** A non-profit corporation that serves as the umbrella organization for Loma Linda University, Loma Linda University Medical Center and several other



medical and educational entities. Directly affiliated with the church's world headquarters. Located in Loma Linda, California, United States.

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## M

**Millerite movement** Founded by Baptist preacher William Miller to publicize the soon return of Jesus Christ. Precursor to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. See also **Great Disappointment**

**Ministerial Association** Serves the Adventist Church through services to pastors, pastors' families, local church elders and company leaders, and Adventist Ministerial Association secretaries. Note: leader of this organization is titled *secretary*, not "director," and must be an ordained minister. Located at the church's headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States. Established in 1922.

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## N

**North American Religious Liberty Association** The North American branch of the International Religious Liberty Association. *NARLA* is acceptable on second reference.

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## O

**Oakwood University** A historically African-American Seventh-day Adventist institution of higher learning located in Huntsville, Alabama, United States. Directly affiliated with the denomination's world headquarters. Established in 1896.

**Office of General Counsel** Provides legal advice and services to the General Conference Corporation. Located in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States. Established in 1936.

**Office of Global Software and Internet** Provides platforms for local church and institutional websites.

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## P

**Pacific Press Publishing Association** An Adventist publishing house in Nampa, Idaho, United States. Commonly referred to as "Pacific Press." It is directly affiliated with the church's world headquarters.

**pastor** Capitalize when used as a title immediately before a name on first reference: *Pastor Jimmy Thurber*. Otherwise, lowercase: *Sam Clemens is pastor of the Hannibal Adventist Church*. On second reference, use only last name. See also **elder**.

**Pathfinders** An Adventist Church youth activity organization.

**PARL** Use as an abbreviation of a department of **Public Affairs and Religious Liberty** on second reference.

**Pen of inspiration** Colloquial phrase used to describe the writings of Ellen G. White, and should not be used when writing for the public. Instead, use *as mentioned in the writings of church co-founder Ellen G. White*.

**Personal Ministries** Church ministry focusing on discipling through training, equipping, and mobilizing members for personal involvement in faith-sharing. Now part of the church department Sabbath School and Personal Ministries. Formerly named Lay Activities. Established in 1870 as the Tract and Missionary Society.

**Planned Giving & Trust Services** Church department offering services assistance to church members in making provision for bequests and in managing their estate. Established in 1968.

**president** Capitalize only when used as a title before a name: *President Tim Lopez*. Otherwise, lowercase: *Tyrone Lee is president of the church's Antarctic Union Mission*.

**Public Affairs and Religious Liberty** Church department that promotes freedom of conscience and conducts outreach to legislators, diplomats and government leaders. *PARL* is acceptable on second reference. Established in 1902.

**Publishing Ministries** Church department focused on production and distribution of religious materials including books, magazines and multimedia. Established in 1902.

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## R

**regional conferences** Church associations that have historically represented African-American congregations in the Eastern United States.

**Remnant or Remnant Church** Internal term used to describe the Seventh-day Adventist movement. Should not be used when writing for public unless part of a quote.

**Review and Herald Publishing Association** Adventist publishing house in Hagerstown, Maryland, United States, often referred to as *Review and Herald*. Directly affiliated with the world church headquarters.

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## S

**Sabbath School** Weekly discipling groups offered by local churches for people of all ages that include fellowship, Bible study, community service and mission.

**Sabbath School and Personal Ministries** The Church department supporting Sabbath School, personal ministries, community service and Bible correspondence schools.

**SDA** Do not use this abbreviation of the Seventh-day Adventist Church because those not familiar with the Adventist Church may not know what it is (it could be Soap and Detergent Association). The shortened version of Seventh-day Adventist is *Adventist*, which is the preferred term on second reference.

**Second Coming** Refer to as the *Second Coming of Jesus*.

**Seventh-day Adventist** Do not abbreviate because those unfamiliar with the Adventist Church may not know what "SDA" is (it could be Software Dealers Association). The shortened version is *Adventist*, which should be used on second reference.

**Seventh-day Adventist Church** Notice capitalized "C" in "Church" and lowercased "d" in "day." A global Christian faith community with a membership of approximately 18 million at the end of 2013. Use *Adventist Church* on second reference. See also **Adventist Church**. See entry in Associated Press Stylebook.

**Seventh-day Adventist world church** Notice lowercase "w" in "world" and "c" in "church." Use this term when describing the global denomination. See also **General Conference**

**Spirit of Prophecy** Books and articles written by Ellen G. White, one of the founding pioneers of the church. Use *writings of church co-founder Ellen G. White*.

**Spring Meeting** One of two biannual meetings of the world church's executive committee held at the church's world headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States. See also **Annual Council**

**states** Do not abbreviate states or provinces of any country.

**Stewardship Ministries** Church department emphasizing Christian management of resources. Established in 1967.

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## T

**10/40 Window** A term used by several Christian denominations to describe a geographical rectangle in the eastern hemisphere between the 10 and 40 northern lines of latitude (North Africa to Southeast Asia, where more than 60 percent of the world's population live, most of whom have not yet heard the Gospel message).

**Three Angels' Message** Add a reference to the Book of Revelation, chapter 14.

**Twenty-eight Fundamental Beliefs** The church's understanding and expression of the teachings of the Bible. Established in 1980. Use *28 Fundamental Beliefs* with numerals when not beginning a sentence. Capitalize *Fundamental Beliefs* when standing alone.

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## U

**United States** Use U.S. on second reference.

**union** A local administrative area consisting of a group of conferences or churches.

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## W

**White, Ellen G.** Do not abbreviate. One of the church's founders, who exercised the gift of prophecy during her 70-year ministry. On first reference, introduce her as a church co-founder.

**Women's Ministries** Church department focusing on women's empowerment and spiritual development. Officially established in 1995.

**worker** Antiquated term for a Seventh-day Adventist pastor or employee. Instead, use actual job title/position: *pastor* or *Bible teacher*.

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## Y

**Youth Ministries** Church department focusing on teenagers and their spiritual development.