

LOCAL CHURCH COMMUNICATION SECRETARIES START GUIDE

Prepared by: Kimarley Walker Medley,
Communication Director, CJC



INTRODUCTION

- Welcome to a ministry that has amazing potential for sharing the message of Jesus and the Seventh-day Adventist Church. As communication secretaries, your role includes sharing news and information with three primary groups of people: members of your church, your conference communication department, and your local community.



CHURCH MEMBERS

- Church members need to know what's happening at your church.
- This group includes people who attend every week, people who attend occasionally, people who attend rarely, shut-ins, and inactive members.
- If your church broadcasts its services online, don't forget virtual members those who may never cross your threshold but consider themselves part of the congregation because of their online participation.



CONFERENCE COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT

- You are part of a global network of Adventist communicators, helping the Seventh-day Adventist Church stay connected.
- By sending articles and photos to your conference communication director, you are sharing news with members around the world and recording the church's history.
- You are also sharing ministry ideas and inspiration with others who may be searching for new ways to share Jesus.



COMMUNITY

- This group includes people whose experience with the Adventist Church ranges from positive to negative and whose knowledge ranges from extensive to nonexistent.
- You should be looking for ways to raise awareness of the Adventist Church and its message of hope with those outside the church.
- Events such as Vacation Bible School, cooking classes, marriage enrichment events, evangelistic programs, or financial planning seminars are prime opportunities to build relationships with those who may not be interested in coming to a church service.



COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE

- If your communication team consists of several people, the Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual suggests forming a communication committee.
- The communication secretary would serve as chair and the committee could include members who are media or technology professionals.
- This committee will work together to plan the church's overall communication strategy.



MINISTRY DESCRIPTION

- As the appointed communication secretary, your role in ministry is specifically defined to ensure that:
- Members are kept informed, and the church is properly represented to the public.
- Following are the four areas that encompass your ministry as communication secretary in the local church.



FOUR KEY AREAS OF MINISTRY

- Public Relations
- Media Relations
- News and Information
- Advertising and Promotions



PUBLIC RELATIONS

- As communication secretary you are responsible for building, monitoring, and protecting the image of your local church and its name, within your community.

To do this effectively:

- Ensure that the church is identified by an exterior sign appropriate to the building's architecture and check the church's appearance regularly for problems needing attention.
- Arrange for the identification of the church through listings in local telephone directories, tourist publications, highway signs.



PUBLIC RELATIONS

- Arrange for church representation at exhibits and fairs, in parades, and at other community events.
- Build and nurture relationships with community leaders, clubs, and organizations, and
- Encourage increased church involvement and support in the community when and where appropriate.



MEDIA RELATIONS

Your objective is to raise public awareness of our church—its members, its mission, and its message; work to get church activities and events noted in the media; and help to get the church's views included in the news adequately and accurately.



MEDIA RELATIONS

- Report church activities to local radio, television, newspapers and by arranging for photo coverage of congregational activities or events and serving as a source of information for public media representatives.
- Look for opportunities, story ideas, and current issues that concern your church and community.
- Seek to become personally acquainted with newspaper editors, broadcast assignment editors, religion reporters, and community relations personnel. Develop initial contacts with press kits, nurture contacts with phone calls, and follow up contacts with hand-written note cards.



NEWS AND INFORMATION

It's vital to keep church members informed about upcoming activities, and equally important to share church news with conference communication directors and the larger Adventist family.



NEWS AND INFORMATION

- Publish a regular newsletter with photos, articles, and input from members and/or submit articles and photos to conference communication directors for conference newsletters or sections in union papers.
- Maintain an attractive bulletin board in the church lobby highlighting church activities, news, photos, and developments.



ADVERTISING AND PROMOTION

- One of your most important responsibilities is to strategically promote all church programs and evangelism campaigns to attract attendance. To do this effectively:
- Regularly consult with the pastor and departmental leaders about events and activities they are planning. Assist them with the creation and placement of brochures, flyers, direct mail, broadcast and print ads, and other promotional ideas.
- Professionally prepared advertising materials are available for many programs, as are public relations and advertising agencies for consultation.

