



What Do Adventists Believe?

Seventh-day Adventists and Health

In 1866, Adventist pioneers established Western Health Reform Institute, the church's first medical institution. Their Battle Creek, Michigan, facility offered the best medical treatment of the day, with an emphasis on preventing disease through lifestyle changes such as nutrition, exercise and cleanliness. Early Adventist medical reformers insisted on providing whole person care, which included physical, mental and spiritual healing. At this new facility, each person was valued as a child of God, which led caregivers to provide a positive healing environment and extraordinary patient care.

Soon, similar centers were established across the United States and abroad. Today Seventh-day Adventist hospitals, nursing homes, clinics and other health-care facilities extend their circle of care and friendship to all, without regard to religious affiliation. Doctors, employees, volunteers, board members and others who help fulfill the mission of Adventist healthcare represent a wide diversity of religions and cultures.

This brochure is written to help you understand who Seventh-day Adventists are and why we—like you—care deeply about the people in our community. Our ultimate desire is not only to share a set of beliefs, but to live God's love. That's our Adventist Health mission.

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Adventists believe...

THE CHURCH IS A SAFE HAVEN FOR HEALING AND GROWTH

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is one of many Christian denominations. The name comes from the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath and a belief in the second coming (advent) of Jesus. Adventists attend church on Saturday—joining together for worship, for fellowship and for Bible study. The Bible is the source of our Christian beliefs.

The Adventist Church welcomes all people to its worship services. Formal membership includes being baptized by immersion, symbolizing our union with God, the forgiveness of sins and our desire to enter into a new life. The most important function of the church is to demonstrate the love of God and to proclaim hope for people in a troubled world. Church membership is our way of declaring that we need God and each other if life is to be meaningful. (*Ezekiel 36:26; 1 John 4:7; 1 Corinthians 12:14–26*)



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PERFECT BEGINNINGS

Adventists believe in the biblical account of creation. God made everything—the heavens, the earth, the sea and every living thing. 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. Adam and Eve spoke with their Creator face-to-face. God did not force His children’s love and obedience, but gave them the freedom to obey or disobey Him. (*Genesis 1:1; Genesis 1:26; Psalm 33:6–9; Joshua 24:15*)


VERY BAD NEWS

Sadly, Adam and Eve chose to disobey God, and experience the effects of sin. Their sin distanced them from their loving Creator. 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, hatred and misery. That's how the human story began. (*Genesis 3:8–11, 17–19*)

VERY GOOD NEWS

But that's not how the story ends, because there is also very good news. Even before Adam and Eve made their fatal choice, God had prepared the plan of salvation—a plan to bring back perfect harmony. Jesus would come to earth and die to restore the perfect world that had been broken by sin. (*1 Peter 1:18–20; Ephesians 1:3–4; Mathew 25:34*)



A photograph of two women jogging through a lush green park. The woman on the left is wearing a pink long-sleeved athletic top and black leggings, smiling broadly. The woman on the right is wearing a bright neon green tank top and black leggings, also smiling and looking towards her friend. Their hair is blowing in the wind, suggesting a breeze. The background is a dense forest of green trees and foliage. On the left side of the image, there is a large blue graphic element consisting of a large rounded rectangle and two smaller rounded shapes above it, which serves as a background for the text.

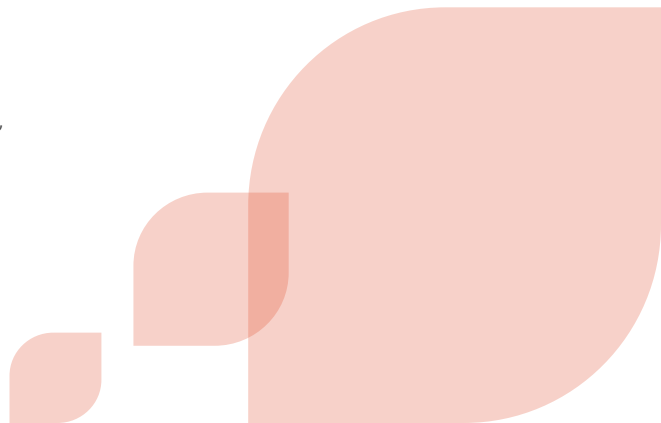
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THE GIFT OF A NEW LIFE

The death of Jesus teaches us that sin is best understood not simply as breaking the law, but rather as breaking the loving heart of God. The death of Jesus on our behalf teaches us that God's love is so great, He will do whatever it takes to restore our eternal friendship with Him. God gave us the ultimate gift of His Son, and He continues to give us new life daily as part of that gift of grace. (*John 3:16; Romans 3:23–24; 2 Corinthians 5:17*)





THE GIFT GIVER: PERFECT GOD, PERFECT MAN

Salvation and new life are gifts from Jesus, who is God in human form—divinity and humanity perfectly united. Because He is God, He has the power and authority to forgive and save us. Because He is man, He experiences our joys and sorrows. Although born into a sinful world, He lived a perfect life on our behalf. Because of His great love for us, He died on a cross, was resurrected, and went to heaven where He is now with the Father. Yet He is still with us through His Holy Spirit—our Comforter—every day, every minute. (*John 1:14; Ephesians 2:8; Hebrews 4:14–15; John 14:16*)



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HOW LIFE CAN BE REALLY GOOD

In His Ten Commandments God explains how we can have a loving relationship with Him and with each other. The commandments are a trustworthy 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.

Obedience to these commandments requires choices. When you love someone, you naturally choose to express your affection and appreciation. That's how it is when you love God. Living the Christian life arises from gratitude to God and a desire to honor Him. And when we fall short of His plan for us, God reminds us that He offers forgiveness as a gift of grace through Jesus.

In addition to the Ten Commandments, we learn how to live from Jesus' teachings and example. He teaches us to love God, to love each other and to love ourselves. He eagerly gives us the gift of His love to make such love possible. (*Exodus 20:3–17; Deuteronomy 10:13; John 13:34–35; John 14:15; 1 John 3:16*)





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A man with a grey beard and a dark cap is kayaking on a river. He is wearing a blue denim jacket and tan shorts. He is holding a black and orange kayak paddle. The river is green and flowing, with a forest of tall trees in the background. The scene is bright and sunny.

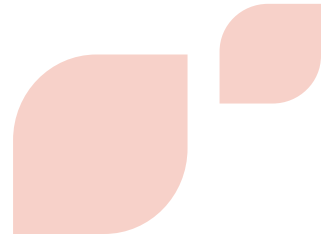
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GOD LISTENS WHEN WE PRAY

Through prayer, we open our hearts to God as if talking with a friend. If we can talk, we can pray. Indeed, if we can think, we can pray. No topic is too great or too small. Jesus taught His disciples to praise God in their prayers, to ask for daily bread and to share the burdens on their hearts. While God already knows what we need, prayer provides the way for us to receive the good things He wants to give us.

But sometimes we don't receive what we ask for, and that can be very difficult. We don't always understand why our prayers aren't answered as we wish, but through faith we can be absolutely sure that God loves us, has our best interests in mind, and is with us no matter what happens.

Too often our conversation with God is one-sided. It is important that we not only talk to God, but that we listen to Him as well. If we're willing to listen, we can hear God's voice through Bible study, through the still small voice of His Holy Spirit, through His created wonders in nature, and through our deepest human relationships. (*Psalm 55:22; Romans 12:12; Jeremiah 29:11–12; Psalm 119:10–11*)





GUARDING OUR GOOD HEALTH

God gives each of us the opportunity to be all that He intends for us to be. Seventh-day Adventists believe that a wholesome lifestyle contributes to good physical, mental and spiritual health.

Why are Adventists so passionate about good health? The Bible says, “Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit lives in you? . . . For God’s temple is sacred, and you are that temple.” (*1 Corinthians 3:16–17*) Enjoying a healthful diet, refraining from harmful substances, and getting adequate exercise and rest are very important ways to care for our body-temples. (*1 Corinthians 10:31; 3 John 2*)

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REST FROM STRESS, FEAR AND ANXIETY

The Bible tells us that after God created the world in six days, He rested on the seventh day. He sanctified the Sabbath—set it apart as a holy day. Later, when He gave the Ten Commandments to Moses, God explained the Sabbath in more detail. The Sabbath is a day to remind us that God is the Creator and worthy of our worship.

The Sabbath is not an ordinary day for ordinary activities. The Sabbath is a day to put aside work, secular pursuits and self-interests—a day to shut out the clamor and pressures of everyday life to receive the needed gifts of peace and rest. God rested on the first Sabbath day, not because He was exhausted from His work of creation, but because He knew His weary children would need a day of rest.

Celebrated from sunset Friday to sunset Saturday, the Sabbath is a spiritual experience as well as a time of physical rest. During His earthly ministry, Jesus made it clear that the Sabbath was made for our benefit.

It was not to be a burden or encumbered with unreasonable man-made rules. Jesus celebrated the Sabbath by attending the synagogue, healing the sick and spending time with those He loved.

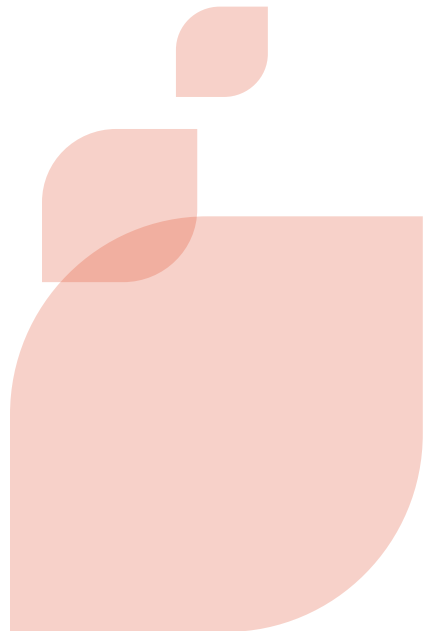
Following Jesus' example of healing, Adventist Health hospitals continue to meet the needs of their patients during the Sabbath hours. All essential medical care and services are provided every day. (*Genesis 2:1–3; Exodus 20:8–11; Mark 2:27; John 5:1–16*)



A VERY HAPPY ENDING

Adventists believe that Jesus will return to this earth to take us home with Him forever. “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.” (*John 14:2,3*) On that happy day, the entire universe will know beyond a doubt that God is indeed a God of forgiveness and love, and that His ways are best.

The Bible says Jesus will come in glory to deliver His people and to restore all things. 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 world—a world free from pain, suffering and death. 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 wonderful Lord. (*Acts 1:11; Revelation 1:7; I Thessalonians 4:16-17; Revelation 21:3-4*)



Thank you for taking time to read this brochure about what Adventists believe. If you would like to learn more about Seventh-day Adventist beliefs and lifestyle, please visit adventisthealth.org/sda.





Adventist Health's Mission

Living God's love by inspiring health, wholeness and hope.

At Adventist Health, We Value:

- Integrity – Our words and actions align with the mission of Adventist Health
- Compassion – When we sense the need for help, we are compelled to act with love
- Respect – We honor the uniqueness of each individual
- Excellence – We hold ourselves personally accountable

Adventist Health

Is a nonprofit health system founded on the Seventh-day Adventist tradition of Christian healthcare. With headquarters in Roseville, California, Adventist Health has facilities in California, Hawaii and Oregon. For more information, visit www.adventisthealth.org.

