



David Trim

THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH'S SESQUICENTENARY

One hundred and fifty years ago, Seventh-day Adventists united for mission. On May 20 and 21, 1863, 20 delegates from across the northern United States, representing each American state with Adventist congregations, met in Battle Creek, Michigan. They founded the “General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists”—an organized denomination focused on mission and on proclaiming the good news of a God who created us, lived among us, died for us, was raised to life, ministers in the heavenly sanctuary for us, and redeems us.

2013 is thus the sesquicentenary of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. For Adventists, however, a 150th anniversary is not a time for parties or celebration—the founders of the General Conference would have undoubtedly been deeply disappointed to know that their descendants are still on earth in 2013. Yet while there may seem little reason for jubilation in this jubilee, there are unquestionably grounds for thanksgiving as we reflect on the way God has led this remnant church. In 1863, there were about 3,000 Seventh-day Adventists, almost all of them in the northeast United States, with a few in Canada and only a handful outside North America. Today, the denomination has a worldwide membership of more than 17 million. Our holistic message has enhanced the lives of many millions of people, while our prophetic message points to a better world to come when Christ returns to redeem those who are faithful to Him.

Thus, we have good reason to commemorate our 150th anniversary: to reflect on “the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history” (*Life Sketches of Ellen G. White*, p. 196); and to renew our commitment to mission.

Between now and May 2014, the Seventh-day Adventist Church will be marking its sesquicentenary. This provides

an excellent opportunity for teachers to discuss Adventist history with their students. Starting in April 2013 and running through the end of May 2014, the *Adventist Review* and *Adventist World* will be publishing regular historical features, which will provide good starting points for classroom discussions. But the 150th anniversary is also an excellent opportunity to assign projects that will develop students’ research skills, and at the same time, acquaint them with the wonderfully rich history of Adventism. For these projects, students will need to access more detailed resources. Teachers may want to develop a special course or unit on Adventist history. They, too, will want more resources.

Libraries will need to provide support for courses and student research projects.

Accordingly, in this issue, there are two articles on Adventist history to help teachers, school and college librarians, and students. Tony Zbaraschuk’s “An Introduction to Adventist Resources” (p. 12), which is largely bibli-

ographical in focus, deals with identifying books for an “Adventist studies” collection; complete bibliographic information on the books will be available online at the JOURNAL’S Website and will be periodically updated. Benjamin Baker’s “A Quick Guide to Adventist Resources on the Internet” (p. 17) reveals the extraordinary wealth of both primary and secondary sources now available online. More resources, focusing on the 150th anniversary in particular, can be found at <http://www.adventist.org/150>.



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