

# SPEAKER'S BUREAU

REV. MAY/2025

## WHAT IS IT?

The Arizona Conference Corporation of Seventh-day Adventists has created this speaker's bureau with the intention of assisting our churches (and even schools) for booking speakers where and when needed. Our conference is blessed to have gifted speakers that have made themselves available as volunteers and as advocates of our Adventist message and mission. Our sole motivation is to connect our congregations and schools with the talent, experience, and skills our speakers possess to motivate, educate, and challenge us toward a greater spiritual and practical experience with Christ. We are leveraging these speakers for your gain.

## THE CURRENT REALITY

Our churches are blessed with pastors that minister to their respective congregations via the proclamation of the Word of God. However, some churches and/or districts of churches may not presently have a pastor to fulfill this function, therefore the local elders are privileged to step up to the plate. Nevertheless, depending upon the size of the church and elders (or others) available, there are still some churches who periodically need speakers. Another scenario is where pastors have multi-church districts (usually our Spanish-speaking churches), thereby having the additional responsibility of arranging for speakers in all their churches every Sabbath. Still another scenario includes our schools, perhaps searching for a special day speaker or for a week of prayer. Our smaller, remote churches also need speakers. Our Arizona Conference Administration (President, Executive Secretary, Treasurer) and some Conference department directors are available to preach, with advanced notice, to any of our churches in Arizona.

## OUR SPEAKERS

All male and female speakers included in our bureau are volunteers, ranging from retired ministers to church-elected elders, to youth/young adults, to community professionals. Their preferred language is included. Speakers are members in good and regular standing of the Adventist church and are committed to Biblical teaching as understood by the Seventh-day Adventist Church expressed in our 28 fundamental beliefs. Of course, our God-given individuality dictates that each speaker possesses unique insights into God's Word. Keep in mind that experience, education, culture, and speaking abilities will certainly vary from one speaker to the next. Some speakers may have special interests or even qualifications on any given topic, such as family life, prophecy, Adventist history, developing a relationship with Christ, youth issues, healthful living, women's ministries, religious liberty, etc. You will notice their areas of interest or competency in their bios. Depending on the speaker, some may also be available for multiple presentations such as a weekend seminar. Perhaps you may even find some of our speakers on YouTube.

No rating system or congregation reviews/commentary of the speakers is used on our posting.

**Approval.** Only lay speakers recommended by their local pastor will be included, or, in the absence of a pastor, by the local elder(s). The Arizona Conference Administration is the final approving body for all speakers posted on our website.

## EACH CONTRIBUTES

Regarding the Biblical authors, Ellen White insightfully stated, "One writer is more strongly impressed with one phase of the subject...another seizes upon a different phase; and each, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, presents what is most forcibly impressed upon his own mind, a different aspect of the truth in each, but a perfect

harmony through all” (The Great Controversy, p. vi). Although our speakers are not inspired in the sense White describes here, the point is that people are impressed uniquely with the same truths—what is “most forcibly impressed upon his own mind.” The Arizona Conference fully endorses our speakers as they share our core beliefs (the “non-negotiables”) while recognizing that Biblical truth may be expressed with peculiar words, phrases, or opinions—“peripheral expressions”—that not all may align with (but usually a matter of further clarification in respectful dialogue). We celebrate our God-given, individual contributions to the Body of Christ.

## HONORARIUMS AND TRAVEL

An honorarium is a one-time payment given to someone for a service that is not part of their regular job duties—a token of appreciation. It is not obligatory but is at the church board’s discretion (determined in advance). It is a courtesy to extend to the speaker an offer to pay for their travel expenses. For our local Adventist context, an honorarium is typically the cost of mileage (as of Feb 2025 at 52 cents per mile) or a maximum of \$120. If an honorarium is granted, it would be good etiquette to inform the speaker in advance and either present it ahead of time or on the day of. The Arizona Conference already provides mileage costs for Arizona Conference Administration and departmental directors who preach in different locales.

If an overnight stay is required because of distance (some of our churches are up to a 5-hour drive from metropolitan Phoenix), the local church may consider providing a hotel stay. In any case, this also is at the discretion of the church board.

Other than travel allowance for Conference Administration and departmental directors, the Arizona Conference does not compensate any speaker.

## HOW TO USE THE SPEAKERS BUREAU

If a church has a pastor, it is his/her prerogative to arrange for speakers in his/her absence. If there is no pastor, the elders, in consultation with each other, arrange for speakers. It may be that the church secretary or clerk initiates contact with a speaker.

### When contacting a speaker:

1. Know beforehand the date(s) you need to arrange for a speaker. Please make the invitation with solid advanced notice
2. Consult the list of speakers and choose more than one as your preference may not be available on any given date
3. Contact your invitee via the email provided in the speaker’s bio (some speakers may include phone)
4. You may or may not have a preferred sermon topic to request of the speaker. Make this clear
5. Inform the speaker of your Sabbath school and worship service times
6. Media. Does your church have projection capability? If so (or if not), state so when you contact the speaker; speakers may or may not use computer slides. Also ask if the speaker will have any hardcopy handouts for the congregation (if so, the speaker usually prints these). Make sure you have volunteers ready to hand out on the day of
7. Inform the speaker of your church’s demographic and size. Speakers will consider the number of attendees, ethnic makeup, age group, and adapt. For example, the ambience of speaking to 20 people is different than addressing 200; and if your congregation is multi-ethnic or even multi-generational, speakers want to be discerning and sensitive. Speaking in a school context is another universe, requires prudence, and has its own unique opportunity for impact
8. Most churches have printed bulletin programs. As the time draws near, confirm the appointment once again and contact the speaker for his/her info: sermon title, Scripture reading, and hymn/song (some speakers like to choose their own opening and closing hymn to coincide with the sermon). Included in our speaker’s bureau are their bios. Print a brief bio in the church bulletin (one line is sufficient) and include

title (“pastor”, “chaplain”, “doctor”, etc.) and/or post-nominal letters (RN, MD, Esq., etc.). If the spouse of the speaker will be present, include his/her name. Give all info to the bulletin secretary

## Introducing the Speaker at Worship

We have all seen it in church: the introduction seems to last longer than the presentation/sermon, the person reads word-for-word a long biography exactly as it is printed, or the introducers make it more about themselves than the speaker. These are just a few painful examples of a wrong introduction.

How do you introduce the speaker to the audience? Follow these tips:

- 1. Introduce.** It goes without saying, but make sure you introduce the speaker! A church should be hospitable, and everyone feel welcomed, but the speaker is there on God’s mission—to share an important message for His people. Welcome him/her with a formal introduction; do NOT abandon the speaker to relying on reading the service order as printed in the bulletin and then approach the mic without an intro. Make certain the speaker receives a bulletin
- 2. Review.** Review the speaker’s bio. If possible, talk with the person ahead of time. You’ll not only make a connection, but you can ask how the person would like to be introduced (usually the speaker doesn’t want you to make a fuss, but ask anyway)
- 3. Brevity.** Your introduction should be clear, concise, and focused. In most cases, 60+ seconds is enough. Don’t steal the show or time
- 4. Timing.** Introduce the speaker immediately before he/she gets up to speak; this timing just looks right
- 5. Pronunciation.** Ask the speaker how to pronounce his/her name. Few things will be more embarrassing for you than mispronouncing the person’s name from the podium. If the name is difficult to pronounce, write it down using phonetic spelling
- 6. Family.** If the speaker’s family is present, acknowledge them
- 7. State his/her proficiency.** From the podium, establish the speaker’s credibility as competent on the topic and/or their relevance to the audience. For example: “Mr. Smith is especially interested in presenting the Gospel in the book of Revelation...” or “Dr. Sheila has been a family therapist for 15 years.” Connect the audience’s needs and interests with the speaker’s presentation. State the speaker’s title—is he/she a pastor, teacher, medical doctor, nurse, lawyer, counselor, etc.? This is not ego-feeding, but exercising due courtesy
- 8. Enthusiasm.** You set the tone not only for the presentation but for the entire event. Too many introductions are lifeless, only going through the motions. If you’re excited about what comes next, let people know through your voice, body language, and facial expressions. Bring some energy to your introduction, ask for a warm welcome, and lead the “amen” (in some churches, applause)
- 9. Closing.** To close your intro, simply face and say to the guest speaker, “Thank you for being with us today. God bless you; we look forward to what you have to say” or something similar. Make it short and sweet, then step aside

## After the Presentation

After the sermon, arrange for your guest speaker to greet people at the door as they leave. Church dismissals vary, but after the sermon accompany the speaker to the door and show him/her where to stand. Make these steps clear. On occasion guest speakers have felt lost, not knowing where to go after the sermon. If there is a potluck lunch, make sure you make a personal invitation for the speaker and his/her family to stay. For multi-presentations (weekend seminar or an entire week), at dismissal it is still nice to have the speaker exit toward the door to greet guests as they leave. The local context (while there is clear communication) will dictate.