



SEVENTH-DAY
ADVENTIST
CHURCH

*Pacific
Union
Conference*

*"Oh, give thanks to the Lord,
for He is good!" (NKJV)*

April 7, 2014

Elder Ted N. C. Wilson, President
General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
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Re: Omission of Sandra Roberts from the SDA Yearbook

Dear Elder Wilson:

This letter is written at the voted request of the Executive Committee of the Pacific Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, in response to a request from the Southeastern California Conference (SECC) Executive Committee. It is written in the interest of preserving the unity, mutual respect and Christian love that Jesus said marks the true church.

It is within this context that we express a serious concern. On October 27, 2013, the Southeastern California Conference elected officers, including a new president, Sandra Roberts. But the current SDA Yearbook shows that the SECC has no president.

With this letter, we respectfully and prayerfully ask that you reconsider the decision to not recognize Roberts' election, for the following reasons:

First, it is our understanding that the GC Yearbook is a simple list of organizations and personnel serving the church. Not showing her name in the Yearbook calls into question the accuracy of the SDA Yearbook itself, now and forever.

Second, not recognizing that Roberts is president of the Southeastern California Conference appears to be in violation of GC Policy B 15 20, which says: "An individual shall be said to have been elected when" three conditions are met: First, "when the *process* by which that individual was chosen involved a decision by the constituency of the organization to be served as set out within the General Conference Constitution and Bylaws and the North American Division Working Policy." We take "the process" to mean a properly called meeting, a quorum of proper delegates, and a properly conducted election. Second, the person accepts the position. And, third, the person is able to relocate (if necessary). All three conditions were met, so according to GC Working Policy, Roberts "*shall* be said to have been elected."

Third, no GC president in history has failed to recognize and support a president elected by a recognized church entity, regardless of personal reservations. It is likely that during the 150-year history of our church, every General Conference president has been concerned at times when an individual whom the GC president believed was not qualified for the job was elected as local president. But regardless of the reasons for these concerns, or their validity, it is our understanding that every president who has ever been elected and has served, has been recognized by the General Conference, and that every president's name has been printed in the church's list of leaders now called the SDA Yearbook.

Fourth, Roberts is serving as Southeastern California Conference president. She is recognized as president by the 71,000 Seventh-day Adventist church members in the SECC, by the SECC Executive Committee, the SECC officers, departmental directors, pastors, principals, teachers, colporteurs and many other employees in that conference. As president, she is an *ex officio* member of the constituencies of La Sierra University and Pacific Union College, and is an *ex officio* member of the LSU board of trustees.

She is recognized as president by the State of California, according to the SECC Articles of Incorporation. If there should be a lawsuit against the SECC, Roberts will most likely be named in the suit and will appear in a court of law as the president. Her signature is sufficient to represent the conference on all contracts. Financial institutions recognize her as president. During the annual audits, Roberts, as the legally elected president, will be required to sign the engagement letters, the release letters and the representation letters, and Roberts will be held legally accountable if any financial irregularities are found.

At North American Division year-end meetings in 2013, the NAD Executive Committee recognized Roberts as president of SECC. With the enthusiastic support of the NAD Executive Committee members, she was introduced as a new conference president, prayed for by her peers, and welcomed to participate in the work of the church, along with the other men and women on that Committee.

Fifth, according to policy, local conferences are governed by their own constitutions and bylaws. Since the late 1980s, the SECC bylaws have not required presidents to be male. Their bylaws state: "The President, the Secretary, and the Vice Presidents for Pastoral Ministry shall be ministerial employees with pastoral experience." Roberts meets those qualifications. After observing her leadership gifts and spiritual influence for many years, that conference believed that the Holy Spirit was indicating to them that Roberts was God's choice for leading them in the fulfillment of their mission: "The expansion of God's kingdom through the preaching, teaching, publishing, and living of the everlasting gospel throughout the cross-cultural communities of our territory."

While not all of us were present when the SECC delegates elected Roberts as president, we trust our fellow believers and we trust church process. We believe those delegates acted within every policy of the Seventh-day Adventist church, within the guidelines of the Bible, and in accordance with the leading of the Holy Spirit.

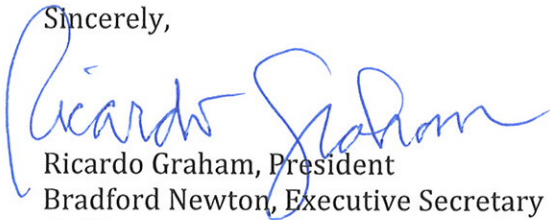
And finally, we are not shaken in our perspective that God is working out His purposes! As we endeavor to faithfully discharge the responsibilities given to us by our gracious Lord for the 52 million people within the Pacific Union territory (including some 10 million people in the SECC), we are praying for the work of the church worldwide.

President Wilson, we, the members of the Pacific Union Conference Executive Committee, love Jesus, love our church, and love and respect our leaders. We sincerely thank God for every gift He gives to the church to assist in His work of seeking and saving the lost.

We don't ask you to agree with the decision of the SECC constituency. We only ask that you recognize the organization and the processes that God has established in our church, and follow policy B 15 20.

We close by committing ourselves—regardless of your decision—to pray for the leadership of our church, and for the officers of the General Conference. May God continue to bless you, your family and your leadership.

Sincerely,



Ricardo Graham, President
Bradford Newton, Executive Secretary
Ted Benson, Treasurer
Arnold Trujillo, Vice President

Copies to:

North American Division President
Pacific Union Conference Executive Committee members