

Corporate structure

The Seventh-day Adventist Church uses a representative form of governance to make the task of organising its almost 13 million members easier. This means members of local churches democratically elect representative bodies and officers to carry out the day-to-day work of the church.

The church has four levels of governance:

1. The local church
2. The conference, mission or field
3. The union conference or union mission
4. The General Conference

1. The local church

The local church is a body of individual believers. For example, Wahroonga Seventh-day Adventist Church is a local church in Sydney.

2. The conference, mission or field

The conference, mission or field is a body of churches in a particular state, province or territory. If the body of churches is self-supporting, it is a conference. If not, it is a mission or a field. Wahroonga Seventh-day Adventist Church is part of the Greater Sydney Conference.

3. The union conference or union mission

The union conference or union mission is a body of conferences or missions or fields within a larger territory. The Greater Sydney Conference is part of the Australian Union Conference.

4. The General Conference

The General Conference is the worldwide headquarters of the church. It has 13 divisions, each consisting of a body of union conferences or union missions. Each division has its own administrative responsibility. The Australian Union Conference is part of the South Pacific Division of the General Conference.

The church also operates a variety of educational, health-care, publishing and other institutions within these four levels. All levels of the church, including these institutions, have representation at the General Conference.