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GO: The Journal for Adventist Laymen

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Background

GO: The Journal for Adventist Laymen was published from 1951 to 1971 as the official publication of the General

Conference of Seventh-day Adventist's Home Missionary department (predecessor to the current Personal Ministries department). As nations moved from the death and destruction of World War II to the uncertainty of the Cold War, the Adventist church saw a need to continue its mission to take the gospel of Jesus to the whole world. Recognizing that paid clergy could not complete this task alone, the church placed a renewed emphasis on training lay members to be involved in the mission of the church.

Founding

The creation of *GO: The Journal for Adventist Laymen* (*GO*) was authorized at the General Conference Fall Council in 1950.¹ With the creation of this new magazine, three periodicals, *Church Officer's Gazette*, *The Dorcas Letter*, and *The Lay Preacher*, ceased publication and were replaced. This was, in part, to streamline and consolidate the message of the Home Missionary department.²

History

GO was initially printed at Southern Publishing Association in Nashville, Tennessee, with Adlai A. Esteb as the first editor. This monthly periodical focused on providing inspiration and instruction for lay members in sharing their faith through giving Bible studies, preaching, and leading out in various ministries of the church. The journal included a variety of features each month on the topics of Bible evangelism, Ingathering, ideas for local church missionary meetings, and inspiring evangelistic success stories featuring lay members. One of the first stated objectives was to help with "doubling our membership by the time of the next General Conference session."³

During the time of *GO*'s publication, the magazine helped promote several major lay evangelism emphases. In 1951, the North American Division held a large "Laymen's Congress." The General Conference declared 1971 the "Laymen's Year for the Advent Movement," followed by "Mission '72," a major evangelistic project that included both pastors and lay people.⁴

This monthly publication contained 36 pages in a magazine format. The initial subscription rate was \$1.00 per year. By the time the magazine ceased publication in 1971, the rate had increased to \$3.25 per year. Originally published by Southern Publishing Association, the printing moved to the Review and Herald Publishing Association in April 1954. Adalai Esteb continued as editor from the magazine's founding in 1951 until his retirement in 1970⁵ Lewis Shipowick was called from the Far Eastern Division to be the next editor. Shipowick oversaw the final year of *GO*, and then continued as the editor of *Adventist Layman*,⁶ the quarterly publication that replaced *GO* in 1972⁷ and continued until 1986.

Editors: Adlai A. Esteb (1951-1970); Lewis A. Shipowick (1970-1971)

SOURCES

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"Farewell." *GO: The Journal of Adventist Laymen*, January 1971.

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Oswald, T. L. "A New Day Dawns...." *GO: The Journal of Adventist Laymen*, July 1951.

Reeder, Marvin H. "Mission '72 – What is it?" *GO: The Journal of Adventist Laymen*, September 1971.

"This Month." *GO: The Journal of Adventist Laymen*, December 1971.

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NOTES

1. A.A. Esteb, "GO's Debut," *GO: The Journal of Adventist Laymen*, July 1951, 21.?

2. T. L. Oswald, "A New Day Dawns....," *GO: The Journal of Adventist Laymen*, July 1951, 5.?

3. Marvin H. Reeder, "Mission '72 – What is it?" *GO: The Journal of Adventist Laymen*, September 1971, 24.?

4. "Farewell," *GO: The Journal of Adventist Laymen*, January 1971, 24.?

5. "New Faces in Lay Activities," *GO: The Journal of Adventist Laymen*, December 1970, 13.?
6. "This Month," *GO: The Journal of Adventist Laymen*, December 1971, 2.?

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