

“He Is Coming”

the
REFORMATION
herald

Vol. 53, No. 1



A GENERAL CONFERENCE

What is a General Conference? The expression “General Conference” is self-explanatory. It is not one person, or a small group of people.

As we will learn in this issue of *The Reformation Herald*, the words of a few persons are not to be considered as the voice of God, yet we are told that the “decisions of a General Conference composed of an assembly of duly appointed, representative men from all parts of the field, should be . . . respected,”¹ and further, that “the representatives of [God’s] church from all parts of the earth, when assembled in a General Conference, shall have authority.”²

No GC officer should be considered as being the “General Conference.” Even a small group of GC officers should not be considered as being the “General Conference,” but “an assembly of duly appointed, representative men” “from al parts of the earth,” when acting in harmony with God’s Word, make up the General Conference whose voice must be respected.

When Moses was visited by Jethro, his father-in-law, an interesting conversation took place. Jethro realized that Moses—capable as he was—was undertaking a very heavy burden for one man alone. Therefore he counseled Moses: “Provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens; and let them judge the people at all seasons: and it shall be, that every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge: so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear the burden with thee. If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee so, then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people shall also go to their place in peace” (Exodus 18:21–23).

Moses gave heed to this sage advice—and the governing of God’s people prospered.

In the system recommended by Jethro to Moses, we find four levels of administration: rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens.

In our system of organization there are: local churches, fields (or conferences), unions, and a General Conference. If the brethren and sisters of all levels fulfill their duties, God’s work will prosper.

Finally, what is a General Conference? It is a general assembly made up of duly elected representatives of God’s church from all the regions of the planet that meet together to decide important matters related to the spiritual progress of God’s children.

In this special issue of *The Reformation Herald*, we will bring to the knowledge of our readers news and important decisions of the General Conference delegation session held in Porumbacu, Romania, from August 23 to September 13, 2011. R

¹ *Gospel Workers*, p. 490; ² *Ibid.*

The Reformation Herald staff would like to take this opportunity to introduce our new Editor, Bro. Davi Paes Silva. He was chosen by the worldwide delegation to serve in this capacity, and we trust that the Lord will utilize his talents in a mighty way. We also would like to thank Bro. D. Sureshkumar for the dedicated service he faithfully rendered as Editor during the past two terms. It is our prayer that the Lord may bless his labors in the vineyard and continue to make him a blessing to others always.

In this issue

- **Why Does God Call for a General Conference?** 3
Following God’s plan of organization.
- **Why Are GC Delegation Sessions Necessary?** 5
The biblical basis for such gatherings.
- **Introducing the Delegation** 8
What happened first?
- **Newly Elected GC Officers** 10
These officers will bear weighty responsibilities.
- **The African Region** 12
Light to the “dark” continent.
- **The Asian Region** 14
Christians face persecution in a tumultuous region.
- **The Central American Region** 16
An ever-growing area rich in faith.
- **The Eurasian Region** 18
A stronghold of reformation in a varied culture.
- **The European Region** 20
The birthplace of Protestantism, a melting pot of cultures.
- **The North American Region** 22
A new evangelistic thrust begins with encouraging result.
- **The Pacific Region** 24
The islands of the sea are ripe for the harvest.
- **The South American Region** 26
Many church members and a great work to do.
- **Highlights From the Decisions** 28
- **21st General Conference Delegates** 34
Who was chosen to participate?
- **Children’s Corner** 40
Building in harmony.

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“The age in which we live calls for reformatory action.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 488.

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Why Does God Call for a **GENERAL CONFERENCE?**

What is a General Conference?

Following God's plan

Is gospel order very important today?

Genuine gospel order
in the last days

R

References

In ancient Israel there were three yearly feasts for which all the men of the nation were to assemble at the sanctuary (Exodus 23:14–17). After the conquest of the land of Canaan, the Israelites held for a time their annual gatherings at Shiloh. Later on, Jerusalem became the center of worship for the Jewish people.

In those days it was relatively easy for the tribes of Israel to convene three times a year, because the whole nation lived in a small territory. Today, the people of God are scattered practically all over the world, which makes it difficult for them to hold general meetings. Not all the people come together; they rather send their representatives to an official business session once every four years. Besides the business session, there is also a spiritual convention, which is attended not only by the local brethren and sisters but also by a number of visitors from other countries.

The plan of God for His church, as revealed in Ephesians 4:1–16, demands a general coordination, an international and worldwide interdependence. The church is compared to a human body. There is no room for the idea that in every place or in every country

the believers should be left to develop the work on a local basis, to the best of their ability, without any connection with other parts of the world. Those who have tried to organize and conduct an independent work, excusing themselves with the argument that they do not want to be controlled and exploited by other people, are usually found doing the very things they purport to be fighting against. Contrary to their opinion, their own experience should prove to them that organizational and administrative oneness is as important for the church as it is for an army in the battlefield. This is one of the reasons why we must have periodical gatherings at every level of the work—local church business meetings, state conference sessions, union conference sessions, and General Conference sessions. General Conference sessions are held for different purposes:

When Paul and Barnabas and other church leaders came to Jerusalem for the first general assembly for consultation and decision on an important issue which was threatening to divide the church, “they declared all things that God had done with them” (Acts 15:4). First of all, the delegates at a conference want to hear official reports

about the development of the work.

Keeping accurate records and giving systematic reports is a well-established practice. The local churches send their reports to the state conference, the state conferences submit their reports to the union conference, and the union conferences forward their reports to the General Conference. Also the regional secretaries and GC departmental secretaries send their reports to the GC office and to the GC Council on a regular basis. When a GC session is near, the GC officers prepare their reports covering a four-year period, from the last conference to the forthcoming conference. In this line, the GC secretary seems to have the hardest job, because he must present a global statistical report including all the unions, fields, and missions. This report must show, not only the present membership, but also the number of new souls added since the previous session, as well as any decreases in membership resulting from death or apostasy. The number of ministers, workers, colporteurs, and church employees, as well as church properties and institutions, must also be reported to the GC delegation in session. This shows how important it is for the unions, fields, and missions to send in their quarterly reports regularly.

Mutual encouragement

Doctrinal questions, church discipline, and other issues

How do we choose a place for a GC session?

Sessions of prayer

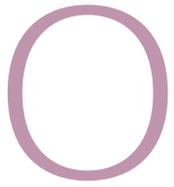
Plans for the advancement of the work

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Important considerations

References

Election of GC officers



Excerpts from the
opening address of
D. Sureshkumar

Newly Elected GENERAL CO

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THE AFRICAN REGION

African countries entered

New interest has been created in **BENIN**. Similar to how Cameroon was evangelized, the Gospel Worker from

The work in Africa has progressed through God's merciful grace bestowed on faithful believers and sacrificial supporters.

Adapted from the report of Bro. D. Samy Doss

THE ASIAN REGION



T

of education before the people can understand them, or they the people. And

Visitations to some places require much effort because of the diverse kind of landscapes and inaccessible location.

*“If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. . .
If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you” (John 5:18, 20).*

R

References

MISSION IN ACTION

Presented by the Regional Secretary, Bro. Eduardo Lainez

THE CENTRAL AMERICAN REGION

Caribbean Sea the places where we
have membership are **HAITI, DOMIN-
ICAN REPUBLIC, PUERTO RICO**

Mexico, Central America, and Colombia

W

Reaching out to new souls, educating the next generation.

R

References

MISSION IN ACTION

Presented by the Regional Secretary, Bro. Simeon Karvatski

THE EURASIAN REGION



events. Only because of the work th
is being done in heaven in our beha
as described in Revelation 7:1-9, th

was in travel of soul for the redemption

C

*The warmth of Christ's truth radiates comfort
in this rigorous and cold climate.*

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Reference

THE EUROPEAN REGION



During the last four years, the Reform Movement has had the fol-

.....

O

*Faced with new economic challenges, the European believers
press on by faith.*

Throughout most of Europe, Christendom has lost the moral and religious power it had during the time of the Reformers. The countries of Europe must be evangelized again. Non-Christian religions have developed here as a result of the migration to the west of Muslims, Buddhists, and Hindus. In this region we need well-prepared missionaries who are able to face these serious challenges. All need to be on guard against the increasing challenges and even against persecution. May the heavenly Father strengthen and sanctify us with the beneficial presence of the Holy Spirit! R

THE NORTH AMERICAN REGION

In the midst of apocalyptic events

the Reform Movement manifests its
presence in the three major units:

As we reach out to the world by faith, the Lord opens new doors.

Adapted From the Report of John Ciric

THE PACIFIC REGION

Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising” (Isaiah 60:1–3).

The Pacific Region has grown since the Lord called me to work in this very vast and diverse part of the world.

There are three organized unions: the Australasian Union, and the North and South Chinese Unions.

We are thankful to the Lord that **AUSTRALIA** has taken a supporting role in the Region. Many countries are looking to Australia for personnel, financial, moral, and spiritual support. The Australasian Union has given much support to the work in the Region and especially in the island missions of the South Pacific. Further, it continues to help as needed in providing training programs and assisting in many situations in these developing missions. Presently, there

is one worker and a trainee-worker in **NEW ZEALAND**. There was recently a baptism, and several visitors are also being prepared for baptism. The main line of work is visiting individuals and groups, Bible studies, Bible correspondence courses, and also going from door to door distributing our literature. Another method used is by giving out or letterboxing with the card offering the book or correspondence course. The method seems to be working fine.

The work in **PAPUA NEW GUINEA (PNG)** is carried out by the local members. We entered there in 1998, and we thank the Lord that the work is steadily progressing, despite the difficulties that the enemy of souls throws on our

The Lords has precious jewels in this wide and heavily-populated region.

way. The country is developing and our fellow there are in need. A number of younger brethren are carrying the burden of the work and are looking to extend the work further from home into new areas of PNG where the message has not yet reached. Of 24 provinces, we have already reached nearly half of them.

Thank the Lord our brethren and sisters in **FIJI** are having good experiences in proclaiming this wonderful message. The work started in 1998—six months before PNG. There was some interest here, and we continued to build on that. Work has steadily progressed since that time, and we thank the Lord that most of the are well established in the truth.

The mission field in **SAMOA** consists of two islands: Western, and American Samoa. There are members on both islands, organized into one field. A seminar was recently held there as well as a baptism.

The Lord works in many ways that we do not expect. *Testimonies to Ministers*, page 300, was experienced on this group of islands. A brother and sister from Australia spent their vacation in **VANUATU**, where they encountered a keen interest in our message. Studies followed with two groups here—and as a result, many are now part of God's church in this archipelago of little islands and few large islands. There are three full-time Bible workers who are actively working for the Lord in proclaiming this precious message. On these islands both English and French are spoken, and we praise the Lord for some younger people who speak both of these languages so the message is carried strongly throughout the islands.

We have also received a donation of land and a church building from a brother who is now our member. By the grace of the Lord we have been able to register our church. One of our Australian brethren runs a school in Vanuatu, and it is a wonderful witness to the community of the message for this time.

We can be thankful to the Lord for the wonderful work that is going on in **FRENCH POLYNESIA**. The way the brethren are working is by involving all the membership. How do they do that? They grow watermelons to finance the Lord's cause. I have witnessed them in action. One brother gave some land to plant watermelons. Then the believers all come together to prepare the soil, then another day they plant the seeds, and all take turns watering them. Three months later they can easily sell the beautiful crop. That is how they have now been able to carry the message to every island in the archipelago.

In **NEW CALEDONIA** there are two groups, though no Bible worker. The are holding to the truth and are sharing with people around them the message of salvation. They have a lovely church building where they are meeting regularly.

Thanks to the Lord, the work in **JAPAN** is steady, and the brethren and sisters are looking to increase their borders. There is new interest in the truth for this time, and it is our hope that some of the interested ones will make their covenant with the Lord. He has been merciful to the members there and protected them in the time of the great natural disaster in this populous country, and we lost none.

The work in **KOREA** continues to grow, and small gains are made. This is a strong Buddhist country, but thanks to the Lord that the work continues to progress steadily from year to year. New souls have been added to the church over time. The brethren and sisters are in good courage and making plans how to carry the work to new places and reach new people. This is a fast developing country and great effort is needed, as people are not used to Christian values.

MONGOLIA is a large landlocked country in Asia, situated between China on the south and Russia on the north. The capital Ulaanbaatar is grow-

ing very fast with capital investments from outside. Since all those that were baptized come from a Buddhist background, they are slow to fully grasp the precious message of Christ. Our way of life—and especially vegetarianism—is hard for the people to understand. The work here is not easy, and to survive one must have a lot of determination and encouragement.

CHINA is the largest country in our Region and the most populous in the world. The message continues to reach new people and places, but still we are really only scratching the surface. Over 1.4 billion people live and work in this country and supply the world's needs in goods of all descriptions. The work is truly great and the laborers are few, but they continue to press on and reach out to new areas. The brethren and sisters are active and continue to look at ways and means to witness.

VIETNAM is the second-to-last country where our message has entered. This is a Communist country, and restrictions are in force. Our Lord has children here also and is calling us to do the work while the day lasts. The membership of Vietnam has grown to be near 90.

Although **NORTH KOREA** is one of the most restricted countries, and we still do not have members there, this wonderful message is nonetheless finding its place in the hearts of a number of people who are studying our *Sabbath Bible Lessons*.

Contact is also being made with in **CAMBODIA** and **LAOS**. At present no actual visits are made, but literature is passed on to them. We pray that the Lord will open the way for the message to be shared freely.

SOLOMON ISLANDS is the most recent country in our Region where the message has been taken. By God's grace, we now have members there as well.

May the mighty power of our heavenly Father attend this message, and that the name of Jesus may be proclaimed to all the world! R

THE SOUTH AMERICAN REGION

our test. At this time we must gather

ness and worldly lusts, we should live
soberly, righteously, and godly, in this
present world; looking for that blessed

B

The Lord calls us to a solemn re-consecration and a renewing of our vows to be faithful to our high calling as Reformers.



References

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“Our Conference meetings, in which business seasons when the heavenly counsels are

HIGHLIG

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*relating to the cause is transacted, are special
made known to those assembled.”*

The General Conference Bulletin, February 4, 1895.

HTS FROM ECISIONS

*chosen men shall go as
are to be tried and proved.”*

Testimonies, vol. 9, p. 262.

Porumbacu Declaration

higher, still higher.

the people to study their Bibles.”

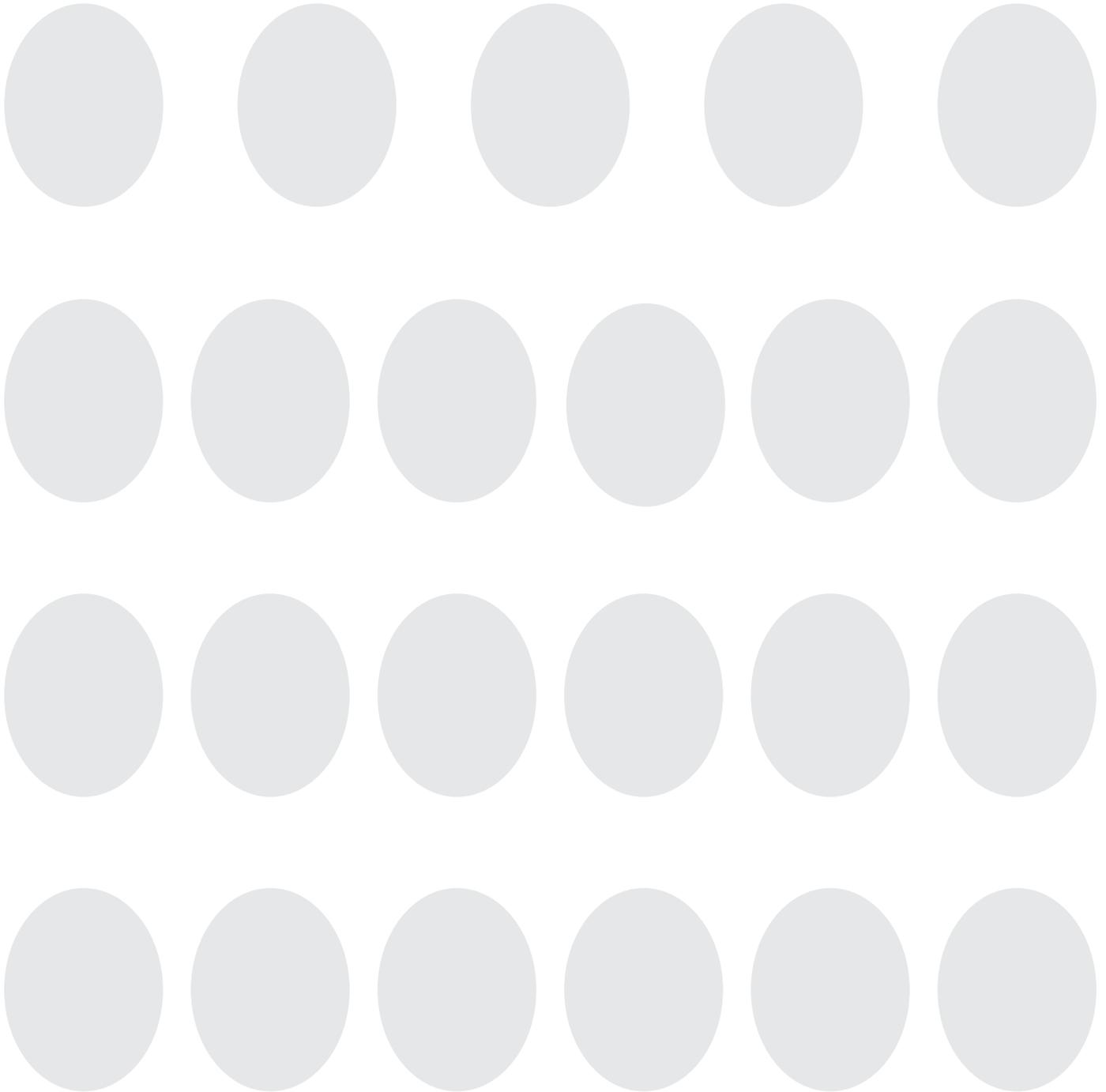
Manuscript Releases, vol. 20, pp. 170, 171.

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References

21st General C

DELEGATES





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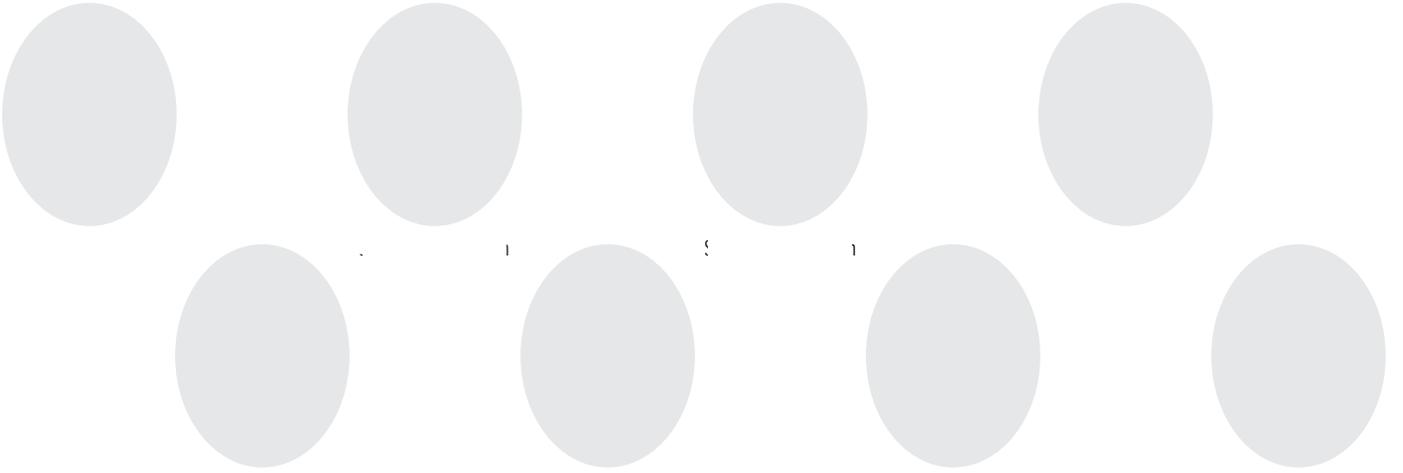
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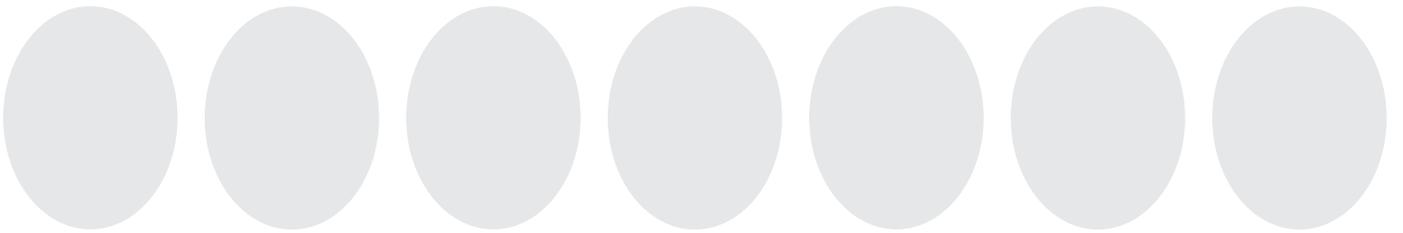
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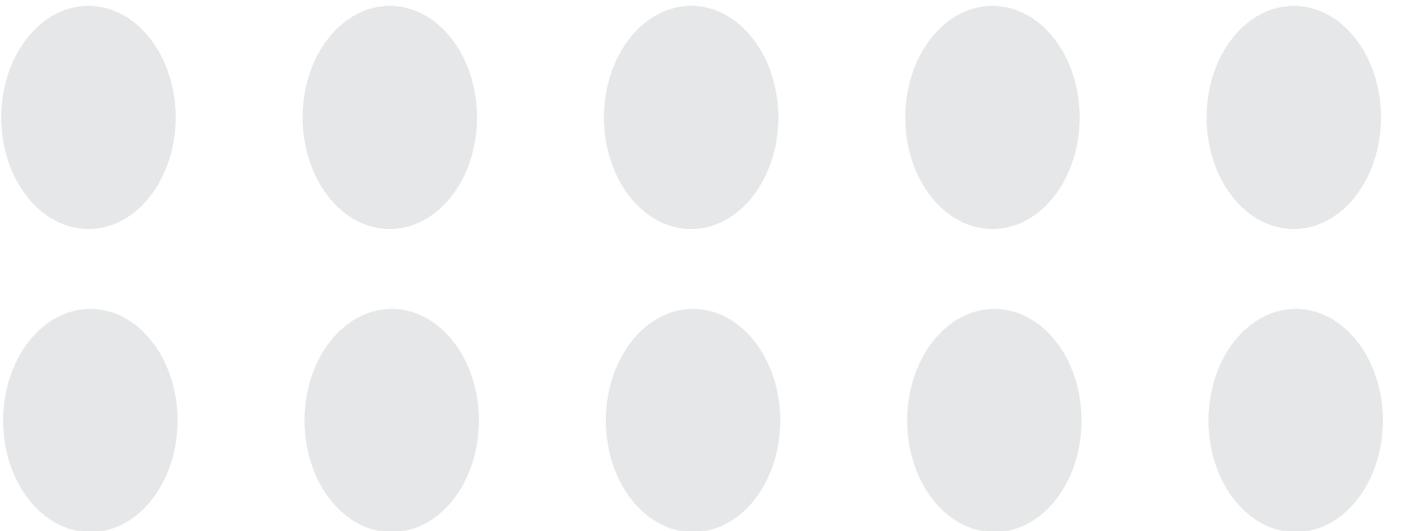
Asian Region



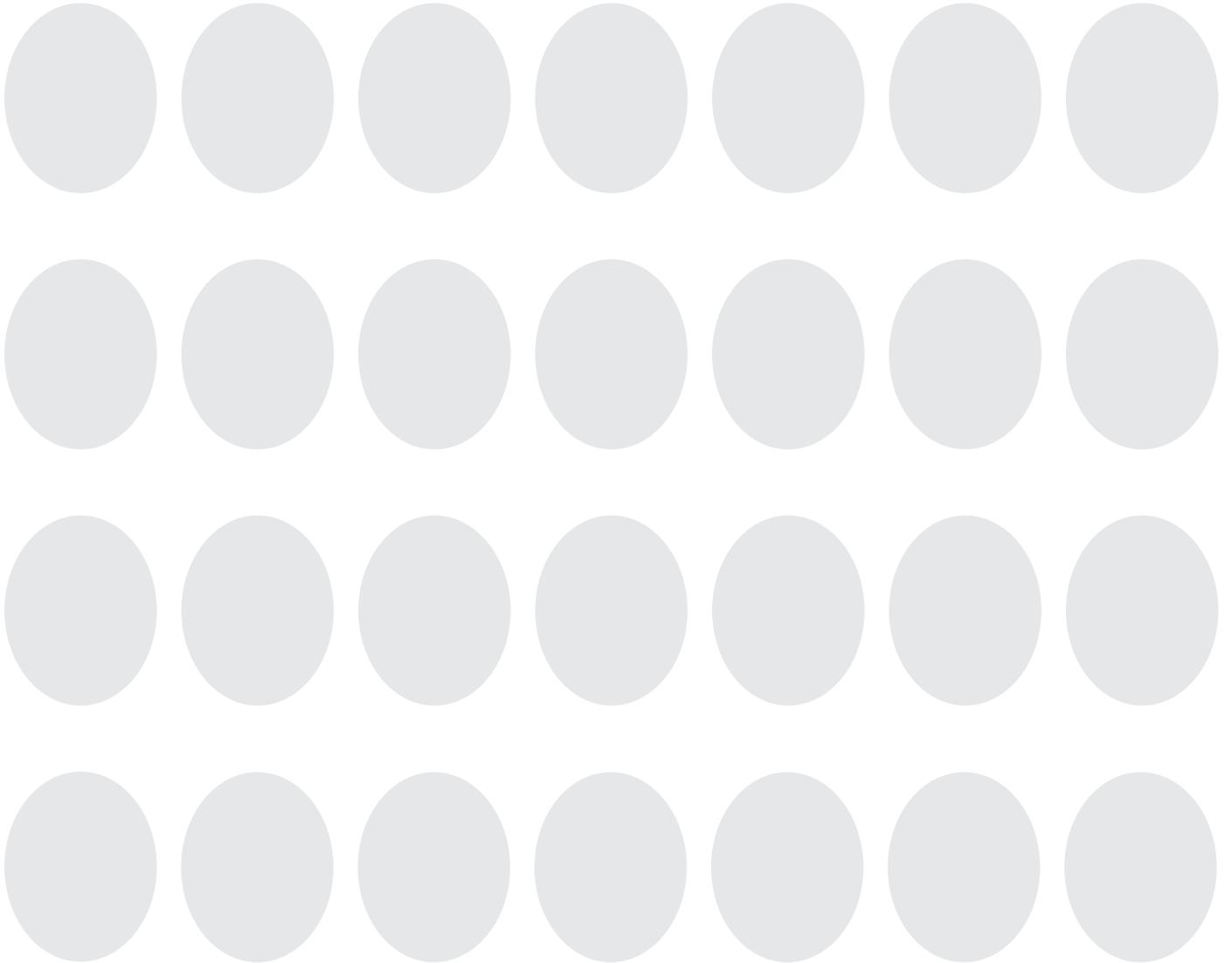
Central American Region



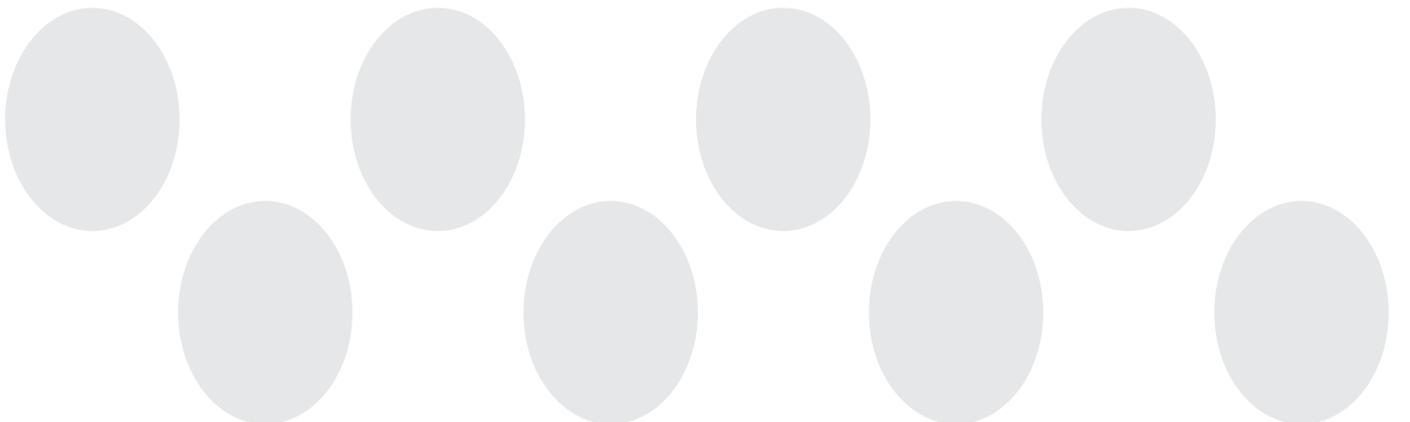
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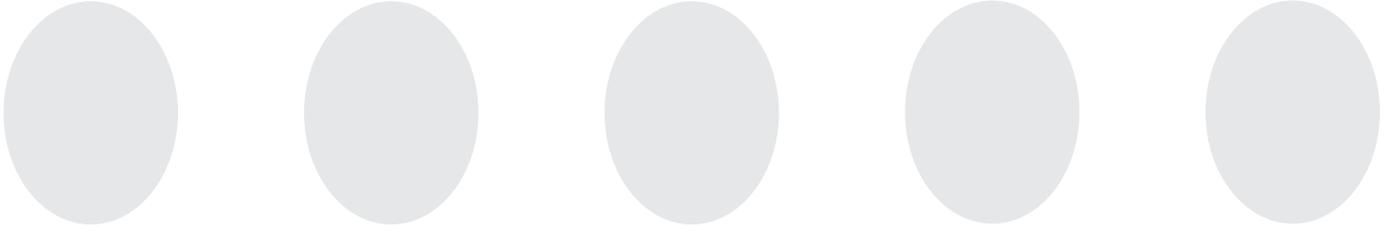
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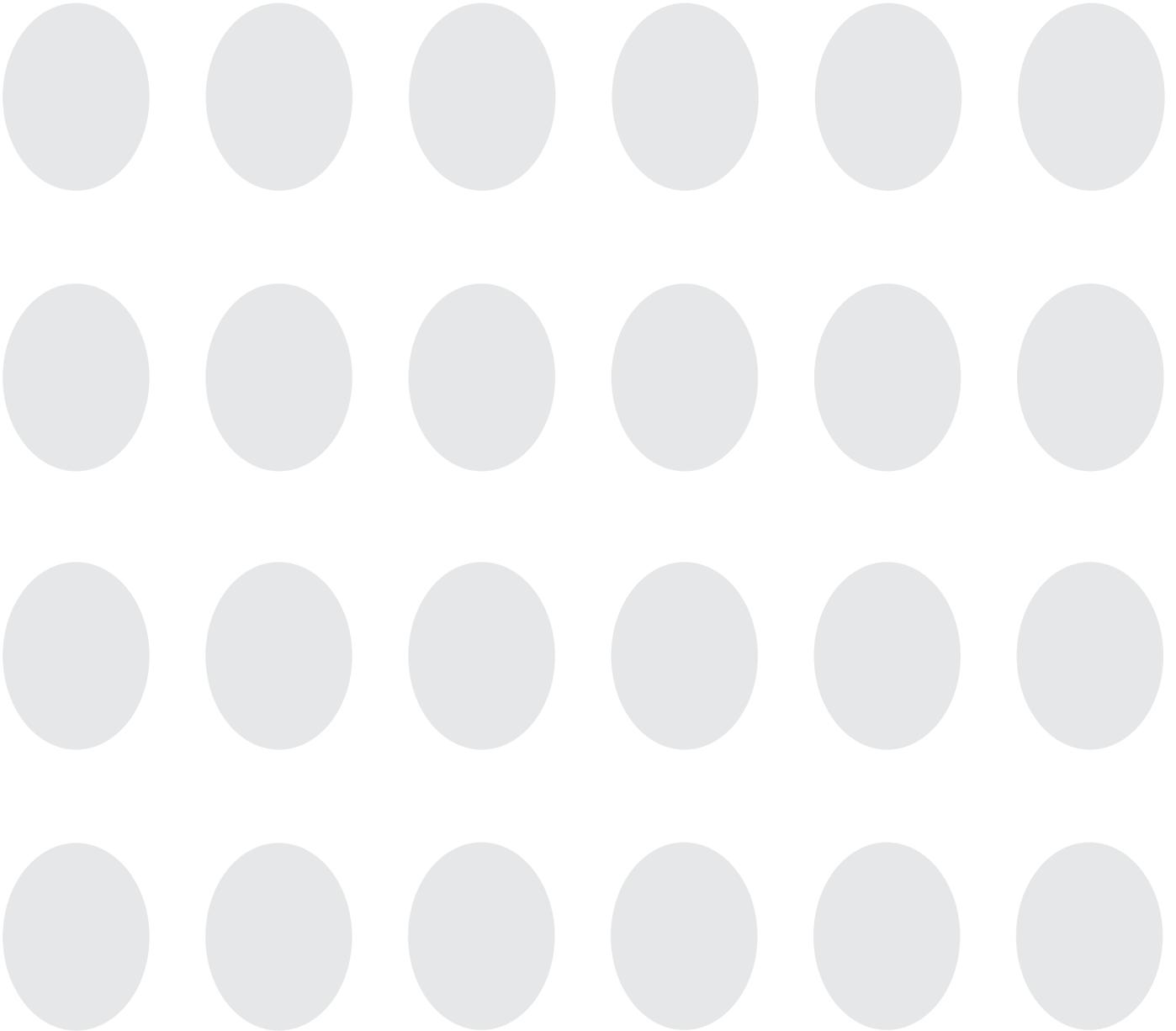
North American Region



Pacific Region



South American Region



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MOVING? Please let us know.

Building in **Harmony**

“We are labourers together with God: ye are God’s husbandry, ye are God’s building” (1 Corinthians 3:9).

W