

Communicating Hope: The ECC's Mission and Media Journey (2021-2024)

Report of the Communications Department to the 7th Quadrennial Session 2025

Presented by Pastor Anthony Hall

Esteemed Chairman, representatives of the Caribbean Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, distinguished guests from the Inter-American Division, delegates to the 7th Quadrennial Session, ladies and gentlemen,

It is a profound privilege to present to you the Communications Department report for the period January 2021 to December 2024. This report reflects our commitment to God's mission, guided by the principle that "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17). Our journey has been one of innovation, dedication, and unwavering focus on using every available platform to share the everlasting gospel.

"God has committed to us a work of the most solemn importance—to give to the world the last message of mercy. We are to proclaim the truth in its purity and power." - *Evangelism*, p. 119.

The Mandate: A Bridge, Not a Barrier

The Communications Department of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, as outlined by the Inter-American Division (IAD) working policy, has a broad and strategic scope. Its purpose is fundamentally about building bridges, sharing hope, and ensuring the church's message and values are clearly understood and positively received by both its members and the wider world. We are not just about transmitting information; we are about forging connections.

"In the past, the message of truth was given to a limited number; but in these last days, it must be proclaimed to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people." - *The Review and Herald*, November 14, 1899.

The scope and purpose of the Communications Department is comprehensive, covering all aspects of internal and external messaging, including:

- **Image Building and Management:** Proactively creating and maintaining a favorable public image of the church, its core mission, the lifestyle of its members, its active witnessing, and all related activities. This goes beyond simple information sharing to active reputation building, which is crucial for evangelism and religious liberty.
- **Message Dissemination:** Ensuring that the church's strategic values of unity, growth, and quality of life are communicated effectively across various platforms to diverse audiences.
- **Media Engagement:** Handling relationships with various media outlets (print, broadcast, digital) to ensure accurate representation of the church and to leverage these channels for outreach.
- **Digital Presence:** Managing and expanding the church's online services and digital footprint to engage with a contemporary audience.
- **Crisis Management:** Being prepared to manage communication during challenging or sensitive situations to protect the church's image and maintain trust.
- **Supporting Strategic Values:** All communication efforts are intended to support the church's overarching strategic values of unity, growth, and quality of life.

In essence, the Communications Department acts as the church's voice and public face, meticulously crafting and delivering messages to ensure its mission thrives in a complex and diverse world.

"Communication is the key to unity, and unity is essential to our success." - Anonymous

Our Strategic Pillars: Reaching, Retaining, and Reclaiming

The East Caribbean Conference Communications Department adopted the core strategic pillars identified by the IAD and the Caribbean Union to strategically leverage all available platforms to **"Empower Lives through Christ-Centered Connections and Fellowship"** and **"win souls for Christ"** within Barbados and Dominica. Our focus embraced a balanced approach of Reach, Retain, and Reclaim, recognizing the critical need to not only bring new individuals to Christ but also to nurture, engage, and re-integrate existing and disengaged members.

"You have but one life to live. Make it count for Christ." - Ellen G. White

1. Mission-Driven Digital & Hybrid Outreach

We aggressively yet humbly shared the Advent message, leveraging our digital platforms to promote evangelistic campaigns like the "Year of Evangelism" in 2024. Our "ECC Online" platform became a primary hub for spiritual growth, featuring compelling digital content and facilitating interactive online Bible studies. We recognize the essential nature of physical

community for worship, and our efforts were always aimed at transitioning online attendees to in-person church fellowship and baptism. Our integrated multi-channel presence ensured consistent messaging across our official website, YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram.

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” - Matthew 28:19

2. Strengthening Member Retention and Engagement

Our mission extends beyond the initial conversion. We implemented targeted communication strategies focused explicitly on member retention, designing campaigns to “reclaim” inactive members. This involved developing personalized outreach plans for new converts and providing proactive spiritual support for existing members to prevent disengagement. We worked to ensure effective and consistent communication to our internal audiences (members, pastors, and local leaders) to foster unity and shared vision.

“The greatest need of the world is the need of men—men who will not be bought or sold, men who in their inmost souls are true and honest, men who do not fear to call sin by its right name, men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole, men who will stand for the right though the heavens fall.” - Ellen G. White, *Education*, p. 57.

3. Strategic Public Affairs & Religious Liberty Advocacy

We actively promoted and defended religious freedom for all, engaging proactively with government bodies and civil society organizations. This included cultivating positive relationships with other religious groups and community stakeholders to enhance the church’s public image. Our communication channels were also used to thoughtfully address pressing societal issues from a faith-based perspective, positioning the church as a responsible and influential civil society actor.

4. Building Communications Capacity & Innovation

Recognizing the rapid advancements in technology, we systematized comprehensive training programs for all church communicators, pastors, and local church leaders. These programs focused on digital literacy, effective content creation, public relations best practices, and ethical communication. We also began exploring the use of advanced analytics and AI to track engagement metrics and optimize our outreach, all while being mindful of ethical implications.

“The only limit to our realization of tomorrow will be our doubts of today.” - Franklin D. Roosevelt

Key Achievements: A Testimony to God's Grace

The East Caribbean Conference Communications Department has significantly advanced the Conference’s mission during this period, achieving a robust digital presence and demonstrating tangible impact.

- **Digital Reach:** We cultivated a strong digital presence with a refurbished website and

active social media pages. Our YouTube channel alone has garnered over **1.5 million views**, a testament to the power of digital evangelism.

- **Evangelism:** We launched and coordinated significant evangelism campaigns, including the “**Year of Evangelism**” in 2024, which set an ambitious goal of 1,400 baptisms. The launch event in Barbados resulted in **18 baptisms**, demonstrating immediate impact. Our “**ECC Online**” platform facilitated virtual engagement and digital evangelism initiatives, such as the distribution of *The Great Controversy*.
- **Event Promotion:** The department effectively promoted and facilitated participation in key ECC events, including the “**Church Without Walls Convocations**” and the “**Ten Days of Prayer**” initiative.
- **Public Affairs:** Through our Public Affairs and Religious Liberty (PARL) work, we actively advocated for religious liberty and human rights. This included the historic in-person Caribbean Religious Liberty Association (CARLA) Congress in Dominica in 2023 and participation in a 2024 webinar on “**The Issue of Crime in the Caribbean: A Faith-Based Response.**”
- **Capacity Building:** We prioritized capacity building for local communicators, offering training in technology skills to enhance evangelism efforts. Participants from both Barbados and Dominica benefited from the planned **Effective Communication Workshop and Training sessions**, which covered Corporate Identity, Digital Communication, Production, and News & Journalism.
- **Volunteer Engagement:** The work of volunteers is indispensable. With the combined efforts of volunteers like **Kyle Roach**, **Wayne Morgan**, and **Lewen Padmore**, we provided Media Training for ECC Media Team Volunteers, equipping them with essential skills in video production, camera operation, audio production, and stage management. This initiative fostered innovation and excellence in worship experiences.

Public Relations and Community Engagement

During this period, the Communications Department actively engaged with the press in both Barbados and Dominica, hosting yearly press conferences to promote our national conventions and the “**Church Project Reset**” initiative. These events were a great success, drawing an estimated **7,000 attendees in Barbados and 3,500 in Dominica**.

We also used our platform to advocate for religious liberty. Following court rulings that decriminalized homosexual acts in Barbados and Dominica, we voiced our opposition, expressing concerns that these decisions could compromise the position of faith-based organizations. Our stance was articulated through articles published in prominent online news outlets.

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free.” - Galatians 5:1

In response to rising violence in the region, our press conferences called for a return to spiritual values. We addressed the societal paradox of increased calls for the church's intervention while its role is often negated in the same breath. We clarified that the religious community has been working on long-term solutions behind the scenes, attributing many social problems to the breakdown of family life and inadequate parenting, and we suggested remedies to combat the scourge.

Pastor Dayle Haynes, ECC Personal Ministries Director, highlighted specific initiatives, including a partnership with the **Astra Babb Reading Clinic** to provide literacy support to 80 boys and a partnership with the **National Peace Programme**. Beyond these specific issues, we consistently leveraged press engagement to promote evangelistic campaigns and to share messages of hope during holidays. This strategic approach was crucial not only for spreading our beliefs but also for building and maintaining a positive public image for the church.

"A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way." - John C. Maxwell

Enhancing Our Corporate Identity and Outreach

The period from 2021 to 2024 was marked by significant advancements in the department's corporate identity and media outreach. We successfully introduced a new letterhead and created templates for new church signage to unify our visual identity across the Conference.

To honor a legacy of media ministry, we proudly renamed our media center after the late **G. Ralph Thompson**, a pioneer who produced the influential "Faith for Today" radio program across Barbados and the Caribbean in the 1970s. This renaming celebrates our rich history and commitment to using media for outreach.

In Barbados, our media presence remained strong through the "**Reach for Life**" broadcast on both radio and television. We are deeply grateful to key speakers like **Pastors Jameil Blackman, Jason Reid, Carl Dyal, and Anthony Hall**, whose powerful messages have been a source of inspiration and guidance for our community.

"Let us not forget that the purpose of all our work is to point souls to Christ." - Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers*, p. 11.

Strategic Recommendations

To enhance future effectiveness and impact, the following are recommended:

- **Enhance Digital Infrastructure and Content:** Invest in upgrading the ECC's digital platforms for more dynamic, interactive, and user-friendly content.
 - **Prioritize Member Retention through Targeted Communication:** Develop and implement data-informed communication campaigns specifically focused on retaining and re-engaging members.
 - **Strengthen Local Church Communication Capacity:** Expand and standardize training programs for local church communicators and pastors, focusing on practical digital tools and compelling content creation.
 - **Leverage Data Analytics and Explore AI:** Implement robust analytics tools and initiate pilot projects to explore AI applications for content generation and audience segmentation.
 - **Sustain and Expand PARL Advocacy:** Continue proactive engagement with governmental bodies and inter-faith groups to promote religious liberty and enhance the church's societal relevance.
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Acknowledging Our Contributors

We want to extend my heartfelt thanks to the many individuals who contributed to the success of the East Caribbean Conference Communications Department.

First, we give thanks to God, who is the source of all our strength and success. His guidance has been instrumental in everything we've accomplished.

We also want to express our sincere gratitude to Dr. Colin Thorne for his dedicated service as the Communications Director for the East Caribbean Conference of Seventh-day Adventists during the years 2021 and 2022. His leadership and foundational work during that period were instrumental in setting the stage for many of the advancements detailed in this report. His commitment to the mission laid a strong groundwork, and we are truly appreciative of his contributions.

We thank the dedicated employees of our media department: **Simon Victor, Shawn Mayers, and Clifford Trotman**. Your hard work, passion, and commitment are the foundation of our success. To my administrative assistant, **Cecile**, thank you for your unwavering support and for keeping the department running smoothly.

A profound thanks to my family for their support. To my wife, **Susanna**, thank you for your patience and encouragement. To our children, **Ansuni and Suthany**, your help has been a blessing. Ansuni, in particular, your efforts in photography, video editing, and managing our social media platforms were a huge part of our digital outreach success.

To our many volunteers, including **Kyle Roach, Wayne Morgan, and Lewen Padmore**, your tireless efforts are the lifeblood of our department. We are deeply grateful for the guidance and support of my Union Conference supervisor, **Pastor Royston Philbert**.

A special thank you goes to the media team from Dominica, led by **Kendell Barrie and Pastor James Collaire**, and all their volunteers. We must also give special recognition to **Paul Messiah**, a talented graphic artist, and to **Kenesha Barry** for her excellent journalistic contributions.

We are truly blessed to have such a dedicated team of individuals committed to spreading hope through Christ-centered communication.

"Many hands make light work." - English Proverb