

Seventh Day Baptist World Federation Sessions Scheduled For Malawi

The Seventh Day Baptist World Federation Sessions, initially scheduled for 2022 in the United States, had to be postponed because of COVID-19 related reasons. For some of those same reasons and others, the SDB World Federation Executive Committee has found good reason to change the host country from United States to Malawi.

Dates and Place

Hence, the Executive Committee is announcing that the next Sessions of the SDB World Federation will be held at the Hotel Victoria in Blantyre, Malawi, on the continent of Africa, September 17-23, 2023. In the preceding week, September 10-16, the Central Africa Conference will hold its annual meetings. Attendees should fly into Chileka International Airport (BLZ), Blantyre.

Reasons for Change to Malawi

The primary reasons for the shift in host country are as follows:

1. To obtain a visa appointment for travel to the United States, most countries are showing a wait time of an average of about 100 calendar days. That is more than three months, and that is only to get an appointment.
2. While it is somewhat unpredictable and seemingly arbitrary sometimes, by our estimation, it has become increasingly difficult for citizens from certain countries to obtain visitors' visas to travel to the United States. Those include African countries and India, especially when the applicant may not have particular professions/careers or are not steadily employed at verifiable places of employment. Currently, there are 19 SDB World Federation member conferences and 8 of them are from Africa.
3. It is generally easier for citizens of other countries to obtain visas to travel to African countries, and in most cases, citizens of African countries do not require a visa to travel to another African country.

So, although our delegates traveling to Malawi from the other side of the world will have higher airfare costs than if they were traveling to the United States, we believe the overall benefit of having more people from more countries potentially able to travel to the Sessions outweighs the added financial cost that some will have to assume.

The SDB World Federation Executive Committee is therefore inviting all our member conferences to plan to send a delegation to the sessions in Malawi in September of this year. We recognize and apologize for the fact that the advance notice time is short, and pray that all of our member conferences can have at least one delegate attending.

Delegates

As has been the case historically, the World Federation is once again blessed to be able to cover all the expenses for one delegate from each member conference, as needed.

Using the formula of one delegate for each member conference, plus one delegate for every 1,000 members or part thereof, the following is our estimate of each member conference's delegate allotment:

| | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Australia – 2 | Kenya – 2 | Rwanda – 4 |
| Brazil – 6 | Malawi – 16 | South Africa – 2 |
| Burundi – 4 | Netherlands – 2 | Uganda – 2 |
| Guyana – 2 | New Zealand – 2 | United Kingdom – 2 |
| India (Andhra Pradesh) – 2 | Nigeria – 2 | USA & Canada – 7 |
| Jamaica – 5 | Philippines – 2 | Zambia – 2 |
| | Poland – 2 | |

Host Committee

In its almost 60 year history, the World Federation Sessions have never been held on the African continent. So, this will be historic and unprecedented. Malawi has the largest SDB Conference in the world, and they have assembled a very capable Host Committee, led by Dr. Alfred Chanza, Principal Secretary at the Malawi Ministry of Labor and Manpower Development, and former Chief Executive Officer of the Blantyre City Council. The Host Committee is already working to do its part in facilitating an enjoyable and fulfilling experience for all sessions attendees while in Malawi.

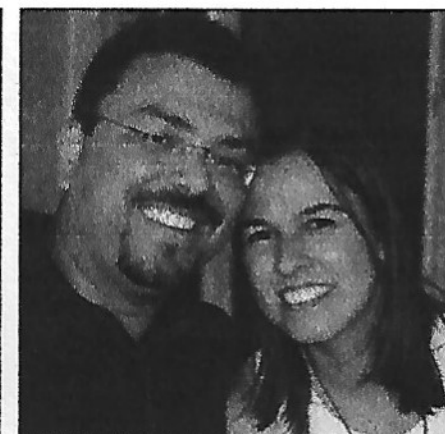
Program

The President of the SDB World Federation, Pastor Luciano Barreto Nogueira de Moura, is putting together an uplifting and visionary program of activities for the week, and will announce his theme shortly.

We look forward to many Seventh Day Baptists from all parts of the world making the trip to Malawi, the warm heart of Africa. SR



*Dr. Alfred Chanza, Chairman of
the 2023 World Federation
Host Committee*



*World Federation President, Pastor
Luciano and his wife Liane—
from Brazil*