Leaders to “reclaim, retain and rescue”

BRISBANE, QUEENSLAND

Youth leaders from around the South Pacific Division (SPD) have embraced a renewed vision for ministry to young people in their respective communities, regions and churches. More than 550 participants from 13 countries launched the ministry objectives—“Reclaim, Retain, Rescue”—at the “Move with the power” youth ministry convention, held in Brisbane (Qld) from August 10 to 14.

“We have been prayerfully assessing the needs of youth ministry and we need to bring that to the people,” explains Pastor Gilbert Cangy, SPD director of youth ministries. “That’s the most important reason we got together. Second, we see it as our responsibility and privilege to bring together our hard-working, committed leaders for a time of inspiration, encouragement, empowerment and training.

“And we also need to remember that we are a church made up of many different entities, levels, geographical locations, ethnicities and languages; but we are not fragmented individual groups—we are a movement, and events like this create a sense of togetherness and belonging. In the midst of all our diversity, it is possible to have common vision, dreams and objectives.”

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Encountering the real God

For Adventist Christians in the islands of the Pacific, the General Conference’s “Tell the world” initiative is an exciting one to embrace. That’s because “Tell the world” is more than just another program—it is an approach to the holistic lifestyle of the church. But we must remember that the “telling” process is only effective if a believer has the knowledge and has also experienced the power of a genuine encounter with God.

As Christianity expanded, Christian principles and values have impacted the lives of so many people around the world. During the arrival of the early Christian missionaries in many parts of the world, Christianity had a powerful impact because of the encounters experienced and witnessed by the recipients of the gospel. As the God of the Bible was witnessed by the early Christian pioneers, nothing could hold them back from telling others about the great redeeming God. These kinds of experiences resulted in the establishment of Christianity in many of our island nations.

Before the arrival of Christianity, many cultural religions tried to understand and worship their gods through the creation of symbols, carved out of rocks and wood. But the biblical God could not be symbolised with any earthly form or shape. Through the Scriptures, God has forbidden the worship of idols. The biblical God is not like you and me, though we were created in His image “like yourself” (Psalm 50:21).

It was the same Jesus who was declared God in the New Testament (see John 1:1-3). This same Jesus was the creator of Holy Writ. He further expounded that “the god of this century no more resembles the Sovereign of Holy Writ... The god who is talked about in the average pulpit... is a figment of human imagination.”

The church at risk of losing its concept of the biblical God by personalising Him too much? Is it possible that the human imagination may misconstrue the true nature of this great God?

While much emphasis is placed on spirituality, Christians should be careful that the behavioural pendulum does not swing further to the opposite, where God is related to as if human. God Himself cautioned, “You thought I was one just like yourself” (Psalm 50:21*).

The God of the Bible is not like you and me, though we were created in His image and likeness. The biblical “God is greater than any mortal” (Job 33:12).

For the “telling” process to be effective and successful, encountering the God of the Bible is crucial. Without such an encounter, to indoctrinate a person into Christianity with sets of beliefs and ethical rules may well make him or her a legalistic Christian—rather than a Christlike Christian.

The God of the Bible is the “same yesterday, today and forever” (Hebrews 13:8). He has never changed. The two heavenly beings that stood beside the 11 disciples at the parting hour proclaimed, “This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven” (Acts 1:11, KJV).

It was the “same Jesus” who was declared God in the New Testament (see John 1:1-3). This same Jesus was the creator God. The same God who led the people of the Old Testament is the same God of the New Testament. He is the same God today and it will be the same glorious God who will return to this earth to redeem His ransomed people.

And it is only when this biblical God is seen and known as He is that people can be remade.

*Unless otherwise indicated, Bible quotations are from the New Revised Standard Version.


Lawrence Tanabose
President
Trans-Pacific Union Mission
Church mourns passing of two leaders

RAROTONGA, COOK ISLANDS
LAE, PAPUA NEW GUINEA

T he Adventist Church in the Cook Islands and Papua New Guinea are mourning the passing of two leaders.

Pastor Uma Tangaroa Ikureo Katu suffered a heart attack while participating in a youth social event on August 4 and efforts to revive him proved futile. As president of the Cook Islands Mission (CIM) for the past nine years, his passing came as a shock to those in his sphere of influence.

Friends and family gathered for Pastor Katu’s funeral, which took place at the Titikaveka church on August 9, with a number of government officials, including the Cook Islands’ prime minister, assistant prime minister, leader for the opposition, the Queen’s representative and ministers of other faiths also in attendance as tribute to his significant contribution in ministry.

Born on September 14, 1948, Pastor Katu was the eldest of seven children and grew up on the island of Aitutaki. He married Ina (Upokoina Teinakore) in 1970 and they had six children. As a young couple, Pastor and Mrs Katu made the decision to make God an integral part of their lives.

Pastor Katu worked for the Cook Islands government as an administration officer in the Department of Agriculture for 23 years before becoming treasurer for the CIM in 1990-91. It was in this role that Uma sensed his call to ministry and attended Fulton College for the next three years with his family. Following his graduation, he worked the outer island parish of Manihiki-Rakahanga, before being called to be secretary-treasurer for the mission. In 1998, Pastor Katu became president of the Cook Islands Mission, where he served till his death.

In Papua New Guinea, Martina Vaira Darius was killed in a car accident on July 20, which also injured her father, Pastor Matupit Darius.

Ms Darius worked as part of the communication and media personnel within the Papua New Guinea Union Mission (PNGUM) and the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA). She created the script for the educational and highly successful HIV/AIDS DVD “Oh Papa God Why Na Em Olsem.”

Ms Darius was born on September 17, 1980, in Vanimo, Sandaun Province, to Matupit and Elsie Darius. Upon completion of Grade 12, she was accepted to study journalism at the University of Papua New Guinea, from which she graduated with a bachelor’s degree in 2004.

After graduating, she worked with the Papua New Guinea national newspaper as a junior journalist from 2004 to mid-2005. Her area of coverage included parliamentary rounds, health issues—especially HIV/AIDS—and sports. During her tenure as a reporter, she was able to gain the respect and admiration of the general reading public and high-profile figures.

In May 2005, she was appointed to the position of information education communication resource officer for the PNGUM and ADRA, which allowed her to continue her advocacy in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Since that time, Ms Darius was a regular contributor of news to Record.—Adele Nash/Kendell Cobbin/Marilyn Lewis

◆ Thirteen young people from Wahroonga church, NSW—mainly nurses from the Sydney Adventist Hospital—have undertaken a mission trip to the Cook Islands. The group painted the Adventist primary school, which has no government funding and limited conference resources, and conducted Kids clubs, using puppets and plays to teach children about Jesus. The group also conducted health assessments in the community by checking diabetes, high blood pressure and giving medical and nutritional advice, as well as working with the disabled on the island. The young people then ran a five-night evangelistic campaign, at which they gave out Bibles and spiritual books. “Throughout this trip, we really saw the hand of God working for us, and we could really see Him paving the way for us,” says Wahroonga’s assistant minister, Rangi Eiao.—Tracey Bridcutt

◆ Former prime minister and member of parliament for Savo Russell Islands, Sir Allan Kemakeza, has praised Seventh-day Adventists for opening a church on Savo, Solomon Islands. It is the first Adventist church building on the island. Pastor George Fafale, evangelism director for Solomon Islands Mission, said it should be used as a centre for evangelism and a place for islanders to seek God. He also assured the community that the Adventist Church is committed to its members and called to minister to the wider community. The construction of the church building was led by retired Adventist pastor Ervin Ferris and a team of volunteers from South Queensland, who completed it in just seven days. Meanwhile, another team of volunteers are currently building a dormitory at Betikama Adventist College. The dormitory will house female students starting next year.—Solomon Star
Youth leaders to “reclaim, retain and rescue”

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The “Move with the power” program included a focus on spirituality, including an emphasis on worship and prayer, as well as the various training workshop options delivered by more than 27 presenters.

“The presenters have been a highlight,” comments Ricky Hergenhan, a church youth leader from Hobart, Tasmania. “I have been challenged to work on my relationship with Jesus as a priority for youth leadership.”

“It has been awesome to experience the sense of family across our church in its various cultures,” says Craig Young, a convention participant and pastor of the Royal Oak church in Auckland, New Zealand. “I have met a number of church members who give so much time and effort in ministry. It’s great to see church members who are passionate about ministry and putting that into practice in local churches.”

Pastor Geoffrey Pomaleu, director of youth ministries for the Papua New Guinea Union Mission, appreciates the benefits this will bring to youth ministry in his country. “The preaching, plenary sessions and workshops have been good stuff,” he says. “Our people feel they have something to take home with them but where they have learnt the most is in interacting with other youth leaders from across the region.”

The first “Move with the power” convention was held in 2000 and Pastor Cangy is pleased to see the growth in youth ministry during the past seven years. “I think there has been a lot of growth in terms of an understanding of ministry to contemporary society,” he reflects. “I can see a greater level of understanding, tolerance and even acceptance of the fact that our message and our vision is the same but our methodology needs to be different.”

During the final program of this year’s “Move with the power” convention, Dr Baraka Muganda, director of youth ministries for the General Conference, paid tribute to the SPD youth ministries leadership and praised their work in putting together a “world-class convention.”

Dr Muganda was also a presenter at the first “Move with the power.” He was enthusiastic about the more specific focus on reclaiming young people who have left the church, retaining those who are currently involved, and rescuing young people who do not yet know about the love of God and the hope He gives.

“I have a special passion for the salvation of young people, and to train leaders, inspire them and make them proud of what they are doing and of the Adventist Church,” says Dr Muganda. “This is the church today and we need to find ways to motivate and grow our young people.”

Dr Muganda also participated in a Saturday evening program that celebrated 100 years of Adventist youth ministries and the growth of youth ministry in the South Pacific. “History is important because when people know where they have come from they have a greater sense of purpose,” he says. “We need to show young people how God has led this movement and to celebrate that this church has shown a special caring by establishing this department to meet the special needs of young people.

“The challenge for us is to ensure the next generation will look back and say the Lord has continued to lead us. When I see young people, I see a lively church and this is about celebrating the excitement of being who we are.”

Pastor Cangy expects that excitement generated at “Move with the power” will have an impact in youth ministry across the SPD. “It was my intention to have all the conference and mission groups get together to decide as a group on some specific objectives with regard to ‘Retain, Reclaim and Rescue’ but I’m afraid we might end up with another document that will gather dust on shelves,” he says. “We have decided to leave it with the Spirit to write that document on the hearts of the people, trusting that without any formal coercion they will feel compelled to act upon what has inspired and moved them at this convention. There are high expectations but we want this to be Spirit- and self-motivated, not just handed down from the leaders.”

“Take home the burden of reclaiming, retaining and reaching out to new souls,” urged Dr Muganda. “Young people are not statistics but are real people to be saved into the kingdom of God. Every program in youth ministry should be focused on salvation and service.” —Nathan Brown
Change is inevitable—except from vending machines.

Times change. It’s not our parents’ world anymore. Today we live in a decentralised, media-dominated, postmodern world. The internet enables the exchange of ideas and information unimagined by previous generations. Facts and opinions bombard us via email, mobile phones, iPods and satellite TV.

We’re more connected electronically than ever before—but more of us feel isolated and lacking in close friends.

Is there such a thing as truth anymore? Can we tell who is telling the truth?

Paperback, 144 pages.
Public Relations and Marketing Director—North New South Wales Conference (Newcastle, Australia) is seeking a person to establish a new position which will serve the church, schools and aged care ministries. This position will form part of an exciting new plan for evangelism throughout the conference. Emphasis will be given to both internal and external public relations. The ability to implement marketing strategies and create effective communication material, such as the conference news, will be essential. Experience and pertinent training will be highly regarded in the selection process. For more information, phone (02) 4951 9889 or email crdale@adventist.org.au. Applications in writing to General Secretary, PO Box 7, Wallabadah NSW 2327. Applications close September 30, 2007.

Primary and Secondary Teaching Positions 2008—Seven-day Adventist Schools (South Queensland) Ltd. Due to ongoing growth and development, vacancies exist for both primary and secondary teaching positions in a range of schools in South Queensland. Have you considered joining the exciting ministry of Adventist education? Expressions of interest are invited for positions in the following schools: Brisbane Adventist College: infants; upper primary; special education; secondary English; home economics; science; and PE. Northpine Christian College: infants; middle school humanities; middle school maths/science; home economics; and outdoor education. Nona Christian College: infants; and middle school humanities. Gold Coast Christian College: infants; and middle primary. Ipswich Adventist School: upper primary. Darling Downs Christian School: computing. Resumes should be forwarded to Director of Education, 19 Eagle Tce, Brisbane Qld 4000 or via email ckent@adventist.org.au.

Electrician—Sanitarium Health Food Company (Cooranbong, Australia) invites applications for the full-time position of electrician. While this position is predominately day shift, regular work on both afternoon and night shifts will be required. The successful applicant will possess a current electrical licence, a strong commitment to OHS within the workplace, a high level of computer literacy; be highly competent with PLC's (preferably Allen Bradley and Omron), have proven fault finding and problem-solving skills and be able to work, rotating shifts, including weekends. For further information, please visit the Job Vacancies section of the Sanitarium website <www.sanitarium.com.au>. Applications in writing should be forwarded to Group Human Resources Sanitarium Health Food Company, Locked Bag 7, Central Coast Mail Centre NSW 2252, fax (02) 4348 7610 or email chumanresources@sanitarium.com.au. Applications close September 16, 2007.

Weddings

Di Cesare—Gibbs, Peter Anthony Di Cesare, son of Vince (deceased) and Rina Di Cesare (Darwin, NT), and Nicole Rae Gibbs, daughter of Warwick and Denise Hampson (Lismore, NSW), were married on 8.7.07 at See Park, Graftery.

Alan Saunders

Minnis—Fodock. Brian Robert Minnis (Mirrabooka, NSW) and Elise Dianne Fodock (Cooranbong) were married on 22.7.07 in the Hillview church, Morisset. They were later honoured at a reception held at Wangi Workers Club on the shores of Lake Macquarie.

Best Godfrey

Obituary

Carruthers, Lillian Doris (nee Watts), born 18.2.1923 at Mackay, Qld; died 4.8.07 at Nambour. On 2.11.1943, she married Alan Wright of Wellington church in 1966 as a result of an evangelistic program run by Jim Cheery. She is sadly missed by her family and friends.

Cairns church for many years. She will be sadly missed.

Hilda was a faithful member of the Wellington church in 1966 as a result of an evangelistic program run by Jim Cheery. She is sadly missed by her family and friends. She was a gentle, caring person who predeceased her in 2006. She is survived by her hope in Jesus, loving character and her faithfulness in all she did.

Bob Laren

Hughes, Hilda, born 4.4.1924 at Oldham, Lancashire, England; died 4.8.07 in Gor-donvale Hospital, Qld. On 11.10.1941, she married James Hughes, who pre-deceased her 14 years ago. She is survived by her daughter, Sandra McGug; son-in-law, Terry; and grandchildren, Nadine, Alagad, Winson and Eloise. Hilda was a faithful member of the Cairns church for many years. She will be sadly missed.

Roger Ward

Wright, (Diana) Margaret (nee Jones), born 27.4.1919 in Cardiff, Wales; died 31.7.07 in Wyong Hospital, NSW, after a period of declining health. On 19.12.1941, she married Alan Wright at Baldonnel, NZ. She is survived by her husband, Alan (Cooranbong); her children, Alyna and Bernard Taylor, Clynton and Danelle (California, US), Daryl and Lyn, Sharon Anne and Andrew (Queensland), Lynedal and Jamie (NT), Cheryl and Garry, and Christine Wright (Mayfield); and her grandchildren. Margaret was buried in Avondale Cemetery on 5.8.07. Her life was characterised by the motto of Longbourn College, when she attended from 1934 to 1937—“Others.”

Leigh Rice

Were, Joan Heather (nee Thompson/Connor), born 29.7.1920 at Drum-moyne, Sydney, NSW; died 6.8.07 in the Wyong Hospital. She is survived by her husband, Laurence; her sister, Gwen; her children and their spouses, Kevin and Susie (Texas, USA); Noel and Robyn (Sydney, NSW) and Alan and Glenys (Sydney); her eight grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren. Joan’s life was one that revolved around her church and her family. She was a devoted wife to her husband, during the 67 years of their married life. She was a gentle, caring person who was loved and respected by all who knew her, and will be sadly missed by her family and friends.

Barry Wright

Advertisements

Note: Neither the editor, Signs Publishing Company, nor the Seventh-day Adventist Church is responsible for the quality of goods or services advertised. Publication does not indicate endorsement of a product or service. Advertisements approved by the editor will be inserted at the following rates: first 30 words or less, $A49.50; each additional word, $A2.20. For your advertisement to appear, payment must be enclosed. Classifi ed advertisements in RECORD are available to Seventh-day Adventist members, churches and institutions only. See masthead (page 2) for contact details.

Shepparton church 50th anniversary, October 27, 10 am. All former members and friends are invited to celebrate with us. Bring any memorabilia. Luncheon will be provided. Inquiries—Russell Bryan (03) 5824 1739.


Data projectors, screens, DVD, VCRs, PA systems etc. Lower prices for SDA churches, schools etc. Australia only. Rural Electronics (02) 6361 3636; or <greenfields@nectonconnect.com.au>.

Advent Funerals—an Adventist business serving our church community. Sydney/ Wollongong/Central Coast/Newcastle. Prepaid and payment plans available. Phone 1300 791 182; fax (02) 4648 0166; or email cadventfunerals@aol.com.

Housing for elderly. Our non-profit Christian-based organisation called Medi Aid Centre Foundation (est 1973) has home unit accommodation available for elderly persons who can care for themselves but may have financial problems. Epping, Eastwood and Ryde area, Sydney. No in-going charges. Close to shops and transit. Monthly rental about half of normal comercial rates. Contact Anne (02) 9585 6105, email <anne@kghurst.com.au> or write PO Box 120, North Ryde, NSW 2113.

Caretaker required for The Log Cabin camp located in the Gold Coast hinterland. The camp has a growing patronage of Pathfinders, church and community groups. A 2BR house and allowances (negotiable) are available. The position has been filled by volunteers and is vacant from late Volunteers. Close applications November. Applications close September 30. For further information, contact secretary on 0407 725 161 or caretaker on (07) 553 86174.

Allround Travel Centre—Introducing our tours for 2008. 1. Cruise: 1st missionary and Holy Land cruise (Athens, Turkey, Israel)—April 2. Cruise: steps of Paul and Revelation Cruise (Greece, Turkey/Patmos/Smyrna/Pergamon)—June. 3. Tour: Reformation tour with Pastor Harker—May. 4. Bali: for young and young at heart—May. Contact Anita, Debbie or Nicki on (07) 5580 3959 or email callitav@bigpond.net.au.

Missionaries’ Lunch—Avondale graduation. Sabbath, December 1. There will be a combined lunch immediately after the church service, for missionaries and ex-missionaries, families and friends who attend the Avondale graduation. Please bring a plate of food, sufficient for your family and a friend. Drinks and goodies will be provided. This year will highlight the role of mission boats in spreading the gospel in the Pacific. We encourage you all to give a short talk on one special highlight of your mission experience, involving a mission boat. Contact Ken Bosch on (02) 4365 3033; mobile 0408 072 313 or Warren Martin on (02) 9489 5907; email <warrenmartin@hotmail.com>.


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Finally

Always do right—this will gratify some and astonish the rest.