HEALTH CHECK
5 TIPS FOR A HEALTHIER CHURCH

LEADING WITH YOUR EARS

CHURCHES ADOPT A CLINIC

ADVENTISTS SAY "END IT NOW"
Reaching and Touching Hearts
Through Television

The Touch of Freedom
Five episodes – to be broadcast in 2010.

Unknown Legends of Gallipoli
Six episodes and two ’specials’ – to be broadcast around April 25, 2010 and beyond.

Machu Picchu: Lost City of the Incas
One of two episodes filmed in Peru – to be broadcast in 2010.

Mission Frontline
Ongoing – at least six new episodes per year.

Growing Through Tough Times
Five episodes – to be broadcast in 2010.

IT IS WRITTEN AIRTIMES*

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<td>Channel 7</td>
<td>80% of Australia (all major cities and some regional areas)</td>
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<td>TV2</td>
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<td>Australian</td>
<td>Anyone with Foxtel, Austar, Optus. Available free in Sydney on Digital Channel 46</td>
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*Correct as at January 2011. Please check your local TV guide to confirm the times shown above. Later air times are subject to content cleared by local TV boards.

www.itiswritten.com.au
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Since the inception of Adventism we’ve seen the body, mind and soul responding favourably to a healthy vegetarian diet, fresh air and a balanced lifestyle. Further, we’ve placed a special emphasis on abstaining from tobacco and alcohol. We like to be healthy.

What does it mean for a church to be healthy? What signs indicate a congregation is healthy and spiritually fit? Is church health about vision, mission, leadership, prayer and/or evangelism?

The local church should aim to provide the best and healthiest environment possible for the growth of the people within, remembering that only God can give the increase. So what then should a healthy church look and ‘feel’ like? It seems you know it when you see it and you have been in it, but it is difficult to define. How is God working in your congregation?

RECORD has invited four church leaders to share their views of what they consider to be essential ingredients for the health of a church.

This is your new RECORD for 2010, and with this edition we bring a number of changes to a publication that has been with us for more than 100 years. As always, we value your contribution, feedback and participation. Tell us what you think about the new segments on our website: <www.record.net.au>.

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Members of two Victorian churches have teamed up to complete major renovations to a medical clinic in the Solomon Islands as part of the Adopt-a-Clinic program. Eight members of the Wantirna and Warrnambool churches went on a 17-day mission trip to Balolava, on Guadalcanal Island, during October.

The clinic is in an isolated area and is the main provider of healthcare in the region. It is staffed by two registered nurses and serves a population of about 4650. To meet the $A45,000 cost of the materials and shipping, the churches set up a fundraising program, including direct donations, a children’s “Book Read” initiative, a food bake where 14,000 food items were made and sold, a gala evening and an auction night.

The refurbishment included replacing the iron roof, new lighting, replacing louvre windows and glass, internal and external painting. Water, which had not been connected to the clinic for some time, was reconnected, two vanities with sinks were fitted, toilets replaced/repaired and showers repaired.

Team leader Lindsay Borgas says they engaged the “locals” at all stages of refurbishment and impressed on them that the visiting team was helping them do the work because it was their clinic. “The team observed some excellent skills amongst the local villagers who were willing workers and keen to understand how to carry out the various tasks and understood the need to maintain the clinic,” he says. The churches also raised funds to provide a new boat to transfer patients to the clinic.
Research investigates HOPE Channel

Bruce Manners - Cooranbong, NSW

HOPE Channel viewers are being surveyed to discover the channel’s impact in Australia and New Zealand, and how it can be improved. While a mail out of surveys to registered HOPE Channel viewers within Australia was recently completed, other viewers are invited to participate. This is the first step in a more extensive investigation by a small team of researchers from Avondale College, with support from Adventist Media Network.

“Christian television is a powerful medium in the hands of the church, but it’s also an expensive one,” says the lead researcher, Dr Daniel Reynaud. “In order to make the most effective use of the church’s precious resources, we need to study how to make our television programs as effective as possible.”

The survey is designed to review church television outreach, identifying who watches, what programs they watch and what impact the programs have on their faith.

“This will allow HOPE Channel to refine its effectiveness as a means of communicating the Adventist message to our community,” adds Dr Reynaud.

Download the survey at <www.avondale.edu.au/hope>.

Australian PM commits to chaplaincy funding

David Gibbons - Canberra, ACT

Adventist leaders have welcomed Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd’s clear support for the school chaplaincy program.

The Federal Government has extend funding for the program until the end of the 2011 school year.

Australian Union Conference General Secretary, Pr Ken Vogel (pictured with Prime Minister Rudd) says the Prime Minister’s announcement is welcome.

“Mr Rudd spoke of his clear and long-standing commitment to the school chaplaincy program. He has a strong appreciation of the valuable role chaplains are playing in helping both school students and their families in a wide variety of situations,” Pastor Vogel says.

Pastor Vogel congratulated Mr Rudd personally for his government’s commitment of $A42 million in funding over the 2010 and 2011 school years—representing an extra year’s funding over what had previously been allocated. Mr Rudd says the government plans to consult with the public, including Adventist school communities, as to how best to shape chaplaincy and pastoral care programs for the period beyond.

OPINION POLL

We asked 120 church members from Adelaide and Sydney the question

“What aspect of church life does a church need to focus on to be healthy?

- Friendliness
- Biblical truth
- Engaging worship
- Outward focus
- Community service
- Inspiring preaching
- Inspiring leadership

RECORD will hold regular polls throughout the year on topics that interest church members or relate to our articles. You can find the latest poll at <record.net.au> or email suggested question to <news@record.net.au>.
The oldest ocean-going passenger ship, the *MV Doulos* took the gospel to more than 600 international ports. It was a floating Christian bookstore and provided volunteer support to communities and churches. But now the Doulos has been retired.—Mission News Network

Democracy in Nepal has meant increased opportunities for evangelism. Adventist church growth in recent years is described as a “runaway train”. Whole villages have been transformed by the gospel, with alcoholism and malnourishment a memory.—Mervyn Penrose

Uganda’s parliament is considering introducing harsh penalties for homosexuality, with repeat offenders risking a death sentence. Some Christian groups in Uganda support the concept, while others are calling for the idea to be scrapped.—Christian Newswire

Archaeologists have, for the first time, discovered a house in Nazareth dating from the time of Jesus. The dwelling has two rooms, a courtyard and a rainwater cistern. It is estimated in the first century, Nazareth was a town of only 50 homes.—Israel Antiquities Authority

Two-thirds of the world’s population live in countries with religious restrictions. Researchers found more populous nations are most likely to curb religious freedoms. Most countries legislate religious freedom but only a quarter guarantee these freedoms in practice.—Pew Research Center

A second-grader in Massachusetts, USA, was sent home from school after he drew a picture of Jesus on the cross. There was concern the boy had depicted a violent scene. He was required to undergo psychological evaluation before being allowed to return to school.—Associated Press

Christian group, Family Voice Australia, is concerned that changes to TV classifications will bring more explicit sexual content into homes. It sees the language of the new regulations as too vague and a downgrade in free-to-air television standards.—Family Voice Australia

Pro-life groups in America are accusing President Obama of sneaking in “free abortions for all” as part of his hotly contested healthcare bill. Protestant, Catholic and other lobby groups are saying the bill is “a betrayal of conscience”.—Christian Post

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Avondale School broadens its community

Susan Rogers–Cooranbong, New South Wales

The learning sphere at Avondale School will expand in the new year to involve nearby Toronto Adventist Primary School. With the Toronto students joining those at Avondale for a number of activities and events throughout the year, the delivery of personal Christian education will be continued under the management of Avondale School.

Toronto Adventist Primary will now share Avondale’s Principal, Dr David Faull. His aim is to continue the quality teaching and foster a loving school community. The IT department is a great example of the value of shared resources between schools. Toronto students will now also receive new computers and share in the strong computer program, facilitated by Avondale School.

The sport curriculum at Toronto has produced a string of talented students who will now also benefit from the resources that Avondale has access to. Toronto has a record of dedication, training and achievement in areas such as athletics and swimming. After 11 years in the role, sport coordinator Cherrie Weber is moving on to a new teaching role at another school, but is positive about the changes.

"By working in partnership with Avondale School, Toronto will start to grow in the community," she says. Ms Weber says she sees the value in children getting personalised attention in a small school but also recognises that now Toronto students will have access to all the things that a big school can offer as well. Ms Weber views the mentoring, kindness and closeness of the students as a product of the school’s focus on accepting difference.

"Toronto is a small school that caters extremely well to the individual," says Avondale School Principal, Dr Faull. "The Christian values that resonate within the Toronto Adventist Primary classroom and playground are definitely commendable." Toronto has two new teachers joining the staff for 2010.

New boats provide transport for LEs in Solomons

Tracey Bridcutt–Solomon Islands

Three new boats will provide a significant boost to the work of literature evangelists in the Solomon Islands. Where it used to take them seven days to row a canoe to one of the islands, it will now take just one and-a-half hours. The three boats will go to the western Solomon Islands where literature evangelists cannot work without a boat.

“I cannot tell you how much these boats are appreciated by those who will be using them and I cannot tell you what a blessing these boats and motors will be to the literature ministry in that area,” says John Brereton, South Pacific Division island publishing coordinator.

The boats are named Besa, Rausu and Pati after the first three literature evangelists to enter the western Solomon Islands many years ago. “The pioneering spirit of these three men will live on in these new boats as they visit the many thousands of islands, seeking to save the lost,” Mr Brereton says.

The boats were dedicated during a special service on November 12.
VITRIOLIC OPPONENTS
Alan Smith, QLD

For several months I have been mulling over some of the letters published following “The need to read” (Features, September 19), urging church members to read widely.

One of the most recent letters suggested that reading other than the Bible is counter-productive. I wonder if the author had his thinker switched on. If we restrict our reading to Holy Writ, how can we relate to those who never have? How can we know where they are coming from?

Two of the most useful books I ever read were Why I am not a Christian and other Essays, by Bertrand Russell, and D.M. Canright’s Seventh Day Adventism Renounced. By the time I read these books, which were both in the library at Carmel College, I was well and truly roped together with the Master Pilot, and wanted to know what the most vitriolic opponents could come up with.

As an 18-year-old, I found most of the arguments easy to answer. My commitment strengthened wonderfully. Adventists are not “fundamentalists”, we are “evangelicals”. The former face life with blinkers, the latter with an open mind, but with the attitude, based on conviction arrived at after examining evidence, that the Bible is the Word of God, that it can be trusted to guide us to heaven, that Christ depicted in its pages was God incarnate. But like many of the biblical authors, wide reading can only enhance our experience and interaction with others. Where did the ghetto mentality which would restrict such reading, arise? The founders of our church had great libraries, Ellen White one of the largest. We should emulate them.

One other point, and not a peripheral one: it is axiomatic that what we really believe determines what we do. The most mature people, the people who lead, are people who have beliefs that are strongly entrenched in their beings, that they have internalised from a multitude of competing ideas, which they are prepared to defend, to stand up for. In other words, not what we say we believe, but what we really believe in our inmost souls. Unless I have wrestled with the competition, am I not likely to be overcame, to sink while others swim? Away with a belief system that has not struggled, pondered, and become settled on rock as a result.

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THE MAIN THING
Bronwyn Reid, NSW

I felt that I must comment on “The hope of the world” (Editorial, November 21). The editorial stated that our hope lies in the local church. Is that really where our hope lies? If so, then we’re in deeply troubled waters without adequate life jackets.

I often quote the saying, “The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing”. What is the main thing for the Adventist church in the 21st century? What is our hope? What are we offering? Is it local church membership? The Bible says that the hope for the world is not the local church or 28 fundamental beliefs or the Sabbath or the Ten Commandments or any church denomination.

It’s Jesus Christ of Nazareth and in Him alone we place our faith, hope and trust for He alone is worthy. It’s Jesus or it’s nothing. To paraphrase the editorial byline, “Could it be that one of the reasons churches stop growing is that Adventists care so little about what broke Jesus’ heart?”

My final quote is from Gospel Workers by Ellen White, who wrote, “Lift up Jesus, lift Him up in sermon, in song, in prayer. Let all your powers be directed to pointing souls, confused, bewildered, lost, to the ‘Lamb of God’. Let the science of salvation be the burden of every sermon, the theme of every song.”

JESUS IN RECORD
Litiana Turner, NSW

My husband took family worship recently and he used as his inspiration the editorial entitled “The Safe Church” (Editorial, November 28). My husband and I have been Adventists all our lives and it wasn’t until he posed the question from the editorial, to our family that the reality of what we teach, we preach and what we expect others to do really hit home to me. Our daughter was asked by her dad, do you think you should invite some of our neighbours to church and quite promptly she replied, “well I want to see you guys (mum and dad) do it and then I’ll know how to do it.” It’s so easy to think that creating a safe church, or even inviting someone else to church, is what others should do but the reality I’m learning and am going to try doing (uurrrgh) is if I want my church to be relevant, Christ-like and safe, then I need to be a part of that transformation. By the way, thanks for the editorial Pastor Lillo.

Violence against women takes many forms, and all of it is unacceptable. Now, in the most significant stand the Seventh-day Adventist Church has ever taken regarding the issue of violence against women and girls, the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) and the Women’s Ministries Department of the Seventh-day Adventist Church have joined together to launch enditnow™, a global campaign that raises awareness and advocates to end violence against women and girls around the world.

“Approximately one in three of the world’s women will experience gender-related violence in her lifetime,” said ADRA Australia’s Chief Executive Officer, Jonathan Duffy. “As a church and a community of caring citizens, Adventists are using the enditnow™ campaign to make a formal stand against this terrible reality and to encourage the people around them to do the same.”

Violence affects the lives of millions of women worldwide, in all socio-economic, educational, cultural and religious groups, including the Adventist church.

“The enditnow™ campaign is not just about telling others to end violence against women,” said the South Pacific Division’s Women’s Ministries Director, Erna Johnson. “This campaign is about raising awareness amongst all groups, including our own, and insisting that violence against women should not be tolerated anywhere.”

The initial phase of enditnow™ aims to collect one million signatures from individuals in more than 200 countries in support of ending violence against women and girls. The signatures will be presented to the United Nations to draw attention to the issue and advocate for the creation of new policies that protect women and girls.

ADRA and Women’s Ministries are inviting Adventists to run this campaign in their churches and communities to raise awareness of the issues and promote the petition. Resources and information, including the petition, can be found at <www.enditnow.org>.

The enditnow™ campaign supports existing programs currently being implemented around the world through ADRA and the Women’s Ministries Department to end violence against women.
Indicators of church health

Regular assessments provide indicators of health and signal early signs of disease. Being a male over 60, I routinely subject myself to medical checkups including the blood and digital tests needed to determine early signs of prostate cancer, the most prevalent killer cancer for Australian men. I’m amazed at how much information my doctor can glean from a blood sample. It’s obvious that many of the true indicators of health are not superficial. This is also true of “the body of Christ” (Ephesians 4:12), the church.

While it is tempting to think numeric growth (in members, institutions or programs) suggests health, the more significant indicators are exposed through deeper probing. Healthy churches …

… know that the focus is God’s kingdom. Jesus only used the word church three times (Matthew 16:18, 18:17) for His focus was the kingdom of God. Healthy churches use the “keys” they hold to open up this kingdom for their communities (Matthew 16:19).

… have an attitude! John Stott calls it counter-cultural; Tim Harris, status reversal; and Michael Gorman, cruciformity—conformity to the attitude that took Jesus to the cross for us. Healthy churches sacrifice their own interests for those of others (Philippians 2:1-11).

… reproduce and multiply. My doctor monitors my size and weight, and gains are not affirmed! However, as my friend he is keenly interested in the growth of my extended family—children and grandchildren. New Testament churches were households—releasing new believers to cultivate new gatherings, sometimes within walking distance (Ephesians 4:1-16; Colossians 4:13, 15). Healthy churches multiply.

… are modest! Healthy churches think appropriately of themselves—and know their limitations. They form the “bride” of Christ (Revelation 21:9) so their identity is not found in bagging others. They cultivate “double listening”—to understand God’s Word and His world.

Globally the Adventist church has experienced significant statistical growth in recent years, but it is my opinion that insufficient attention has been given to these important indicators of health.

Comment on Opinion at www.record.net.au/comment
**Soy good for breast cancer**

Soy is one of the most widely studied foods in the world, with thousands of individual pieces of research examining its potential health benefits.

The latest soy research, published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, has found women with breast cancer who eat a moderate amount of soy have a better survival rate and are less likely to have reoccurring cancer.

**What did the research find?**

With more than 5000 women participating, the Shanghai Breast Cancer Survival Study was the largest study on soy intake and breast cancer survival in the world.

The researchers analysed the amount of soy food the women ate, compared it with survival rates and checked to see if there was any reoccurrence of breast cancer. The types of food the women consumed were soy milk, tofu, fresh soy beans and other soy based products.

The study clearly showed that soy food intake is associated with better survival rates for people with breast cancer. It also stated moderate soy intake each day reduced the likelihood of the cancer reoccurring. This was also true for women taking the cancer drug Tamoxifen.

**Soy studies**

Overwhelmingly, the science tells us that moderate amounts of soy in our diet are healthy, safe and can actually protect us from certain cancers because of soy’s antioxidant effects.

This latest research also reassures us that for people who have been diagnosed with breast cancer, soy foods continue to be a safe and healthy option—and can potentially have a positive effect.

**Soy facts:**

- High quality protein—replacing some of the meat in your diet, especially red meat, with soy will help to lower the amount of saturated fat content you consume, while maintaining your protein levels.
- Colorectal cancer—strong research shows that choosing soy and other plant-proteins over red meat can help reduce the risk of colorectal cancer.

**Our tip:**

Soy—along with fruits, vegetables, wholegrains, nuts and seeds—is a nutritious inclusion as part of a healthy eating style. Including some soy in your diet can be as easy as using soy milk on your cereal or adding tofu to your stir-fries and curries. For other ideas on how to use soy in your cooking, the recipes in our *Food for Health and Happiness* cookbook can help you get started.

If you’d like any information on soy or have other health or nutrition questions, speak with one of our qualified nutritionists on 1800 673 392—it’s a free service and we’d love to hear from you.

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**Capiscum, Tomato, Burghul and Baked Ricotta Salad**

- 250g fresh reduced fat ricotta cheese
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1 tbsp chopped olives
- 1 cup burghul (cracked wheat)
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 chopped red onion
- 1 large red capsicum, cut into strips
- 250g cherry tomatoes (halved)
- 1/4 cup chopped basil
- 1 tbsp balsamic vinegar, to taste

1. Preheat oven to 180°C. Then grease and line the base of a 19cm x 9cm (base) loaf pan with baking paper.
2. Combine ricotta with oregano and chives and place in prepared pan. Spread evenly over base. Bake for 30 minutes until firm. Leave to cool and then turn out of pan. Chop into cubes.
3. Place burghul in a heatproof bowl and cover with boiling water. Stand for 20 minutes. Drain well in a fine strainer, using the back of a spoon to press down on burghul to remove liquid. Spoon into a large bowl.
4. Meanwhile, heat 2 teaspoons oil in a large non-stick frying pan and cook onion for 5 minutes until soft. Add capsicum and cook on a low heat for 15 minutes until soft, stirring occasionally. Add tomatoes and cook for 2 minutes to heat up. Toss mixture through burghul along with basil. Whisk together remaining oil and vinegar and mix through salad. Top warm salad with baked ricotta cubes. Serve chilled, if desired.

**Preparation time: 25 minutes**

**Standing time: 20 minutes**

**Cooking time: 40 minutes**

**Serves 4.**

**PER SERVE: 1410kJ (335cals); Protein 12g; Total Fat 19g; Saturated Fat 5g; Carbohydrate 33g; Total Sugar 6g; Sodium 133mg; Potassium 470mg; Calcium 185mg; Iron 2mg; Fibre 9g**
Nita Chingana recently graduated from Deakin University (Melbourne) with a Masters degree in international and community development. She and husband Bright and their two children emigrated to Australia from Zambia in 2002. Nita wants to “make poverty history”. –IntraVic

More than 70 kids in South Australia listened to Pastor Daron Pratt, the balloon man from “Arnie’s Shack”. Pastor Daron made a super hero and told the kids God can use the seemingly most unimportant child to do incredible things for Him. –GrapeVine

The Sydney-based “Jesus: All About Life” initiative was embraced by Chatswood Church, NSW. Kids from the community are attending church following a free community pancake breakfast. –IntraSyd

Pastor Wayne Stanley (pictured with his wife Martina in St Petersburg, Russia) is the newly appointed President of the Victorian Conference. Wayne worked in North New Zealand and Western Australia before joining the team in Victoria in 2003 as the General Secretary. –IntraVic

Teachers have been known for “dressing down” their students. But these teachers at Gilson College (Victoria) dressed up for History Day, bringing fun back into classes. There are 150 full-time and part-time teachers employed in Adventist schools and colleges across Victoria. –IntraVic

Sydney Adventist Hospital’s trusty fun run mascot, “Syd”, helped to raise funds for the successful Health-Care Outreach project. –Pace Maker

Pastor Ken Mead was awarded for his “Nature’s Frame” entry into the Mont de Lancy Art Show in Victoria. Look at his award-winning entry at <www.record.net.au>. –IntraVic

Twenty-eight people were baptised during the Central Papua Conference (Papua New Guinea) camp meeting. The conference has 27,000 members. The Adventist Church is the largest Christian denomination in the country. The Greater Sydney Conference and the Central Papua Conference are partners in mission. –IntraSyd

Goulburn (south NSW) church members, including David Pengilly (above), gave away clothes, food and goods to the community on their World Went Wacky Day. –Imprint

Pastor Beth McMurtry ministered to Jared Hughes’ parents before he was born. And the combined influence of Adventist education, Pathfinders, the local church as well as faithful parenting saw Jared, his sister Kirsten, and two other young people baptised on the Hughes’ family property at Alstonville (north NSW). –Northpoint

Students at Riverside Adventist Christian School, Townsville, continue to achieve great academic results. Students regularly receive certificates in the Accelerated Reader project, and credits from the annual University of NSW Mathematics competition. All students in Grades 3 to 7 are registered in the Mathletics internet project. –Top News

More than 550 parents and kids camped out at Crosslands for the largest ever Greater Sydney Conference Adventurers Camporee. The children enjoyed Bible stories and crafts, as well as acting in a play. –IntraSyd

Send your pictures and details to news@record.net.au
A family had missed attending the weekly Sabbath meetings. One of the members in their study group noticed this and wondered where the Browns were? Very early the next day the concerned church member walked eight miles, praying most of the way, to the Browns’ farm just to see if they were OK. Disease, tragedy or discouragement could have stopped them coming to Sabbath meetings. The concerned member had to go and minister to the missing.

Another story of early church life in the Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald, told of a neighbour who rode on horsecback 20 miles each week just to share the Bible truths he was learning with others who were interested.

Early Seventh-day Adventism was a movement. It had grown out of the great Advent movement of the early 19th century but it was the only group that suffered the Great Disappointment and carried the characteristics of a movement. God movements occur in history when people seriously connect with God and discover His purpose in their lives. They have something that others need to know and nothing will stop them getting their message across. People are not converted in ones or twos but whole new churches are developed from the evangelistic fervour.

I have visited dozens of cathedrals in Europe that were built when God worked mightily in the past through other groups—groups that were movements of His Holy Spirit (Lutherans, Anglicans, Wesleyans are just some examples). Today these cathedrals are monuments. More tourists frequent their grand architecture than participants attend weekly worship. The tourists marvel that the people of the past gave so much to a building that would honour God but give little thought to the relevance of that God to them today. Seventh-day Adventists in the South Pacific have a choice. They can be stuck in the traditions, rituals and mind-sets of the past and be a monument, or they can become a mighty movement of God again.

Three years ago when Bob and Sheryl were retired but active participants of the Manjimup Church, Sheryl felt God called her to start a church in Northampton, the area where her mother had grown up. Manjimup is a town of over 5000 people in the south-west of Western Australia (WA) and has a church of 110 members. Northampton is nearly 800 kilometres north on the mid WA coast with a population of about 1000 people and no Adventist presence. Today Bob and Sheryl have seen two of their Northampton friends become Seventh-day Adventist Christians. On Sabbaths their shed can have as many as 20 adults and children worshipping God.

This is one of the many stories I am aware of that show God’s people today are reclaiming the Adventist movement. They believe that Jesus is returning soon and that God can use the seemingly insignificant talents that they have to make a big impact on their world.

When more of us grasp these beliefs and put them into action we too will reclaim the Adventist movement.

Glenn Townend serves as president of the Western Australian Conference.
“I can’t come in to work today—I’m sick.”

We can tell pretty easily when a human body is sick but what about a church?

“God, we can’t go about the mission You called us to—we’re sick.”

Scripture is clear on what makes a healthy church. Maybe it’s time to do a quick check-up.

Church health is about following God’s plan for His church and being intentional about achieving our God-given mission.

Ellen White reminds us in Acts of the Apostles that, “Enfeebled and defective as it may appear, the church is the one object upon which God bestows in a special sense His supreme regard. It is the theatre of His grace, in which He delights to reveal His power to transform hearts.”

In growing healthy churches, we need to remember that it is all about glorifying God—it is His church.

Healthy churches answer three questions: “What does God want the church to be?”, “What does God want the church to do?” and “How does God want to work in and through the church to do it?”
What should a healthy Adventist church be?

Often we can think of the “church” as a building, service or organisation.

While these can be important aspects of being a church, healthy churches have a clear picture of the people “being the church” wherever they are. “Church” is something that we are—it is more than something we go to.

The primary picture of “church” in the New Testament is a community of believers designed for mission. This community is not just an ordinary gathering of people. It is Christ’s body and has been called to take part in a life-changing mission. For Adventists, this understanding of mission and what it means to glorify God is compounded in Revelation 14 and 17.

What should a healthy Adventist church do?

Biblically, our church is called to do five things and do them well:

- **Sharing**: a continuous effort to find lost people must be made in order to be able to share God’s messages with them (see Matthew 28:19–20; Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8; Colossians 1:28).
- **Connecting**: genuine fellowship must be facilitated among believers (see Acts 2:42; Hebrews 10:24–25; Philemon 2:1–4; 1 John 1:3).
- **Worshipping**: the church must facilitate worship (see John 4:23–24; Acts 2:42).
- **Growing in the Word**: instruction in understanding and applying God’s Word must happen in an intentional way (see Acts 20:28–32; 2 Timothy 2:2; Ephesians 4:12–13).
- **Serving**: each member is to glorify God and edify one another through serving in their home, church and world (see Ephesians 4:11–12; 1 Peter 4:10; 1 Corinthians 12; Romans 12:6–11).

This calling is neatly summarised in our fundamental beliefs (see sidebar) and outlined in the first chapter of Acts of the Apostles where Ellen White writes about “God’s Purpose for His Church”.

For Adventists, the book of Revelation intensifies this calling by describing these five purposes in the context of the great controversy. Revelation 1–3 describes churches that have lost their way in regard to these five areas.

All five are interconnected and a healthy church will go about working on each of them in a balanced way. If we excel in one or two areas and neglect others, we can end up unhealthy—just like a human body.

The exciting thing about these five areas is that they are also the five reasons humans are on the planet—the five things that matter for eternity. They’re also the five areas we shape Sabbath around.

God has given us a whole day every week to recalibrate our lives around these five primary areas of life and church.

How should the church do ministry?

There is no one right answer. In fact, there are as many ways to go about achieving the five primary purposes as there are congregations—or individuals.

The “how” of church life is where we must pray and discern what God wants to do both in and through the congregations we are part of.

There are various tools—like natural church development—that can help us with the “how”. However, in the end, each congregation needs to prayerfully work through what it means for them to go about sharing, connecting, worshipping and serving in ways that impact the community they are part of with the gifts they have been given.

How can you contribute to your church being healthier?

Our church body is the sum of people who are part of it. If you want your church to look different, start with yourself. The following list explores some of the things you can do to make a change in your own life:

- Intentionally move people toward Christ and link them into the church community.
- Connect with people in your community—remember you are “church” to them.
- Develop honest and meaningful relationships with other members of your church family.
- Make space in your life for times of worship and honour God with your worship when you meet with your church family.
- Steward your time, treasure and talents as an act of worship.
- Know how you are shaped to serve and get involved in serving in your home, church body and wider community.
- Take an active interest in the mission of the church.
- Intentionally follow a spiritual growth plan that allows you to grow in understanding by applying biblical principles. If you are responsible for children, make use of resources to disciple them.

If you want your church to look different, start with yourself.

Brendon Pratt serves as Communication, Personal Ministries and Stewardship Director, for the Greater Sydney Conference.

Seventh-day Adventists believe...

The church is the community of believers who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. In continuity with the people of God in Old Testament times, we are called out from the world, and we join together for worship, for fellowship, for instruction in the Word, for the celebration of the Lord’s Supper, for service to all mankind, and for the worldwide proclamation of the gospel. The church derives its authority from Christ, who is the incarnate Word, and from the Scriptures which are the written Word. The church is God’s family, adopted by Him as children, its members live on the basis of the new covenant. The church is the body of Christ, a community of faith, new covenant people, a community of faith of which Christ Himself is the Head. The church is the bride for whom Christ died that He might sanctify and cleanse her. At His return in triumph, He will present her to Himself a glorious church, the faithful of all the ages, the purchase of His blood, not having spot or wrinkle, but holy and without blemish—Fundamental Belief, 12.
<p><strong>OPENING HIS WORD</strong></p>

Graeme Loftus

When will Jesus come?<br>
When you read the daily papers or watch the news on TV, you wonder just how soon Jesus’ return must be.

Has He already come?<br>No. He hasn’t. Some claim He has already arrived. Paul says we should not become upset or alarmed by those who claim Jesus has come, even if they seem religious and even claim to have had visions from God.

Read 2 Thessalonians 2:1-2

Christians in the first century believed that Jesus would fulfill His promise (see John 14:1-3) and return in their day.

Read Philippians 3:20

The Seventh-day Adventist Church was also born on the belief that the second coming of Jesus was imminent. Jesus warned that no one knows (or will know) the specific time of His return.

Read Matthew 24:36-42

Most of our pioneers earnestly believed they would see Jesus come back to earth during their life time but 166 years have passed since the hope of a specific date based on a certain prophetic understanding was dashed in bitter disappointment.

Have we all been fooled?<br>I’ve heard some people ask, “How soon is ‘soon’ when we talk about the soon coming of Jesus?” Some Christians have become discouraged thinking we’ve been deceived by shallow sensationalism and poor understanding of Scripture.

Have you? God knew the wait would stretch us. He gave Paul some advice to pass on to us living in 2010, still waiting for Jesus’ return.

Read Hebrews 10:23-25
Read 2 Peter 3:8-9

Underline these texts in your Bible and read them regularly.

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<p><strong>GOOD HEALTH</strong></p>

Dr James Wright

What’s your view on naturopathy?<br>Heaps of information offered is excellent, especially regarding food intake, diet and lifestyle modifications. There is a huge emphasis on fruit, vegetables, fruit juices, water, herbs, berries, nuts, legumes and reduced animal fats. The emphasis on “prevention” makes sense. Why wait until you are sick before you seek medical advice. However, if you have a heart attack, nothing beats getting to a major public hospital as soon as possible for standard western medicine. Everything plays a part in the health cycle.

Everybody loves eating chocolate. Does it have any health benefits?<br>Dark chocolate, not light (which often contains milk and fat) is claimed to be beneficial for heart health. Also, a recent report in the <i>British Medical Journal</i> now says “green tea, red wine and chocolate improve cognitive performance, and the more the merrier”. Strong words for the world’s most doctor-read medical journal. So apart from keeping your heart healthy, it may help retain mental acuity for an extended time. Go for it!

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<p><strong>WHY I BECAME AN ADVENTIST</strong></p>

Growing up as a Catholic, my parents wanted me to become a priest. Their wish kept burning in my heart as I grew. I loved my family and the church and their strong Christian characters influenced my spiritual journey in the future. However I met and married a girl from an Adventist family and we moved to New Zealand from Samoa. At the time I was searching diligently in my Bible and as a Catholic, was concerned about the Ten Commandments, especially the Sabbath. I found the text Matthew 7:26, “But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand.”

After learning some of these things through my own Bible study, I was invited by my wife to attend a special visitors’ Sabbath at church. The message was about being called to be a servant. Once again, I was reminded of my desire to minister.

In 1982, two years after coming to New Zealand, I was baptised into the Porirua Samoan Church in Wellington. From 1986 I served my local church in various ways until the end of the year 2000, when I decided to go to Avondale College as a mature-aged student to study theology. After two years, I was advised by the college I could not re-enrol as I had not been able to pass the English requirements. I felt as if my goal was slipping away. However, I have learnt that God’s promises solve my problems. I went back to the beginning, studying English at Wyong TAFE and then in Newcastle. I had to maintain high grades and was eventually admitted back into the Bachelor of Theology course. Perseverance was the first message I heard at college and has become a theme for my academic and spiritual journey over the past nine years. In 2009, I graduated. I became an Adventist to follow God’s calling. I have learnt that ministry is about planting and nurturing faith in others. Now I look forward to bringing others to God’s Kingdom. That’s why I became an Adventist. – Vitolo Vaifale
Healthy and growing churches are led by servant-leaders who understand the critical importance of leading with their ears. These leaders have learnt to listen in the stillness for God’s voice, to hear and receive His messages. Further, they willingly hear and discern the voices of those they are leading. Healthy and growing leaders are listening leaders.

Listening for God’s voice
When God called young Samuel to leadership, the first lesson he learnt from priest Eli was to listen for God’s voice. Eli said, “Go and lie down again, and if someone calls again, say ‘Yes, Lord, your servant is listening’,” (1 Samuel 3:9). Samuel’s first lesson could have focused on vision casting or developing oratorical skills. But God knew that for Samuel to become a leader of His people, Samuel needed to first learn to lead with his ears.

Healthy and growing leaders are committed to a humble dependence on the Spirit of God. Sound leadership begins with the leader tuning into the voice of God—because God’s words are lifegiving. “Come to me with your ears wide open. Listen, and you will find life” (Isaiah 55:3).

Being still in God’s presence
Samuel returned to his bed a third time that night. God was calling him! Wide-awake with excitement, he lay there. Silence roared! Fighting the urge to pace his room, get dressed in his Sabbath best, or even to practice a response, Samuel waited in the stillness of the night, eagerly desiring God’s voice.

To listen well requires commitment and discipline. Communication with God needs stillness and silence. For a leader, prioritising being in the presence of God over competing demands is essential. When leaders are silent and still in God’s presence the focus is on God—on who He is and what He is saying. “Be silent and know that I am God” (Psalm 46:10).

Healthy and growing leaders actively resist the pressure to increase activity in order to maximise deeper moments for meditation and prayer.

Learning to be a listening servant
Eli taught Samuel to be a listening servant. Eli’s two sons, who worked alongside Samuel at the temple, refused to listen to their father’s admonition to change their wicked behaviour; behaviour that had offended and aggrieved the people. However, Samuel faithfully listened to God’s voice through Eli’s counsel, and heard the worshippers in the temple. As a listening servant, Samuel “continued to gain favour with the Lord and the people” (1 Samuel 2:26).

Healthy and growing leaders are able to hear and discern the voices of those they are called to lead. They empower change by leading through relationship other than by command—drawing people not merely into a system of belief, but into the heart of God.

Healthy and growing churches require leadership that values effective listening—leadership that stops to listen for God’s voice and discerns the voice of others. If we are truly to lead with our ears our challenge is to pray (1) Speak Lord, (2) I’m your servant and (3) I am listening (1 Samuel 3:10, NCV).

Eddie Tupai serves as president for the North New Zealand Conference.

*All Bible references are from the New Living Translation unless otherwise indicated.
When Thomas Whittle arrived in the colony of Queensland in the early 1890s, he began selling Adventist literature. There were no Adventists in the colony. After selling some books in Ipswich and Brisbane, Mr Whittle relocated to the bayside township of Sandgate (see photo).

There he sold The Great Controversy to Clarinda Horsey and for a time lodged in her home. Miss Horsey, who read avidly, was impressed by the doctrines explained in Ellen White’s book and enjoyed spiritual conversations with Mr Whittle. As a consequence, she began Bible studies by correspondence, probably with Mary Ellen Daniels, at Adventist headquarters in Melbourne.

In June 1894, Pastor and Mrs George Starr left Melbourne bound for Rockhampton. Advised that Ms Horsey was ready for baptism, Pastor Starr took advantage of a stopover in Brisbane to visit with and baptise her. The Starrs went on to conduct evangelistic meetings in Rockhampton and establish the first Adventist church in Queensland. On their way south, enroute to Toowoomba, the Starrs again visited Miss Horsey and spent 10 days with her. On Sabbath, November 17, 1894, 11 people gathered in the Horsey home to worship and praise God. This was the first recorded Adventist meeting in the Greater Brisbane area.

Indeed, the little acorn found root and became an oak! From that very first baptism, Adventism in Queensland has not looked back and 116 years on there is a veritable forest of 95 congregations and 11,000 baptised members.

Arnold Reye is chairman of the South Queensland Conference Heritage Committee.

From little acorns great oaks grow

Do you know?

- The location of the photo
- The date the photo was taken
- The people or church that the photo is of
- If it is a church: when it was built and dedicated and if it is still there today
Hi Boys and Girls!

Welcome to church! Remember David? He was a shepherd boy who became a great warrior and a king over all of Israel. David knew God was good to him and in response to God’s goodness David loved to worship God.

This week’s RECORD is about how we can make our churches fun and filled with friendly people who love Jesus and want to do things to help others get to know Jesus better. You can be part of this special team of people by sharing your Bible, coloured pencils and toys with other children in your church or you could smile at a visitor and say welcome to them. There are many things you can do to make your church a great place to be!

Gracelink

This month in our Sabbath School lessons, we are focussing on worship. Worship is not just coming to church, worship is what we do as a result of knowing Jesus. Some ways to care for my family and friends this week are

Complete the text

One thing I ask of the________, this is what I seek: that I may ______in the house of the LORD all the _____of my life, to gaze upon the _______of the LORD and to seek him in his______. Psalm 27:4 NIV

Try the crossword

1. Another name for stop, take back or not go ahead with something.
2. Another name for grown-ups.
3. A church where children feel welcome is known as a ____ Church (2 words)
4. If people are not treated nicely, they might hold a ____.
5. (Across) When a group of people get together they form a ___.
6. (Down) What do we call people under the age of 14 years?
7. What do you call a person between the ages of 13 and 19?
8. Another name for the Son of God.
9. People come to church when they feel they are ____.
10. The book made up from the Old and New Testaments.
11. The title of a favourite song, “Amazing ____”.
12. 24 elders in Revelation 4 fall down and ____.
13. People who think they are better than you.
14. Another name for the Son of God.
15. Helping people in your church, neighbourhood or school.
16. AY is a short way of saying “Adventist ____”.
17. The name for God when He visited on the day of Pentecost (2 words). Check Acts 2.
18. When your lips stretch over your teeth.
WHYALLA, South Australia
Helen Hiscock

Last year was an exciting year for Whyalla church. We have had new people worshipping with us; with five being baptised, including me.

As the ADRA officer for Whyalla church, I organised for members to attend a number of Sunday markets where we gave out DVDs and pamphlets. We ran a church fair with great participation and appreciation from the community.

In addition to a Prophecy Seminar; we also ran a Super Kids’ Club following from our Vacation Bible School. A multicultural concert raised funds for the tsunami affected victims of Samoa and the Philippines.

In conclusion, ADRA organised gifts for more than 80 people in our community who were in hospital or disadvantaged.


BURNS CREEK, Solomon Islands
Pastor Benjamin Asa

I attend the Burns Creek church on the eastern outskirts of Honiara. The population of the island is more than 56,000.

The Burns Creek church is a caring family church that has 87 children under the age of 16, with 35 young married couples.

Some of the things I love about my church are the Bible study time during Sabbath School, the outreach programs, a strong sense of community, fellowship and friendliness. Our Sabbath services cater for all age groups. In 2009 we had 11 baptisms.


A burly biker walks through Morisset (NSW) in leathers and bandanna. Joy, a bubbly blonde in her 40s from the local Adventist church, opens her arms and embraces him as they laugh together. They have never met before. “Free Hugs: small, medium or large” reads Joy’s hand-lettered sign. She is standing next to the Adventist display booth at Morisset’s Street Beat fair. The usual blood pressure checks and Discovery Centre DVDs are on offer, but the free hugs initiative is a stand out success.

Joy hugs elderly women with walking frames, toddlers with dripping icecreams and teenagers who have been dared by their giggling friends. There is surprise from many passersby but nearly everyone lets down their defences long enough to connect. Even the few who shake their heads at Joy’s offer smile as if their day has been gladdened, and many glance at the church sign over the booth. Do you think they’re getting the message?

Email your story and photo to: news@record.net.au
WEDDINGS

Andrews–Naughton. Pastor Errol Bryce Andrews (Evanson Park, SA) and Greta Jean Naughton (Little Mountain, Qld) were married 6.12.09 at Kellyville church, NSW, in the presence of their families and friends. Bryce and Greta first met at an It Is Written Oceania convention. They will be initially living at Evanston Park.

Kingsley W Andrews

Fehlberg–Prout. Trafford Jon Fehlberg, son of Paul and Karen Fehlberg (Valentine, NSW), and Zoe Prout, daughter of James and Vicki Prout (Newcastle), were married 29.11.09 in St Patricks Chapel, Nukabia.

Graeme Loftus

Heath–Menteith. Robert Heath, son of William Heath (Adelaide, SA) and Beryl Yates (Safety Bay, WA), and Margaret Menteith, daughter of Raymond and Joan Johnstone, were married 15.3.09 at Safety Bay.

Andrew Skeggs

Judd–Drury. Brenton Judd, son of Raymond and Cheryl Judd (Melbourne, Vic), and Sarah Drury, daughter of Terrance Drury and Julie Taylor, were married 22.11.09 at Kilsyth.

Claude D Judd

Kooke–Schulz. Richard Brenton James Kooke, son of Bill Wilhelm and Brenda Kooke (Callington, SA), and Kelly Raquel Caetano Schulz, daughter of Valter and Maria Schulz (Sao Paulo, Brazil), were married 29.11.09 in a garden wedding on the grounds of Carrick Hill Mansion, SA.

Dave Hamilton

Manners–Moore. Darren Carl Manners, son of Bob and Merrillyn Manners (Canberra, ACT), and Alexandra Rae Moore, daughter of Brett and Glenda Moore (Eastwood, NSW), were married 22.10.09 at Beechcroft. The couple plan to establish their home in Waha roonga.

Bob Manners

Sibarani–McEwen. Jason Trevor Sibarani, son of Bowman and Davina Sibarani (Sydney, NSW), and Haley Cathryn McEwen, daughter of Brian and Susan McEwen (Tallebudgera, Qld), were married 22.11.09 in Raf ferty’s Resort, Lake Macquarie. The couple plan to establish their home in Sydney.

Bruce Roberts

Walker–Montefiore. Shane Walker, son of Ross and Jillian Walker (Manjimup, WA), and Kylie Montefiore, daughter of Lloyd and Merrillyn Montefiore (Perth), were married 14.3.09 at Cottesloe Civic Centre.

Andrew Skeggs

OBITUARIES

Burford, Julie Anne, born 17.10.1949 at Henley Beach, SA; died 13.11.09 in Flinders Medical Centre. On 20.11.1983, she married George Burford. She is survived by her husband; her son, Scott; and daughter, Nadine (all of Reynella). Julie was a valued worker at Prescott Primary Southern School for the past 12 years. She worked as a cleaner, gardener and bus driver. Julie was a devoted wife and mother who will be sorely missed. She now rests in peace until Resurrection morning.

Alien Craft

Cleaver, Leonard John, born 5.1.1935 at Christchurch, NZ; died 21.10.09 in Matthew John Nursing Home, Terrigal, NSW. He is survived by his wife, Lasela (Central Coast); Claire Kittle (Sydney); Brenda (Sydney); Debra Black (Gold Coast, Qld); and John (Central Coast, NSW). Len’s last words to Lasela were, “I’ll see you in the morning, when Jesus comes. It’s a date!”

Russel Stanley

Dobson, Kelvin Graeme, born 23.5.1944, at Wairoa, NZ; died 29.10.09 at Tugun, Qld. On 20.12.1967, he married Helen Godfrey. He will be greatly missed by his wife (Murwillumbah, NSW); and his sons and their families, Gavin and Tina, with granddaughter, Keira (Barham), and Nigel and Tiffany (Murwillumbah). He is remembered by his siblings, Olive (Yeo poon, Qld), Ray (Cooranbong, NSW), Irene (Bega), Beryl (Narrungu, Qld), Lois (Grafton, NSW), Evelyn (Red Rock), Brian (Grafton), Carol (Bega), Athol (Nambour, NSW).
Qld) and Paul (Murwillumbah, NSW). His assurance in Christ throughout his illness was a wonderful example to all who knew him.

Brett Townend, Warren Price

Hossack, Susan (nee Tan), born 19.11.1931 at Bojor, West Java, Indonesia; died 20.11.09 at Epworth Eastern Hospital, Box Hill, Vic. In 1967, she married Joseph Hossack at the Jakarta church, Indonesia, who predeceased her in 2008. Following their marriage the Hossacks lived at Warrandyte, Vic for 40 years prior to relocating in more recent years to the Aveo Cherry Tree Grove retirement complex in Croydon. Services in memory of Susan’s life were held in her home church, Ringwood and at Lilydale Memorial Park.

Trevor Rowe, James Greensill Langtree, Valmai Leslie, born 4.2.1938 at Beaudesert, Qld; died 13.11.09 in Victoria Point Retirement Village. Valmai spent many years in lighting and was a light in that town. Her family, grandchildren and great-grandchildren miss a loving mother and friend. She now rests in the blessed hope of the coming of the Lord.

Neil Tyler, Graham Allen Tudor, Thelma Evangeline, born 29.4.1910 at Devenish, Vic; died 10.11.09 in Elizabeth Lodge, Wahooonga, NSW, just a few months short of her 100th birthday. In 1933, she married Ralph, who predeceased her in 1998. She is survived by her only son, Llewellyn, and his wife, Nina; two grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren (all of Sydney). She enjoyed a partnership in pastoral ministry with her husband that lasted 65 years. In retirement, Thelma continued to assist in local church kindergarten schools until well into her 90s. Thelma will awaken at the call of her Saviour.

Garth Bainbridge

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Medical practitioners needed for the Logan Adventist Health Association Health Centre. Full-time and part-time practitioners needed. Contact 0428 486 455.

House—Nambour, Sunshine Coast. 27 acres, 7 mins from shopping centre. Upstairs 4 bedrooms, ensuite, modern kitchen, 2 bedroom granny flat downstairs. Rainwater tanks, natural spring. Farm shed, 3 phase power. Phone (07) 5441 1928 or email <ralena-will@optusnet.com.au> for slide show via web.

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Finally
If not you, who?
If not now, when?

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Download the HOPE Channel Survey at: www.avondale.edu.au/hope

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