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**DOES ANYONE WATCH
ADVENTIST MEDIA?** page 10

EVANGELISM A SUCCESS IN TONGA page 8

WORLD'S MOST HATED CHRISTIAN page 14

Church entities connect to make a difference

Upolu, Samoa

Eleven Sanitarium employees experienced a side of Samoa that went far beyond the pictures tourists see in travel magazines when they partnered with local communities and ADRA New Zealand in an ADRA Connections trip.

The international community project was part of the Spirit of Sanitarium Awards (SOSA), Sanitarium's annual employee reward program, which recognises employees who bring to life the company's values of care, courage, humility, integrity and passion. As part of the awards program, each year SOSA recipients have the opportunity to be part of an international community project.

"Our annual SOSA project is all about recognising the special people within Sanitarium who truly enact Sanitarium's values in their everyday lives," Corporate Communications manager Julie Praestiin said. "These international projects are a real highlight for our teams, and give us an opportunity to partner with the community to make a difference by working together."

The SOSA team visited four different villages that are part of ADRA's existing work in Samoa, assisting with nutrition and food hygiene education as well as helping to paint newly-built market stalls. These stalls enable locals to sell produce grown as part of the ADRA program, with Sanitarium donating \$15,000 towards the organisation's work in the region.

The team also helped serve breakfast at three local schools to more than 700 students. Students at each school received pencil cases, Weet-Bix Kids TRYathlon t-shirts and sports equipment for their school. And the team quickly ended up on the field, learning firsthand Samoa's passion for rugby.

For Keith Blackburne, an accountant from Sanitarium New Zealand's Auckland head office, it was moments like these that were the real highlight. "I enjoyed letting down our walls a bit and playing," he said. "The children and community wanted to see us get up and dance and play, so that's what we did."

ADRA New Zealand CEO Matthew Siliga said he and his team were excited by the opportunity to host an ADRA Connections trip for Sanitarium. "Our ADRA Connections NZ trips are about everyday Kiwis—and Aussies, in this case—partnering with communities overseas to make a life-changing difference," he said.

"It's a blessing to partner with an organisation like Sanitarium. While our organisations are different, we share a similar purpose and a shared passion for the wellbeing of families and communities."

Working in partnership with the New Zealand Government, ADRA NZ has an agricultural and small business training project in Samoa that targets 1000 of the most vulnerable and disaster-affected families. —*Sharyn Brady*
If you are interested in being part of an ADRA Connections trip, visit <adra.org.nz> or <adra.org.au>.



Child receives gift from SOSA team.

Plan for every church to be a health centre

Wahroonga, New South Wales

A global gathering of Adventist health experts in Geneva has cast a vision for every Adventist congregation in the world to become a health centre for its local community.

More than 1000 participants attended the 2nd Global Health & Lifestyle Conference, which focused on lifestyle diseases blamed for 36 million deaths every year.

Attendees experienced practical health firsthand, with General Conference president Dr Ted Wilson urging delegates to stand and stretch during the first day of the conference.

Speakers from the South Pacific Division (SPD) featured prominently on the second day.

Dr Gary Fraser, currently residing in New Zealand, presented the latest updates from the "Adventist Health Study 2". Dr Fraser is principal investigator of the study, which examines the health outcomes of various diets and lifestyles.

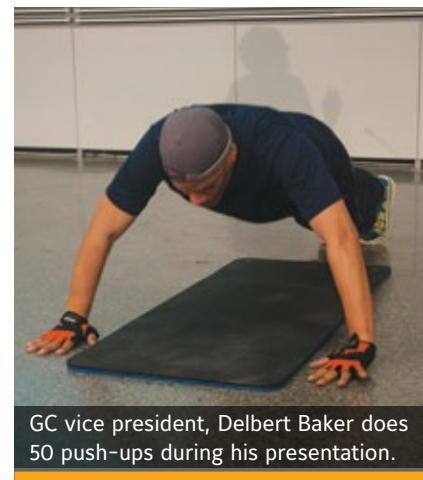
Sanitarium Health & Wellbeing (Australia) CEO Kevin

Jackson discussed the food industry's role in non-communicable diseases.

Dr Ross Grant, CEO of the Australasian Research Institute at Sydney Adventist Hospital, spoke about free radical damage and the ageing process, noting that lifestyle modification could modulate and, in some cases, reverse the progression of non-communicable diseases.

The health and lifestyle conference also saw the launch of a new stop-smoking program called "Breathe-Free 2".

—*Record staff/Adventist Review*



GC vice president, Delbert Baker does 50 push-ups during his presentation.



Devolution

James Standish

Life originated on earth through a God-guided evolutionary process. Theistic evolution is the predominant view among mainline Protestant denominations, and it's a view approved by the Roman Catholic Church.¹

But is there a way to harmonise theistic evolution and the biblical narrative? Not easily.

To accept theistic evolution, we must accept death before sin. So the wages of sin isn't death (Romans 6:23). Rather, death is the natural building block of life. And when we disobey, we will not surely die as a result (Genesis 2:17); rather we will die irrespective, as everything that preceded us did in the long evolutionary chain that was God's intent.

Not only must Moses be wrong about our origins, but the Finger that wrote in stone must also be mistaken (Exodus 20: 11)—and every other biblical writer who referred to our origins (eg, Luke 3:23–38, 1 Corinthians 11:11,12). And Jesus? He was wrong about our origin too (Matthew 19:4,5). And not just wrong about the origin of human life, but the origin of sin, the nature of sin and the substance of salvation (Romans 5:12). The entire story of salvation crumbles into a heap of incoherence under the weight of theistic evolution.

Why can't those who promote this view see the ramifications? Maybe they're too tethered to Christianity to take their teachings to their logical conclusion. But for young people, the obvious ramification is that the Bible is a non-sensical fable, unhinged from objective reality from start to finish. So they leave Christianity. As I would, were I similarly convinced.

The Catholic Church can embrace evolution, as its claim of validity lies in its claims of authority. Protestantism, which claims its validity from the Bible, cannot. Not surprisingly, since adopting theistic evolution, mainline Protestantism has been in freefall. The Presbyterian Church USA is one such body. How has adopting theistic evolution worked out for them? In 2013, they reported: "The PC (USA) now reports 1.84 million members, less than half of its peak membership of 4.25 million members in 1965 . . ."²

The irony is that the rush to attempt to harmonise Scripture with evolution has accelerated precisely at the time when the evidentiary challenges to evolutionism are com-

pounding. For example, the pro-evolutionism *Smithsonian* magazine called the discovery of soft tissue in a dinosaur bone dated 68 million years old a "dinosaur shocker". It went on to report: "The finding amazed colleagues, who had never imagined that even a trace of still-soft dinosaur tissue could survive. After all, as any textbook will tell you, when an animal dies, soft tissues such as blood vessels, muscle and skin decay and disappear over time . . ."³

Of course evolutionists, like everyone else, have no problem coming up with explanations for inconvenient facts. But a 68 million-year-old piece of soft tissue? You be the judge.

It isn't just paleontology producing new evidence that contradicts evolutionism; it's also physics. ABC *Catalyst's* Dr Graham Philips notes it's "scientific blasphemy to even ask", but: "it appears the universe has been fine-tuned so that intelligent beings like you and me can live here . . . to write the fine-tunings off as merely coincidences seems far-fetched". He then explores a host of inventive, and in some cases bizarre, possibilities for why a universe without a God is so astonishingly finely tuned for life. If you doubt God created the earth, watching this pro-evolutionism episode, "Custom Universe", might just convince you He did.

And then there's biology. The more we find out about life, the more complex we find it is. So how could life spontaneously generate? Richard Dawkins, the evolutionary biologist currently specialising in mocking religion, has an idea: "It could be that at some earlier time, somewhere in the universe, a civilisation evolved . . . and designed a form of life that they seeded onto perhaps this planet."⁴ Any explanation will do, it seems, but one: God.

Theistic evolution is entirely incompatible with Protestant Christianity. Just as well. As the time is coming when the weight of evidence will become so large, that propping up a 19th Century model for origins will no longer be sustainable. Indeed, it is already here.

1. *Humani Generis*, 1950, Paragraph 36.
2. <http://www.pcusa.org/news/2013/9/20/whos-joining-exodus/>
3. <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/dinosaur-shocker-115306469/>
4. *Expelled: No Intelligence Allowed*, a film by Ben Stein well worth watching.

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Our vision is to be a church that...
knows
 experiences
 and shares
 our hope in Jesus Christ



This is your moment

Kent Kingston

There was a man I knew in his 70s, a friend of the family, whom God had blessed with a word-perfect memory of the entire Bible—Genesis to Revelation. You could pick any verse at random and read it to him and he could continue from that point, for as long as you wanted. You could give him a book, chapter and verse reference and he would tell you what that verse said. He preached a number of powerful sermons and was a positive influence on several young Adventists who attended Bible studies at his house.

The ironic thing about old Bill*, however, was that he would wonder—I heard him say it a number of times—why God had given him this gift of memory and passion for the Bible. Bill said he just knew God had something big in store for him—he was waiting for His plan to be revealed.

I say ironic, because Bill died last year. In his last months he lost many of his memories, including those that covered the final decades of his life during which he had been a committed Christian.

Death brings awful clarity. I can't help wondering if Bill missed something crucial. Maybe he wasted his time waiting for some Grand Destiny to arrive, when his task lay right in front of him.

I resonate with Bill's story—it scares me a little—because I'm guilty of the same grandiose pie-in-the-sky by-and-by future orientation. Daily life feels so humdrum—the weekly routine; the incessant treadmill of responsibility. Other people's lives look so much more interesting and their accomplishments seem so much more valuable.

But God's working hard to help me recognise that destiny has arrived. Through the pages of this magazine—and through television and the internet—I have the opportunity to influence thousands of readers and viewers on topics of eternal significance. And in my family life I have just a few years left to guide my teenage sons in the path of godly manhood before they leave home.

The moment has arrived. In fact it has been here for some time. Will I give my God-given tasks the attention they deserve? Or will I drift through my week distracted by dreams of distant triumph?

What about you? Are you mentally marking time, waiting for a glorious future to emerge while the present passes you by? Or maybe you're stuck in the past, chained to some hurt or wishing for a return to the good old days.

This is your moment. Now. Whether you're a student, working, unemployed or retired. Whether you're single, married, widowed or divorced. Whether you're young in your faith, backslidden or a sixth generation Adventist. Destiny has arrived.

You don't have to search for your special task. It's sitting in your lap. There are talents to be used, relationships to be built, acts of mercy to be completed, words to be spoken—maybe even a letter to the *Adventist Record* editor that will motivate thousands to action!

We've each been given our window of divine opportunity. It's called Today.

* Not his real name.

Kent Kingston is assistant editor of Adventist Record.



Flying in mid-heaven

I have just finished preparing a sermon for a speaking appointment I have in a few weeks. My topic will be the three angels' messages of Revelation 14. I have enjoyed reviewing this passage of Scripture that is so important to us. Even our Mission Statement says we are to: "Make disciples for Jesus Christ of all peoples, communicating the everlasting gospel in the context of the three angels' messages of Revelation 14:6-12".

Think about it for a moment. The focus of the message is the everlasting gospel. It calls us to deep respect and worship of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. As such it calls us to separate ourselves from worship of anything or anyone who we are tempted to elevate above God. In fact, there are some disturbing warnings that we neglect to our peril about the consequences of putting anything before our God! This strongly alludes to the first of the Ten Commandments. The message is proclaimed in the setting of pre-advent judgement—a corollary of the everlasting gospel in that for God's people, the judgement is all good news! And in contrast to the activity of the forces arraigned against God and His kingdom, the patience of the saints will be rewarded with eternal rest in Christ. The Sabbath, alluded to in the use of the language of the fourth commandment and thus part of the proclaimed message, is clearly a foretaste of this eternal rest, to be enjoyed by God's people right here on earth.

A lot to think about actually. And I have only just scraped the surface. No wonder this amazing passage is so relevant to what we do.

Dr Barry Oliver is president of the South Pacific Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.



Cut the carnage

New research suggests that Australia's road toll could be cut by the simple measure of reducing the minimum legal blood alcohol limit to 0.2, or even zero. International comparisons by Monash University researchers show that the number of fatal road crashes is less in jurisdictions with stricter blood alcohol laws. —ABC News



Biblical epic

A new Hollywood blockbuster based on the book of Exodus is likely to complete what film critics are calling "the year of the Bible". Starring Christian Bale as Moses and directed by Ridley Scott, *Exodus: Gods and Kings* is due to be released in the US in December. —Charisma News



Forced to comply

Concerns for religious freedom are being expressed in Denmark, where parliament has enshrined the rights of same-sex couples to be married in any church they choose. About one-third of Danish clergy have said they will refuse to officiate at same-sex ceremonies. The new legislation requires their bishops to find a replacement. —The Telegraph (UK)



Learnt by heart

Fourteen-year-old Monica Rao Abbasari impressed attendees at a recent Adventist camp meeting in Wales, when she recited the entire Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5-7. It's not a new thing for Monica, who has been reciting whole chapters of Scripture and delivering sermons since the age of nine. —SEC Media



Reconciliation

In the midst of last month's Israel/Gaza violence, about 1000 Christian young people, from both Jewish and Arab backgrounds, met in Haifa for the annual Elav conference. Encounters between the young people included apologies and a footwashing service. For some, it was the first meaningful conversation they'd had with their "enemies". —Israel Today



Sacred Sundays?

During a speech in Molise, Italy, Pope Francis said Sunday should be recognised as a work-free day to assist in balancing employment and family responsibilities, and help believers strengthen their relationship with God. Adventist religious freedom advocates have warned such moves may threaten religious freedom for Jews, Adventists, Muslims and others. —NewsOK.com

Archaeological Diggings

BLIND or HEARING IMPAIRED

Record

HopeChannel

Using media to bring people to JESUS
Media Evangelism offering, August 9

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Dr Carson inspires NZ communities

Auckland, New Zealand

More than 2500 people filled Vodafone Events Centre in Manukau City on July 1 for an evening with Dr Ben Carson.

The theme was "Faith, Hope, Love . . . and Common Sense", with the world-renowned Adventist neurosurgeon discussing the impact these virtues have made on his life.

The evening also featured a Q&A session with Dr Carson and his wife, Candy. Attendees were given the opportunity to submit questions to the Carsons via a texting service provided throughout the night.

New Zealand television presenter Petra Bagust served as host for the evening. There was also a performance by local Christian artist Julia Grace.

The event was organised by the North New Zealand Conference (NNZC). Major sponsors included Sanitarium Health & Wellbeing, Mainfreight and the New Zealand Christian Foundation.

All proceeds from the event will go towards supporting the work of Duffy Books in Homes—a charity organisation seeking to break the cycle of "booklessness" in New Zealand. The organisation currently provides books to more than 500 schools across New Zealand, as well as 220 children's centres.

Dr Carson developed a relationship with Duffy Books in Homes during his first visit to New Zealand in 2012.

The partnership is a fitting one. Having been brought up in extreme poverty is his hometown of Detroit, Michigan,

Dr Carson knows first-hand the life-changing effect of reading books from a young age.

"[My mother] noticed that the wealthy people she worked for spent a lot of time reading," Dr Carson

told *The New Zealand Herald*. "I discovered that a whole new world could open up to me."

In Auckland on July 4, Duffy Books in Homes hosted "Another Evening with Dr Ben Carson" as part of its 20th anniversary celebrations. The event included dinner with the best-selling author as well as a charity auction.

A similar event was also held in Christchurch, with hundreds of people gathering at CBS Arena to hear Dr Carson's story of "bad student to brain surgeon".

Among the attendees were Christchurch Adventist School's (CAS) Years 4-13 students, some of whom had the opportunity to meet Dr Carson.

"The students and staff were thoroughly inspired by Dr Carson's presentation," CAS principal Danny Carrasco said. "We praise God for the fantastic experience."

Dr Carson also spoke in Australia before returning home. —*Linden Chuang*



Dr Ben Carson with a CAS student.

Churches unite for evangelism

Melbourne, Victoria

Adventist churches in Melbourne's southeast and southwest have united to run an evangelistic campaign.

Pakenham, Casey, Cranbourne and two congregations in Dandenong partnered with the Victorian Conference to organise the "Life after Life" series, presented by Pastor Geoff Youlden.

Approximately 240 people attended the last day of the series in Melbourne's southeast when Aaron and Jonah Sivanganthan from Casey church were baptised. In response to Pastor Youlden's final appeal, 38 people requested baptism.

At the last Friday evening program in the southwest, attendees were invited to attend Werribee church the next day. The church was full on Sabbath and many had to watch from an adjoining room as nine candidates were baptised. An additional 25 people requested baptism.

"The reason for Life after Life's success is the prepara-



tion that was done leading up to it," Pastor Youlden said. "We didn't do any of the usual pre-mission advertising. No TV ads, no radio campaigns and minimal letterboxing. Today's climate is different. Instead, we focused on meeting people."

In the months leading up to the campaign, the Victorian Conference helped fund community interest activities like Cheri Peters' Life In Recovery programs, It is Written Oceania's Dinners with Gary Kent and Gary Webster's Ancient Mysteries seminars. Local church members also established contact with the community through *Beyond: the Search* DVDs. The DVDs were offered to anyone who attended the community events and were also shared by church members with friends and neighbours. Literature evangelists also invited their contacts to view *Beyond*.

"It is this contact that makes all the difference," Pastor Youlden said. "Sharing God is personal." —*Vania Chew/IntraVic*



Voyager of the Seas



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Evangelism a success in Tonga

Nuku'alofa, Tonga

The Mission to the Cities initiative continues to gain momentum in cities around the South Pacific, using a combination of evangelism and health messages. The recent program in Tonga's capital, Nuku'alofa, was no exception.

The Tongan Prime Minister and his wife attended the first program, along with Tongan parliamentarians, nobles and people from all levels of the community, with the PM's wife continuing to attend subsequent programs.

The series was held in two locations—at Beulah Adventist College for students and staff in the mornings and in downtown Nuku'alofa at the Queen Salote Memorial Hall at night. A children's program was also run in the evenings at Nuku'alofa church.

"At times there were 400 children at the children's program and up to 1000 at the Queen Salote Hall," said Pastor Ofa Pepa, who coordinated the evangelism.

It is Written Oceania director, Pastor Gary Kent, was the main presenter after *IWO* was screened on television in the two months before the program.

"It was a privilege to work in the Kingdom of Tonga," Pastor Kent said. "The support from the Church was excellent. It was well organised and the people of Tonga responded well. They are a religious people, a spiritual people and many are searching for Bible truth. They want to know what the Bible really teaches and to find answers they are turning to the Adventist Church and that's a good thing."

Dr Chester Kuma, Associate Health director for the South Pacific Division, presented on the health and lifestyle diseases that are plaguing the Pacific.

"The health messages by Dr Kuma were outstanding and very much needed," said Tongan Mission president, Pastor Sione Moala. "Tonga has seen a significant rise in non-communicable diseases in recent years. I noticed that more people were out exercising early in the morning as a result of the meetings." Pastor Moala was also translator for the series.

"The Church on Tongatapu Island, Tonga, has worked together creatively to make this public evangelistic series part of a good process of evangelism; working with Beulah staff and students has been an extra bonus—well done," said Trans-Pacific Union (TPUM) president, Pastor Glenn Townend.

In preparation for the program, Dr Ron Stone, TPUM's Ministerial secretary and also a Tongan, trained church members in friendship evangelism.

Afterwards 63 people were baptised, while more than 40 students from Beulah and children above 10 years of age made commitments to Jesus and need to get parental permission to be baptised at a later date. Bible studies with school chaplain, Pastor Helala, and other pastors are continuing.

Both the health and Bible messages will be shown on Tongatapu Island's TV station later in the year and the outer islands of Tonga will receive DVDs of the whole program to show as a public evangelistic program.—Jarrod Stackelroth/TPUM News



Students of Beulah Adventist College.





Children on a mission

by Sonja Larsen

WITH A GOAL AND A MISSION THERE IS LITTLE to stop children from achieving great things. From March to June, children at the Atoifi Adventist Primary School in the Solomon Islands were on a mission to raise funds for the "silent school" in India.

The journey—involving 41 students and three staff—climaxed at an eagerly anticipated mufti day on June 6. It was a beautiful day in paradise. Even before the school bell rang, the excitement amongst the children—and staff—was palpable. The hard-earned donations had been counted, colourful posters had been carefully created, and the air was painted with the shouts and songs of happy and successful children.

It was a humbling moment for Atoifi principal George Kaola when he stood up in assembly to praise the students' dedication and attitude of cheerful giving. "When we announced that we had raised \$SB1924 for the Speech and Hearing Impaired School, the children were very excited," Mr Kaola said.

His mission was two-fold: to support Asian Aid's Speech and Hearing Impaired School while instilling in children the value of giving and helping others. His mission was also accomplished.

"We asked the children to bring in whatever money they could," Mr Kaola said. "While some students come from low-income earning families, everyone made an effort to bring whatever they could."

In the months leading up to the mufti day, students found it a joy going door-to-door sharing about the "silent school" and asking neighbours, church members and staff from the Atoifi hospital for donations.

While some students come from low-income families, everyone made an effort to bring whatever they could.

"This is for the Indian children," the students would say excitedly as they dropped money into the tin each day.

Student Charles Alacky thoroughly enjoyed the experience, saying, "I love to help and enjoyed walking around with the tin."

"I also enjoyed going around asking for money shouting, 'Help the silent school'," said Laural Polosovai with a grin.

Mr Kaola said the children were great promoters and fundraisers. "The children were committed to telling their families and neighbours about the school and, with the Sabbath School mission news having a focus on India, the children were even more interested," he said.

Instilling in children the value of giving, helping others, service and being aware of the needs in distant countries is a seed he and the staff at Atoifi had wanted to plant, and felt blessed to watch bloom.

In asking students what they learned from the fundraising, Mr Kaloa was given the following replies:

"I learned that giving and helping others also teaches us that helping is a good thing."—*Rowena Gwala*

"I learned how to share and to help others when they are in need."—*Shenila Puia*

The experience has reminded Mr Kaola, his staff and the students about the importance of giving our money, skills and time and, more importantly, that God loves a cheerful giver. R

To learn more about the Speech and Hearing Impaired School, visit www.asianaid.org.au or call (02) 6586 4250.

Sonja Larsen is communication coordinator for Asian Aid.

Does anyone watch Adventist Media?

by Vania Chew

Have you ever wondered what happens to all those TV programs, radio shows, all the magazines and websites the Adventist Media Network produces? Do they all just float off into the great unknown never to be heard of again?

Kent Kingston, host of *Record InFocus*, chuckles: "I've wondered that myself." To test how many people are watching *InFocus*, earlier this year he offered a book as a free giveaway on the show. The problem? "We were overwhelmed! I had to drop everything and become a full-time order delivery taker. All the postage shot our budget. But it also answered a question. Apparently being on Foxtel and HopeChannel has a pretty amazing reach."

Sometimes God uses Adventist Media to reach even into the most improbable places, and into the most unlikely of hearts.

At 15, New Zealand youth Alex Peihopa was sentenced to life imprisonment for murder. His future looked bleak. It would be almost 10 years before he would meet the man—and magazine—that would change his life forever.

When Alex was 24, he was assigned a cellmate called Jacky Yang, a Chinese national incarcerated for smuggling drugs.

One day, Jacky was in the prison library when he came across a *Signs of the Times* magazine. He enjoyed reading it and signed up for the free offers inside. This led to him completing a number of Bible correspondence courses from the Discovery Centre.

Jacky's newfound interest in the Bible bothered his

cellmate.

"I would watch TV while Jacky read his Bible, but he sat in front of the TV to do his Bible study," Alex says. "After a few weeks, I asked to move out of his cell."

It wasn't long, however, before the Holy Spirit began working on Alex's heart. He started attending a Bible study group. He also began reading the Bible and, for the first time, started to feel peace in his heart about the future.

In April 2012, Alex moved to Waiakeria Prison to begin his work release program. He requested *Signs* magazines that he could share with other inmates. Many of them accepted the magazines and also signed up for Bible studies with the Discovery Centre.

Alex was released from prison in August 2012 and baptised into the Cambridge Seventh-day Advent-

ist Church the following year, where he is still a faithful member.

"Shame and guilt no longer haunt me," Alex says. "It was only when I repented and confessed to God that I found peace."

Sometimes God uses Adventist Media to reach someone at precisely the time that they begin asking exactly the right questions.

Yvonne Sookloll was involved in her Sunday-keeping church for more than 30 years but still felt like something was missing in her life. She asked her pastor for advice on what to do, but he didn't share her concerns. "You're doing just fine," he assured her.

Sometimes God uses Adventist Media to reach even into the most improbable places, and into the most unlikely of hearts.

A back injury led to Yvonne having to stay off her feet for some time. She began tuning into satellite Christian television and found a program called Hope Sabbath School. She quickly became engrossed in the Bible lessons and began studying the Bible for eight hours each day.

Yvonne was amazed by the number of passages in the Bible that spoke about the Sabbath and God's law. She and her family decided to leave the church they had been attending. They were ridiculed and told they should repent for leaving.

Yvonne and her husband began keeping Sabbath at home, as they didn't know of any Sabbath-keeping churches. One day, their son Pascal met a woman who was getting baptised at Clarkson church (Western Australia) and asked his parents to go.

"We joined the Clarkson congregation and were baptised," Yvonne says. "I am thankful and grateful for all the prayers and support from Hope Sabbath School."

Sometimes evangelism occurs through less obvious media. "A woman came up to me at camp recently," says *Adventist Record* editor James Standish, "and told me she had started attending an Adventist church after a friend shared

the *Adventist Record* with her. *Adventist Record* tells the story of our Church—what we think, what we do, who we are today. And apparently that's a very attractive package."

"Media allows us to overcome barriers to get into the home, the car and even jail," Media Ministries director Geraldine Przybylko says.

"Our aim at Adventist Media is for all our media (It is Written Oceania, Christian Services for the Blind, *Diggings* magazine, Hope Channel, Discovery Bible School, *Signs* magazine) to work together with local churches to reach the apparently unreachable. We want to reach people who are seeking something more in life, point them to Jesus Christ and connect them with local churches where they can be nurtured." R

Vania Chew is PR/Editorial Assistant for *Adventist Record*.



Ellen White makes it clear that God's final message will be spread to a large degree through the influence of media working hand-in-hand with local churches. At Adventist Media, we take this challenge very seriously. Our vision is to have the Adventist message "never more than an arm's length away".

Whether you are watching *InFocus* on Foxtel or *It Is Written* on Channel 7, listening to Faith FM in your car, reading a *Signs* you found in your doctor's waiting room, perusing a *Diggings* magazine you picked up at your local newsagent or digesting a copy of the *Adventist Record* given to you by a friend; whether you are watching a video on demand on your phone, doing a Discovery course on the net, or relaxing at home watching a *Beyond* DVD; wherever you are the Adventist message is there. Up front. Ready to access. Clear and free.

And we have plans to do far more.

We are about to take HopeChannel into nearly every home in New Zealand and Papua New Guinea. HopeChannel is already available on mainstream TV in Fiji, Vanuatu and Samoa. And by God's grace we ask you to pray Australia will be next. Why? Pastor Mark Finley reports that God has used HopeChannel to bring more than 2 million people into our Church. In Brazil alone, more than 17,000 people come into the Church every year through HopeChannel. What God has done for others, He can do for us.

We continue to need your prayers and financial support to make this dream a reality. Creating good media requires an investment, but it's an investment that brings amazing results.

Thank you for supporting the spread of God's Word,

Neale Schofield
Chief Executive Officer
Adventist Media Network





Message of hope spreading in PNG

Homes of Hope (HOH) ministry in Papua New Guinea recently celebrated its largest ever graduation, with 210 people from the village of Sinei (Northern Province) completing the program. More than 500 people from the predominately Anglican village gathered to witness the ceremony. A number of Adventist Church leaders also attended. HOH uses lessons from the Discovery Centre, part of the Adventist Media Network (Wahroonga, NSW), to share the love of Christ to members of the community. Beryl Waiyaraga founded the ministry in 2010 as a way of reaching people in her homeland of Cape Vogel (Milne Bay Province).—*Eastern Wind*

Greatest story ever told

Hundreds of people gathered at Avondale School in Coorabong (NSW) for three nights in June for the school's inaugural musical production. Featuring the school's orchestra, choir and drama team, *The Story* presented the history of the Bible (from Genesis to Revelation) in a novel format. More than 600 people attended the final night of the musical, which was held in the school's multi-purpose centre. "The students put so much time and energy into the production and were eager to share it with the community," said music teacher Shelley Parsons.—*Michelle Bof*



Good growth

Demand for places at Macarthur Adventist College (NSW) has led Campbelltown Council to approve an increase in the student population from 340 to 570 over the next six years. To cope with the growth, the school will add more on-site parking and an internal "kiss and ride" zone.—*Macarthur Advertiser*

New company welcomes new members

Six people were recently baptised from the new Sinai African company in South Australia. Janet Mutuyimana, Mediatrix [Meddy] Dusabe, Elisa Nidikumana, Joseline Nahayo, Diane Nifasha and Mieye Bartutwanayo were baptised at Largs Bay, with more than 60 people gathered on the shoreline to witness the special event. ADRA South Australia director Pastor David Hamilton conducted the ceremony.—*Grapevine*

Terrific triplets

Two sets of triplets currently attend Christchurch Adventist School (CAS) in New Zealand. The Wormald trio are in Year 3, while the Pirliteanus are in Year 4. "It is unique for a school of our size (220 students) to have two sets of triplets," CAS principal Danny Carrasco said. "We praise God for each of these wonderful students and the uniqueness they bring to our school."—*Tracey Ling*



Back to school

Forty-one teachers from Adventist schools in Solomon Islands have upgraded their teaching certificates through Fulton College's extension program. A graduation ceremony was held in Honiara on June 26, with Fulton College principal Dr Steve Currow serving as guest presenter. The graduation is a testament to the efforts of Peter and Glenda Roberts, who, for the past three years, have organised four-week training sessions for teachers looking to advance their studies.—*TPUM newsletter*

Rusterholzs honoured for roofing ministry

Adventist leaders in Vanuatu honoured Henry and Hanni Rusterholz for providing iron roofing to more than 100 churches in Vanuatu and Papua New Guinea over the past 10 years. Mission president Pastor Nos Terry presented a carved wooden bowl to the Rusterholzs as a token of appreciation during a special lunch on June 30. "This is nothing compared to what you have contributed to the Mission and church members in Vanuatu," Pastor Terry said. "Without your support, we would not be able to respond positively and adequately to the many requests for iron roofs that we receive each year." Based in Australia, the Rusterholzs have spent more than \$V1 million in bringing iron roofs to churches in the South Pacific.—*Simon Luke*



Weighty issue

Health might look different to us if body weight was something we could see without any emotion. Over the years, research has identified healthy body weights for the average person; a weight range that lowers their risk of chronic disease.

But we live in a society where feelings of self-worth are so often attached to physical appearance and, therefore, when body weight is mentioned everyone has their own set of emotions wrapped up with it. And sometimes these emotions can result in far more damage to our health than any body weight is worth.

A recent study by the Australian Institute of Family Studies looked at more than 4000 children at ages eight to nine and again at 10 to 11 and found that more than half of the children wanted a body size slightly thinner than average, with younger children being more dissatisfied.

So how do we promote healthy body weights without going too far? How do we do this without a negative effect flowing down through generations? The answer could very well be that we need to spend far less time focusing on an end result and more on how we get there.

Healthy body weights come as a result of living healthy lives. The number on the scales will be different for all of us and it may never reach "average", but the road to health is a common path. A diet full of unprocessed plant foods, regular activity, quality sleep, managing our stress and building strong, valuable relationships are the keys to living a healthy life.

Maybe health would look different if we attached feelings of self-worth to passing on these philosophies and values to future generations, rather than to a number on a scale.



Head to Sanitarium's website to sign up for Good Food News, a free quarterly digital magazine covering all things health and wellbeing.



Tomato, bocconcini and basil pizza

Preparation time: 15 minutes
Cooking time: 8 minutes Serves: 4

- 4 wholemeal pita pocket breads**
- 1/3 cup tomato pasta sauce**
- 12 basil leaves, torn**
- 250g large cherry tomatoes, quartered**
- 220g tub bocconcini cheese, drained and sliced**
- 1 tablespoon toasted pine nuts**
- 1 large Lebanese cucumber**
- 8 small butter lettuce leaves, trimmed**

1. Preheat oven to 200°C. Place pocket breads on a baking tray lined with baking paper. Spread each with 1 tablespoon tomato pasta sauce. Top with basil, cherry tomatoes, bocconcini and pine nuts. Bake for 5-8 minutes until cheese melts.
2. Meanwhile, to make salad, using a vegetable peeler, slice the cucumber into thin ribbons. Combine cucumber and lettuce in a bowl. Toss to combine and serve with pizzas.

NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVE:
1460kJ (340cal). Protein 17g. Fat 13g.
Carbohydrate 38g. Sodium 500mg. Potassium 590mg. Calcium 250mg. Iron 3.3mg. Fibre 7g.

Call and arrange to speak to one of our qualified nutritionists at Sanitarium Lifestyle Medicine Services on 1800 673 392 (in Australia) or 0800 100 257 (in New Zealand). Alternatively, email us at nutrition@sanitarium.com.au (Australia) or nutrition@sanitarium.co.nz (New Zealand). For more great recipes and health articles visit our website www.sanitarium.com.au or www.sanitarium.co.nz

Sanitarium

LIFESTYLE
MEDICINE
SERVICES



World's most hated Christian

by Bruce Manners

FRED PHELPS, ARGUABLY THE MOST HATED Christian in the United States, died on March 19. Phelps was the founding pastor of the Westboro Baptist Church (WBC) in 1955. WBC is an independent Baptist church with no connection to mainstream Baptists.

His church of about 40—mostly family members—has gained national and international notoriety as the church of hate that pickets funerals of gays and American soldiers with hostile placards.

Their church website not only condemns gays but tells you God also hates America; Islam; and the media. There's even a video, *God hates Australia*. And, in case any should feel left out, *God hates the world*.

Any disaster or loss of life is seen as an act of God, for which we should be thankful as a "display of God's almighty power". It was God who killed the 6801 American soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan. A number counter on the website tells how many people God has cast into hell since the page has been opened—it goes up by about two a second. In case you're wondering, WBC members "lose zero nanoseconds of sleep over your opinions and feeeeeeeeeiiiiings".

There's something so unbiblical about all of this. Here's why:

1. "God is love" (1 John 4:8).¹ That's basic Christianity.

That's what helps us make sense of this world.

2. "God loved the world so much that He gave . . ." (John 3:16). Love acts. Always. God has acted in Jesus and offered life to "whoever". Anyone can be a whoever—there are no racial, ethnic, religious, dress, diet, orientation or lifestyle barriers that this promise doesn't cross. Jesus came not to condemn the world, but to save it (John 3:17).

3. When Jesus was asked what was the greatest command, He replied, "Love God with your whole being" and "love your neighbour as you love yourself" (Matthew 22:37-40). Love God; love others. This is what you'd expect from a God who is love.

4. Jesus said, "Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples" (John 13:34, 35). The church family is a place where 1 Corinthians 13 love is to be lived out.

Is that the whole story?

But there's another side to the story. There are also occasions when we're told God hates. How can this be? How can love and hate exist together? Aren't they opposites that, like darkness and light, are impossible together?

Yet the Bible says: God hates those who do violence (Psalm 11:5); those who celebrate the new moon and annual festivals—at certain times (Isaiah 1:14); He hated Israel

since Gilgal (Hosea 9:15); and He loved Jacob, but rejected (“hated,” NIV) Esau (Malachi 1:2, 3).

Should we, like Fred Phelps, make a list of people we hate—to follow God’s example?

Here’s the problem: Even a shallow understanding of the New Testament would make us question whether God can actually hate—at least in the ways we understand it. The love He demonstrates appears too big and broad, too all-encompassing.

Hate is a judgement call because hating involves making some kind of judgement about the individual or group being hated. It’s in understanding God’s role and our role in making judgements that we find some answers.

In the Old Testament we find various acts of God’s judgement. These include those times He used the Israelites to enact judgements on others. The story of Ananias and Sapphira in the New Testament also reveals an act of God’s judgement. Predictions of future judgement demonstrate that God is a Judge who will act when He deems it necessary.

The heart is key to understanding God’s judgement—His heart and our hearts. First, God’s heart is revealed at the time of Noah’s flood. This judgement came out of extreme sorrow; it also “broke His heart” (Genesis 6:6). This was not an act of vindictiveness or of hatred.

Then, God understands our hearts. He’s quite clear that He sees individuals not as we see them. Simply stated, “People judge by outward appearance;” God “looks at the heart.” (1 Samuel 16:7). That’s why we must leave judgement calls to God.

Jesus is specific about this: “Do not judge others and you will not be judged” (Matthew 7:1). The scary thing about this statement is that it comes from the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus emphasises that even thinking of doing something is as bad as doing it.

But then you have John the Baptist openly challenging (and judging) Herod for his adulterous relationship with his brother’s wife. Doesn’t this demonstrate that there are times for a straight, pointed, condemning testimony?

Yes there are, but there’s another factor to consider. Herod was a part of the Jews, an insider. Born part-Jew (his mother was a Jew), he was a ruler of the Jews, and understood and at least partially followed the ways of the Jews. He was one of them. John the Baptist’s challenge was a forerunner of the way Christians were to take.

It works like this: Jesus came not to condemn the world, but to save it (John 3:17). Jesus’ followers are to be Jesus like. Our role is not to condemn (judge) the world, either. Within our own ranks, though, we are to expect a high standard of Christian conduct and there are times when a judgement call—and even discipline—is needed. Jesus endorsed this by giving the process as to how that should be

managed (see Matthew 18:15–17).

The apostle Paul wrote about the within-without process of judging and discipline in this way: “It isn’t my responsibility to judge outsiders, but it certainly is your responsibility to judge those inside the church who are sinning.” And so there would be no misunderstanding: “God will judge those on the outside; but as the Scriptures say, ‘You must remove the evil person from among you’” (1 Corinthians: 5:12, 13).

Our commission is to make disciples with the weapons of light (love), not of darkness (hate). The greatest command is still to love God and love others. That’s the Christian way. Hate, a destructive force, is the enemy’s way.

The better way

Hate begets hate. Hate can never be a revelation of who God is, His ways or who He wants us to be. “God is love. Period. Are we love? Do we love? Love is the bottom line.

Love is what matters most. Love is the primary measure God uses to determine what is valuable and what is worthless. Love lasts.”²

Love means treating people we disagree with, with care and respect (including Fred Phelps) because love pulls down barriers. Hate builds them up.

Ellen White was an enthusiast for this kind of approach. In an era when it was popular for Protestants to openly attack

Catholics, she argued against it. She wrote a strong letter to the editor of Australia’s *Bible Echo and Signs of the Times* in 1896:

“Brethren, I feel hurt when I see that so many decided thrusts are made against the Catholics. Preach the truth, but restrain the words which show a harsh spirit; for such words cannot help or enlighten anyone. . . . [F]or Christ’s sake heed the admonitions which have been given in regard to making scathing remarks about the Catholics. . . . Satan rejoices when one word of bitterness is found on its pages.”³

One of the tragedies for Fred Phelps is that a couple of months before his death, he was excommunicated from WBC. It came after he asked for a “kinder approach” in how they dealt with each other in the church.⁴

Was this a case of the organisation and philosophy Phelps set up coming back to bite him? Hate begetting hate?

Whatever the case, I hope he understood that God loved him. God loves. That never stops for anyone. It can’t, for God is love.



1. All Bible quotes from the New Living Translation.
 2. Alan Fadling, *An Unhurried Life*, InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois, 2013, pages 83, 84.
 3. Ellen G White, Letter 20, 1896 (Counsels to Editors and Writers, page 63).
 4. <http://guardianlv.com/2014/03/fred-phelps-excommunicated-from-westboro-baptist-church-by-his-own-family/>

Dr Bruce Manners is senior pastor of Lilydale church, Vic.



OPENING HIS WORD

Gary Webster

Seven signs of Christ's return

Sign 6: global proclamation of the gospel

The sixth of the seven signs of Christ's soon return is the global proclamation of the gospel.

Read Matthew 24:14; Revelation 14:6, 7

The gospel is the power of God to save all who trust in Jesus alone, who died for their sins and was raised again for their justification. The gospel of Jesus not only justifies and reconciles the ungodly, but also transforms them, turning them from sin to live righteous lives of obedience to God's commandments, while they wait longingly for Jesus to return.

Read Romans 1:16, 17; 5:1, 6-10; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Galatians 6:14; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 13:20, 21; 10:10-12

In the end-time crisis over worship or allegiance, almost the entire world will be coerced or deceived by the dragon, the sea beast and the land beast into worshipping Satan himself. Little wonder that therefore the gospel is proclaimed globally. It is the only way to the end-time worship or allegiance to God alone, as seen by its effect to turn those who embrace it into lovingly and totally committed followers of Jesus, willing to follow all of God's commandments.

Read Revelation 13:12-17, 8, 4; 14:6, 7, 1-5; 12:17; 14:12

Are you trusting (leaning all your weight on) Christ alone? Then Christ, who is the gospel, will be all and in all to you, and like Paul, the love of Christ will compel you to persuade men and women to also know Christ. Won't you decide right now to lean on Jesus totally and by God's grace share His love with others through deeds and words?

Read Philippians 1:21; 3:8-10; 2 Corinthians 5:10, 11, 14-21

Pastor Gary Webster is director of the Institute of Public Evangelism.

MY MINISTRY

Mission success in Peru

A small group of volunteers from Australia and Colombia travelled to the Sacred Valley of the Incas as part of a mission trip known as Project Peru.

The volunteers built two churches, ran four evangelistic programs, started one small group, ran several classes and workshops, and celebrated 15 baptisms.

But there was also something different about this mission trip.

Group director John Rebolledo's vision was to present the prophetic message to the locals in a way that grabbed their attention, so a large, inflatable "Nebuchadnezzar's Dream" statue from Edgar Ministry was set up and used in many different ways throughout the mission.

The statue was useful in catching the attention of the community and in starting conversations with those who walked by. It was first used in conjunction with a bread of life symbol as part of a project where volunteers distributed free bread to the inhabitants of Lamay.

The statue was also used as part of "Caravana En Lamay"—a march that saw the mission team and church members of surrounding areas join together to make their presence known in the small town. At the end of the march a closing Sabbath worship was held. It was a beautiful experience to have several different Adventist churches, volunteers and most likely the largest crowd of non-Adventists that had gathered throughout the project, join in closing Sabbath. The people were invited to attend the Last Empire seminar a few weeks later.

The statue was used a few more times but one of the more memorable was during health check-ups in Calca. Volunteers checked blood pressure and sugar levels and the information was then reviewed by nutritionists and lifestyle suggestions were made. Volunteers who were not occupied with the check-ups were in charge of talking to passers-by. Again the statue was a great ice-breaker.

In the final weeks of the mission trip Pastor Walter Flamenco preached about final events.

"Overall the mission trip was a success," says Wanda Rebolledo from Springwood church, Queensland. "[We] completed the goals that we had before we left home. Not only did we manage to preach the message of Jesus and of final day events, but we also managed to help individuals in the community. Some part of this success was due to the use of the Nebuchadnezzar statue in the community." —Wanda Rebolledo with Jarrod Stackelroth

For more information visit Facebook/Our Message is Jesus or contact <edgarministry@gmail.com>.



REVIVED BY HIS WORD

August 2—16, 2014

READING THROUGH THE BIBLE TOGETHER
ONE CHAPTER A DAY

2 – Ezek. 36	6 – Ezek. 40	10 – Ezek. 44	14 – Ezek. 48
3 – Ezek. 37	7 – Ezek. 41	11 – Ezek. 45	15 – Dan. 1
4 – Ezek. 38	8 – Ezek. 42	12 – Ezek. 46	16 – Dan. 2
5 – Ezek. 39	9 – Ezek. 43	13 – Ezek. 47	

LETTERS

SECOND CHANCES

Erminia Cotaru, NSW

Re: "Out of sight, out of mind" (Feature, June 21).

I left my country of birth about 25 years ago, while communism was still ruling the lives of everybody in that part of the world. Being an accomplished professional meant absolutely nothing unless one accepted the ideology of the time. For some of us, it was a huge gap between what we believed and what we were allowed to express. There was always the fear that one slip of the tongue may occur and everything was in danger.

As I could not reconcile the two aspects of that life, I decided to leave my country and find a place, somewhere in this world, where I could offer my two daughters the freedom to be who they really are, without any fear of retaliation.

On our way to freedom, we spent six months in a refugee camp in Hungary, 25 kilometres away from Budapest. While there, the living conditions were reasonable, we were free to come and go as we needed and had access to any foreign embassy to check the prospects we had. None of us in that camp expected anything else than to be treated with dignity and be given a chance to a better life.

After the initial contact with the Australian Embassy, it took no longer than three weeks to receive the good news that we were accepted as permanent residents with the prospect of becoming Australian citizens, should we wish to.

Of course we wished to and even more than that, we wished to give our best in return. I really wonder what has changed in the Australian mentality that brings us to see the inhumane treatment of today's refugees and, mostly, why. It breaks my heart

to see children behind wired fences, men and women who are ready to work as hard as they possibly can to start their lives all over again, locked away in no-one's land. They left behind their families, their belongings, their culture. They came here with empty hands but with big and hopeful hearts and a desire to be free. All they get in return is our indifference and terrible treatment at the hands of the Government.

What difference does it make if they come by boat or by plane?

Aren't we all refugees in the end? This is what really amazes me! Wouldn't it be financially better for the government to hire an extra hundred employees to process the refugees' claims in a couple of months than to spend the millions of dollars to keep them locked away in terrible conditions offshore? And wouldn't it be more humane to do so?

ONE SIDED

Alison Buckley, via email

I found "Out of Sight Out of Mind" quite one-sided. It relied heavily on one main witness and less on another. The death of an asylum seeker and the injury of others was tragic and should have been prevented, as should some of the conditions they experience like insufficient drinking water, footwear, clothing and other physical conditions.

I believe every legal measure should be used to protect Australians from terrorism, including the possibility of the illegal arrival of terrorists or other criminals by boat. Every country protects its borders, so should Australia. If refugees have to be held until it is determined that they are safe to be released into our community, then they must accept that as a condition of entry to our country.

A much more humane way of responding to the world refugee problem would be to increase our intake of legitimate refugees already determined to be so. This would benefit both the refugees and Australia and would give our community an opportunity to show that we do care for those who are in genuine need.

EQUAL IN CHRIST

Diane Styles, Australia

I'm alarmed by our church leaders' failure to biblically resolve the issue of women in ministry/leadership positions.

How any Christian can view attempting to uphold God's will as human "discrimination" escapes me, and it is concerning that women claiming to know Jesus reveal such a deep personal insecurity and mistaken belief that their perceived "inequality" can only be "cured" by fighting for a "rightful place alongside men".

Firstly, in Christ all are equal and, if we are experiencing the security He alone can give, we'll feel no need to seek human "equality"—with anyone!

Secondly, where does God anywhere say that a woman's "rightful place" is in filling every role He has only ever indicated men should fill? Nowhere in 6000-plus years of history, the Bible or Ellen White's writings, have women been approved by God for positions of minister/elder. That fact surely should be "enough said".

No matter what other churches are practising, Adventists are separate, and are not to follow human agendas. We must obey and trust God in all matters of salvation/church conduct. This is not a matter for human vote, but a "what saith the Lord".

Note: Views in letters do not necessarily represent those of the editors or the denomination. Letters should be less than 250 words, and writers must include their name, address and phone number. All letters are edited to meet space and literary requirements, but the author's original meaning will not be changed. Not all letters received are published. See Page 4 for contact details.



A YEAR **without** God?

by Anthony MacPherson

FOR A NUMBER OF WEEKS HE WAS POSSIBLY THE most high profile Seventh-day Adventist on the planet, although I am not sure if he would still consider himself an Adventist. I'm talking about Ryan Bell. Bell was previously pastor of Hollywood Adventist church in California. He was asked to resign from ministry in 2013 due to a range of differences with the Church. This made him well-known in Adventist circles but little anywhere else. This all changed as 2014 began. Bell announced to Facebook friends and followers of his blog that he would be trying a "Year without God". He explained he would take a journey into atheism. He would immerse himself in atheist literature, talk to atheists, study them, seek to think as an atheist, and live his life as if he was an atheist. No prayer, no devotion, no worship, no God.

To Bell's surprise his announcement caught the attention of sceptics and the media. His story went viral. Within days some of the biggest TV and radio programs in the world were seeking interviews with him. He even made an appearance on the Australian TV morning show *Sunrise*. Atheists greeted this experiment enthusiastically. Although it's fair to say that some viewed it either as a stunt or naïve; after all, they reminded Bell, you either believe or you don't. Unbelief is not something you can pretend to have.

Christian reaction was far more diverse and passionate. Almost all were shocked. Some were angry. Most were

concerned. Many were heartbroken and sad. Large numbers voiced their commitment to pray for Bell. Strangely, some celebrated the decision as brave and encouraged him in his undertaking (but what of the spiritual risk and danger?). The more intellectual either assembled apologetic responses or expressed curiosity about the outcome. Meanwhile, Bell, while moved, was certainly undeterred. And think about it, what could you say, to a pastor no less, that he had not either encountered before or thought about already?

For unbelievers, Bell was trying on a new philosophy, ideology, a bit like testing a different culture. It was significant but not ultimate. But for believers there was no minimising what was really taking place. A year without God is like a year of ignoring your spouse. It's like denying the existence of your parents or your child for a year. It's unthinkable in the deepest sense. No believer could ignore the sobering words of Jesus, "Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 10:32,33).

Some have tried to psychoanalyse or figure Bell out. They have tried to get behind his motives. In the wake of his resignation he had not attended church and prayed very little. He was struggling with faith before his announce-

ment. Was he already an atheist? His journey had been one of extremes, from highly conservative Adventist young man to prominent and very liberal pastor, and now from theist to (functional) atheist. Was he unstable? And yet meet Bell, as I have, and he is anything but extreme. He is engaging, clearly intelligent, very articulate and eminently likeable. It's beyond us and forbidden for us to judge the heart (Matthew 7:1). Any such analysis must beware lest we cross over this line.

Leaving aside Bell's heart and motives, I've tried to reflect on the meaning, at least to me, of his strange journey. What eventually struck me was, bizarrely, the utter mundane and pedestrian nature of it all. Not pedestrian to me but to our era. In our secular society profoundly shaped by three centuries of rationalism and philosophical materialism, myriad believers have travelled the road from faith to doubt. In a culture in which countless free-thinkers, sceptics, and atheists have penned novels, published treatises, composed poems, scripted films, constructed philosophies, cut sculptures, produced paintings and performed plays championing a godless world view, Bell's journey is one that has played out again and again. We do not lack for stories of those who have lost faith. We all know some. Such stories reflect tendencies, whether it be our autonomous individualism, radical scepticism or anti-authoritarianism, that are deep in Western culture. This realisation is no comfort to us. It's tragic. But the tragedy is now in the ordinariness. So Bell will immerse himself in the thoughts of the sceptic. He will imbibe their arguments and reasoning. He will retrace a path that is so familiar to anyone in Western culture. True he is going to try and see unbelief from the inside. But when so much of it surrounds believers, it isn't hard to feel you are inside it anyway.

What I appreciate in all of this is that it highlights that we are all seeking out a journey worthy to retrace or emulate. Our lives naturally mirror others. We can find parallels in other people and their stories. Survivors of suffering experience a profound connection with fellow sufferers. We love meeting people who have travelled to the same places we have and swapping stories about our trips. We actively seek to imitate our heroes. Few things are as comforting or challenging to find than that our lives have been tracing a course eerily similar to another's.


For us believers the Bible is alive partly because we discover that we, too, are a Judas in danger of betrayal, a Thomas struggling with doubt, a Moses being disciplined in the desert. We relive the peace of the lady about to be stoned by the mob and hear the words, "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more" (John 8:11). We, too, feel the healing touch of Jesus removing the shame of

some modern leprosy, opening our blind hearts and raising our spiritually dead souls to new life. Our various journeys are not isolated by an unqualified uniqueness. They are connected by shared experience and circumstances. Paradoxically, our unique life journeys are always parallel-ing paths or pilgrimages already taken. So why trade the path of Samuel or Sarah for Sartre, King David for Dawkins, or faithful Hannah for Hitchens? Why immerse yourself in the mind of Daniel Dennett when you could see and even experience what the apostle John did when he gazed, touched, talked and listened to the Word of Life himself (1 John 1:1-4)? What journey do we retrace?

But there is something even more significant. There is a journey like no other—that of Jesus Himself. Here is the biggest journey ever, undertaken on behalf of a fallen and helpless race. What a journey! It involves the dizzying descent from adored Deity, worshipped by angels, to despised Teacher, harassed by authorities. Down and down He comes, from the untouchable haven of divine majesty to the scary confines of humanity, vulnerable to pain, violence, suffering, trial and temptation. He plunges from the highest heights to the lowest abyss of betrayal, denial, and God-forsakenness on the cross.

He re-travelled over the failed journey of Adam and Eve, the story of every man and woman, to give it a new end. He bore every life-destroying sin and goal-terminating evil in His own body. And then He tore up the grave in order that His saving journey might become the redemption of all our failed ones.

Finally, and most marvellously, we can become part of His journey. Not just by reliving it in a reading of the gospels. More than that, God credits the journey to those who believe. By faith it is as if we are like Him, without sin, not condemned, beloved, forgiven, and God's very own child (Romans 5:1,2,8,9). Such is justification! What's more the power of the journey is imparted to us and the Architect of it lives in us, renewing and guiding us each day (Romans 8:1-17). Why would anyone trade this offer of a saving journey which places life on an eternal plane to instead learn to re-think the thoughts of the atheist? What are the conjectures of a finite sceptic worth in comparison to the world-changing work of the Lord Jesus Christ?

Sadly, Ryan Bell is rehearsing a set of ultimately futile journeys. All the while God is still offering the chance to have an entirely different journey replayed in his life. We are all going somewhere. Where will our journey end? A year without God? Or an incomparable eternity with Him? 

But the tragedy is now in the ordinariness . . . he will retrace a path that is so familiar to anyone in Western culture.

Pastor Anthony MacPherson is pastor of Plenty Valley and Croydon churches, Vic.

ANNIVERSARY



Cappe. Phillip Cappe and Noelene Hardwicke were married 11.5.1954 by the late Pastor Reuben Hare in Stanmore church, NSW, after they both had graduated from medicine at Sydney University. They spent the next 10 years in general practice, during which time their four children, Ian, Greg, Jenny and Brian (deceased) were born, after which Phillip worked as a radiologist in the western suburbs of Sydney. Phillip and Noelene have nine grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. Fourteen members of the family circle celebrated the couple's diamond wedding anniversary on Mother's Day at Katoomba, where they spent their honeymoon.

WEDDINGS



Baxter-Harrison. Brendan Baxter, son of John and Debbie Baxter (Onkaparinga Hills, SA), and

Chelsie Harrison, granddaughter of David and Barbara Littlelyke (Hallett Cove), were married 3.5.14 in the Brighton church, SA. Good wishes were sent from South Africa and Canada. Brendan, a roof plumber, and Chelsie, a childcare worker, have set up their home in Huntfield Heights.

George Hirst



Edser-Kelly. Nathan Edser, son of Malcolm and Janelle Edser, and Jessica Kelly, daughter of Robert and Kim Kelly, were married 11.8.13 in Glenvale church. Nathan and Jessica are now living happily in Toowoomba with Jesus as the Head of their family.

Casey Wolverton

Powell-Price. Cameron Powell, son of Tim and Jenine Powell (Perth, WA), and Lindsey Price, daughter of Mark and Jackie Price (Brunswick Junction), were married 10.5.14 in St Peter's Anglican Church, Brunswick Junction. The couple are both commercial pilots.

Peter Fowler

OBITUARIES

Andrews, Edna Dawn, born 4.2.1920 in Adelaide, SA; died 25.4.14 in Broken Hill, NSW. In 1951, she married Rex Andrews, who predeceased her. She is survived by her children, Paul and Dianne Andrews, John and Pam Andrews, and Jan and Jim Syvertsen. Edna went to Broken Hill in search of her fortune and found two of her richest treasures: her husband Rex, a pastoralist, and a vibrant faith in Jesus. Edna was befriended by Pastor Cyril and May Brown and baptised in 1974. She was a refined and generous lady, who lived her faith with joy and honour. Her affirming attitude and gracious presence will be missed in the community and her church. Edna died with the assurance that nothing in all creation can separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Norm Hardy



Bauer, Alison Julie, born 10.8.1968 in Barmera, SA; died 26.5.14 in Barmera.

She was predeceased by her sister, Shirley. She is survived by Tim and Beverly Bauer (Loveday, SA), Norma and Wayne (Harts Range, NT), Murray and Noela (Gosford, NSW) and Lindsay and Liz (Barmera, SA). Alison was a quiet, private person, but was always willing to help and support others. Her great love was working with children. Her mother and father, Ron and Lorna, her siblings and church family greatly miss her. She loved her God and served him faithfully. Awaiting the second coming.

Glynn Slade

Blair, Valda (nee Roy), born 19.4.1917 in Cooranbong, NSW; died 14.12.13 in Launceston, Tas. On 21.12.1942, she married Pastor Leslie Hugh Blair. She was predeceased by her husband in 1998, and by Beverley Estelle Blair. She is survived by Kathleen Valda Donald (Launceston, Tas); Melva Anne Pearce (Bairnsdale, Vic) and Leslie Maitland Blair (Brisbane, Qld); her grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. Valda was known for her white hair, beautiful smile, prayers, sweet patience, and her gentle witness to those she would meet. Her life was

testament to her love for God and His Word, which she had read cover to cover many times throughout her life. She was devoted to her husband and their ministry around Australia and in New Zealand. Their work was always "as unto the Lord".

Alfredo Campos



Hickford, Geoff, born 17.11.1924; died 16.3.14 in Ilam Life Care, Christchurch,

NZ. He is survived by his wife, Alice; children, Jan, Gina and Nick; and two younger brothers, Ron and Robin. Geoff was born and bred in Westport, raised Anglican, and a lifelong lover of cricket and rugby. He served with the Royal New Zealand Air Force from 1943. Post-war Geoff pursued a successful career as a chartered accountant, was baptised in the old Barbados Street church, and lent his skills to various roles in local congregations, including Ilam church where he was a long-time member. He was laid to rest with the sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life. Appreciation is extended to all those whose condolences and support have encouraged the family.

Damien Rice



Hon, Hazel, born 18.8.1914 in Tenterfield, NSW; died 14.5.14 in Esther

Somerville Nursing Home, Wahroonga. Together with her husband, Pastor Eric Hon, who predeceased her in 1980, they started community and health ministry in Greater Sydney during the 1950s and '60s. She was well known for her vegetarian cooking schools and cookbook, her lively personality and infectious laughter. She is survived by her children, Dr Kelvin and Leone Hon (Castle Hill, NSW), Bruce Hon (Manly), and Judith and Glen Lukos (Los Angeles, California, US); grandchildren; and great-grandchildren. Family and friends gathered at Pennant Hills, NSW, to mourn her passing and to celebrate her dynamic and happy life. Stories and memories shared portrayed her as a woman of true faith and excellence. She will always be remembered.

Orchard, Laurel Doreen (nee Farmer), born 20.9.1924; died

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5.6.14. Her life was remembered and celebrated by her children, Brian (Geraldton, WA), Pam (Perth), Keith (Bunbury) and Terry (Perth); 12 grandchildren; and 16 great-grandchildren. She was predeceased by her husband, Bill, in 1996. Laurel and Bill were pioneer farmers in the Koorda wheatbelt of WA. Guests remembered her country hospitality, spiritual leadership and influence on a whole generation of young people who she taught in remote church locations, the author being one of them. The funeral was a time of wit and laughter as her four children shared life on the farm with a mother who possessed a wonderful humour and a great zest for life.

Peter Fowler



Lahey. Gloria Beryl (nee Stewart), born 29.12.1923 in Brisbane, Qld; died 27.5.14 in Brisbane. She was predeceased by her husband, Lenny, in 1986. She is survived by her son, Peter Lahey, daughter Shirley Davis, and brother, Dennis Stewart (all from Brisbane); and grandsons, Shane and Bryce Davis,

granddaughter-in-law, Sharleen; and great-grandchildren, Tyler, Zac, Mason, Noah and Sharlah (all from Bundaberg). Gloria experienced a radical transformation after her conversion and baptism in 1979, and was renowned in Albion church for her trademark cheeky smile and the twinkle in her eye looking up from her wheelchair. She died in the sure and certain hope of a resurrection to eternal life with her Friend Jesus.

Mike Brownhill

Petersen, Marjorie May, born 28.2.1929; died 16.12.13 in Pindara Hospital, Gold Coast, Qld. She is survived by her husband, Jim; three daughters and their spouses, Christine and Rick, Marilyn and Dennis, and Jenny and Claude; her grandchildren and great-grandchild, Kim and Mike, Leisa and Glen, Jarred and Chen, Joshua and Malaika. Marje and Jim married in 1949 and were baptised in 1952 in the Mackay church. Her family and church were the most important things in her life. She was very supportive of her church and church school, enjoying fellowship at Dorcas meetings and the school tuckshop. In 2012, with her

health declining, Marje and Jim moved to Melody Park, Nerang, to be close to their daughters and families.

Tom Osborne



Simms, Joan Winifred, born 13.9.1919; died 13.5.14.

Simms, Thomas William, born 15.9.1920 in Australia; died 14.5.14. He was baptised in January 2011 at the age of 91. Together in life and death, the couple were happily married for 69 years. Sadly missed by daughter and son-in-law, Andrea and John, son, Clayton, four grandchildren and partners, seven great-grandchildren and a host of friends. They were loved members of the Waitara church family.

Nataniel Pereira, Charissa Fong



Spider, Yundu, born in 1930 in Oodnadatta, SA; died early 2014 in his home at Aputula Community (Finke), NT. He is survived by his wife, Violet Doolan (Finke); his children, Janet Amos (Port Augusta, SA), Julie Amos (Oodnadatta), Peter Amos

(Oodnadatta), Marie Amos (Port Augusta), Joe Amos and Stanley Amos; 27 grandchildren; 42 great-grandchildren; 32 great-great-grandchildren; and a great-great-great-grandchild. Yundu worked on many stations in SA and NT, eventually becoming head stockman. The front page of *Post Magazine* claimed he was the first Aboriginal stockman to do mustering on a motorbike! Yundu was at the first Adventist meeting held in Finke in 2002. He eventually requested baptism—encouraged by Keith Minunga. In January 2012, he was baptised at Oodnadatta and in October he participated in the opening of the Adventist church in Finke. Everyone who met Yundu will remember his impressive snow-white beard, how he loved hearing about Jesus and was willing to follow His Saviour.

Eric Davey, Don Fehlberg



Wright, Lisa Rochelle (nee Gate), born 20.3.1972 in Albany, WA; died 27.5.14 at home in Erina, NSW. In August 1994, she married Craig Wright. She is survived by her husband;

POSITIONS VACANT

■ **Development manager—Adventist Senior Living (Cooranbong, NSW).** Adventist Senior Living is entering an exciting growth phase in the life of the organisation and is looking for a development manager to manage the contract administration and associated construction processes for the ongoing development across the organisation. This is a terrific opportunity for a building professional to play a substantial role in the ongoing growth of the organisation. For a copy of the job description or to discuss the opportunity further please contact David Knight at <davidknight@adventistseniorliving.com.au> or phone (02) 4977 0000. Applications in writing addressing the requirements of the job description are to be submitted via email at <davidknight@adventistseniorliving.com.au>. Applications close **August 15, 2014.**

■ **Relationships manager—ADRA Australia (Wahroonga, NSW).** The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Australia is seeking a relationships manager in its Public and Supporter Relations department. The successful candidate will be required to develop and implement an exceptional relationships fundraising strategy that will enable ADRA to grow sustainable financial support to achieve its mission to create just and positive change for people living in poverty and distress. All enquiries to Alison Young, ADRA Australia, phone (02) 9473 9503 or <alisonyoung@adra.org.au>. Further information including a job description is available on both the Adventist Employment and ADRA websites. Please submit your latest CV along with a letter of application addressing the education, experience and competency criteria to Alison Young, ADRA Australia at <alisonyoung@adra.org.au>. Applications close **August 17, 2014.**

■ **Media Ministries administrative assistant—Adventist Media Network (Wahroonga, NSW).** Adventist Media Network (AMN) is seeking a part-time administrative assistant. The successful applicant will assist the activities of the ministries of AMN with the goal of bringing people to Jesus. Flexible working arrangements are possible. The position involves: day-to-day management of the database system, providing front-line communication with clients and contacts, coordinating projects and providing general administrative support. The successful applicant must be a baptised member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church with full commitment to its message, mission and lifestyle. He/she should have interest/skills/experience in: effective written and oral communication, computer database management—data entry and report extraction, and public evangelism and personal witness. Overseas applicants should ensure they can satisfy Australian working visa requirements before applying for this position. Adventist Media Network reserves the right to fill this vacancy at its discretion. Applications and enquiries should be directed to Calvin Dever, Corporate Services, Adventist Media Network on (02) 9847 2222 or email <corpserv@adventistmedia.org.au>. Applications close **August 22, 2014.**

■ **Doctor—Atoifi Adventist Hospital (Malaita, Solomon Islands).** The Seventh-day Adventist Church (Pacific) Ltd is seeking to appoint a qualified and experienced medical doctor for Atoifi Adventist Hospital in the Solomon Islands. The role involves diagnosing and treating a variety of diseases and injuries reported to the hospital. Atoifi Adventist Hospital serves a population of 80,000 on the island of Malaita. As one of only five hospitals in the country, Atoifi serves a regional as well as a "mission" role. The hospital cares for people who live in small, remote villages with no modern amenities. Those interested in this position must be competent in maintaining operations in accordance

their children, Jack, Laughlin, Levi, Montana and Zachary; and her parents, John and Nerolie Gate; and sister, Kassandra. Lisa's earliest memories were from Papua New Guinea where her family served as missionaries from 1975 to 1985. Lisa's education continued at Avondale High School, Warburton and Hobart. She graduated from secretarial studies, then the Bachelor of Nursing degree at Avondale College, and later specialised in midwifery. She was baptised in 1985 at the Hillview church. She was always an active member of every church she attended. She was an exceptional mother and beautiful wife, tirelessly doing all she could to ensure her children were brought up in the image of Jesus. Her passion was to live for the glory of God and she did this through every aspect of her life.

John Gate

Laxton, Doreen Mae, (nee Rudge), born 10.11.1927 in Sydney, NSW; died 3.6.14 in Cooranbong. In November 1950, she married George Laxton who predeceased her in December 2013. She is survived by her

sister, June Medland, Julie and Elton Edwards (Melbourne, Vic), Nerida and Ian Miller (Newcastle, NSW); and four grandchildren. Following training at the Australasian Missionary College she served in the NNSW Conference youth department, and later as a secretary in the SPD office. Doreen and George faithfully served God in New Zealand, Avondale College and again in Sydney as a florist at the 'San'. She was a gracious, generous Christian who always had an open house. Her gentle elegance, friendship and hospitality was appreciated by many.

Roger Nixon

ADVERTISEMENTS

South New South Wales Conference Triennial Constituency Meeting. Notice is hereby given that the 84th Constituency Meeting of the South New South Wales Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church will be held at the Canberra National Seventh-day Adventist Church, cnr Gould and Macleay Streets, Turner, ACT 2612. The business session

will be held Sunday, September 21, 2014, commencing at 10am. Registration will be required prior to the commencement time. Delegates are to be appointed in harmony with the Constitution. The business of the Constituency Meeting will be as provided in the Constitution, incorporating the presentation of reports and financial statements for the period. The officers, executive committee and other committees, as provided in the Constitution, will be appointed.
Kendell Cobbin, General Secretary

Law firm in Melbourne: McMahon Fearnley Lawyers Pty Ltd. Areas of law include the sale and purchase of property, litigation, commercial transactions (including shareholder and partnership

agreements, franchising and leasing), wills, estates and probate applications. Adventist lawyers include Lloyd McMahon and Michael Brady. Please call (03) 9670 0966 or email <mb@mcmahonfearnley.com.au>.

Finally . . .

If you're not proud of what you are doing then do it better. Or do something else.
—George Clooney

Next RECORD August 16

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POSITIONS VACANT

with the objectives of the hospital. For more information please visit <www.adventistemployment.org.au>. All applications must include your CV, three work-related referees, and the contact details of your local church pastor, and be sent to: Human Resources, Seventh-day Adventist Church (Pacific) Ltd, Locked Bag 2014, Wahroonga, NSW 2076, Australia. Email <hr@adventist.org.au> or fax to +612 9489 0943. Applications close **August 17, 2014**.

■ **Store person—Signs Publishing Company (Warburton, Vic).** Signs Publishing Company, part of the Adventist Media Network, is seeking a full-time store person who will be based at Warburton, Vic. Reporting to the distribution manager, you will be responsible for general warehouse duties, picking and packing of orders, customer service, data entry as well as loading and unloading of trucks and other tasks. You will have a strong background in warehousing, have good computer and communication skills and have a car and forklift licence. You will need to be fit and healthy for this active, physical role and be willing to submit to a pre-employment physical assessment. This role requires a strong commitment to the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the sharing of the gospel through the distribution of Christian resources via a range of media in a variety of cultural settings. Overseas applicants should ensure they can satisfy Australian working visa requirements before applying for this position. Adventist Media Network reserves the right to fill this vacancy at its discretion. Applications and enquiries should be directed to Calvin Dever, Corporate Services, Adventist Media Network on (02) 9847 2222 or email <corpserv@adventistmedia.org.au>. Application close **August 5, 2014**.

■ **Distribution support officer—Signs Publishing Company (Warburton, Vic).** Signs Publishing Company, part of the Adventist Media Network, is seeking a full-time distribution support officer who will be based at Warburton, Vic. Reporting to the distribution manager, you will be responsible for customer service, data entry, invoicing, labelling, processing customer orders, preparation of import/export shipping documentation and a range of other duties to assist the distribution manager. You will have a strong background and focus on customer service, and experience in a warehouse/logistics environment. During periods of peak demand you will be expected to assist with other tasks associated with operating a busy warehouse and mailing facility. You will have a car and forklift licence (preferred), be fit and healthy for this physical role and be willing to submit to a pre-employment physical assessment. This role requires a strong commitment to the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the sharing of the gospel through the distribution of Christian resources via a range of media in a variety of cultural settings. Overseas applicants should supply documentary proof that they are eligible to work in Australia with their application. Adventist Media Network reserves the right to fill this vacancy at its discretion. Applications and enquiries should be directed to Calvin Dever, Corporate Services, Adventist Media Network on (02) 9847 2222 or email <corpserv@adventistmedia.org.au>. Application close **August 5, 2014**.

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