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PNG MEMBERSHIP TO HIT 300,000 IN 2017 *8*

NEWS

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ADVENTIST RECORD | JULY 1, 2017
ISSN 0819-5633

THE LIVE MORE PROJECT



WELLNESS GAMECHANGER

The South Pacific Division is developing an exciting wellness initiative called **The Live More Project** as part of the Comprehensive Health Strategy. We are inviting anyone who wants to improve their wellness, regardless of where they may be at today, to participate in the free Advance Screening.

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DESIGNED TO THRIVE

THE CITY CHALLENGE

There is one Seventh-day Adventist for every 20 people in the Trans Pacific Union, 1:28 in Papua New Guinea, 1:261 in the New Zealand Pacific Union Conference and 1:398 in Australia. These ratios clearly show the biggest mission fields in the South Pacific Division (SPD) are Australia and New Zealand. Big cities there pose the largest challenge.

For example, around the Sydney suburb of Wahroonga, where a number of Adventist institutions are based, there is one Seventh-day Adventist for every 200 people. But in the eastern beachside suburbs of Sydney—from Palm Beach to Kogarah—there are places with a ratio of 1:4000. Adventist mission lacks penetration in immigrant communities from minority Christian countries and among those from a secular Anglo background.

In 2008, the world's population was evenly split between urban and rural dwellers for the first time. If time lasts, by 2050 almost 70 per cent of the world's estimated 10 billion people will live in cities*.

In recent years, the General Conference has emphasised "Mission to the Cities" but in the late 1800s and early 1900s, the Adventist Church worked well in cities. Ellen White, our visionary, challenged church leadership, saying, "There is no change in the messages that God has sent in the past. The work in the cities is the essential work for this time. When the cities are worked as God would have them, the result will be the setting in operation of a mighty movement such as we have not yet witnessed" (MM, p 304).

I want to see that mighty movement.

The SPD's Mission to the Cities strategy is focused on six cities with 1 million people or more: Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth, Adelaide and Auckland.

The apostle Paul faced the city challenge in his journey to wealthy Corinth (Acts 18:1-18). Even as a stranger in Corinth, Paul used the familiar to connect with people for the gospel's sake. Paul was a tent maker like Aquila and Priscilla, fellow Christians he met there. They used their trade to live and to make relational connections in the city (Acts 18:1-3). Paul was also a Jew and a Pharisee so he used his opportu-

nity to speak in the local synagogue on Sabbaths (Acts 18:4). Today we need people to live, work and witness in the city. We need to use what is familiar to us—good Adventist media, health resources and education—to connect, meet people's needs and build trust.

While we use the familiar to connect with people it is only the Word of God that can transform them. Paul used Scripture to reveal Jesus to both Jews and Gentiles for 18 months in Corinth (Acts 18:5,6,11). Today we can give GLOW tracts and *Beyond* DVDs, post spiritual and biblical thoughts on social media, and host Bible reading groups so people can see how the good news speaks to current issues.

We don't know how many different individuals responded to Paul's ministry in Corinth but we do know he followed up on relational networks. The synagogue leader and his household were all baptised (Acts 18:7,8) even though Paul was thrown out of the synagogue. Every new believer in Jesus has family, colleagues, school mates and people they mix with who do not follow Jesus. They will see the change the gospel makes in another's life and could be open to it.

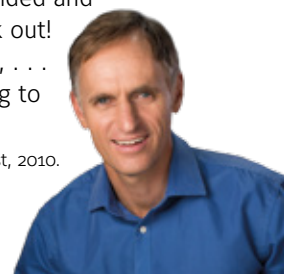
Paul was doing God's work in Corinth. Although it was tough, God encouraged him in a vision with a command and a promise (Acts 18:9,10). Those who do God's work in tough environments can expect divine intervention—God is already working there.

Paul and the new disciples in Corinth faced opposition (Acts 18:12-18). Cultural, political and personal opposition is real in ministry in any city but God can be trusted to establish His work.

Is God calling you to be an innovative missionary in the city? Whatever your answer I ask you to pray for God to help us reach the people of the cities for Jesus' kingdom. God has commanded and promised, "Don't be afraid! Speak out! Don't be silent! For I am with you, . . . for many people in this city belong to me" (Acts 18:9,10, NLT).

* Urban Urgency, *Christianity Today*, August, 2010.

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mailed within australia and

nz \$A43.80 \$NZ73.00 other

prices on application.

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cover credit:

Photo: Wes Tolhurst

"Young Adventist at the front of PNG Parliament."

adventist record is the

official news magazine of the seventh-day adventist church's south pacific division

abn 59 093 117 689

vol 122 no 12

USE IT OR LOSE IT

I have a constant dilemma. Every time I go back to my language of birth for a significant period of time, my English suffers upon my return. My verbal forms and grammar get all back to front. This, I suppose, is the price of learning English at a later age in life.

But it also reveals another clear reality that is applicable in many areas of life: if you don't use it, you lose it.

This is not just a fact of life; this is also true in the spiritual sense.

In the fourth chapter of the Gospel of Mark we see Jesus tell the people, "He who has ears, let him hear." This statement sits right at the end of the parable of the sower. Jesus' directive is for those who want to attune their spiritual radar to His voice and His words. As He explains the parable to His disciples, He concludes by saying, "the good soil are the ones who hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold."

There is a direct correlation between the sowing and the "hearing". While Christ speaks to all, those who will spiritually discern His voice will be moved to action. This transformational action in the lives of those who follow Him brings results that are abundant and, to a certain degree, totally unexpected.

The rest will hear the words but will not "listen" to them, thus missing out on an opportunity to see the blessings of a productive harvest. While they can have the experience, they run the risk of losing it.

Recently, hundreds of Adventists across Australia opened their homes to their communities as part of the Australian Union Conference's "Open Home" initiative—an opportunity to "hear" and act accordingly. It was a starting point to be involved and put faith into action. It was an invitation to use whatever we have heard from Him to connect and become friends with those around us.

This is not always easy. We are always looking for the right method but we forget that God, instead, is always looking for the right person—those who have ears to hear His words.

JORGE MUNOZ
AUC PRESIDENT



NEWS

STAFF GET NEW ROLES; FACTORY SOON TO CLOSE

DARREN HAGEN/RECORD STAFF

More than 30 employees from the Sanitarium Cooranbong (NSW) factory have assumed new roles elsewhere within the company as the factory progresses toward closure in August 2018.

When the closure was announced in 2015 employees were offered first chance at opportunities to transfer within the company and 31 have taken up this option. A further 37 individuals have accessed all or part of a \$A1000 allowance to assist with training for work elsewhere.

Todd Saunders, executive general manager for Sanitarium's Australian and New Zealand operations, acknowledged the significance of the transition for staff.

"This change represents a significant impact for our people who have faithfully produced quality products in Cooranbong for many years," he said.

"The team are doing all of us proud as they continue showing their passion and dedication during this challenging process. Please remember our staff in your thoughts and



COORANBONG SITE.

prayers as they begin to make the difficult transition in their work and personal life."

Sanitarium has also confirmed that the planned process of ceasing production of loose cereal products, including Light 'n' Tasty, Cornflakes and Granola, within the Australian market, is nearly complete. Staff are working through the transfer of Weet-Bix Bites technology to the Sanitarium Brisbane site and the setup of new Weet-Bix factory lines at Berkeley Vale, NSW.

The company continues to work with site owners, the South Pacific Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, on plans for future use of the Cooranbong site.

MINISTRIES SEEK BETTER CONNECTION

TRACEY BRIDCUTT

Educators, health administrators and Seventh-day Adventist Church leaders were among approximately 80 people who gathered for a day of worship, prayer and discussion at the inaugural Adventist HealthCare Connect Conference.

Held at the Clinical Education Centre at Sydney Adventist Hospital on May 20, the aim was to bring together the Church's preaching, teaching and healing ministries to see how they can better work together to further the mission of the Church.

Organiser Dr Branimir Schubert, director of Mission and Culture at Sydney Adventist Hospital, said the three ministries have tended to



DR BRANIMIR SCHUBERT.

operate "in their own little silos" and the conference was all about generating discussion and ideas to create better connections into the future.

Sanitarium Health and Wellbeing, Avondale College, the South Pacific Division and Greater Sydney Conference were among the Church entities represented.

Planning is now underway to hold the conference annually.

RESEARCHERS DEFINE, DEVELOP MODEL OF DISCIPLESHIP

SARA BOLST

Researchers from Avondale College of Higher Education have tackled one of the founding terms of the Seventh-day Adventist faith in a two-year, Church-funded study on discipleship.

"One of the key postulations of Christianity is that there is an inherent link between becoming a Christian and being a disciple," notes the paper "Developing a Discipleship Measurement Tool".

"You can't hit the target if you don't know what it is," said project leader Dr Kayle de Waal, head of Avondale Seminary.

The project began in 2014 with a \$A50,000 grant from the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the South Pacific. The aims: to provide an objective description of a Seventh-day Adventist disciple of Jesus; and to provide criteria by which to measure discipleship.

"Our first quandary was to figure out whether discipleship was even something that could be measured," said Dr Sherry Hattingh, Primary Course convenor at Avondale and a member

of the project's multidisciplinary team. Other members are Dr Lindsay Morton from the Discipline of Humanities and Creative Arts, Dr Rick Ferret from the Discipline of Ministry and Theology, and Dr Kevin Petrie and Julie-Anne Heise from the Discipline of Education. "We eventually came to the unanimous conclusion that, actually, you can."

During the first stage of the project the team interviewed leaders at the local church, conference, union and Division. Of the 126 people contacted, 40 responded. All but one of the respondents provided personal definitions of discipleship. Only 57 per cent acknowledged a global definition of discipleship within the Church, but these respondents stated clearly that discipleship constitutes "the central vision" of the Church and is their priority.

When asked about what actions a disciple of Christ displays, respondents said: active participation in the life of the Church.

Using the results from this study, the team developed a working two-di-



mensional model for expressing visible aspects of discipleship. "The Growing Disciple" model features four areas—"Godly", "Reproducing", "Obedient" and "Working"—designed in non-hierarchical form.

With results and the model now published—in issues one and two of the *Journal of Adventist Mission Studies* this past year—the next stage involves equipping churches and church members with a discipleship tool. That tool: online guides that help church members choose areas of discipleship in which they want to improve, in what Dr Hattingh calls a self-analysis.

WEWAK ADVENTISTS PREPARE TO BREAK DOWN WALLS

KENT KINGSTON

Gander Memorial Church in Wewak, Papua New Guinea, has a problem, but it's a good one. After more than 40 years of worshipping together, they've outgrown their church building.

On Sunday, June 4, the congregation came together to officially decommission the original side walls of their worship space ahead of their demolition. The roof has been extended and new side walls have already been constructed, adding an extra six metres of width to the building, which means approximately 150 more seats for worshippers. All that remains is for the old walls to be demolished.

In an attempt, perhaps, to assuage the concerns of those who treasure the memory of the construction and dedication of the building in 1970, Pastor Samuel Silas, president of the

Sepik Mission, reminded the congregation that "any place where Jesus is present is a holy place".

He was reminded, in turn, of the solid construction of the building as he attempted to remove one of the side doors as a symbolic gesture—the first step of the demolition. A number of stubborn hinge screws refused to yield to Pastor Silas's screwdriver but several blows from a builder's hammer removed the obstacles, allowing the ceremony to proceed.

The rapid growth of the congregation is fairly recent. In 2012 membership stood at about 250. Now, five years later, it's at 400. According to Gander Memorial pastor, Graham Oresui, the spike in numbers is no accident. "Every Sabbath morning the members break into eight differ-



ent groups and run branch Sabbath School programs around Wewak," he explained to *Record*. And yes, this all happens before the 9:30am start of worship at Gander Memorial, with members beginning their weekly outreach activities between 6:30am and 7am. It seems breaking down walls and demolishing strongholds are activities that can start very early indeed.

SUPPORT A KEY FOCUS AT EDUCATIONAL LEADERS SUMMIT

DARYL MURDOCH/RECORD STAFF

More than 160 educational leaders from Australia and New Zealand recently gathered in Melbourne, Victoria, for their biennial conference.

The conference, titled "Our God—My Strength", featured several local and international speakers exploring a range of key themes relating to maintaining an Adventist worldview in all facets of educational programs in societies that are increasingly secular and less tolerant of Christianity.

Another key focus was learning to meet the wellbeing needs of both school staff and students, as the growing number of students in society who are experiencing high levels of stress and anxiety is of significant concern to educators.

Dr Peter Beamish and Dr Darren Morton from Avondale College of Higher Education provided many practical suggestions in relation to enhancing support systems and structures for staff

and students.

Worship was another conference highlight, with devotionals on the fruit of the spirit led by Pastor Dick Duerksen, assistant to the president for the Oregon Conference (USA). Students and staff from Edinburgh College, Gilson College, Nunawading Christian College and Heritage College also led in praise and worship and shared inspiring testimonies.

At the end of the conference an additional day focusing on school improvement was offered. More than 120 leaders gained insights into building strong professional learning communities in their schools.

"It was exciting to see so many



DICK DUERKSEN, THE DEVOTIONAL SPEAKER.

school leaders dedicated to being engaged in developing skills to build school communities of excellence across Australia and New Zealand," said Dr Daryl Murdoch, education director for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Australia.

"Participants returned to their schools refreshed, inspired and re-focused as they continue at the forefront of outreach to communities."



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ANNUAL CAMP FEATURES DEAF “SPEAKER”

RECORD STAFF

In what promises to be a unique event, and possibly a first for the South Pacific Division, a presenter who cannot hear or speak will be the featured “speaker” at a fellowship camp.

Pastor Jeff Jordan, who leads the Southern Deaf Fellowship in the US, will be the guest at this year’s Catalina Deaf Camp in late October. Deaf since infancy, Pastor Jordan only speaks American Sign Language (ASL). His wife Melissa will voice what he says.

“ASL is quite different from the Auslan of the Australian Deaf, so he will ASL sign, which will then be voiced, and in turn signed in Auslan for local consumption,” said Lee Dunstan from Christian Services for the Blind and Hearing Impaired (CSFBHI), which is sponsoring his visit.

The Deaf Camp, an annual event, is organised by Logan Reserve church in Queensland, supported by CSFBHI.

Pastor Jordan currently teaches at

Southern Adventist University and is an associate coordinator for the General Conference’s Deaf Ministries within its office of Special Needs. He is a qualified instructor of ASL.

Deaf Camp will be held at the Catalina Conference Centre, Rathmines, on Lake Macquarie (NSW), not far from Avondale College, where it is anticipated Pastor Jordan will speak to the student body.

Deaf Camp is open to all Deaf and hard of hearing within the Christian community (see advertisement page 23).



PASTOR JEFF JORDAN
SIGNS “I LOVE YOU”.

PARTNERSHIP PROVIDES HEALTHCARE FOR REMOTE COMMUNITY

PAUL RANKIN

A remote community in Papua New Guinea (PNG) now has a clinic, thanks in part to Elis Andrew, a local woman who had a dream of healthcare for her community.

The Tomba Community Health Post officially opened on June 8 after 13 years of campaigning, talking and hard work. It is a joint project of the local community, Adopt a Clinic, Western Highlands Mission, PNG State Church partnership and the provincial government.

The complex comprises a delivery and emergency room, a day ward, outpatient treatment room, a pharmacy, storerooms and three staff houses.

Built by a local tradesperson, this clinic will be managed by the Western Highlands Mission in cooperation with the provincial government and staffed by a nurse/midwife and two community health workers with support staff.



TOMBA CLINIC.

A local businessman donated a Toyota LandCruiser for the use of the clinic.

The opening was attended by the Governor of the Western Highlands Province, Pias Winti, PNG Union Mission Health director Gad Koito and South Pacific Division representative Dr Paul Rankin.

Ms Andrew is not finished yet as she dreams of the Tomba Health Clinic becoming a district hospital.

NEWS GRABS



HELPING HAND

Adventists were among the volunteers assisting the displaced residents of Marawi, Philippines, whose city was occupied by Islamist militants for some weeks, from May 23. Church members gathered food and emergency supplies for the thousands of people taking refuge in Iligan City, 60km north of Marawi.

—Adventist Review



RECOVERY EFFORT

Cyclone Mora brought floods and landslides to Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, killing hundreds and forcing 800,000 people to leave their homes. ADRA is working in both countries, partnering with other NGO agencies, to deliver food and other emergency supplies to flood survivors. ADRA International is coordinating donations. —adra.org



BROTHER IN CHRIST?

The death in prison of a former military dictator, General Manuel Noriega, has prompted revelations he was an Adventist. Noriega was baptised in 2011 in a US prison and, after being deported to Panama, he received “dozens” of prison visits from an Adventist pastor. He had publicly asked forgiveness for the harm he caused. —Adventist Review

HOT TOPICS



TARGETED

Muslim-majority Malaysia is known for its religious tolerance but human rights groups are concerned a series of well-organised abductions point to a new hostility towards faith minorities. Four people are missing including a Christian pastor, a Shia Muslim man and a Christian couple who converted from Islam. —*The Guardian*



SINCERE OR SCAM?

A group of Christian and Buddhist leaders staged a sit-in at Commonwealth Bank's Sydney headquarters—calling on the bank to rule out funding thermal coal, starting with the controversial Adani project (Qld). The protesters are concerned about native title at the mining site as well as the impact of fossil fuels. —*Ed Mortimer*



NOXIOUS

A World Health Organisation report has highlighted tobacco's negative impact on the environment, pointing out that tobacco waste contains 7000 toxic chemicals, including carcinogens and greenhouse gases. Tobacco waste is the most common type of litter; cigarette butts account for up to 40 per cent of items collected in coastal and urban clean-ups. —*UN News*

PNG LEADERS MEET, PLAN AND WORSHIP IN LAE

KENT KINGSTON

If current growth trends continue, Adventist membership in Papua New Guinea (PNG) will reach 300,000 before the end of 2017. And, thanks largely to PNG, membership across the South Pacific Division (SPD) is likely to hit the half million mark.

But Adventism in PNG is not only marked by its quantity. There's a groundswell of enthusiasm for discipleship and the General Conference's call for "Total Member Involvement" (TMI) has been heard in community-oriented PNG.

This enthusiasm was apparent as Adventist leaders and representatives from around the nation met in Lae, May 23 to June 2, for the Papua New Guinea Union Mission's (PNGUM) mid-year meetings. Reports came in from various Church departments and all corners of the country, with speaker after speaker describing how TMI was becoming a reality in their jurisdiction. Youth groups are planting churches, ADRA volunteers are delivering Bibles to struggling families along with food and household necessities, classrooms are being built, free healthcare is being provided and rubbish-strewn towns are being tidied by willing helpers. "When the Church is at work, God is at work," proclaimed Pastor Joanis Fezamo, principal at Omaura School of Ministry, during his report to the PNGUM Executive Committee. His students have been working hard in their school gardens as well as finding time to upgrade roads and help negotiate peace between local tribesmen involved in violent clashes.

Apart from the administrative tasks involved in the year-end meetings, those present also took the opportunity to attend a spiritual retreat, a series of training seminars conducted by members of the SPD's Discipleship Ministries Team and a special reconciliation Sunday program at Lae Memorial Adventist Church. The all-day meeting was a showcase of reconciliation in action as a long-standing personal conflict between church members was resolved with much prayer, expressions of hurt and confessions of



AULDRIN BILL AND FIONA TOM WERE LAY DELEGATES AT THE PNGUM EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPRESENTING THE LARGE NUMBERS OF YOUNG ADVENTISTS IN PNG.

wrong. PNGUM president, Pastor Kepsie Elodo, has specialised in reconciliation ministry in recent years, including reconciliation between parties recovering from the impact of Bougainville's civil war, 1988–1998.

PNGUM general secretary Pastor Henry Monape said that in contrast to last year, with the sadness and disruption caused by the death of PNGUM president Pastor Geoffrey Pomaleu, the mood at this year's mid-year meetings was positive. He agreed that Church leaders had enthusiastically adopted the focus on discipleship and TMI, describing the Mount Hagen town clean-up in April as a "highlight" of the mission reports. That initiative inspired Executive Committee delegates to vote in favour of two nation-wide clean-up days in 2018.

Another issue considered was the possibility of administrative regions of the Adventist Church in PNG being upgraded from "mission" to "conference" status—to reflect maturity in local leadership and increased financial self-sufficiency. At present only the Central Papua region, around the capital, Port Moresby, is a conference. But retired Church administrator and special consultant Pastor Peter Oli reminded the Executive Committee four other missions—Eastern Highlands Simbu, Morobe, New Britain New Ireland and Western Highlands—were recommended for conference status in 2010. He urged PNGUM and mission leaders to pursue the necessary application and auditing procedures so that these regions can gain conference status by 2020.

FLASHPOINT



MAKING HISTORY

Two students from Iakina Adventist Academy (American Samoa) were successful at the National History Day Competition for all schools in the country. Grade 7 student Tavillacollin Puni won first place with his commentary project entitled "Taking a stand against violence: Desmond Doss". Grade 6 student Harmony Leo also won an award, placing second with her performance project, "Taking a stand by sitting down: Rosa Parks". This is the first time a student from the Iakina Adventist Academy Junior Division has placed first or second in the competition, and as the overall winner, Tavillacollin recently travelled to Maryland University (Washington DC, USA) to represent American Samoa at the US National History Day. —Mele Vaihola



PRIZED HEALTH

Each year, final year primary education students from Avondale College (NSW) complete an assignment to produce a resource for teaching young children about health. This year the topic was sugar and how it affects our bodies. Cash prizes were presented from sponsors ACA Health and the Health department of the South Pacific Division, with the highest prize—the ACA Health Choice Award—presented to Elijah Roussos for his little book *Sugar Spies*. Mr Roussos won \$A300, with his educational resource professionally produced and distributed by ACA Health. —Lagani Gairo/Maritz Brunt



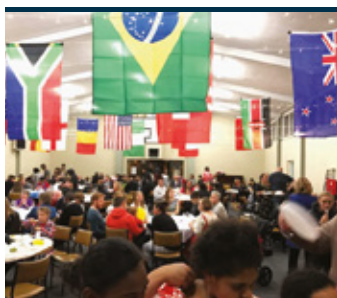
CONNECTING CREATIVITY

Women from the Newtown church in Fiji recently challenged themselves to connect with their community and decided to run a patchwork sewing class. Over two days, 32 women, including five non-Adventists, attended the class, building connections and perfecting their skills. The women also received a short devotional from Miliakere MacDonald, Women's Ministries director for the Fiji Mission. "It is our hope that this small group of women will be challenged to learn more new skills and extend their connections to their community," Mrs MacDonald said. —TPUM



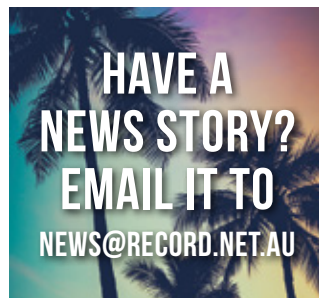
BACK TO ROSEWOOD

More than 90 happy worshippers attended a "Back to Rosewood Day", held at Rosewood church (Qld) in May. Among the attendees were 20 people who were present for the official opening of the church on May 16, 1987. There were also several generations of the Hughes family who were charter members in 1980; five have attended regularly ever since and are the backbone of the current congregation. Helping with the service were five ordained ministers who were associated with the church over the years. Local councillor David Pahlke dropped in at the end of the service to wish Rosewood a happy birthday and make a donation toward providing facilities for the disabled. —Marjorie Entermann



CELEBRATING DIVERSITY

Bishopton church in South New Zealand recently celebrated its cultural diversity with a special church service. The service was filled with different languages, outfits, symbols and expressions of worship. Later in the day, a diverse dinner was shared, where many different kinds of food were tasted, including from the Pacific, Russia, South America, Switzerland, South Africa and New Zealand. After dinner attendees were treated to a concert featuring music and different cultural acts. "It was very special to put aside a day to highlight our cultural differences, learn about each other and simply share in the joy of a diverse Aotearoa!" said church member Vicky Bell. —Record staff



HONOURING SHIRLEY

"Daring, sharing and definitely caring"—these were words used to describe teacher Shirley Upton at her recent memorial service held at the Auckland Seventh-day Adventist High School (ASDAH) in New Zealand. Shirley started her journey with ASDAH in early January 1999 and taught until her passing on May 19. She will be greatly missed by everyone whose life she touched with her wit, humour and passion for teaching. —NNZ Conference



FEED THE BUS, FUEL THE FAMILY

Parkside Christian Adventist School (New Zealand) has found a creative way to help the needs of its community by participating for the past few years in the "Feed the bus, fuel the family" project. Students are encouraged to donate non-perishable food items and toiletries for pick-up by a bus that stops at various schools and businesses. The bus then donates the items to the Napier Community Foodbank. —Rosalie McFarlane/Belinda Bestel



PRAYING FOR TELEFOMIN

Adventist Church members in the remote village of Telefomin (West Sepik Province, Papua New Guinea) are continuing to pray for and find ways to share the gospel with their community. Although predominantly Baptist, the people of Telefomin are slowly becoming more receptive to the Adventist message through the presence of the Telefomin Primary School, where more than 30 Adventist students are enrolled. —Paul Bopalo

IF YOU THINK CHURCH IS TOO GIRLY, YOU'RE DOING IT WRONG...

This is a message for the men in the church. Ladies, feel free to tag along; who knows, you may find it strangely relevant.

DON'T GET ME WRONG: THE critique of Christian worship encapsulated in books such as *Why Men Hate Going to Church* has some validity. I'm as uncomfortable as the next guy when I'm asked to stand and sing about "Jesus, lover of my soul", "precious Jesus", "the darling of heaven". I'm already struggling to identify with the clear Bible teaching that identifies me as part of the bride of Christ; the lovey dovey language in many "Jesus is my boyfriend" songs doesn't help.

But when I look around my home church I don't see a bunch of emasculated wussy men. Instead I'm inspired by blokes with nailguns transforming our church courtyard in preparation for our annual nativity play. They're in there with a bobcat fixing the church's drainage problems at no charge. They're negotiating rutted bush tracks in four-wheel drives, plotting routes for Pathfinder hikes. They're heading out to Nepal, Solomon Islands or Sarawak to maintain hospitals and medical boats or to preach evangelistic series and build churches. They're welders and motorcyclists; organisers and musicians; technicians and cinnamon scroll bakers.

Do you get the picture? A healthy church is an active church. And most men like being active. If your Christianity is limited to enduring weepy music while you sit passively in a meeting an hour per week, you've got it all wrong. It's like saying you're

a footballer when all you do is attend the half-time pep talk and the full-time celebration. "What's with all the hugging and back-slapping and rah rah rah?" you whinge. But you never actually lace up and play the game.

It's time to man up. Whatever your age or stage in life God has a ministry for you. It probably should include taking part in Sabbath worship from time to time, either up front or behind the scenes. Maybe you can even help make it more meaningful to your fellow men. But God's call on your life definitely involves your unique passions and talents being used outside the four walls of a church building, directed to the cause of growing His kingdom. He created you like no-one else for a specific purpose. Find that purpose.

And maybe one day, when you're standing in a baptismal font alongside a pastor and a person you've helped bring to Jesus through your unique ministry, the organ will warble "Softly and tenderly, Jesus is calling" and you'll discover a lump in your throat and a manly tear on your cheek. But don't worry: if you don't mention it, I won't.

KENT KINGSTON

📍 @KentHasTheConch



A MODEL FOR MISSION: *Remembering the Melanesia*

THE STORY AND LEGACY OF THE *Melanesia* was celebrated at Memorial Seventh-day Adventist Church in Cooranbong (NSW) on Sabbath, June 3—exactly 100 years to the day since the Australasian Union Committee dedicated the mission boat to the work of spreading the gospel in the South Pacific islands.

While the *Melanesia* went to a watery grave more than 40 years ago, the original model from which the mission boat was designed remains. For many years the model was nothing more than just that—a few remains—until Dr John Hammond took it upon himself to rebuild and restore the boat to its original glory.

"The model had been in our family for 90 years and was in a bad way, with only the hull remaining in three broken bits," Dr Hammond explained. "It took a lot of putting back together."

Dr Hammond described the restoration process as a "slow and finicky job". A tiny staircase in the model took several hours to construct, with the retired education administrator confessing "it would have been easier to build a full-size set". The binnacle and compass, crafted out of solid brass, also took a while to complete, as did the grating on the deck of the boat, which was made from an almost extinct Fijian hardwood known as nawanawa.

"Master craftsman" Ray Faull assisted Dr Hammond by working on the "really difficult" railings and fittings (as well as the boat's toilet). Together, the

two men spent more than 300 hours on the project.

The result of their hard work was evident on June 3, with the model—completed just before the start of Sabbath a day earlier—captivating those gathered for Sabbath School at Memorial church. The morning service was made extra special through the attendance of Joan Patrick (Howse), who was born on the *Melanesia*. Dr Hammond explained how her mother resisted the pleas of the Solomon Islands crew who had begged for the baby girl to be named "Melanesia".

The Australasian Union Committee commissioned the construction of the *Melanesia* in August 1916 after pastor and sea captain Griffith Jones, on furlough from New Hebrides (now Vanuatu), pleaded for a boat he could use to spread the gospel in the Pacific islands. Plans for the vessel took the form of a large model boat, which was taken around churches in Australia to encourage members to donate money.

The *Melanesia* sailed under the command of a number of skippers and served the mission of the Church in the South Pacific region for 30 years. During this time the vessel endured some harrowing adventures. The boat was involved in a sensational escape from the advancing Japanese during World War II, when a number of Adventist missionaries sailed her to Australia after being stranded in Solomon Islands following the evacuation of their wives

and children. The *Melanesia* was later requisitioned by the US Navy and sunk by the Japanese.

After being raised and repaired, the *Melanesia* resumed her role as a mission boat for the Church. The vessel was sold in 1947 and ultimately wrecked on a reef off Suva (Fiji) in 1971. The model would also have met an untimely end had it not been for Dr Hammond's mother retrieving it from the ceiling of the old Union Conference office in Wahroonga (NSW) the night before the building was demolished.

Speaking at Memorial church, Dr Hammond said the model is a reminder of the "mission that is so vital to us". "Today we fly aeroplanes and drive cars, back then we sailed on the *Melanesia*."

Dr Hammond said the model will be returned to the South Pacific Division offices where it can be put on display for all to see.

"The model symbolises the faithful work of our missionaries and national people who were won to the blessed truth through the sturdy vessel which, even though it had a reputation as a 'roller' due to its shallow draft, never failed in a mission."

LINDEN CHUANG/JOHN HAMMOND



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AFTERNOON

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SINGING FOR THE LORD

LOCALS and tourists walking the streets of Vanuatu's capital Port Vila will likely come across a local disabled man singing happily assisted by a microphone attached to a small amplifier.

"I believe all people need to be part of the gospel commission in Matthew 28:19,20, and this is my way of doing it," says Peter Dick.

"We know that as Christians we need to let our light shine out to other people who are still in darkness."

Mr Dick started busking in October 2016 with the aim of singing songs "to bless people's hearts".

"I come from one of Efate's outer islands, which is Nguna, and I was born on July 15, 1976," he says.

"I am the second born out of nine siblings in the family but two died."

Mr Dick is a member of the Seventh-day Adventist church at Udupua village in Nguna.

"I came from a Presbyterian family and when I was 11 years old I recognised this Sabbath truth through a Bible study and so I gave my life to Jesus," he says.

"But it wasn't as good as I

thought; I ended up no longer going to church anymore and my life was a mess with all the temptations of this world.



"I started attending [another ministry] but my behaviour just got worse.

"So in 2009 I took the stand to be re-baptised back into the church and recommitted my life to the Lord after a big meeting at Saralana [Park] in Port Vila."

Mr Dick says he only sings religious songs and has a warm smile for all passers-by, whether they offer any money or not.

"I am a disabled person and I can't do any work, so I wanted to be involved in singing for Jesus because I feel blessed by doing that and also it helps me by getting income," he says.

"I don't force people to walk by and give their offerings. It's just up to them and I'd like to thank them for having such generous hearts.

"We know that someday there will be a judgement day so the Lord will judge you and me on what we have been doing in this world, so do something for Him.

"Time is running out and may God bless you all."

Mr Dick has used the offerings that people donate to help the villagers on Epi Island pay for two sound speakers and some uniforms for the Pathfinder club.

"I also helped some poor people who are in need," he says.

Mr Dick did some part-time work for some newspaper offices in Port Vila before deciding to use his God-given talent to sing.

BRENDA DANIEL SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST
JOURNALIST IN VANUATU



ZEALOUS YOUNG MEN



On an ordinary Sabbath, the Seventh-day Adventist churches in the Forster-Tuncurry region of New South Wales are probably fairly quiet. Just the normal Sabbath School, worship service and maybe lunch. But not this day. On this day, 39 energetic young men rolled up in two busloads to conduct a regional youth rally.

Young Adventists study at Avondale College of Higher Education for a number of reasons. But for the young men boarding in Watson Hall this year, there is a dedicated interest in being active in ministry. That's why they jumped at the opportunity to attend and serve the Forster-Tuncurry church.

One of the organisers and a residential assistant, Rhys Charleson, says while they had hoped for 20 men, the fact that they got almost double that number shows that the students are keen to serve.

"Serving helps you grow as a person," Rhys says. "This was another opportunity to grow our boys spiritually so that when they graduate from here and go all across Australia, they can take that passion with them and it can ignite hundreds of local churches to be passionate about serving the Lord in whatever that capacity may be."

This year, the theme of Watson Hall men is Romans 12:11: "Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervour, serving the Lord" (NIV). The youth rally they conducted focused on the ideas of zeal, passion, fervour and service. The team wore specially designed T-shirts and were sponsored by Avondale College church.

And there is a flow-on effect for the men of Watson Hall. "It built community in dorms," says Rhys, "as well as a desire to serve again—to be encouraged and to encourage people in their walks with God, showing that the generation coming up does care, is active and does want to serve."

The team is looking for another church to visit in August and will take the service at college church on October 7.

"I believe God placed it on my heart this year to show the boys and the Avondale community what can happen when people are passionate together," shares Rhys, an Avondale theology student. "And how this place (Avondale College) can be a hub where people come and are spiritually encouraged, grow and develop a zealous passion for God and His calling on their lives."

JARROD STACKELROTH EDITOR.

📧 @JStackelroth

DIGGING IN HIS WORD WITH GARY WEBSTER

DANIEL 7: YOU MATTER TO GOD

No-one is more loved and precious to God than His children. Christ and Anti-christ go head to head in Daniel 7 over God's children. Four beasts take us on a journey through time from Babylon to the end times.

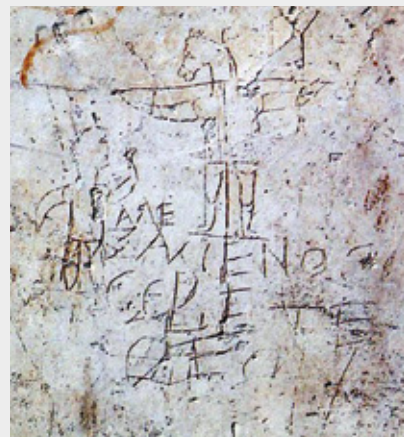
Read Daniel 7:3-8; 2:38; 8:20,21,25.

But it is God's people—the saints of the Most High—who take centre stage in this great prophetic drama. Seven times they are mentioned: when they are persecuted by a devastating little horn; receive a favourable verdict in God's great judgement; and with the Son of Man, take possession of God's eternal kingdom.

Read Daniel 7:18,21,22,25,27.

Are you one of the saints of the Most High—His people sanctified and set apart for Him and His service? You can be. God's saints are His people, sanctified by His merciful grace through the blood of the Lamb, as a kingdom of priests whose purpose is to turn people to the saving love of their great God. "There is a fountain filled with blood, drawn from Emmanuel's veins." Be a saint by plunging under it today and every day.

Read Leviticus 8:30; Hebrews 10:29; 13:12; 1 Peter 2:9-12.



THE ALEXAMENOS GRAFFITI AT THE PALATINE HILL, ROME, IS A SECOND OR EARLY THIRD CENTURY PIECE OF GRAFFITI APPARENTLY MOCKING A CHRISTIAN (ALEXAMENOS) WHO IS DEPICTED AS WORSHIPPING A CRUCIFIED DONKEY. LIKE ALEXAMENOS, GOD'S PEOPLE ARE MADE SAINTS THROUGH ACCEPTING CHRIST'S DEATH, WHICH IS FOOLISHNESS TO NON-BELIEVERS.



Church is not just about God

IF YOU GO TO CHURCH OR HAVE gone to church in the past you have probably heard this saying: “We don’t go to church for other people. We go to church for God.”

The saying is usually used in settings where someone is complaining about people in the church. Perhaps there is a lot of division, hypocrisy and bickering or it could be as simple as a lack of true intimacy among the church members. So someone shares their frustration and perhaps even their doubts about returning to church.

That’s when this age-old adage comes to the fore. And what we really mean by it is, “No matter how bad people are at church there is no excuse to stop coming because at the end of the day you are only there for God, not them. So keep coming for God and ignore all those people.” This concept sounds noble. In fact, it even sounds biblical. But it turns out, it isn’t really true.

The New Testament (NT) introduces us to the concept of church. It uses the Greek word *ecclesia*, which liter-

ally means “group of people”.¹

When Jesus says to Peter, “On this rock I will build my church”, He is literally saying, “On this rock I will build my group of people.” Likewise, when the NT speaks of believers having church it simply means that they were having community. Nowhere in the NT do we get the idea that the church is a building or a location. Not once. Instead, the church is a non-building, non-temple, non-institutional group of people who do life together with God and each other.



With this definition in mind, it's impossible to maintain the old adage that "We go to church for God not for people." What we are literally saying is "We go to a group of people for God not for people." I don't know about you but that sounds very weird to me.

Some of the problem is theological. Many seem to have embraced the idea that the NT church is a sort of replica of the Old Testament (OT) sanctuary. In the OT sanctuary, sinners came individually to offer worship and sacrifice to God. Some of the problem is also

historical. The early Christian church quickly came to adopt the concept of "holy buildings" and "shrines" from the pagan culture around them. The cathedrals and the eventual "mass" became the central element of the church service. Practitioners went, not for fellowship, but for this cultic ritual that provided redemption to them. Under this paradigm, church became a geographical place with a central individualised focus.²

The NT church, on the other hand, is not a place but a community of people. Therefore, when someone goes to church, they are not going to a building or a place but to meet with a group of people. That's what church is. And this group of people gather: to encourage and nurture one another through fellowship; serve one another and the community that surrounds them through acts of mercy; help one another to grow in grace; and spread the gospel in their area of influence. This is all accomplished through intimate member-to-member connection. And this connection, Jesus declared, was to be the evidence that we are truly children of God (John 13:35).

If the church were a place for individual worship, then yes, it would be exclusively about Him and no-one else. But the church is not a place! It is a community. It is a group of people. When we go to church we go to connect with God and with this group of people who love Him and worship Him.

Most of the time when people say that church is about God and no-one else, they are trying to convince someone who has been hurt by another in the church or who is tired of the hypocrisy, to attend anyway because it's God alone they are there for. It comes from a good place. But this concept is horribly flawed. People are not supposed to attend church for God alone. They are supposed to attend for the people as well! The church was made for community. For friendship. For togetherness and "withness". It was made for companionship and social support. It's about God and people. Even the OT sanctuary, which

had a more individual function on a day-to-day basis, was still encapsulated in community. The NT church is more so.

If this is true, then we need to stop excusing our hypocrisy and failures with the "it's just about God" cop-out. Instead, we should take a good hard look at ourselves and an even longer harder look at the cross of Christ. What are the areas in which we are failing to be the kind of community that God has called us to be? And how can we become that *ecclesia*?

The church is about God yes. But it is also about people. It is about us. When someone leaves our church due to interpersonal conflicts we do them—and ourselves—a disservice by saying, "Come anyway. It's about God not people." What this statement really communicates is that it's the person who is hurt who is at fault and that we don't need to do anything to change.

But nothing could be further from reality. We do need to change and we need to aim to create the culture of intimacy and togetherness in our churches that we were always meant to have.

1. *Ecclesia*: 1) a gathering of citizens called out from their homes into some public place, an assembly. 1a) an assembly of the people convened at the public place of the council for the purpose of deliberating. 1b) the assembly of the Israelites. 1c) any gathering or throng of men assembled by chance, tumultuously. 1d) in a Christian sense. 1d1) an assembly of Christians gathered for worship in a religious meeting. 1d2) a company of Christians, or of those who, hoping for eternal salvation through Jesus Christ, observe their own religious rites, hold their own religious meetings and manage their own affairs, according to regulations prescribed for the body for order's sake. 1d3) those who anywhere, in a city, village, constitute such a company and are united into one body. 1d4) the whole body of Christians scattered throughout the earth. 1d5) the assembly of faithful Christians already dead and received into heaven [https://lumina.bible.org].

2. See: *Pagan Christianity?: Exploring the Roots of Our Church Practices*, Frank Viola and George Barna (2012). Chapter 2: "The Church Building: Inheriting the Edifice Complex".



MARCOS TORRES LIVES IN PERTH WITH HIS WIFE AND CHILDREN. HE PASTORS THE VICTORIA PARK AND JOONDALUP CHURCHES. MARCOS BLOGS AT <WWW.POMOPASTOR.COM>.



A DOMINION OF MERCY

How deeds and diets demonstrate dominion

HUMANS SHARE THE PLANET with a vast array of animal and plant life. We are instructed to care for the world that we live in (Genesis 2:15) but we have not cared for it well, and we all know it. For more than half a century, secular environmentalists have been raising their voices in protest. In more recent decades, concerns over our mistreatment of animals, particularly the animals that we eat, have increasingly been expressed.

Christian authors have also voiced concern over the negative impact of human activity upon the environment and, more recently, regarding the animal question.

Where have Seventh-day Adventists stood on these two closely related issues? We have shown some sympathy on the first issue but we've been practically silent on the disturbing problem of society's systemic mistreatment of livestock.

Why the silence? Perhaps we regard it as a secular issue: "we have been called to minister to people; let others watch out for the animals!"

The truth is, God has called us to look after the lower creatures. The original mandate given to humankind

was to "have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth" (Genesis 1:28). Let us consider carefully what this means.

"AND LET THEM HAVE DOMINION . . ."

Dominion—it's not a commonly used word today. If used at all outside of Christian circles, it is likely to bear the ugly connotation of domination.

Yet, in the beginning, the idea of dominion was positive. God Himself gave the first man and woman dominion over every living creature. It is safe to assume this was to be a benign and gentle rulership—a mandate to maintain the order, harmony and peace of an Edenic paradise.

Nor was it a dominion over each other. Rulership over other human beings developed progressively following the Fall. It was all too frequently practised as a harsh and dominating ascendancy. Happily times have changed and most of us, in those countries that enjoy high levels of freedom, live our lives with little awareness of being under any kind of dominion.

Much less do we think of ourselves today as exercising dominion. Usually, we associate the idea of dominion

solely with inter-human relationships. We have largely forgotten that our Maker made us to have dominion over the animal kingdom. That original mandate has never been revoked (Psalm 8:6-8). We are still to rule over the animals. And, as we shall see, we are to do so in the manner of the One who rules over us.

GOD AS RULER

In giving men and women rulership over the creatures, God did not relinquish His own sovereignty. He is still King of all the earth (Psalm 47:2,7). "The earth is the LORD's" (24:1; 89:11); it is full of His possessions (104:24; 95:3-5). God is King because He created the world and all that is in it. But what kind of king is He?

As King, God rules in righteousness, hating wickedness (Psalm 45:6,7). In practical terms this means that He provides and protects. He provides a dwelling place for His human and non-human creatures (84:3-4a), a refuge for the needy and oppressed (48:2b-3; 9:9; 99:4), food for the hungry (145:15; 104:10-14; Matthew 6:26) and satisfaction of the natural desires of "every living thing" (Psalm 145:16). Our divine King hears our cries for help

IT IS AT THE DINNER TABLE THAT WE EXERCISE DOMINION. THERE WE WILL EITHER BE PREDATORS OR PROTECTORS.

(5:2; 20:9; 145:19), works salvation in all the earth (74:12), is quick to satisfy with His mercies (90:14), none are exempt from the Creator's fatherly care, and He preserves "man and beast" (36:6).

This is dominion modelled by our Creator, whose "tender mercies are over all his works" (145:9).

There are clear indications in the Bible that our own exercise of dominion (whether over people or animals) should mirror what is seen in the kingly rule of God. Let's focus on just three such indications.

MODELLING GOD'S DOMINION

First, we are to mirror the kingly rule of God simply because we are made in His image. "Dominion" and "image" are closely linked in the biblical Creation account: "Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness; let them have dominion . . ." (Gen 1:26). This appears to mean that being in the image of God involves the privilege and practice of dominion. It means to reflect in our words and works the character of our Creator, our King. We are to rule as He rules.

Second, we are to forgive others as God has forgiven us. This, too, is practising dominion, because indebtedness brings bondage (Proverbs 22:7): we hold sway over those who owe us money. To forgive our debtors is to extend mercy to those who are in our power, just as God has done for us (Matthew 18:23-35). Showing forgiveness is showing mercy, and is another example of modelling God's dominion.

But it is the biblical picture of shepherd that most clearly portrays

the connection between God's manner of rulership and our own. A shepherd is a leader, a ruler of sorts (2 Samuel 5:2). This makes shepherding a form of dominion. God characterised His people as sheep, and He as their Shepherd (Psalms 78:52; 79:13; 80:1; Ezekiel 34:31). In recognition of this relationship, the rulers of Israel were required to shepherd God's people after the manner of the divine Shepherd (Psalms 80:1-3; 79:13).

The fearful results of the rulers' failure to do this are portrayed in a striking prophecy given to the prophet Ezekiel.

EZEKIEL 34: TWO CONTRASTING FORMS OF DOMINION

In this prophecy, the harsh rulers of Israel were described as shepherds who used the animals for their own benefit—using their wool and eating their meat—rather than feeding the flocks. They neither strengthened the weak, nor healed those who were sick, nor bound up the broken, nor sought those who were lost. Rather, they ruled God's sheep with force and cruelty, satisfying their own needs while neglecting the needs of those whom God had placed under their care (Ezekiel 34:2-5, 18, 19).

Four times the unfaithful shepherds were charged with eating the sheep instead of feeding them (vv 2, 3, 8, 10). And four times it is promised that the future Davidic Shepherd would, by contrast, feed the flock (vv 13, 14, 15, 23). Godly dominion, it is seen, is not self-serving.

Indeed, godly dominion is self-sacrificing, for Jesus, the "Good Shepherd", would lay down His life for the sheep (John 10:14, 15). The sheep do not sacrifice their lives for the Shepherd. Nowhere is the Good Shepherd ever said to take the life of even one of His flock. Those fortunate sheep who have the gentle Saviour as their Shepherd have no reason to fear that He will one day change from being their protector to being their predator.

DOMINION TODAY

What implications does all this have

for us today? Some are obvious, if uncomfortable. If God is not a predator, should we be? If the gentle Shepherd never takes the life of His animals, should we? If mercy is the predominant feature of God's way of dominion, should it not be ours?

Of course, many of us have little direct contact with animals, apart from our cosseted pets. It is at the dinner table, however, that we exercise dominion. There we will be either predators or protectors. There we will either proclaim our right to devour those whom God placed in our care; or we may demonstrate our duty to protect those creatures for whom the gentle Shepherd has such tender regard. This is dominion. It is dominion at a distance but dominion nevertheless.

Many today evaluate meat in the diet on the basis of its positive or negative effects on health. But Scripture commands us to eat and drink to the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:31). Whatever we do to God's glory will be good for us (Ecclesiastes 8:5). We do not need to anxiously await the latest nutritional discoveries that will validate the health benefits of vegetarianism. Let us simply eat to the glory of God.

This requires we adopt a diet of mercy. Yes, after the Flood God permitted a flesh diet. But will you not have mercy? You may be convinced there are some health benefits to eating grass-fed beef and free-range chickens. But will you not have mercy? Mercy triumphs over judgement (James 2:13).

Let us demonstrate to those around us—those both in and outside of the Church (2 Corinthians 2:15)—that we not only believe in mercy, we practise it. Let our exercise of dominion reflect that of our King, so that when He comes to claim His own, we may have reason to know that His mercy towards us has produced the fruit of mercy in us.

BERNARD WHITE IS TEACHING ENGLISH AND THEOLOGY AT SAHMYOOK UNIVERSITY IN SEOUL, KOREA, WHILE COMPLETING A PHD IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY THROUGH AVONDALE COLLEGE.



PLANT-BASED BEST FOR WEIGHT LOSS

A recent study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* found that one in 10 of the world's people was classified as obese. Even more sobering was that 30 per cent, or about one in every three people, was believed to be overweight or obese. It seems that while we are becoming more and more aware of the global obesity epidemic, it continues to grow and affect the health of billions.

But research is also helping to shine a light on the tools we can use to combat this epidemic and the changes we're all capable of making. Another study published recently, this one in the *Journal of the American College of Nutrition*, followed the lives of people with type 2 diabetes on either a conventional or a vegetarian diet for six months. Both diets were designed to be equally kilojoule restrictive to promote weight loss, but at the end of the study those in the vegetarian group had lost significantly more weight and a greater percentage of fat. A larger number of participants also had what was defined as high compliance to the vegetarian diet than the conventional diet, suggesting the dietary change is a simple one to make and maintain.

So could the solution to the world's obesity problem be as simple as eating more plants? There are many different factors that impact our health and have led to the global health issues we see today. Health is usually not gained by changing one thing—it comes from a lot of small but significant changes made consistently over time. And research keeps telling us that one of the simplest and most powerful changes we can make is to start adopting a plant-based diet.

To get started on making your diet more plant-based today, check out Sanitarium's great range of plant-based recipes for all occasions at:
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TOP TIPS TO SUPPORT A HEALTHY DIET AND MAINTAIN A HEALTHY WEIGHT



GET ACTIVE

This doesn't have to mean going to the gym—just building more activity into daily life. Walk to the shops instead of driving, stand up at your desk when taking phone calls to reduce sitting or park at the far end of the carpark for a longer walk to the shops. It all adds up. Aim for at least 30 minutes of activity or 10,000 steps a day.



SLEEP ON IT

Research shows that those who sleep too little or sleep too much tend to have higher body mass indexes. The sweet spot when it comes to maintaining a lower BMI seems to be between 7.5 and 8 hours of sleep a night. It's also worth noting that the negative effect is much more pronounced for those who chronically undersleep than those who oversleep, so it's especially important to prioritise getting at least 7 hours rest a night.

Sanitarium
health & wellbeing

SCRATCHING THE ITCH

The Case For Christ is a great movie. Strobel is right when he says that “Evangelism in the 21st century is spelled ‘apologetics’” (“Apologetics seems to be the poor cousin to prophecy . . .”, Editorial, June 3).

In a scientific age, why would most people believe unless there are rational/logical reasons for belief to undergird faith? “Prophecy” that has been fulfilled can of course be part of an apologetics “toolbox”. But Adventists who emphasise “prophecy seminars” in isolation are not scratching where it’s itching in 2017.

John Denne, NSW

THE REAL DEAL

I loved Anna Beaden’s article “Let’s actually meet people” (May 20), and as the author’s pastor (Glenvale church), I can testify that she is the real deal.

Anna walks the talk. Her enthusiasm for the LAMP initiative is contagious and has spread to many of our youth and their leaders, helping establish what has become one of the largest young adult ministries in the South Queensland Conference.

What works for youth ministry will work for the Church as a whole. Our mission begins, not with dynamic evangelistic campaigns, innovative discipleship programs or even magnetic church services. As good and as important as all of these things are, our mission begins with personal friendships—Let’s Actually Meet People.

Casey Wolverton, Qld

‘MECHANICAL’ APPROACH

I support the view of the editorial “Apologetics seems to be the poor cousin to prophecy . . .” (June 3).

I think this is dead on target. Our emphasis on prophecy over the past generations has too often appealed to the number-crunchers on timeline

prophecies: too much emphasis on a kind of mathematical formula of dates and events. This kind of “mechanical” approach leaves little room for a spiritual Christ-centred direction.

The “poor cousin” apologetics needs to be courted in the halls of Adventist academia so that our next generation of preachers are properly armed for the battle against secular atheism.

Malcolm Ford, NZ

NOT NIT-PICKING BUT. . .

Please do not think that I am “nit-picking” when I recommend that your editorial staff get their knuckles rapped over the two glaring errors that appeared in the column “Inspiring the impossible” (Editorial, June 3).

The first person to break the four-minute mile barrier was the English physician Roger Gilbert Bannister, and the Australian who broke his time was John Michael Landy, who later in life became the governor of Victoria.

There are two other items in the same issue of *Adventist Record* on which I would like to comment.

Your assistant editor Linden Chuang in his article “Cages” evinced an interest in killer whales. I would

suggest that if he can locate a copy of Tom Mead’s book, *Killers of Eden* (1961: Angus & Robertson Ltd), he read it, as it deals with a strange relationship between humans and killer whales.

Your correspondent Cassandra Gerken in “Abstinence or moderation?” (Have Your Say) extolled the use of carob, which is made from the dried seed pod of the evergreen shrub *Ceratonia siliqua* or carob bush, a member of the pea family. The dried seed pod when ground and mixed with vegetable oil and sugar can be moulded into a block having similar colour and texture to chocolate, but remember the same can be achieved with dirt.

Graham Mitchell, via email

TRIED AND TRUE

The [“New research suggests secrets of evangelism”] article, (posted online June 2) on religion in Australia contains a great deal of useful information, but the solution [provided] is inadequate.

The suggestion that “friendship evangelism” is the answer is only partly true. Christians are expected to be friendly and personally share their faith at an appropriate time but much

more is needed.

There is no substitute for the public proclamation of Christ’s gospel through the Holy Spirit anointed lips of God’s preacher. An evangelist, by biblical definition, is a proclaimer of the good news, and while there are lost sinners and apostles called by God (see and read 1 Corinthians 12:28), there will always be crowds listening to the public proclamation of God’s Word.

Imagine telling Paul that friendship evangelism was the way to go. Wherever the Church is stuck on so-called friendship evangelism and ignores the public proclamation of the Word, it is dying.

Be not deceived by cheap, easy, politically correct substitutes that sound good but result in dwindling congregations.

John Carter, US

NOTE: Views in “Have your say” do not necessarily represent those of the editors or the denomination. Comments should be less than 250 words, and writers must include their name, address and phone number. All comments are edited to meet space and literary requirements, but the author’s original meaning will not be changed. Not all comments received are published.

SIGNS
OF THE TIMES

WHEN VIRTUAL BECOMES reality

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Alco-free in a boozy culture

About marriage—by single men

+ *Sue Radd's recipe*

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HI KIDS

KIDS SPACE





GOD'S GENTLE WHISPER




Jezebel is trying to kill Elijah. Elijah is afraid, and runs for his life for 40 days. Tired and discouraged, he arrives at Mount Horeb, and goes into a cave to rest and hide. God asks him, “What are you doing here, Elijah?” God says to go and stand on the mountain, and He will pass by. There is powerful wind, and earthquake, and a fire, but God isn’t in any of these. Finally, God speaks in a gentle whisper and tells Elijah to go back where he came from and continue to work for Him.






USE THE CODE IN THE
BOX BELOW TO SOLVE THE
PUZZLES.

[illegible]






















MEMORY VERSE (Isaiah 30:21, NIV)

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F = 	L = 	R = 	X = 
G = 	M = 	S = 	Y = 
H = 	N = 	T = 	Z = 
I = 	O = 	U = 	
J = 	P = 	V = 	
K = 	Q = 	W = 	



Seeking God IN COMMUNIST RUSSIA

BY DECREE, GOD CEASED TO exist in Russia in 1917 when Christianity was driven underground and appeared to die. The State systematically strove to erase any memory of God. It was not until the advent of *glasnost* (openness) in the later years of the 20th century that Christianity resurfaced in Russia.

One would wonder how, then, in the 1980s, a little nine-year-old girl could find God in Russia. Such was the early life of Elena Ladygina, who, at the age of nine, started a search for God. Possessed of a naturally curious nature and, by her own admission, a degree of stubborn tenacity driven by a yearning conviction that “God wanted me to search for Him”, she was about to discover that God does not ignore a searcher.

A turning point in Elena’s search for God was the discovery of a Bible on a shelf in her grandmother’s home. The Bible had served no greater purpose than to be regarded as a talisman or holy object, but when Elena started to read it at the age of 14, she became convinced about the existence of God.

It is hard for us who live in our Western freedom to imagine the dif-

ficulties that a girl of 14 would face in accepting Christianity. With absolutely no idea of how to pray, Elena turned to the Psalms and joyfully discovered that the psalmist himself had begged God to reveal Himself to him. The Psalms of David taught Elena the basics of prayer.

It was a mission in Elena’s home city of Nizhni Novgorod being run by US evangelist Pastor John Carter that opened the eyes and heart of Elena. She was stunned to discover that Pastor Carter’s nightly messages came directly from the Bible and contrasted starkly with the traditions of Russian religion. She was baptised at 15 and became involved in church activities.

Under pressure to study medicine, Elena had been told that there were no prospects for a female theologian in a male-dominated society. Thus, Elena commenced her medical course at the remarkably young age of 16. Graduating first as a doctor and then achieving qualifications in paediatrics, Elena felt convicted that God wanted her to become an evangelist.

However, it was as a doctor that she met a stubbornly dynamic young minister who had been admitted to

hospital with a bronchial infection. Ignoring her advice to stay at home rather than preaching on very cold nights, Pastor Vadim Butov indeed “took a turn for the nurse”.

Vadim encouraged his new wife to become an evangelist and discovered that, although her preaching was appreciated, there was a widespread conviction that a successful evangelist had to be a male. By now a conference president, Vadim gave Elena \$500 to establish a church.

Thus armed, with God at her side, Elena Butov established her first church and saw 16 baptisms within months. She then established another church and baptised 35, followed by a third church plant where 78 were baptised, thus achieving 129 baptisms in one year. The Union relented and appointed Elena as the Union evangelist and another 600 souls were won to the Lord.

The Butov family now live in Australia as pastors at the Avondale Memorial church in Cooranbong. Vadim was John Carter’s principal translator for much of his work in Russia. His language skills are legendary and he is known to be fluent in six languages and conversant in another seven. Elena took the opportunity to commence a PhD program in theology at Avondale College and became a doctor for the second time in her life in 2016. Her thesis, “The Four Prohibitions of Acts 15 and their Common Background on the Basis of the Genesis 1–3 Account” is now attracting scholarly attention for the thoughtful anchoring of the distinctions between clean and unclean foods within a biblical context.

Elena arrived in Australia eight years ago, barely able to speak a word in English. Amazingly, she has now written a PhD in English. The Butov family are now Australian citizens who have adapted to living far from their native Russia. Their pastoral work at the Avondale Memorial church has proved to be a great blessing.

DR JOHN HAMMOND IS A RETIRED EDUCATOR WHO ATTENDS AVONDALE MEMORIAL CHURCH, NSW.

Anniversary



PAGE. Tony and Myra (nee Williams) were married at the

Methodist church in Greenmount, WA, on 15.6.1957. The family became Adventists in 1974 and Tony and Myra have been very involved in working for the Lord in various ways: Tony in colporteur work, which led to the beginnings of the Wanneroo church (now Clarkson church) and helping anyone in need over the years; Myra worked as a cook for Sanitarium in Perth for several years. They managed the Morawa Caravan Park and took part in many other pursuits assisting others. They've been blessed with three children: Barbara, Michael and Robert; seven grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren. Tony and Myra celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on 15.6.17. They now reside very happily at the Rossmoyne Adventist retirement facility and look forward to the second coming.

Weddings

MANDAVY-DAVIDSON. Corey Mandavy, son of Frank and Adri Mandavy (Stanthorpe, Qld), and Angie Davidson, daughter of Norm Davidson (Grassy Head, NSW) and Janine Barden (Laidley, Qld), were married in a beautiful beach setting at Byron Bay on 14.2.17. They have settled in Stanthorpe.

Mark Pearce

BARBER-WILSON, Aron Barber, son of Garry (deceased) and

Michelle Barber (Glen Innes, NSW), and Serena Wilson, daughter of Mark and Susan Wilson (Port Lincoln, SA), were married at Sanctuary Cove on the Gold Coast (Qld) on 2.5.17. Aron and Serena met at a Waitara church camp and are currently living on the Gold Coast where Aron is a builder and Serena is studying nutrition.

Geoffery Youlden, Mark Wilson

Obituaries



BUCKMAN, Esme, born 8.2.1925 in Newcastle, NSW; died 1.5.17 in Coffs Harbour. She was

predeceased by her husband Charlie and her son Wayne. She is survived by her daughter Gloria Embury and her son Gary. Esme will be remembered for her beautiful organ music, commitment to church, encouraging smile and deep love for Jesus.

Abel Iorgulescu

FLORIDA, Beverly Dianne, born 25.12.1944 in Newcastle, NSW; died 25.3.17 in Bonnells Bay. On 29.6.1964 she married Robert Florida in Hamilton. She is survived by her husband (Bonnells Bay); her four children: Danielle (Balmain), Rochelle and Malcolm Butler (Turrumurra), Christian and Brenda (Dubbo) and Joshua and Natalie (Bewral); and 10 grandchildren. Beverly loved her family and her church. She was a friend to many, ever ready to be hospitable and charitable and was very much involved in the life of her church prior to her illness. She was Sabbath School teacher for years and president of the Hamilton

Home and School Association. Despite her illness she remained an avid Bible student.

Adrian Craig



HARRISON, Dianne Lesley (nee Pettingill), born 12.6.1952 in Mt Gambier, SA; died

5.5.17 in Brisbane, Qld. She is survived by her husband Peter; children Rochelle and husband Darren, Tanya, and Jamie and wife Jess; and Tanya's children Kayden, Ashah and Lahni (all of Brisbane). Dianne was a lovely, kind and generous person who was loved and appreciated by all who knew her. Deeply devoted to her children and family, she will be greatly missed.

Mike Browning



HEWSTON, Aubrey Clarence, born 29.7.1925; died 10.5.17 in Toronto, NSW.

Aubrey was predeceased by his sister and two brothers. Aubrey was a member of Charlestown and Hamilton churches, serving as a deacon for many years. He was well known for his special contributions to musical worship, including solos on the pedal steel guitar. Aubrey was a quiet gentleman who focused on the needs of others rather than himself, demonstrated in his more than 20 years volunteering for charities such as Meals on Wheels.

Roger Nixon

WALDRIP, Professor Bruce Gordon, born 13.2.1949 in Sydney, NSW; died 24.1.17 in Launceston, Tasmania. On 11.5.1980 he married Karin (nee Braun). He is survived by his wife (Launceston); children Lynelle Waldrup (Launceston) and Andrew (Berwick, Vic); and siblings Dr Harold Waldrup (Yarra Junction), Jeanette Kavur (Bonnells Bay, NSW) and Marvin Waldrup (Cooranbong). Bruce spent a total of seven years in mission service teaching at Kambubu and

Kabiufa (PNG). He also taught at the Lilydale and Hawthorn schools and was a professor at several Australian universities. His research into education in the fields of maths and science will be of benefit to teachers and students well into the future.

Jim Tonkin, Harley Stanton

WINFIELD, Douglas Allan (Doug), born 6.1.1939 in Petersham, NSW; died 24.3.17 in Cooranbong after a long illness. On 20.7.1964 he and Penny Borlase were married by Pastor Ralph Tudor in the old Lakemba church. Doug was deeply loved by his wife; his son Edward and wife Susan, and daughter Margaret and her husband Lyndon; and grandchildren Emily, Mathew, Rebekkah and Lachlan. Doug loved his Jesus deeply right to the end.

Greggo Pillay

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