Starting the year with a bang

Happy New Year! Can you believe it's 2013? Yes, that's right. It's been eight years since the tragic Boxing Day Tsunami, which claimed the lives of more than 300,000 people in central and south-east Asia. Around that same period, George W Bush was reelected as president of the United States and, believe it or not, MySpace was more popular than Facebook.

It had also been eight years since the Adventist Church in the South Pacific held a youth congress. That was until church youth leaders and more than 1800 young people from across the South Pacific gathered in Brisbane for the World Changers youth congress from January 1-5.

If you weren't able to attend—or were internet-less for the first week of the year—don't worry, we've got you covered in this week's edition of RECORD eNews.
SPD youth congress set for world-changing

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World Changers Bible launched at congress

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World Changers march to fight world hunger

With the assistance of a Police escort, 1500 young people from 14 South Pacific nations marched from King George Square to the City Botanic Gardens on January 3 to call for more action to combat hunger in our world.

Read Adventist World

The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) has stories to tell; and you'll find them in the latest issue of Adventist World.

Watch/download InFocus

Experience some of the highlights of last year's Record InFocus program. Interviews with opera singer Manuel Escorsio and Aussie rocker-turned-Greek Orthodox priest, Themi Adams.
Congress culminates in commissioning

Young people from across the South Pacific have been commissioned to share their faith and change their world on the final night of the six-day youth congress on January 5.
More than 1800 young people and leaders from 14 nations of the South Pacific celebrated opening night of the regional youth congress in Brisbane on January 1. The energetic opening featured video, music, drama and a mass choir of delegates from across Papua New Guinea, as well as the flags of the nations represented. An estimated audience of 2000 also watched the opening program of the six-day congress on an online stream, including church groups in the Solomon Islands.

Congress participants arrived and registered during the course of New Year’s Day and the program began with the evening meal, followed by the opening ceremony that transitioned into the first worship program. In welcoming participants, Dr Barry Oliver, president of the South Pacific Division (SPD), celebrated the multicultural family of the church that becomes obvious at such regional events.
Director of Youth Ministries for SPD, Dr Nick Kross is gratified to see representatives from almost every territory in the South Pacific region as part of the youth congress. He also paid tribute to the team of youth leaders who have spent more than two years planning for this event and have been working intensely onsite at the Watson Park Convention Centre, north of Brisbane, for the past week to have the program and venues ready for the opening.

“When we get the opportunity to have a youth team together, there is a sense of harmony and cohesion,” says Dr Kross. “During this time of preparation, we have had a positive environment and this in itself is a way to build our youth ministry resources. This is a time of corporate celebration but it also provides opportunity for training and mentoring of our youth ministry team.”

According to Dr Kross, the octennial event is built around the theme of “World Changers,” challenging young people to make a difference in the world and connecting with youth ministry team World Changers
Bible Project that has been a major fundraising project in the past 18 months for the church in the South Pacific. He says this event is the transition point from fundraising to implementation as young people will be equipped and trained to use the new resources in their home communities.

Pastor Sam Leonor preaches at the first evening meeting of the youth congress.

In his opening sermon, Pastor Sam Leonor, chaplain of La Sierra University in California, emphasised the centrality of Jesus to the task of world changing and urged congress participants to seek a new vision of Jesus during their experiences at the congress.

The live stream of the main programs of the South Pacific Division youth congress can be viewed at www.livingministrymedia.com.au. Check program times on that site and adjust for your local time zone.

Regular updates will be posted at the World Changes Youth Congress event page on Facebook.

Labels: South Pacific Division, Youth Congress, World Changers, Barry Oliver, Youth Ministries, Nick Cross, Sam Leonor

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Congress participants from Papua New Guinea pray together at the opening of the World Changers Youth Congress.

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The worship team lead in singing a favourite hymn at the congress’ opening program.

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The launch of the World Changers Bible was a highlight of the South Pacific Division (SPD) Youth Congress in Brisbane this week. This launch was the culmination of 18 months of fundraising and development, and the presentation of the Bibles was greeted with excitement by congress participants.

Dr Nick Kross, director of youth ministries for the SPD, introduced the initiative at the Move With the Power youth leadership training in August 2011, beginning a fundraising campaign built around camp-meeting mission offerings in Australia and New Zealand since that time. However, he says the project has caught the imagination of churches, church members and young people around the South Pacific.

“It has been a project we can all get behind and support,” says Dr Kross. “At the core of Adventist DNA is the primacy of the Word and the primacy of truth, and in this package we have combined a Bible with studies of the main themes of scripture and added a discipleship training kit. This powerful combination can take the gospel across our part of the world by putting these tools in the hands of young people.”

Congress participants from Papua New Guinea explore their new World Changers Bibles.
More than $670,000 has been received from offerings and donations. While the fundraising focus has ended, donations continue to be received. “It seems God is not finished with this project yet,” he says. Dr Kross says he is humbled and gratified by the response from so many young people who have sacrificed to contribute to the project. “We’ve had college students who have made donations like $1000 and have seen youth groups get together to raise funds for Bibles for their fellow young people.”

The first order of 125,000 Bibles was placed in June and received two weeks before the congress. The Bibles include 13 pages of discipleship training material and come with a set of 29 Bible-study book marks, which provide outlines for sharing the Adventist Church’s fundamental beliefs, customised to the World Changers Bible.

The first 1500 World Changers Bibles have been delivered to South Pacific young people at the World Changers youth congress.

The launch of the Bible is a key part of the strategy of the SPD youth congress. “We are not just giving out Bibles,” Dr Kross explains. “It is given with a commitment to change the world. It is part of a strategy. As great as this project has been, young people actively sharing their faith with their friends is more important to me than the Bibles.”

“These Bibles will give young people the opportunity to do what we always talk about,” adds associate youth ministries director Litiana Turner. “This is about the church giving ownership to these young people the tools to share their faith.”

Dr Kross and Mrs Turner will be travelling through the South Pacific for further launches of the World Changers Bible in different regions in coming months. They are also planning for another order of Bibles to use the remaining funds and further donations.
Brisbane, Queensland

Easily identifiable by their bright blue T-shirts, they came on 25 buses to fill the city streets of Brisbane with a “flood of justice,” after hearing a sermon based on Amos 5:24. With the assistance of a Police escort, 1500 young people from 14 South Pacific nations marched from King George Square to the City Botanic Gardens on January 3 to call for more action to combat hunger in our world.

“It’s significant that we can get this number of young people from across the Pacific region to speak up on something more than themselves,” says Dr Nick Kross, director of youth ministry for the South Pacific Division. “This is about thinking like a contributor and a servant of others, rather than a mere consumer.”

South Pacific Adventist young people call for an end to hunger in the world.

Delegates to the six-day youth congress also had a “poverty lunch” to identify with the hungry and raised $10,000 for the work of the Adventist Development and Relief Agency.
to fight hunger by foregoing their usual meal. They presented this cheque to Jonathan Duffy, president of ADRA International, together with a photo petition affirming the work of ADRA.

A statement issued by congress participants recognised the reality of hunger in our world—even in a city such as Brisbane. They thanked agencies that work to care for those in need and called for others to join in the continuing and urgent work to end world hunger.

Young people from Papua New Guinea represented their church and their nation in marching to end hunger.

“Adventism has lost its voice publicly and we need to be prepared to re-enter the public arena to speak up about things we believe in,” says Dr Kross. “Micah 6:8 sums up what God wants us to do and this was one way to put this verse into action.”

“It’s exciting to see young people really want to make a difference the world and I was encouraged by the genuineness of their desire,” adds Mr Duffy. “We have not understood the power of the voice we can have in the world. Actually advocating for change is a powerful thing. But this was also a significant demonstration of what can be done. By making a small change such as sacrificing one meal, a significant difference is made when we work together.”

Adventist young people from around the South Pacific marched on the streets of Brisbane on January 3 to call for greater action to fight world...
Groups of young people have also worked in the northern suburbs of Brisbane this week to collect canned and non-perishable food for use in ADRA services across the city. “This is a critical time of year for these agencies who are working to help individuals and families doing it tough,” says Matthew Siliga, coordinator of this community outreach for the congress. “So as visitors to this city, we hope to help feed thousands of Brisbane residents by collecting generous donations from the local community and delivering to these local agencies.”

ADRA Australia has also initiated a campaign to raise the issue of world hunger, launching a video—“Enough is Enough”—that headlines a social media campaign focussed on fighting hunger.

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Brisbane, Queensland

Young people from across the South Pacific have been commissioned to share their faith and change their world on the final night of the six-day youth congress on January 5. More than 1100 young people responded to an appeal to commit, recommit and re-focus their lives to Jesus and His mission on the Friday evening, followed by a day of worship, commissioning and celebration.

“The commissioning was a highlight, engaging all our leaders and young people in the world-changing mission of the church,” says Dr Nick Kross, director of youth ministry for the South Pacific Division. “So many young people have expressed their gratitude and delight with what they have experienced and connected with here—and that has been gratifying for us as leaders.”

Dr Hyveth Williams preaches in the Sabbath morning worship service at the South Pacific Division congress. [Photo courtesy: Ben Beaden]

The main congress speaker Pastor Sam Leonor, chaplain of La Sierra University, California,
challenged congress participants to be not only disciples of Jesus but also apostles. “I hope these young people will see their local context as a place God has put them to do something big,” he says. “But I also hope they will see that when we worship together and act together, we can change the world.

“This event has been a great ‘slice’ of the church,” he adds. “We’ve had so many different kinds of people and cultures represented and I think there’s something holy about that. It is good for these young people to look around and see what the Church really is. Living together for a week as the church has got to be empowering.”

A choir from Papua New Guinea sings on the final night of the South Pacific Division congress. The 700 delegates from Papua New Guinea comprised almost half of congress participants. [Photo courtesy: Ben Beaden]

The 1500 congress participants worked together again on the last afternoon of congress —writing out the entire Bible by hand, with the pages to be bound as a memorial to the congress. “People really got into it and it was a great achievement of this congress,” reports Dr Kross. “We have had a focus on the Word of God and this was a way to highlight this and get our people engaged.”

Some 1500 congress participants worked together to hand-write the entire Bible in about two hours on Sabbath afternoon, January 5. [Photo courtesy: Tony Knight]
Together with the commissioning, he says the march against hunger was one of his congress highlights. “At one stage, I stopped and looked back at our marchers and seeing the line that stretched almost a kilometre back with banners and all those young people, I felt a sense of pride in our young people and what they were doing.”

But, according to Dr Kross, many of the important achievements of the congress are yet to be seen. “It is hard to measure or explain inspiration, so the real outcome of this congress is not necessarily what we see here but the small and great things that will happen in places across the South Pacific,” he says. “We have empowered these young people and we will continue to support them in their involvement in the mission of the church.”
this week been named Chief Executive Officer of the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Australia.

- **Message of hope back on PNG airwaves**

  It Is Written Oceania (IIWO) is returning to public television in Papua New Guinea (PNG).

- **Congress culminates in commissioning**

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- **World Changers march to fight world hunger**

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- **SPD Youth Congress set for world-changing**

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- **Adventist Church outlines 2013 world budget**

  The 2013 budget of the Seventh-day Adventist Church’s world headquarters funds mission work and administrative support outside of North America, as well as the operation of the headquarters building.

- **ADRA seeks clarification on aid re-distribution**

  The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Australia has expressed concern and
disappointment over Wednesday’s announcement regarding the re-distribution of funds from the Australian Aid program.

- **Cyclone Evan—ADRA responds in Samoa and Fiji**

Following Cyclone Evan’s destructive path across the South Pacific, the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) is assisting some of those most seriously affected in both Samoa and Fiji.

- **GraceLink strengthened to ensure faith**

After a decade of service, the GraceLink Sabbath School curriculum is being renewed and expanded to make it even more effective.

- **Wilson offers condolences for victims**

Seventh-day Adventist Church president Ted Wilson on Friday offered a message of condolence following a mass shooting at an elementary school in Newtown, Connecticut, United States.

- **Road To Bethlehem makes front page news**

The Seventh-day Adventist Church's campground in Nunawading, Victoria was transformed into an ancient biblical city last week, drawing the attention of thousands of visitors and even one leading Australian newspaper.

- **Healthy outlook for new CHIP resource**

A new global and integrated health resource for local churches was launched at a CHIP Summit on November 15-19 at Cohutta Springs Conference Centre, Crandall, Georgia.

- **Vegetarian food company arrives in Australia**

The SPD Health Food Department has launched Life Health Food (LHF) Australia.

- **Master of music**
An alumna inspired by her experience with an Avondale vocal ensemble has this year become the first student to graduate with a Master of Arts (Research).

**ADRA assists typhoon victims in Philippines**

The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) in the Philippines is coordinating relief efforts following Typhoon Bopha’s slam Tuesday on the southern island of Mindanao.

**Church launches Christmas Monteiro Operation**

With the Christmas holidays fast approaching, the Seventh-day Adventist Church is continuing to rally support for two Adventists currently imprisoned in the West African country of Togo.

**Sabbath focus of community conference**

A one-day conference about the Sabbath was held at the South Naracoorte Primary School hall in South Australia on October 15.

**Church outreach celebrates biblical creation**

The auditorium darkened, lightening flashed across a projector screen, thunder roared over the loudspeaker and artificial rain fell on hundreds of school children during a recreation of the biblical flood.

**Adventist evangelist Leo Schreven dies at 51**

American evangelist Leo Schreven passed away on Saturday, December 1. He was 51 years old.

**Spirit of service**

Eleven enthusiastic Spirit of Sanitarium Award Recipients from Australia and New Zealand headed to Vanuatu in November to take part in an exciting community project with the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA).

**Gilson College takes over Acacia College site**
Gilson College, part of Adventist Schools Victoria (ASV), plans to establish a new campus at Mernda, taking over the site of Acacia College following its closure.

Two and a Half Men actor joins Adventist Church

Angus T Jones, an actor of the CBS sitcom Two and a Half Men, became a member of a local Seventh-day Adventist congregation in the San Fernando Valley area in June of 2012.

Adventist missionary killed in accident in PNG

An accident has claimed the life of John Lello, a Seventh-day Adventist missionary who was serving in Papua New Guinea through Adventist Frontier Missions.

ADRA issues Christmas challenge

As Christmas gifts and decorations begin to fill store shelves, the CEO of the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Australia is challenging people to remember those families who go without—and give them a reason to celebrate.

Students make desks for peers

Seventy students at Kambubu Adventist Secondary School (East New Britain) are enjoying working at new desks—designed and constructed by their peers.

Syrian refugees supported through winter

Thousands of Syrian refugees will be given life-saving supplies thanks to the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA).

Blind given scholarships to develop life skills

Christian Services for the Blind and Hearing Impaired (CSFBHI) is broadening its scope with the announcement of a scholarship program.

Adventist president calls for day of prayer
Seventh-day Adventist world church president Ted Wilson today called for an International Day of Prayer and Fasting on December 1 to rally support for the release of two Adventists currently imprisoned in the West African country of Togo.

**PAU International Choir sings for royal couple**

Pacific Adventist University (PAU) International Choir was invited to sing for their Royal Highnesses, the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall, on Sunday, November 4 at the Adventure Park, Port Moresby.

**Historic first radio program aired in India**

An Indian FM station aired the country's first Seventh-day Adventist radio program this week.

**ADRA part of earthquake relief in Guatemala**

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Guatemala is mourning the loss of five of its members including a church elder after a 7.2-magnitude earthquake shook the western part of the country on November 7.

**Church in the Netherlands votes ordination**

Two hundred delegates representing 56 Adventist churches across the Netherlands spent considerable time discussing a motion on the ordination of women, which eventually passed with a large majority.

**Church reaffirms no tolerance stance on abuse**

Seventh-day Adventist Church representatives in the South Pacific voted a statement regarding the Church's position on abuse during the division's year-end meetings.

**Camp meeting changes lives and habits**

More than 3000 people attended the Central Papua Conference Regional Camp at Korela Mission station, which saw 153 people baptised by 14 pastors.
**Creative champion**

A published anthology of pieces by Avondale students and professionals will encourage the former to write creatively as a career, says an award-winning local poet.

**Church plants third congregation**

Nine years after its initial congregation was established, Gateway Adventist Centre launched its third congregation, Gateway West, on August 4.

**Adventist Church president visits Belarus**

In what marked the first visit to Belarus by a sitting Seventh-day Adventist world church president, Pastor Ted Wilson last week toured church infrastructure and met with government officials in the Eastern European country.

**125,000 Bibles will change the world**

The first order has been placed for the printing of 125,000 NKJV Bibles in readiness for the World Changers Youth Congress in January.

**High point for hymns**

A neutral venue and the appeal of a popular journalist and broadcaster has delivered a music program produced by an Avondale College lecturer its biggest audience.

**Adventist congressman defeated**

One of the results on this week’s election was the defeat of Congressman Roscoe Bartlett, one of only two Adventists in the 441 member United States Congress.

**Course set to strengthen families**

A new course in Family Ministries leadership—designed to help churches strengthen families and relationships—has been held in Lae, Papua New Guinea (PNG).
Adventist Church assists hurricane victims

On Sunday, November 4, members of the North American Division Executive Committee voted a number of financial initiatives to assist the victims of Hurricane Sandy.

Worship the focus of conference

Seventy people from congregations in South New Zealand gathered for a “Worship In Focus” weekend conference at Papanui church.

Shop, play, relax

Threatening weather failed to dampen the friendly and fun atmosphere at Avondale College of Higher Education’s first Market Day Southlake on Sunday (October 21). More than 300 members of the community attended.

Chamberlain defence lawyer honoured

Defence lawyer Stuart Tipple was awarded the 2012 President's Medal by the Law Society of New South Wales on October 25.

Jamaican churches hit hard by Hurricane Sandy

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in the northeastern parishes of St. Mary and Portland was dealt a hard blow during the passing of Hurricane Sandy on Wednesday, October 24.

Adventists affected by Hurricane Sandy

According to United States news reports, at least 48 people are dead and eight million are without power because of “Superstorm” Sandy that recently whipped through the East Coast.

Aboriginal students experience Avondale

Avondale School recently gave ten indigenous students from Karalundi Aborigianl Education Centre a taste of the mainstream school experience.
Manifest in Melbourne

A creative worship experience at a youth rally in Melbourne gave participants a taste of what to expect at next year’s Manifest Creative Arts Festival.