Happy Mother's Day!

RECORD would like to wish "a happy and blessed Mother's Day" to all the mums, aunties, and women who contribute so much to our families and churches. What makes a mother so special? Click here to find out.

"Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her . . . " (Proverbs 31:28).

The strength of women

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be mothers.

New president for Trans-Pacific

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Notorious criminals surrender to Christ

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Milena Momcilovic (mother); Mara Maric (grandmother)

All that I am and all that I desire in my life comes from the passion, love, humour, faith and selfless dedication I have experienced from my mother and grandmother. Mum taught me how to laugh, love, enjoy life, make plans, dream big and never give up. My grandmother taught me the value of hard work, persistence, humility, service to others and unwavering faith in God’s plan for my life. Their unshakeable confidence in God planted a seed of faith in my own heart from a very early age, and their example continues to strengthen and inspire me in my own Christian walk.—Alexandra Momcilovic
Kristina Tan

She always told me to chase my dreams, even though it meant I would end up thousands of kilometres away. Her incredible love, patience and quiet strength gave me the courage to face challenges, the opportunities to experience great joy and the privilege of knowing Jesus. I love you Mum.—Melody Tan

Cathy Shipton

I love my mum, because she is the strongest woman I know. She is my rock, my inspiration and I look up to her. She supports and encourages me to continue to chase my dreams. She is the type of person who will always make time to listen, even when she is really busy. She never gives up on me.—Jessica Shipton

Leanne Franklin

My mum is great because she is loving, caring, kind. When I was little, Mum would just take me and her out in the school holidays to a movie. I remember when she came to snow camp and we went tobogganing and we watched a group of kids learn how to ski without the ski poles.—Melissa Starkey-Franklin
Rochelle Baxter

I love the women in my life. My mum; she is selfless, she is compassionate and strong. I know that despite all the fights and disagreements I might have with her, she still loves me and would do anything for me! My grandmothers; they are the very reason my parents are who they are. I could decide to do anything and I know they would support me. They always have a word of encouragement and are ever willing to pass on sound advice. I have been blessed to have such amazing God-fearing women in my life and I love them all!—Annali Baxter

Ghislaine Dholah
She is my role model and my best friend. She is a woman of strong spiritual character with a remarkable personality. She is beautiful inside and out. Mami places her children first and continues to do so. She gave up her life in Melbourne to come to Sydney and help raise my children. I love you Mami.—Gilda Roddy

[Lagifa'atafa Anapu Penese]

[My mum] was a beautiful and humble woman of God. She was the heart of our family and always softly spoken. We praise God for the memories we’ve shared together and the hope we have in Jesus Christ to see you again. We love you, Mummy. See you in the morning (1 Peter 5:7).—Anapu–Penese family
Frances Mkurazhizha

I love my mother because she is very funny and kind. I also love my mother because we pray together, and also because she bought me a bike and a piano. My mother is God’s special gift to me and I thank God for my mother.—Ruva Mkurazhizha

There is nothing she can't and won't do for others. There is nothing like her amazing cooking. She is the most selfless person I have ever known. She is my heroine, my inspiration; she is my mother. Feliz día das Maes.—Sarah and Marcelo Bussacarini

Cecilia Hopkins
Thank you for bringing me up in a spiritual home. God is in my life because you showed me his love through your actions. I appreciate all that you have and continue to do for me. I am the man I am today because you let God lead you with bringing me up.—Rowan Hopkins

To my amazing mother, who brought both my sister and me up as a single mum. Words cannot express the gratitude I have for you. We’ve gone through tough, and great times together. None of which I could have done without you. You’re the best. I love you so much.—Jordan Archer
The strength of women

May 10, 2013

Clunk!

She heard the dull, metallic thud as the medical staff walked away. She tried to ask the doctors what sex the baby was, tried to find out why she had miscarried. Was it a strain from pushing the car, after they had broken down between Adelaide and Melbourne? Was it something she had done wrong? Her husband was interstate. She had called and was waiting for him to fly back. The medical staff answered her questions by saying they didn’t know. They told her it didn’t really matter, because it wasn’t really a baby; not yet anyway.

But to her it was. She’d heard the clunk as they dropped her baby into the pan to carry it away. They didn’t understand but that made it real.

My mother had a miscarriage. Between my younger brother and I there is a three and-a-half year gap. During that time, my mother fell pregnant but lost the baby.

In preparing for this editorial I spoke to Mum about the experience. She was open and told me things she’d never really talked about before.

The pain of miscarriage is usually hidden, often brushed over. The pain of losing a child is immense; the hurt of never having children can be awkward, even ostracising or demoralising.

Now that my wife and I are married, we inevitably get the next life question: “When are you having kids?” “C’mon,” people say, “we want to see your kids, they’ll be cute, can we babysit?” We are at the age where all of our friends are having babies—the wedding invites
on our fridge are starting to be crowded out by those for baby showers. We joke and say “we’re not ready yet”. But at the back of our minds is a nagging doubt—the doubt that we may never be able to have children of our own.

While we’ve been married for a year and a half and are doing nothing to prevent it, we haven’t yet fallen pregnant. You see my wife has a condition called polycystic ovary syndrome, which means she will have trouble falling pregnant. We know it means we may never have our own children. Sometimes it’s hard to think about, and it’s always hard to talk about.

Mother’s Day is an opportunity to celebrate some of the strongest women in our lives. But I want to also pay tribute to those who aren’t mothers. I have aunties I love who have been like a mother to me and don’t have their own children. There are women in our churches and communities who invest in us with their time and energy—some choose not to have children, others don’t have a choice. This Mother’s Day I encourage you to bring flowers to church or send a card to someone you know who may not have children to receive them from.

Like so many of life’s celebrations, Mother’s Day can hold tinges of sadness—for those who have lost children, those who have lost mothers, those who can never be mothers. Let’s remember the mourning and the marginalised—they are close to God’s heart. And at times like this, they need to be held close to ours.

I asked my mum how she felt after her experience. As she lay in the hospital, my mother felt grateful. Next to her was a woman who’d had five miscarriages and would never have another one. She had no living children. My mum already had me and hoped she could have more. She held onto hope. That is the strength of women.

Jarrod Stackelroth is associate editor of RECORD.
Pastor Glenn Townend has been appointed president of the Trans-Pacific Union Mission (TPUM). The announcement comes after the South Pacific Division’s (SPD) executive committee met earlier this week to discuss the vacancy, following Pastor Waisea Vuniwa’s retirement on March 27.

Pastor Glenn Townend.

“I am very humbled and honoured to be asked to serve the nations of the Pacific,” said Pastor Townend. “I spent a good portion of my growing up years in Papua New Guinea, and since then have an admiration for the island lifestyle. I look forward to now learning about the lifestyle of those from the nations of the Trans-Pacific. The people’s love of Jesus in this part of the world is attractive to me.” The TPUM is based in Fiji and covers Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Samoa, American Samoa, Niue, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Nauru and Kiribati.

Pastor Townend has served as president of the Western Australian Conference for the past 10 years. During his 27 years of ministry in Australia, he has worked in several ministry roles, from local church pastor, church planter and departmental director.

"The Pacific island representatives on the SPD executive committee are delighted the new
TPUM president has such an excellent record of godly leadership and such a strong vision for our church,” said SPD general secretary Pastor Lawrence Tanabose.

Pastor Chester Stanley, president of the Australian Union Conference (AUC), described Pastor Townend as a “seasoned leader” and “well prepared for his new responsibilities.”

“We are sad to see him leave the AUC, but we're pleased the TPUM will benefit from his dedication and skill,” added Pastor Stanley.

TPUM headquarters in Suva, Fiji.

The appointment is the latest in a number of leadership changes for the TPUM. Following a mid-term review late last year, the TPUM announced new presidents for the Fiji, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu church missions. The appointment of a new president comes after several weeks of earnest prayer on the part of SPD and TPUM administrators.

“Today we have confirmation of those prayers being answered,” said TPUM general secretary Pastor Wayne Boehm, who stepped into the role of interim president following Pastor Waisea Vuniwa’s retirement. “We now look forward to Pastor Townend and his wife Pamela’s arrival in Fiji to build God’s kingdom and advance His work in this Union.”

Pastor Townend and Pamela have three adult children, Amy, Megan and Travis.
Notorious criminals surrender to Christ

Eastern Highlands, Papua New Guinea

Ninety-five people from one of Papua New Guinea’s most notorious villages have surrendered their lives to the Lord after a week-long evangelistic series at Ainora village, Eastern Highlands Province.

Faifosa, a local village counsellor, expressed the community’s desire for change after decades of being known as the most notorious village in the Kainantu district.

"Every hold up on the highway or any robbery in town, police knew it was my boys from Ainora who did it," he said. "This will now be something of the past."

He said the meetings came at a perfect time, and had a fitting theme: “Enough Is Enough".

Local church elder Lamech said the impact the program has had on the community is enormous.

Zuzai Hizoke, general secretary of the Eastern Highlands Simbu Mission, was the main speaker.

Neighbouring villages are planning to hold similar programs so they can build an Adventist church. “Our churches are already running out of sitting spaces,” Lamech added.

The Eastern Highlands Simbu Mission, acknowledging the program’s impact, has given Ainora church a mission volunteer to pastor the church in the meantime.
The program was sponsored by Wayasere Asaga, who has recently moved into the area for business. Vehicles were arranged for the pick-up and drop-off of the hundreds who turned out every night, despite heavy downpours on the Monday and Tuesday.