Tough road

Adventist Aviation Services engineer Linden Millist has come a long way since his accident in January 2013, in which 50 per cent of his body was severely burnt. He has passed through the valley of the shadow of death, but the journey’s far from over.

This morning, Linden underwent surgery for grafts and steroid injections to his face. It’s the second time he has had this procedure, and he’s hoping it will be his last.

We encourage you to keep praying for Linden and his wife, Bri, as they continue along this difficult journey. To follow Linden’s progress, visit the “Prayers for Linden Millist, his wife Bri and their families” Facebook page.

Linden wasn’t the only Millist to make Adventist Record headlines this past week. Keep reading this week’s edition of Record eNews to find out more.
Ordination Committee completes work

The Theology of Ordination Committee comprising 106 Adventist men and women of diverse ages, ethnicities, and professions, and set up by the leadership of the General Conference in September 2012, has now completed its work.

Adventist pilot honoured for overseas service

Pastor Roger Millist was awarded the Order of Australia Medal (OAM) as part of this year’s Queen’s Birthday honours.

Read Adventist World

Strap in to the newest issue of *Adventist World* and find out how Darren Peakall is reaching Adventist members scattered among 274 islands of the Torres Strait.

Watch/download InFocus

Making headlines:
- Aussies and Kiwis headed for danger
- Christian outreach at Brazil’s World Cup
- A Russian Orthodox priest rows across the Pacific

The Australian Christian Lobby’s Katherine Spackman comments on prostitution law reform and the case of new mum Meriam Ibrahim, sentenced to death in a Sudan court.

Early morning chill
Sudan’s Meriam Ibrahim is on death row for choosing not to deny her Christian faith. If you think there is nothing you can do to help her and other modern-day martyrs, think again.

More Features

Dennis Perry: The man who died three times

Very few people have suffered as much as Dennis Perry. But today he’s incredibly positive and says he’s been blessed as he devotes his energies to others in need.

More Stories

Following Jesus—really

Walking from town to town sharing the Good News, or simply doing the dishes? What does it really mean to “follow Jesus”?
This week's offering (June 14, 2014): Union Offering—Mamarapha College

from Linden Chuang, Adventist Record assistant editor—digital

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Adventist engineer burnt in fuel fire

Goroka, Papua New Guinea

An Adventist Aviation Services (AAS) engineer has suffered burns on up to 50 per cent of his body, after a fire during routine maintenance on their newest plane.

Chief engineer Linden Millist was burned after a fuel tank caught fire and was medevac’d to Brisbane from AAS headquarters at Goroka, Papua New Guinea yesterday evening (January 22).

He is currently sedated and will be undergoing surgery over the next few days.

Linden Millist.

President of the Papua New Guinea Union Mission, Pastor Leigh Rice, is calling for Adventists in the South Pacific to pray for Mr Millist and his recovery.

“I and everyone in the National Office in Lae, are praying for Linden and his family,” said Pastor Rice.

“Adventist Aviation plays a significant role in the mission of the Church in Papua New Guinea, so this incident will impact on the mission of the Church here,” he added.

AAS CEO, Roger Millist, said that AAS is currently working with the Accident Investigation Commission to determine what exactly happened.
Aviation engineer to undergo face operation

The Adventist Aviation Services engineer who was severely burnt in an accident at the Goroka hangar is having another operation tomorrow (Friday, June 13), as his long road to recovery continues.

Linden Millist will go into surgery at 6am for grafts and steroid injections to his face.

“This is the op I have been waiting for now, for a few months,” Mr Millist told those following his progress on Facebook.

The operation had been scheduled for June 5, but had to be deferred after the hospital received another acute burns patient. “I said yes to this opportunity, despite it messing up a few appointments and plans, as I have already been bumped once, after waiting a few months.”

This is the second time Mr Millist has had this procedure and he is hoping it will be his last. Some patients have this procedure done four times.

“I recall the recovery [from this procedure] wasn’t much fun and painful,” said Mr Millist. “I was hoping that that first attempt would be the one and only, but despite working hard to reach that goal, I have lost this battle with my body’s rapid natural healing.”

In spite of so many follow up operations and the need to live near the hospital, Mr Millist is upbeat. “Life is an adventure still, not knowing what each new day will bring, kinda like living in PNG!”

“Thank you for thinking and praying for me!”

Photo Source: Facebook: Prayers for Linden Millist, his wife Bri and their families
Ordination Committee completes work

The Theology of Ordination Committee comprising 106 Adventist men and women of diverse ages, ethnicities, and professions, and set up by the leadership of the General Conference in September 2012, has now completed its work.

When it was appointed in response to a request made at the 2010 General Conference session in Atlanta, it was given two primary questions to answer:

1. What is the theology of ordination from a Biblical perspective?
2. What should the implications of this theology be for Seventh-day Adventist practices, including the question of women’s ordination?

In response to the first question the committee initially agreed on a consensus statement on the theology of ordination from a Seventh-day Adventist perspective. This document, together with all of the documents which have been presented to the committee, may be accessed at <www.adventistarchives.org(gc-tosc)> (papers from the June 2014 meeting will be added shortly).

The committee has spent most of its time considering the second question. Presentations looking at many different aspects of the discussion have been presented. There have been those who have presented from a position which supports only the ordination of men. There have been those who have presented from a position which supports the ordination of both men and women. All presentations have been biblically based as attempts were made to substantiate each viewpoint on the basis of the teaching of Scripture.

However, despite a thorough process, no consensus representing only one viewpoint was reached at the end of the meeting. In fact, recommendations arising from three viewpoints have been forwarded to the leaders of the General Conference to be considered in preparation for the Annual Council of the General Conference Executive Committee and, subsequently, the General Conference session in San Antonio in 2015.

Briefly summarised are the three viewpoints and their implications:

1. Those who believe that only the ordination of men is supported in Scripture are asking that the Church does
not proceed to permit women to be ordained, and that previous decisions which have allowed women to be ordained as elders and deacons be reversed so that in the future only men are ordained to any office which requires ordination in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

2. Those who believe that the ordination of both men and women is supported in Scripture are asking that appropriate decisions and action be taken, starting at the General Conference and proceeding through the Divisions, Unions, Conferences and Missions, which allow those organisational units of the Church which wish to proceed to ordain both men and women to do so, and those organisational units which do not wish to proceed, not to do so. Unity would be preserved by allowing diversity of practice in an area which is not part of the central Fundamental Beliefs of the Church.

3. Those who believe that male headship is the general pattern in Scripture are asking that this ideal be upheld while allowing that there may be circumstances which allow for exceptions in areas for which there is no universal divine command or salvation imperative. In light of factors such as the priority of mission, the importance of church unity, and the principles of Christian liberty, it is recommended that denominational leadership at the proper level may be authorised to decide whether or not to ordain women with no pastor, church employee, organisational unit, or local church being compelled to support the resulting diversity.

A survey of attendees was taken of the attendees at the final committee to ascertain support for each of these positions. Each person was asked to nominate the position which they supported, and if they wished, nominate their second and third choice. The results were as follows:

1. 32 chose Position 1 as their first choice, 0 as their second choice and 2 as their third choice.
2. 40 chose Position 2 as their first choice, 12 as their second choice and 0 as their third choice.
3. 22 chose Position 3 as their first choice, 19 as their second choice and 0 as their third choice.

While there remained many who are opposed or have reservations regarding ordination of women to the gospel ministry, it may be significant that approximately two thirds of those participating were willing to allow the ordination of both men and women, at least in some circumstances.

The next step in the process is consideration of the recommendations by the leaders of the General Conference who will advance the discussion to the floor of the Annual Council of the Executive Committee of the General Conference. From there it will proceed to the General Conference session. Please pray that the hand of God will continue to be seen in the consultation process and that He will direct the Church in the decision-making process.

Dr Barry Oliver and Dr Ray Roennfeldt are South Pacific Division representatives on the Theology of Ordination Committee.
Wahroonga, New South Wales

Pastor Roger Millist was awarded the Order of Australia Medal (OAM) yesterday as part of this year’s Queen’s Birthday honours.

The outgoing Adventist Aviation Services (AAS) CEO was recognised for “service to international relations through a range of aviation and church roles in Papua New Guinea (PNG)”.

“I feel very humbled to have been nominated and awarded,” said Pastor Millist. “My aim in life has always been to put others and their needs ahead of my own, and to serve to the best of my ability using the talents God has given me and allowed me to develop.”

The OAM is part of the Australian honours system, and recognises an individual’s outstanding achievement and service locally and internationally.

Pastor Millist has served as a missionary pilot in PNG for 16 years (over two stints). However, he is quick to acknowledge the work of other missionaries who have made a “greater contribution to both aviation and the development of PNG”.

“I don’t feel I have done any more than many others who have worked and served in PNG over the years,” says Pastor Millist. “In accepting this award, I accept it on behalf of all who have served the needs of the remote villages of PNG.”

The OAM isn’t Pastor Millist’s first brush with royalty. In April, he was invited to participate in Prince William’s tour of the Pacific Aerospace Limited (PAL) aircraft factory in New Zealand.

Following the tour, Pastor Millist presented the Duke of Cambridge with a copy of 50 Years: Adventist Aviation 1964–2014.

AAS is celebrating 50 years of operations in PNG this year, with a special jubilee being held in Goroka from July 3-6.
I fight sleep in the early morning chill, debating whether to get out of bed. I slide on my slippers. A chorus of birds grows louder as I tiptoe down the hall to check on my little girl. She is breathing quietly under a mountain of quilts. My only concerns for the day are planning her birthday party.

On the other side of the world: A woman lies awake. Her large, luminous eyes widen every time she hears footsteps. What will happen to her children when her baby girl turns two? Her little girl will understand what a birthday is, but she will not understand what it means to kiss Mummy goodbye for the last time. Will her children be taken by the relatives who accused her of adultery and apostasy, knowing that the Sudanese government would give her 100 lashings and the death sentence?

She pictures her husband Daniel’s reunion with his little boy. She hears him cry out, "Martin!" He looks as if he wants to leap from his wheelchair. He embraces his son and cradles his head, protectively. "Be brave, Meriam", the mother whispers to herself, but her heart stabs with loneliness. If only Daniel could have seen the birth of their little girl. "I want to be there for them always, but I won’t deny Jesus." She hugs her children in the early morning chill.

Two mothers, so far apart. Is it enough for me to mutter a morning prayer for Meriam?

Jesus’ disciple James would disagree. " . . . Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" (James 2:15).

James tells I need more than words—but how can I help? Perhaps I am not important enough to make a difference. Or can I find a solution between idealistic extremes, and well-meaning words? Something I can do for modern-day martyrs—those faithful to Jesus though they suffer and may pay the ultimate price.

I look up the Voice of the Martyrs website, to find that letter-writing can be a form of advocacy. Benefits of letter-writing are listed: the prisoner knows they are not forgotten; better treatment; lighter sentences; earlier release times.

I look up a link to Amnesty International. From there I can email, send a letter, or even send a text message to petition the Sudanese authorities. I can also give a donation. Amnesty International estimates more than half a million people are calling for Meriam's release. Ordinary people like me.

I type "ADRA Australia" (Adventist Development and Relief Agency), to see what they are doing in Sudan. Poverty and desperation are a factor in the spread of oppressive religions because alongside force, bribery (money, houses, marriage partners and more) is an efficient way of gaining "converts". Supporting ADRA’s work to care for and
empower the communities of Sudan improves the situation for every Christian living there.

Also, though a hasty prayer may not mean much, there are whole prayer ministries praying for Christians suffering persecution. Jesus' words come to mind: "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:20). I see thousands of appeals for Meriam rising to the Supreme Ruler of the universe. I think about what happened to Pharaoh when he ignored God's command, "Let my people go" (Exodus 5-12). I realise my God is powerful and will not forget His child in prison, but He also gives me the privilege to do my part.

I recall C S Lewis' words as he refers to "the frightening parable of the sheep and the goats [that] seems to be the point on which everything turns".

"Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord . . . when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, 'Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me'" (Matthew 25:37-40).

*All verses quoted from the Holy Bible, King James Version.*

**Resources**


Voice of the Martyrs Australia: <www.vom.com.au>


Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Australia: <www.adra.org.au>


*Leesa Briones writes from Melbourne, Australia, where she lives with her husband Morris and daughter Mia.*
What does it really mean to “follow Jesus”? How literally are we supposed to take it? Should we all, at the age of 30—just when we’re supposed to be getting sensible—abandon our careers and families and couch-surf our way around the country, teaching, healing, exorcising demons and aggravating our leaders?

I live next to Lake Macquarie in New South Wales. Its dimensions are basically the same as the Sea of Galilee, with settlements dotted along each side. And about as far north as Galilee is from Jerusalem, Lake Macquarie is from Sydney.

It’s an uncanny geographical resemblance that has triggered strange thoughts of living out the Jesus story in my own local area—journeying on foot from township to township, staying at the homes of friendly people I meet along the way, visiting a different church each Sabbath, walking the 100 kilometres to Sydney a couple of times per year for Passover/Easter and similar festivals.

Is this what it means to really follow Jesus? Well, maybe I’m being hyper-literal, but I fear my more typical opposite reaction: Of course Jesus didn’t mean looking at someone lustfully is as bad as adultery—it’s just a figure of speech. I know the commandment says I shouldn’t covet, but wanting that gadget is my motivation to save my money responsibly. I know Jesus said if we give a stranger a room, it’s like we’re caring for Him, but this guy doesn’t smell like Jesus—he stinks!

That’s how I usually explain away the inconvenient verses in the Bible that challenge me to think or act differently. They’re metaphorical, they’re written for a different time and culture, they’re hyperbole—exaggeration for literary effect. Or if I just think about the challenge for a long while, turning the idea over in my head, even posting a pithy quote on Twitter . . . and, well, eventually I’ll get over it and move on to something else—my mind neutralised, my life unchanged.

Is it desperation for an escape from this cycle of spiritual atrophy that leads to thoughts (aka more passive speculation) of wandering homeless around the grassy verges of Lake Macquarie? But, of course, the change required is so huge—and possibly ridiculous—that it will be added to the inert mountain of other untested challenges.
I’m starting to suspect that these wild ideas are a way to avoid the next simple act of obedience Jesus is calling me to—waking up early enough to spend some time with Him, loving my family by cleaning the kitchen, to befriend my neighbour, giving generously to the relative who asks for help.

I still believe that God has some kind of astounding challenge or heart-breaking sacrifice in store for everyone who is truly submitted to Him. But I’m gradually realising that the way for me to literally follow Jesus isn’t about grandiose gestures. Instead it’s one small, unremarkable, obedient step at a time.

Kent Kingston is assistant editor of Adventist Record.