

# RECORD

December 19, 2009

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Avondale School students give gifts

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Curtin appoints first Adventist chaplain

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Ellen White and Christmas



## Record number graduate



*Pastor Chester Stanley, president of the Australian Union Conference, addresses conference presidents from around Australia at Jumbunna Lodge, home of the new training centre.*

## AUC introduces new training centre

RINGWOOD, VICTORIA

The Australian Union Conference (AUC) used the AUC year-end meetings, held over the end of November and beginning of December, to introduce conference presidents from around Australia to the venue that will host the AUC Training Centre. Jumbunna Lodge, near Healesville, will host the Training Centre, which will be held for the first time in 2010.

Presidents were given the opportunity to talk with AUC leaders about the training programs at the meetings. The first AUC Training Centre will be run from February 14 to March 5, with the second held from

October 17 to November 5. There are about 25 places available, and applications must include recommendations from a member's local pastor and conference president. Application forms are available from the training centre website, <[www.auctrainingcentre.org.au](http://www.auctrainingcentre.org.au)>. The AUC's board of directors approved the Training Centre last year.

Pastor Roger Govender, director of Personal Ministries for the AUC, says, "Since then, we've been working to transform the training centre from a concept to reality. Conference presidents have long said they've wanted to establish something like this, so

*(Continued on page 4)*



We have always evaluated the success of our evangelistic endeavours by counting the number of baptisms we have—and this is good.

# Our mission of discipleship

**A**T THE RECENT MEETINGS OF THE South Pacific Division Executive Committee, an important change was made to the mission statement of the division. The General Conference has also recently amended its mission statement along the same lines. The amendment focuses on the connection between mission and discipleship. The mission statement of our South Pacific Division now reads like this:

Our mission is “To make disciples for Jesus Christ of all peoples, communicating the everlasting gospel in the context of the Three Angels’ Messages of Revelation 14:6-12.”

In Matthew 28:18-20, Jesus provided His people of all ages with a commission to “go and make disciples.” We would do well to notice that the commission was given on the basis of His authority. His authority ensures the success of the mission. His authority is our mandate. The passage reads:

“Then Jesus came to them and said, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.’”

In the gospel commission recorded

by Matthew, there are four verbs. The primary verb is the verb translated in all contemporary translations as “make disciples.” This verb is in the imperative case. It is the language of command. Jesus is clearly telling us that the core of mission is the making of disciples.

The other three verbs in the commission are participles. Participles contribute to the action but generally do not constitute the primary action. In the gospel commission, the three participles may be translated as “going,” “baptising,” and “teaching.” While the essence of our mission, whichever method we utilise, is the making of disciples, Jesus is saying it is important that we “go.” If we stay within the boundaries of our own comfort zones, or if we stay within the strictures of our own making, we cannot be faithful in the task of making disciples. We cannot fulfil the commission. We are called to step outside the walls of our own confinement—whatever they are.

The “baptising” is also vitally important. Jesus would not have said it if it was not so.

Seventh-day Adventists have always taken Jesus’ words seriously, to the extent that we have always evaluated the success of our evangelistic endeavours by counting the number of baptisms we have—and this is good. I personally believe it is essential to be accountable in our use of resources and in the evaluation of results. But ac-

ording to Jesus, “baptising” is not to be our focus of attention. We do not succeed simply by “baptising.” In Jesus’ words, “baptising” is secondary to the central focus of making disciples. Administrators and evangelists take note!

While it is identified as one of the three principle contributing actions, teaching is also secondary to the central focus of making disciples. Teachers take note! If we are engaged in education and our “teaching” is not focused on the ultimate goal of disciple making, it is not core mission! If we are engaged in evangelism and all we are doing is “baptising,” we are not engaged in core mission. If we are “going” across the street or to the ends of the earth yet are not focused on disciple making, we are not engaged in core mission. We can go, we can teach, we can baptise. But the central focus of our core mission is to make disciples—through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus’ words were not a description of appropriate church organisation. They were not a clarification of the finer points of theology. They were a mandate for mission with discipleship at the centre.

*\*Unless otherwise specified, all Bible quotations are from the New International Version.*

**Barry Oliver**  
President  
South Pacific Division



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Our vision is to...  
**know**  
**experience**  
**and share**  
our hope in Jesus Christ!

# Record number graduate “for Him”

COORANBONG, NEW SOUTH WALES

God’s providence and service to others were the key values of this year’s Avondale College graduation class. A record number of graduands received their degrees (310) on the weekend of December 4 to 6. What stood out the most was the classes’ desire to look beyond themselves to God. This idea was clearly expressed in the theme of graduation, “From Him... through Him... for Him.”

The acknowledgement of God’s providence came in a variety of forms over the weekend. God was emphasised as the source of life and success by keynote speakers in their addresses at the consecration and valedictory services.

For four graduands, the weekend’s festivities provided the setting for public displays of faith in God. Although not a part of the official graduation program, students Jodie Eckert, Robert Stanton, Samantha Knopper and Tahlia D’Costa surrendered their lives to God through baptism. Each person celebrated their decision with family and friends who had gathered for the weekend.

Graduates also recognised the importance of serving others. The graduating classes’ gift of donated money to the college was announced during Friday night’s consecration service on the Lake Macquarie

campus. A third of the money will go into an Avondale College Seventh-day Adventist church fund that will provide Bibles for newly-baptised students. The other two thirds are being donated to Barnados—a not-for-profit organisation assisting and raising awareness of Australian children in desperate need.

Pastor Brendan Pratt, director of Sabbath School and Personal Ministries director for the Greater Sydney Conference, reminded graduands of the importance of reaching out to others in his worship service sermon. Avondale College’s yearbook, the *Jacaranda*, edited by graduand Kim Brown, also centered on the concept of “A better world.”

In his graduation service speech, class co-president Andrew White encouraged his peers to continue to have a service mindset. “It is my sincere hope that every graduate of Avondale College, irrespective of their field of learning, should embrace their future professions as a true calling. With this attitude, our impact on the world around us can be profound and far reaching.”

Sunday’s graduation service saw most of the record number of graduands take to the stage to receive their certificates. Nine more students than last year—were eligible to march during the service.

In his presidential remarks, Dr Ray Roennfeldt noted the steady growth of



*Nerliza Sales from Thailand shakes hands with Dr Cedric Grieve after graduating from Avondale College with a Master of Education. She is the only student from Thailand to graduate through Avondale’s partnership with Mission College this year.*

Avondale College, which has seen a 40 per cent increase in students since 2004.

Professor Raymond Nobbs, senior research fellow of macquarie university and director at Newington College, presented the graduation service address. He too emphasised the importance of being God and service focused. “I challenge you to consider the skills you’ve acquired out of which you’re called (as your college motto says) to have “a greater vision of world needs” and also to share the good news of Jesus Christ.” He concluded with one short message for the graduands: “Go with God.”—**Brenton Stacey**



◆ **Carmel Adventist College students (WA)** recently provided food and entertainment for nearly 80 people who have served the Adventist Church faithfully over many years. Senior students prepared a tasty three-course meal, while those from the junior grades waited on tables and provided musical entertainment. The grand

finale to the day saw members of the **College Acrobatics Team** perform somersaults, twists, forward rolls and backflips for a very appreciative audience. According to one of the guests, “This is the best day I’ve had in awhile. The entertainment was fantastic and the students were really friendly.” A highlight was the personal testimony given by **Brendon Ellers**, a Year 11 student, who spoke of his recent conversion to Christianity and the joy he receives from attending a local adventist church. —**Gavin Williams**

◆ On November 30, **Elva Litster**, a member of **Hillview church, NSW**, received a special presentation and thank you from the children of **Wyee Public School** for her longstanding commitment to teaching Scripture at their school. Mrs Litster, who is now retiring due to ill health, has taught consistently at the school for 20 years. When asked, all of the children put up their hand to say that Mrs Litster had taught them and their brothers and sisters over the years. **Pastor Daron Pratt**, director of Children’s



Ministries for North New South Wales Conference, says, “It was inspiring to see how much of an evangelistic impact one person can have on so many lives, just from teaching Scripture in our local state primary schools. This might be the only opportunity these children have to be exposed to Christianity.” —**NNSW conference**

## AUC introduces new training centre

(Continued from page 1)

it is really meeting a need.”

Pastor Chester Stanley, president of the AUC, says the Training Centre offers church members the opportunity to acquire both the theoretical and practical skills that will equip them for local church ministry and community service.

“The focus is equipping pastoral assistants and training youth for evangelism,” says Pastor Stanley. “I would encourage Adventists in Australia to take the time to explore how they can enhance their own Christian experience by making a valuable contribution to God, church and community.”

The lay pastoral assistant course aims to equip people for the role of assisting pastors in evangelistic and pastoral functions. It covers three categories—evangelistic, pastor and local special ministries.

The youth Bible worker course is primarily aimed at achieving the mission of the church through personal evangelism, with an emphasis on young people. The course will explore community outreach, door-to-door work, visitations, Bible studies, small groups and other topics.

The Training Centre aims to establish working relationships with conferences and complement the training already being offered by them. Pastor Govender says, “The Training Centre is a new initiative. We

want to train members who want to make a meaningful contribution to their church and local community. The centre aims to equip, empower and really give members an opportunity to develop their skills.”

Six presenters will conduct the training. Pastor Ricardo North, an associate professor at Andrews University, will focus on the principles and practice of evangelism and preparation for small group sessions. Dr Jonathan Kuntaraf, director of Personal Ministries and Sabbath school for the General Conference, will focus on personal spirituality and how to give Bible studies. The other lecturers include: Dr Alan Lindsay, former director of the EG White Centre; Pastor Ken Vogel, general secretary of the AUC; Pastor Geoff Youlden, head AUC evangelist; and Pastor Loren Pratt, director of Personal Ministries for the Victorian Conference.

“These are presenters who really know their material—they’re very professional. They’re involved in training all the time,” says Pastor Govender. “It’s not just theory they’ll share—they’ll pass on as much practical experience as they can themselves.”

—Adele Nash

More @ [www.auctrainingcentre.org.au](http://www.auctrainingcentre.org.au)

For more information, contact Pastor Roger Govender via <[rogergovender@adventist.org.au](mailto:rogergovender@adventist.org.au)> or Pastor Graeme Christian via <[graemechristian@adventist.org.au](mailto:graemechristian@adventist.org.au)>.

## Avondale School students give gifts

COORANBONG, NEW SOUTH WALES

The Year 8 students at Avondale School have been getting into the Christmas spirit with enthusiasm and generosity. Looking beyond their own needs, they helped put together shoebox gifts for needy children around the world. Operation Christmas Child is a unique Samaritan’s Purse project that aims to bring hope to children in desperate situations. In 2008, Australia and New Zealand delivered more than 300,000 gift-filled shoeboxes to South East Asia and the South Pacific. The class worked together to collect and wrap the gifts. One student summarised everyone’s feelings by saying “it was cool to be able to help kids that couldn’t help us back.” the children hoped that each delivered shoebox gift is treasured by whoever that receives it and that they, in turn, feel valued.—Susan Rogers



Year 8 class with their packages.



◆ Mildura church hall, Vic, was awash with pink as women from the church and local community were invited to attend a **Girls’ Night In** on October 24 to raise money for **Pink Ribbon Breast Cancer Awareness**. The church social team were impressed with “the number of people who were willing to support the event,” says event coordinator **Lily Stojkovic**.

More than 50 women attended the night of pamper sessions and fellowship, with more than 15 local businesses donating their time by either attending on the evening or donating gift vouchers. These were auctioned off at the end of the night. The team were very pleased with how the evening progressed, with over \$A650 raised for the **Pink Ribbon Charity**. The event not only raised awareness of the issue of breast cancer but also created an opportunity for a church social that was an outwardly community-focused event.—Di Obst



◆ Children at Queensland’s **Maroochydore church** used breakfast cereal as bricks and chocolate as mortar to build the **walls of Jericho** (pictured). Then they destroyed and ate the walls as a visual illustration of the destruction of the city.—Phil Ward

◆ **Family Ministries leaders** from the **South Pacific Divi-**

**sion (SPD)** met recently with **Dr Ron and Karen Flowers**, Family Ministries leaders at the General Conference, for a two-day consultation held at the SPD office. Dr and Mrs Flowers have been directors in Family Ministry for 30 years. A number of issues were discussed, including the need for greater emphasis on family ministry at all levels of the church; the need for ongoing education in family matters for young people and high school students; and for the development of effective resources for strengthening families. Discus-

HAVE A SAFE AND BLESSED HOLIDAY SEASON

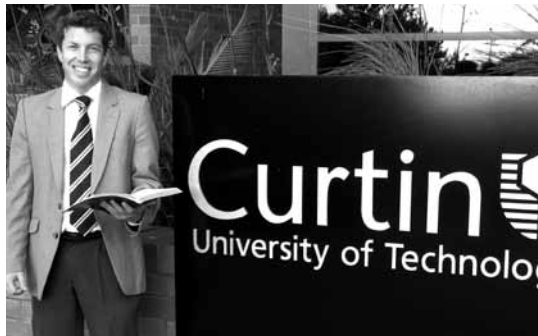
# Curtin appoints first Adventist chaplain

PERTH, WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Curtin University has appointed Bruce McCourt as its first Seventh-day Adventist chaplain. "There are so many exciting opportunities on university campuses to reach out and represent the Adventist message," observes Mr McCourt. "I believe God wants the Seventh-day Adventist Church to be a light on every campus, and for students to experience the joy and privilege of working for Him."

His appointment was initiated by the university due to the recent growth and development of the Seventh-day Adventist student body on the Bentley campus. This development includes the organisation of the ACTS Club, which was registered with the Curtin Student Guild in July 2008, and the recent launch of the ACTS church in July.

Mr McCourt has been a key leader in the development of Seventh-day Adventist student ministry at Curtin University. He started working there in February 2008 as a Bible worker and immediately began connecting with students at Curtin who expressed a personal interest in learning more about Bible prophecy. Mr McCourt was a founding member in the launch of the ACTS Club.



*Bruce McCourt is the first Adventist chaplain to serve Curtin University.*

In April, he launched the first on-campus Friday night Bible-study group with Dalibor Acimic. Mr McCourt is also one of the pioneering leaders of the ACTS church, which began worshipping during Sabbath at Curtin University on July 11.

As the Seventh-day Adventist chaplain, Mr McCourt will have many opportunities to represent the Adventist message within the Curtin University community. All students and staff at Curtin University, a community of approximately 45,000 people, have the opportunity to access the on-campus Adventist ministry through the university website, student orientation materials and information provided through student residential villages.

His chaplaincy role ensures the ongoing viability of the ACTS church, because his

leadership within the on-campus church is now recognised by both the WA Conference and the university.

As the Adventist chaplain at Curtin, Mr McCourt will have opportunities to organise seminars at the university. The vision and mission of key Adventist organisations such as ADRA, Sanitarium Health Food Company, Adventist Education and the

Ellen White Research Centre will be presented in the seminars.

"I believe there is no limit to what God will do for those who step out in faith and follow His leading in their lives," says Mr McCourt. "God wants to raise up a great movement of young people, who will dedicate their lives to Him and represent the love of Jesus to everyone they meet. I believe that we have a mission field here at home and God is calling for workers who will see the value of every soul." Mr McCourt has also been active within the ACTS church in creating a vision for establishing Adventist university churches on every campus in Perth.

—Sven Ostring

More @ <http://multifaith.curtin.edu.au/team/sda>.



sion was also given to providing a pastoral counselling course for pastors.—Trafford Fischer

◆ **Tom Schandy**, a professional wildlife photographer and member of the Adventist Church in Norway, has won the prestigious **Gerald Durrell Award for Endangered Wildlife**—one of the categories of

the **46th "Wildlife Photographer of the Year"** competition, organised by the **BBC and Natural History Museum** in England. The winning photo, which features a jaguar, was taken in 2008 during an expedition to the Pantanal wetland in Brazil, an area where jaguars still roam free from human harassment. The jaguar in the winning picture was only one of four jaguars Mr Schandy encountered during a three-day boat trip on the Rio Paraguay. "I have been involved in nature conservation my whole life I have also been

engaged in the World Wild Fund for Nature (WWF) in Norway for more than 20 years," says Mr Schandy. The Gerald Durrell Award for Endangered Wildlife is given to the most memorable image that captures the unique character or spirit of a species that is officially listed as endangered.—**TED News**

◆ Editors hope *Renewed & Ready's* new online presence will open the former print magazine to a wider audience. A magazine targeting **Seventh-day Adventists aged 50 and over** is mov-

ing online after more than two years in print circulation. Editors say <RenewedAndReady.com> will feature much of the same content distributed monthly in *Renewed & Ready*, a publication of church-owned **Pacific Press** that saw its final issue in September. Former subscribers can also access articles from back issues of the magazine, respond to stories in discussion topic forums and easily share content. An online presence will hopefully open *Renewed & Ready's* ministry to a wider age group, editors say.—**ANN**

# General Conference holds inaugural HR summit

SILVER SPRINGS, MARYLAND, US

Representatives of the South Pacific Division's (SPD) Human Resources department have made significant presentations at the inaugural International Human Resources Conference.

Held at the General Conference (GC) headquarters from September 30 to October 1, the conference brought together more than 80 delegates from the world divisions and the GC, including GC vice-president Pastor Ted N C Wilson and GC general secretary Pastor Matthew Bediako.

The conference was developed and held to help the church manage its vast and diverse workforce. "We are blessed to have such a dynamic and diverse workforce that is passionate and committed to the mission of the church," says Korey Dowling, SPD employment promotions officer.

Mr Dowling presented some of the initiatives the SPD is using to attract and retain a dynamic workforce. These initiatives include the Adventist Employment Internship/Scholarship Program, Employment Database and the support available to those seeking denominational employment. He also presented on the im-

portance of building a cross-generational workforce through understanding Generations X and Y. "If you take the time to connect with those of different generations and put aside preconceived thoughts, you will find that all generations can learn and benefit from the different perspectives of each group. When this occurs, a positive work culture thrives and the generational diversity has an empowering outcome."

Colin Clark, director of Human Resources for the SPD, presented on the difference between profit-driven corporate HR and belief-driven Adventist HR, and the role that HR can play in the church. "Understanding 'why' and 'how' we are different helps us understand and define our special Adventist HR character," he says.

On the second day of the conference, he shared the SPD electronic appraisal program. It was unanimously agreed that another conference needs to be held in the next few years, as there were many employment issues facing the church that need to be worked on collectively rather than individually.—*RECORD staff/Korey Dowling*

More @ [adventistemployment.org.au](http://adventistemployment.org.au)

## Love and Respect for couples and singles

COFFS HARBOUR, NEW SOUTH WALES

Coffs Harbour Family Ministries department facilitated a Relationship Enhancing Workshop for both couples and singles from the Coffs Harbour and Coffs Coast churches.

The workshop was based on the book *Love and Respect*, along with the *Love and Respect Workbook* by Dr Emerson Eggerichs. The key concept is that husbands and wives have one driving need—a wife to feel loved and a husband to feel respected.

The book reveals why spouses react negatively to each other, and how they can deal with such conflict quickly, easily and biblically. Two half-hour video presentations by Dr Eggerichs were followed by half-hour small group discussions, where various questions were addressed and individuals were given an opportunity to respond and/or share their own experiences.

The workshop ran for two hours on Sabbath afternoons for four weeks in August and September. Those who attended found the materials covered simple yet revolutionary. Some commented that it would be great if all young people heard the presentations before establishing their homes.—*Margaret Hivon*

◆ **Malaysian authorities** have seized 15,000 Bibles in the latest episode of the "Allah" saga. The government has been pushing for the use of the word "Allah" to be limited to Muslims, although it is the recognised word for "God" for Malay speakers of all faiths. The Bibles seizure pre-empts the pending decision of the **Kuala Lumpur High Court** on the issue. The **Christian Federation of Malaysia (CFM)** is calling for the immediate return of the confiscated Bibles, saying that authorities are in breach of the nation's Constitution, "which gives every

Malaysian the right to profess his/her faith as well as to practice it."—*Charisma News online*

◆ **Brisbane residents** are resorting to police intervention in response to rising volume levels from **contemporary churches**. Early morning rock music sessions have neighbours in despair, with the problem somewhat dealt with by dispute resolution and council curfews. But one resident, **Jenny Johansen**, says she is still subjected to hours of amplified music every Sunday afternoon. "It really drives up

the stress levels when all you want is to have a quiet sit in your backyard," she says. "The last thing you want is to have to listen to **Christian karaoke**."—*Courier Mail*

◆ Should people be allowed to **publicly criticise** a religion? More than **18,000 people** in 20 nations around the world were asked this question, and 57 per cent answered "Yes." The **World Public Opinion organisation** found that support for free speech in regard to religion was strongest in the United States, Europe and more

Westernised countries. But 34 per cent of those surveyed, mostly from Egypt, Pakistan and India, felt that public criticism of religion should be met with criminal sanctions. This trend was often strongest in countries where religious violence is an issue. The researchers noted that many of the countries at this end of the spectrum were currently struggling with sectarian violence. The poll comes as the United Nations is considering a controversial resolution against religious hate speech and defamation.—*www.worldpublicopinion.org*

IS YOUR CHURCH DOING SOMETHING EXCITING, INNOVATIVE OR INSPIRING? EMAIL [RECORD@SIGNSPUBLISHING.COM.AU](mailto:RECORD@SIGNSPUBLISHING.COM.AU)



## Macadamia Christmas cake

Preparation time: 15 minutes

Cooking time: 40 minutes

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup margarine (125g)

$\frac{1}{3}$  cup brown sugar

2 tsp grated orange rind

2 eggs

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup wholemeal flour

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup plain flour

$\frac{1}{2}$  tsp baking soda

$\frac{1}{2}$  tsp mixed spice

1 cup sultanas

1 cup raisins

1 cup currants

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup macadamia nut halves

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup water

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup macadamia nut halves, extra

3 tbsp strained, heated apricot jam, to serve

1. Preheat oven to 180°C. Lightly grease and line a 20cm square cake tin.

2. Cream margarine, sugar and rind. Add eggs one at a time, mixing until well combined.

3. Add sifted flours, baking soda and mixed spice, stirring to combine. Stir through fruit, nuts and water.

4. Pour mixture into cake tin and bake for 20 minutes. Arrange remaining macadamia nuts on top. Cover cake with foil and bake for a further 20 minutes or until cooked.

5. Allow cake to cool in tin before turning onto a cooling rack. Glaze with apricot jam before serving.

Cut into 16 slices.

*Per serve: 1700 kilojoules (380 calories). Protein 16g. Total fat 14g. Saturated fat 1g. Carbohydrate 50g. Total sugars 5g. Sodium 1230mg. Potassium 1060mg. Calcium 115mg. Iron 3.9mg. Fibre 9g.*

# Our Christmas gift to you

CHRISTMAS IS THE SANITARIUM Nutrition Service's favourite time of the year. As well as remembering the birth of Jesus and His gift to this world, it's a wonderful time for caring, sharing, connecting and celebrating with the people we cherish—our friends and family. As part of our Christmas celebrations this year, we are offering you a gift.

### A gift for you

Receive a complementary packet of Greenpatch Organic Herb Seeds with every copy of our latest free cookbook, *Food for Health and Happiness*.\* Full of great recipes to help you nourish and care for yourself and your family, *Food for Health and Happiness* also includes a handy seasonal planting guide to show you which herbs and vegetables will grow best in each season in different areas of Australia or New Zealand.

### From little things big things grow

Our hope is that our gift of seeds will help to kick-start your summer herb garden. Growing your own food, even if it is just a few herbs, is a wonderful way to connect with nature and enjoy the health benefits

that come from eating fresh plant foods.

Don't have a garden? Why not start with a few pots on the balcony or a small pot on your windowsill?

Often when you plant some herbs or vegetables you will produce more that you can eat at any one time. So why not use the excess produce to get to know your neighbours? Share with them a gift from your garden.

### Order quickly

Order your free copy of *Food for Health and Happiness* cookbook along with your free packet of Greenpatch Organic Herb

Seeds online at <[www.sanitarium.com.au](http://www.sanitarium.com.au)> or by calling 1800 673 392 (in Australia) or 0800 100 257 (in New Zealand) during business hours. Order is valid for one copy per person. Christmas promotion ends December 23, 2009. Allow 28 days for delivery.

### Merry Christmas

We hope your Christmas is full of health and happiness, and that it continues throughout the new year.

Warmest wishes and God's blessings from our team.

*\*Due to quarantine restrictions, West Australian residents will receive sunflower seeds instead of herb seeds, and the offer of Australian seeds is unavailable in Tasmania and outside Australia. New Zealand residents will receive New Zealand herb seeds.*



**Cathy and the Sanitarium Nutrition Team, Berkeley Vale, New South Wales.**

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# Of empires and kingdom

BY NATHAN BROWN

ONE OF THE MOST AWARDED Australian books of last year was *American Journeys* by Don Watson. Beginning in May 2005, Watson travelled through much of the United States by road and rail over a period of about two years. He visited places of importance, both currently and historically, observing, listening, exploring and reflecting.

As a left-leaning, secular Australian intellectual best known for his biography of former Australian prime minister Paul Keating—for whom Watson was a speech writer—*American Journeys* is surprising in the amount of space it gives to questions of religion. But then again, perhaps it should not be so surprising—the public prominence of religion is one of the strong contrasts between Watson’s native land and the America he discovered.

But in this context and from this author, a moment of conjecture about two-thirds of the way through the narration of his journeys offers a compelling insight, asking questions about the nature of religion and empires: “It’s not impossible that someone will come to see more in the New Testament than personal healing, personal satisfaction, personal closure and opposition to abortion and the ‘gay agenda’ of the Democratic Party. What if they begin to pursue the kingdom of God and decide that empire is as it was in Christ’s time, the opposite of God’s kingdom; that the mall is what the temple was; that the politicians, moguls, media hosts and evangelists are hypocrites and false prophets; that the worship of celebrities is idolatrous; and that the flag offers all the reassurance and moral force of the Romans’ SPQR?<sup>1</sup> What if the corrupt and reactionary evangelists and their political parasites have created the conditions for their own demise?”

But Watson does not leave it there. He offers a hopeful possibility for renewal for the best of reasons. It is intriguing to hear another voice from the secular world suggesting that Christianity be more true to what it claims to believe—and that this might be good for the world. “To the extent his-

tory is tragic repetition made sufferable by irony,” he writes. “it is almost preordained that the temples, built inevitably on moral compromise and falsehood and blasphemy even against their own tenets, should be torn down from within by a new breed of radical Puritans intent on the kingdom of God.”

## The new breed of radicals

Interestingly, Watson’s suggestion may find resonance in a string of Christian writers and thinkers that have shown new interest in the claims of the kingdom of God in contrast to the religious and non-religious empires that clamour for our attention and allegiance. A number of recent books have “rediscovered” the “fall” of Christianity with the fourth-century victory of Roman emperor Constantine and subsequent establishment of Christianity as a state religion.<sup>2</sup> These writers are exploring the damage empire has done to the kingdom of God as taught by Jesus, as well as the loss to the world. “The kingdom of God that had been known through a king who rules with a towel, a donkey, and a cross has become the empire of Christendom. In the name of the one who taught us to love our enemies, the church burned its enemies alive” (Claiborne and Haw, *Jesus for President*).

These books all include an element of lament, grieving for what the church has lost and how the church has so often misrepresented the God it claims to seek and serve. Greg Boyd summarises this history as that of “an institution that has frequently traded its holy mission for what it thought was a good mission. It is the history of an organisation that has frequently forsaken the slow, discrete, nonviolent, sacrificial way of transforming the world for the immediate, obvious, practical and less costly ways of improving the world. It is the history of a people who too often identified the kingdom of God with a ‘Christian’ version of the kingdom of the world” (*The Myth of a Christian Nation*).

Many of these writers see benefits to authentic Christianity in the decline of churches in the Western world as help-

ful in shifting Christianity away from its socially-accepted role as chaplains to the prevailing culture—the empire—to a more counter-cultural position. At the margins, the church is more likely to identify with the marginalised and resist the temptations of the dominant culture. “With the death of Christendom, the game is up. . . . The church in fewer and fewer situations represents the best vehicle for public service or citizenship, leaving only the faithful behind to rediscover the Christian experience as it was intended: a radical, subversive, compassionate community of followers of Jesus” (Michael Frost, *Exiles*).

## The old breed of radicals?

Yet reading these kinds of thoughts might not be such a new experience for many Adventists and other Christians in the best of the Protestant tradition, who have had strong critique of empire, particularly religious empire, an abhorrence of the abuses of history committed in the name of Christianity, and a wariness about the unhealthy conjunction between belief and power. Many Adventists’ first introduction to the Adventist understanding of the Bible and history came in the form of a large image, explained as representing the empires of the ancient world. This Daniel 2 introduction to Bible prophecy is usually expanded by discovering Daniel 7, an even more fearsome representation of the empires of this world and how they have oppressed and persecuted God’s people.

A new believer’s learning would often continue to the Book of Revelation, which would have been readily recognised by its first readers as “a bold, courageous, politically subversive attack on corrosive empire and its power to oppress people” (Bell and Golden, *Jesus Wants to Save Christians*). Read historically 2000 years later, it continues to offer this kind of assessment of and warning against Christianity-gone-wrong as it has been too often practiced and co-opted.

These are two aspects of a group of beliefs that, at their best, are aimed at reclaiming the heart of Christianity and standing up



against all systems and powers that would oppress, enslave and diminish people who are created and loved by God. And as such, much of this more-contemporary examination of these issues resonates with what might be considered the traditional Adventist introduction to the story of God as told in the Bible.

At its best, Adventism is part of a line of people of God who seek to be faithful by protesting against the abuse of power and pointing back to Jesus, the One who refused temptations to worldly power. Instead, He chose to serve and suffer to demonstrate “the full extent of his love” (John 13:1<sup>3</sup>).

### Back to Jesus

The phenomenon of Christmas is perhaps one of the best examples of how a radical story and earth-shattering God event has been overlaid by a quite different empire, domesticated by society, simplified and dismissed as a children’s story, exploited by retailers, and appreciated by many only as an excuse for self-indulgence and a few days off. All the while, Christianity stands by as an ineffectual but willing chaplain, happy to say grace for the feasting but otherwise largely disregarded.

Yet even in the supposed Christmas story lie the seeds for realising the clash of kingdom and empire that is part of the big story of history, as portrayed in the Bible. After announcing the “good news” of an impending Birth to Mary, the angel had barely left when she began singing a song of revolution: “He has taken princes from their thrones and exalted the lowly. He has satisfied the hungry with good things and sent the rich away with empty hands” (Luke 1:52, 53). And Jesus was probably just a few weeks old when some strange foreigners started asking questions about a new king in Israel. The then-king did what he thought he had to do to crush any potential rival, massacring all infant boys in Bethlehem (see Matthew 2:13-18).

Jesus’ ministry began with His rejection of the temptation to worship falsely in order to gain “the nations of the world and all their glory” (Matthew 4:8) but this temptation recurred in various forms as Jesus continued His cautious non-engagement with the religious and political authorities of His day. Yet He preached much about the kingdom of God, often using language that would have been quickly recognised by

the people as creating a strong contrast to the promises and threats of other empires.

And the “Christmas story,” when told properly, must lead to the cross. And the clash of empire and kingdom is at least one significant aspect of this event: “The cross is the culmination of all that the empire had to offer, where all the wrath of the world was poured out on God. And it is on the cross that we can see the ultimate power standoff. On the cross we see what love looks like when it stares evil in the face” (Claiborne and Haw).

### Intent on the kingdom

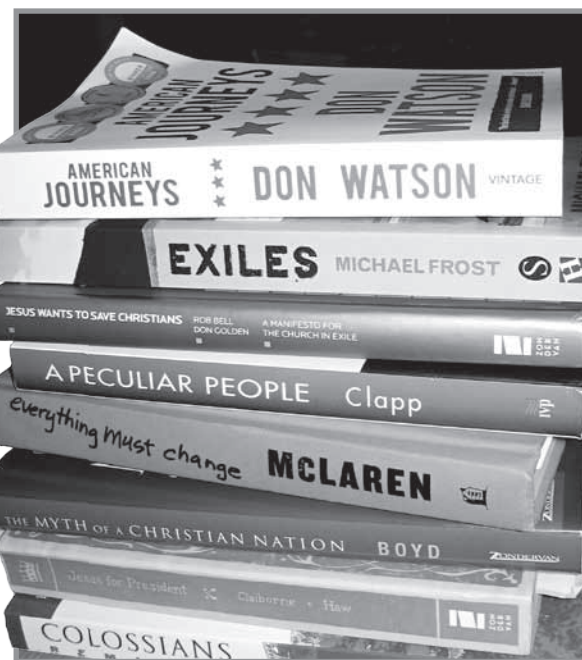
Surveying this history, it becomes clear that standing against empires is not easy or comfortable. But in a variety of ways, it is a necessity for faithfulness. Jesus’ proclamation of the kingdom is a call to courageous living—but such calls always come with the assurance of being backed by the most powerful of kings and kingdoms.

Perhaps one of the best examples comes in the vision the prophet Daniel recorded in Daniel 7. As Daniel watches, four beasts—representing empires—come out of the sea. As various commentators have pointed out, the portrayal of these empires as beasts fits with how such empires have acted throughout history, hurting and oppressing the people of God, acting as “mutations of things made by God” (Claiborne and Haw).

But the first beast to appear—the lion with eagle’s wings (see Daniel 7:4)—would have been of particular interest to Daniel. It was more than an appropriate symbol for the power of Babylon to him. Even as this vision began, he was reassured as to how the story would end. After all, in just the previous chapter of his story, Daniel had been protected in the lion’s den. As Daniel explained it to the king, “My God sent his angel to shut the lions’ mouths so that they would not hurt me” (Daniel 6:22).

The empires of this world are only ever temporary, and always subject to the power of God and the pre-eminence of His kingdom. God had already demonstrated this in a dramatic, physical way in Daniel’s life.

Daniel’s vision concludes with a vindication of his hope—Someone coming with the clouds of heaven, again using the language of kingdoms to contrast with those of this



world: “He was given authority, honour, and royal power over all the nations of the world, so that people of every race and nation and language would obey him. His rule is eternal—it will never end. His kingdom will never be destroyed” (Daniel 7:14).

When we are reminded how the story ends, Watson’s suggestion of “a new breed of radical Puritans intent on the kingdom of God” doesn’t sound as out of place as even he might have thought. Albeit unwittingly, he is echoing the call of God to His people throughout history—to live as members of a different kingdom, knowing that only God’s kingdom offers so much more than “tragic repetition made sufferable by irony.” **R**

1. *Senatus Populusque Romanus* (“The Senate and the People of Rome”), used as a symbol of Roman government power.

2. Examples include: *Jesus Wants to Save Christians: A manifesto for the church in exile* by Rob Bell and Don Golden; *The Myth of a Christian Nation: How the quest for political power is destroying the church* by Gregory Boyd; *Jesus for President* by Shane Claiborne and Chris Haw; *A Peculiar People: The church as culture in a post-Christian society* by Rodney Clapp; *Exiles: Living missionally in a post-Christian culture* by Michael Frost; *Everything Must Change: Jesus, global crises and a revolution of hope* by Brian McLaren; and *Colossians Remixed: Subverting the empire* by Brian Walsh and Sylvia Keemaat.

3. All Bible quotations are from the *New Living Translation*.

**Nathan Brown is a contributing writer for RECORD.**



# Ellen White and Christmas

BY JOHN SKRZYPASZEK

**C**HRISTMAS TIME. IT IS A TIME OF FESTIVITIES, the joyful sound of carols, holidays, memories of families and friends far away, and many chores to keep our lives busy. At Christmas time, perhaps more than at any other time of the year, we run around and become exhausted with the preparation of good things—good things for families, good things for the poor and good things for the church.

In his challenging book *Secrets of the Spiritual Life*, Rich Stevenson remarks, “We live in such a busy society and have become such a busy church. It reminds me of the title of the book I read years ago, *Little House on the Freeway*. That’s what we’ve become! We are a church torn in two. We are people distracted by so many good things, many of them good things for Jesus.”

Stevenson further expands his frustrations with the reality of our preoccupation with doing good things. “Sometimes I feel as though Jesus would like to stand centre stage in our churches and speak with a loud voice. Don’t just do something, stand here.”<sup>1</sup>

## Behold the Child

Stop, stand still and behold the child. Twice I’ve waited for the first glimpse, the first sound and the first breath. As I waited for the birth of my sons, the world around me stopped. In a sense, I was helpless. So I stood there, waiting in silence to behold the child.

Perhaps things have not changed that much since the day of Christ’s birth. For many, the world kept spinning just as it does today—same routines, same rituals and same challenges.

Note how Ellen White describes life back then. “Yet Jerusalem was not preparing to welcome her Redeemer. With amazement the heavenly messengers beheld the indifference of that people of God whom God has called to communicate to the world the light of sacred truth . . . In the temple the morning and evening sacrifices daily pointed to the Lamb of God; yet there was no preparation to receive Him. The priests and teachers of the nation knew not the greatest event of the ages was about to take place. They rehearsed their meaningless prayers, and performed their rites of worship to be seen by men, but in their strife for riches and worldly honour they were not prepared for the revelation of the Messiah. Hearts selfish and world-engrossed were untouched by the joy that thrilled all heaven. Only a few were longing to behold the Unseen. To these heaven’s embassy was sent.”<sup>2</sup>

Christmas should remind us of the time when the universe waited for the first glimpse, the first sound and the first breath of Life—God’s entry into the realm of human life. Here, I echo Stevenson’s “stand here” thought. Stop running—look away from the pathway of your goals, achievements, ambitions and plans. Let’s stand still and behold the child!

Ellen White continues, “The story of Bethlehem is an exhaustless theme. In it is hidden ‘the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God.’ God gave His only-begotten Son, that the path of life might be made sure for our little ones [Romans 11:33]. ‘Here is love.’

Wonder, O heavens! And be astonished, O earth!”<sup>3</sup>

## Ellen White and Christmas

With these thoughts in mind, I wondered, *How did Ellen White celebrate Christmas?* Well, her schedule was busy but on December 14, 1867, she wrote a letter to her son, Edson. In it, she says, “Our effort in this place closed last evening, and I am weary and worn. Our labours have been very wearing. I have had the heaviest amount of labour to perform. Have tried earnestly to bring souls to the point to decide to take their position on the truth.”

She also writes about being unable to get to sleep until late at night due to “labouring for the people,” exhorting them to make decisions for truth.

Yet in all this she remembered Christmas, for she concludes the letter by saying, “Dear son, I send you a Christmas present. Accept the same from your loving mother.”<sup>4</sup>

Perhaps mail services were not as efficient as they are today, for on December 29, she wrote to her children. “I have for some reason felt anxious for you. I expected to find a letter from you here at Enosburg but was disappointed. I sent you a Christmas present. Let me hear from you.”<sup>5</sup>

I am sure she loved to spend Christmas with family. This longing comes through in her letter to Lucinda Hall, written on December 19, 1873: “I wanted to be with you [for] Christmas, but we shall be on the way. Tell the children their Christmas presents are forthcoming. We are sorry that we could not have them at Santa Rosa at the time.”<sup>6</sup>

She enjoyed Christmas shopping and Christmas celebrations. On December 26, 1878, she wrote to her family. “I suppose you will be interested to know how we spent Christmas. The day before Christmas we went to town, and it was tediously cold. I suffered with cold. I never remember of its being much colder in Michigan. But Brother Moore’s people were living in a tent and were very uncomfortable. We were determined he should not live thus and we commenced to bring about a change. We moved them into Sister Bohler’s old house which was very open, but better than a tent, for several nights. We had divided our bedding with them to keep them from suffering.

“We then went to the city and purchased for them flour, white and graham; sugar, a bone of meat, butter out of the question. We laid out ten dollars for clothing to make them comfortable and necessary furniture to get along. I will tell you everything they had for breakfast—a few corn gems and a little beef-suet fat; not a chair, a straw bed and a comforter laid over it. The children had an old rug and blanket laid under them. Sister Moore had no shoes, no comfortable clothing. He had no pants fit to be seen. Christmas morning we all took breakfast together.”<sup>7</sup>

### Stop and be still

Ellen White was busy, committed and dedicated to her prophetic ministry. She was subject to pressures of life, discouragement, disappointments, sickness and loneliness. So I wondered, *What did it mean for her to stop and stand still?*

The year 1880 was filled with challenging issues for the White family. Arthur White describes it as a “potentially difficult time.”<sup>8</sup> In her letter to Willie and Mary, she opened her heart, showing what “standing still” at Christmas time meant for her.

“My soul was drawn out in earnest prayer to God. I felt an earnest longing for the manifestation of the Spirit of God and obtained relief. I believed that the Lord heard me and if I can preserve my connection with God, the way may be rough but it cannot be long. ‘I will smooth it with hope and will cheer it with song.’ There is rest for the weary. I feel unworthy of that rest. I have no exalted opinion of myself, but Jesus lives. If I trust wholly in Him His righteousness will cover my defects.

“It will pay to trust in Jesus always. Do not let the sad strain breathed in my letters sadden your hearts. I again grasp more firmly the cross of Christ and will follow more closely the dear Redeemer.

“Christmas is almost here. My Christmas will be spent in seeking Jesus to be a welcome guest in my heart. His presence will drive all the shadows away. Love, humility and meekness we should cherish, and let not Satan have the control of our minds or affections.”

She concludes the letter by saying, “Dear children, whatever may be your cares, your perplexities and trials, do not hesitate to tell it to Jesus. His ear is open to your prayer and He will not leave or forsake you—never, no never. I will not shadow your pathway by any sorrow of mine. Light is sown for the righteous and truth for the upright in heart. We must not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are unseen—the reward that awaits us at the end of the journey. Be strong in the Lord. He is acquainted with your perplexities, with every sorrow, and will be to you a present help in every time of need. But do not trust to your own strength, but cling mightily to the Rock that is higher than you. Write me as often as you can.”<sup>9</sup>

This is what Christmas spirit is all about. To “behold the child” means that God wants us to “be still” for the one thing that is most important. He wants from us our implicit trust in His love and care.<sup>10</sup>

And yes, Ellen White stood still at Christmas time to behold Jesus, her precious Lord and friend. **R**

1. Rich Stevenson, *Secrets of the Spiritual Life, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Baker Books, 2003, page 67.*

2. Ellen White, *The Desire of Ages, Mountain View, California, 1940, page 44.*

3. *Ibid, page 49.*

4. Ellen White, *Letter 19, December 19, 1867.*

5. Ellen White, *Letter 21, December 29, 1867.*

6. Ellen White, *Letter 29, December 19, 1873.*

7. Ellen White, *Letter 63, December 26, 1878.*

8. *Read Arthur White’s The Lonely Years 1876–1891, Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1984, pages 144–153.*

9. Ellen White, *Letter 51, December 20, 1880.*

10. Rich Stevenson, *Secrets of the Spiritual Life, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Baker Books, 2003, page 68.*

**Pastor John Skrzypaszek is director of the Ellen G White/Adventist Research Centre, based at Avondale College.**



## A Christmas Prayer

BY MAUREEN LEFANUE

LOOK DOWN UPON US, LORD,  
As we celebrate Your birth.  
Help us to faithfully reflect  
Upon Your life and its worth.

You are our hope;  
Our joy and peace.  
This Christmas time  
Your love release.

A world more troubled  
Than ever before  
Needs Your love to be felt  
Instead of war.  
We pray this Christmas  
For Your presence dear  
To fill each home  
With love and care.

Gift us faith so strong  
To believe things unseen.  
Hope for salvation  
Of hearts made keen  
To share the gospel  
Of Your love divine,  
That hearts the world ‘round  
Will become entwined.

We give thanks for Your blessings  
That all year abound,  
And thank You for  
Your love gifts all around,  
May Your peace and joy  
Touch the hearts of all men.  
At this Christmas time  
Hallelujah, Amen. **R**

**Maureen LeFanue writes from Doonan, Queensland.**

## Exciting ministry

JOY BUTLER, KENYA

Thank you and praise God for “What determines Manhood matters” (Feature, November 7) and the marvellous ministry “Mission Serenity” in Queensland. This is the most exciting ministry I have heard about

## So many men have spoken of their desire for such a ministry and women have wished for it for years.

for a long time. A ministry focused on men is long overdue and although various attempts have been made during the past 15 years or so in Australia, they have been minimal and have not met with much enthusiasm in some places. So many men have spoken of their desire for such a ministry and women have wished for it for years. Women who work with and for men realise the need for it. How wonderful that Graham and Michelle have turned up, by God’s grace, and are bringing this very necessary ministry to our church. And in their goals, they state that they wish to extend it globally! I will be praying for and supporting this venture. God bless you, Graham and Michelle.

## Overcome all sin?

JAN KNOPPER, NSW

“The quest for authentic Christianity” (Feature, November 7) gives a list of traditions that I would like to challenge. If wrong, I stand to be corrected.

According to the author, full-time ministry and ordination are traditions and find no basis in the Word of God. My understanding from reading *Acts of the Apostles* is that the apostles were in full-time ministry. I read in Mark 2:14 that Jesus ordained his disciples to be apostles. In Acts 6:6 and James 5:14 and 15, we read that laying on of hands was done by the apostles or elders of the church. The work or ministry of Phillip in Acts 8 shows deacons were also involved in gospel ministry. They were ordained for something special in Acts 6 but not excluded from gospel work.

I have baptised people in Europe, Africa and Australia but never after they have

shown victory over all known sin. If that were the case, our church would never baptise anyone into God’s kingdom. Of course, we would like people to overcome the use of legal and illegal drugs, keep the Sabbath and obey God’s commandments. But having to overcome every known sin first goes too far. The author also calls it a tradition to teach people all things before being baptised.

Jesus instructs us in Matthew 28:19 and 20 to teach people all things, then baptise them. How can this be construed as tradition if it’s based on the clear Word of God? How much people need to be taught depends on their knowledge of the scriptures.

## Pray for forgiveness

SEAN RUSSELL, QLD

After reading “Paul against Paul?” (Letters, October 31) I feel compelled to make an urgent plea for all those who have polyester/cotton shirts to repent and pray for forgiveness. Anyone who doubts that wearing such garments is against the will of God should have a look at Leviticus 19:19. Spurious arguments along the lines of “God has not changed but human society and culture has” will not be considered. To do so would undermine the authority of scripture in flagrant violation of Fundamental Belief Number One.

## God’s instrument

CASEY WOLVERTON, QLD

Congratulations Pastor Pablo Lillo on your editorial “The hope of the world” (November 21). As part of a worldwide movement consisting of schools, universities, hospitals, nursing homes, media centres, publishing houses and, of course, an army of administrators, it’s easy to forget the central importance of the local church. Yet nothing has the potential to draw people to Christ—or scare them away—like the local church. It’s an essential instrument God uses to convey his love and character

to an unbelieving world. It can be heaven’s ambassador of hope—the hope of the world. Thank you for challenging us to become outward focused where it really counts, in the local church.

## Incoherent babbling

VICTOR CHRISTENSEN, QLD

I read “The quest for authentic christianity” with some concern. There is only one congregation in the New Testament that fits the description provided by the writer and the apostle Paul’s response to that situation was entirely negative.

Paul told the Corinthians their involvement in the incoherent babbling they called worship would cause outside observers to conclude “you are mad” (see 1 Corinthians 14:23).

Paul also identified the glossolalia practiced by the Corinthians as ineffectual witness. “If you are praising God with your spirit, how can one who finds himself among those who do not understand say “Amen” to your thanksgiving, since he does not know what you are saying?” (1 Corinthians 14:16).

According to Acts 2:1-8, the miracle of speaking in “tongues” at Pentecost did not include what is called “glossolalia” but represented the “native language” of the different ethnic groups in attendance. Scripture says “When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard them speaking in his own language” (Acts 2:6).

Paul’s response to the Corinthians religious incoherence was to reject it.

“But in the church I would rather speak five intelligible words to instruct others than ten thousand words in a tongue” (1 Corinthians 14:19).

Finally, in a direct response to the well-known pagan practice of “babbling” in worship manifested by the Corinthians, Jesus said “when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans” (Matthew 6:7).

**Note:** Views in Letters do not necessarily represent those of the editors or the denomination. Letters should be less than 250 words, and writers must include their name, address and phone number. All letters are edited to meet space and literary requirements, but the author’s original meaning will not be changed. Not all letters received are published. See masthead (page 2) for contact details.

## Positions vacant

▲ **Teacher—Carlisle Christian College, Mackay** (gateway to the Whitsundays), Qld. This role is to teach English, Bible and SOSE to middle school, years 7 to 10. The middle school has about 30 students. For further details, contact Rob Randall on (07) 4779 3988 or 0438 732 223, or email <robertrandall@adventist.org.au>.

▲ **Program Desk Officer—ADRA Australia (Wahroonga, NSW)**. The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Australia works with people in poverty and distress to create just and positive change through empowering partnerships and responsible action. ADRA Australia seeks expressions of interest from development-qualified and experienced professionals for a full-time program desk officer role. The contract term is one year, subject to possible extension. This role involves supporting and coaching; implementing partner ADRA offices; and managing international projects based in Asia and the Pacific. For further information, including a job description, contact Alison Young on (02) 9489 5488 or email <ayoung@adra.org.au>. Applicants should address essential and desirable criteria listed in the job description through examples of past experiences and qualifications. Applicants must have legal right to work in Australia. Forward your application letter and resume to Human Resources, ADRA Australia, PO Box 129 Wahroonga NSW 2076, email <ayoung@adra.org.au> or fax (02) 9489 7790. Please include three work-related referees and the contact information of your church pastor. Applications close **January 4, 2010**.

▲ **Receptionist/Orders Clerk—Sydney Adventist Hospital (Wahroonga, NSW)**. For this full-time position, we are seeking a well-organised and customer-focused individual to be the first point of contact for our Engineering and Maintenance department. You will be responsible for greeting and liaising with clients and customers of the department, either in person or over the telephone; processing work requests, invoices and purchase documents, as well as other associated administrative tasks. Essential criteria: previous experience in secretarial, clerical and reception work; proven skills with Microsoft programs; current NSW drivers licence; and a secretarial or Office Administration Certificate. Desirable criteria: previous experience in purchasing and invoice control. Inquiries and applications should be directed to Bernard Jakovac, Engineering and Infrastructure service manager on (02) 9487 9912 or email <bernardj@sah.org.au>. Applications close **January 4, 2010**

For more employment options go to  
adventistemployment.org.au



## Volunteers!

**Project Atoifi 2010**. We are very excited to announce the return of Project Atoifi for 2010, based at Atoifi on the Solomon Islands. It will be even bigger and better this year. We need at least 40 volunteers. We are looking for volunteer camera crews (each with HD cameras), team leaders, builders, musicians, singers, storytellers, first-aid instructors, all round handymen, and anyone who has a sense of adventure and would like to be part of a life-changing and very rewarding experience. This project will see new churches and a new primary school built. Project will run 29.6.2010 to 3.8.2010. For inquiries, contact Brian Larwood, <team@project-atoifi.org>.

Email:

<volunteers@adventist.org.au>  
For more positions, check the web on  
<www.adventistvolunteers.org>.

+61 2 9847 3275



Lawrence Wallace and Deborah Curtis Morris (Brisbane), were married 10.10.09 in Crowne Plaza Chapel (Gold Coast).

*Mladen Krklec*

**Hall—Schwarze**. Jason Garrie Hall, son of Garrie Hall and Cherryln Schofield (Westleigh, NSW), and Stephanie Anne Schwarze, daughter of Phillip and Suzanne Schwarze (Kingaroy, Qld), were married 25.10.09 in Wahroonga church. Jason and Stephanie are planning to live in Kingaroy after their honeymoon in Fiji.

*Frank Tassone*

**Tun Hla—Ler**. Hay Kae Mu Tun Hla, son of Tun and Mun Hla (Indiana, US), and Paw Gay Ler, daughter of Ker and May Ler (Canberra, ACT), were married on 9.11.09 in Canberra National church. The wedding party wore Burmese attire and the service was translated into the Karen language.

*Sid Griffith, Mervyn Myajkyan*

**Wright—Chant**. Adrian Peter Wright, son of Geoffrey and Yngvill Wright (Glenn Valley, NSW), and Kelly Anne Chant, daughter of Colin Chant and Virginia Dominick, were married 15.11.09 at a family property in Glenn Valley.

*Jeff Parker*

## Obituaries

**Barr**, Phyllis Jean (nee Gooper), born 29.10.1922 in Casterton Hospital, Vic; died 26.7.09 in Hamilton Hospital. She was predeceased by her husband, Francis. She is survived by her children, Gillian and Lesley; and grandchildren, Kayla, Jacqueline, Joshua, Nicholas and Lillie. Phyllis was a loving and caring woman who was always helping others. Hav-

ing opened her heart to Jesus, her home was opened to caring for little children and aged people. A full church was a tribute and testimony to her life from the whole community. As she rests til He comes, Phyllis will be remembered by all of Hamilton church and district.

*Ron Burnett, Dr P Tung,  
Russell Wareham*

**Dorrington**, Ellen May, born 30.12.1923 at Woodburn, NSW; died 26.10.09 in Hornsby Hospital. On 31.12.1941, she married George at Woodburn. He predeceased her in 1998, as did her daughter, Beverley, in 2006. She is survived by her sons and their spouses, Athol and Ruth (Coffs Harbour), Darrell and Wendy (Canberra, ACT), Neville and Marien (Wyong, NSW), and her son-in-law, Warren Martin (Wahroonga). Ellen will always be remembered for her hospitality, and her love for Jesus and her family. She had strong hope in the soon return of Jesus and now rests, awaiting His call on the Resurrection day.

*Eric Greenwell*

**Easthope**, Douglas William, born 2.10.1921 at Cooranbong, NSW; died 14.10.09 at Cooranbong. In 1947, he married Marjorie in Avondale church, Cooranbong. He is survived by his wife (Cooranbong); his children, Peter (Aberdeen), David (Brisbane, Qld), Susanne Munro (Sydney, NSW) and six grandchildren. Following four and a half years of military service in the Field Ambulance, Doug completed dentistry at Sydney University, graduating in 1950. He set up his practice in Newcastle and also headed up the Department of Orthodontics at Newcastle Hospital for 20 years. Doug was a diligent, tireless leader and worker for his local church, Boolaroo. He put his time and attention into Adventist Education, serving as board chairman and leading other committees of Newcastle Adventist Central School. He relief taught at the school and when the ambitious plan to relocate the school to Macquarie College campus was decided, he was a founding father and board chairman. At the age of 55, he embarked on his first mission trip to the Solomon Islands and other locations to provide dental services. Over the next 20 years, he completed 29 self-funded trips. He received the Order of Australia in recognition of his contribution to dentistry. Doug lived by the dictum that "to live is to give." He was a loved husband, a respected father and admired grandfather. He was a great church father and though dead, he speaks. He rests from his toil, awaiting the call to service in the new kingdom.

*Jan Jankiewicz, Adrian Craig*

**Green**, Albert, born 28.12.1918 at Temora, NSW; died 15.11.09 in Canberra, ACT. On 9.10.1941, he married Marjorie, who predeceased him on 31.3.08. He is survived by Laurel and Ian Mooney (Canberra), John and Carmel (Bowral, NSW), Robert and Robyn (Canberra, ACT), Laurie and Di (Canberra), Graham and Pauline (Hall), and Glen and Wendy (Canberra); 14 grandchildren; and nine great-grandchildren. Albert was baptised

## Appreciation

**Easthope**. Marjorie and family wish to thank friends for the cards and flowers received expressing sorrow at the passing of Doug Easthope. Your thoughts brought great comfort and we all await the great reunion day.



## Anniversary

**Stojic**, Rajko and Rosa, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in September with their family in Brisbane. They were married in 1959 at Gornji Smrtici, Bosnia. Rosa was baptised in Banja Luka-Bosna Hercegovina in 1983. Rajko and Rosa immigrated to Australia as refugees in 1997 to escape the harshness of the country's politics, and to reunite with their children in Australia. Later, Rajko decided to give his heart to God and was baptised in 1998. Rajko and Rosa are a much-loved couple in their church, and the church members wish them God's blessings, good health and happiness. This is a wonderful milestone in life.

**Tasker**, Raymond and June (nee Fardon), of Cooranbong, NSW, celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary on 22.11.09. They were married by Pastor Frances Allum at Pappinbarra. They had one son, Ronald (deceased) and have three daughters, Sharon Gillis, Lorelle Graham and Janette Gale, and their husbands. They have 15 grandchildren and

33 great-grandchildren. Ray and June were active members of Coffs Harbour church for over 55 years before moving to Cooranbong to take up full retirement. Sixty family and friends gathered at the party to celebrate this auspicious occasion with them. Ray spent his working life as a farmer, timber worker and banana grower to support the family. Their life and example has been an inspiration to all.

## Wedding

**Coltheart—Maris**. Stephen Coltheart, son of David Coltheart (Buderim, Qld) and Michelle Down (Newcastle, NSW), and Andrada Maris, daughter of Aurel and Aurelia Maris (Romania), were married 6.9.09 in Stone Manor Hotel, Kidderminster, UK. When Andrada completes her studies in June 2010, they plan to return and setup their home in Australia.

*Aaron Jeffries*

**Esteves—Wallace**. Michael Esteves, son of Carlos and Sharon Esteves (Brisbane, Qld), and Nicole Wallace, daughter of

at West Wyalong, NSW, on 4.3.1934 by Pastor H Mitchell. For the last 33 years, he has been a loyal and supportive member of South Canberra church, ACT, where he was much loved by his fellow members. He now rests in the same grave as his wife. They will not be surprised to meet on the Resurrection morning—it is what God's promise assured them.

*Neil Lawson*

**Head, Shirley May** (nee Jensen), born 6.4.1930 at Girraween, NSW; died 6.11.09 in Sydney Adventist Hospital. She was predeceased by her husband, Milton, in 2008. She is survived by her sister, Phyllis (Central Coast); her children and their spouses, Brian (Sydney), Graeme and Debbie (Bonnells Bay), and Darryl and Leanne (Sydney); and five grandchildren. Shirley spent her early life in Cooranbong and later moved to the northern suburbs in Sydney, where she was employed at the church headquarters in Wahroonga. A number of years were also spent with the Sanitarium Health Food Company in Prahran, Victoria and Lewisham in Sydney, NSW. Shirley loved her God, her church and her family. She was a gentle, caring person who was loved and respected by all who knew her. She will be sadly missed by her family and friends.

*Barry Wright, Eric White*

**Hopkins, Frederick George**, born 1.10.1913 at Rockhampton, Qld; died 28.10.09, aged 96, in Mackay. In 1932, he married his first wife, Jess, with whom he had three children, Kevin (deceased), Coral and Neville. Over the years, George's interest in his parents' Adventist faith grew and, in 1966, he was baptised in Mackay Central church. By this time, George had a new family and with Mary, his wife, he had four children, John, Judy, Debbie and Terry. George has been a faithful member and a keen witness for the message of the three angels for over 40 years, and looked forward in faith to the glorious return of His Lord. He is sadly missed by his children and many grandchildren, whom he loved and hoped to see on the great Resurrection reunion day.

*Neil Peatey*

**Johnston, Ronald**, born 4.2.1938 at Stanford Merthyr, NSW; died 20.9.09 in Royal Darwin Hospital Hospice, NT, after a long battle with chronic illnesses. He is survived by his wife, Priscilla; children, Jonathan, Natalie and Gloria; his brother, John, and his sister, Jo-Anne. Ron worked for Darwin City Council as a gardener and tractor operator until his illness forced him to retire early in 2000. However, it did not keep him from gardening. The plants around the Darwin church, mango trees at old Darwin Primary Adventist school, and friends' backyards and gardens are all living witnesses to Ron's gift as a gardener. Ron was held in high regards by all because of his vibrant personality, and sincere and caring attitude toward his friends. His cordial greeting, "How are ya, Mate?" made everyone feel important and at ease. Through failing health, he continued to live his faith and never let physical pains dampen the hope of God's

promise of eternal life. Ron will be sadly missed by his family and friends who, like him, look forward to that blessed Resurrection morning when "God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away" Revelation 21:4 (NKJV).

*Khamsay Phetchareun*

**Lauder, Pauline Evie**, born 8.11.1914 at Gayndah, Qld; died 8.11.09 on her 95th birthday in Esther Somerville Nursing Home, Sydney, NSW. On 30.6.1937, she married Pastor William Lauder, who predeceased her in 1986. She is survived by her son, John, and his wife, Leigh (Sydney), her daughter, Sandra, and her husband, Bruce Roberts (Burleigh Waters, Qld); seven grandchildren; and nine great-grandchildren. Pauline was a loving wife who stood loyally and actively by her husband's side in his ministry despite health problems throughout her life. She also lovingly taught disabled children for many years. Hers was a life of service for others. She was buried on 13.11.09 with Bill at Castle Hill Cemetery, NSW. She is now sleeping peacefully, awaiting the call of Jesus.

*Bruce Roberts*

**Miller, Virginia**, born 14.9.1956; died 22.9.09 at home at Brogo, NSW, after a long battle with cancer. She is survived by her husband, Ray; and her four children, Rachael, Rebecca, Jonathan and Sarah. Virginia was a fantastic woman who was loved by so many people. Once met, she was never forgotten. She was very generous and cared about others more than herself. Virginia will be sorely missed by her family, her church and the community of Bega Valley.

*Jeff Parker, Rob Steed*

**Puruto, Emily**, born 19.9.1958; died 23.9.09 after battling with cancer for the past 12 months. She is survived by her husband, John (Sydney, NSW); her children, Alec (NZ), Ricki and family (NZ), George and family, Henrietta, Charlie (all of Sydney) and Daijah (NZ); her mother, Tata Ashia (NZ); and her siblings and their families (Australia and New Zealand).

*Bruce Shield, Tangi Tuaneiti*

**Raphael, Mavis Emma** (nee Hankinson), born 12.4.1917 at Lismore; died 15.11.09, aged 92, in Victoria Point Adventist Nursing Home. In 1940, she married Carl in Lismore, who predeceased her in 1990. They had two children, Allen and Margaret. Mavis is survived by her son. She served as a pastor's wife for over 40 years in Samoa, Grafton, Ballina, Mullumbimby, Brisbane and Sydney. She continued to serve her Lord wherever she could until her illness confined her to her bed in the nursing home in 2005. All who knew her appreciated her happy attitude and look forward to meeting her again on the promised Resurrection day.

*Neil Peatey, Selwyn Bartlett*

**Robb, Edna** (nee Williamson), born 20.3.1921 at New Plymouth, NZ; died 19.11.09 at Tauranga. She is survived by

her sister, Lois Rickard (Tauranga). Edna attended Longburn College from 1936 to 37 and trained as a registered nurse. Edna loved her Bible and sharing her faith with whoever she met. Awaiting her call from her friend Jesus.

*Pat Downey*

**Schneider, Richard Lewis**, born 25.1.1923 at Lorquon, Vic; died 8.9.09 in South Eastern Private Hospital, Mulgrave. On 29.8.1946, he married Hazel Merton in the old Ballarat church. They just celebrated their 63rd wedding anniversary. He was predeceased by his daughter, Helen-Joy. He is survived by his wife (Upper Beaconsfield, Vic); his daughters, Faye and Joylene; his grandsons, Leighton, Richard and Kelynn; and great-grandson, Asher Richard. Richard played an active role in building Copeville church, SA, in 1954. He was devoted to its operation and maintenance for some 50 years before retiring to Victoria, where he became a member of Bayles church. Richard loved his Lord, his family and his church. He now sleeps and awaits his Lord's call on that Resurrection morning. He was a special influence in our lives and a true soldier for Jesus. He is sadly missed.

*Duane Haora, David Butcher*

**Sutton, Trevor Henry Edward**, born 1.6.1920 in Invercargill, NZ; died peacefully in his sleep 8.11.09 in Selwyn Park Rest Home, Whangarei. On 6.3.1954, he married Margaretha. He is survived by his wife; his children and their spouses, Trevor (South Africa), Rowena and Lance (Whangarei, NZ), David and Gaylene (Te Puke); and his grandchildren. He was baptised in December, 1989, and served as deacon for several years. Being a private man, he was patient and uncomplaining and bore his lot with dignity till the end. Sadly missed by his loved ones, he is asleep till Jesus wakes him.

*Garry Hallmond*

**Tenant, Noreen**, born in 1927 at Taringa, Qld; died 26.10.09 in Caloundra Private Hospital. In 1948, she married Curley Mattison, a war veteran who predeceased her around 1972. She was a widow for a number of years, then married Ford Tennant, who predeceased her this year. Noreen had been a faithful member of Landsborough church for many years. She was introduced to the Seventh-day Adventist Church by the Robinson family, who also lived in the area and were founding members of the church.

*Heinrich Rusterholz*

**Williams, Nancy May**, born 3.3.1916 at Ballarat, Vic; died 16.11.09 in Wyong Hospital, NSW. She was predeceased by her first husband, George Weeks, her second husband, Gordon Ernest Williams, and her daughter, Annette Joy Ivey, from her first marriage. She is survived by her son, Johnny Williams; her son-in-law, Eric Ivey; three grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. She rediscovered the book *Your Bible and You*, which led to Bible studies and baptism into Gosford church in 1973. Nancy held church office wherever she lived and worshipped, and was known for her kindness, help-

fulness, cheerfulness and willingness. As a true child of God, Nancy was known by the characteristic smile that adorned her beaming face. She was laid to rest on 22.11.09 in Avondale Cemetery until she is called to eternal life by Jesus Christ.

*Leigh Rice, Don Boehm  
Owen D'Costa*

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For more information or to make an application, please contact Bob Dale, General Secretary NNSW Conference on (02) 4951 8088, email [bobdale@adventist.org.au](mailto:bobdale@adventist.org.au) or visit our website at [nsw.adventist.org.au](http://nsw.adventist.org.au)

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