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Record

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ENROLMENT** page 7

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**PNGUM
EDITION**

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Union emphasis on discipling children

Lae, Papua New Guinea

A Kids in Discipleship program has been the focus of the Children's Ministries department of the Papua New Guinea Union Mission since 2010.

With training programs conducted around the country, the ministry targets family spirituality.

There are two series of Bible study guides—one is 12 weeks and targets parents' and mentors' spirituality, and the other is a 32-week child-friendly Bible study series.

For those churches and families who have been conducting these studies, they testified to amazing, life-changing experiences. One parent said her children were now looking forward to family worship whereas they previously found it boring. In the evening the children are helping with chores so that they can have more time for worship.

The worships are interactive which makes it engaging for the children. Another family said their children were creat-

ing prayer spots/mats. Parents are blessed to see their children developing the attitude of prayer and Bible study.

Pastor Daniel Teta, a retired pastor from Koroba, in the Southern Highlands Province, said, "I wish I had known this much earlier in my ministry." He runs a children's Bible study group which he hopes to eventually turn into a branch church. "I'd rather spend the last lap of my life winning 1000 children rather than working for one adult," he said.
—Judith Nagamisovo



Resources enable parents to disciple their children.



A clinic nurse enjoys the restored water supply.

Volunteers give clinic a facelift

Sepik, Papua New Guinea

A team of volunteers has given a small clinic in Papua New Guinea a much-needed makeover.

The team of four made the journey from Sydney to Port Moresby, bringing with them supplies for maintenance work on the clinic. Small boats were used to transport the volunteers and materials from Port Moresby to Koli Island, which is part of the Schouten Islands, located approximately 80 kilometres north-east of Wewak.

Volunteers and locals spent two weeks restoring the water supply to the nurses' residences. A hot and cold water system was also installed for the clinic and to an external shower and toilet block. New steps, insect screens and doors were also installed, and the entire building was painted inside and out.

"We can praise God [this] clinic now stands as a wonderful representative of what Adventist health should be," team leader, John Bryant, said. "Thanks to the churches of Gayndah and Biloela who have donated money and faithfully supported Koli Island Clinic over the last few years."—Jenny Robson

ADRA empowers women in Moresby

Wahroonga, New South Wales

Vocational and business training in Papua New Guinea's capital, Port Moresby, is empowering hundreds of women to start their own businesses and take ownership of their futures.

The Small Enterprise Development (SED) project gives free training to people like Moku Momo in skills such as tie-dyeing, sewing, cooking and baking, along with skills and support in business development and planning. In addition, ADRA staff support savings groups that encourage women to put money aside as their income increases.

"Being a single woman in Port Moresby is hard," Ms Momo said. "I would think about food and I would think about power, sometimes I would cry." Previously she would rely on her brothers and sisters for food, money and support. "I felt guilty. I was only taking. I couldn't give or share.

I had nothing to share."

But thanks to ADRA's SED project Ms Momo is now earning an income for herself and contributing back to her family. With the money she makes selling traditional lap-laps and food in the local markets, she is not only caring for herself but is paying school fees for the orphaned daughter of her niece. "Now I can help when they ask," she said. "I want to share what I have. Now I can give more."—Braden Blyde



Ms Momo with her lap-laps.





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Cover credit: "Elder of Tominap church, Anton and his wife, Anas, carry timber 20 kilometres to build their church."

Our vision is to be a church that...
knows experiences and shares
our hope in Jesus Christ!

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Men of faith

Leigh Rice

Two men have challenged my faith and commitment to God more than anyone else. If only I lived with as much passion and devotion to God as they do.

David was a deacon in the Wellington church in New Zealand. He and his wife, Tesa, had been married for some years and were childless. They decide to fast and pray each Sabbath for a child. Tesa became pregnant and they thanked God. David made another decision. He decided to fast each Sabbath as his gift of thanks to God for the gift of his daughter, Dianne. David had been offering this gift to God for 13 years when I pastored in Wellington. His example of passionate thankfulness to God continues to challenge my devotion to God.

Last year, I visited Oksapmin in the highlands of the Sandau Province in Papua New Guinea. Here I met the second man, Anton, whose faith challenges me. Anton and his wife, Anas, were walking along a track beside the airstrip. They were each carrying a heavy 5 metre length of timber (pictured on the cover). Their young son walked beside them. The scene surprised me so I stopped and spoke to the couple. I discovered that Anton was the elder of the Tominap church and they were carrying the timber to build a permanent church in their village. How many trips would it take to carry enough timber to build their church at two lengths of timber per trip? Quite a few! That is not amazing in itself. What amazed and challenged me was that the journey from Oksapmin to Tominap is a 20 kilometre walk. What is more this journey takes the walker up 500 metres over the saddle, in the range and down again to the village. It takes five hours each way. His passionate commitment to the work of God continues to challenge my devotion to God.

David and Anton's passion and devotion are a challenge and an example to my faithfulness to God. They reflect well the passion and devotion that motivated Jesus' life and ministry. They could each say with Paul, "Follow me as I follow Christ".

Can I? Can you?

Please enjoy this special PNGUM edition as you read about the Churches work here.

Leigh Rice is president of the Papua New Guinea Union Mission.

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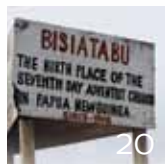
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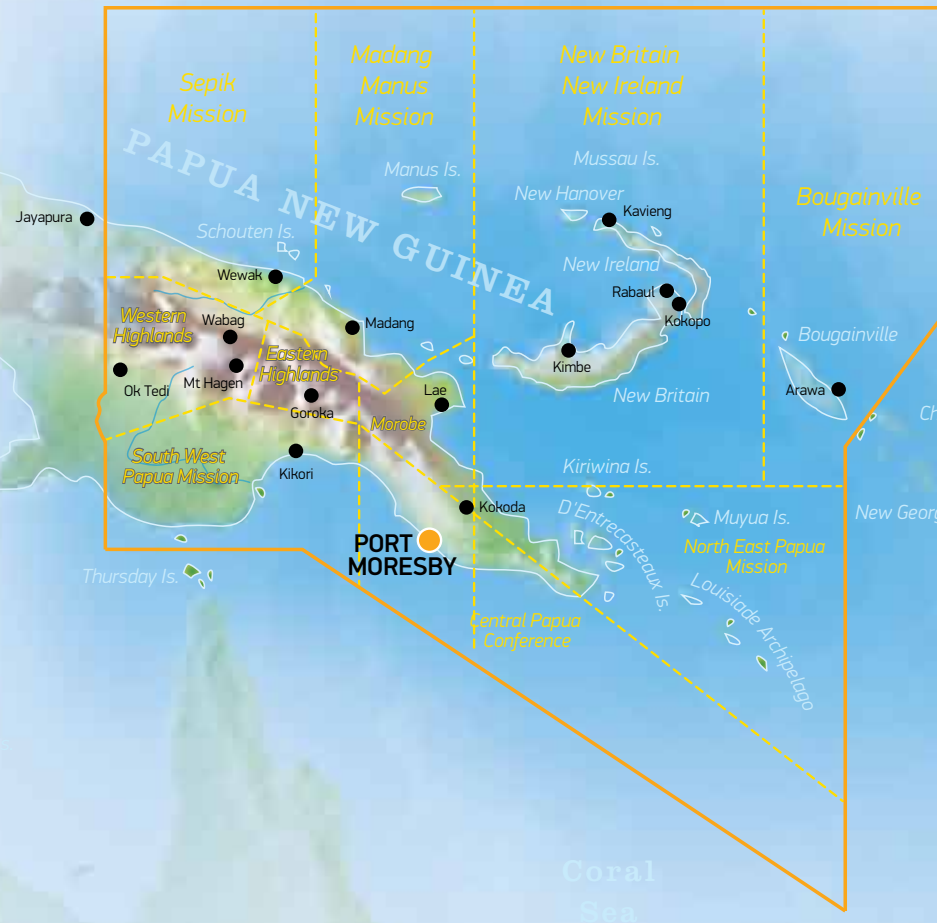


Papua New Guinea Union Mission (PNGUM)

Membership: 247,756

Ministers: 267

Ratio of ministers to members: 1:928



Bougainville Mission/ North Solomons

Membership: 5993

Ministers: 13

Ratio: 1:461

Central Papua Conference

Membership: 24,460

Ministers: 36

Ratio: 1:679

Eastern Highlands/ Simbu Mission

Membership: 70,972

Ministers: 43

Ratio: 1:1651

Madang/Manus Mission

Membership: 10,040

Ministers: 24

Ratio: 1:418

Morobe Mission

Membership: 21,162

Ministers: 18

Ratio: 1:1176

New Britain/New Ireland Mission

Membership: 17,813

Ministers: 28

Ratio: 1:636

North East Papua Mission

Membership: 10,483

Ministers: 14

Ratio: 1:749

Sepik Mission

Membership: 10,562

Ministers: 14

Ratio: 1:754

South West Papua Mission

Membership: 11,461

Ministers: 5

Ratio: 1:2292

Western Highlands Mission

Membership: 64,810

Ministers: 58

Ratio: 1:1117

Media training sessions equip church leaders

Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea

The Communication Department of Papua New Guinea Union Mission ran three media training sessions over the 2011-2012 year-end period.

The training was designed to impart important skills in appropriately using the current media technology available to church leaders, members and administrators.

Training already conducted includes videography, website development, news writing and photojournalism. Central Papua Conference, Western Highlands Mission and Eastern Highlands Simbu Mission have their own newsletter and websites and are now connected to the world through the internet.

The sessions represent the initiation of the Communication Department's five-year plan to connect all church institutions and missions/conferences, and also to develop the

communication section of the Church in PNG.

The training will continue on to the other seven missions to give church members the skills necessary to report on what is happening in their local missions/conferences and inform others of church activities in the country.

The Communication Department is embarking on several other objectives, including setting up a national FM radio station for the Adventist Church in PNG. The licence was obtained in 2011 and the technical team hopes to begin broadcasting this year.

The department is also having

preliminary discussions with PNG's National Information Communication Technology Authority to have Hope Channel broadcast on free-to-air TV.

The department will continue with its plans and will also collaborate with the South Pacific Division's initiatives on media development in order to speed up the proclamation of the Gospel through media technology that is quickly changing people's lives.

—Andrew Opis



Church leaders and members attended media training.

Pacific Adventist University
Nestled within the peaceful bird sanctuary of Koiari Park outside Port Moresby, Pacific Adventist University offers quality Christian education to young Pacific Islanders.

Our graduates hold key positions throughout Papua New Guinea and the Pacific and many have attributed their successes to the quality education and values that are taught at PAU.

PAU offers both undergraduate and postgraduate courses. Please visit our website at www.pau.ac.pg for more information or contact us on the address below:

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University doubles enrolment

Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea

Enrolment at Pacific Adventist University has doubled in the past three years.

The increase in students has been the cause of “great rejoicing” among staff members and administration, even if a rise in enrolment creates added pressure on accommodation and dining facilities as well as support services.

During the opening convocation, Rosalie McFarlane, education director for New Zealand Pacific Union Conference, encouraged staff members and students to consider the hard work and persistence needed to achieve success. She likened the growth of the university to the female turtle, which has to struggle up the beach in order to find a safe place to lay her eggs.

In his address, PAU vice chancellor, Ben Thomas, further highlighted the school’s growth and progress, in addition to the needs of the university. He challenged the students to use their opportunity to create a better future for themselves and their families.

Many students are sponsored by AusAid, private companies and church missions, as well as their own families.

Students starting undergraduate and postgraduate studies represent several countries across the South Pacific.

Lecturers are also from diverse cultures and backgrounds.

Degrees in Business, Education, Environmental Science, Nursing, Midwifery, Science and Theology are offered at PAU.

A number of students are completing Masters in Leadership and Development, Pastoral Ministry, Theology and Philosophy. These students also serve as graduate teaching assistants.

Deputy vice chancellor, Dr Tracie Mafile’o, said students graduate “with a strong focus on academics, integrity and ethics, and most importantly a real commitment to their God, their country and their place”. –*Glennes Annis*



PAU students come from across the Pacific.

Remote clinic receives K150,000 for staff housing

Jiwaka, Papua New Guinea

A remote clinic in the Western Highlands has received a K150,000 donation from the Department of National Planning and Monitoring.

“This is a huge support for a remote aid-post. It’s a windfall,” said Pastor Max Zaccias, president of the Western Highlands Mission.

The cheque was presented to the MinjMu Adventist Clinic by Kunumbka leader and clinic founder, Elder Lucas Koki, in front of a cheering crowd of 500 people, including leaders of the Adventist Church in Jiwaka and dignitaries.

Mr Koki thanked the national government for funding rural-based clinics such as MinjMu. He also called upon the local community to look after the new building.

Anglimb-South Waghi district health officer, Donald Teveko, said the funding was an answer to the prayers of the “silent majority” who “lacked basic medical services for a long time” due to poor road conditions.

The funds will be used to build a staff house for the clinic.

This is the first time the mission has received such financial backing from the government for a specific project. The money was made available in response to a request lodged with the Department of National Planning and Monitoring in 2011.

Kunumbka leader and medical practitioner, Dr David Nangen, of Mt Hagen Hospital, gratefully acknowledged the

support of the government and all who played a part in making the funds available.

MinjMu Adventist Clinic is located 8 kilometres south-east of the town of Minj in the newly cre-

ated Jiwaka Province. It serves as a medical provider for approximately 8000 people from the Kondika, Kunumbka and Ngeneka tribes.

MinjMu is one of many such clinics scattered throughout the mission. The building was given a major facelift last year thanks to volunteers from Murwillumbah Adventist church in Australia.

A team of 20, led by Pastor Brett Townend, built the solar-powered clinic, which houses an outpatient section, office, storeroom, labour ward, eight-bed section for inpatient care, and toilet facilities.

It took volunteers eight days to complete the project last June in partnership with the local mission. –*Terry Koim*



Lucas Koki, Max Zaccias, Terry Koim (project initiator) and Donald Teveko hold the cheque.



Adventist Week promotes church in the community

Lae, Papua New Guinea

Adventist church leaders from all the regions of Papua New Guinea have voted at the recent presidents' council to make Adventist Week a nation-wide program.

Adventist Week is an initiative of the Communication Department of the Central Papua Conference and is designed to promote Adventism to the community.

The presidents decided to take up the initiative after seeing the success of the first Adventist Week, run in July 2011.

During the week, more than 20,000 Adventists participated at 13 different sites, in and around the National Capital District.

The program showcased the Church, highlighting its unique doctrines and what it can offer.

The venues were public parks, ovals and stadiums, and every program ended with preaching from evangelists.

"Our aim," said Pastor Cameron Wari, communication director of the CPC, "was to promote Adventists in communities through singing, preaching of the Word, healthy lifestyles and media publications."

Last year's program opened at Sir John Guise Stadium following a parade led by the Papua New Guinea Royal Constabulary Police. The Women's Ministry and Adventist Community Service marching bands, and YAPA departments (young people), also took part in the march from Unagi Oval to the stadium.

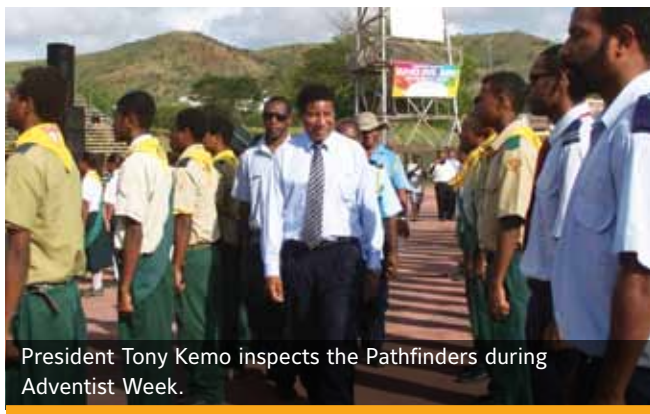
Adventists of all ages proudly shared in day activities such as market clean-ups, hospital visitations, street preaching, tract distribution, singing,

health awareness programs and public displays of Adventist doctrines in skit form. Some local churches organised Adventist cooking demonstrations, showed Adventist-produced movies such as *Just a Little* series, *O Papa God wai na i Olsem* and many more.

The evening programs included health presentations by Adventist health professionals from Port Moresby General Hospital, private clinics and students from the medical faculty—Taurama campus, and Pacific Adventist University.

Thousands attended the programs, including former members who made a commitment to return to the Church.

Adventist Week will be held nationally in the first week of July, during school holidays. —Jarrod Stackelroth/Cameron Wari



President Tony Kemo inspects the Pathfinders during Adventist Week.



Pathfinders took part in a parade.

'Bookmen army' still recruiting

Lae, Papua New Guinea

New colporteurs from the New Guinea Islands and part of the Momase Region of Papua New Guinea had beginners training in Lae in February.

South Pacific Division associate publishing director, Tony Wall, was the main facilitator during training for the 13 new recruits.

"The training is to make [our] people ready to sell books," Mr Wall said. "We will have other sales seminars in the future to continue to upgrade their skills."

An advanced course is also available, which they can do through correspondence.

The trainees will also attend unit meetings once a week with team leader, Peo Sama, where they can discuss goals and sales skills, share experiences and pray together. They will participate in several other seminars and training sessions before they are sent out to do canvassing to establish contacts for the Lord.

Mr Sama said it was good to see new people coming in to join the "bookmen army". "We need more people because the geography is wide-stretched and the demand is high," he said. —Andrew Opis



Tony Wall (centre) with the new recruits.

WELCOME 2 PAGLUM
ADV HIGH SCHOOL

Education transformation

by Kent Kingston

In 2007, Paglum Adventist High School was in a woeful state. The campus was unkempt and the buildings in a poor state of repair. In an area known for tribal clashes, students were fighting with each other along ethnic lines and were involved in conflicts with local villagers. Out of the 16 high schools in the province, Paglum's academic results were among the worst.

Perhaps it was desperation on the part of church leaders that led to the appointment of Robinson Lanza as principal; a teacher still in his 20s, only four years out of Pacific Adventist University in Port Moresby. Although, to be fair, he had shown promise at his first posting—Kambubu Adventist Secondary School in his home province of New Britain.

As a man from another province, Lanza faced immediate prejudice from the warring parties at Paglum. "There were a lot of issues that we were facing," he says. "While we were sleeping in the night they came and burned the kitchen to the ground." To this day he can't be sure who was responsible.

But fuelled by prayer, youthful idealism and a commitment to seeing through the challenge he'd been

handed, Lanza threw himself into turning Paglum Adventist High School around.

Fast-forward to 2012 and a new, stricter discipline regime is in place. The feuding has ended and positive relations have been established with nearby villages. The campus is an expression of the school pride that has developed—it's immaculately kept, featuring shrubs and

garden beds surrounded by local river rocks and white-painted tyres. The library has been refurbished, extended, restocked and updated to the electronic age. There's a new teacher's house and the school kitchen, which was built in 1952, received significant renovations and now feeds the boarding students three times a day from a varied and healthy menu.

About half the students are from Adventist homes, a very low proportion in PNG terms, where Adventist students usually hold a clear majority of 80 per cent in church schools. At Paglum, enthusiastic worship gatherings happen daily and prayer groups are very active. The school chaplain, Pastor Gideon Kovah, is an older, fatherly man whom the students look to for spiritual support. In recent years, about 15 students have been baptised at the school annually. Around the same number are baptised in their home churches.

In 2007, Paglum was down to 100 students. The current enrolment is 590, with more students wanting places. And in terms of academic performance, the school has steadily risen to fifth place in the province. Lanza is planning on adding Year 11 and 12 grades in the next few years and, given his track record, he is likely to succeed.

In many ways, Paglum's journey is indicative of the transformation that has occurred in Adventist education around PNG over the past several years. Committed leadership at schools, as well as at mission and union levels, is a significant part of the equation. But the Papua New Guinea government, which has made education a priority, also deserves credit. Since the Adventist school system joined the Unified National Education System in 2006, the



Robinson Lanza



government has paid teachers' wages, allowing fees to be decreased. Up to this point, the Papua New Guinea Union Mission's (PNGUM) 167 schools were seeing dropping enrolments and some schools needed to close. "The system was in serious decline," says PNGUM education director, Joseph Ponduk. But with the financial burden eased further this year by a government commitment to reimburse 100 per cent of school fees up to Year 10, parents are in a better position to choose an Adventist education for their children. Over a five-year period, enrolments have jumped from 16,318 to more than 23,000.

"The trend is still upwards," says PNGUM associate education director, Jim Yawane. "We have advised missions to enrol students based on the facilities that they have. Unfortunately in some missions students get accepted into elementary and primary schools without proper facilities and even classroom space. It's common to have a teacher-to-student ratio of 1:50."

The government is also contributing millions to upgrading facilities through the Rehabilitation of Educational School Infrastructures (RESI) fund, although this is not the sole source of finance for the upgrades.

"There are now new buildings going up everywhere," says Yawane. "The funding is coming from five sources; national government, provincial government, local level government, parliamentarians, NGOs (non-government organisations) and individuals. My assumption is that in the next five years 95 per cent of our schools will have had a major upgrade."

In 2009, the PNG government announced that school attendance is now mandatory to Year 8, a step that experts describe as a worthy aspiration rather than a plausible reality, considering the number of places currently available in what is still very much a developing nation.

However, many of the nation's 96 Adventist primary schools have upgraded to Year 8 in recent years, producing a group of students too large to fit into the Church's 11 high and secondary schools. "We have a lot of students

going into the state system," says Ponduk. "I would say that 60 to 70 per cent of students at some state schools—Goroka, for example—are Adventists." It's a situation that doesn't have a clear solution, but Ponduk says the first step should be for primary schools in "strategic locations" to add on Years 9 and 10, rather than trying to establish new high schools from scratch. Ponduk says several local missions are currently working towards this outcome.

But despite ongoing issues of overcrowding, Adventist schools in PNG are highly sought after. According to Joseph Ponduk, a number of politicians and university academics choose Adventist schools for their children, saying, "We like your approach", referring to the holistic Adventist education philosophy. "Parents, both Adventists and non-Adventist, see something different in our schools," adds Yawane. "The major reason is commitment from our teachers and of course the special character displayed. We are different to the state schools and other church schools; that's the story we hear time and again."

That "special character" is something that leaders in Adventist education strive to maintain. It's expressed through a "cleanliness is next to godliness" attitude that produces carefully maintained campuses and productive farms. It's expressed through teachers who see their role as a ministry rather than just a job. It's expressed through a strong spiritual program that, at its best, involves prayer groups, chaplains, revival meetings, Pathfinders and a fresh and effective Bible curriculum that is being enthusiastically adopted by government and Catholic schools as well.

It's clear that challenges lie ahead: an overflow of students; finding enough teachers and making sure they're trained to the appropriate level; maintaining a Seventh-day Adventist identity while working closely with the government. But the evidences of God's leading are all around and there's every reason to "tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, his power and wonders he has done" (Psalm 78:4).

Kent Kingston is assistant editor of RECORD.



Simeon Nara

Chaplain to Adventist politicians

My name is Simeon Nara. My village is Dagua, in the East Sepik Province of Papua New Guinea.

I have a Catholic background. My mother was a very faithful Catholic, but not my father. He did not go to church because he considered himself a "big man" and was indeed like a god unto himself. I went to a Catholic school until I was expelled due to being silly. I did not attend classes or prayer meetings, and was sent home after only completing Grade 1.

I have five siblings—two sisters and three brothers. They all went to the Catholic school. My parents sent me to a government school. I successfully read a Grade 3 book and was enrolled into the grade. The following year I did Grade 4 and 5.

I did not know anything about Seventh-day Adventists growing up. The only time I came across Adventists was during choir competitions in Wewak, where Nagaum Adventist School won most of the singing prizes.

I completed Grade 10 at Brandi High School, Wewak, in 1969. The following year I went to Goroka Teachers School where I did a year of a high school teaching diploma. I did not complete these studies.

I started working for the Commonwealth Bank, where I was very successful. But heavy drinking habits caused me to have an accident and I spent nine months in hospital.

Working at the hospital were nurses from Wuvulu who were Adventist. I would give them money to purchase cigarettes. However, they would say, "Sorry our church does not allow us to touch cigarettes".

After I got out of hospital, the New Britain Oil Palm Development accepted me to be the company's settlers

liaison officer. This position involved payment of oil palm fruits, doing pays for settlers and negotiation for oil palm prices. Whenever company trucks did not pick settlers' oil palm fruits, I would lead out in the negotiations to find a solution.

When my company house was under repair I stayed with my parents in our oil palm block. It was during this time I met Nenek Taos, a very faithful missionary from Mussau. I was drunk and challenged him, saying if his God could help me overcome my bad drinking habit I would become an Adventist. This was a joke so to speak—I was trying to make fun of him. But I also said if he returned next Sabbath I would not get drunk, but wait for him for a Bible study.

He was faithful. He kept the promise and I waited for him. The Bible study he shared was the seven last plagues. I was touched by the study. This went on for two to three years. I would sometimes tell my wife to tell him I was not home, but he was faithful during these years.

My most thrilling experience came when I was in Kimbe. I bought a pack of cigarettes, lit one and smoked it. The missionary came up behind me and embraced me. He said, "Good morning son. Are you OK?" I was angry inside; he caught me red-handed smoking. I was so ashamed. The change I received after paying for the cigarettes I ended up giving to the missionary.

(Continued next page)



ADVENTISTS IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA PARLIAMENT

Name	Position
*Belden Namah	Deputy Prime Minister/Minister for Forestry & Climate Change, Member of Vanimo-Green River Open
*Don Polye	Minister for Treasury & Finance, Member for Kandep Open
*Job Pomat	Minister for Fisheries, Member for Manus Open
*Jim Miringtoro	Minister for Communication & Information Technology, Central Bougainville Open
John Pundari	Member for Kompiam-Ambum Open
James Marabe	Member for Tari Open
Ben Semri	Member for Middle Ramu Open
Alphonse Moroi	Member for Central Provincial
Bonny Oveyara	Member for Okapa Open
Benny Allan	Member for Unggai-Bena Open
Koni Iguan	Member for Markham Open
Anthony Nene	Member for Sohe Open
Miki Kaeok	Member for Wapenamanda Open
Roy Biyama	Member for Middle Fly Open
Francis Potape	Member for Komo-Margarima Open
Ben Micah	Chief-of-Staff for Prime Minister Peter O'Neill

*Current members of Cabinet



Belden Namah



Don Polye



Job Pomat



(Continued from page 11)

On Sabbath he hired a vehicle to come to the house and take me to the church. This was the very first time my wife and I went to the Seventh-day Adventist church. I told my wife, "This is it. If he tells everyone in the church he saw me smoking, I am walking out of the church and never returning, and I will stop him from visiting me."

We sat in Sabbath class, and he went around to everyone in the class asking, "Have you stopped smoking, chewing the beetle nuts, drinking?" But when he came to me he did not ask me. That was the point of my conversion.

I was surprised God saw the plan inside of me to walk out of the church and, therefore, he controlled the missionary from asking me. I went home satisfied—there is a God in heaven, He knows everyone, even our plans and desires.

After three years of telling lies to the missionary, hiding at times, I was finally baptised.

The missionary brought to me an application to take up ministerial training at Sonoma College. I left work and went to the college. The only school fee I ever paid was K60. I do not know who paid my college fees; I believe the college did.

The Sonoma principal at the time was Richard Anderson. The head of Theology was Pastor Peter Roennfeldt. Lynn Webster was one of my lecturers.

I graduated in 1980 and started working with the New Britain/New Ireland Mission. South Pacific Division President, Dr Barry Oliver, was the local mission president. We worked together for the next four years.

I am currently in my second year as chaplain to Adventist politicians. It is hard, but with the trust and confidence the members have in God they will come when I go out to visit them.

My first ever meeting with them was very successful. They said (we could meet for) one hour but we went on for three hours, even during a parliament session.

This is a great opportunity for the Church in this country. It is new ground and territory, but with God all things are possible.

MT DIAMOND ADVENTIST HIGH SCHOOL Baia Warapa, Chaplain 2011

Our congregation is made up of 300 boarding students, 40 staff, and their families and neighbours.

As a school church, we have designed our program to target students. We believe the best way of doing things is God's way. Therefore, we try to emphasise opportunities and choices for the children that are grounded in God's Word.

Our weekly worship consists of a Wednesday prayer meeting, Friday fellowship, Sabbath morning service, AYs, closing Sabbath and ambassador programs every night except Sunday. Each school class leads out in chapel workshops.

Year 12 decide the theme for the year. Last year it was "soaring high with God". We have three special weeks of spiritual emphasis during a school year, which culminate in baptisms. Last year we had a record with 119 students and adults baptised.

The school choir comes under the church budget. They have outings to town to do special programs and sing gospel music in an old Adventist style, with just their voices.

Our biggest challenge at this point is that half of our students are day students. We need to cater for them as well. Apart from Bible lessons as part of their schooling, we need an emphasis to minister to them equally.

Our vision is to see all the students as boarding students, so we can provide for them spiritually. At the moment there is no capacity for all the students we have and sometimes it is dangerous for our day students to travel to school and back every day.

I also hope for more interaction and spiritual enrichment for our staff members. It is no good to think of the children and forget about our staff.




WHY I BECAME AN ADVENTIST

Michael Amala

I am serving 12 years in prison for a major crime that I committed. I came here with all my hopes in life shattered. I knew I was wrong so I am receiving the consequences.

Christianity has never been any part of my life. I never thought of having a relationship with God, but I thank the friends from Buimo Seventh-day Adventist church. They have introduced to me a new hope and meaning in life. I started attending church inside the prison compound and was baptised in 2009.

I feel that I am not a prisoner anymore. There is freedom in me with a peace of mind. I have served six years and am waiting for my next six years. When I am done, I will bring this good news that changed me to my village and share it with fellow tribesmen and women so that they too can have a relationship with Jesus.—with Andrew Opis



Read today

by Reeves Papaol

I'M A THIRD GENERATION SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST, the eldest grandchild of a pioneer missionary pastor. I'm also an IT manager at an Adventist institution and studying part-time to complete my theology degree. I can quote more than enough Scripture; I am a true blue Adventist!

Two months ago, these would have been credentials that could easily give me an audience in my home country. Today, I am someone totally different and loving it.

A few months ago, I hit rock bottom. At that time, someone shared with me how devotion can revitalise faith. I decided to wake up at least an hour earlier every morning to read my Bible and allow the Word to speak to my situation.

One morning, I woke at 3am to my 16-month-old daughter's distressed cry. She had fallen off the bed. I was horrified, yet, as I picked her up and cuddled her to my chest, she fell asleep as if nothing had even happened. I struggled with my emotions. Why did she fall out of bed? God, couldn't you have prevented her from falling?

In my annoyance with myself and God as to what had transpired, I couldn't sleep. I figured I may as well read the Bible early. So instead of sleeping, I sat down inside my dark and cold study and the Holy Spirit spoke to me: "What is the life of your child, compared to the millions that would be lost? . . . Get up and pray for their salvation."

With a sense of discontent, I read Luke 4:4, meditating on it and praying to God to make it relevant in my life. "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone'."

I was asking God for an opportunity. "Who can I reach, Lord?" I challenged Him to provide a chance.

Just then, my phone alarm sounded, like it does every morning. Instinctively I thought "My morning alarm, time to get up properly", but when I looked at my phone, it was only 5am and someone whose number I didn't recognise was calling me. I thought it was a strange time of morning to call so I answered.

A few seconds passed. A voice on the other end asked, "Did you call me?" I had not been near my phone at the time. Not only that but my phone is prepaid and I had no call credits. I assured him, although I had not called him, I

knew why both our phones had rung.

"Somehow" a total stranger, who was also a struggling Seventh-day Adventist, had called me. We talked. He was working on Sabbaths to provide food for his family and felt guilty every time. I opened my mouth to share to him and was surprised at what I was saying. Without thinking, out of my mouth came:

"The devil continues to lie to you that you can turn stones into bread. That you can break my Laws, defy my principles, neglect my word, for your own conveniences. Stop believing that lie." I was able to minister to and encourage this unknown brother. I was able to get his number and keep in contact.

Matthew 4:4 adds a dimension to our strength for the day, "but by every word that proceeded out of the mouth of God". God does not live in our domain. He does not have lungs and exhale like us. His breath creates life and regenerates and transforms life that is dead.

Mrs White states in her book, *Steps to Christ* (p 90), "There is nothing more calculated to strengthen the intellect than the study of the Scriptures. No other book is so potent to elevate the thoughts, to give vigour to the faculties, as the broad, ennobling truths of the Bible. If God's word were studied as it should be, men would have a breadth of mind, a nobility of character, and a stability of purpose rarely seen in these times."

We need God's Word, and with it we become more aware of God's opportunity to plant that Gospel seed every day. When you are connected with God, those who God brings into your sphere of influence will find a blessing, even in a one-liner Bible verse. For years I attempted to create that situation in my life, and it never worked. But read your Bible with the intention to share it with another today and God will do the rest.

I still struggle to be consistent and read my Bible daily, however, when we seek God first, He can do wonders. It doesn't happen every day, but He can provide seamless witnessing opportunities that will completely blow your mind away if you start truly reading the Bible today. **R**

Reeves Papaol is IT manager at PAU, while he studies Theology.





Land of the unexpected

RECORD interviewed Papua New Guinea Union Mission president, Pastor Leigh Rice, to find out more about the vision and challenges of the Church in PNG.

First, we want to give our sincere condolences to you on behalf of the RECORD team for the loss of life in the recent ferry sinking tragedy. How is the Church handling such a tragic loss of life and talent?

It has been a sad time for the Church. I joined the family of the late Belinda Kemba for the 'hauscry' and the funeral service in Lae. The bodies of other Adventists have not been recovered so this adds to the sadness of the church family. It is a challenge to find replacement accountants, teachers and pastors when there are already shortages.

Please give us some perspective on how large and complex our Church is in Papua New Guinea (PNG).

The Church in PNG is a large operation. There are 250,000 members; 10 conferences/missions; Sonoma—a tertiary college offering ministerial, primary teaching, business and agriculture courses; three secondary boarding institutions; and Omarau School of Ministry. The diversity of the population (and) the isolation of members living in many parts of the country add to the challenge. We also have Pacific Adventist University in PNG.

With so many language and cultural groups, how does the Church remain unified?

The sharing of leadership across the country from the 800 different language groups has been a strength for the unity of the Church. Pastors and teachers serve across the country so the cultural differences enrich the life of the Church. Pacific Adventist University and Sonoma College attract students from throughout the country and friendships (and marriages) are made across the cultural differences.

How did the Church grow so large in PNG?

Foundations for the growth of the Church were laid by the pioneer missionaries in the country. Church planting

in urban areas in the '70s and '80s played a part. People movements are a key to the growth in many rural areas. Church members are also passionate about sharing their faith. Leadership in the country continues to focus on growing the kingdom of God in PNG.

Does it continue to grow?

Yes it does! We continue to struggle to provide enough seats in churches, especially in the urban areas of the country. Growth is not as dramatic as it was in the '90s but there is still healthy growth. Leaders have renewed a focus on nurture and local church-based training to revitalise the former growth.

As with all areas, PNG faces a substantial problem with people leaving the Church. How large is the problem, and what are we doing to address it?

There are many more people in PNG who call themselves Seventh-day Adventists in the census than who are members of the Church. Our first step is to conduct a membership audit to determine the extent of the problem. This is already underway. We are working to provide resources to local churches and pastors that will nurture members to arrest the cases of apostasy. Building a caring Church that seeks to minister to former and backslidden Adventists, is the focus the Church is working on.

You note that more people self identify as Seventh-day Adventists in the PNG census than we have on our membership books. What is the significance of this?

It provides an excellent opportunity for evangelism but also a real challenge. Having been Adventist in name but not in practice suggests many are cultural Adventists with little or no passion for an active relationship with Jesus. But it also provides a pool of people who are sympathetic to the Church.



There are a number of Adventists in high profile governmental positions in PNG. What impact are Adventists having on the national dialogue, and what impact does the national dialogue have on the Adventist Church?

Sixteen members of the national parliament are Seventh-day Adventist Christians. The acting chief justice is an Adventist from the South West Papuan Mission. A number of ministries are headed up by Seventh-day Adventist members. So their leadership does have an impact for good in the country. They also open the avenue for Adventist input into the decision-making process of the country.

There is a national political crisis in PNG with two men claiming simultaneously to be the legitimate PM. How is the Church navigating this crisis?

The Church has attempted to maintain neutrality in this crisis. While I have prayed for the Honourable Peter O'Neill and his leadership, I have also stated that the Church is committed to support the government of the day whether it is under his leadership or someone else's.

As with the rest of the world, PNG faces a sexual health crisis, with rates of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases at very high levels. What are we doing to prevent the transmission of STDs, and to treat those who have them?

This is a real challenge. The Church is working through its Family Ministry Department and Health Department to provide education and support in this area. The Health Department, in partnership with AusAID, has produced a number of DVDs which address the HIV/AIDS problem. ADRA also runs a counselling clinic.

What is the Church doing to address serious issues like domestic violence and child abuse?

The Church has taken an active part in the 'End-It-Now' program. On UN International Women's Day in November, I joined the campaign in PNG to end violence against women and shaved my head. It became an opportunity for me to speak out about the issue.

Tribal warfare and violent crime (the so-called "raskols") are a serious problem in PNG.

Yes, some of this violence has its roots in the culture of PNG but some of it grows out of the poverty of people and the difference between rich and poor. In (some) areas, the Church is participating with other churches to end tribal fighting among Christian believers. It is an issue the Church will continue to work on as lives are transformed by the power of the Gospel.

Around the world, weaning new Christians from a dual belief in spiritism is difficult. Do we struggle with this in PNG as well?

Yes, it is a problem with some. A recent book on the issue in Africa is giving insight into how to address the issue in PNG. Many, however, have experienced the saving power of God and the superstitions of the past and the involvement in spiritism is no longer part of their Adventist lifestyle.

Coffee is an important cash crop in PNG. How does the Church relate to members who own coffee plantations?

One could say (tongue-in-cheek) someone has to grow the bean for the Adventist coffee drinkers in Australia and New Zealand! In all seriousness, this is a tricky one. Many people in PNG are willing to grow the coffee crop but would not drink coffee themselves. I have had some discussions with ADRA to see if there are alternative cash crops that could be introduced. Some opportunities of the past are no longer available as a herb and spice factory in the country has closed down and the bottom has fallen out of the vanilla bean market.

PAU is one of the most important institutions of higher learning in PNG. Tell us about its success and the vision for its future.

PAU is a growing institution (more than 800 students have enrolled this year). It is respected as a premier institution and produces the top business graduates in the country. PAU struggles to provide enough places for the applicants. More than 1200 applications were received this year. Accommodation is critical and security is a problem for day students. The success of PAU is a blessing from God. The plan is to grow PAU to 1500 students.

Into the future, what are the most serious challenges facing our Church in PNG and what are your plans to address them?

Leadership is a crucial issue as we move ahead. The next five years will see the retirement of half of the conference/mission presidents, a principal of one of the secondary schools and several of the Department directors. Developing the next generation of leaders in the Church is the focus. Our plans for leadership development include both formal education and mentoring processes.

Where is our Church heading in PNG—what are your dreams and vision for it?

The vision is of a Spirit-filled Church, always growing, and leading and excelling in all areas of our ministry. I see a vision of a million disciplined Seventh-day Adventist Christians living a distinctive lifestyle. They will be led by a team of passionate and skilled pastors, teachers and health workers. Local church leaders (elders, SS teachers and leaders, and youth and Pathfinder leaders) will live and model Christ-like faith. The Church will continue to grow, ministering to the whole person both in the Church and in service in the community.





Respect for women

by Peter Barnabas Pamula

COME FROM THE POPULOUS AND VOLATILE HIGHLANDS region of Papua New Guinea, where polygamy is a norm of the society. In this region, the practice of polygamy is associated with power, wealth, fame and influence. Generally, women are considered less important than men, and are confined to domestic duties. The Highlands are not alone.

In contemporary Papua New Guinea, rates of violence against women, gender discrimination and abuse are alarming. Rape, sexual assault, discrimination and inequality are the hallmarks of a society racing with time and ignorance. The mistreatment of half our population is a national disaster! Given this crisis, a lone female politician in our male-dominated national parliament recently proposed legislation that would reserve 22 seats for women. The reason for her radical proposal is that it is necessary

to ensure women are involved in national decision-making and nation building. The proposed bill attracted stiff opposition from all sectors of society but it finally became law in November 2011, to great rejoicing among women and their male supporters in PNG.

The issues of gender inequality, violence, abuse, prejudice and intolerance not only challenge society, but also the Church, and they not only challenge PNG but the entire world. Personally, I was influenced by cultural presuppositions and ignorance of feminine importance in the Scripture, and held reservations of promoting the idea of gender equality and tolerance in my community and the Church. But recently my perception has been challenged by the way Jesus treated women. In fact, I've discovered in Scripture that Jesus did not embrace anti-women views. Especially, in the five narratives in the Gospel of John, He underscored



their significance, not only in the plan of salvation but also to the society in which they belonged. Let me explain.

Woman of Samaria

Jesus overlooked the cultural prejudice and marginalisation of the Samaritan woman and respected her status and worth (John 4:4-25). The setting of the encounter was the popular Jacob's well. Here He met a woman who had a questionable reputation, who came to the well at midday to fetch water. This is in contrast to Nicodemus who came by night in the previous chapter to converse with Jesus (3:1,2). The middle of the day in very hot regions of the world is not generally when hard work is undertaken. Hence both Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman appeared at an inappropriate time, probably to avoid ridicule and judgement.

Immediately, Jesus asked the woman for a drink. Having realised that He was a Jew, she instantly resisted His request. Arguably, however, her reluctance was deeply imbedded in her cultural world view. As one theologian notices, three major differences between Jews and Samaritans are echoed in the narrative. Firstly, the Jews and the Samaritans were ethnic enemies who made worship claims based on their geographic location. Secondly, religiously, the Samaritans only acknowledged the five books of Moses as Scripture while the Jews included the writings of the prophets. Thirdly, morally, Jesus was the Son of God while the woman was a fallen human being.

However, against all these barriers, Jesus proceeded to engage her in a serious theological discussion. The issue at stake was the misconstrued notion of salvation held by both the Jews and the Samaritans. According to Jesus, the proper places of worship are not necessarily important but rather those who worship in truth and in Spirit are God's children. The reason is because God is a Spirit and His existence is not bound by geography and ethnicity.

Meanwhile, Jesus addressed the Samaritan woman *gu,nai* (verse 21) in a vocative feminine noun, a significant term used by the author to express favourability of her worth and dignity. By the usage of *gu,nai* He explicably demonstrated the love and grace of God filtered through the barriers of ethnicity, religion and gender, and touched her perplexed soul.

Furthermore, He politely appealed to her misguided world view and personal background for the need of God's acceptance, forgiveness and salvation. She accepted the gift of salvation and became a missionary to her own people. Thus, women of questionable integrity, different ethnicity and religious affiliation are still the object of God's grace and love. Despite their background, they are of value in the kingdom of God.

The woman in adultery

The grace and respect Christ showed to the Samaritan woman was not an exception. Jesus forgave the woman caught in adultery and offered her salvation (John 8:2-24). Instead of uttering judgement on her, Christ stooped down

and wrote on the sand. The reason was to show her value in spite of the judgement passed against her. Just like the Samaritan woman, Christ used the same vocative feminine noun, *gu,nai*, to show God's mercy and inspire hope to her battered soul.

Mary and Martha of Bethany

The word *hvga,pa* appears five times in the Gospel of John (11:5, 13:23, 19:26, 21:7 and 21:20). Four of the five occurrences relate to John's intimate relationship with Jesus. However, one occurrence of the verb *hvga,pa*—in an indicative imperfect active form in this context—implies an ongoing affection, intimacy and love between Jesus, Mary, Martha and Lazarus.

Thus, Jesus' relationship with these sisters encompasses the true value of friendship with the opposite gender. There is no demonstration of exploitation and abuse, in spite of the spirit of exploitation evident in the disciples, notably Judas Iscariot (John 12:4-6). In fact, divine love underscores the importance of tolerance of feminine relationships and discourages abuse and exploitation of women. Besides, in spite of the prejudices, Jesus demonstrated that meaningful and positive relationships can be developed with the opposite gender for the glory of God.

Mary, the mother of Jesus

Finally, Jesus demonstrated that His mother was important in many ways. He treated her with a great deal of attention and respect. Christ's first miracle was performed to honour her trust and to strengthen the faith of His disciples. Even at His most agonising point, Christ did not neglect His mother. On the cross, Jesus leaves both His mother and the second generation of Christians in the care of the beloved disciple, the only one who has seen and fully understood His glory. He used *gu,nai* (John 2:4; 19:26) to indicate the significance of her maternal role. Thus, divine love does not undermine the value of women but rather elevates their significance in society.

Conclusion

From the perspective of the Gospel of John, women take centre stage in the mission of Christ on earth. They are the object of God's redemptive love. They are created in the image of God. It is central to Christianity that women be treated with dignity and respect.

I lament my ignorance of the importance of women in Scripture and my cultural perception of women in society at large. As a Christian, I see the treatment given by Jesus to women as a solid argument and testimony for respect and equality for women in our societies. Therefore, I encourage Christian men to support and promote respect and equality for women. I see the invaluable lessons of the importance of women in John's narratives as a source of inspiration and guidance for all men. R

Peter Barnabas Pamula is currently studying his Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Religion, majoring in Biblical Studies in the AIIAS Seminary. Before that he served the PNGUM.



GREY NOMADS CAMP

4—12 May, 2012
Stuarts Point
Convention Centre

The North New South Wales Conference's annual Grey Nomads Camp for 2012 will be held at the Adventist Convention Centre, Stuarts Point, NSW from 4—12 May, 2012. The event is open to Grey Nomads from across Australia, and is an excellent opportunity for retirees to meet and fellowship together.

Dr Roy Adams, a former associate editor of the *Adventist Review* and *Adventist World*, is the guest speaker for the 2012 Grey Nomads Camp.

A special concert with South African tenor Manuel Escórcio will be held on Saturday night, 5 May at the camp. Three of Manuel's 27 recordings have achieved gold status and one has gone platinum.

On-site accommodation is available for private caravans and tents for Grey Nomads Camp. Application forms for the camp can be downloaded or filled out by following the links found at <http://nsw.adventist.org.au>.

Applications close Friday, 27 April.

For more information about Grey Nomads 2012, contact Debbie Head on (02) 4944 3220 or email debbiehead@adventist.org.au.



R MY MINISTRY IDEA

Reuben Alu

Most people don't like going to prison. If you ask those who are in prison, more often than not, given a choice, they'd choose not to be there.

But Reuben Alu chooses to go to prison. He has attended Bomana Prison faithfully every Sabbath since 2003 and he loves it.

Bomana is one of Papua New Guinea's biggest prisons. In Port Moresby, the main compound holds 800-1000 prisoners in minimum security, a women's unit and a maximum security section.

Mr Alu, head of security at Pacific Adventist University, takes church to the prisoners, helping to organise programs, build a sense of community and nurture the roughly 250 Adventist prisoners. They call him Elder Reuben and he is very well respected. "You have to get to their level, pray as much as you can, study God's Word and witness as much as you can," he says. He has washed the feet of one of PNG's most notorious criminals, a cannibal.

"You must have a passion for this ministry," Mr Alu says. "The heart needs to be there or it is a waste of time. I've developed a heart for them. When I walk into gate 24 and leave my freedom, my spirituality is revived. I come away rested."

Mr Alu says every inmate now knows the Sabbath truth and he has been challenging them to bring someone to Jesus. "I am trying to nurture, develop and get them to maintain their spirituality," he says.

He is hoping to use PAU theology students (one in each compound) and resources to help with the ministry. He runs baptismal classes and sees an average of 50 baptisms a year.

Prisoners help Mr Alu by running and organising their own MV programs, devotions, a prayer warriors group and mentoring other prisoners. "I always enjoy the testimonies," he says. "I am blessed by ministry. Even at PAU the singing is not as good as in prison."

The prisoners have their own singing group, Visions of Home, and often tell Mr Alu that when they get to heaven, Elder Reuben will be the conductor of their heavenly choir.

Dennis Perry, from Operation Food for Life, has provided Bibles for the inmates and he even takes them copies of RECORD. The South Pacific Division has donated hymnals. They are also able to watch DVDs produced by Wahroonga church, NSW. The payoff? Seeing the inmates who have left

prison and are now on fire for God. A former inmate, called Daniel, now preaches on the bus, giving his testimony and what God has done for his life.

"When you have—when you know—the truth," Mr Alu says, "you should share it with others and make sure you walk it!" —with Jarrod Stackelroth



A prisoner prays during worship service.

OPINION

Dr Brad Kemp



Missionaries need our support

While there are approximately 2.2 billion Christians in the world today, there are over 5 billion who have not accepted the Gospel of Jesus Christ—and the number is growing rapidly. Christ said, “the harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few” (Matthew 9:37, NIV), and that has never been more true than it is today.

Our Church wants to change this dynamic. We are, as Christ instructed, asking “the Lord of the harvest . . . to send out workers into His harvest field” (Matthew 9:38, NIV). In response to our prayers, the Lord has sent our Church brave men and women who are willing to go to every corner of this world to proclaim the Gospel and His soon return—even to places where Christians are targets of horrendous violence.

Today’s missionaries take on very tough assignments with faith in God as their guide, and you and I as their support. But will we support them? In recent years, the mission offering in many parts of the developed world has actually fallen. It seems incredible. Here we are with a growing mission challenge, and many of us are actually giving less than we did in the past. The Lord has answered our prayers for men and women willing, capable and ready to serve. It’s up to us whether they are able to go.

On Sabbath, April 7, a world-wide offering will be directed specifically to support nearly 700 expatriate missionaries around the world. Missionary life is not easy. It takes tenacity, sacrifice and, often, substantial courage. We are counting on these missionaries to make a real difference in some of the toughest areas of our world. Can they count on us for support or will we leave them hanging out there alone? This Easter long-weekend, let’s not forget in our holiday plans, to redouble our giving to those who are dedicating so much to get the job done.

Dr Brad Kemp is associate general secretary of the South Pacific Division.

OPINION POLL:

What can Adventists around the world learn from our church in PNG?
How to :

- grow the church using modest resources
- trust God even in adversity
- build a strong sense of community
- sustain enthusiasm for church programs

Visit <record.net.au> to answer this poll.

SNAP SHOT
with Dr Barry Oliver



Pacific leaders come together

From time to time I hear comments about the amount of time church leaders spend in meetings. Mostly they are light-hearted and given more out of sympathy than anything else. But just why do meetings take so much time and what is discussed at such meetings? Let me give you an example.

Each year the leaders of our unions, conferences and missions in the Pacific Islands come together for two days of meetings at Division headquarters in Wahroonga. Apart from giving an opportunity for a time of Bible study, prayer and spiritual renewal, this annual meeting has an agenda which is regarded as of high importance by the participants. The agenda for this year’s meetings included a number of strategic items, for example, Mission to the Big Cities—a global plan from the General Conference to reach urban areas for Christ in 2013–2014; Project Hope—an initiative to share Great Controversy, Desire of Ages and Steps to Christ with neighbours and friends in 2012–2015; the role and function of the president, general secretary and chief financial officer; and the healthy churches initiative of the Church’s Health Department.

Many operational items appeared on the agenda. We discussed, for example, insurance of our properties and people in the Pacific in the face of increasing natural disasters; plans to better coordinate the work of our hospitals and clinics in the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea in particular; the use of tithe; dealing with all forms of abuse that tragically occur in the Church; the Division budget process including application for and disbursement of funds.

Human resources items included: long service leave entitlements and sustentation; principles of employment in the Church; ministry and support of our schools; human resource issues facing the Pacific; and caring for pastoral spouses.

This meeting demonstrated that the leaders of our Church in the Pacific Islands are facing exciting but challenging times ahead as we move into 2012. They are grateful for our ongoing prayers and support.

Dr Barry Oliver is president of the South Pacific Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.



Building a house

by David Thiele

THE PSALMIST PUT IT THIS WAY: “UNLESS THE LORD BUILDS the house, its builders labour in vain.” Since 1908, when Septimus Carr and Peni Tavodi came to Bisiatabu, the Seventh-day Adventist Church has been engaged in a “building” program in Papua New Guinea (PNG). Have we laboured in vain or has the Lord, indeed, built the house? It is a question which came forcefully to me early in 2009.

I was visiting Goroka in the Eastern Highlands Province with my wife, my daughter, her husband and his parents, John and Lueen Behrens. As we were driving on the main road from Goroka to Homu we stopped on the side of the road where there were a couple of houses.

We crossed the road and were met by curious children and almost-as-curious adults. Our guide explained who we were and that we had come to see the old man who lived in one of the houses. And he was an old man; grey-haired, frail and bent. (Sadly, he has died since our visit). His name was Samuel Sapukai. In his younger days he had been a pioneer mission worker in this area and knew John’s parents, as well as my wife’s parents, Hugh and Royce Dickins, when they had been missionaries in the Eastern Highlands in the 1960s. We spent some time there and he told us, with tears in his eyes, that he often wondered if the expatriate missionaries of old remembered their national co-workers when they returned to their homelands. He was profoundly touched that we—and especially the son and daughter of old missionaries—had taken the time to come and spend some time with him. Meeting Pastor Sapukai was one of the most moving experiences I have had in my 20 years in Papua New Guinea.

Still it is not something that should have surprised me. I am often asked by elderly former missionaries in Australia, “Do they still remember us up there?” No-one wants to live in vain. We all want our life to mean something. Those who trekked through the rugged terrain of Papua New Guinea, facing incredible dangers and experiencing untold hardships have a right to ask, “Was it worth it?” Some lost their health; some lost their children; some their marriages; all of them lost the luxury and comfort of their homeland—at least for a time. The risks were great, the isolation overwhelming and costs profound. Was it worth it?

I am not sure we are confronted by that question today as we were in the past. I still have vivid memories of some of the tales told by returned missionaries at Big Camp in Townsville when I was a boy. I do not have anything too exciting to tell, myself. I work in a university. I meet as many cannibals and headhunters as you would expect! Sometimes we miss the significance of this fact. It is precisely because of the generations of missionaries who went before that Papua New Guinea is different today. The foundation laid in blood and sweat, and tears and prayers, was strong and the church today is being built up on it.

A few years ago I attended the funeral of an old man named Param. He had never learned to read or write, had never gone to school or gained a formal education. But Param was committed to the Church and to sharing the good



Peni Tavodi's grave site.

news he had learned from the missionaries. Why did I go to his funeral? His son, Malachi, worked with me at Sonoma Adventist College. This son of an unschooled, illiterate villager was a teacher—a lecturer in one of the best teacher training institutions in the country. He has a Masters degree from an American University! Could old Param have ever imagined that his son would be one of the many educated people in the country! Never! But the missionary who taught old Param laid a good foundation that has changed generations of people in PNG.

The rise of the building on that foundation is evident wherever one looks in PNG. I think of Dr Aaron Lopa, who has recently retired from Pacific Adventist University. His father was a devil priest but his mother was one of the few who became an Adventist when the first missionaries came to their isolated island, far to the north of the New Guinea mainland. Aaron's faith was nurtured and he made a commitment to God in the little



Early missionaries to PNG

school the missionaries opened and operated. That commitment saw him dedicate his life to the work of the Church and, especially, the training of ministers. His formal education culminated with a doctorate from Andrews University, making him one of the most

highly educated Papua New Guinean Adventists of his generation, but he remained an ever humble, dedicated servant of God and His Church. Aaron's impact on the work of God in PNG and throughout the Pacific is incalculable.

Another of my friends in Port Moresby is Pastor Moses Songavari, who retired from church employ in 1999 but is still active in church planting and ministry today. He was born in PNG and lived his entire life here. His father was called to this part of the world field after completing Grade 2 in the Solomon Islands in the early 1930s. Moses followed him into ministry after completing Grade 9. He has lived and worked his entire life in Papua New Guinea, separated from his extensive family of relatives in the Solomons. Moses' grandson has been a lecturer at Pacific Adventist University and is now completing his PhD. Who could have imagined this when his great-grandfather set out as a missionary all those years ago?

The stories of the way the pioneer missionaries laid a solid foundation are almost endless. Was their sacrifice worth it? Yes! God has indeed built the house. Those who laboured did not labour in vain. They brought the good news of salvation to the ends of the earth in PNG and people's lives were changed and whole societies were improved in ways they could not have begun to imagine. How about our generation? Will it be said of us that we made a difference, that we built solidly on the foundation? The choice is ours to make. I pray that we will draw together and work for the sharing of the good news with those who do not know—even to the ends of the earth—and that we will do so faithfully till Jesus comes. Amen. \curvearrowright

Dr David Thiele is dean of the school of Theology at Pacific Adventist University.



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ANNIVERSARIES



Mattner. Harold and Flora were married 3.11.1951 in Adelaide, SA.

They joyously celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary in Adelaide on 3.11.11—a wonderful achievement. They have been blessed with eight children and 19 grandchildren, and are very much loved.



Toepfer. Cecil and Elaine (nee Hunt) celebrated their 60th

wedding anniversary with friends and family. They were married on 17.12.1951 in the Avondale church by Pastor Alfred Kranz. Together they served the Church for 80 years: Cecil, as a printer, 42 years for Sanitarium (Longburn, NZ and Cooranbong, NSW), and Elaine, as a secretary, 38 years in various places (SHF in Longburn, NSW Conference Office, and Avondale primary and high schools). They currently live in Cooranbong, are active members of the Avondale Memorial church, and enjoy travelling. They have one child, Narelle Brothers (Oregon, USA), and two grandchildren, Cecilia and Rebecca.

WEDDINGS

Cuthbert–Tovosia. Luke Cuthbert, son of Ross and Heather Cuthbert (Bahrs Scrub, Qld), and Marina Tovosia, daughter of Timotheus (deceased) and Eileen Tovosia (Sukiki, Solomon Islands), were married 22.12.11 at Burns Creek church, Honiara. The

reception was held at Maranatha Hall, and included friends from across the Solomon Islands, NZ and Australia. They met at Atoifi hospital during a fly-n-build. Luke is an electrician and Marina is finishing her nursing studies in Honiara. They plan to settle in Brisbane, Qld.

Alwyn Wako



Crago–Goods. Frank Crago, son of Valma and Percy Crago

(Moora, WA), and Robyn Goods, daughter of Elaine and Wesley Goods (both deceased), were married 19.2.12 at Moora church, Moora.

Steven Goods

Flory–de Guzman. Christopher John Flory, son of Shirley and Geoffrey (deceased) Flory (Sydney, NSW), and Aida Daywan de Guzman, daughter of Tranquilino and Elvira de Guzman, were married 8.5.11 at Royal Oak church, Auckland, NZ.

Lawrence Lane



Mboya Awino–Pink. Joseph Mboya Awino, son of Zacharia

Awino Chiandah and Philomena Orawo Awino (Oyugis, Kenya), and Trina Donelle Pink, daughter of Don and Lorraine Pink (Narrakup, WA), were married 25.8.11 at Maxwell church, Nairobi, Kenya.

Tom Mwombo



Mowbray–LaGreca. Reuben Sebastian Cargill Mowbray, son of

Anthony and Kathleen Mowbray, (Cann River, Vic), and Emmaline

Serena Narelle LaGreca, daughter of Anthony and Penelope LaGreca (Shady Creek), were married 12.2.12 at Victoria Chapel, Warragul. This dedicated young couple have committed their lives to serving the Lord where He leads.

Lindsay J Laws



Tekopua–Givney. Turi Tama (Joe) Tekopua, son of

Taeata and Maine Nga Tekopua (Melbourne, Vic), and Sarah Givney, daughter of Paul and Jenny Givney (Townsville, Qld), were married 30.10.11 at Nunawading church, Vic.

Tuakana Pere, Johnny Murison



Tomokino–Kenyon. Tuatiaki Temanuana Tomokino, son of

Piti and Ngateokotai Tomokino (Auckland, NZ), and Linda Mina Tepua Kenyon, daughter of Teokotai Amaru (deceased) and Mary-Ellen Gardener-Kenyon (Edinburgh, Scotland), were married 12.2.12 at Royal Oak church, Auckland, NZ. They have a beautiful daughter, Bailey, whom they treasure. The happy family look forward to a loving future together.

OBITUARIES

Forbes, Kerrie Anne (nee Stanley), born 13.4.1966 in Mt Gambier, SA; died 5.7.11 in Young Care, Brisbane, Qld. On 18.12.1988, she married Clayton Forbes (divorced). She is survived

by her children, Kirsten Beahan and Michael Forbes (both of Caboolture). She was the cherished only daughter of Elaine and Dennis Stanley and precious sister of Craig and Adrian. Such a short life, so beautifully lived. A life of sorrow, and yet a life of faith, always thinking of others despite her own troubles. She was a heroine, an inspiration, and one day soon will be a princess in the Kingdom of God. She will always be loved by all who knew her.

*Athol Tolhurst, Chester Stanley
Bob Possingham*

Coles, Jillian (nee Carter), born 1.11.1957 in Ballarat, Vic; died 19.12.11 in McCulloch House, Clayton. On 18.12.1977, she married Graham Coles. She is survived by her husband; her children and their spouses, La-etitia Coles and Peter Dobrenov (Chapel Hill, Qld), Megan and Jamie Jaworski (Endeavour Hills, Vic) and Nathan (Rowville); and her grandchildren, Sasha and Oliver. Jill worked in nursing for many years, including both geriatric and mental health. In the most trying, painful weeks of her illness, she constantly gave witness to her faith and the assurance she had of meeting her Saviour again. Those who knew her and nursed her all remarked on the way she could muster a smile, even during her suffering.

Moe Ioane, Peter Hughes

Ellis, Ronald Earl, born 10.10.1927 in Woodville, NZ; died 10.1.12 in New Plymouth. Ron is survived by his wife, Nola (New Plymouth); his four children, David (New Plym-

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outh), Marilyn and Wayne Gredig (Brisbane, Qld), Stephen and Gaylia (New Plymouth, NZ), and Sharon and Tony (Whangarei); eight grandchildren; four great-grandchildren; and his brother, Len (New Plymouth). Ron was a much-loved husband, father and brother and will be remembered as a patient, quiet and humble man, one of God's true gentlemen. Ron maintained his Christian witness throughout his long and debilitating illness. He died in the belief that he was a son of Jesus and now awaits the resurrection morning.

Wayne Gredig



Hunt, Dulcie Elsie Ruth (nee Schofield), born 17.4.1918 in Parramatta, Sydney, NSW: died 25.11.11 in Dural, Sydney. She married in 1938. Dulcie was predeceased by her youngest daughter, Mavis, in 1964; her sister, Gwen; and brother, Henry. She is survived by her brothers and their wives, Arthur and Val, and Jack and June; her children, Ron, Joan (both of Sydney) and Norma (Hong Kong); seven grandchildren, Debbie, David, Tony, Muriel, Peter, Sue and Geoff; and 22 great-grandchildren. She will be remembered for her hearty laugh, her love for her family, Windsor church and the Bible, and her faith in Jesus.

Neale Schofield

Miller, Gwenevere Estelle, died 28.11.11, aged 83, in Lismore Hospital, after a 12-month period of deteriorating health. The service at Ballina church on December 2 (Gwen's birthday), highlighted her caring love of people through her work in nursing and later with ADRA. The eulogy presented by her sons revealed a fun-loving spirit and a much-loved mother. Gwen was predeceased by her son, Barry. She is survived by her loving husband of 64 years, Geoff, and their sons, Ray, Ken, Graeme and Doug, her loving daughter, Lyn; 13 grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren.

*Jeff Parker, Ernie Krause
Tim Kingston*

Newman, Lorna (nee Brown), born 25.4.1926 in Richmond, Vic; died 8.2.12 in Benalla. On 9.10.1948, she married Victor Robert in Sunshine. She was predeceased by her husband; and by Allan Brown, Iris Symondes, Nancy, Lennard and Marjorie. She is survived by Avis Davey (Bayswater), Janne and Barry Randell (Benalla), Ian and Margaret Newman (Gold Coast, Qld), and Joy and Stuart Bull (Shelly Beach, NSW). Lorna was a much-loved and respected resident of Benalla. She loved her budies and especially her cockatoo. She enjoyed arts and crafts, especially china painting. She was always thinking of others, particularly her neighbours and the lonely. Lorna will be sadly missed by all her family and friends at Benalla church.

Malcolm Reid

Wood, Susan Alison (nee Cramp), born 13.1.1945 in Paddington, NSW; died 4.2.12 in the Sydney Adventist Hospital. She is survived by her husband, Ken; her sons and their wives, DJ and Jo (Quakers Hill), Geoff and Romanie (Baulkham Hills) and Peter and Nikki (Christchurch NZ); and eight grandchildren. For the past 20 years Sue has been the face of the Sydney Adventist Hospital, known and loved by patients and staff alike. She served for nine years as a valued member of the Executive Committee of the Greater Sydney Conference, as well as serving on other church and school boards. She was the first ordained lady elder of the Epping church, and continuously held office there in various capacities for almost 40 years. Sue will be remembered for her bubbly personality, infectious smile, strong faith and love of her Lord. Sue loved people. She did not preach sermons but lived one.

Malcolm Allen, Greg Harker

ADVERTISEMENTS

Norfolk Island church homecoming. Open to all past and present members, pastors

and friends. June 9, 2012. Bounty Day celebration weekend. Program: 10am to 12pm and a potluck lunch the Norfolk way. Connect—Reconnect—Reunite. For more information, contact: Lance Weslake, Australia: +612 96296585; Ian Summerscales, NZ: +64 9000000; or Ken Nobbs, Norfolk Island +6723 22131. For all travel arrangements please call/visit: Tel: +6723 22781 <www.aaanorfolkisland.nf>; Tel: +6723 22502 <www.travelcentre.nf>; Tel: +6723 22195 <www.burntpinetravel.nf>.

The Auburn school in Sydney.

If you were either a teacher or student at Auburn in the Ted Butler era of the late '40s and '50s, or perhaps you know someone who was, email <calbabestewart@yahoo.com.au> or call (03) 9888 6952.

Para Vista church 25th anniversary.

Former members and pastors of the Para Vista (SA) church are invited to join with the church in its 25th anniversary celebrations on Sabbath, June 23, 2012. To obtain the full Sabbath program and notify of your intention to be present, please contact Dan Heidik (08) 8263 2562 or <dheidik@bigpond.com>.

Albury and Wodonga churches are hosting a reunion celebrating over 75 years.

Sunday, April 29, 2012, from 10:30am at Border Christian College multipurpose building. Correspondence and RSVP <reunion@alburyadventistchurch.org.au> or 0414 548 058.

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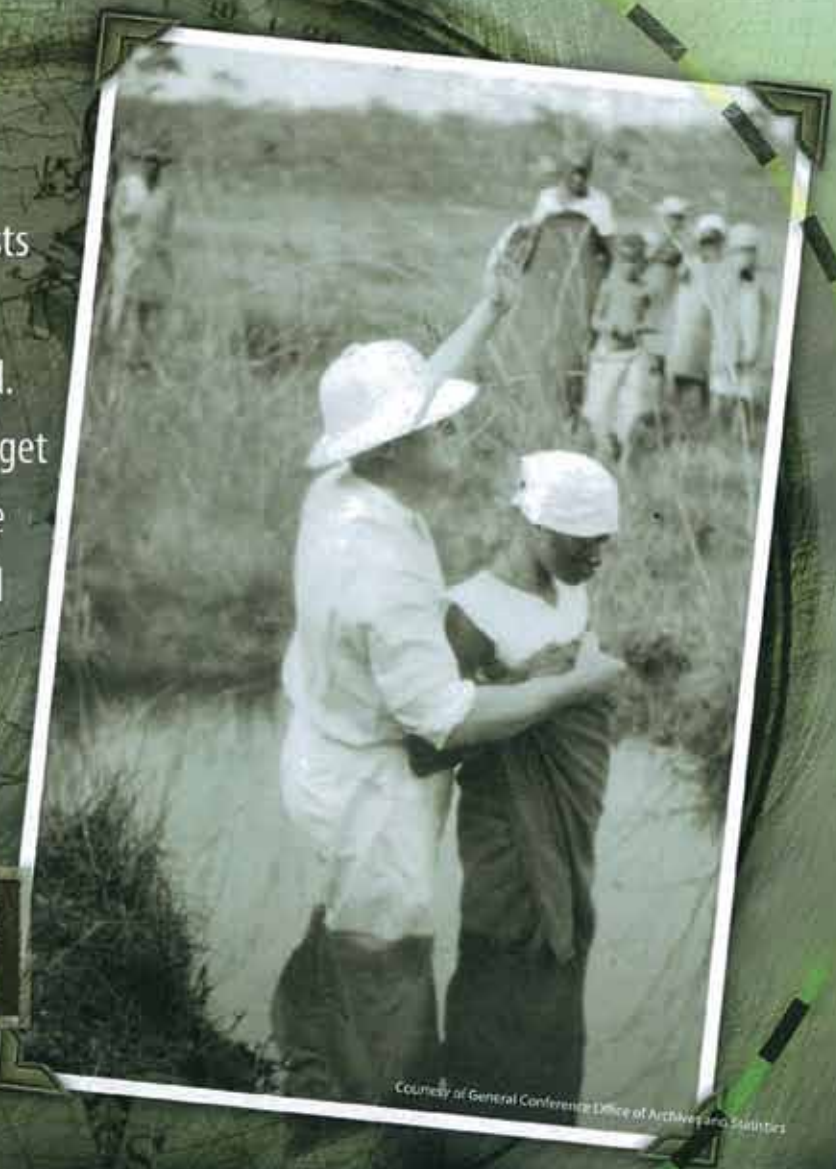
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