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# Adventist Record

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BIG BANG** page 18



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## Dual badging for Avondale degrees

Cooranbong, New South Wales

Degree students at Avondale will receive dual-badged testamurs from this year as the college of higher education gains further benefits from its memorandum of understanding with Charles Sturt University.

Dual badging will see Charles Sturt's seal appear on the testamur of every undergraduate and postgraduate student at Avondale. "This may help employers or other higher education providers more easily recognise your degree," college president Professor Ray Roennfeldt said.

It means Charles Sturt recognises all of Avondale's degrees as if they were its own, "without any changes and in full respect of our ethos and mission," Professor Roennfeldt said. "That's significant because it indicates a high level of trust between the two institutions."

Avondale's governing body, Avondale College Council, approved dual badging in March—the decision is not retrospective, so previous graduates requiring a replacement testamur will receive only a testamur with Avondale's logo and seal. Charles Sturt's council ratified the decision to dual badge on June 19.

"We've been impressed by the commitment to quality at Avondale," said Charles Sturt's deputy vice-chancellor and vice-president (academic) Professor Garry Marchant, who sits as an external member on the Academic Board at Avondale. "The institution is strongly focused on quality and on delivering to its students great graduate outcomes."

Dual badging is a key principle of the memorandum,

which Avondale and Charles Sturt signed in July 2013. "It shows the journey we undertook with Charles Sturt is continuing," Professor Roennfeldt said. "We still have a lot to do to realise the full benefits of the memorandum of understanding but we're moving forward together."

The memorandum formalised Charles Sturt's role as a mentor and advisor to Avondale. The role includes: assessing and benchmarking Avondale's governance, learning and teaching and research quality and standards; and sharing resources on a cost-for-services basis. This is particularly important now that Avondale, having been granted self-accrediting status, is seeking university college status.

"We're working with Avondale on its journey toward university college status because we support the development of regional institutions and the development of access to higher education in those regions," Professor Marchant said.

The memorandum is not legally binding but is valid for five years, although Avondale and Charles Sturt can extend—in duration and scope—or suspend it by mutual agreement.—*Brenton Stacey*



Odailson Fialho receives his testamur from Avondale College president Professor Ray Roennfeldt.

## Literacy school continues to expand

Wildlife, Papua New Guinea

A large open air classroom was one of a number of buildings recently opened at the Rob and Jan Patterson Literacy School in the village of Wildlife near Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea (PNG).

The building was donated by Digicel, one of PNG's largest telecommunications companies.

Speaking during the opening ceremony of the classroom, a Digicel (PNG) executive said the literacy school, which is supported by Operation Food For Life (OFFL), was chosen because of the excellent academic record of its students during its brief history. She also paid tribute to the school's commitment and involvement in the Wildlife community.

A small house was built next to the school by OFFL for volunteer principal Ogasta Tabie and her husband Daniel. The couple

had been living in a worn-down structure next to the school.

New accommodation was also provided for volunteer teachers Kessner and Kope, who have been with the Rob and Jan Patterson Literacy School since it opened in 2012.

OFFL co-founder Dennis Perry said the teachers screamed with joy when they were introduced to their new home.

"To be here and witness the emotion when the ladies saw their room and slept in it the first night was overwhelming," he said.

The new buildings come a year after Australian High Commissioner to PNG, Deborah Stokes, opened an extension at the literacy school. "From small beginnings a seed is planted and bigger things grow," she said at the time.—*Dennis Perry/Linden Chuang*



Volunteer teachers Kessner and Kope inside their new home.



The new open air classroom.



## Barry

James Standish

OK, let me get this off my chest. Yes, Barry was my boss for four years. And, yes, now he's out of the way. He's gone. Done. Dusted. He's walked out of the corner office and he ain't coming back.

There's nothing he can do to me now!

So it has come time to level with you about what I really think about Barry. You see, there are some things I've been mulling over for four years. And I've never been able to share them with you until now.

Sit back, strap yourself in and let's get started.

This is my candid assessment of the man: the minute he walked out the door our Church lost a giant. And my guess is, you don't fully realise it. And I don't blame you. Because one of the most underappreciated characteristics Barry exhibits is humility. In fact, it took some work to get him to agree to the feature in this week's *Adventist Record*—he simply is never about Barry. He is all about the mission of the Church, knuckling down and getting the job done—even when it is tedious, unrewarding and goes completely unnoticed. In fact, I think he prefers the latter when he is involved.

In many ways division leadership is a pretty thankless task. You're far enough removed from church members to appear irrelevant to many, but everything you do can dramatically impact the health of the Church for good or ill. All the responsibility of leadership but none of the glamour or warmth.

You're general conference president? Everywhere you go you're treated like a celebrity. You're conference president? Everywhere you go you're treated like family. Division president? Neither. And you cop a lot of flak—often for things you haven't done!

And it turns out to be a crushingly complex job. Think about this. The South Pacific Division stretches east to west, covering a third of the circumference of the earth! Our Division is also the most culturally and economically diverse in the world. And we run some of the most complex institutions anywhere in our Church. We operate the largest single-campus private hospital in Australia—which

is integrated into both a medical and a nursing school, an enormous health and wellbeing company, the premier university of Papua New Guinea and Avondale in Australia, and a media centre that is globally respected. Then there are the unions. And that's just the beginning.

Imagine waking up with all of that on your plate!

Barry, however, put it to me this way once: "I let the mantle of leadership rest lightly on me." And he did. He was seldom flustered. He wasn't worried. He slept well at night. Why? Because he trusted God, and he entrusted those who reported to him with the leeway to do their jobs.

Barry was also willing to take risks. If you want to know, for example, why *Adventist Record* is among the most interesting publications in our Church, it isn't a coincidence. Barry empowered our team to deal with complex issues in creative ways. We see this empowerment all around our Division, and particularly in the dramatic expansion of our Division institutions under his leadership.

He was a careful leader but he took plenty of calculated risks. And that's a good thing. Because risk-free leadership is stagnation.

There is something else about Barry you probably don't appreciate fully. He is smart. Really smart. He could have gone into virtually any career he wanted. And he would have excelled. And made a lot more money with a lot less hassles. In fact, that is one of the strange things. If he'd gone ahead with medicine, which he was accepted into, he would be universally admired. But church leadership? Not so much—which is perverse. We are so fortunate he dedicated his intelligence and talents to serving Christ by serving our Church. And as a community, I think we should be a lot more respectful and thankful than we generally are.

But most of all, the Barry I've known over the past four years is a genuine Christian. A man of God. A man of faith and faithful to his calling. I'm very sorry to see him leave. And, that, my friends, is what I really think about Barry.

*James Standish is editor of Adventist Record.*

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



## Asylum

Kent Kingston

We face a situation right now where governments—in particular Australia, Papua New Guinea and Nauru—are involved in the systematic abuse of men, women and children who are asking us for a safe haven from their suffering. Inquiries, leaks and official documents reveal that Australia's off-shore detention camps are places where sexual abuse occurs, mental illness and self-harming behaviour festers, people are known by numbers instead of names, medical and legal assistance is refused, and those who speak out have their employment contracts terminated. A new Australian law threatens medical doctors at detention centres with imprisonment if they publicly voice their concerns.

At what point do Seventh-day Adventists speak out publicly about political issues? Or to put the question another way, at what point do political issues become spiritual and moral issues?

### **Bible teaching**

"Do not ill-treat or oppress a foreigner, for you were foreigners in Egypt" (Exodus 22:21). The refugee experience is embedded in Scripture and its numerous accounts of individuals and groups who fled threats and persecution—the Hebrews leaving Egyptian slavery; David seeking refuge with the Philistines; Joseph, Mary and Jesus escaping to Egypt in fear of Herod's slaughter of the innocents. Yes, even Jesus was a refugee. And it's clear where God's sympathies lie when the poor and disadvantaged are oppressed.

### **Religious liberty**

Adventists have a proud tradition of religious liberty but right now the world's biggest threat to religious liberty

is violent persecution from terrorists, hardline Islamist or Communist governments, or hostile neighbours that's causing millions—Christians, Muslims, Hindus and others—to flee for their lives.

Surely Adventists should be known for our unflinching support of those seeking a safe haven where they will be able to practise their faith in peace. Yes, Adventist religious liberty representatives at both the South Pacific Division and the General Conference have advocated on behalf of asylum and worked on specific asylum seeker cases. ADRA and other Adventist-sponsored aid agencies are doing amazing work with displaced people in the Middle East, Africa and Southeast Asia. And South Pacific religious liberty and ADRA leaders attempted to visit Manus Island to visit asylum seekers and assess their treatment, but were barred from entry by the PNG Government, who has implemented an internal visa program to Manus. But what about the rest of us? Yes, there are complexities involved but surely victimising the most vulnerable shouldn't be part of the policy solution. Shouldn't every Seventh-day Adventist stand up against the mistreatment of asylum seekers in our region?

### **Our opportunity**

Because of our organisational structure, the Adventist Church is uniquely placed to respond to this South Pacific issue in a unified way. In the light of Bible teaching, in keeping with our commitment to religious liberty, and in the cause of our shared humanity, don't you think it's time we had the courage to be a voice for morality and justice?

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*Kent Kingston is assistant editor of Adventist Record.*

## Cover story

*From Paul Kos, Communication director for the North East Papua Mission (Popondetta, Papua New Guinea).*

"Today I went to visit Sam Oivo and his wife at their home and they send their words of thank you to the *Adventist Record* team for publishing their story.

It took them by surprise when a copy of the May 16 issue of *Record* reached their home. They feel really humbled and excited to see themselves appear on the front cover. Not only them, but the surrounding neighbours (non-Adventists) have also read and talked about the article. It is the very first of its kind to them and they are really excited! Thank you."

To read Sam's story, visit <[www.record.net.au/items/ex-gangster-facilitates-reconciliation](http://www.record.net.au/items/ex-gangster-facilitates-reconciliation)>.







### Rainbow nation

A Supreme Court decision has effectively legalised same-sex marriage throughout the United States. The Adventist Church was one of a number of Christian groups in North America that publicly stated continuing support for biblical marriage. Adventist leaders say that, going forward, vigilance is needed. – *Adventist Review*



### New Adventists

Andy and Naomi Weaver were baptised in the US state of Ohio last year after reading *Desire of Ages* and being convicted about the Sabbath. However, they've decided to maintain aspects of their simple lifestyle as Old Order Amish while they reach out to their family and friends with their message of hope. – *Advocate*



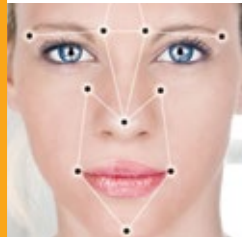
### Guns and government

Evangelical Christians in the south of the Philippines are speaking out against planned autonomy legislation that they fear will allow militant Muslim separatists to introduce sharia law in parts of Mindanao. However, if agreement with the rebel groups is not reached, the violence of the past decades will likely continue. – *Morning Star News*



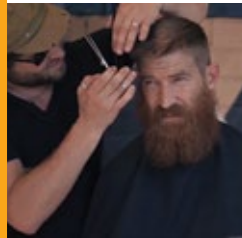
### Forgive us

Pope Francis has made an historic personal apology to the descendants of the Sabbath-keeping Waldenses who were persecuted from the 12th to the 15th centuries as "heretics". Attending a Waldensian church in Italy, Pope Francis asked forgiveness for the Catholic Church's un-Christian and inhuman attitudes and behaviour. – *Rome Reports*



### Unblinking eye

A company based in the US and Israel says its "Churchix" facial recognition software has been purchased by at least 30 churches around the world. The software scans video files and allows churches to keep track of who's turning up for worship services. There's no guarantee that members are being informed. – *Fusion.net*



### Simple kindness

A new charity has launched in Perth (WA) providing free haircuts for the disadvantaged. Shortback and Sidewalks says a haircut provides a much-needed boost in confidence as well as allowing the positive human contact that's so important for isolated people. The Salvation Army and UnitingCare are among the supporting agencies. – *ShortBackandSidewalks.com*

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## HopeChannel gets the nod in PNG

Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea

The Papua New Guinea Union Mission (PNGUM) and the EMTV channel, owned by the PNG government, signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) in Port Moresby on June 22 to allow HopeChannel programs to broadcast on free-to-air TV.

EMTV has given an hour every Saturday morning to HopeChannel to air its programs. And when PNG's TV broadcast platform switches from analogue to digital in 2016, HopeChannel will have its own 24/7 channel. The agreement is for three years and is likely to be renewed after that.

EMTV head of news Neville Choi welcomed HopeChannel into the partnership and congratulated the Seventh-day Adventist Church for being the first Christian church in PNG to partner with EMTV.

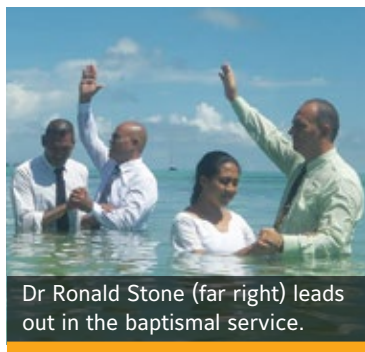
The MOA was made possible by the Minister for Public Enterprise and State Investments, Ben Micah, who is a Seventh-day Adventist.

"HopeChannel will not only cover PNG but Solomon Islands as well as Indonesia," Mr Micah said.

The agreement stipulates that the Adventist Church in PNG will partner with the national government and assist by developing the community's quality of life through the Church's health, education, ADRA and Adventist Aviation services. — *Andrew Opis*



The signing of the MOA.



Dr Ronald Stone (far right) leads out in the baptismal service.

## Baptism highlights exciting times in Tuvalu

Tuvalu

Forty-four new and former church members were baptised in Tuvalu in May.

The baptism took place following a public evangelistic series hosted by Dr Ronald Stone, Ministerial Association and Global Mission director for the Trans-Pacific Union Mission (TPUM).

which decided to reach out to former members after participating in a "Reconnecting Missing Members" workshop hosted by TPUM Personal Ministries director Pastor Luther Taniveke in March.

Funafuti's youth and two frontline workers from Fiji began visiting and praying with former church members and their friends. As a result of their efforts, 60 people—including many former members—attended Dr Stone's evangelistic series.

The two Fijian volunteers will stay in Tuvalu until August to help the Funafuti church community nurture and support its new members. — *TPUM newsletter/Linden Chuang*

Church leaders in Tuvalu said the baptism was the largest they have seen in a very long time.

It is a testament to the work of the local Funafuti church,

## Calls for action against alcohol-related violence

Canberra, Australia

Australian of the Year Rosie Batty has spoken out publicly on the links between family violence and alcohol, and called for governments to take more effective action on the issue.

Ms Batty's 11-year-old son Luke was killed by his father last year—a tragedy leading to Ms Batty becoming a campaigner against domestic violence.

Launching a new report by the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education at Parliament House in Canberra, Ms Batty said too often the link between alcohol and violence is ignored.

The founder of the Luke Batty Foundation told Prime Minister Tony Abbott that if Australia is determined to seriously address family violence, it "must act now" to recognise the problem and look for solutions.

"Prevention must be the ultimate goal," she said.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is among community groups that have expressed support for more targeted and effective action on the problem of alcohol-related violence.

"We have long taught an alcohol-free lifestyle mainly for health reasons," South Pacific Division Women's Ministries director Erna Johnson said. "But we have seen over many decades that alcohol can have serious social and psychological effects on the people affected, including women and children." — *Record staff*



Alcohol is involved in up to 65 per cent of family violence incidents.



## His way: Conference uses Christ's method for ministry

Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea

Hundreds participated in a recent "Bereina Mission15" project organised by the Central Papua Conference in Papua New Guinea.

The project lasted for 14 days and its aim was to evangelise using Christ's method, by ministering directly to the community's needs.

More than 300 patients were treated each day at the special day clinics run by more than 50 doctors and nurses. More than 30 surgeries were performed and dental services were provided as well as general health checks.

A new maternity ward was built and furnished for Bereina District Health Centre with the assistance of more than 100 skilled carpenters, plumbers, painters, electricians and welders.

Local MP Peter Isoaimo officially opened the maternity ward on behalf of the centre. He directed his officers to establish a piece of land in Bereina Station for the Seventh-day Adventist Church

so that services such as health and education would continue to be delivered to those in need.

About 800 men, women and young people were involved in "beautifying Bereina"—cutting grass and cleaning up the town each day. Services such as maintenance work for underprivileged members of the community were carried out and domestic duties such as sewing and cooking were taught.

Health presentations also ran each night for the duration of the project.

"The response was overwhelming," said Pastor Cameron Wari, the Conference's communication director. "About 1500-2000 people attended these presentations."

As Ellen White said in *Ministry of Healing*, "Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then he bade them, 'Follow Me'."—Cameron Wari/Vania Chew



A crowd gathers around the new maternity ward.



More than 30 surgeries were performed during the project.



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# Here He comes

by Neale Schofield

I'M STANDING ON THE BALCONY OF A HIGH-RISE building overlooking Sydney's famous harbour. To my left is the city's billowing white Opera House. In front of me is the Sydney Harbour Bridge with its high half-moon arch. Below me are thousands and thousands of people. It's almost midnight on New Year's Eve and Sydney is putting on a show to remember!

This is so loud! There are more than 7 tonnes of explosives out there—52 boats carrying 11,000 containers of fireworks. The sky is alive with 25,000 shooting comets and 100,000 individual fireworks. Talk about power! I can feel it.

It's a great show. But I think for a minute: if this is impressive, imagine the second coming! Like these fireworks the soon return of Jesus will be real and it will be loud but it will also be the most spectacular event in earth's history. And every single person on earth will see it.

But some people are going to be very surprised. Why? Because there is widespread confusion over if, or how,

Jesus will return. And these different views aren't just out there in society. Increasingly, they are creeping into our Church.

The Jews are waiting earnestly for the first coming of the Messiah. One of the great Jewish philosophers stated: "I firmly believe in the coming of the Messiah; and although He may tarry, I daily hope for His coming."<sup>1</sup>

Many Buddhists, Hindus and Muslims also believe in the coming of a supernatural being.

Buddhist tradition teaches that soon the oceans will recede and Maitreya will descend to bring his spiritual truth, wisdom and blessings. Some Hindu sects teach Vishnu will incarnate himself as Kalki. He'll appear in the clouds with a sword in his hand and riding on a white horse. He'll defeat evil then introduce 1000 years of peace.

The Quran alludes to the return of Jesus. The "prophet" Jesus will descend somewhere in the Middle East—maybe to the great mosque in Damascus, maybe Mecca or maybe even the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem. But there's one

aspect that all Muslims are united on: Jesus will appear on planet earth.

So what about the Christian faith? Most Christians believe in the second coming of Jesus. But ideas about how He will return differ markedly.

If you walk into the Sistine Chapel the Catholic view of the second coming is right before your eyes. Michelangelo's fresco, "The Last Judgement", has at its centre a powerful, muscular Jesus. Mary is by His side. He's surrounded by the saints. Mind you the second coming doesn't look like a happy event for them. A group of angels is blowing trumpets to raise the dead. Gabriel holds the thin book of the saved. The enormous book of the lost is held by another angel.

Those coming up from their graves on the right side of Jesus are taken by angels towards heaven. Some are being pulled up by their rosary beads—it's not going to be a comfortable trip! The people on the left side of Jesus are on their way to everlasting hell. We can see angels pushing them down while the demons are scratching away pulling them towards the fire. Borrowing from pagan mythology, Michelangelo depicts the doomed being ferried across in a boat with a demonic figure beating the reluctant sinners into hell.

When we look at this amazing fresco, we see an event primarily about judgement. It is awesome. It is powerful. But it is far from joyous.

Protestants have a bewildering array of beliefs about the second coming but the view that is becoming more popular is the secret rapture—a two-staged second coming. The first stage is when the righteous are whisked away to heaven. This is followed by a seven-year tribulation. Then Jesus arrives in all His splendour and sets up His kingdom on planet earth.

It makes for excellent book sales and a few profitable movies. But does any of this square with the Bible? Not one bit. In the Bible the second coming certainly isn't secret. This is how the Bible describes it:

*"Look, He is coming with the clouds," and "every eye will see Him . . ." (Revelation 1:7).*

So we know Jesus will come personally, visibly and globally—literally "every eye will see Him". What else does the Bible say?

*"Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of*

*heaven to the other"* (Matthew 24:30,31).

Jesus will return with power and great glory. Much better than fireworks on New Year's Eve! It will be like lightning zapping across the sky from east to west. The angels will gather all of God's people together. One people in one place at one time.

Maybe the most famous text on the second coming states:

*"For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord"* (1 Thessalonians 4:16,17).

At the second coming Jesus will raise the righteous from the dead. Then all of us will meet Jesus in the sky. This second coming is the greatest event in the history of humanity.

That's why the message of the second coming is the central focus of the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. For me that's what I live for. It's what makes my heart beat.

Tragically, there's a flip side to the second coming. I can imagine the lips of Jesus quivering when

He said, "the tribes of the earth will mourn" when they see Him.

One of the most famous paintings of all time is "The Scream" by Edvard Munch. I went to Norway to see this haunting masterpiece. Munch wrote on the frame of "The Scream", "my friends walked on, and I stood there trembling with anxiety—and I sensed an infinite scream passing through nature." Munch wasn't talking about the second coming but I think he captured a hint of the gut-wrenching reality the lost will experience.

Ellen White, in *The Great Controversy*, says the wails and screams of the wicked will be so horrendous they will be heard above the sound of the elements. This, at a time when the earth is, according to Scripture, in a state of almost unimaginable convulsions.

When I read these words they haunt me. Why are we so indifferent when the stakes are so astonishingly high? There's the beauty of eternal life—of complete love and peace with our Father in Heaven—or the anguish of missing out on everything for nothing. As Seventh-day Adventists we need to do whatever we can to save every soul for the kingdom so they'll never go through this experience.

One night I had a dream. In this dream I was alive at the second coming. I'd seen Jesus return and was on my way to heaven. So that was a good start.

**Those coming up from their graves on the right side of Jesus are taken by angels towards heaven. Some are being pulled up by their rosary beads—it's not going to be a comfortable trip!**



# ANCIENT WORDS PRESENT HOPE

What the Old Testament teaches us about Revelation

KAYLE B DE WAAL



**Sabbath,  
August 15, 2015**

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of Higher Education

A symposium and book launch with  
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Morning sessions include reflection and  
sermon by Kayle and worship led by Dr  
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On the way to heaven we were zipping past the planets and it came time for the Sabbath. Jesus stopped us and we sat down at a massive table to have a special Sabbath lunch.

This was not just a Sabbath potluck lunch—this was the greatest feast imaginable. Everything looked tantalising and delicious.

As I sat down I began to look at the people surrounding me. I spoke to the person seated next to me and asked him what his name was. He said, "I'm Martin Luther." Really? "I've been to the place where you lived, where you preached, where you nailed up the 95 Theses," I replied excitedly. "Tell me more of your story!"

So Martin Luther began telling me story after story. I just soaked it all in.

I then turned to the person on the other side of me and said, "what's your name?" "I'm John Huss," he replied. "Wow! I saw where you were burnt at the stake. You're a hero of mine. Tell me how you had the courage to die for Jesus. What went through your mind as they were lighting the fires beneath you?"

Once again he thrilled me with his stories.

I then looked at the person on the opposite side of the table. I said, "what's your name?"

"I'm John the Baptist."

"No! Really? Jesus said you were the greatest man who ever lived. You gave everything for Jesus!"

Then I looked at the man directly opposite me. He didn't look very impressive so I said to him casually, "who are you?" To my amazement he replied, "I'm the apostle Paul."

I couldn't believe my ears. "Tell me about some of your missionary trips. What was it like to be shipwrecked? Beaten? Pelted with stones?"

I was so enthralled with these men and their stories and then Paul looked straight at me. He asked, "what's your name?"

"I'm Neale," I replied, knowing full well this would mean nothing to any of them.

Then Paul looked me in the eyes and said, "tell me Neale—what have you ever done for Jesus?"

I got such a shock that I woke up in a cold sweat. Why? Because I realised how selfish my life was. My time, my resources, my focus were all on myself—not on Christ. It was obvious; I wasn't ready for Jesus to come. It wasn't a matter of what I had or hadn't done. That was just the symptom. The issue was this: for me Jesus was a segment of my life. For people like Luther, Huss, John the Baptist and Paul, Jesus was their life. For me Jesus would return as an Acquaintance. For those men He would return as a Friend.

That dream helped me wake up to my woeful spiritual condition. I surrendered my entire life to God and chose to live for Jesus with every fibre of my being. That night I accepted Jesus as my Lord, Saviour and best Friend. Today my driving passion is to ensure Christ's sacrifice was not for naught. I want every single person on this planet in heaven. I don't want anyone to miss out. Because I know that each and every one is of inestimable value.

I now long for the second coming of Jesus. I long for the day when we look up and say, "Lo, this is our God. We have waited for Him and He will save us."

R

1. Moses ben Maimonides, 13 Articles of Faith

*Neale Schofield is CEO of Adventist Media Network. This piece was presented during morning worship at the 2015 General Conference Session in San Antonio, Texas.*





### Toys for everyone

Beautiful toys restored by the volunteers at Peninsula Seniors Toy Recyclers (Sydney) have been distributed in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, by Operation Food for Life (OFFL). Children at the OFFL-sponsored Rob and Jan Patterson Literacy School were overwhelmed by the surprise. It was a real treat for them to have a toy of their own. OFFL expressed its gratitude for the generosity of the Peninsula Seniors Toy Recyclers and for its volunteers who collected, forwarded and distributed the toys. —*Dennis Perry*



### Restoring sight

A fundraiser dinner in Hornsby (NSW) organised by Lita Ford has raised more than \$A6000 for Open Heart International (OHI), the humanitarian arm of the Sydney Adventist Hospital. Guests included the Philippines Consul-General and members of the local Filipino community. The OHI team visited the Philippines shortly after the event and performed 127 cataract operations. "Each ophthalmic operation costs OHI approximately \$A200," OHI manager Michael Were said. "Lita's fundraising helped restore sight to 60 people who would otherwise remain blind." —*Pacemaker*



### New studios

Fiji Mission president Pastor Luke Narabe and Trans-Pacific Union Mission chief financial officer Francois Keet recently commissioned new studios to be constructed at the Church's Lami compound. The studios will produce local content for HopeChannel (Fiji), which is part of the official global television network of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. —*TPUM newsletter*



### Dental donations

Four dental vans worth more than \$A100,000 each have been donated to the Solomon Islands Mission. One van that is fully operational with dental chair and X-ray equipment will be located at Atoifi Adventist Hospital. The other vans will be lent to the Government Hospital in Honiara until its new dental clinic is built. The Greater Sydney Conference is raising funds to transport the vans by ship to the Solomon Islands. —*Greater Sydney Conference*



### Successful service

Caboorture Adventist Church (Qld) has voted to continue with an early worship service that was trialled last year. The extra service, held at 8am, is especially a blessing for families with children. Once a month, the church holds a combined service and fellowship lunch to maintain their connection. —*Focus*



### Experiencing redeeming grace

A women's retreat, held in Bridport (Tas) in April, was attended by 43 women, girls and babies. The theme was "Experiencing Redeeming Grace". Speaker Wendy Stanton presented two poignant messages on being a victim of grace and a survivor of grace. The weekend included early morning beach walks, individual prayer time, writing about personal walks with God, a fitness session, craft and many opportunities to catch up with old friends and make new ones. —*Tasda*



### Raising funds and awareness

Twenty-four participants from Nambour and Pine Rivers Pathfinder clubs (Qld) walked almost 12km to Mooloolaba and back to highlight the issue of domestic violence in Australia. Sponsorships were invited, with the event raising funds for Sunshine Sanctuary, an Adventist women's refuge opened more than 22 years ago. "Thank you Pathfinders for going the 'second mile'," said Marguerite Ryle, chairperson of Sunshine Sanctuary. —*Marguerite Ryle*



## An end to overeating

We're suffering from an obesity crisis. Rates of overweight and obesity in Australia have risen steadily over recent decades, despite the growth of the weight loss industry. It seems like everyone's trying to sell a quick, easy solution but none seem to be working.

A new scientific review of 1151 people following a specific diet for between 9 and 74 weeks is giving us further insight into what we could be doing to help reverse our weight crisis. And it's surprisingly simple: eat more plants.

The researchers found that people who followed plant-based diets lost significantly more weight than those who ate meat and animal products. And these weren't people who were trying to stick to lower than normal calorie intakes to lose weight either. People who did this in the plant-based group lost even more weight.

The reason for these results may have a lot to do with the energy density of plant foods. Plant foods tend to be high in fibre and lower in energy for a set volume compared to animal foods. In other words, sticking to a whole foods, plant-based diet makes it difficult to overeat.

But while we know that overweight and obesity are associated with a number of health conditions, we also know that an ideal weight differs from person to person. And it can't be used solely to define a person's health. The good news is that plant-based diets have also been associated with a lower risk of everything from heart disease to type 2 diabetes. So while we don't all necessarily have a weight loss goal, we should all have a health goal and research is showing that plant-based diets are a great way to reach it.



### *Baby potato, asparagus and almond salad*

Preparation time: 5 minutes

Cooking time: 15 minutes Serves: 4

- 400 g small new potatoes (chats), washed**
- 2 bunches asparagus, trimmed**
- 150 g green beans, trimmed**
- 2 tbsp olive oil**
- 1 tbsp baby capers, rinsed and chopped**
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped**
- ¼ cup lemon juice**
- ⅓ cup flat-leaf parsley leaves, chopped**
- 2 tbsp finely chopped chives**
- 50 g baby spinach leaves**
- 2 tbsp slivered almonds (toasted)**

1. Cook potatoes in a large saucepan of boiling water for 12 minutes. Drain, rinse in cold water and set aside to cool. Slice thickly.
2. Cook asparagus and beans in simmering water for 3 minutes. Drain and refresh in cold water.
3. To make a warm dressing, heat oil in the frying pan over medium heat. Add capers and garlic. Cook for 1 minute. Remove from heat. Add lemon juice, parsley and chives.
4. Mix ¾ of the warm lemon dressing with hot potatoes, then add asparagus, beans and spinach. Drizzle the remaining dressing over the top and sprinkle with slivered almonds and serve.

**NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVE:** 1278kJ (306cal). Protein 8g. Fat 6g. Carbohydrate 53g. Sodium 13mg. Potassium 456mg. Calcium 42mg. Iron 2.2mg. Fibre 9g.



Call and arrange to speak to one of our qualified nutritionists at Sanitarium Lifestyle Medicine Services on 1800 673 392 (in Australia) or 0800 100 257 (in New Zealand). Alternatively, email us at [nutrition@sanitarium.com.au](mailto:nutrition@sanitarium.com.au) (Australia) or [nutrition@sanitarium.co.nz](mailto:nutrition@sanitarium.co.nz) (New Zealand). For more great recipes and health articles visit our website [www.sanitarium.com.au](http://www.sanitarium.com.au) or [www.sanitarium.co.nz](http://www.sanitarium.co.nz)

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# On reflection

by Barry Oliver

**N**OT LONG BEFORE MY GRANDFATHER DIED HE said something that, on reflection, was almost unbelievable. My grandfather Norm Overend lived a good, honest but sometimes quite hard life. He certainly didn't pursue tertiary studies. In fact I don't think he even went to high school. He lived through the tough Depression years and two world wars. He made a living for his family as something of a jack-of-all-trades around Goulburn in rural New South Wales.

But even though he could be a bit rough around the edges at times—that independent Irish-Australian spirit—I remember him as having something far more valuable than tertiary qualifications, wealth or urban sophistication: he had a deep, abiding faith; a faith that expressed itself through a lifetime of service to our family, our Church and our community.

I'm sure he knew he wouldn't be with us much longer. After coming home from hearing a sermon by South Pacific Division president Pastor L C Naden, we were sitting together around the dinner table reflecting on the way life had a habit of throwing up surprises. While I cannot remember too many details about the conversation almost 50 years later, I do remember this: he looked over and said simply, "you never know Barry, one day you might be president of the Division!"

I was young, full of plans, hopes and dreams. And none of them had anything to do with ministry or Church administration, let alone being president of the Division! That was a long way away from where my young mind was. I have no idea how I responded but I think I probably just laughed.

Today I smile to myself for a very different reason, because I'm writing this to you as I prepare to pack up my personal effects and move out of the president's office at the South Pacific Division (SPD) after a lifetime of service. It has been an amazing journey. You see, when through a series of remarkable events I found myself at Avondale preparing for ministry, I planned to spend my life as a local

church pastor serving our Church family. I never imagined being the president of the Division would be on God's agenda and it certainly was not on mine. But somehow what God impressed on my grandfather's heart happened anyway.

As I prepare to leave this office I have been asked if I could pass on some final thoughts to you. I suppose you could say these are my dreams for our Church family. To use the well-worn metaphor, there are rocky shores I want our Church to avoid and a bountiful harbour in which I hope we will anchor.

## A Christ-focused Church

It is my deepest desire that we become a far more Christ-focused and biblically anchored community.

I hear you say that we are already Christ-centred and who is more biblically based than us? Yes, in theory that's true. But let me ask you a few simple questions; questions that I ask myself:

How much time did you and I spend studying or even reading the Bible yesterday?

On the other hand, how much time did we spend watching TV or doing something else just as insignificant?

How much effort did we put into endeavouring to understand the life and character of Jesus and modelling our lives after Him?

On the other hand, how much effort did we put into making money?

It gives me considerable grief to say it but the typical Seventh-day Adventist today is spending far more time absorbed in secular pursuits and entertainment than in the Word of God, and we are far more focused on earning a living than letting God live through us.

I don't say this to be judgemental. I say this because I love our Church. And when I see the way we invest our time and the priorities around which we organise our lives, I know God has something better for us. Something higher. Something deeper. God wants to do miracles in our lives—



but we have to open the door so He can. We need to be Christ-focused and biblically anchored.

### A unique and special Church

The Seventh-day Adventist Church isn't here by coincidence. This Church is a movement predicted in ancient prophecy, called for a very specific time and equipped with the most awesome mission ever entrusted to anyone on earth.

And yet, I fear we are forgetting our calling. We are trading the exceptional for the mundane, the best for the passable, the unique for the generic.

Yes, it is good to love other Christians. We can even admire and learn from aspects in other Christian denominations. Most of our hymns were, for example, written by Christians who were not Seventh-day Adventists. And it's good to appreciate what is best about all cultures and faiths. Adventists are not called to a chauvinistic or triumphalist view of the world. But we can appreciate others without forgetting our own, very unique calling.

Our understanding of the great controversy provides a context for a perspective that is unparalleled in Christianity. It is time for every Seventh-day Adventist Christian to delve into the depth and breadth of this unique message. From the remarkable health message God has given us to the laser sharp insights on education, from the breathtakingly broad understanding of prophecy to the beauty of our understanding of the character of God. All of it, and much more. Yes, it makes us different. And yes, that is good! It is good to be different for God. As everything God has given to us is good.

Adventism is not Christianity-lite. It is not the lowest common denominator. It is not reheated evangelicalism with a little apocalypse on the side. This Church has been called into existence by the Lord God of Hosts to prepare a people to meet the Son of God Himself upon His return. There has never been a higher calling. And that highest calling is yours and it is mine. What a privilege! Let's never

trade away our Adventist birthright in exchange for a tepid substitute.

### A loving, caring Church

"What is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them?" asks the psalmist. It's a very good question. If a sinful human being was in God's position, would he care about a planet full of impotent rebels grinding their way to self destruction? I don't think so. And even if the sinful heart did begrudgingly care a fraction, would a sinful person leave the splendour, love and contentment of heaven to come and die for those rebels? It's completely inconceivable.

And yet that is what our God did.

And that fact should colour everything we do. It should colour how we talk to each other. It should colour how we treat each other. It should impact how we invest our time, what we do with our financial resources and how we think of other human beings—even those who despise us.

As a Church family, I think we can do better. I don't want us to think about how people have mistreated us in the Church—all of us could make our own little lists. Rather, I want all of us to think about how we have mistreated others. What have I said or done; what have I failed to say or do? If Jesus were actually directing every thought and action in my life, how would the way I treat others change?

Jesus said there is a simple test to determine if we are His followers. Ultimately there is just one sign of authentic Christianity—it is whether we love one another (John 13:35).

My heart grieves when I hear of abuse in the Adventist community. Let me be clear: if you are employing physical violence or emotional blackmail against anyone, particularly against family members, your heart is not at one with Christ. If you are abusing another sexually, your heart is not at one with Christ. If you are using your words to denigrate and humiliate others, your heart is not at one with Christ.

Every one of us needs to humble our hearts and beg for Christ to break our sinful character and rebuild us so that,

as we're told in Philippians, we will have the mind "which was also in Christ Jesus". When we have Jesus' mind we will be patient with one another, as He was patient with everyone—from His strong-willed disciples to the little children. If we have His mind we will care for others, just as He cared for the lepers, the soldiers who crucified Him, the crowds of people who followed Him and just as He cared for His mother. If we have Jesus' mind in us we will be very, very different people. Going to church, keeping the Sabbath or even giving offerings doesn't make us Christians. What makes us Christians is our acceptance of the grace of God and loving each other. Under Christ's grace we can do better.

### A strategically-minded Church

There is one more thing I want to touch on. It's an area that we sometimes don't give enough thought to, and that is strategy. There are many, many things we can do at any given time. Good things. But unless we act in a thoughtful, strategic way, prioritising wisely, we will end up running in a thousand well-intentioned directions but achieving very little in the process.

As a community we are not strategic enough in the way we employ our resources and invest our time and effort. Which is good news as we can improve our impact for Christ dramatically if we act strategically—even without dramatically increasing the cost and effort.

Let me give you one example. Health has always been a very strong part of the Seventh-day Adventist community. In the South Pacific we have health departments at the Division, the unions, the conferences and the missions. We operate Sanitarium Health & Wellbeing, Sydney Adventist Hospital and Atoifi Adventist Hospital, 57 island clinics and Avondale's nursing school. We have first-rate dietitians, a network of Adventist health professionals who run everything from consulting rooms to health retreats, and much, much more. And we also have a first-rate media arm that includes a myriad of websites, magazines, books, radio and TV networks. The strategic failure? We've never pulled this all together in a manner that delivers our health message to the general public as part of a sophisticated outreach process leading to Jesus.

We have all the activity. And we all share the same goal. We have an enormous amount invested. And we have

tremendous professional capacity. We just haven't coordinated in a manner that produces a first-rate, high profile, attractive and engaging product that all of our society can readily interact with. In many of our communities people do not even know we exist despite the fact that they interact with us in some way almost every day!

As we look to the future, the SPD is about to release a strategy for the next five years that aims to improve our effectiveness. It is our goal to focus our collective energies around health, media, discipleship and our mission to the cities. There are many, many other things we can do. But we are looking to focus our effort. Why? Because by acting strategically we can do a better job introducing people to the magnificent love of Christ. It is my hope that, going forward, our work at every level of the Church will be much more strategically focused.

Along with this, we need to be united. It's true that when we do things by ourselves or in a small group we can implement ideas very quickly. But it takes coordination to do very big things.

It's like the little torpedo boat commanded by John F Kennedy that was rammed by a Japanese destroyer near the Solomon Islands during World War II. It was a fabulous little craft—very fast and manoeuvrable. But, of course, as important as torpedo boats were, they weren't the tool that proved decisive in the Pacific campaign. No, for that you'd have to look at the aircraft carriers. An aircraft carrier is relatively slow, it takes a long time to turn and a lot of coordination to operate. But when it gets going, what an immense power it can project!

We all have a choice. We can choose to put our efforts into little torpedo boats or we can pull together as a team and be part of an aircraft carrier for God. Both are very good things to do. But if we want to do the best—to make the most of our time and talents—there is no substitute for working together. On the aircraft carrier we might be the ones who arm the planes. We might steer the carrier. We might navigate. Maybe we might fly one of the planes. There are thousands of indispensable parts that are essential to be played to make that aircraft carrier function. When all of them work together, aircraft carriers win wars.

We are in a spiritual war. We each have a part to play. Let's act strategically, intelligently and in a unified manner. Why? Because when this war is won, the great controversy







will finally end, God's character will be vindicated before the universe for eternity and we will all go home to a far better land.

## Conclusion

My vision for our Church family as we move forward is that we will be Christ-focused, confidently unique, love each other far more and organise our strengths to act strategically. Together, one in Christ, focused on the mission He has given us and full of love for each other, our Church family can live out the destiny God preordained for us.

Before I close I hope you don't mind if I mention my family. If it wasn't for them I would never have had this extraordinary experience. My thanks begin with my parents. Like myself, my father felt the call to ministry. He was only a few months short of graduating from ministerial training at Avondale when I arrived. And that changed everything. With a newborn baby and no money in the bank, he was forced to put study on hold and go to work fulltime.

He never did finish that theology degree. A lesser man might have resented the baby who came in the way of following his calling. But that wasn't my father. I'd like to think God rewarded his faithfulness because, at a mature age, my father was finally called into the ministry. What a privilege we had to serve God in ministry together!

As many of you know, ministry is a team effort. That effort is heightened when one is called to Church leadership. The truth is, the presidency of the SPD is not a position that is easy on the family. We have a vast territory, very complex institutions and the president serves on a number of entities at the world level. Sometimes the hours are punishing and the days away from home are long and taxing

God has given each of us more than one calling. Being a pastor and a leader is a calling from God but I also have a calling to be a husband, a father, grandfather, brother, etc. In the years ahead I plan to dedicate myself predominantly to those callings, without neglecting His calling on my life to ministry. It is, as the term is popularly known, a time for rebalancing. Not abandoning, but balancing my life back towards my calling at home.

And so, soon after writing this, I will be walking out of my office for the very last time as president. I'll be shaking hands in the hallway, getting into my car and driving up the long road home. And I pray God will give Julie and I many, many happy years together reliving the highlights of the incredible experiences God has given us, spending time with our children, grandchildren and extended family, enjoying catching up with dear friends, and the blessing of being part of our local church family. And not having to pack another suitcase or sit in another board meeting for a very, very long time. ➤

*Dr Barry Oliver retired from his role as president of the South Pacific Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church on July 6, 2015.*



## The Dead Sea Scrolls and you

The Dead Sea Scrolls, written by the Essenes 100-200 years before Jesus Christ, contain many Old Testament prophecies of the Messiah. Daniel's book, a favourite of the Essenes, predicted the time of the Messiah's arrival in chapter 9:24-27.

Prophecy was given so that we might have faith and confidence in God and His Word. So what confident assurance does Daniel 9:24-27 give us? The context of this passage is that sin and rebellion (disobedience to God's laws and prophets) by God's people led to their captivity and the destruction of their city and temple.

**Read John 13:19; Daniel 9:5,6,10,11,13,14**

The grand prediction is that with the Messiah's arrival and death their rebel hearts will be broken, they will have victory over sin, they will be both righteous before and live righteously for God, and they will experience the peace of reconciliation with God. All of it is assured by the predicted time of both the Messiah's arrival and death.

**Read Daniel 9:24**

The fulfilment is for us too. For through faith in Jesus Christ's life and death, we weak, sinful rebels are justified, reconciled, saved and delivered from sin's power by the God of super abounding love. Claim it all right now by casting yourself on Christ.

**Read Romans 5:1-11; 6:8-14**



The Great Isaiah Scroll. The Dead Sea Scrolls, discovered at Qumran in 1947, contain many predictions of the coming Messiah (photograph by Ardon Bar Hama).





# Bigger than the Big Bang

by Sven Östring

**F**OR CENTURIES THE BIBLE HAS RESOLUTELY proclaimed that in the beginning, God created the universe. This teaching was at odds with Aristotle's influential theory of an eternal, unchanging universe.

All this changed in 1824 through the work of French military engineer and physicist Nicolas Léonard Sadi Carnot, the first person to formulate the second law of thermodynamics. The law states that the processes taking place in an isolated system always tend toward a state of equilibrium. Since the universe is not in an ultimate state of equilibrium now, it could not have existed for an infinite amount of time. Thus, science could now offer its support for the profoundly significant biblical position that the universe actually had a beginning.

While working on the general theory of relativity in 1917, Albert Einstein also found that his theory would not support an eternal, unchanging universe. Two scientists, Alexander Friedmann and Georges Lemaître, continued to work on applying the general theory of relativity, and in the 1920s they independently reached the conclusion that the universe is expanding. The theory predicted that all of space and time originated from a single point and has expanded to the immense universe that we know today. This expansion became known as the "Big Bang". Once again science supported the reality that the universe had a beginning.

There are Christians who feel the need to integrate the Big Bang theory into their theology because they believe that the weight of evidence requires them to do so and because they don't want to be perceived as anti-science. This is understandable but there is the real danger that this approach could lead to promoting a physical process that God did not actually use in creation and adopting a scientific theory that will ultimately become obsolete.

In order to catch a glimpse of how God created the

universe it's important to carry out a study of passages in the Bible regarding Creation. For example, the book of Hebrews acknowledges that it is "by faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible" and the psalmist tells us that "by the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and by the breath of his mouth all their host".<sup>1</sup> This reveals that the universe was spoken into existence by God.

Does the Big Bang theory integrate smoothly with this biblical insight? It's important to note that the Seventh-day Adventist Church has neither formally nor informally endorsed the Big Bang theory. But should we as individual Seventh-day Adventist Christians feel intellectually obligated to adopt and defend the Big Bang theory? There are a number of reasons why we should not.

Firstly, the Big Bang theory is not the only theory that can fit the data.<sup>2</sup> The Christian cosmologist George Ellis has explained, "People need to be aware that there is a range of models that could explain the observations . . . What I want to bring into the open is the fact that we are using philosophical criteria in choosing our models. A lot of cosmology tries to hide that."<sup>3</sup> Even the famous cosmologist Stephen Hawking, who is now an atheist, recognised this when he wrote, "One can imagine that God created the universe at literally any time in the past . . . One could still imagine that God created the universe at the instant of the Big Bang, or even afterwards in just such a way as to make it look as though there had been a Big Bang."<sup>4</sup> Thus, the weight of evidence does not lead inescapably to the Big Bang.

Secondly, the Big Bang theory itself is not free of problems. It's based on an assumption called the cosmological principle, which holds that matter is distributed uniformly throughout the universe. As the theoretical physicist Richard Feynman notes, though: "The assumption that

we have just mentioned implies a very strong uniformity in the universe. It is a completely arbitrary hypothesis, as far as I understand it."<sup>5</sup> The standard Big Bang theory also has other problems;<sup>6</sup> to solve these problems the standard model has been patched up with inflation, dark matter and dark energy. Is it time for the Big Bang theory to be traded in for a new model?

Scientists themselves see the need to explore other models of the universe. In 2004, 33 scientists wrote an open letter to the scientific community, urging them to support the exploration of alternative models to the Big Bang theory.<sup>7</sup> Then in February this year, Ahmed Farag Ali and Saurya Das proposed a new cosmological model that eliminates the Big Bang.<sup>8</sup> Wrapping our theology around scientific theories turns out to be a misguided endeavour.

History warns us not to credulously adopt and defend the dominant cosmology of our day. Contrary to popular belief and according to Galileo's own account, the Galileo affair was initially between Galileo and the academic Aristotelian professors of the day.<sup>9</sup> Galileo challenged the Aristotelian-Ptolemaic cosmology, and, as Hawking has noted, "This annoyed the Aristotelian professors, who united against him seeking to persuade the Catholic Church to ban Copernicanism."<sup>10</sup> The critical mistake that the Catholic Church made was to credulously adopt and then repressively defend the dominant pagan Greek cosmology of their day. Adventist academics would be wise to learn from the Galileo affair and not make the same mistake the Catholic Church did, by adopting or defending the dominant cosmological theory of our day. That some have recently made that mistake publicly is tragic.<sup>11</sup>

Finally, the reality is that we already reject key projections of the Big Bang theory, namely what it predicts about the future. Current observations suggest that the universe is expanding at a rate that will end in what is known as the Big Freeze. Accordingly to this theory, the universe will ultimately become one vast, cosmic graveyard for all of life, including humans.<sup>12</sup> However, we reject the Big Freeze because of the biblical prophecies that Jesus will come again in the near future and create a new heaven and a new earth.<sup>13</sup> Since we reject the future projections of the Big Freeze based on biblical revelation, we should similarly choose to uphold God's revelation regarding our past over the historical projections or theory of the day.<sup>14</sup>

Adventists should certainly recognise the hard work that cosmologists devote to studying the universe and their ongoing efforts to develop models to describe it. However, we should not credulously adopt the Big Bang theory. Like the Catholics who defended Aristotle's view of the universe, Adventists who mould their theology around the Big Bang theory not only give up theological credibility but are likely to be left behind as science moves on from the Big Bang.

God has given us the ability to discover amazing things about the universe. He has also given us the ability to

grow in our faith in Him, to believe by faith in a God who can create a universe in any way He wants to. A God who can establish physical laws and then intervene to perform supernatural miracles. A God who is willing to enter into this physical world and become flesh, just to reveal to us His love and power. A God who is bigger than the Big Bang, who is wiser than the wisest man, and who gave us insights into our origins that outlasted Aristotle and Einstein, and will outlast Hawking also. Let's learn the hard lessons of the past and base our theology on His Word, not on the shifting sands of theoretical physics. ✉

1. Hebrews 11:3 and Psalm 33:6 (ESV).
2. Scientific theories tend to be underdetermined by the evidence, which means that more than one theory could be matched to the data. Refer to John Lennox, *God and Stephen Hawking: Whose Design is it Anyway?* Lion Books, 2011, p 65.
3. Gibbs, W W, Profile: George F R Ellis, *Scientific American* 273(4):55, October 1995.
4. Stephen Hawking, *A Brief History of Time: From the Big Bang to Black Holes*, Bantam Books, 1988, p 10. In acknowledging that God could have created the universe at literally any time after the instant of the Big Bang, and specifically in the case that the universe was more recently created, say in the order of thousands of years ago, Hawking sweeps away the starlight problem and objections based on deep-time dating models, such as radiometric dating, continental plate tectonics, the geological column, ice cores and evolutionary timescales for the biosphere, in one fell swoop.
5. Richard P Feynman, Fernando B Morinigo and William G Wagner, *Feynman Lectures on Gravitation*, ed. Brian Hatfield, Addison-Wesley, 1995, p 166.
6. These problems include: (1) the horizon problem, (2) the flatness problem, (3) the magnetic monopole objection, (4) the rotation curves of spiral galaxies, and (5) distant supernovae being dimmer than expected. It is fascinating to note that the horizon problem involves the issue that, within the standard Big Bang theory, there is insufficient time for information and energy to travel between regions of the universe because of the physical limitation imposed by the speed of light. John Hartnett has observed, "Some of the solutions proposed [for the horizon problem], such as a massively higher speed of light in the past, or rapid inflation, have been no less exotic than any put forward by creationists." John Hartnett, *Starlight, Time and the New Physics*, Creation Book Publishers, 2007, p 21.
7. Available online at <<https://web.archive.org/web/20140401081546/http://cosmologystate-ment.org>> and Lerner, E. "Bucking the big bang", *New Scientist*, 182(2448):20, 22 May 2004.
8. This model was announced in <<http://phys.org/news/2015-02-big-quantum-equation-universe.html>>. It is important to note that there have been many other cosmological models proposed, including oscillating models, Linde chaotic inflationary model, Vilenkin and Hartle-Hawking quantum gravity models, and the Carroll-Chen model that relies on a background de Sitter space-time. Refer to *Reasonable Faith*, p125-150.
9. Refer to Galileo's letter to Kepler in 1610, which is available at <<http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/galileo/lettergalileokeplar1610.html>> and his famous letter to the Grand Duchess Christina of Tuscany in 1615, which is available at <[http://scitech.au.dk/fileadmin/site\\_files/science.au.dk/NF/Komm/DenbevaegedeJord/Letter\\_to\\_the\\_Grand\\_Duchess\\_Christina\\_of\\_Tuscany.1615\\_Galilei.pdf](http://scitech.au.dk/fileadmin/site_files/science.au.dk/NF/Komm/DenbevaegedeJord/Letter_to_the_Grand_Duchess_Christina_of_Tuscany.1615_Galilei.pdf)>.
10. *A Brief History of Time*, p 189. John Lennox has also confirmed this historical corrective: "Furthermore, Galileo enjoyed a great deal of support from religious intellectuals—at least at the start. The astronomers of the powerful Jesuit educational institution, the Collegio Romano, initially endorsed his astronomical work and fêted him for it. However, he was vigorously opposed by secular philosophers, who were enraged at his criticism of Aristotle. This was bound to cause trouble. But, be it emphasised, not at first with the church." John Lennox, *God's Undertaker: Has Science Buried God?* Lion Books, 2009, p 24.
11. It is sobering to realise that Christian academics who are defending the dominant cosmology of our day are playing the contemporary equivalent to Professor Cosimo Boscaglia's historical role in the Galileo affair rather than Galileo Galilei and Benedetto Castelli's historical roles. For the historical context, refer to Moss, J. "Galileo's Letter to Christina: Some Rhetorical Considerations" *Renaissance Quarterly*, 36 (4): 547-576, 1983. Available at <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2860733>>.
12. *Reasonable Faith*, p 143.
13. Isaiah 65:17 and Revelation 21:1-4.
14. As Craig has pointed out, "Theological eschatology therefore takes the findings of physical eschatology to be at best projections of the future course of events rather than actual descriptions." William Lane Craig, "The End of the World". Available at <<http://www.reasonablefaith.org/the-end-of-the-world>>. In a similar way, physical cosmogonies can be taken to be at best projections of the history of the universe rather than actual descriptions. It should be noted that no evangelical Christian supposes that God will take billions or even millions of years to create the new heavens and the new earth. The biblical symmetry between protology and eschatology would then support a much shorter protological timescale.

*Dr Sven Ostring is director of Personal Ministries, Sabbath School, Stewardship and Discipleship for the Greater Sydney Conference.*



LETTERS

**COUNTER THE CUT**

Norman Young, via email

The Government's recent budget severely reduces Australia's foreign aid commitment. Foreign Minister Julie Bishop used three criteria in re-assessing the extent of Australia's aid: "Firstly, she considered whether those countries themselves are giving foreign aid . . . Number two, she looked at their forecast economic growth and their capacity to do it. And number three, she looked at the regions and said, 'Well, we have a responsibility to take care of our region'."<sup>1</sup>

The result of Bishop's review on the basis of these three criteria is that aid will be reduced by 40 per cent in countries such as Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Vietnam. Sub-Saharan Africa's aid is cut by a massive 70 per cent while the Middle East and North Africa suffered a cut of 82 per cent.<sup>2</sup> "And at a time when Australia is involved in another war there, Iraq will receive no recurrent aid funding at all."<sup>3</sup>

This is the severest cut ever in Australia's foreign aid program, and at around 0.22 per cent of its GNP, it's the meanest level of aid ever. It's well below Denmark, Norway and Sweden's approximately 1 per cent of GDP; indeed, Australia is well down the list of donors to foreign aid (about 20th). Many countries in our region will be affected by these cuts; countries that Julie Bishop said should be Australia's priority.

So what should be our Adventist response? The most practical reaction is to review our own giving to ADRA. If you are not a donor to ADRA,

now's a good time to start; if you are a donor, now's a good time to consider increasing your support. Maybe we should even consider ingathering this year.

1. Treasurer Joe Hockey on the ABC's 7.30 Report (May 14, 2015).
2. *The Guardian*, "Budget cuts to foreign aid put Australia on track for least generous spend ever."
3. ABC's 7.30 Report (May 14, 2015).

**HANGING ON**

Peta Hay, via website

Thank you Deanna for your article "The spiritual wounds of abuse" (Feature, June 20). You have talked about a difficult subject with honesty.

I am a survivor as well. The abuse has damaged my whole life and I struggled a long time to live a life with meaning. I'm not sure that I am there yet. I have problems with intimacy and don't trust God yet. I still hang on though. I am in a better frame of mind now but I still feel the need to deal with some issues.

**MONEY MATTERS**

Linda, via website

Re: "A second look at Adventist education" (Feature, June 20).

Something that is not mentioned in this article, but has a big impact on whether Adventist families send their children to Adventist schools, is money. Some of the fees at our schools are terribly expensive and there seems to be many Adventist schools no longer giving a discount (small as it is) to Adventist families.

A lot of these families are single income with multiple children (some still at home) and would dearly love to send their children to a school that shares their faith, but cannot afford it. These people

also may not be eligible for fee assistance, depending on the school's eligibility requirements. Also, the growing size of the schools was mentioned in the article as a "plus". Yes, there are advantages to bigger schools but some children need a small school environment. Furthermore, having been to a number of Adventist schools, very few are "wheelchair friendly" so this prevents some from enrolling.

Just some things for our education system to think about.

**HOME SCHOOL?**

Aaron Gudze, via website

Re: "A second look at Adventist education" (Feature, June 20).

I have met and befriended many Adventist parents who have chosen to home-school their children. I'm not sure why but it seems to be a growing trend in Adventist families. Why the distrust?

I have also heard a number of Adventist teachers speak poorly of their experience in our schools. That can't be good for publicity either.

**IMPORTANT STEP**

Graham Weir, via website

Re: "Steps to Christ" (Insight, June 20).

Thank you Dr Barry for writing this great encouragement to read Ellen G White's writings. It is refreshing to see this coming from the SPD.

So many of our pastors coming out of Avondale nowadays seem to downplay/never mention her writings. Perhaps the teachers in the theology department there no longer share your confidence in her writings?

*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 Page 4 for contact details.*

# Kids' Space

**HI KIDS!**  
My name is King Josiah, I am 26 years old. I am going to order the restoration of the temple.

After studying the Bible scrolls Josiah learns about God's laws & promises. King Josiah promises to follow God's law & his people want to follow God too.



## COMMUNITY MESSAGE

God leads His  as we study and obey His word.

## MEMORY VERSE

"Your word is a  to my feet and a  for my path" Psalm 119:105, NIV



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## WEDDINGS



**Tay–Davidson.** Marcel Saiw Yee Tay, son of Freddy and Yeo Tay (Kuching, Malaysia), and

Tanya Yin Davidson, daughter of Danson and Phua (Brisbane, Qld), were married 31.8.14 at Peppers Resort, Kingscliff, NSW. They have set up their home in Brisbane, Qld, where they are both studying.

*Mark Pearce*



**van de Wetering–Barden.** Troy Jan van de Wetering,

son of Rod and Kim van de Wetering (Port Macquarie, NSW), and Claire Louise Barden, daughter of Kim Barden (Lowood, Qld) and the late Anne Barden, were married 21.12.14. They met in Mackay where they are both working and have set up their home.

*Mark Pearce*

**D'Costa–Baker.** William Clement D'Costa, son of Pastor Owen (deceased) and Patricia (Perth, WA), and Nicolette Baker, daughter of Erwin and Gisela Schwartz (Sydney, NSW), were married 26.4.15 at Le Montage, Lilyfield. Family and friends from near and far gathered to celebrate Bill and Nicky's happy day, wishing them God's blessing. They have set up their home in Lilyfield.

*Eric Winter*

## OBITUARIES

**Bazley,** Allan Henry, born 30.1.1936 in Monto, Qld; died 21.5.15 in Bundaberg. He was predeceased by his brother Cliff Bazley in 1964. He is survived by his siblings and their families: Doris and Lawrence Hay (Murgon), Athol and Pat Bazley (Toowoomba), Rita and Ray Milner (Bundaberg), Melva Powell (Adelaide, SA), Kelvin and Lynne Bazley (Nambour, Qld) and Kathy

and Peter Beard (Sydney, NSW). Allan had an interesting life, working as a cane locomotive driver, General Motors Holden vehicle assembler, farmer and saw miller. He travelled through Europe and North America, and enjoyed a loving family.

*Phil Downing*

**Carbery,** Grace Shirley (nee Larwood), born 4.5.1924 in Blyth, SA; died 1.10.14 in Wahroonga, NSW. On 19.10.1946 she married John Anthony Carbery. She was predeceased by her husband and daughter Coral. She is survived by her daughters: Heather, Beverley, Shirley, Patricia, Rosalie and Jenny. Grace was always kind, open and generous. She was devoted to reading her Bible and to prayer. She was deeply loved by family and friends who look forward to a great reunion at the resurrection.

*Murray House*

**Fisher,** Ivy Alvilda (nee Brown), born 13.4.1921 in Brisbane, Qld; died 23.5.15 on the Gold Coast. Ivy, the fourth of 10 children, married Archibald Fisher on 27.2.1942 and they had five daughters: Jean, Lynette, Lyndel, Helen and Elaine. Ivy was predeceased by Archie and two of their daughters Lyndel and Lynette. She is survived by three daughters; eight grandchildren; and 11 great-grandchildren.

*Andy Krause*

**Gillies,** Lorna Rose, born 9.12.1927 in Warracknabeal, Vic; died 13.5.15 in Cooranbong, NSW. On 23.11.1954 she married Bruce Gillies. She is survived by her husband; their children: Brian, Graeme, Len and Nerolie Heckendorf; and six grandchildren: Michael, La-Shae, Justin, Luke, Jordan and Eliza. Lorna's father died when she was seven and at the age of 15 she began working in a publishing factory where she was employed until enrolling at Avondale College in 1946. She worked as a nurse but back problems caused her to switch to clerical work. Lorna spent many happy hours composing poetry to bring honour and glory to His name. As her health deteriorated over recent years Bruce became her principal carer and considered it his labour of love.

*Barry Satchell*

**Harch–Groom,** Daphne (nee

May), born 23.9.1930 in Sarina, Qld; died 15.1.15 in Victoria Point Aged Care. She was predeceased by her daughter Vernita, first husband John Harch and second husband Wilfred Groom. She is survived by her daughters Delvene (Jimboomba) and Lorelle (Wynnum); grandchildren Kelvin (Jimboomba), Maria (Greenbank), Gavin (Wynnum) and Adam (Wynnum); and great-grandchildren Helena and Kyle (Greenbank). Daphne was a very gifted lady with sewing, cooking, crochet, music and many other talents.

*David Gibson*

**King,** William (Bill) Murdoch, born 14.1.1936 in Hornsby, NSW; died 25.5.15 at his home in Hornsby Heights. He is survived by his wife of 52 years, Marjorie; four children and their spouses: Colin and Debbie, Carol and Tim, Kylie and Scott, Kasey and Brett; and 12 grandchildren. A large number of relatives and friends gathered at the Hillside Chapel, Palmdale Crematorium, Ourimbah, to support the family and to farewell a true and treasured friend. Bill had a constant faith in his Saviour and with him, we look forward to the resurrection morning.

*Ron Evans*



**Laza,** Hilda (nee Schultz), born 3.1.1943 in Debnik, Poland; died 20.10.14 in

Brisbane, Qld, after a short battle with acute myeloid leukaemia. She married Robert Laza in 1967. She is survived by her husband; son Andrew and his wife Kathy; granddaughters Monique and Naomi; and extended family in Australia and Germany. Hilda migrated to Australia in 1966 with her brother Zygmunt. In 1977 she and Robert moved to Brisbane, where she was a faithful member of Springwood church for 37 years. With an unshakeable faith and trust in the Lord, she lived her life devoted to spreading the gospel, considering the needs of others and passionately living a healthy lifestyle. Her witnessing led many people to commit their lives to the Lord.

*Mladen Krklec*



**Leopold,** Anna (nee Prokoff), born 29.7.1930 in Bratsk-Sentoram, Croatia; died 7.2.15 in the Sydney

## POSITION VACANT

■ **Country director–ADRA Papua New Guinea (Lae, PNG).** The role of the ADRA PNG country director is to provide visionary and strategic leadership to ADRA PNG so that it fulfils its mission as the humanitarian development and relief agency of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in PNG. The country director also ensures that ADRA's administrative operation is professional, efficient, is financially accountable and sustainable; provides a positive and challenging work environment for personnel; and is an exemplary model of Seventh-day Adventist values. For more information please visit the South Pacific Division's Human Resources website at <www.adventistemployment.org.au>. All applications, including your CV, three-work related referees and a reference from your church pastor, must be forwarded to: Human Resources, Seventh-day Adventist Church (Pacific) Limited, Locked Bag 2014, Wahroonga NSW, 2076 Australia or email to <hr@adventist.org.au>, or fax to (02) 9489 0943. Applications close **July 31, 2015.**

■ **Marketing manager–Avondale College (Lake Macquarie Campus)** seeks to attract a suitably qualified and experienced marketing manager to lead a progressive marketing team in the challenge of increasing enrolments through designing and implementing a range of effective initiatives. The role will include: continuing the development and implementation of the operational marketing plan and related initiatives, coordinating and managing the marketing team personnel and their activities, coordinating and managing the marketing services budget, ensuring promotion of Avondale's Seventh-day Adventist mission and ethos in churches, schools, conventions, youth rallies, conference camps and other church meetings, ensuring partnerships with schools with whom Avondale has or desires a relationship, coordinating the promotion of Avondale at career expos. Applications, addressing the selection criteria, should be emailed to <employment@avondale.edu.au>. Applications close **July 31, 2015.**

Sign up for job updates and find more vacant positions at <adventistemployment.org.au>



Adventist Hospital, Wahroonga, NSW. In 1951 she went to Austria, where she married Josep, who predeceased her in 2000. She is survived by their three children: Ingrid, Peter and Kurt. The family migrated to Australia and quickly integrated and embraced life in their new homeland. Through illness and disability she continued to show great faith and courage. Anna was a long-time member of Mona Vale church. She will be remembered for her commitment, kindness, faithfulness, patience, long-suffering and her wonderful European-based cooking skills.

*John Hadzic*



**Meyn, Eric Sydney**, born 16.3.1924 in West Tamworth, NSW; died 16.5.15 in Coffs

Harbour Base Hospital. Eric grew up as a country boy and after enlisting in the armed forces during World War II he served with distinction in both the army and air force. In 1950 he married Jean Maud Hurst, who predeceased him in 2013. Eric, a successful entrepreneur and keen student of sciences and literature, found his Lord and Saviour along with the Sabbath and other biblical truths in 2005 and has in recent years served as deacon for the Coffs Harbour church.

*Bob Manners*

**Pink, Lenore Muriel** (nee Slater), born in 1934; died in 2014 in Base Hospital, Shepparton. In 1952 she married Edward Sydney Pink. She was predeceased by Sophie, Michael and Kathleen. She is survived by Stephen (Qld), Leona Pink (Shepparton, Vic), Rodger Pink (Albury, NSW), Zona Goldfinch, (Port Parham, SA), Tania Pink, (Port Parham), Trevor Schiller (Barmera), Frances Goldfinch (Davoren Park), Tarla Goldfinch (Port Parham), Ron Pink and Ralph Audersy, (Mt Gambier). Lenore, from Scott Creek, SA, married and had several children.

Her mother was a founding member of Stirling church. Lenore is survived by five generations of descendants.

*Russell Branyt*

**Richter, Pastor Raymond Walford**, born 12.9.1923 in Rockhampton, Qld; died 16.5.15 in Melody Park, Gold Coast. He was predeceased by his devoted wife Coralie. He is survived by his siblings Enid and Cyril; son Doug and daughter Jan; and five grandchildren. Ray was a gracious Christian gentleman with a dauntless faith, indomitable pioneer spirit and an inspired sense of mission. He gave 29 years of distinguished mission service, including roles as principal of Betikama Adventist College (Solomon Islands), Jones Missionary College (Papua New Guinea), departmental director of the Bismarck-Solomons Union and departmental director in PNG. The legacy of Ray and Coralie live on in a quite profound way in the lives of many national teachers, pastors and political leaders in the Pacific Isles.

*Peter Colquhoun,*

*Wayne Humphries, Ira Dawson*



**Speers, Jean** (nee Oliver), born 8.12.1929 in Parkes, NSW; died 27.5.15 in the Avondale

Adventist Aged Care Facility, Cooranbong, NSW. Jean was baptised at the age of 14 and remained a warm, generous, fun-loving Adventist Christian all her life. In 1951 she married Reg Douglas and five beautiful daughters were born into their home: Jeanette Plane (deceased), Wendy Wilson, Kathy Readford, Faye Saville and Sharon Turner. Her work included nursing at Sydney Adventist Hospital and then later in the Sanitarium canteen in Cooranbong. In retirement she volunteered at the Adventist community centre. After many years spent raising her family alone, Jean married Gordon Speers in 1979 and they

lived happily in Cooranbong. She was loved by her extended family and many friends in the village church. She will be remembered as a wonderful wife, mother, sister, nanna and gran-nan.

*Barry Oliver*

## ADVERTISEMENTS

### Notice of Meeting—PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF VENUE.

Notice is hereby given that the **56th Constituency Meeting of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, North New South**

**Wales Conference** will be held at Stuarts Point Convention Centre, 250 Grassy Head Road, Stuarts Point, NSW, 2441. The meeting will be held on Sunday, August 23, 2015, commencing at 9.30am. Delegates will be appointed in harmony with the constitution. The business of the constituency meeting will be as provided in the constitution, including the presentation of reports and financial statements for the quadrennial period 2011–2014 inclusive. The executive officers, departmental directors, associate departmental directors, executive committee, constitution committee and appointments committee for the North New South Wales Conference will be elected.

*—Pr Paul Geelan, General Secretary*

### Hillview church celebrating 40 years—October 2 and 3, 2015.

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and inspiration. For more information, email: <iescale@yahoo.com.au> or phone: (02) 4977 2255.

### Avondale College Church invites you to "The Dance" women's conference on

September 19–20, 2015. Guest speakers include Lola Moore and Litiana Turner. Register online <collegechurch.org.au/the-dance>. Email <bighouseconferences@gmail.com> for more information.

## CORRECTION

The article "Give them the keys" (July 4, page 21) incorrectly stated Dr Nick Kross as the author. This article was written by Chelsea Mitchell, one of the young adults who formed the committee on Youth Outreach.

## Finally . . .

It's never too late to start over. If you weren't happy with yesterday, try something different today. Don't stay stuck, do better.

—Alex Elle

Next RECORD August 1

## VOLUNTEERS

■ **Vanuatu fly-n-build team volunteers required.** A group of 20 volunteers are need to help build three churches in Port Vila mid-October 2015. We need people skilled in construction or who can assist with construction of pre-fabricated buildings. You will be assisted and supervised by a team of experienced builders who have designed the cyclone-rated building. Final details are yet to be confirmed and accommodation—it could be a little rough! Contact: Maryanne Jakovac at AVS. Email: <volunteers@adventist.org.au> to register your interest in either this build or future planned trips.

■ **Children/youth work—Kaitaia Adventist Church (New Zealand).** Position available for 12 months starting September 1, 2015. Run after-school programs, youth Friday nights, organise activities Sat/Sun afternoons, sports, craft and assist children with particular or special needs. Suitable for individual or married couple (age 21–30). Minimum education—Bachelors, must have experience working with children. Must have a driver's licence. See more details at <www.adventistvolunteers.org>. Search for Call ID: SPD. KAI.2015.01 or contact AVS <volunteers@adventist.org.au> or phone +61 2 9847 3275.

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# PACIFIC ISLAND ADVANCEMENT

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