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# SAVE THE DATE

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JULY 15-20, 2019

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Seventh-day  
Adventist Church

*Australia*



## CHILDHOOD SEXUAL ABUSE

Child sexual abuse is devastating. I know as a relative because members of my extended family have been victims. I also know as a pastor from listening to church members who trusted me with their abuse story.

Sleepless nights, lack of trust, panic attacks, feelings of intense depreciated value, tendencies to self-harm, aggressive behaviour from deep-seated anger are just some of the things I have observed and heard of from those who are victims of this terrible crime. Taking someone's innocence by force is despicable.

Michelle Hood's experience is real and I acknowledge her courageous journey to healing (see "Healing the wounds of childhood sexual abuse", page 16). I applaud that, with her husband Graeme, she ministers to and supports many victims and their families. Michelle has turned an absolutely horrible experience into a valuable ministry with Jesus.

Last year, Pastor Jorge Munoz, president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Australia, and I published an apology on the *Adventist Record* website (October 23, 2018). It was genuine and heartfelt. Some people really valued it. Others responded that it was too little, too late. An apology is important, but if it is not followed by positive action, it means very little.

I am pleased that the corporate Church in the South Pacific, New Zealand and Australia has responded positively. Safe Place Services was the first attempt to deal with victims and perpetrators of child sexual abuse. The Church began to listen and care for victims. They began to restrict perpetrators, and began to educate church leaders and congregations. As president of the Western Australian Conference in the early to mid-2000s, I worked with a sub-committee of the Executive to develop the first policy on the topic. This has since been amended, improved and developed by others, but some of the policies we put in place remain today.

During Australia's Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, the corporate Church realised we could do better and established a separate entity called Adsafes. Adsafes does all the things that Safe Place Services did with more staff and more focus. They also support the redress system. Adsafes and

our church communities still have much to learn, but through Adsafes we are trying to better deal with the many ramifications of child sexual abuse in our Church.

I recently spent a morning with the staff at Adsafes and encouraged them in their difficult work. One comment from a staff member still challenges my thinking, "We are a very redemptive community who lacks compassion." What did they mean by that?

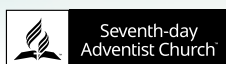
In my words, we explain and teach the redemptive grace of Jesus very well. People know that Jesus saves and saves completely. Jesus' death on the cross took all of my sin and its penalty, and replaced it with complete forgiveness and righteousness. This is indeed redemptive and good news. But when it comes to dealing with people who stumble and fall continually because of abuse they've experienced, and how others and their own sins have affected their lives, we are not so patient and caring. Caring for people takes time and effort—real compassion.

Jesus modelled this compassion. He continually cared for Mary Magdalene who came back for hope and healing seven times (Luke 8:2, DA 568). As a Church it would be great if we could be real disciples and dispense such lavish grace and compassion.

Jesus is just and tough too. He said to His disciples, "Temptations to sin are sure to come, but woe to the one through whom they come! It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were cast into the sea than that he should cause one of these little ones to sin," (Luke 17:1,2; ESV). We don't know what sins Jesus is talking about, but from what I see it certainly applies to sexual child abuse.

Tough, compassionate and redemptive—this is what the Church is called to be. To do this we need grace and discernment, given to us through the Holy Spirit. I am committed to this—I ask you to be too!

**GLENN TOWNEND**  
SENIOR CONSULTING EDITOR  
📧/SPDpresident



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### senior consulting editor

glenn townend  
senior editor  
jarrod stackelroth  
assistant editors  
maritza brunt  
vania chew  
copyeditors  
tracey bridcutt  
kent kingston

### graphic designer

linden chuang  
template designer  
theodora pau'u  
noticeboard  
julie laws  
letters  
editor@record.net.au  
news & photos  
news@record.net.au

### noticeboard

ads@record.net.au  
subscriptions  
subscriptions@record.net.au  
+ 61 (03) 5965 6300  
mailed within australia and  
nz \$A43.80 \$NZ73.00 other  
prices on application.  
website  
record.adventistchurch.com

### adventist media

locked bag 1115  
wahroonga nsw 2076 australia  
+ 61 (02) 9847 2222  
cover credit  
tracey bridcutt  
"Women from Fiji at the 2019  
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Women's Congress."

## AVONDALE: HERE FOR GOOD

I've never been more clear about our mission: we are a Seventh-day Adventist higher education learning community dedicated to serving world needs. The new branding of our research offers a sharper summary.

"Here for Good" aligns our mission with our research agenda. As my colleague Dr Carolyn Rickett notes, we research not for individual scholarly pursuit, but "to embrace a larger, more altruistic concern of improving the world around and within us". The framework and focus of our research supports the Church's mission by increasing our understanding of historic Adventist fields of significance: society and culture (including biblical study and Christian spirituality), Christian education and health. One of our vice-presidents, Professor Jane Fernandez, describes research at Avondale as never an end in itself. "If our research is here for good, it is especially here for the cause of good."

This is why students choose an Avondale education: they see it as giving them "a greater vision". That's our motto and I saw it in action during our biannual Festival of Faith. Speaker Pastor Brock Goodall found the gospel of grace in Leviticus. Now, 10 students want to take their relationship with Jesus further—we baptised the first three just before Easter. About the same number want Bible studies. Three times as many want to serve on campus.

And it's a campus that continues to modernise. The Clinical Education Centre (Sydney) is a state-of-the-art learning centre for nursing students. And the administration building and College Hall (Lake Macquarie) are being refurbished into contemporary hubs for new and prospective students.

But the best evidence that we are Here for Good is our graduates. Look for them in your churches and schools. I'm very proud of them.

**RAY ROENNFELDT**  
AVONDALE PRESIDENT

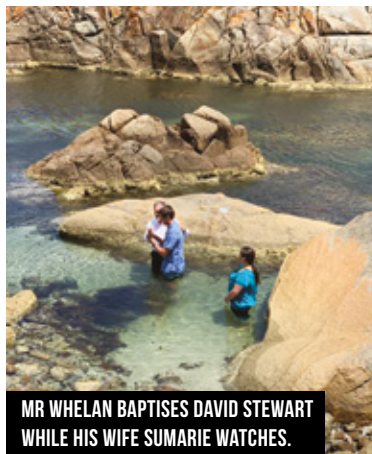


## FIRST BAPTISM IN 24 YEARS

TASDA/RECORD STAFF

Just a little under five years ago, a rescue mission was commenced to "save" the King Island Seventh-day Adventist Church from extinction. The house at the side of the church had been sold and it was intended that the church be sold as soon as a buyer could be found.

The land on King Island (which lies off the north-west coast of Tasmania) had been purchased



MR WHELAN BAPTISES DAVID STEWART WHILE HIS WIFE SUMARIE WATCHES.

and a church had been built with a team of volunteers in early January 1981. At that stage the church had an average attendance of about 40. Over the years the membership had decreased and the last surviving original member (Laurie Morgan) was buried in 2013.

This year, after five years of ministry by lay members from Victoria, King Island church celebrated its first baptisms in 24 years.

The church group and a number of visitors witnessed the baptism of a young, newly married couple, David and Sumarie Stewart, on Sabbath, January 19, and the following day a mother and daughter, Kymm and Gracye Hill, were baptised together in the same natural rock pool just south of the main township of Currie.

Regular attendance is between 15 and 20.

## GIFT-GIVING IN-REACH AT SAMOA COLLEGE

RECORD STAFF/MOSESE LAWELOA

An innovative program at Samoa Adventist College, Lalovaea, Upolu, has seen students help each other and become more attuned to the needs of their neighbours.

The school's spiritual committee came up with the idea of doing "inreach" at their school, rather than outreach. The committee observed that there were many students in the school who needed help in different ways.

During the penultimate week of first term, teachers helped the students to pick a secret friend. They were then given three weeks to identify their secret

friend's needs and come up with a plan to alleviate those needs. Uniform items, shoes, pens, an exercise book, even a thank-you card were some of the ideas the students came up with.

"I saw students crying while giving and when receiving," said Mosese Laweloa, school chaplain. "I'm sure when they give gifts to people in future, they [will] know how the other person feels."



YEAR 8 STUDENTS.



## JEWISH ADVENTIST GROUP CELEBRATE PASSOVER

JARROD STACKELROTH

Forty-five people came together to mark Passover in Wellington, New Zealand, on Friday, April 19. The Passover seder meal was led by Dr Richard Elofer, director of the World Jewish-Adventist Friendship Centre at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, and hosted by Bet Tikkun, the Jewish Adventist congregation in New Zealand.

For most of those who attended, it was their first time experiencing the Passover seder. Dr Elofer led attendees through the Passover traditions—an evening filled with symbolism and the eating of specific food and herbs—and explained how to understand Passover using the gospel writings from a messianic perspective.

A smaller crowd gathered on Sabbath for a seminar in which Dr Elofer explored more of the meaning of the Passover, as well as his work at the World Jewish-Adventist Friendship Centre. Dr Elofer's enthusiasm and vast knowledge led to engaging dialogue with questions on topics such

as clean and unclean, Jesus being Jewish, and confronting some of the Christian prejudice towards Judaism. Around two-thirds of the attendees for the Passover meal were friends of Bet Tikkun members, and had no other connection with the Adventist Church. As such they were curious about the connection between the Seventh-day Adventist Church and a Jewish messianic congregation.

North New Zealand Conference (NNZC) president Pastor Ben Timothy, his wife Noeline, and NNZC secretary Pastor Hugh Heenan expressed how blessed they had been by attending the Passover meal and seminar. Attendees kept commenting that "this was really interesting" and "I learnt a lot". For one young woman, it had been particularly meaningful. Having found the event online, she expressed how happy she was to be there. As a Messianic Jew, she hadn't attended Passover since she went with her parents as a child. She really felt blessed and planned to attend Bet



DR RICHARD ELOFER.



FORTY-FIVE PEOPLE ATTENDED THE EVENT.

Tikkun again in the near future.

The next Passover seder meal will once again be hosted by Bet Tikkun and is scheduled for April 8, 2020.

*Bet Tikkun is the only Jewish messianic Adventist congregation in NZ and ministers to people across the country. For more information visit <bettikkun.com> and <facebook.com/bettikkun>.*

## GC NUTRITION EXPERTS VISIT TASSIE

ADVENTIST HEALTH MINISTRIES/RECORD STAFF

The General Conference Nutrition Council (GCNC) had its annual meeting in Tasmania on March 12–17.

During the first four days, the nutritional experts—many from the United States, Latin America and Europe—reviewed papers in preparation for publication of various nutritional fact sheets. They also listened to presentations by invited experts on current nutritional issues.

A unique aspect of the meeting this year was the collaboration with Tasmanian Conference to engage in community outreach.

The GCNC members were divided into three groups and spread across Tasmania to preach on Sabbath in various churches, and also participated in Sunday health expos aimed at reaching the community. The

GCNC guests worked together with local church members to provide health screenings, lifestyle advice, food demonstrations and specific presentations covering topics on health and nutrition.

"I was impressed," said South Pacific Division health spokesperson, Dr Chester Kuma. "I commend the team for being able to provide credible and scientifically validated information on nutrition that the church desperately needs today."

Pastor Cosmin Dan-Marica, Conference CFO and pastor of the Glenorchy church, organised the health expo in Hobart together with volunteers from local churches.



GENERAL CONFERENCE NUTRITION COUNCIL MEETING ATTENDEES.

"This was the most successful health expo we have had so far, with great response from the community," said Pastor Dan-Marica. "We have a plan to follow up with each contact and meet their identified health needs."

Most attendees asked questions about being healthy and were interested in making lifestyle changes. Many took home free literature and asked to have prayer before leaving.

# ADVENTISTS AND LUTHERANS SHARE COMBINED EASTER SERVICE

DANIEL KUBEREK

Seventh-day Adventist campers in South Australia were joined by hundreds of Lutheran worshippers from the Barossa Valley region for a combined Good Friday Easter service on April 18.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church's Big Camp meetings are held at Faith Lutheran College in Tanunda, during the first week of the April school holidays, which coincided with Easter this year.

"That created something of a problem" said Pastor Garry Hodgkin, one of the organisers of the program. "The Barossa Lutherans normally utilise this facility for a combined Easter service. Because of that clash, they actually approached us and said, 'Look, would you be prepared to do a combined worship event on Good Friday?' We thought about it, we prayed about it and thought it would be a worthwhile project."

The program featured musical items from Seventh-day Adventist group One Accord, as well as praise time led by Gilson College chaplain Pastor Mau Tuaoi. Heather Slade, from the Lutheran group, shared a children's story, before ministers from both the Lutheran and Seventh-day Adventist churches presented short sermonettes on the significance of Easter.

Lutheran senior Pastor David Gogoll presented on the practical outcomes of the cross.

"There are all sorts of theories about what actually happened on the cross. But at the heart of what happened on the cross was that God wants a relationship with you; that God loves you," he told the capacity crowd.

A presentation by South Australian Conference president Pastor David Butcher followed, speaking on the



SA CONFERENCE PRESIDENT PASTOR DAVID BUTCHER (LEFT) WITH PASTOR DAVID GOGOLL.

practical meaning of resurrection.

In speaking of the event, Pastor Hodgkin said, "This event was not planned as an ecumenical gathering, but rather as a wonderful opportunity to express friendship and provide witness to other Christian people."

Pastor Butcher echoed these sentiments. "One of the things we want to look at is how to better connect with the local community when we do run camp."



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## CHURCH LEADERS RESPOND TO SRI LANKA TRAGEDY

RECORD STAFF

Seventh-day Adventist Church leaders from around the world have expressed their condolences following the Easter attacks in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

More than 250 people were killed and nearly 500 injured after bombs exploded in three churches and other sites across the city.

"I am sickened each time I see the devastation of churches and hear the tearful stories of survivors," said South Pacific Division president, Pastor Glenn Townend.

"Attacking innocent people who are worshipping Jesus and remembering His resurrection is a despicable crime against all humanity. We must stop such religious-hate violence. Thank God that we have the hope of a resurrected Jesus who conquered death for all people, and that God loves and comforts all who mourn."

On behalf of the Seventh-day Adventist Church worldwide, General Conference president Dr Ted Wilson released an official statement of condolence.

"Our hearts go out to the grieving families of those killed," said Dr Wilson.

Church leaders from the local Southern Asia-Pacific Division also released a statement of sympathy.

"Our thoughts and our prayers are with Sri Lanka as we invite everyone around the world to continue praying for the families whose hearts are broken."



## AUSTRALIAN SCHOLAR FINDS NEW GERMAN VOICE

NATHAN BROWN

*Mission Shift*—or *Mission Umdenken*—by Dr Kayle de Waal, head of the Avondale Seminary, is now available in German.

"It's on point and refreshingly down-to-earth, motivating to read, easy to understand, and at the same time knowledgeable and a good overview of the current state of study in the field," said Daniel Wildemann, book editor at Advent-Verlag, the Seventh-day Adventist publishing house in Germany, who said he enjoyed working on the translation project. "It's a truly biblical

study of what mission is all about in the first place and a brief survey of how it became entirely something else in the history of the Church."

Citing his German heritage, Dr de Waal said he was pleased to see the new German edition. "More importantly it is humbling to know that the book is now helping to advance God's kingdom in Europe."

Since the book's English launch at Avondale College's Lake Macquarie campus in early 2017, Dr de Waal said he has received feedback from leaders and members from churches around Australia.

But Mr Wildemann has a view to widen its readership among German-speaking Adventists. "That the future of the Church lies in the local community is a claim that every reader can understand and apply," he said.

*Mission Shift* is available from Adventist bookstores in Australia and New Zealand.



## NEWS GRABS



### SPRING BREAK

Nearly 80,000 Pathfinders and Master Guides recently participated in camporees throughout the Inter-American Division. Activities included classes in survival techniques, worship, skill competitions, networking and honours classes, with the Pathfinders also participating in community service activities in local towns. In total, more than 2000 Pathfinders were baptised at the culmination of the camporees.—*Adventist Review*



### SECOND CHANCE

Doctors at Loma Linda University Children's Hospital, USA, recently conducted their first ever stem cell transplant in a sickle cell disease patient, effectively curing her of the inherited blood disease. The patient, 11-year-old Valeria Vargas-Olmedo, had lived with the disease since birth.—*Sheann Brandon*



### WARM WELCOME

Seventh-day Adventist Church members in Porto Alegre, Brazil, recently started a support centre for families of autistic kids. The centre, which operates out of the church building, aims to provide an "open environment of fellowship".—*ANN*



## HOT TOPICS



### CHINESE EXODUS

As churches are demolished across China under the government's communist regime, millions of Chinese Christians are finding religious freedom in an unlikely place: Kenya. In 2014, the country, where 80 per cent of the 50 million residents are Christian, was home to 40,000 Chinese migrants. Chinese-led congregations are now forming across the continent as more Chinese move to Africa to work and trade. —CNN



### SICKLY SWEET

A new British study has found high sugar intake is related to mental illness in men. The study, conducted by scientists from University College London, found men with the highest sugar intake were 23 per cent more likely to have a common mental disorder. Both women and men with a high sugar intake may be at increased risk of recurrent depression. —Sustain UK



### UNCOVERED

Archaeologists in Jerusalem have uncovered two seals that bear an inscription, noting they belonged to Nathan-Melech, an official named in the book of 2 Kings. Researchers say this new discovery helps confirm the biblical timeline of the City of David. —Relevant

## CHURCH LOCKED IN LEGAL DISPUTE WITH FIJI GOVT

TRACEY BRIDCUTT

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Fiji is locked in a legal dispute with the country's government following the Church's decision to privatise Vatuvonu Adventist High School.

The issue began in April after the Church's executive committee announced that it would be closing Vatuvonu Adventist High School—on Vanua Levu, Fiji's second largest island—at the end of Term 1, due to the Fiji Ministry of Education's refusal to appoint Adventist staff to the school.

A few days later, the executive committee announced that the school would remain open, and a Seventh-day Adventist principal and teachers would be appointed. To achieve this outcome, the Church would privatise the school, which meant that it would need to introduce student fees as the Fiji government would be withdrawing the Free Education Grant.

On April 15, High Court proceedings were commenced by the Attorney-General's office against Vatuvonu school and the Adventist Church. The orders block the closure of the school and prevent the Church having any say on the government's appointment of the principal or staff.

Fiji Mission general secretary Pastor Joe Talemaitoga said the Church is preparing to vigorously defend itself.

"It's disappointing that the situation has reached this point when all we are trying to do is operate the school in accordance with our religious beliefs and ethos," he said.

The Fiji government operates a universal free education system where it pays staff wages and funds schools around the country. Under its Open Merit Recruitment Selection System the government chooses principals and teaching staff to fill school vacancies. However, it refuses to match appointees with the school's religious orientation. Schools in Fiji are almost entirely (more than 95 per cent) owned and oper-

ated by faith-based organisations.

The inability to staff schools with Adventist teachers has become a significant issue for the Adventist Church in Fiji, and led to the privatisation of Navesau Adventist High School at the beginning of 2019.

Pastor Talemaitoga said there had been considerable effort by the Church to resolve the staffing issue at Vatuvonu, including a number of appeals to the Ministry of Education. "The values and beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church are foundational and central to everything that happens within Adventist schools," he said. "It is essential, therefore, that teachers share the values, beliefs and moral principles of the Seventh-day Adventist Church so that they can contribute to the faith ethos of Adventist schools and be positive role models of those beliefs."

Ronald Bower, religious liberty director for the South Pacific Division, said he believes the Church in Fiji has a strong legal case in relation to upholding its constitutional rights.

The Fijian Constitution (Section 22) guarantees freedom of religion for individuals and for religious organisations conducting activities in Fiji. Further, the United Nations' International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Article 18) states that everyone should have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, and the freedom to manifest their religion in worship, observance, practice and teaching.

*At the time of printing, the case was due to return to court on May 13.*



VATUVONU ADVENTIST HIGH SCHOOL.





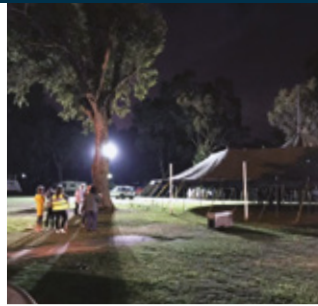
**MAJOR MILESTONE**

Generous support of the HOME Offering initiative by Adventist church members in Vanuatu has led the Vanuatu Mission to purchase a plot of land to build a district office for Torba. A ground-breaking ceremony was held on March 8, attended by Vanuatu Mission (VM) president Pastor Nos Terry and CFO Tom Noka, the chairman of the Torba council of chiefs, and several other religious denomination leaders. The development, which will also include an Adventist Book Centre, is a major milestone for the Vanuatu Mission, who aim to eventually build offices for each of their eight districts. Torba is the fifth district to receive an office. —VM



**A GREAT FRIDAY**

With the generous collaboration of ADRA, Sanitarium, Hope Channel and the Seventh-day Adventist Church in New Zealand, 40 widows and 15 of the critically injured families from the Christchurch attacks were presented with a box of Sanitarium breakfast products and a fruit basket on Good Friday, exactly one month after the Christchurch attacks. Working closely with volunteers from the Muslim Association Canterbury, Adventist volunteers were able to deliver these parcels in person. Many of the volunteers expressed how humbling it was to be thanked, hugged and invited in by the widows, injured and their families. —SNZC



**EASTER CAMP EVACUATION**

For the first time in more than 50 years, the Big Tent at Western Australia's recent Easter Camp had to be pulled down hours before the first meeting was scheduled to happen. Campers were evacuated as a severe weather warning for the area was announced. Taken down in record time, it was also put up in a record five hours; staging, seats, lights, audio visuals and pot plants included! The rest of the camp went smoothly, with campers enjoying presentations by guest speakers, a "country fair" youth social on the Saturday evening, and plenty of fun and worship for every age. —Nathaniel Tan/Record staff



**ORDAINING RICK**

On March 9, Pastor Rick Meale was ordained at Refresh Adventist Church (Qld). Many young people from across the years of Pastor Meale's ministry attended from around Australia to be part of the important occasion. During the service, Pastor Meale honoured his parents and family for their input in his life, particularly his wife Joy who was instrumental in bringing him to Christ. In his response, Pastor Meale spoke of the need for more young people to take key roles in ministry in the church. The service was significant for all who came, most especially Pastor Meale's father who was particularly moved by the service. —Russell Willcocks



**MAKING CONNECTIONS**

Every Tuesday for two hours, a Friendship Club takes place in the Rangiora Adventist Church hall (NZ). Up to 12 children and young people from the community mingle with adults around crafts, a hot drink and deepening conversations about Jesus. During the recent school holidays, there were nearly 30 children and parents attending. "This program has put the church in Rangiora on the local map and has given good vibes in the community," said church pastor Romina Masih. "We praise God for his goodness and blessings!" —South News



**GENEROUS GIVING**

The recent Western Australia Easter Camp saw more than \$A110,000 collected for special projects across the Conference and the Pacific. A mission offering for Papua New Guinea raised more than \$A27,000, while a further \$A31,000 was collected to support youth Bible workers across Western Australian churches. Another special collection for 10,000 Toes saw nearly \$50,000 collected. —Record staff



**BUNCHES OF BLESSINGS**

On the second Saturday of each month, members of the Landsborough Seventh-day Adventist Church (Qld) meet together to arrange bunches of fresh flowers. These are then hand-delivered to residents in local retirement villages, as well as to elderly and shut-in people in the community. "Flowers are a great way of letting people know they are special," said church member Beth Beaden. —Charles Russel



**SERVICE MATTERS**

More than 210 Adventist young people attended a recent youth rally held at Carmel Adventist College (WA). The majority of young men and women stood up during the service, pledging to answer a call to service and dedicating themselves to being used by God. That weekend, the young people put this into action by cleaning the city, visiting people in nursing homes and cleaning up backyards in the suburbs of Perth. —Connect



## Women transformed in Jesus

Traffic in the main street of Nuku'alofa, Tonga's capital, came to a halt last month as a parade involving 600 Seventh-day Adventist women from around the Pacific made its way to the Royal Palace.

Led by the Tongan police band, the parade was one of the highlights of the 2019 Trans Pacific Union Mission (TPUM) Women's Congress, held April 17-22.

Wearing colourful traditional dress and waving the flags of their nations, the women carried banners and posters promoting EndItNow—a global Seventh-day Adventist campaign aimed at stopping violence against women. Many curious onlookers stopped to watch the procession, which attracted local media coverage, raising awareness of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

In a special honour, Queen Nanasipau'u permitted the parade to enter the palace grounds through the front gate—an entry point normally reserved for royalty. In another gracious gesture, the Queen arranged for congress guest speakers Janet Page (General Conference associate ministerial secretary), Dr Danijela Schubert (South Pacific Division women's ministry leader), Ann Wooldridge (Adsafe general manager) and Dr Wendy Jackson (Avondale lecturer) to sit beside her on the palace front veranda overlooking the lawn where the congress attendees gathered. A special gift-giving ceremony saw women from each of the countries represented present a gift from their homeland to the Queen.

Queen Nanasipau'u was also a special guest at the congress opening ceremony, held the previous evening. She gave an inspiring address based around the congress theme, "Women Transformed in Jesus".

"I'd like to begin by thanking God for bringing together so many beautiful, amazing and inspiring women from around the Pacific to celebrate women transformed," the Queen said.

"During the last few years, there is an English catchphrase that has become popular. It is 'I got this'. Today I want to remind you that God's got this. He says to us, 'Give me your need, leave it with Me, I can handle it, trust Me, I've got this.'

"Why have we gathered here at this congress? We have gathered here because God's got this. Because of who He is, He can use women who are transformed in Jesus to heal your family, to heal your city and even to heal your nation . . . He wants the women He has transformed in Jesus to stand up and do their part in whatever nation and in whatever area of influence that He has given you."

The congress, which also included workshops, prayer walks, worships and a gospel concert finale, marked the official launch of the TPUM's Year of the Woman. 2019 is all about empowering women to be on the frontline of discipleship and evangelism.

"This is a historical event for our Church . . . this is the first time that the TPUM has dedicated a year for women to lead out," TPUM president Pastor Maveni Kaufononga said. "I believe in the power of women and what they can do."

TPUM discipleship team leader Pastor Nasoni Lutunaliwa said when it comes to evangelism, women have traditionally provided more of a supportive role.

"The Church is made up of over 50 per cent of women,





**PHOTO (ABOVE): THE MARCH THROUGH NUKU'ALOFA, TONGA.  
PHOTO (BOTTOM RIGHT): QUEEN OF TONGA WITH CHURCH LEADERS.**

but they seem to not have been given the space to reach out to people in terms of public preaching, small groups and evangelism," Pastor Lutunaliwa said.

"But this year we are saying we want them to be on the frontline, which means we want to see more women standing up to preach, involved in running Bible studies and forming small groups, and all other discipleship activities that are evangelism based."

Some of the women have already started working in their communities through revival programs and health activities.

Women in Solomon Islands have adopted the motto "Take a step and reach one"—in other words step out and reach another woman for Jesus.

"Women all have special gifts [and] by using their special gifts they can minister to those who need them," said Solomon Islands Women's Ministries director Beverly Maega.

She said friendship evangelism is one of the methods they are using. "Women are good at talking and making friends. Men say women are good at gossiping. What we want to do is turn that around into a positive: use that 'gossiping' to talk about Jesus."

July is harvest month for the TPUM when the fruits of the evangelistic campaigns and discipleship activities will be in the spotlight. Last year more than 6000 people were baptised and leaders are hoping the number will be even higher this year.



**TRACEY BRIDCUTT** COMMUNICATION DIRECTOR FOR THE SOUTH PACIFIC DIVISION.

# THE TEN

## biblical verses to get you through **EXAM SEASON**

### 1. PSALM 119:143

As pressure and stress bear down on me, I find joy in your commands.

### 2. 1 PETER 1:6,7

So be truly glad. There is wonderful joy ahead, even though you must endure many trials for a little while. These trials will show that your faith is genuine. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold—though your faith is far more precious than mere gold. So when your faith remains strong through many trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honour on the day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world.

### 3. JOHN 14:27

I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don't be troubled or afraid.

### 4. 2 CORINTHIANS 4:16,17

That is why we never give up. Though our bodies are dying, our spirits are being renewed every day. For our present troubles are small and won't last very long. Yet they produce for us a glory that vastly outweighs them and will last forever!

### 5. MARK 10:27

Jesus looked at them intently and said, "Humanly speaking, it is impossible. But not with God. Everything is possible with God."

### 6. PSALM 16:8

I know the Lord is always with me. I will not be shaken, for he is right beside me.

### 7. ROMANS 8:28

And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.

### 8. PHILIPPIANS 4:12,13

I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything. I have learned the secret of living in every situation, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with plenty or little. For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.

### 9. PSALM 138:8

The Lord will work out his plans for my life—for your faithful love, O Lord, endures forever.

### 10. PHILIPPIANS 4:6,7

Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

*All references from New Living Translation.*







## DIGGING IN HIS WORD WITH GARY WEBSTER

### NO TIME TO LOSE

Despite hundreds of flood stories in scores of cultures around the world, and millions of specimens of sea life discovered on the tops of major mountain ranges, including Mount Everest, most people today deny there was a global flood.

But the Bible is clear that Noah's flood covered the earth. Jesus, Peter and Paul all believed the historicity of the event. Peter even predicted that disbelief in it would be an end-time sign of the return of Jesus.

**READ** Genesis 7:19,20; Luke 17:26,27; Hebrews 11:7; 1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 2:5; 3:3-7.

God, pained by humanity's continual evil and violence, warned the world, through Noah's preaching, that He would send a global flood. But in enormous love and longsuffering He held back the destruction for 120 years in the hope that His children would repent.

**READ** Genesis 6:3,5-7,11-13,17; 1 Peter 3:19,20; 2 Peter 2:5.

We are living in the end times spoken of by Jesus and Peter, in which humanity, thinking evil continually, is oblivious of the catastrophe about to overtake them. There's no time to lose. We must arise while God's longsuffering love holds back impending destruction and prepare our world for the soon return of Jesus, because there will be no more water—it is the fire next time!

**READ** Luke 17:26,27; 2 Peter 3:6-10.

## BRINGING GLORY TO GOD THROUGH SONG

An Adventist businesswoman is bringing glory to God through a gospel music spectacular that attracts thousands annually.

Robina Nakao is the dynamic force behind the annual "One Tonga—Glorifying God Through Song" choral event. It is part of Heilala Festival Week, the biggest annual event on Tonga's calendar.

The mother of two has been organising the concert since 2008. Featuring youth choirs from the various churches around Tonga, it is attended by 2500 people, plus thousands more outside the venue. The guest of honour is the Queen of Tonga and, this year, the King is said to be attending the July 7 event, coinciding with his 60th birthday.

"It's the only event where I see churches come together in one spirit," Ms Nakao said. "People say there's something very different when you come into this concert; it's God's Spirit, He is there.

"It's so big now, everyone talks about One Tonga. It just gets bigger and bigger and bigger. It also means that it's an event of the highest calibre."

Music has the power to bring people together, according to Ms Nakao. "It is more powerful than any sermon. I see the way it just speaks to people's hearts."

Ms Nakao is the children's and health ministries leader at her local Adventist church in the Tongan capital of Nuku'alofa. Last year she started a health program called Lose and Live, targeted at the diabetes epidemic that is sweeping the country. Participants have their weight, blood sugar, blood pressure and BMI tested, and take part in a nine-week challenge, which includes regular exercise sessions. She has run the program three times; the most recent challenge winner lost 18.8 kilograms.

"I'm just amazed how God has been able to use me," Ms Nakao said. "He has kind of pushed me out there and done some amazing things."

Ms Nakao organised the opening ceremony, parade and closing gospel concert for the 2019 Trans Pacific Union Mission Women's Congress, which began on April 17 and concluded on April 22 (see p10).

**I TRACEY BRIDCUTT** COMMUNICATION DIRECTOR, SOUTH PACIFIC DIVISION.



**TABLET XI: THE ANCIENT MESOPOTAMIAN EPIC OF GILGAMESH, A FLOOD STORY SIMILAR TO THE BIBLE ACCOUNT.**

# OBEDIENCE IS LEGALISM . . .

I used to think the legalists were the ones trying to be vegan (and make everybody else so); those who did a lot to prepare for Sabbath and kept it for 26 hours each week; the ones trying to be obedient—like the title provocatively suggests (at least it got you to start reading this!). But I now realise that's not what makes a legalist.

There is a story in Genesis 4 that turns the modern idea of legalism on its head.

It's the story of Cain and Abel.

Abel did everything God asked, the way God asked him to do it. He brought an offering of death that foretold Jesus' atoning sacrifice.

Cain also worshipped. He built an altar. He brought a sacrifice. But not as God asked.

Hebrews 11 records the story in this way: "By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks" (verse 4, NKJV).

The issue wasn't merely that Cain didn't get the details right—that he just brought the wrong thing. Cain stopped living a life of faith. He stopped trusting that the only way to be saved is through the death of a substitute.

They both brought an offering. The difference is simple yet profound: Cain brought what he thought would be good enough.

When God doesn't accept Cain's offering, Cain gets angry. Cain feels God owes him acceptance. Cain's mentality is legalism. He is 100 per cent trying to work his way to being accepted.

Legalism is salvation by calculation. It's calculating what is the least I need to do to please God—to be saved. Legalism is a mindset that says, "It's good enough"; to assume that God should be happy that I've given Him anything at all; to think that I don't actually need to give Him what He's asked for.

Faith is not calculating what's "enough". Faith simply chooses to say "I acknowledge I don't know what's right and wrong. I have no power to conquer the devil, to redeem myself."

Faith submits. Faith says "God said it, so I'll do it." Faith is the posture of acknowledging that God is so much beyond us. We are so undeserving. We'd be ridiculous to refuse to do anything God asks of us.

Being more faithful in keeping the Sabbath, paying tithe and honouring marriage—these aren't acts of legalism. The person of faith will do what God asks because they trust that God knows best, He is all and they assume an attitude of submission. That's faith.

I'm tired of being accused of legalism regarding my observance of the Sabbath. Especially by Sunday keepers.

Keeping the Sabbath is an act of faith.

It's easier to keep Sunday in today's world. Social and economic pressures of work and sports make Sunday the easier option. By far.

But going to church on Sunday or just any day is more like legalism. It's the mentality of "This is good enough"—even though the Bible explicitly says to keep the seventh day holy.

Legalism is functioning through calculating "what is enough?"

But the gospel teaches that only death is enough.

There are no calculations in the gospel of Jesus Christ. You and I can't fix this, so Jesus had to say, "I'm going to come as a human and die to defeat the devil, sin and death", (see Genesis 3:15).

Our role is to take a position of faith, believing that anything God promises is true, 100 per cent sure. So we just submit to it.

The moment we ask ourselves "What will be enough?" we are at risk of falling into legalism.

I see within myself the spirit of Cain. I look at the priority I place on my pastoral work: my sermon preparation, visitation and Bible study. They all just have to fit in around the rest of life.

"How much time have I got left for this?" I find myself calculating and bargaining regarding the very thing that I've given my life to God for, in response to His saving grace and





# WAIT, THAT'S FAITH

calling on my life.

How often do we find ourselves saying, "This is good enough" when it comes to the things of God?

If my good deeds are filthy rags, what hope do I have in calculating what's good enough? My sermon, my prayer, my generosity, my helping hand—if my good deeds are as filthy rags, what hope do I have in calculating?

The only calculation that means anything is to ask, "Will I give my whole life to God?" The only thing we can do if we are going to be people of faith is to submit it all.

I cannot do enough. I cannot perform. I can't calculate what's good enough. Nothing is good enough.

The act of coming to Him in faith

looks like doing things the way He's asked me to. That's faith; not an arbitrary belief. Faith is doing what Abel did—bringing our offering the way God asked (see Hebrews 11:4).

The gospel frees us; it brings hope. The gospel is absolute liberation—but only when you give it all. Unless you give it all, you're constantly going through this calculation of "what's good enough?"

Unless we give it all, we are like Cain. We say, "I know God says this, but that is all I am willing to bring." Our heart isn't completely in it.

God calls us to be people of faith; to strive to follow God in everything we do.

Faith is total submission and trust of what God has asked. Anything else is

legalism.

Abel submitted. Cain calculated.

Abel was a man of faith. Cain was a legalist.

God doesn't accept a calculating faith. A faith of submission is acceptable to God.

Let's be people of faith. Submit to the Lord; don't calculate what is good enough. Sure, we struggle and sometimes fall. We need the forgiving grace of Jesus. But our posture is not one of legalistic calculation of the bare minimum required; it is one of total submission. That's faith.

**BORIS JOVINOV** SENIOR PASTOR OF NEWCASTLE CHURCH, NORTH NSW CONFERENCE.



# healing the wounds of CHILDHOOD SEXUAL ABUSE

## *A compulsory journey of reconciliation*

**M**y name is Michelle Hood and I am a survivor of childhood sexual abuse in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. I will not revisit the story of my abuse in this article but rather speak of the lessons we must all learn as a result of past mistakes and mismanagement—not only from Church administration, but also from members of local church congregations.

Australia's Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sex Abuse has concluded and recommendations have been made as to redress and other matters pertaining to rehabilitation and policy structures going forward.

For me, giving evidence to the commission was a most cathartic and healing experience. For many, it was recognition of the horror of abuse and a chance to be heard and, most of all, believed.

I have heard many people say that our Church must be clean because we did not rate a mention. This is not true. Sexual abuse in church communities is as rife as in the secular world. That's because churches are made up of human beings—all are flawed by sin. Predators often see the cloistered order of the church community as a happy hunting ground. The truth is that none of us want to believe that any Christian attending church could commit such a crime. We worship together, socialise together and open our homes to each other. We cannot imagine this behaviour from one of our own.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church had at least 25 respondents\* to the Royal Commission and may well have been called to public scrutiny in open session had the commission not had all the information it needed to present its findings.

Many have asked me why I shared my story with the commission. This is the first tangible opportunity that survivors have ever had to put matters right before the law. The legal system has let most survivors down in endless

arguments about the letter of the law and little concern for real justice.

When I laid charges before the courts back in the 1990s, the legal system did as much to hurt me as anyone else and true justice was not served at all.

I felt worse in many ways by coming forward. So why did I? These offences continue because we sweep them under the carpet. If I had been able to speak up earlier I may have prevented scores of other children going through what I went through. A community that hides abuse enables abuse, and our society has done this for too long already.

Did I do it for the money? Financial compensation does help in putting some things right, but the main reason is that corporations and organisations are slow to change unless the hip pocket is hit and hit hard. Our Church and many other churches and groups have had to make substantial budgetary adjustments for what is to come, but so be it. Let's be honest here. If this is God's church, and I believe it is, then God will protect it. I'm also certain that God wants His house in order and pretty quickly. This is a pain everyone must share for the ultimate gain it will bring us all.

How does one child's experience of abuse affect the church community at large?

I know of many survivors who will never set foot in any church ever again. If 20 people are lost to the causes of heaven for each victim, then multiply that by the number of victims and we are in the tens if not hundreds of thousands. And often overlooked in the roll call of those whose lives have been changed are the families of the perpetrator.

I was asked by the commission to list those who had added to my abuse—the list was quite extensive. The perpetrator had sexually assaulted me consistently for a number of years, but when I laid charges, the church leadership's response was tardy and lacklustre, victimising





me in the corporate sense and failing to secure my situation. I was spiritually, mentally and physically abused by members of church congregations who branded me a troublemaker for speaking out and thwarted every attempt I made to continue in church life. I was legally abused by a judicial system that failed me; people in high places who took the high moral ground at my expense while dragging enormous salaries from government coffers. I actually asked the commission when it would call on its own fraternity to explain its actions.

So where to now? As the findings are made clear and we as a community come to terms with the enormity of this situation, we need to search our collective morality and seek answers to the big questions. How can we best bring back the lost lambs of abuse? How can we prevent a repeat of this situation? How can we be more inclusive? How can we be part of healing the wounds of past and, sadly, future generations? These are very big questions that can only be asked and answered in the full light of truth.

I have embraced a very difficult ministry of inconvenient truth since starting Mission Serenity—a charity supporting abuse survivors—more than a decade ago. I've been given relative freedom to discuss these matters in public and open forums and, as a result, have participated in the healing journey of hundreds of survivors and their families. Galatians 1:10 is my source of encouraging support: "I speak to please God not man."

Former South Pacific Division president Dr Barry Oliver expressed his deep sorrow for me in public in 2014 at the South Queensland and North NSW camp meetings. God has blessed me with a healing ministry, a happy marriage and a very strong relationship with Him.

As the Royal Commission was winding up, the Church acted decisively and with great compassion long before the findings were handed down. I was deeply touched by

the efforts made to support me and the speed at which things were done. What is of the highest importance now is that we keep this momentum going and make the required changes, to prevent these things from happening on our watch. If we don't, many of us will have some very awkward questions to answer when judgement comes.

The Church has engaged in an extensive and thorough investigation into my claims over the past 10 years, and has endorsed my actions and found my story to be true and correct. I thank God for that and I ask anyone who sees honest survivors as troublemakers to examine their hearts. What if your son or daughter were abused and confessed? Would you want someone to push it under the carpet?

My name is Michelle Hood and I am a grateful believer in Jesus Christ. I am happy and it is well with my soul. My healing journey is almost complete and, for the first time in my life, I am free.

*To read Michelle's testimony go to <[missionserenity.org.au](http://missionserenity.org.au)>.*

*\* This figure represents the total number of child sexual abuse survivors from the Seventh-day Adventist Church who were given a private session by the Royal Commission, and not those survivors who approached the commission but were not given a private session at the time the report was finalised. This figure also does not include survivors from the Seventh-day Adventist Church who reported to the Royal Commission by phone, email or letter.*

*If this article has raised an issue for you or someone you know please contact Lifeline on 13 11 14 (Australia) or Adsafe on (02) 9847 3488 or <[survivors@adsafe.org.au](mailto:survivors@adsafe.org.au)>.*

**I MICHELLE HOOD CO-FOUNDER, MISSION SERENITY.**

# faith and science



There is a natural wonder that wells up inside your heart whenever you pause to examine some of the incredible features of nature:

- The unique and individual crystal structure of every snowflake
- The hovering and reversible flight of a hummingbird
- A pod of surf-skipping, fun-loving and friendly dolphins
- The vivid colours of a rainbow framing the dark clouds of a looming storm.

The two questions that immediately spring to mind are, *How do they work?* and *Where did they come from?* It is this wonder that sparks the imagination and the dedication of scientists. It is this wonder that led King David to marvel, “When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place . . .” (Psalm 8:3).

Reading through the Bible’s account of the origin of everything we see around us triggers a similar kind of wonder and amazement. Genesis tells us that, in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth, and then, over six days, supernaturally created everything that fills them. It is a magnificent and epic account of our origins.

As I am sure that you are aware, though, science today tells us quite a different story. It says that space and time emerged from a singularity—rapidly inflating to the immense structure of the universe that we observe today, slowing down only when the background microwave radiation had enough time to speed all away across to the other edge of the universe. Then, as galaxies, stars and planets coalesced, a small soupy planet comes into view out of one of the spiral arms of the dairy-free Milky Way galaxy. Atoms and molecules started randomly bumping into each other in this primordial party until amino acids, proteins, RNA and even DNA eventually linked up. Then, with a stroke of natural genius, these elegant molecules were swept up together inside a membrane to form the very first cell—a busy, microscopic factory-city, with the amazing capacity to reproduce and multiply. From there appeared amoebas, angelfish, Archaeopteryxes, albatrosses, aardvarks, apes, Africans and Australians, just to mention a few of the notables in the lineage of As. That’s really fast-forwarding a science that is supposed to have taken billions of years.

Two stories, that both see things appearing over time,

but on vastly different timescales and differing on whether God supernaturally intervened or not.

What should we, as Seventh-day Adventists, do with these two accounts? Should we weave them together into a theistic evolutionary tapestry, or should we try to permit God to progressively supernaturally insert new genetic material or create new species whenever needed? Should we understand Genesis 1 to really just be poetry and the days to be symbolically referring to vast periods of time, or can we read Genesis literally? Can we rationally and responsibly believe in a literal six-day Creation week that ends with the very first genuine day of Sabbath rest? Or does accepting the Bible include having to believe these four impossible things:

1. The entire universe is only 6000 years old
2. Our planet Earth is really quite young
3. Rocks only look like they are billions of years old
4. Genetically similar animals do not have a common biological ancestor?

The 2019 South Pacific Division Faith and Science Conference to be held at Avondale College from July 16–19, is the first of a series of seminars that will address these fascinating questions and more. The aim of this conference is to build your confidence in the biblical account of Creation and equip you to share your faith in our amazing Creator Friend with your friends. Join us for an adventure of faith, science, wonder and discovery.

For more information and to register, visit [education.adventistchurch.com/faith-science-conference/](http://education.adventistchurch.com/faith-science-conference/).

**DR SVEN OSTRING** DIRECTOR OF CHURCH PLANTING, NORTH NEW SOUTH WALES.





## HARA HACHI BU: THE SIMPLE JAPANESE PHRASE FOR A LONGER AND LEANER LIFE

Okinawa, Japan, is home to a group of people who are among the healthiest on the planet.

In fact, the Okinawans are found in one of the “Blue Zone” hot spots—regions where people live extraordinarily long and healthy lives. So, what’s their secret?

While they already follow a range of healthy lifestyle practices such as having a close network of friends and a keen sense of purpose, the Okinawans also abide by an old adage before the beginning of every meal—*hara hachi bu*—which roughly means “eat until you’re 80 per cent full”. Simple, no?

The combination of kilojoule restriction and eating mindfully is part of the reason Okinawa has a higher percentage of centenarians than anywhere else in the world.

Given we tend to ignore the satiating signals our belly sends to our brain when we’re enjoying a tasty meal, the idea of stopping at 80 per cent may seem impossible.

But it doesn’t have to be. Here’s how:

**Fill up on plants:** Filling up on veggies is a great way to get a boost of nutrients and feel fuller. If you can, aim to fill at least half your plate with a range of colourful veggies.

**Eat slowly:** When you’re hungry, you can tend to wolf down your food. This doesn’t give your stomach time to digest, which means you miss the cues that you’ve had enough.

Instead, take your time, chew mindfully and you’ll realise you’re full much quicker than usual. Remember, it takes 20 minutes for your body to register you’ve eaten enough!

Why not try some of our other simple steps to put the concept into practice?

Visit <[sanitarium.com.au](http://sanitarium.com.au)> for more great ways to help you improve your health.

### HOW TO HARA HACHI BU



#### DON'T GET HUNGRY

Eating when you’re ravenous will likely end in over-eating. Instead, don’t let yourself get to that level of hunger. Check in with yourself throughout the day and keep healthy snacks on hand, like a handful of nuts or veggie sticks.



#### FOCUS ON FOOD

If you’re going to eat, just eat. Remove any distractions, like the television or other devices. It will help you eat mindfully because you’ll pay more attention to your food, eat slower and savour each bite.



#### RESETTING YOUR MUSCLE MEMORY

Your stomach gets used to eating a certain amount of food. If you’re used to overly-large meals, your stomach will be too. By slowly reducing the amount you eat at each meal, your stomach will get used to smaller portion sizes and you’ll be less likely to overeat.

Recipe of the Week Sanitarium  
health & wellbeing



### Soba noodle and green vegetables

This plant-powered noodle dish has the colour and crunch of lightly steamed brussels sprouts, leafy greens and a sprinkle of toasted pumpkin seeds. The whole family will love it!

Find this recipe and hundreds more at:

Australia: [sanitarium.com.au/recipes](http://sanitarium.com.au/recipes)  
New Zealand: [sanitarium.co.nz/recipes](http://sanitarium.co.nz/recipes)

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/sanitariumnz

Sanitarium  
health & wellbeing

# SHABBAT SHALOM KIDS!\*

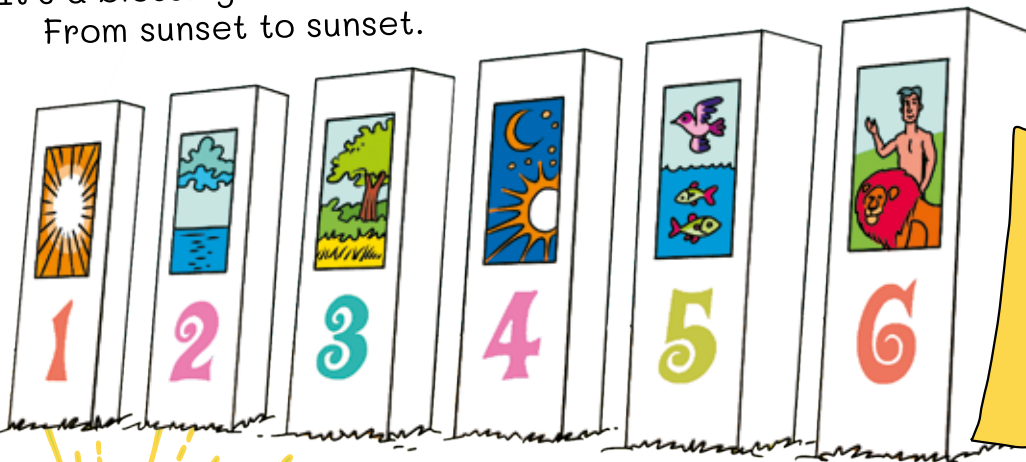


We worship God when we enjoy His Sabbath.



## A Day of Celebration

The Sabbath is a delight. It's about nurturing relationships; it's a gift from God to us (human beings). It's a blessing for us and also a day that God blessed. From sunset to sunset.



### Memory Verse

"Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy."

Genesis 2:3

# 7

**SABBATH IS  
A CELEBRATION  
AND A BLESSING!**

Draw your family in the people shapes.



\*Shabbat Shalom is a Hebrew greeting for Sabbath







## EASTER OPPORTUNITY

Re: Easter Song (Editorial, April 20). For those who are concerned about Seventh-day Adventists celebrating pagan Easter, we don't. Maybe you need to look at it in another way. It is an opportunity for Christians to share with fellow-Christians, in the story of the death and resurrection of Jesus, to rejoice in our salvation. Not only other Christians, but anyone who may wander in to church on the Sabbath of Easter is likely to expect a service centred around these events. (I know, it has happened in our church.) Instead of just seeing the pagan side, why not see it as an opportunity to share the gospel?

Marilyn Stuart, via Facebook

## HEART WARMING

My heart was really warmed by "Where no-one else will go" (Feature, April 20) about the ministry accomplished by Cliff Morgan and his helpers. It's a tremendous ministry I know he has engaged in for more than 20 years. May God continue to bless your efforts, Cliff.

It reminded me of others who are missionary-minded: Dennis Perry and his work among the needy in Port Moresby, those who send motorcycles to enable ministers get around their churches more quickly, the fly'n'builders, the fly'n'preachers, those who send money to give those volunteers their "salt and soap" wages. And not to forget those intrepid volunteers themselves, many with families to support.

How many of us have the same spirit of sacrifice as these volunteers—doing something practical to hasten the return of our Saviour?

May I challenge each of us retirees to give more of what we may spend traveling to exotic destinations, to financing more volunteers to serve in isolated places

where we could never go.

Maye Porter, NSW

## LESSER LIGHT?

Re: "Faith nurturing guide" (Feature, April 6).

There are many ways of making Ellen White's writings of little effect.

One of them is saying that her writings are the lesser light and the Bible is the greater light. We can come to that conclusion only if we use selective and out-of-context quotations.

Regrettably, this is a myth, which has existed many years in our church. The Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy are equally the lesser lights and their primary purpose is to lead men and women to the greater light—Jesus Christ.

Jesus said: "I am the light of the world". Read what He said about John the Baptist and Himself (John 5:35). We can conclude from this story that if John the Baptist was greater than all the prophets of the Bible and he was the lesser light, so then all the prophets of the Bible and their writings cannot be greater lights but the lesser lights. Could something that Jesus said in the first century AD be more or less

authoritative than what He said in the 19th century AD?

The pen of inspiration tells us: "The Holy Ghost is the author of the Holy Scripture and the Spirit of Prophecy" (Letter 106, 1907, SM, Book 3, p30).

Wally Sobor, NSW

## DOWNWARD SLIDE

"Is Easter Pagan? (April 20) is a clever use of words to hide truth (commonly known as deception). To be students of the "Word of God" we must be "doers of the Word."

Easter is a pagan festival! The reason for "an adjustment made so it will always fall over a weekend" (as the author states), has occurred because in 325AD the Council of Nicaea established that Easter would be held on the first Sunday after the first full moon occurring on or after the vernal equinox (later honed by Pope Gregory XIII and his Gregorian Calendar).

As a Seventh-day Adventist, I understood we were to follow the Holy Bible—not the traditions of the "Beast Power". Leviticus 23:5 tells us the timing of the Lord's Passover, "the fourteenth day of the

first month at even is the LORD'S Passover." When did we take Passover from the date God set for it, and replace it with a clearly pagan date and title?

This article is nothing more than a downward slide from scriptural truth, into a justifying of Catholic tradition. It even subtly excuses Easter eggs and bunnies.

The article ends by admonishing us to focus on Christ. Well said, but was it not Jesus who said, "in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men," (Matthew 15:9, Mark 7:7).

If we ignore God's date and title for "Passover," calling it "Easter" and changing the date from God's appointed time, how long will it take before we change the Sabbath day to Sunday?

Jim Ballantyne, SA

**NOTE:** Views in "Have your say" do not necessarily represent those of the editors or the denomination. Comments should be less than 250 words, and writers must include their name, address and phone number. All comments are edited to meet space and literary requirements, but the author's original meaning will not be changed. Not all comments received are published.

## Appreciation

**HEDGES.** The family of Allan George Hedges would like to sincerely thank those who visited, prayed for, sent cards and messages, and gave support during the time of Allan's illness, and following his passing. Your kindness and care have been greatly appreciated.

## Obituaries

**DICKSON,** Alex Raymond (Ray), born 24.11.1923 in Fitzroy, Vic; died 1.4.19 in Cooranbong, NSW. He is survived by his wife, Marilyn; eight children and their respective families. Gifted with a beautiful baritone voice, Ray gave up a career in professional show business to eventually study ministry at Avondale College, subsequently caring for churches in the Greater Sydney and North New South Wales conferences before being called to departmental and pastoral work in South Australia. Even in his retirement, he continued voluntary ministerial work for a further 17 years. Ray was diagnosed with dementia in 2003 that increasingly impacted his life.

*Adrian Raethel, Roger Nixon*



**DYASON,** Linden Prescott, born 23.5.1935 in Sydney, NSW; died 15.2.19 in England. In 1956 he married Mary Brunner, who predeceased him. In 2017 he married Paulina Rinta-aho. Linden is survived by Paulina and his children, Arthur, Cheryl, Scott and Emily; and sister, Valmae Hills. Lin and Mary fostered 59 children in both Australia and England. Lin was a natural salesman and in 1971 was offered a job in the UK where the family attended Stanborough church. Lin set up the Institute for Independent Business, which now has hundreds of members. He also had a love of brass instruments and donated many to the Stanborough Secondary School. He used his coach business to help schools, orphanages and hospitals in many places.

*Patrick Boyle, Paul Lockham*

**FORD,** Desmond, born 2.2.1929 in Townsville, Qld; died 11.3.2019 in Caloundra. He first married Gwen Booth, who passed away in 1970. He is survived by his children to Gwen, Elenne, Paul and Luke; second wife Gillian (Wastell) and two grandchildren. He was well known for his world-wide

gospel preaching and teaching ministry. The more than 30 books he published form a significant part of his scholarly legacy. Many will also remember his long running series "Bible Questions Answered" in *Signs of the Times*. In his last years, he attended the nearby Caboolture Adventist church where his participation in the Bible discussions was valued. By word and example he pointed many people to Jesus.

*Milton Hook, Gillian Ford*

**FRY,** Peter Phillip, born 10.2.1949 in Footscray, Vic; died 16.12.18 on the Gold Coast, Qld. On 22.12.1972 he married Lynden. He is survived by his wife (Mount Tamborine); children, Kelly and Nigel (Brisbane), Michael and Linda (Blue Mountains, NSW), and Nathan (Gold Coast, Qld) and grandson, Kian. Peter was a fun loving, life-of-the-party person who cared deeply for his family and had a passion for young people. Peter served the young people at the Bairnsdale (Vic) and Livingston (WA) churches. He also attended Eight Mile Plains (Qld) and Darwin (NT) churches. He had a strong faith and eagerly looked forward to the resurrection.

*Russ Willcocks*



**HEDGES,** Allan George, born 20.2.1940 in Ipswich, Qld; died 2.4.19 in Victoria Point. In 1961 he married Ursula Wood-Stotesbury, who predeceased him in 2005. He is survived by his second wife Sandra (Currie); children, Kenn, Dwane and Linelle; eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Allan was denominationally employed and ministered in the Pacific Island fields, the North New Zealand, North New South Wales and South Queensland conferences as a teacher, principal and departmental director. Following retirement, he volunteered-pastored churches in several conferences. Allan was selfless, kind, generous and people focussed. He was strong of faith and a keen Bible student.

*Mladen Krklec, Kendell Cobbin, Roger Nixon, Warren Fedorow*

**RICHARDS,** Olive (nee Williams), born 6.10.1945 in Bathurst, NSW; died 23.10.18 in Gympie, Qld. Olive was predeceased by her son Gavin in 1985. She is survived by children, Katrina Williams (Gympie), Nigel and Kelly (Brisbane) and Hannah (Gympie); grandchildren, Antonio, Adrian, Crystal, Damien, Nikita, Leilani,

Mike and Kian; and great-grandchildren, Justice, Issayah, Samara and Letisha. Olive was known for the many beautiful handmade cards she created and for her fun-loving personality. She was a member of the Gympie church for 38 years. She leaves a legacy of "togetherness is strength", family first and her strong faith.

*Kelly Richards*

## ADVERTISING

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### SOUTH BRISBANE CHURCH 120TH ANNIVERSARY, August 31, 2019.

Past and present members invited. O'Keefe Street, Buranda. Sabbath school 9.30 am. Service 11 am with lunch afterwards.

**HOPE CHANNEL** is seeking to increase the variety of Christian programming available on TV to meet and minister to the diverse needs of Australia's population. If you are able to volunteer your time, have access to the internet and can critically review TV programs according to Adventist beliefs and values, we would love to hear from you. Expressions of interest can be made via email <info@hopechannel.com> or phone (02) 9847 2277.

**HILLIARD CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, TASMANIA** is searching for an administrative assistant working 35 hours per week. For more details and expressions of interest contact the principal at <principal@hilliard.adventist.edu.au>.

### ALLROUND TRAVEL

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### ABSOLUTE CARE FUNERALS

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### FERNTREE GULLY CHURCH 60TH ANNIVERSARY, October 19, 2019.

All friends and former members are invited to attend this special celebration. For catering purposes, please let us know if you plan to attend via <anniversary@ferntreegullyadventist.org.au>.

## NEXT ISSUE: ADVENTIST RECORD, JUNE 1

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**POSITION VACANT**

**ACCOUNTANT/SENIOR ACCOUNTANT, NORTHERN AUSTRALIAN CONFERENCE TOWNSVILLE, QUEENSLAND**

Northern Australian Conference (Townsville, Qld), is seeking an experienced accountant/senior accountant to join our team. This is a key leadership position responsible for producing monthly and annual financial reporting, budgets, overseeing payroll, FBT, cashier, accounts and other statutory and reporting obligations. The role also includes supervision of our Adventist Book Centre. This position requires relevant tertiary qualifications, exceptional attention to detail, self-motivation, well-organised, great team player, excellent written and oral communication, and a high level of computer skills, particularly with Excel. For more information and a position profile contact <nataliescott@adventist.org.au> or phone (07) 4779 3988. **Applications close May 31, 2019.**

FOR MORE AVAILABLE POSITIONS VISIT:  
[ADVENTISTEMPLOYMENT.ORG.AU](http://ADVENTISTEMPLOYMENT.ORG.AU)



**SUPPORTING MINISTRY**

**CEDARVALE**

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Cedarvale Health Retreat is seeking suitable persons for the roles of general manager; office administrator; and maintenance manager. These positions are to commence in the latter part of 2019. It is expected that the successful applicants would have a passion for health evangelism and would proactively support Cedarvale's status as a supportive ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. For details call (02) 4465 1362 or email <info@cedarvaleretreat.com.au>. Expressions of interests/applications can be submitted at <cedarvale.org/job>.

*Cedarvale is an independent ministry supportive of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.*

**MEDICAL MISSIONARY TRAINING INSTITUTE**

**RTO administrator**

The Medical Missionary Training Institute Inc needs a quality and compliance officer for the operation of its RTO. This is a very responsible position requiring knowledge of the Australian VET system. The requirements include, conducting an internal audit, setting up a student management system and managing it, and assisting the principal of Acacia Life Academy in operating the Learning Management Platform. Experience in administration in the VET sector is necessary. Remuneration will be negotiated upon interview. Work time and place is negotiable and can be done from home. Please contact Bev Krogdahl on 0458 536 115. This position is open until it is filled. We are particularly interested in attracting a retired person, wanting to support the Lord's lay medical missionary work.

*MMTI is an independent ministry supportive of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.*

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