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NEWS

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YOUNG ADVENTIST 8

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WAITING IN EXPECTANT HOPE

This year has been tough. As I write this, my family is waiting in anticipation. Hopefully, by the time you are reading it, we'll have seen our hopes realised.

You see, my six-month-old daughter, the first granddaughter on both sides, has not yet met my parents. It's not supposed to be like this. Grandparents are always busting to see their grandchildren. But then COVID-19 came to wreak havoc. The borders to South Australia have been closed and we've been separated.

We are just one of many families going through separation this year.

The situation has been frustrating. It has hurt. But it has caused me to reflect on that other reunion we are waiting for—Jesus returning and setting everything right.

There has been lots of conjecture and Christian focus about the tragedies of 2020 and how they feel like the end of the world. Many have pointed to the things happening around us as signs of Jesus' soon return. They have been exploiting the drama to support their "right" cause.

Habakkuk's complaint could well be appropriate for these times: "O Lord, how long shall I cry for help, and you will not hear? . . . Destruction and violence are before me; strife and contention arise . . . so the law is paralysed and justice never goes forth" (v1-4).

Dick Duerksen, a storyteller from the Oregon Conference (USA), took morning worship at the South Pacific Division recently. He described the terrible wildfires on the west coast of America, including in Oregon, and how the Church was able to serve their community by inviting those who had evacuated to stay on the Adventist campground.

Although things were terrible, the Church was able to connect with their community in the chaos, in real and tangible ways.

The way we wait through disasters; wear the peace that passes understanding; the way we carry joy through lamenting, is our witness to the world and will be our testimony of our relationship with God. To me, these signs of the end are more about lost relationships.

It's been easy to despair, thinking the borders will never open. I've clung to the hope that I will see my family again.

The borders of heaven and earth separate us from our Father for now. And yet we wait in expectant hope to be together. Some days it feels like things will never change. We can't see the grand plan. But we do have options for FaceTime and connecting. We can still commune with God in our time of waiting.

We need to stay ready and expectant. The point is not to live in fear and morbidity. If we focus on the disasters around us, we miss the joy that life can bring. This was Habakkuk's experience. He ends his book, his waiting and unfulfilled expectation, with praise.

*Though the fig tree does not bud
and there are no grapes on the vines,
though the olive crop fails
and the fields produce no food,
though there are no sheep in the pen
and no cattle in the stalls,
yet I will rejoice in the Lord,
I will be joyful in God my Saviour (3:17,18).*

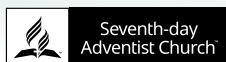
Hope for the future helps us praise in the pain. Habakkuk trusted God's promises, that even though he didn't understand, even though he would never see it, God would make all things right. As we live expectantly, holding onto nothing more than our hope at times, the way we serve others and praise in joy will be the things that set us apart and see us ready as God's children.

The border has finally opened. My mum has booked a flight. By the time you're reading this, we'll have all been reunited. That sweet meeting will have taken place. I'm ecstatic. It's a moment we've all longed for, for six months.

There are many moments this year in which I've longed to see Jesus. So many lives have been lost—so many friends to reunite with. I know there will be joy and celebration on that glorious day.

Even so, come quickly Lord Jesus.

JARROD STACKELROTH
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PNG INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATIONS

TRACEY BRIDCUTT

Youth, Ambassadors, Pathfinders and Adventurers (YAPA) marched from Riwo Seventh-day Adventist Church to Riwo village, north of Madang, as part of Papua New Guinea's 45th Independence Day celebrations on September 16.

Onlookers were impressed by the marching style of the young people who were led by Reuben Micah. After their arrival in Riwo village, they participated in a flag-raising ceremony.

Most of the young people attend Riwo Adventist Primary School and are from other faith backgrounds.

Madang Manus Mission president Pastor Garry Laukei presented the devotion, telling the crowds that their spiritual independence can only truly be found in Jesus. "Jesus died . . . so that we are no longer a slave to sin, but are under the leadership of Jesus Christ," he said.

Eric Kuman, an elder from



MARCHING TO RIWO VILLAGE.

Kiunga, said marching with YAPA uniforms created a positive impact on children in the village. Elder Ben Baleng, from Riwo Adventist Church, commented that such a program had never been permitted previously, and it was good that the community could appreciate the Adventist presence.

Pastor Laukei said he is pleased to see the support of YAPA by church leaders, members of Riwo Adventist Church and teachers from Riwo Adventist Primary School.

"Witnessing is about going out to the community [and] making a difference," he said.

DIVISION SECRETARY RESIGNS

TRACEY BRIDCUTT

Pastor Lionel Smith has resigned as secretary of the South Pacific Division (SPD) for personal reasons, effective September 30.

Pastor Smith has served in the role since 2014; his accomplishments have included restructuring the Division Secretariat, and chairing both the Literature Evangelism Ministry Refocus Committee and the Papua New Guinea Union Mission Survey Commission for better governance. Prior to working at the Division he spent a decade serving in the Western Australian Conference, most recently as Conference secretary. He also served the Church

in Papua New Guinea for 13 years.

SPD president Pastor Glenn Townend acknowledged Pastor Smith's service to the Division. "Lionel has skills and abilities that God has used to benefit others," he said. "He has always focused on supporting the marginalised. I wish Lionel God's full blessings in his future endeavours."



PASTOR LIONEL SMITH.

TRANSFORMATIONAL

I've been reflecting on some thoughts by Oswald Chambers (1874-1917), a Baptist evangelist and teacher from Scotland. Although complications from an appendectomy shortened his life, wife Biddy took his teaching and preaching notes and published a number of books, the best known being *My Utmost for His Highest* (1927), long considered a Christian classic.

A compilation published in 2015, *Our Brilliant Heritage/If You Will Be Perfect/Disciples Indeed: The Inheritance of God's Transforming Mind and Heart*, is part of my library. Within this book is a quote you may have heard before but is worth considering again: "Beware of harking back to what you once were when God wants you to be something you have never been."

Scripture has a lot to say about the transformation God longs to enact in each life—in essence, yearning to turn us into something we have never been before. "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

I have reflected on what brings God most joy, eventually concluding that it is taking chaos—particularly as sometimes practised in our lives—and turning it into beauty.

An Avondale student once confided to me he had given up following God, believing God would have tired of him consistently making a mess of life. The time had come, he thought, to "cut himself loose". Fortunately, the truth is quite the opposite. God does not tire of turning chaos into beauty and never rejects those who come to Him with sincerity. That is transformational.



KEVIN PETRIE
AVONDALE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE PRESIDENT
@AvondaleViceChancellor

YOUNG ADULTS NAVIGATE FAITH IN A POST-CHRISTIAN WORLD

MARYELLEN FAIRFAX

Practising and sharing Christian faith in a post-Christian world can be difficult, which is why more than 100 young adults gathered at Sydney's Bankwest Stadium on Sabbath, September 12, to share practical faith tips, listen to inspiring talks and engage in roundtable discussions.

Organised by the Sydney Adventist Young Adults (SAYA) team—a group of young Adventist professionals—the theme for the conference was “Counter culture: Navigating faith in a post-Christian world”.

Keynote presentations were given by Greater Sydney Conference youth director Pastor Simon Gigliotti, author and international speaker Dr Heather Thompson Day, and Avondale University College first-year theology student Sharee Patrick. Each presentation explored how to navigate opposing church and world cultures, and gave tips on how to reach out to people who need to hear about Jesus.

Attendee Tyler Kuulkers from

Stanmore Adventist Church said he enjoyed the practical aspect of the conference.

“I absolutely loved Simon and his practical tips, he always does an awesome job making whatever content he has useful and relatable!”

The afternoon also featured music from the Parramatta Adventist Church band and a panel discussion about practical ways that young adults can connect with God on a daily basis.

Tabitha Krzar-Radovanovic, a member of the SAYA team, says the motivation behind the event was to try and engage a demographic of the Church that is often overlooked.

“Young adults are the biggest group of people leaving the Church. As I look around I see less and less of the friends I had in Sabbath school staying active in church. They may be young professionals, young marrieds or

new parents. SAYA is seeking to reach out and engage young adults again by creating content and events relevant to them.”

Pastor Gigliotti agreed that the purpose of the conference was to empower young adults and give them a place of belonging.

“We need to help young adults navigate life and faith in a post-Christian world [and] empower them for mission and service,” he said.

Watch the full program via the Sydney Adventist Youth YouTube page.



SOCIALLY-DISTANCED ATTENDEES ENJOYING A ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION.

NEW INITIATIVE SETS CHILDREN ON LIFETIME HEALTH PATH

JARROD STACKELROTH

Sanitarium Health Food Company has partnered with Sprout Cooking School to launch a new program that teaches children skills and principles for healthy living.

The 12 before 12 initiative gives parents tools to empower primary-aged children to understand meal selection and food preparation, learning 12 essential food skills before they turn 12 years old.



CALLUM HANN AND THEMIS CHRYSIDIS FROM SPROUT COOKING SCHOOL IN ADELAIDE.

Nutrition experts at Sanitarium joined forces with dietitian Themis Chryssidis and Masterchef contestant Callum Hann from Adelaide's Sprout Cooking School for the program.

“We created 12 before 12 because healthy food habits established in childhood play an important role in our health over our lifetime,” said Shane Landon, accredited practising dietitian and nutrition insights manager for Sanitarium. “One of the key ways to a healthier diet is having the practical skills to make it happen.”

In helping to identify the 12 skills, Mr Chryssidis from Sprout said they were guided by a mission to simplify healthy eating advice.

“12 before 12's simpler

message is: eat mostly whole plant-based foods, drink mostly water, cook more at home—and for kids, find ways to sprinkle in some fun.”

Grouped into four key areas—shopping, prepping, cooking and eating—the 12 before 12 skills cover the complete food journey.

These food skills form the basis of a new Sanitarium cookbook, available as a free digital download from the 12 before 12 website.

12 before 12 also reinforces the importance of family meal times as an opportunity for parents to model healthier eating behaviours and provide children with a much-needed opportunity to reconnect after a busy day of school and play.

To download a free copy of the cookbook visit <12before12.sanitarium.com.au>.

ADVENTCARE THANKS STAFF AMID MELBOURNE LOCKDOWN

NATHAN BROWN

Amid the ongoing COVID-19 lockdown in greater Melbourne, AdventCare Victoria thanked their 230 staff members with gift bags packed and decorated by the aged-care residents, and including messages of gratitude from residents' families. The "Well-being Bags" were built around *Live More Happy* by Dr Darren Morton. The Pocket Edition was included in each bag, with healthy snacks, recipe cards from *Food As Medicine*, gratitude prompt cards and a note of encouragement—with a roll of toilet paper.

During nine weeks of COVID-19 restrictions, family, friends and volunteers have been unable to visit residents. More than 400 "Stay In Touch" visits—through windows or via Zoom—have been facilitated by AdventCare's Chaplaincy and Lifestyle team.

"The stress for frontline staff, in what is already a high-pressure environment, has been immense,"

said AdventCare chaplain Pastor Nalissa Maberly. "The Wellbeing Bags were designed as a boost for each staff member, to remind them to take care of themselves and offer them ideas on how to do so."

Pastor Maberly said that seeing residents take part in preparing the bags was gratifying. "One of the residents who had a stroke struggles to write, yet she was determined to do as many bags as possible," she reported. "With great effort she shakily wrote 'thank you' and decorated 20 bags. At AdventCare Whitehorse, two of the Adventist residents assisted with packing the bags—it would have been a struggle



ADVENTCARE WHITEHORSE RESIDENTS RUBY WAREHAM AND ORLEAN O'CONNOR PACKING THE BAGS.

to get it done without them."

Many staff members responded positively: "The mood has shifted, everyone is lighter and more energetic." On reading the "Words from Families", one staff member said that she would "have to stop now and read the rest at home. I can't stop crying, it's so lovely."

Another recipient reflected that "I've worked here 10 years and never been thanked in such a meaningful way. Everything in the bag had a purpose—loved that the residents were involved."

AdventCare Victoria cares for 180 residents at their Whitehorse and Yarra Ranges (Warburton) facilities.

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EXPANDED BOOKS HELP COOL STRESS

NATHAN BROWN

Cameron Johnston has been talking and teaching about stress for many years, but he believes the need for resources and training for managing stress only continues to grow. "It's a problem that is getting worse rather than getting better," says the Canada-based stress coach, retired pastor and author of two newly-published books on the subject. "With all the things that are happening in the world at the moment, people need effective, practical strategies to cope with stress."

Both books were originally self-published by Pastor Johnston in 2002, but have been updated, revised and expanded in these new editions. *Cooling Down Teen Stress*—co-written with his daughter Delight Johnston Chandler, when she was a teenager—is now in its third edition from Signs Publishing, while *Cooling Down Stress* is a new title from Signs.



While he has a master's degree in public health from Loma Linda University, Pastor Johnston dates his interest in stress management to his own burnout more than 30 years ago. "I practise the

principles in my book," he says, urging that his wholistic approach distinguishes these principles from some other stress resources. "I keep relaxed as much as possible, do physical activity, look for the positive, exercise gratitude and lean heavily on the Lord."

Cooling Down Stress and *Cooling Down Teen Stress* each tell stories of families encountering the stress of real-life situations and pressures, drawn from the experiences of participants in stress seminars Pastor Johnston has conducted in a number of countries, including a number of visits to Australia.

Signs Publishing assistant book editor Lauren Webb worked on revising these books for publication during the first part of this year, amid the coronavirus lockdowns and uncertainties. "I've found myself dipping into these books for my own wellbeing and to help out some of my friends too," she reflects. "We all need a bit of help to deal with stress."

New chapters in *Cooling Down Stress* focus on deep-seated stressors, including grief and anger. "I found these particularly eye-opening," says Ms Webb.

"Stress is the spice of life and we need a good level of stress," explains Pastor Johnston. "Stress itself is not the problem—it is not recognising how stress is affecting us physically, emotionally and spiritually, and living with constantly escalating stress that harms us. I hope these books will help people to take action to manage stress effectively."

Cooling Down Stress and *Cooling Down Teen Stress* are available from Adventist bookstores in Australia and New Zealand.

A yellow and white promotional banner. At the top, it says 'MORE THAN A MAGAZINE' in large white letters, with 'FOLLOW ADVENTIST RECORD ONLINE' below it. Below the text are social media icons for Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, YouTube, and Vimeo. Each icon has a handle or name below it: '@ADVENTISTRECORD', '@THEADVENTISTRECORD', 'ADVENTIST RECORD', and 'RECORDADVENTISTCHURCH.COM'. A keyboard is visible on the left side of the banner.

NEWS GRABS



HEALTH CARE RECOVERY

Forty-eight employees—or 23 per cent of staff—from Southeast Hospital, an Adventist health-care institution in Tabasco, Mexico, were quarantined due to COVID-19 for three weeks between April and August. Perez Gonzalez, financial director of the hospital, said it was the biggest challenge the hospital has ever faced.—*IAD News*



CELEBRATING CREATION

The worldwide Seventh-day Adventist Church will celebrate Creation Sabbath on October 24. Churches are encouraged to host special events and share the importance and beauty of our belief in the biblical creation story. For more information, resources and videos to host your own event, please visit <creationsabbath.net>.—*Record staff*



WORLD PATHFINDER DAY

Adventist world Church president Pastor Ted Wilson recognised World Pathfinder Day, which celebrated 70 years of Pathfinding, on Sabbath, September 19. In his video message, he encouraged viewers to tune into a global livestream on the General Conference Youth Facebook page.—*Adventist News Network*

HOT TOPICS



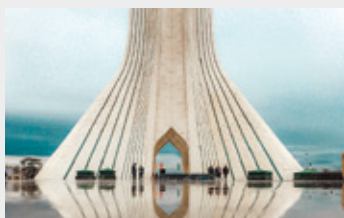
A MORAL NECESSITY?

Christian school assistant Kristie Higgs was dismissed from Farmor's School in Gloucestershire (UK) last year for "gross misconduct" in posting concerns online about LGBT relationship lessons, believing it was "morally necessary to speak out in defence of the Bible truth when false or harmful doctrines are being taught to children".—*BBC News*



CHILDREN WITH COVID

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in the US, Black and Hispanic children are more susceptible to COVID-19 than their white counterparts, making up 86 per cent of the childhood death toll. The CDC attributes this to lower socioeconomic conditions and lack of access to good hygiene and healthcare.—*Relevant*



CHRISTIANITY ON THE RISE

According to a new survey of 50,000 Iranians by GAMAAN, 1.5 per cent identified as Christian—meaning that Iran's total Christian population has grown beyond a million believers. This is contrary to official government statistics, which estimate that 117,700 "traditional Armenian and Assyrian Christians" live in the country.—*ChristianityToday*

THOUSANDS MOURN LOSS OF YOUNG ADVENTIST

JARROD STACKELROTH

Hundreds of people from all over Fiji filled the Gimit Centre in Lautoka on September 24 to celebrate the life of a young man who was known throughout the Pacific for his ready smile and passion for digital evangelism.

Petero Navosailagi, known as Pete, died early Sunday morning, September 20, while swimming, presumed drowned, at a Pathfinder camp—the day before his 32nd birthday.

Mr Navosailagi, originally from Lautoka, had worked and lived at the Trans Pacific Union Mission (TPUM) office in Suva for the past five years as the Union's communication officer. He was a technician, photographer, designer, communications officer and helped roll out the Adventist branding and identity for TPUM.

As well as his work at TPUM, Mr Navosailagi was heavily involved in his home church in Waiyavi, Lautoka, and PTEC in Suva, where he lived, as well as being an adviser to the youth department of the Fiji Mission.

According to the Youth Ministry—Fiji Mission of the Seventh Day Adventist

Church Facebook page, "Pete was incredibly talented and instrumental to the department and most importantly, the Church in Fiji, the region and beyond. Pete has left us with such fond and wonderful memories, one of which is his zeal and passion in the mission of saving souls for Jesus."

Testament to the work he had done helping other countries throughout TPUM improve their digital outreach, more than 800 people were watching the service online, from places such as Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Tonga. The service included singing from a number of church groups and tributes, while TPUM president Pastor Maveni Kaufononga preached.

Colleagues paid tribute to Mr Navosailagi's eagerness to learn and share, his willingness to help and his passion for sharing the gospel.

Pastor Kaufononga described him as "a committed Christian and a vibrant young person.

"His impact upon many lives was marked by a packed funeral service in Lautoka and again a packed memorial service at his local church in Suva.

"He was passionate about Digital Discipleship. He had started to train young people in using media for evangelism [across the Pacific] and has set a platform to be used in this area. His work as a graphic designer left his fingerprints all around the Pacific with church sign boards, uniforms, banners, business card designs etc.

"His last testimony to the Pathfinder leaders on his last Sabbath: church family is my family. He was sure that his church family is his family forever. We look forward to being reunited when Jesus returns to claim His own."

He is survived by his mother, Adi Ateca Vokili, and five siblings.



PETERO NAVOSAILAGI.



PETE WAS WELL LOVED BY MANY FRIENDS.

THE TEN

MEN IN THE BIBLE WHO WERE THE “BEST” AT SOMETHING



STRONGEST: SAMSON

Judges 15:15—“And he found a fresh jawbone of a donkey, and put out his hand and took it, and with it he struck 1000 men.”

HUMBLEST: MOSES

Numbers 12:3—“Now Moses was a very humble man, more humble than anyone else on the face of the earth.” Moses is credited as the author of Numbers.

HEALTHIEST: DANIEL

Daniel 1:15—“At the end of the ten days they looked healthier and better nourished than any of the young men who ate the royal food.”

TALLEST: GOLIATH

1 Samuel 17:4—“A champion named Goliath, who was from Gath, came out of the Philistine camp. His height was six cubits and a span.” That’s nearly three metres!

MOST PROLIFIC: PAUL

Although Paul wrote the most books in the Bible—12 books with a total of 32,408 words—Moses is credited with more words, writing the first five books, one psalm and 125,139 words!

OLDEST: METHUSELAH

Genesis 5:27: “Thus all the days of Methuselah were 969 years, and he died.”

MOST PETS: NOAH

Genesis 7:8,9—“Pairs of clean and unclean animals, of birds and of all creatures that move along the ground, male and female, came to Noah and entered the ark, of bird, of every kind of animal and of every kind of creature that moves along the ground will come to you to be kept alive.”

RICHEST: SOLOMON

1 Kings 10:23—“King Solomon was greater in riches and wisdom than all the other kings of the earth.”

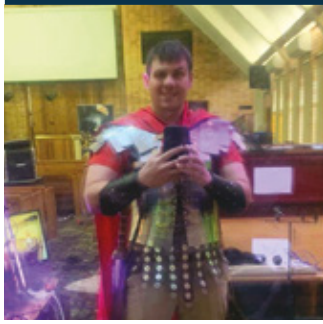
FATTEST: EGLON

“Eglon king of Moab, who was a very fat man . . . And the hilt also went in after the blade, and the fat closed over the blade, for he did not pull the sword out of his belly”. Full story found in Judges 3:14-29.

MOST ENCOURAGING: BARNABAS

Acts 4:36—“Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means ‘son of encouragement’).” Given his nickname for a reason, Paul may not have got as far as he did without the help of Barnabas. He vouched for Paul after his conversion and the Holy Spirit even picked him to accompany Paul.

PASTORS APPRECIATION DAY 2020



DANIEL MATTEO

Tasmanian Youth director; Hilliard Christian School chaplain

He is gifted with insight, wisdom, knowledge, understanding and teaching from the Bible for children's ministries through to young adults. His leadership shines when helping others with the importance of having joy and living with the Holy Spirit. —Donna Moss



DAVID MCKIBBEN

Wahroonga Church (NSW)

He has the heart of a shepherd. He is gentle, encouraging, approachable and earnest in his work for Jesus. We all love and appreciate him and his beautiful family, even though we don't show it nearly enough! —Carol Boehm



SAMUELA KORO

Wailoaloo, Wainiyavu, Namuamua, and Naimasimasi churches (Fiji)

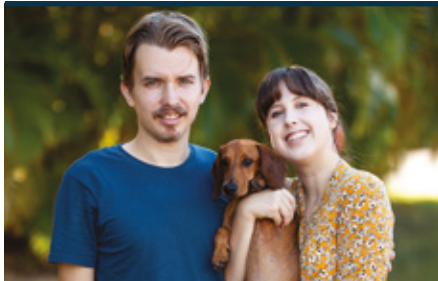
I wish to recommend this minister who, through the power of the Holy Spirit, has planted churches in many untouched areas of Fiji. Although he has limited formal education, he is surrendered to the Lord's service. He is an evangelist that God is using mightily. I praise God for this humble preacher. —Fulori Bola



SITIVENE FINE TEAUPA

Sydney Tongan Church; Sydney Cook Island Church

This is our handsome, humble kind-hearted, multi-talented, God-fearing pastor. He is on call 24/7. He knows his holidays and days off will be interrupted by crises and deaths, but he doesn't complain. He is a selfless man and a grateful man, he is a great multitasker. He is often found conducting our church brass band, composing and translating music from English to Tongan. He can sing solo better than Elvis Presely, and plays the guitar and different brass instruments. Our pastor is an amazing loving father, grandfather and husband, and has poured so much time, effort and passion into our church. —Jacinta Tuputupu



MACIEJ KUBEREK

North Mackay and Walkerston Churches (Qld)

He was always destined for service. From a young age he based his full identity in Jesus, always studying the Word in spare moments. Maciej's love for his church and community is only surpassed by his love for Christ. —Daniel Kuberek



NIXON YUTI

Boundary Road Church with three branch churches; Buimo Road Church (Morobe Mission, PNG)

His commitment is remarkable. The way he presents sermons is clear so uneducated church members can understand. He makes time to visit the branch churches and encourage the small congregations. —Thavy Ouch



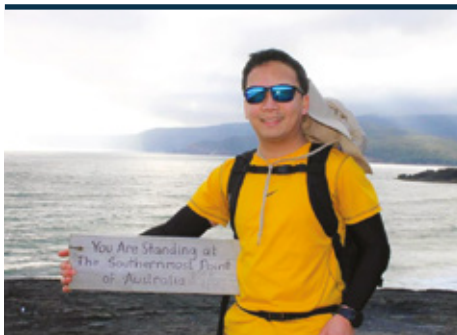
TIM SHELTON

Fountain in the City, Pendle Hill (NSW)

TAPIWA MUTSERIWA

Fountain in the City, Fairfield (NSW)

Thank you both for always being dedicated, selfless and hardworking pastors. Your unending passion for ministry and love for people is inspiring. You are an immense blessing to our church—please don't ever leave. God bless your ministry! —Izabella Cuyuca



EUGENE GONZALES ESTIL

New Norfolk Church; church planter (Tas)

He has a gift for working in the recreation area and loves involving himself in a number of ways. His gifts of insight, wisdom, knowledge, understanding and teachings from the Bible show others that it's all about love and joy. —Donna Moss



SAMUEL TELDI KOIM

Apiamp Church (Western Highlands Mission, PNG)

He is very active and skillful in church planting and discipleship making and building new branch churches. Many young people have given their lives to Jesus through the waters of baptism. I praise God for such a kind-hearted and hardworking pastor. We appreciate his help and service to our church and community. —Manua Samuel



MARTIN VUKMANIC
Kellyville Church (NSW)

Kellyville has been blessed to have Martin as a visionary leader for the past 15 years. He inspires, supports, mentors and cares for our community in so many ways, and we do truly appreciate him as our pastor and friend. (Pictured with his wife Drene Somasundram).
—Rod Long



DAVID KOSMEIER
Wauchope and Camden Haven churches (NSW)

I love my pastor because the man of God he is in church is the same man of God he is at home, at a café, at Bunnings—everywhere he goes. He also never let being a pastor get in the way of being my dad. —Sharna Kosmeier



JONATHAN MOSES
Sarakata Church; four company churches (Santo, Vanuatu)

As well as pastoring multiple churches, Jonathan Moses is the Sanma District Ministry Leader. He loves God, his family and our church. He is God-fearing, proactive, welcoming, visionary, supportive of all church activities, encouraging leadership, sourcing funding for church projects, courageous in decision-making, conscientious and always active. (Pictured with his wife May Moses.)
—Sarai Vaofanua—Stephens



GREG CAMPLING
Ipswich Church (Qld)

How do we describe a man
Who sets aside each day
The time to serve his Master
In a plain and simple way?

How do we describe a man
Whose gentle, humble heart,
Displays the love of Jesus
In its fullness, not in part?

He is patient and he's kind
Understanding and refined.
He is faithful and forgiving
Shares the gospel with mankind.

He is measured and he's treasured
And we take this special time
To express our love and admiration
In a short and simple rhyme.
—Lee Masher Kolbee



USAIA BARAVI
Cabramatta Central Church (NSW)

Thank you Pastor Baravi for being:

- Best pastor**
- Awesome teacher**
- Respectable**
- Amazing preacher**
- Very kind**
- Incredible** —Amiel Edian

Thank you Pastor Baravi for helping me learn about the second coming and how Jesus died to save us. I would like to thank you for praying for me when I was stressed with school assessments. —Noah Edian

Pastor Baravi is the best Bible study teacher. He always has goodies and food for us and he makes us laugh. He teaches us to be selfless. He is kind, understanding and ready to listen. We are happy to have him as our pastor! —Ariyana, Bethany and Ezekiel

What I love about Pastor Usaia Baravi is that he uses a lot of his precious time and energy to teach us young kids about how God is Almighty, how God created the world and how He's our true Saviour.
—Tevin Chhuo



DANIEL PRZYBYLKO
Parramatta Central Church (NSW)

He is a man who opens his house to his church. Strong, yet gentle. Patient, yet kind. We appreciate his hearty laugh and things he has generously done for our church family. A power couple along with his energetic wife!
—Parramatta Central

To read more Pastors Appreciation Day comments, please visit our website record.adventistchurch.com or Instagram @adventistrecord.

UTU LIULIU
Satala Church; Aua Ministry/Church (American Samoa)



Brother Utu is a very respectful, humble and god-fearing man. He speaks the word of God with clarity and is always prepared when the call comes for him to share the Word. —Selena Sionesini

I appreciate Brother Utu for his personality, talents and because he is an inspiration. He is filled with humility, kindness and respect. He always puts the need of others before his. —Mauola Metuli



OSEA RAITILA
Two Indian and three iTaukei churches in Nadi and Lautoka, Fiji

He has also served as a pastor in Savusavu, Labasa, Ba, Lautoka and as the chaplain of Fulton College (Fiji). In July this year, Pastor Osea ran an evangelism series in Hindi for four weeks on Hope Channel Fiji and Hope 107FM Radio about the end times. For some, they were really amazed to hear how an iTaukei (Fijian) person could preach so well in the Hindi language.
—Sushiel Jit

The pre-eminent sense: the TOUCH of God when we need it most

If I was to put the title to this article to you in the form of a question—*What is the pre-eminent sense?*—I could get six answers. Six you say? Yes, six. We know that sight, smell, taste, hearing and touch are senses we have as humans. The sixth is *proprioception* (this allows us to know where our body parts are in space).

The gourmand may say that taste is the best sense to have. The sound engineer or someone like Professor Graeme Clark, who invented the cochlear implant, may say hearing is the most important sense. If we could ask Professor Fred Hollows the same question, he would no doubt say that sight is the greatest of all senses.

But if we could ask Helen Adam Keller (d 1968), who could neither see nor hear, what would she say? I am quite confident that she would say that the sense of touch is the indispensable sense, the paramount sense, even the pre-eminent sense.

If we should give serious thought to this question, I think we would agree with the famed Helen Keller. Try to imagine that you have suddenly lost all sense of touch; not only hand touch but touching by any part of your body.

You would soon be a body of bruises. But that wouldn't be the worst of it. You could not feel the stroke of a loved one's hand, nor feel anything at all when they kissed you—nor could you meaningfully respond. You would not know how much to chew your food, as your tongue would have no sensation. At the other end of that journey you would not be able to tell when your excretory organs should be used. Now, that would be a problem, wouldn't it?

The sense of touch was given to us by our Maker for a number of reasons, including enjoyment, safety, comfort and for our emotional needs.

In the COVID-19 virus environment we have been living in for some time, the touches we are used to receiving from loved ones and friends are greatly reduced. No longer do we shake hands, give people a hug or kiss those close to us. Oh, no! We could be passing on to them the dreaded virus! Since my wife passed away just before the pandemic, I tell people I am hug-less and that is true now for more than one reason.

In the Bible, much is said about "touch". There are two full columns in small print with words referring to touch in my *Strong's Concordance*. These are: *touch*, *touched*, *toucheth* (*touches*) and *touching*. These words, with the same common root, are fairly evenly divided between both Testaments. Indeed, the gospel descriptions of the ministry of

Jesus shows that touch played a significant part in Christ's ministry of healing and giving life to the dead. And not only that, but imagine the joy the little children had as Jesus blessed them, placed His hands upon them and gave these little ones a loving hug.

The first warning about the wrong use of touch was given by God Himself when He warned Adam and Eve they were not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, nor even touch it, or they would die (Genesis 3:3).

Much later, Israel was warned not even to touch unclean foods or other unclean things (see Leviticus). God also warned that His anointed ones and His prophets were not to be touched in a harmful way (1 Chronicles 16:22).

In Christ's time, faith was wonderfully demonstrated when a woman found Jesus and touched the hem of His garment and was immediately healed of her bleeding.

When Myra "Brooks" Welch wrote the well-known poem "The Touch of the Master's Hand", little could she have guessed how popular this piece would become, right down to our day. What is so appealing about this poem is that the author, through the figure of the old violinist, turns our attention to the Master of us all who, with His touch, makes all the difference in the world for us.

WILLIAM ACKLAND

IS RETIRED IN COORANBONG, NSW, AND HAS WRITTEN SIX BOOKS.





Emily Crawford

Artist

Emily Crawford is an artist who explores the world through her fingertips. Hailing from Perth in Western Australia where she attends Livingston Adventist Church, Emily spends time in her home studio almost every day, creating art for clients and refining her own unique style.

With a bachelor's degree in Fine Arts, Emily says her creative practice stems from life influences and experiences.

"My passion for art comes from my upbringing as an Adventist Christian, my struggles with anxiety and depression, and . . . my degree," she says. For Emily, the qualities she needs to create are "an unceasing curiosity to know why people do what they do, a chunk of compassion and empathy, a litre of story-telling, and a dash of sarcasm and humour to sprinkle on top." These layers of personality and meaning are also reflected in her practice of creating each artwork.

"[I] build upon the first marks with something else. Often, I'll start drawing, then add paint, embroidery or block printing. It comes out in different ways depending on my satisfaction or the desires of a client."

Communicating important messages is a core—albeit difficult to balance—part of the artmaking process for Emily.

"It's a complicated space to be in sometimes, trying to express important topics in my art without overstepping boundaries or over-sharing. However, that's the beauty of being an

artist; you can go down the rabbit hole and learn to see the world in a new light."

In a recent series, Emily drew on questions from her childhood to depict female stories from Greek mythology.

"Growing up I always got confused and a little annoyed with how the Bible portrayed women. Very few of those women were the kind of people you would see as typical heroes. But as I've grown older and learnt more about the context of the period these ancient narratives were born from, I saw parallels and found relatability in their experiences to those of contemporary women."

By drawing parallels between identities and human experiences, and through the act of creating itself, Emily says she finds connection with God.

"I've always thought that God is basically the first artist in our known existence. And in giving us life, the ability to create and be creative is passed through to us."

Emily likes to imagine that when she's creating, she's tapping into God's creative power in some way.

So where to from here?

"I can't say for certain what God has in store for me. However, I hope that my work will continue to develop into greater art; and that people connect, discuss, learn, relate and take a piece of it with them."

See Emily's art on Instagram or Facebook @emcrawfordart.

RECORD STAFF

DIGGING IN HIS WORD

WITH GARY WEBSTER

CANA: A LONG WALK TO SERVE

Immediately after finding His first five disciples at Bethabara, just 50km from Jerusalem, Jesus took a 300km round-journey north for a wedding in Cana, followed by a brief few days in Capernaum, before heading back south to Jerusalem. Why the long journey at the start of a busy ministry?

READ John 1:22,23; Isaiah 40:3; John 1:29,35-51; Isaiah 44:6.

A fascinating, almost day-by-day account—during which John the Baptist and Jesus Himself proclaim that Jesus is the pre-existent Lord (Jehovah) God, Israel's King and God's sin-bearing Lamb—reveals the answer.

READ John 1:43; 2:1,2,11-13.

Firstly, turning water to wine helped His disciples believe He really was the Lord God Almighty. However, a miracle at Bethabara could have done that. But in Cana, wine was needed to save a young couple's marriage from a humiliating start, and to honour His mum's faith in Him. Finally, He wanted His disciples to spend time with their families in Capernaum before they all headed back to Jerusalem. What a self-denying Saviour—a 300km walk for others! That's ministry! Let's do likewise.

READ John 2:3,5-11.



A STONE WATER JAR IN CANA, ISRAEL.

Pentecost and the three angels

Pentecost dramatically impacted the early church. Many Christians regard Pentecost as the “birthday of the Christian church.”¹ On that amazing morning, crowds in Jerusalem exclaimed, “Look, are not all these who speak Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each in our own language in which we were born? . . . we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God” (Acts 2:7,8,11).² The church exploded in number from 120 to 3000.

Pentecost, however, was a Jewish feast; Pentecost being the Greek version of *Shavu’ot*, the Feast of Weeks celebrated seven weeks, or 50 days, after Passover (Leviticus 23:15-22).

All Jewish feasts had both historical and prophetic importance. Recognition of this helps elucidate the true meaning of these feasts, and especially the significance for us today of why God chose the Feast of Pentecost to pour out the Holy Spirit, and not the Feast of Firstfruits, occurring seven days

after Passover and the sacrificial death of Jesus, or perhaps Yom Kippur, the Day of Judgement.

There were seven Jewish feasts (Leviticus 23). The Sabbath pointed back to creation (Exodus 20:11), but also to His work of redemption from slavery (Deuteronomy 5:15), and finally to the re-creation of a perfect world when sin is obliterated forever (Revelation 21:1-4). Passover and the Feast of First Fruits pointed back to the triumphant exodus from Egypt, but forward to the sacrifice of Jesus (1 Corinthians 5:7), and ultimately to the supreme exodus of all God’s people from the slavery of this sin-filled world. The Day of Atonement reminded the Israelites of the tragic death of Nadab and Abihu (Leviticus 16:1), and pointed forward to the great end-time judgement when all humans will stand before the judgement seat of God (Romans 14:10). The Feast of Tabernacles remembered the temporary shelters of the wandering in the wilderness (Leviticus

23:43) and was the promise of enjoying the yield of fruitful trees in the Promised Land, and also the rejoicing when God’s people gather in the Promised Land of heaven.

But what did the Feast of Weeks commemorate? It undoubtedly pointed forward to the bountiful harvests Israel would experience under the blessing of God in Canaan, and the New Testament Pentecost shows the best of all harvests was the gathering of all people into the knowledge of the gospel. This was anticipated in the instructions for the feast, in what may appear to be an irrelevant footnote to the general instructions: “When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not wholly reap the corners of your field when you reap, nor shall you gather any gleaning from your harvest. You shall leave them for the *poor* and the *stranger*: I am the Lord your God” (Leviticus 23:22, italics supplied).

But what was the historical event this feast commemorated?

Although not explicit, the Bible clearly records that approximately 50 days after the drama of Exodus something stupendous happened (Exodus 19:1–20:17). The two-month gap between the Exodus and the giving of the Ten Commandments computes to about 50 days. Furthermore, contemporary Jews recognise that Shavu'ot historically commemorates the giving of the Torah, specifically the Ten Commandments.³

“At Shavuot (Pentecost) the Jews celebrate the receiving of the Torah on Mount Sinai, which was literally the beginning of Judaism. For Christians Pentecost . . . was literally the beginning of the church . . .”⁴

Thus, Pentecost was the formal inauguration of both the Jewish covenant with God, and the Christian.

This association of Pentecost with the law-giving on Sinai makes the New Testament Pentecost of great interest.

At Sinai God presented Himself to His people as fire on the mountain (Exodus 19:18, Deuteronomy 5:5, 6:24,25) and through law that revealed God's character and government, God formally presented Himself as the covenant-keeping God. The people responded three times, “All that the Lord has said we will do” (Exodus 19:8; 24:3,7). At the New Testament Pentecost God again presented Himself as fire, and the gospel message of God's self-sacrificing love was heard by a large group of people.

Author Eugene Peterson states: “The . . . theme of Pentecost is the covenant revelation at Sinai. The Torah reading assigned to the Feast tells the story of the revelation on Mt Sinai in Exodus 19,20, and the liturgy of the day remembers the event. At Sinai Israel found structure and direction for the redeemed life . . . At Sinai God revealed His ways and showed how all behaviour and all relationships were included in the

structure of redemption . . . The first two sentences [regarded by Jews as the first commandment] in the Sinai revelation set the two realities side by side: ‘I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before me’ (Exodus 20:2,3).

“The Hebrews would no more have considered the covenant Ten Commandments as a burden in living a life of faith than a person would call nouns, verbs and prepositions a burden in carrying on a conversation.”⁵

Adventist scholar Jon Dybdahl noted: “Three times in [Exodus] 23:14–17 Israel is commanded to *celebrate* . . . The second of these feasts is called the feast of harvest, or of Weeks, or Pentecost. It occurred 50 days after the feast of Unleavened Bread in Israel's third religious month . . . It was a festival of great joy celebrating the harvest of grains other than barley. During the feast, wheat from the new harvest was presented to God. In a religious sense, it commemorated the giving of the law on Mt Sinai.”⁶

The Jewish disciples at the time of Pentecost knew what the feast commemorated. Most of them had probably just heard in the synagogue, or read together, the prescribed Torah reading for Shavu'ot that climaxes in the Ten Commandments. As the tongues of fire fell on them they knew their significance. Significantly, the liturgy of Pentecost also included the book of Ruth.⁷ This should have enabled them to appreciate the great harvest from all nations, exemplified by the inclusion of Ruth, the outcast Moabite, who was brought into fellowship with God's people.

Therefore, any true understanding of the blessing of Pentecost must include appreciation of the blessings and importance of God's law, all of God's law, including the

fourth commandment.

The revelation of the character of God through both the sacrifice of Jesus and the Ten Commandments is the true understanding of the Hebrew Pentecost in the Old Testament, of the apostolic Pentecost of the New Testament, and the final Pentecost that will herald the soon return of Jesus Christ.

Pentecost is thus significant not for the strange, unbiblical “sign” of glossolalia, but for bringing people into covenant relationship with God and His Good News of salvation to all people through Jesus Christ.

It becomes truly the “everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on earth . . . , ‘Fear God and give glory to Him . . . and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water’” (Revelation 14:6,7).

Pentecost upholds the law of God, endorses its eternal nature, and rejoices in the freely-offered redemption that comes to all who believe in the amazing sacrifice of Jesus Christ. The only way we can share the end-time message of the three angels' messages is through the power of a baptism of the Holy Spirit, a renewed Pentecost.

1. <bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/christianity/holydays/pentecost.shtml>, December 26, 2017.

2. All Bible quotes are from the NKJV.

3. <thoughtco.com/feast-of-pentecost-700186>. January 3, 2018.

4. <charismamag.com/blogs/the-strange-report/17729-what-pentecost-means-to-both-christians-and-jews>. January 1, 2018.

5. Eugene Peterson, *Five Smooth Stones for Pastoral Work*. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI, 1980, pp78–81.

6. Jon Dybdahl, *The Abundant Life Amplifier: Exodus*. Pacific Press, Boise, Idaho, 1994, p208.

7. <jewfaq.org/holidayc.htm>; Peterson, 78.

DR ELIZABETH OSTRING
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SELF-HELP AND SPIRITUAL PARALYSIS

*Why personalizing
Christianity could threaten
your salvation.*



Scrolling through my carefully curated, psychologically uplifting Instagram feed, I see hundreds of posts promising that my problems will vanish if I embrace love, lose weight, make sacrifices and embrace my flaws. Or was that reject haters, embrace body positivity, never settle and work on personal weaknesses? Yes, and yes.

The problem with self-help is that there's so much of it, and everyone's an "expert". Sometimes used interchangeably with words like *self-love* or *self-care*, self-help describes content that claims to help people achieve a better life with limited external support. Presented in how-to or step-by-step formats, it promises success and wellbeing in a relatively short time period.

While a lot of self-help is feel-good social media chaff, there is also an abundance of good quality, professionally published, peer-reviewed and scientifically validated self-help literature. And as if this cacophony of contradictory information wasn't confusing enough, for Christians, it's even more complicated.

Increasingly, Western preachers and Christian teachers are jumping on the self-help bandwagon. Presenting biblical advice on finances, career, relationships or health, these messages captivate audiences. Christian "self-help" style books like Bruce Wilkinson's *The Prayer of Jabez* has sold more than 20 million copies worldwide,¹ and Rick Warren's *Purpose Driven Life* has sold 50 million—the best-selling Christian hardback of all time.²

As a bit of a self-help fanatic, I've devoured these books and dozens like them. After all, they're Christian books—what could be the harm? Written by well-intending and well-respected Christian authors, they pro-

vide practical steps to facilitate God working in your life. I've benefited from their teachings: learned to pray better, love better, take care of my body, be more self-aware.

Coupled with correct theology, Christian self-help can be transformational. But below its rosy surface often exists warped religious dogma created by poor human rationality. While many Christians—particularly Adventists—pride themselves on the logical and theological foundations of their faith, we're all susceptible to irrational thinking that warps God's character and can create stumbling blocks for ourselves and others.

INDIVIDUALISM VERSUS GOD: THE PROBLEM OF POOR HUMAN RATIONALITY

It's often said that today's society is more individualistic than ever. This is reflected in the abundance and nature of self-help content. Sociologist Rachel Rybaczuk argues that while previous "self-help" movements—like the Enlightenment and even Hitler's national socialism—were socially orientated toward cultural progress, today's permeating individualism is in direct conflict with social cohesion.³

"People's search for self-fulfilment is in conflict with the level of commitment necessary to sustain a social movement," she argues. So what about Christianity? Adventism?

At their core, these are social movements. Jesus and Paul both repeatedly urge us to be united as the body of Christ (John 17:11-23; Romans 15:5-7; 1 Corinthians 1:10; 2 Corinthians 12:9). We are called to proclaim the three angels' messages, to "Go and make disciples" (Matthew 28:19), to be generous to our neighbours (Mark 12:30-31). But some sociologists argue that the self-help

movement—which reinforces comparison, competition and self-reliance—hinders these goals significantly.

But self-help literature is not solely to blame for creating this individualistic mindset. Individualism is a product of sin's deeper effect on the human heart. Self-help merely creates a framework that gives Christian readers permission to ignore the paradox of being an "individualistic Christian": to read the Bible in a self-focused manner; to pursue consumerism and materialism; and to make self-gratification the end goal of religious behaviour.

Wilkinson's *The Prayer of Jabez* extrapolates a book worth of personalised principles for material success from two verses in Scripture.

"Jabez was more honourable than his brothers. His mother had named him Jabez, saying, 'I gave birth to him in pain.' Jabez cried out to the God of Israel, 'Oh, that you would bless me and enlarge my territory! Let your hand be with me and keep me from harm so that I will be free from pain.' And God granted his request" (1 Chronicles 4:9,10).

Writer and pastor David Schrock argues that rather than providing a framework for asking God for material blessings, the biblical story is actually about God comforting Jabez's pain. Schrock says, "Marketed to upwardly-mobile Christians, *The Prayer of Jabez* told this Israelite's story as if he was one of us. But that's the problem: Jabez isn't like us. He doesn't live amid our modern materialism. And his prayer can't be directly applied to us without seeing how it relates to his own situation first and then to Jesus Christ."⁴

This is also often seen in the way Christians interpret verses like Jeremiah 29:11. Although popularly interpreted as a promise that God will prosper each person's individual future, God is actually speaking to "you" in a plural sense; to the nation of Israel in Babylonian captivity. And it's not an instantaneous promise either. Verse 10 specifies that God will redeem His people only after 70 years in exile, a far cry from our expectations of prospering in Christ.

This act of forgetting biblical context demonstrates confirmation bias—the tendency to look for evidence that confirms existing beliefs, and ignore evidence that contradicts existing beliefs.³ If you are led to believe that God wants to bless you materially, then you will naturally look for evidence to support your desires, while ignoring contextual differences and countless other stories of people who aren't materially blessed by God.

Having clung tight to out-of-context Bible promises myself, my knee-jerk reaction is to defend the individual application of Bible texts. After all, the Word of God is living and active (Hebrews 4:12); *all* Scripture is God-breathed and useful for teaching, rebuking and training in righteousness (2 Timothy 3:16, italics added). Even when taken out of context, Bible verses offer value to the individual, right?

When interpreted correctly, yes. However there is a big difference between personalising Bible verses/stories by saying, "Because God did that for this Bible character, He will also do it for me," and asking, "If God did this for this person, what principle can I draw about His character, or

apply to my life?"

Just because God did it for someone else (in a different context or opposite circumstances), does not mean He will do the same for you.

So, when reading and consuming self-help content, it's important to ask, "Am I subconsciously looking for evidence that confirms my existing beliefs?" And in today's day and age of social media algorithms and recommended content, it's never been more important to be aware of how confirmation bias can warp biblical narratives and principles.

BEHAVIOUR VERSUS GOD: A TROUBLING RELATIONSHIP DYNAMIC

The fact that self-help appeals to our biased, selfish tendencies is just scratching the surface. More problematically, Christian self-help can misrepresent God's character by convincing readers that if they "work hard for God", He will provide material, worldly blessings in response. This creates a dangerous relationship dynamic, an expectation: "Work hard for God and He will work hard for you."

"Prosperity gospel!" you may cry, "Burn the books!" And you wouldn't be alone. Many Christians have made similar accusations against countless authors and pastors, who have responded by rejecting the oh-so-hated prosperity gospel and highlighting that their teaching is far more nuanced. I can imagine them saying, *It's not working hard for God . . . It's praying hard, hoping hard, loving hard, wanting hard, and it's God's faithfulness—His loving character expressed—in return.*

And they're right, their teachings are more nuanced, and God does desire to bless us. But you only need to look at suffering on a global scale to be sceptical. Often, these nuances are merely due to people masking the prosperity gospel—consciously or unconsciously—under the guise of self-help or handy step-by-step guides. This has been colloquially labelled the "soft prosperity gospel".

In contrast to the "hard prosperity gospel", which offers miraculous health and wealth to Christians who "do the right thing", soft prosperity more subtly states that God's commandments and guidance will help Christians to prosper through wise choices. I've heard many Adventists make this assertion, comparing obedient churchgoers to backslidden drug-addicts, suggesting that obedience to God's commandments has made all the difference.

While the Commandments may keep you out of some trouble, to extrapolate a behaviour-reward exchange ignores countless stories of people who have obeyed God but had a cyclone tear through their house, or died in persecution. It ignores forces outside of our control and assumes we have control over God's will or blessings for us.

Invisible to the naked eye, this soft prosperity message is thick with pagan undertones. Much like the Caananites who worshipped and made offerings to Baal so that he would send rain,⁴ believing that doing the right thing will bring blessings is only one step removed from salvation by works. But rather than earning salvation through correct behaviour, we earn material blessings instead.

MAMMON VERSUS GOD: COMPLACENCY AND AN IMPOSSIBLE CONTRADICTION

In Matthew 6:24 and Luke 16:13, Jesus states, “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon” (NKJV). “Mammon”, replaced with “money” in other translations, isn’t limited to just financial flourishing. It’s a wider term for wealth, the name of the god of riches and is associated with the greedy pursuit of personal gain—exactly what self-help promotes.

Much Christian self-help literature tries to rationalise this contradiction by suggesting that God will bless you so long as you extend those blessings to others—the “build a longer table, not a higher fence” idea. While it’s good to share blessings with others, this rationalisation is often just a cheap cure for cognitive dissonance.

Cognitive dissonance happens where a person’s conflicting beliefs and behaviours cause them to alter behaviour or belief to reduce or resolve internal conflict.

A person who seeks material wealth (behaviour) while knowing that “mammon” separates us from God (belief) experiences cognitive dissonance. We can “cure” this by telling ourselves that God wants us to have material blessings (let’s call this the “Jabez cure”), that wealth is good if we share it (the “longer table” cure), or by believing—contrary to Jesus’ teaching—that we can serve both God and mammon. I am personally guilty of having believed all three.

A tell-tale sign of being lulled into cognitively-dissonant thinking is to play the blame game and attribute fault to anything but ourselves for our internal conflict and spiritual complacency: busyness, distractions, technology, the Bible being boring, unanswered prayers. But these aren’t to blame; they are merely symptoms of our own lack of desire for God, stemming from self-sufficient lifestyles.

I’m not suggesting that the pursuit of success, money, better health or relationships cannot be part of a healthy Christian worldview. However, trouble comes when we prioritise these things over the gospel message. Our natural, sinful tendency is to reduce God to a genie-in-a-bottle who can give us our best life now. Too distracted by our craving for stuff, we stop seeking God first. Without even realising it, Christianity becomes a mere tool for success and material blessings this side of heaven.

STORING UP TREASURES: WALKING THE LINE BETWEEN HEAVEN AND EARTH

Perhaps this article has made you feel compelled to stop accumulating worldly possessions, to become a minimalist, to donate money to charity, to make space to focus on your relationship with God. While these are good things, I must make one critical qualification: if you start doing them to secure your own salvation, you’ve missed the point.

When we are reminded of our spiritual emptiness, self-sufficiency and love for money, it’s very easy to react out of fear. We may start “behaving”—reading our Bible and

praying more—to try to rebuild a relationship with God. We become afraid of “losing our spot in heaven”, remembering Jesus’ comment about camels going through needles (Mark 10:25) and strive to tie down our salvation. But, ironically, this behaviour can be just as dangerous as seeking prosperity. Salvation can also be the prosperity that we seek.

By simply replacing the goal of material wealth with the goal of salvation, we remain trapped in the never-ending quest of trying to be good enough. We think salvation, like self-help, is a grueling staircase that we must climb. But salvation is an escalator. We don’t have to worry about getting there; Christ has freed us from the huffing and puffing.

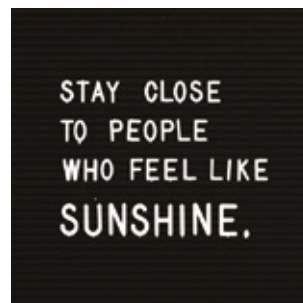
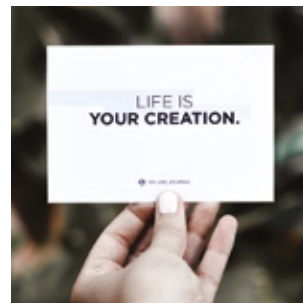
In our self-help centred society, it’s easy to forget that salvation is not a reward to be earned; not a self-help goal we must reach. Rather, it is a gift, an inheritance we receive thanks to our identity as sons and daughters of God, not our works (Ephesians 2:8,9). This should free us to share that message with others.

Rather than hoarding the gospel message for ourselves and “behaving” to earn eternal life, Christ has freed us to reach out and bring the kingdom of heaven to others. Check yourself: are you doing “good works” to earn salvation, or to bring others into the eternal kingdom?

Remember, we can’t take our treasures with us. Life is short and fragile (Psalm 103:15,16), so rather than worrying about food and clothing and accumulating worldly treasures (Matthew 6:25), let us “throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith” (Hebrews 12:1,2).

1. Rightnow Media, “Bruce Wilkinson” (2020), <rightnowmedia.org/Content/Speaker/1145/1>.
2. Simon & Schuster, “Rick Warren” (2020), <simonandschuster.com/authors/Rick-Warren/39904606>.
3. Rachel Rybaczuk, “The Search for Self-Fulfilment: How Individualism Undermines Community Organizing”, University of Massachusetts Amherst, Master’s thesis 1911 (February, 2014), 278.
4. David Schrock, “Jabez and the Soft Prosperity Gospel”, The Gospel Coalition (2015), <thegospelcoalition.org/article/jabez-and-the-soft-prosperity-gospel1/>.

MARYELLEN FAIRFAX
ASSISTANT EDITOR, ADVENTIST RECORD.





FOODS THAT HELP EASE PMS NATURALLY

From feeling exhausted to being downright cranky, the symptoms of premenstrual syndrome (PMS) are long and varied. Yet the exact cause of PMS is unknown. Fluctuating hormones is the most likely culprit. The good news is that the foods you eat can help to reduce the symptoms. Here is a list of key nutrients that may help to alleviate PMS, and some foods that contain them.

CALCIUM

Calcium is a key nutrient to help manage PMS and also menopause. Research shows low-dose calcium supplements can help with mood disorders associated with PMS, including anxiety, depression, mood swings, as well as water retention. Calcium may also have anti-inflammatory properties, which can help relieve headaches, cramps and bloating. Bump up calcium levels with nuts, tofu, chickpeas, leafy greens, yoghurt, milk and calcium-fortified soy, almond and oat milks.

OMEGA-3

There is emerging evidence to say that omega-3 may help alleviate a wide range of PMS symptoms, both mood related and physical. There are plenty of plant-based sources of this important fatty acid, including seaweed, hemp, chia and flax seeds/oils, walnuts, green leafy veggies, soybean oil and edamame.

MAGNESIUM

There is also some research which shows that magnesium may help with PMS symptoms. Magnesium levels in your body fluctuate during your monthly cycle—as your body makes more oestrogen or progesterone in the lead up to ovulation, magnesium levels can dip, which can trigger cramps, depression, headaches and migraines. Increase magnesium levels by adding beans, pumpkin seeds, bananas, wholegrains and green leafy vegetables to your diet.

VITAMIN B6

Vitamin B6 is known to help regulate hormone activity, and getting enough vitamin B6 in your diet may also help with PMS symptoms. Foods that contain vitamin B6 include bananas, spinach, peas, sweet potatoes, avocados and breakfast cereals.

TIPS TO HELP BALANCE HORMONES



KEEP BALANCED

Reducing stress, staying active and looking after yourself by getting enough rest, will all help ease symptoms of PMS.



FOODS TO AVOID

Try cutting back on fried foods, sugary drinks, and highly-refined carbohydrates that can exacerbate inflammation. If poor sleep and menstrual cramps are causing problems, it might be a good idea to cut back on the caffeine and salty foods.



UP VITAMINS AND MINERALS

Vitamins and minerals from your food help to support the glands that produce hormones. To get plenty of vitamins and minerals, focus on eating lots of nutrient-rich plant foods. A low-fat vegetarian diet has even been shown to reduce the duration and severity of menstrual cramps and pains.



Recipe of the Week

Rainbow fruit salad bowl

Start your day with an explosion of colour and flavour with this rainbow fruit salad bowl. Pair it with cottage cheese and Weet-Bix for a nourishing breakfast full of protein, fibre and vitamins.

Find this recipe and hundreds more at:

Australia: sanitarium.com.au/recipes
New Zealand: sanitarium.co.nz/recipes



the kindly missionary who loved his people

Arthur Jacobson was born in Napier, New Zealand, on July 30, 1908. When Arthur was just three years of age, his mother died, and his aunt, Esther Anderson, who was the deputy matron at the Sanitarium (now Sydney Adventist Hospital) in Sydney, Australia, resigned her position and returned to New Zealand to care for him and his older brother, Howard.

After attending New Zealand Missionary College (1924–1926, now Longburn Adventist College), Arthur completed his education at the Australasian Missionary College (now Avondale University College) and graduated from the ministerial course there in 1929.

From January 1930, Arthur was busy in evangelistic work in North Queensland and between 1930 and 1934 he pastored in Mackay, Townsville, Cairns, Charters Towers and the Atherton Tablelands.

While a student at Avondale, Arthur met Norma Isabelle Woodgate who was born in Brisbane on January 16, 1912. After her graduation as a teacher from Avondale, she taught music at the West Australian Missionary School near Perth (now Carmel Adventist College). Arthur and Norma married during Arthur's years in North Queensland and their first child, Brian Arthur Jacobson, was born in Townsville in 1934.

The young couple soon entered mission service—and here the official records in the South Pacific Division archives and the Adventist Heritage Centre differ somewhat—but it would seem that the Jacobsons served in Fiji from 1935 to 1938 and then moved to the Cook Islands where Arthur was the president of the mission there from 1938 for about four years.

While serving in the Cook Islands, the Jacobsons experienced some difficulties in their marriage, but Norma's intention to continue to live on Rarotonga—in separate accommodation from her husband—was not acceptable to denominational leaders and the family was returned home to Australia, settling in Adelaide, South Australia.

Arthur was ordained to the gospel ministry on March 22, 1942, either in New Zealand on his way to Adelaide or after he arrived there. The accounts agree on the date but differ as to the location. The Jacobson family remember Arthur as a kind, compassionate and gentle

man and it is suggested his ordination immediately after the family left behind the difficulties of the Cook Islands experience was an endorsement of his contribution there.

With Arthur and Norma reconciled, the Jacobson's daughter, Betty Joy, was born in Adelaide in 1942 and Arthur pastored there for a few months. His personal service record has Arthur in ministry in North Queensland during 1943 and then, with his family, he was back in mission service in Fiji from 1944–1948.

Eventually his marriage to Norma ended, and from 1949 Arthur was engaged in evangelistic work in New Zealand. On September 25, 1952, in Auckland, Arthur married Lois Joan Stevenson. In time, three sons were born to this union, Martin, Brett and Craig. Before long the new family unit was in mission service, this time in Tonga—initially at what is now Beulah College from 1956 and then as president of the Tonga Mission for several years (about eight years altogether in Tonga).

On his return from mission service, Arthur pastored in New Zealand, initially in Auckland, and his last pastorate prior to his retirement was the Hamilton church where he led out in the establishment of the new church school in that community.

After retirement on July 28, 1973, with Arthur completing 44 years of denominational service, including 19 years as a missionary in the South Pacific, the Jacobsons built a family home in Cooranbong, New South Wales, near Avondale. In their later years, Arthur and Lois moved to a family property in Widgee, Queensland.

Pastor Arthur Jacobson died on October 10, 1992 at the age of 84 years after a lifetime of committed service. Survived by his wife, Lois, and his five children, Arthur was buried on the family property at Widgee. As Pastor Cyril Pascoe noted at the time, "the Jacobson family, the Gympie church, and friends and neighbours will sorely miss the kindly missionary who loved his people. He loved his God and His Word and sought by godly living to draw all to his Saviour."



DR LESTER DEVINE

DIRECTOR EMERITUS OF THE ELLEN G WHITE/ADVENTIST RESEARCH CENTRE AT AVONDALE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE.

ENHANCED WORSHIP

I refer to the article, "The lesser controversy: drums in church" (September 19). As a professional musician, I had the privilege for 20 years playing with a fine group of musicians—eight of us in all and sometimes nine when Aleta King joined us on violin—playing every week for church services at Springwood church, Queensland. And yes, we had drums! Parishioners would often tell us how our music enhanced their worship experience.

On the negative side, I've been told I shouldn't play saxophone in church. What about recorded music in church and at home? Maybe we should put a ban on drums, saxophone, clever jazz-sounding arrangements, vocalists backing CDs, etc.

Billo Smith, *Qld*



NOT THE SAME

The author of "The lesser controversy: Drums in church" (September 19) says, "If drums are biblical . . ." when all the texts he quotes refer mainly to cymbals, with some mention of tambourines and timbrels.

No mention is made of main items of modern drum kits such as the bass drum (the biggest item), the floor tom (the next biggest) and the tom-tom. Nothing the Bible mentions comes close to the size of what has been left out. It is these items that are commonly the items used for sounds and beats not wanted by many in church worship.

On this basis I think that claiming drums are biblical is misleading. I think the editor should have caught this.

By the way, I have found drums such as used in Maranatha Singers music in the 1970s albums not domineering and pleasant. It is the domineering loud beat, such as those items left out, that is the source of unwanted influences, such as in what we get in voodoo beats. A lot of secular music

I enjoy employs drums in harmony with the other instruments.

Dene Staples, *WA*

DISCORDANT JANGLING?

I am puzzled over the claim that modern people would find ancient Israelite music as dissonant jangling in "The lesser controversy" (September 19).

David is recorded as soothing Saul with his music, and I have trouble with comprehending how the music as described could do this. The Depression Anxiety Recovery Program (DARP) from Dr Neil Nedley seems to support this. I have heard other music professions claim that other cultures appear to have far more complicated music compared with European conventions. So Israelite music may not have been that primitive after all.

Perhaps we should be more careful in making assumptions about ancient Israelite music before being asked to relate our current practices to those assumptions.

That is why we need the Holy Spirit to help guide us

to determine reliable information.

Ryan Young, *via email*

TWIST AND TURN

Great article "The lesser controversy: Drums in church" (September 19). Perfectly clear. As you correctly identify, the Thus saith the Lord is easy to see: drums are essentially biblical.

As you rightly note, those opposed to drums are not driven by Scripture. They twist and turn to ignore what Scripture makes plain.

They are driven by wholly non-scriptural reasons, such as a bad personal experience or tradition or whatever.

It illustrates to me how easy it is for humans to ignore the Bible when it suits them.

Stephen Ferguson, *WA*

TRUTH WITHOUT LOVE?

I like much of the article "Be like Jesus. Be less nice" (August 15), but I'm not a fan of the title. I would have preferred something like, "Be like Jesus. Be respectful of others, including yourself." I have met too many Christians over the years

that have used truth as a weapon to hurt others and alleviate their own sense of worth. "Truth" that is not expressed lovingly should be kept to oneself. Giving feedback to another that is hurtful and not well-received will damage relationships. The only exception is when other vulnerable persons need protection. Dealing effectively with relationship differences comes down to the golden rule, "love your neighbour as yourself." It is all about respecting the other and respecting yourself. When we express ourselves honestly and respectfully to the other there is a fair chance we will achieve a good outcome.

Rob Steed, *Vic*

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.

HI KIDS!

Loving service is done well, even without a reward.



RUNNING AWAY AGAIN

God tells Jacob to leave Laban and return to his homeland. Jacob leaves without telling Laban. When he catches up to Jacob, Laban is angry. They quarrel about the terms of their separation. Laban insists that all that Jacob owns really belongs to him. Jacob reminds Laban of his faithful service in harsh conditions and unfair wages.

MEMORY VERSE
 "Whatever you do,
 work at it with all
 your heart"
 Colossians 3:23

	3		
2		3	4
1		4	
	4		2

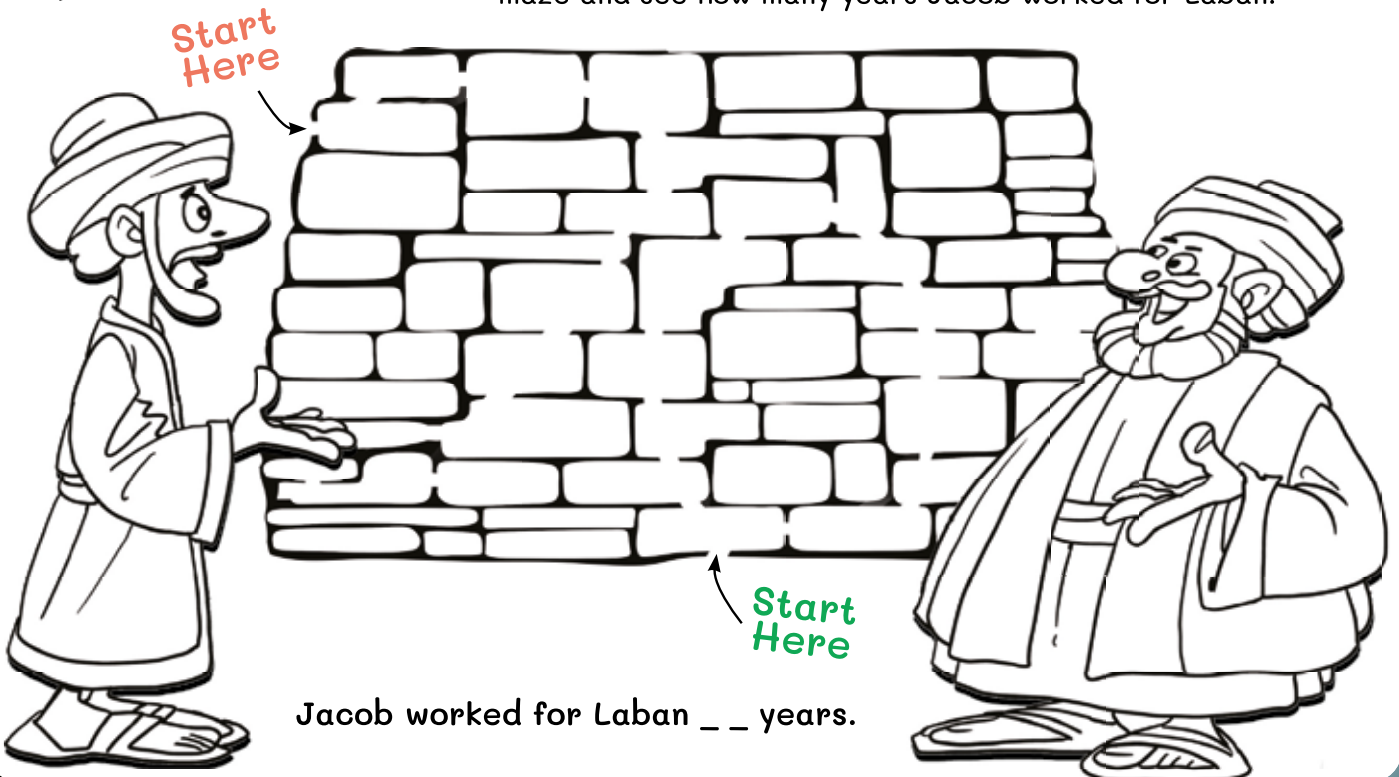
3	4	1	2
	1		
4			1
1			3

SUDOKU FUN FOR KIDS

RULES
Each column, row and block of four squares has to contain all the numbers, 1 to 4. But each number can only appear once in a column, row or box.

2			4
4		3	
3		4	
	4		3

Finally Jacob and Laban agree to part on good terms and together build an altar to testify to their agreement. Follow the maze and see how many years Jacob worked for Laban.



Weddings

RUSSELL-CARMICHAEL. Jile Denham Russell, son of Mark Russell (Warwick, Qld) and Barbara Lee (Brisbane, Qld), and Tammy Lucina Carmichael, daughter of Vincent Carmichael and Magdolna Corban (Camp Mountain), were married on 20.9.20 at Michelton Church. Jile is an army NCO and Tammy works in heavy vehicle administration. They plan to set up their home in Brisbane.

Neil Marks

Obituaries



HEATH, Michael John, born 9.8.1967 at Maitland, NSW; died 1.9.20 in the Toronto Private

Hospital. Michael is survived by his partner, Jodi, (Maitland); daughter, Jessica Zimmerman; grandson, Tyler, (Toowoomba, Qld); mother, Carol; and father, Terry and Helen (Maitland, NSW). Michael, despite battling cancer for nine years, ever remained unrelentingly optimistic and courageous. He was artistically gifted and for several years worked for the Signs Publishing Company (Vic) and the Adventist Media Centre (NSW) in creative art and design. Michael was also the public relations officer for Mountain View and Macquarie Adventist Colleges. He trained as a qualified electrician in his father's business. He was fully committed to his local church and served as its Pathfinder director for many years. Michael was a kind, generous Christian who was greatly loved and valued. We look forward to the day of the great reunion.

Roger Nixon, Neil Thompson, Rick Ferret

VALDEREMAO, Anthony Claud (Tony), born 7.11.1927 in India; died 17.4.20 at Taillem Bend Nursing Home, SA. On 31.1.1982 he married Gudrun. He is survived by his children, Louise and Tina (England), Carolyn (Adelaide), Anita and Rachel (Sydney) and Neil (Adelaide). Tony was the first in his family to hear and accept the Advent message and he went about sharing his new found faith with his parents and siblings. Tony was an active member of the Wistow church until age prevented him coming. He will always be remembered for his engaging and ever so welcoming smile.

Ray Carlsen



WOODS, Timothy Lionel, born 5.2.1969 in Brisbane, Qld; died 15.9.20 in Cleveland.

Tim is survived by his son, Daniel (Murarrie); daughter, Sarah (Cleveland); mother, Denise (Victoria Point); and siblings, Geoffrey, Peter, David, Paul, Karen, Andrew and their families (all of Qld). Tim worshipped at the Mt Gravatt, Park Ridge and Carbrook churches. He worked most of his life selling and fitting security screens in the Bay area of Brisbane. Those who knew him will always remember the smile on his face, the love in his heart and his big affectionate hugs. Tim will be sadly missed by his family and friends, and especially his identical twin brother, Andrew.

Neil Marks

ADVERTISING

CONSTITUENCY MEETING NEW ZEALAND PACIFIC UNION CONFERENCE

Notice is hereby given that the Sixth Constituency Meeting of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, New Zealand Pacific Union Conference, will be held in the Crowne Plaza Hotel, 128 Albert Street, Auckland, from February 12-14, 2021. Appointed delegates will vote on who the Officers and Executive Committee of the Union will be for the next quinquennium and consider proposed changes to the Union constitution. Various administration, ministry and financial reports will be presented and considered by delegates. Graeme Drinkall FCPA, Secretary Treasurer, New Zealand Pacific Union Conference.

ABSOLUTE CARE FUNERALS

The Adventist family owned and operated business, caring for you from Sydney to Newcastle and Wollongong. Contact Arne Neirinckx, who understands our Adventist philosophy. Contact us on 1300 982 803 or 0408 458 452 or <arne@absolute-carefunerals.com.au> even if you have already paid for your funeral.

SHARE SIGNS FOR CHRISTMAS—GET YOUR ORDER IN NOW!

Large public events will likely not be possible this Christmas, due to COVID-19, so what creative alternatives will you and your church come up with? Could Signs magazine add value to the connections you're making in your community? Get your one-off bulk Signs order in before October 22 to avoid a

great disappointment! Email Kelli Geelan <info@signsofthetimes.org.au> or freecall 1800 035 542 (Aus), 0800 770 565 (NZ), +612 5965 6316 (other countries).

NEXT ISSUE: ADVENTIST RECORD, OCTOBER 31

POSITIONS VACANT

GRAPHIC DESIGNER (MATERNITY LEAVE COVER) ADVENTIST MEDIA, WAHROONGA, NSW

Adventist Media is looking for a full-time graphic designer to join the editorial team to fill a maternity relief role for 12 months, with the ability to start in January 2021. In this role you will be preparing designs for both print and digital production, with the main focus on the design and layout of magazines produced by Adventist Media. The successful applicant will have tertiary qualifications in graphic design or a related discipline, previous experience in a similar role, an advanced level of skill and knowledge of Adobe Creative Suite especially InDesign, Photoshop and Illustrator, high level organisational skills, including the ability to prioritise tasks in order to meet strict deadlines, a high standard of attention to detail, excellent communication and interpersonal skills with the ability to work with people at all levels. For more information on the position visit <employment.adventistchurch.com>. To apply, please send your resume and portfolio to Tracey Bridcutt <traceybridcutt@adventistmedia.org.au>. **Applications close October 31, 2020.**

DIRECTOR OF TECHNOLOGY OPERATIONS AND STRATEGY ADVENTIST TECHNOLOGY, SOUTH PACIFIC DIVISION, WAHROONGA, NSW

The Seventh-day Adventist Church (SPD) Limited is seeking a highly talented technology leader to transform the Church's digital, information governance, information and communication technology (ICT) strategies and capabilities, in order to achieve the Church's mission and improve its operational effectiveness. This will be achieved by partnering with key Church leadership, technology customers and the resources of Adventist Technology. As director of technology operations and strategy, you will be adept at strategic planning and implementation within technology and business, possess leadership and interpersonal skills and be a change agent assisting the Church with digital transformation. This full-time senior management role will report to the CFO and be based at the Division head office in Wahroonga, NSW. For full selection criteria please go to <employment.adventistchurch.com>. To apply, please email a cover letter, your CV, three work-related referees and the contact details of your Adventist church pastor, to <hr@adventist.org.au> (Attn: HR Manager, People Services, South Pacific Division). The appointing body reserves the right to fill this position at its discretion and close applications early. **Applications close October 31, 2020.**

FOR MORE AVAILABLE POSITIONS VISIT: ADVENTISTEMPLOYMENT.ORG.AU



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WE NEED YOUR HELP

Two areas of mission are in crisis right now:

1. **Your** Local Church, and
2. **World** Mission Budget

We invite you to schedule regular offerings on the eGiving website or eGiving app to your Local Church (Local Mission) and to Sabbath School Offerings (World Mission).

THANK YOU

Your participation changes everything!

