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United or Divided

How a United Church
pastor became an
Adventist¹⁶

Church membership hits 600,000⁵

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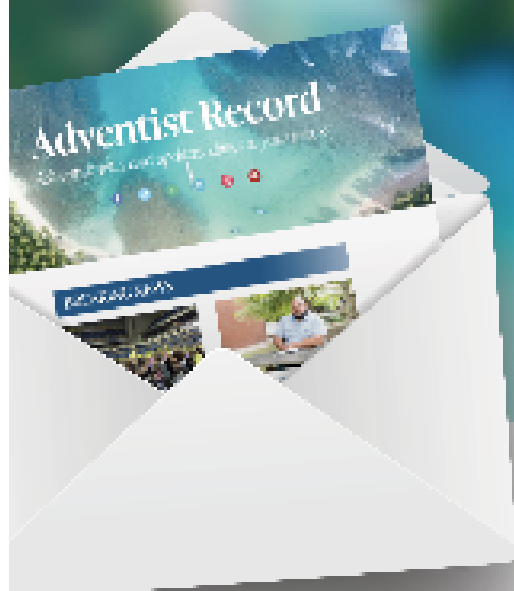


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EDITOR'S NOTE:

Signs month: Mission is in our DNA

Jarrod Stackelroth
Editor

“

In a world that is hurting and hungry for hope, we want to see people sharing the good news of Jesus as well.

I must have been about eight years old. We were collecting canned food for the needy in the neighbourhood around our church. I was paired up with an older lady, one of my Sabbath school teachers.

We had a modest haul of imperishable goods when we came to a certain house. It was unremarkable for that part of Adelaide: low wire fence and gate, path up to the front porch, brick and painted gables. We knocked and waited.

The door opened and before we had got through our pitch, I was engulfed in a barking maelstrom of fur and teeth, saliva flying. My adult shielded me as we sprinted for the gate, while the dog's adult tried to get it under control. It had death in its eyes.

I can't remember if I cried or if the fear paralysed my tear glands. Already anxious about knocking on the doors of strangers, this little encounter left me petrified. I broke down again when reunited with my parents and the story blubbered out.

Any hesitancy we have toward sharing the gospel these days is probably not so dramatic as being eaten alive by a giant dog (I was eight, it felt like it was giant OK). Yet maybe we fear being ridiculed, rejected or just don't know what to say. With some negativity toward Christians online and in the media, sometimes it feels like our vitally important good news won't be well received.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church was founded by people who were on fire for sharing the good news about Jesus and His soon return. You could say that mission is in our DNA and that it has been since the beginning. It gives us purpose.

And since the Church first came to Australia *Signs of the Times* magazine has been an integral part of that outreach. Celebrating 135 years in 2021, *Signs* has always been the Church's flagship evangelistic publication. We're working really hard to make the content engaging and the language accessible to the broader community, while still communicating a Christian worldview and the values of the Adventist church.

Research conducted by our marketing team at Adventist Media uncovered some perhaps unsurprising results—two-thirds of Adventists want to do something to share the good news about Jesus but one of the main things holding them back is that they don't want to offend others.

In a world that is hurting and hungry for hope, we want to see people sharing the good news of Jesus—in fact, it's the whole purpose of our ministry here at *Signs*. Sharing literature is a non-confronting way to easily share the hope that you have. The magazine might sit in a waiting room, or in a home, and people have a choice to read it. If you read a good article about health or relationships in *Signs*, you can recommend it to your friend and they may read more of the magazine later.

But at the end of the day, if approaching other people with a piece of literature has you a bit tentative, there are a whole stack of ministries already using *Signs* that need your support.

Just before the recent round of lockdowns, I travelled to ADRA Logan and saw some of the amazing work that their volunteers are doing in the local community. I saw their *Signs* magazines in the reception area and they told me how much they value the magazine being available for those they serve. In fact, in June alone we had \$A30,000 worth of *Signs* subscriptions for ministries like these needing support, in the form of donations, to continue.

Signs is just the tool to help you share your faith that is simply and easily. You can give a copy to a friend, sponsor a rack in your area or at your local Adventist school, or you could make a donation to where it is needed most to keep a community project stocked with *Signs* magazines.

August is *Signs* month. This month we'll share a bit about *Signs* and we hope you'll consider partnering with us to spread Jesus' message, to live as people of faith, hope and love, and to remind the world that in the midst of current events, He wants something better for them and is coming back soon. Visit [signsofthetimes/august](https://signsofthetimes.com/august) for more information.



EDITOR'S NOTE:

Leaders bleed

Rodney Brady
Chief Financial Officer, South Pacific
Division

After 21 years, I am finishing as the South Pacific Division CFO. It's been a privilege to serve and I am encouraged as I look at the way the Church has been blessed.

During my tenure, I have worked alongside skilled and committed Church leaders in many countries. They take on heavy responsibilities and work long hours beyond most people's standard working week, motivated by mission, not money.

The committee system allows decisions to be reached, respectfully resolving different perspectives and competing priorities under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Leaders become the public face of committee decisions and the target of those that want to criticise. Criticising church leaders is something that has existed from Bible times until today. Criticism is not accountability.

In society, the impact of public criticism fuelled by social media is affecting the mental health of celebrities, politicians and sportsman. In extreme cases it has led to suicide. To survive and be successful, some are saying that they quit social media and stop listening.

I have observed during my term as CFO an increase in the ferocity of criticism towards Church leaders by small groups of members. It has shifted from a few people grumbling together to orchestrated national or global social media campaigns. Those members are being influenced negatively by a society that criticises public figures without restraint and expose themselves to potential defamation lawsuits. From the security of their keyboard, some members are desensitised to the pain inflicted as the leader grapples with what "turn the other cheek" means. Members forget that leaders have feelings and families that love them. Inappropriate public criticism hurts and discourages a leader, their spouse, parents and children.

My concern for the future of our Church is not about a lack of resources—God will provide. I am concerned at the way some members are damaging leaders and taking away their courage to lead, which hurts the Church. My prayer for the future is that we value and encourage our leaders. As time draws to an end, we need to pull together and at the second coming be united as one singing praises to God.

"By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another" (John 13:35, NIV).







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Baptism at Navosa Highlands, Western Fiji.

Church membership hits 600,000

📍 Wairoonga, NSW | Tracey Bridcutt

Membership of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the South Pacific has now exceeded 600,000, largely driven by a significant jump in the number of members in the Papua New Guinea Union Mission (PNGUM).

According to the South Pacific Division (SPD) Statistics Report presented to the Division Executive Committee, membership in 2020 was 609,868, compared to 567,139 in 2019. Significantly, the Church's growth rate was 7.85 per cent, the highest it has been in the past 10 years.

In 2020 the overall number of baptisms/professions of faith was 57,947, of which 48,622 were in PNGUM. Membership losses totalled 15,596. A calculation of gains to losses reveals that for every 3.7 people who joined the Church, one left.

According to the report, there's a significant difference in the number of Adventists in the populations of the union missions compared to the union conferences. In the Trans Pacific Union Mission (TPUM) there is one church member per 18 citizens, in PNGUM one per 19 citizens, whereas in the New Zealand Pacific Union Conference (NZPUC) it's 1:261 and in the Australian Union Conference (AUC) 1:407.

There is also a noticeable disparity in the number of members per pastor: 496 members per pastor in PNGUM,

414 in TPUM, 236 in NZPUC and 166 in the AUC. Tithe per capita was: \$A1423 AUC, \$988 NZPUC, \$108 TPUM and \$58 PNGUM.

In 2020 there were 14,075 denominational employees across the Division, including 3937 teachers and 1584 pastoral/ministerial employees.

"It's really exciting to see the growth in membership in 2020, particularly in such a challenging year impacted by the pandemic," SPD president Pastor Glenn Townend said.

"What we do know is that the disciple-making methods of Discovery Bible Reading and World Changer Bibles being used in Papua New Guinea and the Trans Pacific are really working, and that's great to see. During the pandemic last year they were able to meet in small groups to read the Bible and listen to each other and what God was saying—the increased involvement and relationship connection led to this growth.

"In Australia and New Zealand it continues to be a challenge to reach people—however the reach by electronic media of streamed worship services and the impact of Hope Channel in NZ and Faith FM in Australia grew significantly. These countries are very secular and most people are not interested in the Bible but the seed of the gospel has been sown."



Ministry of Education and Training CEO Dr Tangikina Steen cutting the ribbon at the opening ceremony.

School opens sustainable playground in Tonga

📍 Vaini, Tonga | Elisapesi Manson/Juliana Muniz

Aiming to provide a space for fun and exercise with lessons of sustainability, Beulah Adventist School in Vaini, Tonga, has opened its new playground built with recycled waste materials.

Excited teachers, students and parents were present at the opening ceremony on July 15, where Ministry of Education and Training CEO Dr Tangikina Steen cut the ribbon and Tonga Mission (TM) president Pastor Fanueli Mataele dedicated the new playground.

Also present at the event were Ministry of Internal Affairs CEO 'Onetoto 'Anisi, TM Adventist Education director

Fatongia Hopoate and other Adventist representatives.

Valued at \$T70,000—around \$A42,000—the project was entirely funded through donations, with \$T6000 donated in cash and approximately \$T64,000 in materials, building equipment, consultancy and labour.

"We thank everyone who supported this project and hope this playground becomes a model of how locally available materials can promote quality learning that is achievable and sustainable," said Dr Elisapesi Manson, chair of the playground project committee.



One of AAA's staff explaining their new farming technologies. (Credit: Aore My Home Facebook)

Aore Adventist Academy celebrates abundant harvest at community “field day”

📍 Port Lautour, Vanuatu | Maryellen Hacko

Just over 12 months since its campus was almost completely destroyed by Cyclone Harold, Aore Adventist Academy (AAA) in Vanuatu has demonstrated its ability to bounce back, hosting a “field day” that showcased its farming technologies.

Held on July 15, the field day was organised by AAA administration in partnership with Sanma Province’s Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry, Fisheries and Biosecurity (MALFFB), as part of MALFFB’s “Think Big Increase and Multiply Recovery Project”, which is supported by the New Caledonia Government and the European Union.

A total of 35 agriculture students from AAA and nearby Nandiutu School (Moto) celebrated their success by harvesting a one-hectare food basket of

sweet potatoes, weighing 8–12 tonnes.

According to *Loop Pacific*, the field day also showcased resilient root crops, coconut and livestock farming technologies. Improved/elite planting materials were also demonstrated and distributed to attendees.

Deputy director of Vanuatu’s Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, Mark Vurobaravu, said the sweet potato harvest will be distributed to AAA families, local farmers and residents to help them recover from Cyclone Harold, and help strengthen community resilience and preparedness for future disasters.

A hectare of cassava will be harvested in the next 8–10 months.



Pastor Gershom Luke baptising a candidate.

Hundreds baptised at prophecy seminar in PNG

📍 Port Moresby, PNG | Simon Dopi/Juliana Muniz

Hundreds of people were baptised at the end of a prophecy seminar run by the Ted Wilson Memorial Seventh-day Adventist church in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, from June 6 to 19.

Presented by local evangelist and retired pastor Karl Jack, the seminar was themed “God’s Final Call”, urging attendees to give their lives to Christ.

With surrounding communities affected by drug use, the seminar aimed to bring messages of hope and salvation with personal testimonies targeting young adults in the area. The successful initiative was the first big evangelistic meeting run by the church, but it also met a few challenges.

One of the young people who decided to accept Christ faced threats from his father due to his decision.

“This young man was convinced by the nightly messages preached. He decided to get baptised, and his own father threatened to kill him with a knife. However, he escaped and was taken care of by the senior elder of the church,” said associate pastor of Koki

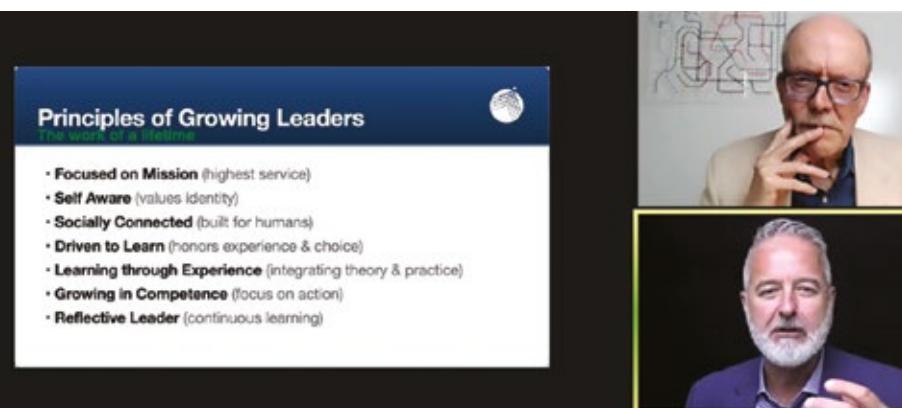
Adventist Church Simon Dopi, who supported the evangelistic initiative.

“There was also fear of the pandemic inflicting the movement of people at the site of the meeting. However, it didn’t stop people from attending the meeting.”

Mr Dopi said the message of hope presented each night brought comfort and optimism during the present uncertainty caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

At the end of the two-week meeting, 200 people were baptised by three guest pastors Frank Lyambian, Aki Pawa, Gaza Asitore and Ted Wilson Memorial senior pastor Gershom Luke.

“We are already planning another big evangelistic meeting mid next year, as well as a project to expand the church building to accommodate the newly baptised and new converts,” said Pastor Luke.



Dr Baumgartner (top) and Dr Siebold lead a discussion.

Online workshop upskills SPD leaders

📍 Wahroonga, NSW | Tracey Bridcutt

Hundreds of leaders from around the South Pacific Division (SPD) and beyond attended an online “Leadership Essentials” program from July 13 to 16.

The leaders included pastors, educators, conference and mission personnel, along with representatives from Adventist Aged Care, Adventist HealthCare, Adventist Media, Pacific Adventist University, Sonoma College and other entities. Nearly 400 leaders each day joined the online program from around the SPD and other divisions.

Leadership Essentials was part of the SPD Administrators Council and ran from July 13–16 with two workshops each day. Facilitators were Dr Erich Baumgartner, director of the Global Leadership Institute (GLI) of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, GLI associate director Dr Randy Siebold, and Duane Vickery, Danny O’Neill and Tyrone Adamson from ETM Perspectives.

Topics included God’s message for leaders—staying connected to the Holy Spirit, strategic leadership, innovation and creative thinking, problem solving frameworks, managing cross-cultural conflict and mentoring the next generation.

“The purpose was to gather as many leaders as possible together at the beginning of the new quinquennium to share our leadership strategic direction and conduct a series of workshops around these key areas of strategic leadership focus,” said SPD leadership and professional development manager Dean Banks.

“From a SPD leadership perspective, there’s a recognition that to achieve our mission we need an enterprise mindset and the skills to influence and execute our strategy rapidly. This is done through modelling the way and enabling those we lead to execute effectively.”

Cook Islands pastor Sarah Aratai found the workshops beneficial: “I needed this leadership workshop. I have moved to outer islands and I have an issue of leadership here not having [a] mission focus, we [are] just doing church.”

Mr Banks said a number of leadership initiatives have been planned, including a pilot monthly leadership roundtable starting in September.

“We’re also partnering in September with the recently formed Global Leadership Institute with an online four-day experiential leadership program designed for up to 100 leaders across the SPD where they apply learning to simulations and real time problem solving,” he said.

making headlines

National Pathfinder Day

A total of 243,237 Pathfinders in Brazil are two steps away from having September 20 instituted as “National Pathfinder Day”. With the bill approved by the Chamber of Deputies on July 15, the request is now waiting for analysis by the Senate and, if approved, the signature of the President of the Republic.—**South American Adventist News Agency (ASN)**



Walking ministry

In Tortola, British Virgin Islands, Maranatha Adventist Church members connect and witness to the community through weekly walks. An evangelistic health-focused initiative, the “Newstart Walkers” ministry was prompted by the strict lockdown in 2020. “We have seen a reconnect with many members who were not in attendance and also gained new friendships,” said the church personal ministries leader Khoy Smith.—**Adventist Review**

Life-saving venom

University of Queensland researchers have learnt that poison from the deadly funnel-web spider contains a molecule that can save the lives of heart attack victims. While years of research is still needed, experts say the signs are very promising—and sorely needed.—**ABC News**

Picking a bone with caffeine

Excess caffeine may be linked to an increased risk of osteoporosis. Investigating the effects of coffee on how the kidneys regulate calcium in the body, University of South Australia (UniSA) researchers found that high doses of caffeine consumed over a six-hour period almost doubled the amount of calcium lost in a person’s urine.—**UniSA**



Connect, grow and multiply

The North New Zealand Conference (NNZC) Executive Committee had a spiritual time to reflect on God's calling during a special retreat at Tui Ridge from July 16 to 18. Studying and discussing Jesus' parable of the vine and branches, the group connected the story to NNZC's vision, mission and values called Connect, Grow, Multiply. "I'm proud of our Executive Committee. The Committee members have many different talents and backgrounds but they have one thing in common: they love Jesus and are committed to seeing the gospel spread across our Conference," said NNZC president Pastor Bob Larsen.—**NNZC Facebook**



Celebrating golden oldies

Mt Druitt Samoan Church (NSW) dedicated Sabbath, May 29 to celebrating their older church members. The congregation wanted to recognise those older members for their contribution, leadership, vision and direction of the church. With COVID-19 challenging several aspects of church, the event was a way to recognise all the efforts the elderly had put in leading Sabbath school and main service programs while being the most vulnerable during the pandemic. The service ended with the whole church church gathering for a special prayer, praising God for the seniors' commitment and for their modelling of God's love to the many generations in the church community. This activity is now an annual event on the Mt Druitt Samoan Church calendar.—**Asofitu Leatuavao**



Standing for Jesus

Betikama Adventist College, Solomon Islands, celebrated a baptism at the conclusion of a Week of Spiritual Emphasis on June 12, where 16 students were baptised. "This brings baptisms to a total of 50 so far this year. We are anticipating two more in semester two as more students are currently enrolled in Bible studies. We praise God for these souls," college principal Partinson Bekala said.—**Conch Shell**



A very long walk

The Kandep District in PNG hosted its first district-wide evangelistic camp meeting from May 31 to June 5. The event was held at the remote village of Yumbis, requiring some district members to walk more than 8 hours to arrive at the campsite. In the nightly meetings, minister Justin Kundalin shared messages themed "Can Man Live without God?" "Hearts were changed, and heaven was glorified when two souls were baptised. And in the Sabbath morning, a huge rainbow circled the meeting area. This was an incredible experience for the district," said Mr Kundalin.—**Record Staff**



Passion for service

After more than a year of planning, a group of 23 young adults from the South New Zealand Conference (SNZC) recently travelled to Waikato, in the north island, to share God's Word, serving in different areas of need.

During the day, the team was split into two groups to serve at the Hamilton and Tauranga Adventist schools, where the volunteers ran a special worship program, service projects and connected with students during playtimes and running activities.

"The impact at both schools was profound as strong connections were made between our team and the students. Both school principals were so grateful for our teams' ministry and contribution to the work in their schools," said SNZ Youth director Pastor Lance Boulton. "Hamilton school principal Shaun Hurlow remarked how powerful it was for his students to see someone older [but] like them, in terms of personality, culture or interests, who cared about them and showed them what it meant to follow Jesus."

After finishing the activities at the schools each day, the team ran an evening revival series called Re:Generations at Hamilton Adventist church. "Our team led out in this program through hosting, drama, music, testimony and sharing. It was incredible to see our young people speaking into the lives of a whole church, helping them to again be refreshed in Jesus," said Pastor Boulton.

—Record Staff

have news to share?

Send info and photos to <news@record.net.au>



Dinner at Parliament House

Two students from Wairoa Adventist School were among 24 who attended the High School Captains Dinner at New South Wales (NSW) Parliament House on June 10. Hosted by State Member for Ku-ring-gai Alister Henskens, the event celebrated and acknowledged the role these young leaders play within their school communities. Before the dinner, Mr Henskens took the students on a tour of Parliament House, with a surprise appearance by NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian. Closing the event, Mr Henskens thanked the young leaders for the time and effort they put into leading their schools, "which are some of the finest in our state", he said. "It was a great night with no shortage of conversation," he added.

—Record Staff



Equipping mothers

Adventist Community Service (ACS) mothers from Kindeng Adventist church in Jiwaka Province (PNG) have learned organic farming skills to improve basic lifestyles and meet daily family needs. The workshop was offered by Ganti Adventist church minister Kelly Aro, who equipped the women with skills to produce natural fertiliser and pesticides. With this practical training, church families can sustain themselves financially through farming and selling garden produce. The attendees, all subsistence farmers and smallholders, thanked Mr Aro for his generosity in sharing his knowledge.

—The Voice of Jiwaka

From liquor bar to juice bar



Wailoaloa Beach is a famous tourist destination in Nadi, Fiji, known for its affordable accommodation, restaurants and especially its liquor bars and night spots.

When COVID-19 struck Fiji in March 2020, many of the small coffee shops, fast food outlets and restaurants along the beach lost business as the tourist industry took a plunge. One such place was the Bamboo Resort.

Sensing an opportunity to take advantage of the availability of affordable, abandoned space and the need to expand the influence of the 10,000 Toes campaign in turning the tide on diabetes, 10,000 Toes ambassadors from three local Adventist churches partnered with the Bamboo Resort to set up the Bitu Wellness Bar (*bitu* being the local name for bamboo), using a space in the resort that was once a coffee and pastry outlet.

The bar—offering a host of wellness and health programs including free biometric screenings, exercise programs, fat loss challenges and person-

alised meal plans—gained popularity in a short time. Locals flocked in for their daily dose of traditional natural herbs and therapeutic, healthy fresh juices.

The idea was to have the bar as a centre of influence that encouraged Fijians to take a more holistic and natural approach to their health in the war against lifestyle diseases—particularly diabetes. It was also to create an awareness among patrons that this bar offered healthier and better alternatives to alcoholic drinks.

In April 2020 a second wave of COVID-19 struck Fiji in a very unexpected and serious manner. Authorities ordered the Bamboo Resort be completely shut down. All activities came to a halt, including the Bitu Wellness Bar. For two weeks the patrons and regular customers were calling daily to find out when and where the new bar location would be. What happened next is extraordinary.

One hundred metres up the road from the Bamboo Resort is the Beach Escape Resort. Managers Anne and

Ruben had been watching daily with interest, curious about the crowds of people driving in and out of the Bamboo Resort, and noticing that more people were visiting the juice bar than the alcohol bar. They also noticed there were less alcohol-induced incidents on the street—the neighbourhood was now much quieter and more peaceful.

Happy with what they had observed, the couple offered their liquor bar to serve healthy juices and their premises to be used as a wellness hub. At first the 10,000 Toes ambassadors turned down the offer because they believed healthy juices should not be sold from the same bar as alcohol. However, the managers had already decided that no more liquor would be sold on the premises.

Alcohol was completely cleared out from the bar, fridges and coolers and replaced with juicing machines, blenders and healthy local fruits, herbs and veggies. Early July was the first Saturday the bar was closed. What was usually a very busy bar day has become “a restful and peaceful day”, says Ruben. Now Ruben’s kitchen offers a special healthy plant-based menu daily.

The Bitu Wellness Bar is up and running again. God works in marvellous ways. The juice bar has not only influenced patrons of the old Bamboo Resort but has also been able to transform the Beach Escape Resort to be part of something that brings hope and healing to the community.

Anne and Ruben cannot wait to be trained as ambassadors for 10,000 Toes and to be part of this great life-saving movement.

“The South Pacific Division Comprehensive Health strategy aims to positively impact the community and has set a goal of 400 wellness hubs across the South Pacific sharing whole-person health by 2025,” says South Pacific Division health strategy consultant Geraldine Przybylko. “We encourage you be part of this vision!”

For further details on how to partner with us contact 10,000 Toes coordinator Pamela Townend on <pam@10000toes.com>.

George Kwong/Record staff

Contextualising the gospel



One of the first things I did after finishing high school was join a mission trip to the state of Tamilnadu in southern India.

On this trip my group and I got to visit orphanages, see the formation of new churches and meet local missionaries who had toiled for years trying to spread the Gospel.

It was an exciting trip, but one thing that set this mission trip apart from others is that we weren't allowed to evangelise or preach to any of the locals. All we could do was watch and observe local missionaries in action. This was because none of us belonged or could relate to the Tamil culture that we interacted with.

India is an incredibly diverse country with 22 official languages and over 2000 ethnic groups; the Indian subcontinent is the most linguistically, culturally and genetically diverse region in the world. My group and I could barely grasp mainstream Indian culture let alone the ethnic Tamil culture that we interacted with.

I had no idea of their context or their livelihoods. I had no understanding about India's caste system that still permeates throughout parts of Indian culture. I couldn't (and still can't) speak Tamil or any of the other Indian dialects and I had minimal understanding of Tamil cultural traditions.

As a result, any attempts at evangelising to these communities would have been fruitless or detrimental to the Gospel work. If I had preached about God's work in my life, I would have sounded like some billionaire talking to a homeless person about how great his private yacht is. I would have sounded arrogant

and out of touch, and instead of bringing people closer to Jesus, I most likely would have turned them away.

On the other hand, with the local missionaries leading the ministry, I witnessed souls falling in love with Jesus and growing in their knowledge and passion for the Gospel. This ministry was effective because it was led by those who understood the context, those of a Tamil background who had belonged to the same social circumstances of the people they were ministering to. By contextualising their message, they were able to reach a mission field that needed to hear about Jesus.

Like the Indian missionaries who I met, Jesus understood the culture of His time and His community. For one, He became a human, to reach humans. Jesus could have refused to take on human form, He could have sent angels instead or He could have continued sending visions through prophets. But just like Tamil Indians would be unable to relate to a young Australian tourist, humans cannot relate to angels, or to an all powerful God. Who would want to listen to a God who seems so distant and out of touch to the struggles of the world?

God knew that to effectively reach the lost world, Jesus had to become human so that He could relate to humans.

Throughout His ministry, Jesus described the Gospel as "living water" to those who were physically dehydrated, as "treasure in heaven" to investors and business people, and like fishing to those who were, you guessed it, fishermen!

Just like Jesus was able to target His

message towards the needs and desires of the people of His time, the modern church needs to do the same. Contemporary Christianity must understand the needs and desires of people living today and present theology that is relevant, without diluting the Gospel.

The health message, prophecy, grace and the Sabbath are all important, and will remain important for all eternity, but what changes is the way these beliefs are presented to the world. Is there a way to simplify prophecy to help die-hard sports fans or comic-book-loving nerds understand it? Is there a way to present the health message that reaches New Age believers? Is there a way to present grace to single parents? Do we know how to present the gospel to a raging, radical socialist AND to a stubborn, troglodyte conservative without compromising Scripture?

If God didn't care about us understanding and empathising with the world, He would have just sent angels in our place. He wouldn't have sent Jesus to commune and dwell among us. The entire Gospel is filled with Jesus finding ways to penetrate the social milieu so that humanity could gain a clearer view of God.

We can try our own methods, try to evangelise and run church our way, or we can try Christ's method—one which requires us to truly empathise with the needs and desires of the culture around us, so that we can present to them their Ultimate need.

Timothy Pinzone

International Security Studies student and youth leader at Epping church (NSW).



The in-print imprint

If you read this article on a screen—according to a growing weight of research—you are less likely to read it closely, remember it, understand it or reflect on it. In short, it is less likely to make an impression on you or make a difference in your life.

If you read it on a piece of paper, whether you print it out yourself or as a page of one of your favourite magazines, you are less likely to be interrupted or distracted, lose focus or click away to something else.

From studies and anecdotes of school students in various parts of the world who are moving away from digital-only learning and choosing printed reading¹ to observing our own experiences of how we consume, scroll and read, reading deeply happens more often, more easily and with more impact on paper. Of course, you can choose to focus on reading closely on a screen—and you can always turn the magazine pages to catch up on the weddings and obituaries—but as people who have important things to learn and something vital to share, we need to be alert to the reality that we “shouldn’t assume all media are the same, even when they contain identical words”.²

Yet it seems that every church committee—from a local church near you to the General Conference—will include someone who is enamored with their newest gadget and the latest technology, who will be urging that we shift our funding and focus to digital platforms and media. There are arguments to be made about reaching as many people as possible as cheaply and efficiently as possible, and the church should be creative and expansive in using a variety of media formats. But Jesus’ parable of the sower points out that where and how the seed of the gospel lands significantly affects how and even if it will be received (see Matthew 13:1–23). It seems that the seed can be easily “snatched away” if it is scattered haphazardly or if it is not understood (see verse 19). The kingdom of God and the message we have to share must always be more about faithfulness than efficiency, more about depth than hype, more about communication than clicks, more about relationships than “follows”, more about conversations than downloads.

A recent survey conducted by Adventist Media showed that two-thirds of respondents are positive about sharing their faith using literature—and many of these were keen to learn how to do this more effectively. This might begin with choosing how and where. In a world awash with digital junk, sharing our hope in printed form can cut through the noise,



demonstrate its value to us and to others, and become part of ongoing conversations and real relationships with friends, neighbours and members of our community.

But it also changes how we—and they—actually read it. We expect that what we read and write can change people’s lives. While God can and does work in people’s hearts, minds and lives in countless ways and even in all media, researchers confirm that the discipline, focus and tactile experience that comes with reading from a printed page means that what we read and share in this format will have a deeper impact. The same message can be heard differently or even not at all, depending on the methods and media we use.

If you read this on a screen, you are more likely to shrug and click to the next thing.

If you read this on a printed page, you are more likely to remember it, reflect on it and even act on it.

How much more when we have something vitally important to share.

1. For example, Jordan Baker, “‘Major distraction’: school dumps iPads, returns to paper textbooks,” *The Sydney Morning Herald*, March 31, 2019, <www.smh.com.au/education/major-distraction-school-dumps-ipads-returns-to-paper-textbooks-20190329-p5191r.html>.

2. Naomi S Baron, “Why we remember more by reading—especially print—than from audio or video,” *The Conversation*, <<https://theconversation.com/why-we-remember-more-by-reading-especially-print-than-from-audio-or-video-159522>>.

Nathan Brown



Bible verses about your *identity*

What does it mean to have our identity in Christ?

The Bible tells us that when we accept Jesus' sacrifice, we are new creatures. We lose our identity of this world and become pure, blameless and forgiven. And with this new identity, we become part of His body, where we are called to be a blessing to others in His name.

Whenever you're going through an identity crisis, Scripture is an amazing reminder that in Him, we are chosen, and nothing can separate us from God's unconditional love.

1 Peter 2:9

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light.

1 Corinthians 1:30

But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption.

1 Peter 3:15

But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defence to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.

1 Samuel 12:22

For the Lord will not forsake His people, for His great name's sake, because it has pleased the Lord to make you His people.

Colossians 3:12

Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering.

Ephesians 1:5

He predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of His will.

Ephesians 2:10

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Galatians 3:28

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

1 John 3:1

Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.

1 Corinthians 12:27

Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.

LIVING KINGDOM



You and me: modern day pharisees?

Luke 18:9-14

The Pharisee and the tax collector

"I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted" (Luke 18:14).

Swedish footballer Zlatan Ibrahimovic is reported to be one of the most unlikeable and unpleasant sports personalities in the world. He once threatened to break his teammate's legs, he's allegedly thrown a training kit box at his coach and he's also headbutted one of his teammates during a training session. There's plenty more where that came from too: the footballer's career has been full of kicking, elbowing, grabbing, slapping, choking; and even more incidents where Ibrahimovic verbally abused teammates, staff, journalists and athletes in other sporting codes.

It's no wonder that sports publications like *L'Équipe* and *The Sportster* list Ibrahimovic as the most arrogant footballer, and indeed professional athlete still in competition.

And yet, Ibrahimovic is adored by fans.

They love his frequent use of third-person when referencing himself. When asked about Sweden's chances of qualifying for the 2014 world cup, he said, "Only God knows who will go through." The reporter responded, "It's hard to ask him". "You're talking to him," Ibrahimovic said.

In amongst his frequent use of self-exaltation and passive-aggression towards others, Ibrahimovic has always silenced his critics on the field. More than 570 career goals (and counting) across stints with 11 clubs in the world's top leagues, Ibrahimovic continues to defy his age while many of

his peers have long retired.

For a man who has shaped his identity around cockiness and arrogance, he's lauded and praised as one of the greatest players of his generation simply because he backs himself and gets results.

What about a person who hasn't achieved anything of significance? What's left when all you have is that person and their attitude?

Enter the temple

It only takes one sentence, and the guy is already unlikeable—there he is, a Pharisee, entering the temple with a tax collector to pray. "God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector," he said (Luke 18:11). The searing heat of the Pharisee's sass comes steaming off the page. "I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get," he adds (verse 12). You can imagine a hypothetical crowd jumping up and giving a sarcastic applause.

The Pharisee's were respected. They were in an elevated position in society due to the knowledge they possessed about Jewish laws and traditions. This respect didn't bring an ounce of humility, as the Bible often describes them as scrutineering and criticising others—with Jesus a frequent target. And Jesus didn't mince His words about Pharisees either: "Woe to you Pharisees, because you give God a tenth of your mint, rue and all other kinds of garden herbs, but you neglect justice and the love of God. You should have practiced the latter without leaving the former undone" (Luke 11:42).

Reading Jesus' rebuke, and indeed The Parable of the Pharisee and Tax Collector, can be quite comfortable when you restrict the scope of what He was saying to that context. But was Jesus' parable just an attempt to call out the Pharisees' hubris? Or is there more to it?

We can laugh and agree; yes, the Pharisees were kind of annoying. Some of us might even come up with a few examples of modern-day Pharisees who we know, including people at work, church or even in our friendship circles. Dial back a little bit and the truth slams home: the parable isn't for pharisees, it's for "some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else" (Luke 18:9). Was Jesus talking about you and me?

In love with self

The term "narcissism" stems from a Greek mythology story about a hunter, Narcissus, who saw his reflection in some water and immediately fell in love. He spent the rest of his days looking into the water until his death in that same spot. The mythological story alleges that following his death a narcissus flower—commonly known as the "ego flower"—grew where he died.

These days, narcissism is used as a psychological term to describe a personality disorder. The term has often been used in conjunction with other extreme psychological disorders, like sociopathy and psychopathy. *Psychology Today*, however, defines narcissism as "a hunger for appreciation or admiration, a desire to be the centre of attention, and an expectation of special treatment reflecting perceived higher status". Pathological narcissism is a diagnosed mental disorder in approximately one per cent of the global population, but that doesn't mean that the rest of us don't carry narcissistic traits.

A 2013 TIME magazine article by Joel Stein is famously entitled "Millennials: the Me Me Me Generation". In his piece, Stein alleges that millennials scored three times higher in narcissism than those aged 65 and older, attributing this to millennials being raised with elevated expectations of how they will be treated as well as the advent of social media where everyone can be a star. Indeed, a Pew Research paper in 2015 found around half of millennials agreed their generation is "self-absorbed", "wasteful" and "greedy". A more recent study—the largest one on narcissism to date—published in *Psychology and Aging*—countered that baby boomers also have "hypersensitive" traits and are just as narcissistic as

millennials.

Whether one blames the way we were all raised, or how social media is manipulating our behaviour, the definition of self-centredness makes it clear there is a void. There is a need for admiration, a need to receive attention. As much as one's attitude can easily be attributed to a view of high self-worth, it becomes clear that it is often due to the complete opposite. The difference comes in how either confronts the reality of their insecurity.

In Jesus' Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector, the latter stood there, having likely heard the Pharisee's sly remark. Rather than reacting or defending himself, he instead calls out to God. "God have mercy on me, a sinner," he said (Luke 18:13). The Bible describes that out of shame he didn't even look up to heaven.

Christ's lesson was very simple—"this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God" (verse 14).

On one hand we have a man with status; one who expects reverence and respect. On the other, we have a man who in his position as a tax collector is hated by many. The tax collector was able to humble himself and surrender to God, and he subsequently received the promise of God's blessing. As Jesus' final point exemplifies, "all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted" (verse 14). The tax collector, however, needs only to read King Solomon's comment, "pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall" (Proverbs 16:18).

There'll come a time when Zlatan Ibrahimovic will retire and his claims that "I do not need a trophy to tell myself that I am the best" will become mere references to the past.

Indeed, there will come a time for all of us when our beauty and achievements will fade away. It's only when we separate ourselves from our privilege and entitlement in the present day that we can truly see God. It's a far more valuable life lived if at the end of it, rather than a special mention of my love for myself, my gravestone lists my love for my God and for my fellow man and woman.



Daniel Kuberek

Soccer fan and associate editor of *Signs of the Times*.





United or Divided?

How a United Church pastor became an Adventist

Having spent more than 25 years teaching, preaching and pastoring in the United Church in Papua New Guinea, Pastor Sabadi Sabadi never imagined that he would become an Adventist.

"I was ordained to the ministry and became a reverend. I was a pastor in Hula District. I was also a pastor back here in my village Gabagaba," he explains.

Graduating with a diploma in theology and bachelor's in divinity studies in 2000, Pastor Sabadi was one of the more educated United Church pastors in his area, often teaching at institutions including the Laws Bible College in Alotau and at David's Kidi School of Theology and Mission in Kwikila.

But when Pastor Sabadi's congregation at Gabagaba decided to break away from the United Church in 2008, he had no idea the trouble that would await him.

"When I went on leave in 2008, the village people asked if I could look after the church just for the festive season. Not knowing what was in their mind, I said it wouldn't hurt and that when my leave was over, I'll go back to my posting. I got hooked up in this row between the United Church and the church in Gabagaba. I was suspended by the United Church for, well they said I was 'looking after the church illegally'."

Pastor Sabadi and the Gabagaba United Church were taken to court, and the case eventually escalated to the National Court of Papua New Guinea. "Eventually I was excommunicated from the United Church," Pastor Sabadi explains.

After many personal attacks and misunderstandings caused relationships to deteriorate, the parties took a step back and acknowledged that mistakes were made.

"The United Church took me back again after they looked at all my problems and could not find any expellable offence that I committed," he said. "To compensate me, they allowed me to teach at the college again. I was teaching basically Old Testament subjects."

A few years after being reinstated to his position at Gabagaba, church politics intensified again and Pastor Sabadi was moved on—but not without a gift from his congregation.

"I got moved out. In fact, I moved out properly," he says. "People wanted to show their kindness to me, so they gave me some money: K10,000. I got this money and did not know what to do with it. I had this desire to do a postgraduate study, but I never had the money to do it. When they gave me K10,000 I said, 'this is it!' So, I went around looking for institutions."

Finding nowhere he could study, Pastor Sabadi began to lose hope, until he spoke to a lawyer friend of his, Bill Nou Wari, who told him about Pacific Adventist University (PAU).

"They took me to PAU and introduced me to Dr David Theile, who was the dean of Theological Studies. When we went to his office, he was in fact writing a letter to the United Church, inviting their members to come and do degrees at PAU. When I walked in, David was very happy. He said, 'Oh, I just wrote a letter inviting United Church members and now you are here, a United Church pastor!' I was really happy that he asked me to give him my transcript, which I did, and he said he could enrol me."

Pastor Sabadi paid the K10,000 and began studying, moving forward in faith that the rest of the money would come. "I did not know where the rest of the money would come [from], but money just came in and I completed my master's degree in 2014."

Leaving PAU with an increased understanding of the Bible, Pastor Sabadi went to resume teaching at his old college, this time deciding to specialise in different subjects. "I changed the way I used to teach, having gained more knowledge," he said. "Subjects like baptism by immersion and Sabbath are subjects I felt I needed to teach. 'I'm a teacher,' I said. 'If I don't teach these, I will be doing injustice to the people.'"

Following his principles, Pastor Sabadi began teaching on these subjects, and in doing so, says that he upset a lot of people. "I eventually got kicked out. They could not take it."

After being moved out of the United Church, Pastor Sabadi got married to Rahela Hera and, in the process of discovering new biblical truths and doctrines together, they decided to join the Adventist Church.

"We both went into the water of baptism on October 12, 2019. Our baptism shocked the United Church and the community because I am one of the few scholars in the United Church in Papua New Guinea. When we made the move, one scientist who is also a United Church deacon, asked, 'What did this pastor see that we are not seeing? What did he see that made him move?'"

When asked about his personal philosophy and vision, Pastor Sabadi responded, "You don't find truth in a Church. You find truth in the Bible. My objective is basically trying to bring back those whom I have misled. Some of the things I overlooked, the Bible showed them to me in a new light. I want to teach something that is real. I want to teach purely the Bible. Nothing but solely Scripture."

Upholding this new personal philosophy, Pastor Sabadi now serves as an elder of the Tagana Seventh-day Adventist Church—a small hand church of Manugoro Adventist Church in the Kwikila District. From May 2 to 8 this year, they ran a one-week "Revelation of Hope" series, where Elder Sabadi shared messages from the Bible.

With a number of people from the United Church in attendance, Elder Sabadi invited attendees to submit their questions regarding any biblical subjects they desired clarification on. "The response was hectic. Questions began pouring in during the week from members of other Christian denominations," wrote McValen Kaminiel from the Central Papua Conference's (CPC) Media and Communications team. "He reserved Sabbath afternoon as a time to unfold all these questions and answer them one by one from the Bible.

"The segment got heated as the members from the other church got defeated by the answers—they started to use coarse languages against the four brave Adventist clerics," he continued. "Elder Sabadi calmed the commotion when employing his experience as the former United Church reverend and sharing his reasons why he left his former church. It was a dramatic afternoon, but all ended well."

Sixteen people were baptised on May 8 thanks to this outreach. Witnessing the baptism was Pastor Andrew Anis, director of CPC Personal Ministries and the Sabbath School department, Manoah Wanaga, director for Lands and Infrastructure, and associate communication director, Ottoa Sepuna. The pastors conducting the baptism were Kwikila District director, Pastor Palie Veroli, Manugoro Church pastor Samuel Asi and Pastor Mairi Gimana.

In addition to the baptisms, more than 20 people—mostly young—have committed to being baptised in the future.

"Let us uphold Elder Sabadi and the small church at Tagana in our prayers as they continue to share the love of Jesus to their surrounding communities," encouraged Mr Kaminiel.

**McValen Kaminiel/
Maryellen Fairfax**



Spanish scrambled tofu

This Spanish-inspired quick and easy egg substitute recipe is an awesome breakfast for vegans or those looking to reduce the intake of eggs in their diet. Turmeric gives it a yolk-yellow colour and the crumbled tofu gives it a similar texture to scrambled egg. It is protein packed and a great fuel for your body.

Ingredients

- 2 tsp olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- ½ red onion, sliced
- ½ red capsicum, sliced
- ½ punnet cherry tomatoes, halved
- ¼ tsp chilli flakes (optional)
- 1 ½ tsp ground turmeric
- 350g firm tofu, chopped
- ¼ cup whole pitted kalamata olives
- 1 cup baby spinach
- 1 tbsp nutritional yeast flakes (optional)
- ½ tsp salt

Method

1. Heat oil in a frypan and sauté garlic, onion and capsicum until soft.
2. Add tomatoes, chilli flakes and turmeric and sauté for 1 minute. Place chopped tofu in a food processor and process until mixture is evenly crumbled.
3. Add tofu, olives and spinach to pan and mix through.
4. Season with yeast flakes and salt. Serve with toasted sourdough.

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Plant foods that pack a *protein punch*

Worried that your vegetarian diet might be lacking in protein? Don't be. There are an abundance of delicious plant foods that deliver a powerful protein punch.



What exactly is protein?

Protein is a macronutrient that consists of amino acids. Our body cleverly makes some amino acids itself but there are nine "essential" amino acids that we need to get from the food we eat.

Why do we need it?

Protein has been long heralded as the post-exercise recovery must-have, but the truth is that proteins play a role in almost every biological process, and their functions vary widely. Eating a diet higher in protein could play an important role in healthy weight management.

How much do we need?

Men up to the age of 70 are recommended to have at least 64g per day, whereas women should aim for at least 46g.

5 sources of plant protein that really pack a punch

1. Soy beans (canned): one cup = 16.3g protein
2. Pistachios: 30g handful = 6g protein
3. Peanut butter: 1 tablespoon (20g) = 5g protein
4. Peas: a cup cooked = 8g
5. Quinoa: ½ cup cooked = 3.8g protein



Conversations

Muddied waters

The article “Present truth and predicting the future” (July 17) implies that end-time prophetic realities may be different from what we have taught for over 100 years. It leaves open the possibility of multiple different entities occupying a prophetically-predicted role, where only one has been taught in Adventist eschatology previously. In doing that, are we not following the methodology of Ribera and Alcasar, who 400 years ago at the Roman Catholic Council of Trent, “muddied the waters” of prophecy with two entirely different interpretations of prophecy?

They did so on the orders of the Jesuit General, to deflect from the historicist interpretation of the Protestant Reformers. Whilst one can agree that minor details may vary according to the times, the institutions and persons unveiled by the Reformers have a glove-like fit with the descriptions of Daniel and John. Backed up by both history and many recent events, what we have taught for most of our history is undeniable. There is only one power seeking to deny it.

David Pennington, NSW

Spirit of possibility?

“Present truth and predicting the future” (July 17) rattles the foundations of long-standing Adventist beliefs regarding the mark of the beast and a coming Sunday law.

“We cannot base our interpretation of (prophecy) on Ellen White’s end-time scenarios.” Furthermore, the article strongly suggests that Adventists and indeed Ellen White got it wrong, and that we need to reinterpret the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation.

These views follow along the lines of views expressed by liberal Adventists such as Reinder Bruinsma and Jon Paulien. These apologists tend to relegate the Sunday Law to something that might have happened in Ellen White’s time, but is highly unlikely to happen in our own time.

If this controversial view were to be adopted by Adventists, then large portions of the *Great Controversy* which deal specifically with the Sunday law and events leading up to it, would have to be abandoned. To suggest that a prophet could get such large amounts of vital information wrong would seem somewhat hard to fathom.

The article begs the question, should Adventists continue to believe in the Spirit of Prophecy, or rather put their faith in the spirit of possibility? If we follow the spirit of possibility then the focus of Satan’s end-time attacks, “may or may not be a day of rest”, and the Sunday Law may or may not be a significant event that occurs in the future.

Jeff Crombie, Email

Record Live comments

Present truth and prophecy: have Adventists got it wrong? (July 14 livestream):

I do believe the main purpose of prophecy is not to decipher the future, but rather to build our faith in God. Otherwise, we could possibly apply prophecy to many things: current political climate, world events, even predicting the finals of the Euros!

Diego Vazquez, Facebook

So it’s the character of Christ in us that draws others to Him and thus His coming—not that we’ve told them about Sunday laws etc. I love the universal application of all things “Babylon”. So relevant to us every day (not just waiting for a Sunday law which is just a narrow focus). Thank you for this practical exhortation for us to oppose anything that takes us away from real worship.

Peter Mushenko, Facebook

Really appreciated this discussion guys! It was very insightful and reassuring, focusing entirely on Jesus!

John Tausere, Facebook

It was a great interview . . . I’m looking forward to reading Emanuel’s article. There can always be a part two with Emanuel!

Geoffrey Panckhurst, Facebook

HI KIDS!

Kids Space

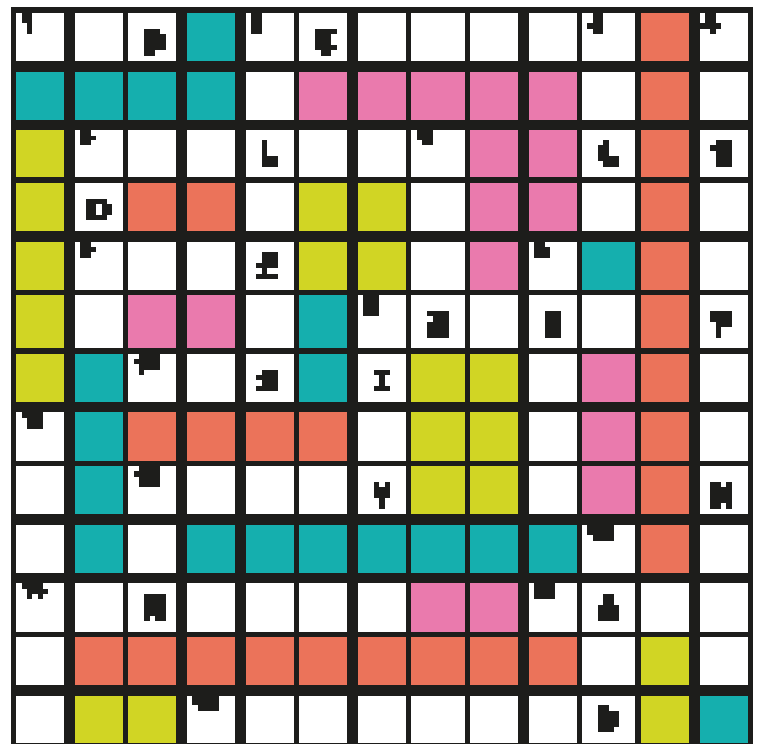
BETTER THAN GOLD!

Peter and John are moved by the Holy Spirit to lead a man, crippled from birth. They tell him to stand and walk. His child-like people don't believe. Peter tells them about Jesus and many miracles. The cripple of the Temple beautiful was a 40-year-old man longer. He hoped to see Jesus so he could be healed. His family-converted friends to bring him to Jerusalem, but when he arrived, he found out that he was too late. Jesus had just gone to church. His friends have later disappointed he was and brought him to the temple every day, hoping that their wife passed by would take pity on him and give him money.

When I help others, I don't have Jesus.



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Anniversary



WAY. Norm and Joan Way (Warburton, Vic) celebrated 65 years of marriage four days after Norm's 90th birthday. Family and friends travelled from a number of states to mark these fantastic milestones. The couple met at Signs Publishing company and were married in Warburton church by manager Pastor Carl Ulrich on 20.5.1956. Building their house together prior to their marriage was a major achievement. Wishing them God's blessing as they downsize to a new unit in the retirement village after almost 70 years in the one place.

Hunter Hospital, Newcastle. On 11.4.1968 he married Robyn. Lynn is survived by his wife; son, Andrew and Teresa; and grandchildren, Nathanael, Joshua and Sophia. Lynn had a contagious zeal for life. His laugh and genuine care for people brought joy to all who knew him. Lynn married his childhood sweetheart and began working in the pathology department at Maitland and later at John Hunter hospitals. Andrew, their son, was the joy of his life. A joy that doubled when Andrew brought Teresa into the family. Lynn adored his grandchildren, as well as his Wallsend church family.
 Justin Torossian, Roger Nixon,
 Wayne Boehm

COOK, Merlene May (nee Robertson), born 13.5.1927; died 29.4.21 in Toowoomba, Qld. Aunty Merl is survived by her daughter, Yvonne Parrett; and grandchildren, Andrew and Danika. She was a deeply loved member of Toowoomba Central church only giving up office at the age of 90. She was well loved by her family and is asleep in Jesus.

Keith Miller, David Yeo

Obituaries



CLARK, Robert Lynn, born 11.4.1947 in Wallsend, NSW; died 23.5.21 in John



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CONSTITUENCY MEETING OF THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN CONFERENCE.

Notice is hereby given that the 78th constituency meeting of the Western Australian Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church will be held at Carmel Adventist College auditorium, 210 Glenisla Road, Carmel, September 11 and 12, 2021. Mission-focused departmental reports will be presented Sabbath afternoon from 2:30pm with the business of the meeting commencing after the closing Sabbath program on September 11, concluding on September 12, 2021. In harmony with the Constitution, the meeting will receive various administration and financial reports, vote on various appointments and consider various matters and changes to the Constitution.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES AND RECORD ON CD

The SPD's Christian Services for the Blind (CSFBHI) produces a monthly audio compendium of articles from recent *Record*, *Adventist World* and *Signs of the Times* issues, along with Sabbath school lessons, for the vision impaired. If you or someone you know could benefit from this service, mail or email CSFBHI including postal address. Email <CSFBHI@adventistmedia.org.au> or write to Christian Services for the Blind, Locked Bag 1115, Wahroonga NSW 2076. For the legally blind in Australia and New Zealand, CSFBHI also has a large audio library of Christian and denominational books available. Legally blind in Australia and New Zealand, CSFBHI also has a large

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Positions vacant

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Wahroonga, NSW

The South Pacific Division (SPD) is seeking an experienced and dedicated individual to join our dynamic Adventist Technology team. Supporting a diverse Adventist group of entities across the South Pacific, this full-time role requires an individual who is highly self-motivated, well organised, with excellent attention to detail and great communication skills.

IT SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATOR

Wahroonga, NSW

The South Pacific Division (SPD) is also seeking a highly skilled and experienced systems administrator to join Adventist Technology. This full-time role will be responsible for supporting IT systems and related infrastructure, be an escalation point for service desk, assisting the engineering teams, and remote support to locations across the South Pacific. For full selection criteria for each role, please visit Adventist Employment at <adventistemployment.org.au>. To apply, email a cover letter addressing the selection criteria, your CV, three work-related referees and the contact details of your Adventist Church pastor to <hr@adventist.org.au>. The appointing body reserves the right to fill these positions at its discretion and close applications early. Only those who have the legal right to work in Australia will be considered. **Applications close August 13, 2021.**

MINISTRY INNOVATIONS AND MARKETING LEADER, SPD

Wahroonga, NSW

Fantastic opportunity to develop and lead a culture of innovative ministry at the South Pacific Division using current trends and research. The ideal candidate will be a thought-leader, innovator and influencer able to bring together a wide group of people, ideas and strategies towards a disciple-making movement across this Division. For full selection criteria please visit <adventistem-employment.org.au>. To apply, please email a cover letter addressing selection criteria, your CV, three work-related referees and the contact details of your Adventist pastor, to <hr@adventist.org.au> (attn: HR Manager, People Services, South Pacific Division).

Applications close August 9, 2021, by 9am (AEST).

MINISTRY RESEARCH AND DATA ANALYSIS COORDINATOR, SPD (PART-TIME)

Wahroonga, NSW

Join the South Pacific Division's newly structured ministry team to seek out and analyse research, and find new and innovative approaches to church ministry. This part-time (20hpw) role will suit someone with experience in data analytics and research, as well as great attention to detail and exceptional communication skills. For full selection criteria please visit <adventistem-employment.org.au>. To apply, please email a cover letter addressing selection criteria, your CV, three work-related referees and the contact details of your Adventist pastor, to <hr@adventist.org.au> (attn: HR Manager, People Services, South Pacific Division).

Applications close August 9, 2021, by 9am (AEST).



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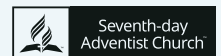
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South Pacific








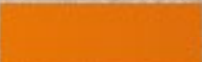
THANK YOU FOR YOUR FAITHFULNESS

The report below reflects God's blessing to His people across the South Pacific Division (SPD) and the faithfulness of members at all levels starting with the local church that faithfully return, administer and govern. We acknowledge the work of volunteer local church treasurers, treasury teams and auditors who ensure the ongoing integrity of God's storehouse system. Thank you.




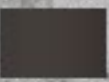


The 2020 *Use of Tithe* reports from every Union, Conference and Mission across the SPD can be averaged to provide us with a report on the use of tithe:

USE OF \$100 TITHE IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC DIVISION 2020

80% of tithe is retained in the Local Conference or Local Mission

	Salaries of front-line pastors, Bible workers and chaplains *		\$52.40
	Direct evangelism		\$5.60
	Adventist Education		\$3.00
	Conference or mission administration and ministry departments, trainings, annual camp / convention		\$19.00

20% is shared nationally, regionally and with the world church (Acts 1:8)

	Local Union: either Australian Union, New Zealand Union, Trans Pacific Union or Papua New Guinea Union (supports local higher education such as Fulton, Sonoma, Omaura, Mamarapha)		\$8.00
	South Pacific Division: Adventist Media, Adventist RECORD, international service staff, support of Pacific territories, evangelism, ministry resources		\$10.00
	General Conference		\$2.00

* % of tithe used directly for salaries of front line pastors and chaplains varies from Conference to Conference and Mission to Mission but this percentage provides an average across the SPD from the real data.



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South Pacific



Australia: www.egiving.org.au
New Zealand: www.egiving.org.nz