

A black and white ferret is the central focus, looking directly at the camera. It is wearing a black leash with a silver metal clasp. The ferret is surrounded by lush green grass and several bright yellow flowers. The background is slightly blurred, emphasizing the ferret.

The Strange Request

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EDITOR'S NOTE:

The main thing

Jarrod Stackelroth
Editor

“

Are you intentionally showing Jesus to anyone or telling them about what God has done in your life?

As we wind up towards the end of any year, there is always lots to be done to finish well. It's a time of busyness as school and work wind up (I was going to say church, but God's people are still the church even when they holiday . . . right?). Churches might be planning special programs for Christmas, and everyone wants to get together and celebrate the year so there are lunches and brunches and dinners and events galore.

It's also a time for strategy and reflection. I'm sure many of you experience the same thing. The calendar ticking over from December 31 to January 1 doesn't change much in the real world, but for many of us, it is a distinct mile marker on the road of life.

One important question that comes up during times of reflection and strategy is "How do we make the main thing, the main thing?" A question I've been wrestling with in a number of areas.

Every one of us has a calling on our lives to be disciplined by Jesus, and those with mature faith to disciple others into a relationship with Jesus. This is not some mystical or abstract process—it's eating, working, doing activities, alongside others and investing in their lives.

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations," Jesus instructed (Matthew 28:19) and it is an imperative. The only negotiation comes around how we do it. But Jesus gave us some guidelines there too. "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but those who are ill" (Luke 5:31) and "A new command I give you: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another" (John 13:34).

In some ways the pandemic has disconnected us. We're going through the forms of attendance or commitment but not actually establishing new relationships. Deep, loving, missional relationships. Perhaps as you're planning what next year looks like for you and your family (and your church), you can include some missional goals and strategies. It doesn't have to be a wholesale change to your regular routines and patterns (unless there are areas that have been neglected), but could just be an adjustment that changes your focus.

Are you using your time, your talents, your connections to disciple anyone? If you don't have a strong community find one, or with some like-minded others start one. Are you intentionally showing Jesus to anyone or telling them about what God has done in your life? Your children? Friends?

On a recent Signs Radio podcast with Rosie Kendall, the CEO of Christians Against Poverty, she talked about where we spend money showing where our values lie and recommended us all to work out where our values lie. It's the same with our time and with our identities. If our money, time and talents are not being used for Jesus' kingdom then are we really valuing our Adventism, our Christianity? And without taking too much away from our local church, are our communities focused more on in-reach or outreach?

In recent Insight columns, our church leaders have talked about refocusing on mission and some modern-day missionary opportunities and collaborations. Other ministries are becoming community hubs. These corporate initiatives are good and important. Our ministries must be effective and grapple with strategies to reach the ever-changing and dynamic world we live in.

These initiatives are fantastic. However, even if we can't do something like that, as individuals we can be intentional and missional right where we are placed. I recently heard of a man who was given a *Signs* magazine by his mechanic and is now in his small Bible study group.

It's a challenging time of year as we all try to finish well. But as you're reflecting and planning, maybe I can challenge you to dream big. This could be that sign you've been asking for to start that missional project, try that new ministry, invite that neighbour for a meal or share a *Signs* subscription with someone you feel impressed might value it. Don't wait for the new year. Start now. Plan to make 2023 the year you try something new. You might just change the world (for someone).



INSIGHT:

Hiding or visible?

Malachi Yani
Papua New Guinea Union Mission
president

When a woman approached Simon Peter and said “this fellow was with Jesus”, it was a very challenging identification. He didn’t want to be known as one of Jesus’ disciples because he could be crucified as well. He was at a crossroads.

I’m writing this on my first trip to Australia. When I went shopping, I noticed some kids were staring at me. I’m visible in Australia, I stand out. If you come to PNG, you are visible. Simon Peter was caught out. His name was not known but where you belong is visible, no matter what you do. As a church sometimes, we can try to hide ourselves, but we should be visible as well. One of the churches I visited recently was running an evangelistic program during the evenings. But during the day they would visit the community. They built-up the community marketplace, built toilets, did gardening for people—even provided small things like soap and second-hand clothes. As a result, they formed a small group that eventually became a church. We have 6000 house churches across PNG that need to be converted into company churches.

We have a lot of challenges to get this done but we plan to plant churches in all the villages in PNG in the next 5 to 10 years.

The identity of Seventh-day Adventists in PNG is very strong. When our identity and belonging is not visible, members lack engagement in the mission of the Church. We must continue to keep the identity of the Adventist Church clear. We say our identity is keeping the 10 commandments and testimony of Christ and that is good in our preaching.

Yet Matthew 25:35,36 says when we reach heaven, it won’t be about the best sermon we preach, how well we dress but how we touched lives. “For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was ill and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.”

Our identity is to be charitable. Are we really a charitable organisation? This is our strong identity as people who love God. This is my prayer. The Church in the SPD is blessed with different people, cultures and countries but we are a community of believers coming together to prepare people for His coming.

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Government and church leaders and Wahroonga Adventist School students were among the attendees.

700 trees to be planted on Wahroonga Estate

📍 **Wahroonga, NSW** | Tracey Bridcutt

A commemorative tree planting ceremony was held on October 20 in the grounds of Sydney Adventist Hospital, on the Wahroonga Estate, in honour of the late Queen Elizabeth II.

Member for Bradfield Paul Fletcher, Hornsby Mayor Philip Ruddock and Ku-ring-gai Mayor Jeff Pettett joined senior hospital staff and leaders of the Adventist Church—the custodians of the Wahroonga Estate—to pay tribute to the late Monarch by planting an advanced blackbutt tree.

The blackbutt is the first of 700 trees to be planted on the estate through the Australian Government’s Planting Trees for The Queen’s Jubilee Program.

The large-scale tree planting project will be a special, living tribute to the late Queen, who was known for her commitment to protect the environment.

Speaking at the ceremony, Mr Fletcher commended the Adventist Church for its work as stewards “of this precious piece of the environment”.

“Stewardship I think is an excellent word to describe the approach of the Adventist Church in dealing with this extraordinary piece of land here in Wahroonga,” Mr Fletcher said.

“The many ways in which you use it to provide a service to the community: of course, the largest and most sophisticated private hospital in New South

Wales—a teaching hospital, a hospital providing service to this community for generations—the school, your headquarters for your many other operations that the Church has. But the seriousness with which the Church takes its responsibilities as an environmental steward is also something absolutely to be celebrated.”

Overseeing the project is Jayden Streatfeild, environmental officer for the South Pacific Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. He made the successful application for the grant with the support of Mr Fletcher’s office.

Mr Streatfeild said the trees will be planted within the Wahroonga Estate’s 31.4ha environmental conservation zone, known as the “Jewel of Lane Cove”.

The site is not only a haven for wildlife, but it is also a popular community space. Bushwalkers, bird watchers and mountain bike riders are among those who enjoy its beauty and serenity.

The Wahroonga Estate is a 64.2ha parcel of land acquired by the Seventh-day Adventist Church in 1898. The estate is home to Sydney Adventist Hospital, Adventist Aged Care Wahroonga, two Seventh-day Adventist churches, Wahroonga Adventist School and the headquarters of the South Pacific Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.



Avondale University students attended the symposium.

Symposium equips disciples to plant churches

📍 **Cooranbong, NSW** | Shaylee Walsh

Avondale University Seminary students, along with other guests, participated in a Mission Symposium held on the Lake Macquarie campus on October 14 and 15. The theme of the symposium was church planting and it featured keynote presenters who spoke on various aspects of this topic.

Symposium organiser Dr Wayne Krause said, “The goal is that every student attending Avondale, and those recommended by their conference leaders, or anyone who wants to participate, will be able to do four things when they finish these symposiums: 1. Know how to be and make disciples; 2. Know how

to plant churches; 3. Know what it will take for them to reach our cities; and 4. Know how to do cross cultural ministry.”

Ministry student Trent Keegan shared his top learning from the talks: “Looking at churches being for those who aren’t here yet and this idea of trying to build a place for safety, for people to come in and feel welcome.”

The next symposium will be held in May 2023 and will focus on Mission to the Cities. To register your interest, visit <bit.ly/3DRk9SZ>. In-person spots are limited, but you can also join via Zoom. This event’s presentations can be viewed online at <bit.ly/3yPKIdK>.



The course has received the top ranking for quality of the educational experience, learner engagement and more.

Nursing at Avondale rated #1 again

📍 Coorabong, NSW | Brenton Stacey

A government-endorsed national survey of undergraduate students has again ranked Avondale University's nursing course as number one in Australia.

Results from the 2021 Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching Student Experience Survey rate the Bachelor of Nursing top for quality of the educational experience, skills development, learner engagement, teaching quality, student support and learning resources. The rankings compare Avondale with the 37 other universities and higher education providers offering a similar course.

Almost 300 Avondale nurses completed the survey. Linda Heath is one. As a mature-age student, she speaks highly of the personalised support she receives from dedicated academic and professional staff. "They're not only approachable but genuinely want us to succeed and go out of their way to accommodate special requests." Completing placements at "my go-to

hospital"—Sydney Adventist Hospital—also appeals. "The staff at the San do their best to help meet the requirements of your scope of practice."

Head of School Tamera Gosling and course convenor Cheryl Magus are "humbled" students like Ms Heath are "recognised the dedication of our team and the quality of our course". The challenges of COVID-19 highlighted both. For example, the school used creative strategies to support learning during the lockdown, mailing supplies to ensure students could practise new skills before clinical placements. This culture of care is key. "We love having the opportunity as a Christian university to help students develop knowledge, skills and professional behaviour in a course underpinned by the ethic of holistic care. This ensures they are best prepared to provide that same quality care to others," said Ms Gosling and Ms Magus.



ADRA delivering much-needed supplies to flood victims. (Credit: Facebook)

ADRA responds to Victorian floods emergency

📍 Echuca, Victoria | Record staff

The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) has responded to the needs of those impacted by the recent flooding emergency in northern Victoria, Australia.

According to ADRA Victoria director Rebecca Auriant, "churches in this region were already involved with ADRA, allowing them to respond in a timely and effective manner during this flood crisis".

On October 25, an ADRA team headed to the townships of Echuca and Rochester with 2.5 tonnes of supplies to support the flood relief efforts. The truck was filled with non-perishable items, toiletries from the ADRA Op Shop Boronia, and fresh produce provided by SecondBite.

During the drop-off, the ADRA team learned that Echuca Neighbourhood House was in desperate need of supplies. Together with donations received from the nearby town of Moama, ADRA was able to help restock Echuca Neighbourhood House so they could continue

to serve their community.

ADRA and the Echuca Seventh-day Adventist Church have been supporting Echuca Neighbourhood House with weekly food donations for over four years.

"Thank you so much to ADRA Australia for the very generous donation towards our food bank and flood relief services," said Sarah from Echuca Neighbourhood House. "Without the support of ADRA I don't actually know where we'd be right now."

According to Ms Auriant, Sarah herself was isolated for seven days due to the rising Murray River. "When we arrived, both her cool room and pantry were empty. She had communication delays and was so thankful that we could deliver five pallets of stock," Ms Auriant added.

In total, seven pallets stocked with a mix of non-perishables, fresh produce and hygiene kits were taken to the affected communities for distribution.



L-R: Stephen Andrews, David Woolley, Elaine Woolley, Bob Smith, Margaret Smith, Owen Mason, Marion Mason, Paul Rubessa.

Risk Management Service celebrates 50 years of operation

📍 Wahoonga, NSW | Linzi Aitken

The Risk Management Service (RMS) of the South Pacific Division (SPD) recently celebrated 50 years of operation, rededicating the service to ministry and mission at a reunion of former RMS managers.

RMS was formally established in 1972 with the purpose of administering the Church's insurance program in the then Australasian Division (later South Pacific Division) to reduce financial exposure to the Church, should losses occur.

To mark the anniversary, RMS hosted a thanksgiving lunch on November 1, attended by previous RMS managers, current SPD Services Board members and current RMS staff.

Since its establishment, RMS has been led by seven different managers: Cecil Powell (1972-85), Bob Smith (1985-95), David Woolley (1995-98), Owen Mason (1998-2005), Stephen Andrews (2005-11), Paul Rubessa (2011-17) and Jonathan Hale (2017-present).

Five of them reunited at the event, and the RMS team and board members were delighted by the stories and experiences that each former manager shared of their time in RMS, including miraculous answers to prayer.

Mr Woolley remembered on one occasion calling the staff together for prayer. "A cyclone was tracking toward major Adventist sites in the Solomon Islands," he recalled. "After prayer you could see the track of the cyclone turn away from its predicted route."

Mr Hale expressed his deep gratitude for the efforts of previous managers. "We are in the position we are today because of your dedication and innovative leadership," he said. "I wish we could spend more time with each of you."

Division CFO Francois Keet and Mr Smith both offered heartfelt prayers of thanksgiving, rededicating the service to God's ministry and mission.

The 50th anniversary of RMS was also acknowledged during the recent Division Executive Committee meeting on November 9, with General Conference president Pastor Ted Wilson rededicating the service with prayer.

making headlines

Compostable Cups

A world-first certified home compostable communion cup has been developed in response to Australian single-use plastic ban legislation. "It is our hope that these cups made from plants will encourage all churches in Australia and around the world to adopt more ecologically sustainable practices. The cups will fit existing standard communion cup trays and have a fill-line for consistent pouring," said spokesperson, Rev Mark Schultz.

— Australian Christian Resources



Christmas packages

Started by former inmate Lemuel Vega, Christmas Behind Bars is one solution in Michigan, US, that seeks to share hope to those locked away. Village Seventh-day Adventist Church pastor Dennis Page, a former federal inmate, orchestrated the stuffing of 8600 bags to send to prisoners behind bars. The bags were sent to four state prisons and one county jail. —Lake Union Herald

Autograph Exhibit

Southern Adventist University (US) has a new exhibit showcasing verified original signatures of prominent historical figures from around the world. The display is open to the public and includes 75 autographs from figures such as Sir Isaac Newton, Marie Curie, Desmond Doss and Albert Einstein. —NAD

Grand Investitures

More than 3500 Adventurers and Pathfinders gathered for a 10-day special investiture tour in Mexico. Rather than holding club investitures at local churches, these "Grand Investitures" allowed young people to meet church leaders and take photos with their youth leaders during each ceremony.

—ANN



Busy bees

More than 600 Adventurers and staff from across North NSW Conference (NNSW) attended the Adventurer Camporee at Stuarts Point Convention Centre (NSW) from October 7 to 9. It was the first Conference-wide camporee post-pandemic. Throughout the weekend, children and parents were encouraged to spread the word through praise and worship led by Happy Hands founder Caroline Schmitz, with short messages shared by Brisbane-based (Qld) pastor Sean Berkeley. Worship also featured the camporee theme song "Truly Free", an original piece composed by local church member Amy Cherry. From the favourable weather to the positive responses from Adventurers, NNSW children and family ministries administrator Louise Ginn highlighted how there were many prayers answered during the weekend. —Alan Bates/Megantha Kiruwi



Youth Big Camp debut

The Sydney Adventist Youth team held their first ever Youth and Young Adult Big Camp in Appin, NSW, over the weekend of September 8-11. "The Greater Sydney Conference Youth Advisory came up with the idea over a year and-a-half ago," said youth ministries director Pastor Simon Gigliotti. "It was born from a desire to bring young people together and inspire them to serve Jesus." "I've been to a few big camps over the years," said one guest, "but this one was the best. Great speakers!" Husband and wife pastoral team Jamil and Vanessa Hairston (based in Miami, Florida, US) and Australian Defence Force chaplain Ray Moaga were keynote speakers for the event. "Many young people's hearts were touched," said Pastor Gigliotti. —Joyce Taylor



Student wellness

Trans Pacific Union Mission president Pastor Maveni Kaufononga opened a new wellness centre at Betikama Adventist College on August 31, during his visit to Solomon Islands Mission. This initiative is a pilot project that aims to assist students in overcoming negative behaviours. The new space has a room for the college chaplain as well as an open area for the students. ADRA Solomon Islands supported the project by helping with office furniture and refurbishment costs. —Conch Shell



Spiritual feast

Attendees at this year's Grey Nomads camp at Stuarts Point, NSW, described it as a spiritual feast. The Bible study periods and the evening meetings—presented by pastors Justin Lawman and Ashley Smith—were packed out. The theme, "And then the End will Come", was based on Matthew 24-25. The music was also a highlight, especially the hymns and songs from yesteryear. Dr George Knight will be the main speaker for next year's camp: April 28-May 7, 2023. —Vern Parmenter



100x100 celebration

Hamilton Adventist School in New Zealand has recently celebrated two milestones: 100 students and 100 years of operation. Opened in 1920—but closed between 1932 and 1933—the school’s enrolment numbers have fluctuated throughout the years, averaging 60 students. This year’s substantial growth to 100 students is a first in the school’s history.

To celebrate the special achievements and dedicate the newly renovated structure, the school held a special program attended by past and current students, teachers, principals and parents. Some represented three generations who have been associated with the school.

Avondale University vice chancellor Dr Kevin Petrie—who was the longest-serving principal of Hamilton school—was the main speaker at the celebration. Speaking of the conquering of Mount Everest and the breaking of the four-minute mile, he challenged those present, saying, “it is not until someone actually does it—ventures to do the seemingly impossible—that we see others soon follow and go even further”.

Also speaking at the event, current Hamilton school principal Shaun Hurlow praised God for the growth and development of the school, and New Zealand Adventist Education property manager Roger Marshall reminded those present that the focus of Adventist schools is supporting the learning and development of the children.—**Rosalie McFarlane**



Unsinkable Faith

Northern Australian Conference (NAC) teens spent a week kayaking through the Whitsundays, Queensland, and growing spiritually at the NAC Teen Ex held from September 25 to October 1. Around 37 teens and staff were part of the expedition, kayaking more than 40 kilometres to different campsites across four islands in the Whitsundays, including North Molle Island, Whitsunday Island, Henning Island and South Molle Island. In addition to kayaking, the young attendees took part in hiking, snorkelling and fishing, always starting and finishing each day with worship. At the end of the week, which was themed “Unsinkable Faith”, seven teens made the decision to dedicate themselves to God and start Bible studies with their local church pastor.—**Lorraine Atchia**



Positive relationships

Eight classes from Tuvalu Seventh-day Adventist Primary School held a special event throughout the week of September 24 to October 1 to celebrate Adventist education. Centred around the theme “I Will Go To My Family”, parents, teachers and students worked together to create an event to remember. There were songs and speeches every night. Additionally, there was special emphasis placed on the importance of the health message, with a reminder that God wants His people to live wholesically so they can effectively reveal Jesus to everyone around them. “Our theme, ‘I Will Go To My Family’, together with this special week of Adventist emphasis has really helped us as teachers, students and parents create positive relationships,” said teacher Adi Nawawabalavu.—**Conch Shell**

LIVE AT AVONDALE WHILE STUDYING OFF CAMPUS

Abbey Rubessa has heard a lot about life in the residences of Avondale University's Lake Macquarie campus. Her parents Paul and Linda lived in Watson and Bethel Halls as students and brother Jai had a room in the men's residence during his degree. "They've always raved on about how fun it was, so I wanted to experience it, too." But with an interest in chemical engineering, Abbey enrolled in the Bachelor of Science at The University of Newcastle. A new initiative, though, has opened the residences to students who study off campus elsewhere but want to live on campus. So, Abbey applied and now has her own room in Ella Boyd Hall.

With most of the week at uni or at work in a local pharmacy, Abbey has evenings and weekends to connect with her Avondale friends. "I'm not a social butterfly but living in the residences has given me more confidence to meet new people."

You'll often find Abbey studying with others in the library, enjoying the beach or "just chilling around dorms". A student-led worship service on Fridays is also "a good time to catch up with everyone and spend time with God".

The on-off campus arrangement has pros and cons. Offsetting the fear of missing out is "getting that Avondale experience while studying what I enjoy". While Abbey's advice is to know your limits, "the social and spiritual vibe here is so cool".

Welcoming other students like Abbey to the residences has helped—there's a dozen in total. "Ella Boyd feels fuller," said Peer Support leader Kahlie Wrانkmore. "There's lots of noise, good noise."

Conversations with on-campus students who changed to courses not offered by Avondale but didn't want to leave their new



home led to the opening of the residences.

"The students would ask me, 'Is there any way we can continue living here?'" said Student Life Services director Jennifer Petrie. She also heard from parents who wanted their children to experience what they did at Avondale—"the fostering of spiritual wellbeing in a caring, safe and supportive environment".

One parent wrote about their son transferring to Newcastle from a tertiary institution in Melbourne. With mostly online classes, the son had little connection with his classmates and felt life had become routine. So, moving closer to beaches, a lake and the mountains appealed. Living at Avondale now gives him easier access to adventure activities and more opportunities to connect with like-minded young adults. "There's people around who want to do the same things I do," he said. The "supportive structures" on campus are "a great way for our son to gain independence without isolation".

The on-off campus students, Mrs Petrie shares "enrich our campus by bringing their family's Avondale legacy into the mix and sharing their gifts and talents".

To go on the waiting list for 2023, email <studentfinance@avondale.edu.au>.

Brenton Stacey

Public relations and philanthropy officer,
Avondale University.



Why do Christians sing so much?

When I was studying at Avondale University, I was lucky enough to stay in Watson Hall. I still have so many close friends and great memories from that time. One in particular is from when a friend who doesn't come from a Christian background came to stay in the dorms for a weekend.

He seemed to enjoy his weekend there and afterwards, I asked him what he thought of the experience. He told me it was good, but his biggest question was "why do Christians sing so much?" I laughed as he explained to me there was always singing. I hadn't thought about it but as I reflected, he was right. The guys were always singing! In people's rooms with a guitar, in the showers, walking down the hall, at church, to start Bible studies, in the foyer with the piano. There was always someone singing, and I'd never noticed because I'm so accustomed to it.

The past two years have drawn my attention to how much I love our tradition of singing together. During lockdowns, many of our churches were unable to meet together, or if we could meet together, we couldn't sing because of the risk of spreading the virus.

I'm grateful to be in a position where we can sing as a community again and I never want to take this for granted. So, I thought I'd answer the question, why do we as Christians sing so much? Here are four reasons:

1. It's tradition

Christianity is born out of Judaism. In both religions, there is a rich history and tradition of group singing. In the biblical story of the Israelites being liberated from Egypt, Miriam's victory song (Exodus 15:1-19) is estimated to have been written and sung as a congregation as early as the fifteenth century BC. So we have thousands of years of singing together and a beautiful history of songs to draw upon. I can't wait until we're in heaven and able to sing the greatest worship songs from all time and all languages as one huge congregation.

2. It's good for you

Singing has been shown to relieve stress, improve immune response, speaking skills and lung function and even reduce snoring! As a Church that preaches a health message, no wonder we love singing so much! There

are other positive effects it can have on our health which you can check out here: [healthline.com/health/benefits-of-singing](https://www.healthline.com/health/benefits-of-singing).

3. It bonds us together as a community

At the footy, when the crowd start cheering their team's anthem together in one loud and messy voice, something special happens. They're unified in their support and love for one thing. Their team. When we all gather and sing about something together, it unifies us around that thing. The most important thing we can sing about is Jesus and when we sing together it binds us as a community around Him as His church. People find belonging in the songs.

This is exactly why Paul urged the church at Colossae to "teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts" (Colossians 3:16).

4. It gives us a chance to refocus on what matters

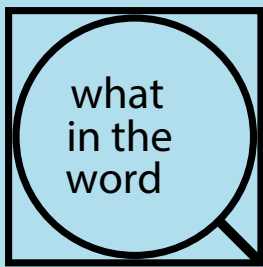
The words of songs matter and they stick in our minds more easily than spoken or written words. When we sing powerful songs together, it gives us an opportunity to focus again on the powerful words of these songs. It also helps us learn truths about God in a different way. I learned so much about God and His character through the songs we sing in church and the words of the songs stick with me.

There are plenty of other reasons to sing together as congregations and I'd love to hear yours too! Whether you are singing hymns, scripture songs, choir songs, kids' worship songs, modern worship songs, anything else or a mix, let's be grateful to be able to sing to our God who is most worthy of all the praise we could ever give Him and more.

"Sing to the Lord a new song;
sing to the Lord, all the earth.
Sing to the Lord, praise his name;
proclaim his salvation day after day.
Declare his glory among the nations,
his marvellous deeds among all peoples.
For great is the Lord and most worthy of praise"
(Psalm 96:1-4).

Joshua Stothers

associate pastor and chaplain at Castle Hill church and Hills Adventist College, Sydney, NSW.



presented by
Fulton Adventist University College



Vapour/breath

noun: הֶבֶל | hebel [heh'-bel] Hebrew

The Hebrew term *hebel* occurs 73 times in the Old Testament. It is translated variously into English as vapour, breath, futility, nothingness, meaningless and vanity. *Hebel* may seem subtle, but most authors use it to convey our insignificance in the grand scheme of things. We live a short and futile life.

The Hebrew root idea for *hebel* is introduced in Genesis. Eve conceived Cain and said, "I have acquired a man from the Lord" (Genesis 4:1).¹ "Then she bore again, this time his brother Abel [הֶבֶל *Hebel*]. Now Abel [*Hebel*] was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground" (Genesis 4:2, *hebel* is used here twice). Hebel appears again in Genesis 4:4 (twice), Genesis 4:8 (twice), Genesis 4:9 (once) and Genesis 4:25 (once). The story ended tragically when the life of Abel (*hebel*) was cut short by his elder brother Cain. Like vapour, Abel's life symbolises brevity. He was a mere breath in the annals of history.

The word *hebel* can also refer to anything fleeting, ephemeral or fragile. Job 7:16 says, "I loathe my life; I would not live forever. Let me alone, 'for my days are but a breath'" [*hebel*]. Living forever may seem like a wonderful prospect for healthy and happy individuals. However, Job did not enjoy life. He was ill and miserable. He lived only one "breath" at a time. Psalm 39:5, "Certainly every man at his best state is but vapour" [*hebel*]. Psalm 94:11, "The Lord knows the thoughts of man, that they are futile" [*hebel*]. Psalm 144:4, "Man is like a breath [*hebel*]; His days are like a passing shadow."² The Hebrew verb *habal* is emphatic: "they followed idols [vanity] and became idolaters [vain]" (2 Kings 17:15; cf. Job 27:12; Psalm 62:11; Jeremiah 2:5; 23:16). Especially when chasing after "worthless" (Jonah 2:8; 2 Kings 7:15; Jeremiah 2:5) or "vain idols" (Psalm 31:47) of the heathens (see Isaiah 40:18-20 and 44:9-20). When we replace God with an idol, there is nothing solid to grasp, only vapour.

The time we spend on earth is like a blink. We are relatively insignificant in the whole scheme of things. This theme

is explored best in Ecclesiastes. "The preacher" [Hebrew title, *Qoheleth*] (1:1 KJV) or "the teacher" (NIV) emphasises the absurdity of life. Solomon is *Qoheleth*, but Divine Wisdom also speaks through him. "Vanity of vanities [*Hebel hebelim*]," says the Preacher, "Vanity of vanities! All is vanity [*Hebel hebelim hakkol hebel*]" (1:2). Solomon speaks to the people metaphorically. He expounds his biographical quest for meaning, "What does man gain from all his labour at which he toils under the sun?" (1:3). He discovered that "pleasure" (2:1), "industry" (labour) and "human wisdom" was "toilsome" and "meaningless" (*hebel*), like "chasing after the wind" (2:11, 15, 22, 23; 4:4). Even all of "life", "leaving an inheritance" (2:18, 21), "acquiring riches" (4:7, 8), "political popularity" (4:16), "many dreams" (5:7), "wealth" (6:2), "foolish laughter" (7:6) and "injustice" (8:14) are all fleeting. His summation: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man" (12:13).

Life is like breath (*hebel*). It is short. Everything we desire or value more than God is an "idol" that is useless and futile. The recurring 35 references to the word *hebel* in 29 verses in Ecclesiastes, is intentional. It's to remind us, emphatically, that life without God and an afterlife is ultimately meaningless. Authentic and genuine meaning can only be found when we invite God into our daily lives. In Emmanuel, God is with us. And when we are with God, our eternity is secured.

1. All Bible citations used in this article are taken from the NKJV, unless otherwise indicated.

2. Cf. Job 9:29, 21:34, Psalm 39:7; Lamentations 4:17; Isaiah 30:7; and Jeremiah 10:3, 8.

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Bethany Home, New Zealand

During the 1890s at a time when Helping Hand Missions were being established in many cities around Australia and New Zealand, Doctors Eric and Margaret Caro and some members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Napier, New Zealand, formed what was termed a Christian Help Band to assist released female prisoners and “the fallen”. Temporarily housed in the Caro home while more permanent accommodation could be obtained, the women were cared for until suitable positions could be found for them.

Ten volunteers canvassed the city for suitable housing, furniture and donations. In 1896, a suitable rental property was found and Bethany Home opened its doors. From its spacious verandas, the ocean could be viewed in three directions.

This new institution had to be self-supporting. Within two weeks, accommodation, furnishings, a guaranteed rental income, a matron and inmates were organised. Miss Radford, the former president of the Christian Help Band, offered her services free of charge as the first matron and brought her piano and some household furniture to the home with her. The home was opened to all women without distinction of faith or nationality.

Newspapers reported the official opening of Bethany Home by the Napier mayor on February 16, 1898. Often referred to as Bethany Rescue Home, the facility housed 25 women during its first year of operation, 11 of whom were recently released prisoners. The local newspaper reported that “some of the others have also turned into the right path, and are now supporting themselves in a proper manner. Of course, some of the most invertebrate [sic] drunkards could not see the error of their ways, and relapsed into their old unfortunate habits.”

Five months later the Napier newspaper stated that “the work has gone steadily forward, literally hundreds of visits having been made, hundreds of meals provided, and hundreds of garments given to those who were in straitened circumstances. Physiology classes for children have also

been undertaken with the most gratifying results.”

Within a year Miss Alice Parr became the matron of the home, a position she held for 17 years. To help make the home self-supporting, the plan was to take in laundry work, sewing, knitting and other suitable employment. At this time a small maternity room was also established. Support from the citizens of Napier helped keep the home operating, with newspapers reporting on information on the residents at the time, as well as donations and expenditures.

A move to a venue further uphill was soon undertaken. Here more women could be cared for in the larger premises. Bethany had expanded to include the rescue and temporary care of children from unfavourable or dangerous surroundings.

On August 14, 1914, Bethany Home was transferred to the Salvation Army. They retained the name Bethany Home, which was subsequently used for most of the Salvation Army Hospitals in New Zealand. Bethany Home was officially reopened by the Salvation Army on November 26, 1914, with a large interested audience. The bishop of Waipau stated that “as long as there was sin in the world such institutions would be necessary”, and “he felt that all large towns needed a similar Institution as the one opening today. It would be a place where sinners would be brought to their Saviour.” This denomination ran private maternity hospitals bearing the name Bethany Home in Russell, Auckland, Gisborne, Napier, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin.

The role of Bethany Home changed over the years when child welfare officers were appointed in 1925, and young children could be housed there briefly until a suitable home was found for them. The 1931 Napier earthquake badly damaged the building, and it did not reopen until 1938. In 1942 the home was relocated once again, to 42 Morris Street, Nelson Park, Napier, and functioned under the name Bethany Maternity Hospital. The facility closed its doors in October 1978.

Marian de Berg/ESDA



Adsafe

THE CHURCH POLICE OR HERE TO PROTECT AND HEAL?

The Church Police”—that’s how some Adventists refer to Adsafe. I’ve also heard comments such as “Adsafe presumes everyone is guilty and always takes the victim’s side”, “Adsafe blocks people from attending church” and “Adsafe stops people from getting their working with children check”.

This misinformation is concerning, and it has prompted me to write this article to provide some clarity around the role of Adsafe in the South Pacific Division (SPD).

Firstly, I’ll briefly provide the reason for Adsafe’s existence, which dates back to the proceedings of the Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The Royal Commission provided an appropriate understanding of past events and the subsequent development of recommendations, to bring effective change across a broad range of issues relating to child sexual abuse. Of the 6875 survivors who addressed the Royal Commission in private sessions, 4029 (58.6 per cent) spoke of abuse happening in religious institutions.¹ Survivors who were brave enough to share their lived experience of abuse, enabled the Royal Commission to identify what needed to be done to make institutions safer for children in the future.

This led to extensive recommendations which have been the catalyst for numerous and ongoing national and state/territory legislative changes and the development of national child safe standards, as well as various similar state/territory standards. As a result of the findings and outcomes of the Royal Commission, society expects more vigilance from faith-based organisations collectively, in relation to child and vulnerable adult protection and will not tolerate further failures to protect. The Royal Commission has been the catalyst for numerous national and state/territory legislative changes, which are continuing to emerge and inform the SPD’s safeguarding framework.

Adsafe delivers—on behalf of the SPD—protective services for children and vulnerable adults who have been physically or sexually abused. These protective services include advice and guidance to all stakeholders, case management support and referral to appropriate professionals, risk management and investigations, policy development and training for all local churches and denominational entities throughout the Division. Adsafe is staffed with highly skilled and experienced personnel who are compassionate and committed to applying procedurally fair processes, discharge their reporting obligations, support children and vulnerable adults who have experienced abuse, manage risk and deliver training to make all of our churches and denominational entities safe places for people to experience the love of God.

Adsafe’s work is challenging given the sensitive nature of all abuse types and due processes require strict confidentiality to afford protection for all persons involved, including the person subject to the allegations, the survivor, families, friends, pastors and leaders. Quite often matters need to be reported to police and while they investigate the matter, neither Adsafe nor any other stakeholder can interfere with the process. Negative narrative about Adsafe often stems from people not knowing the “other side” of the story.

Adsafe is a voice for those children and vulnerable adults who have been abused. I am now honoured to share a true experience of a survivor within our Division.

1. Commonwealth of Australia (2017). *The Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse: Final Report—Religious Institutions*, Volume 16, Book 1, p23.

A Survivor's Journey: The Power of Being Heard

Trigger warning: This article contains references to suicide and child sexual abuse, which could distress some readers. If you need support, please contact Adsafe on (02) 9847 3488/1800 220 468 (AUS)/ 0800 442 458 (NZ) or Lifeline on 13 11 14 or Beyond Blue on 1300 224 636.

In 2004 when Georgia* was in her teens, she reconnected with her local Adventist church community. It was a safe place for her to rebuild her faith in God and develop new positive relationships. She never suspected she would be groomed and targeted ultimately for sexual abuse by a church elder, Tom*, who had known her since she was a child.

Tom encouraged Georgia to participate in adult Sabbath school, the church choir, and he became a much valued and supportive father figure for Georgia. A few months past and the relationship began to change, with Georgia exposed to increasingly more sexually inappropriate behaviour. After a short time, with Georgia alone in his home, he sexually abused her.

Georgia was in shock by what had happened. She felt deeply wronged, powerless and confused. Despite Georgia's confusion she had the courage to disclose her abuse to her mother and reported it to the police.

The abuse impacted Georgia dramatically and she struggled to focus at school and she was overwhelmed with feelings of anger and betrayal. Sadly, she even considered ending her life.

Georgia sought out the care of her Adventist church community. She spoke with her pastor and told him what had happened to her. Pastor Ron* listened to Georgia, showing care and sympathy. Importantly, Pastor Ron believed Georgia and supported her. He had Tom removed from his church roles and made it possible for Georgia to attend church without fear of seeing Tom, who was ultimately convicted for the abuse.

The impacts on Georgia have been lifelong, as is a common feature of those having experienced child sexual abuse. It has been nearly two decades since the abuse, and Georgia no longer attends church or believes in the existence of God. However, on reflection she feels gratitude toward Pastor Ron because he heard, believed and validated her trauma. In acting on her disclosure with awareness and empathy, she feels her abuse was treated seriously and with sensitivity and because of this she feels comfortable sharing her story to help create greater awareness of child sexual abuse and its impact.

While Georgia is changed by her trauma, by speaking

her truth she contributes an important narrative to destigmatise the shame and silence surrounding child sexual abuse. As commonly recounted by survivors, concern and consideration of other potential victims is ultimately the reason Georgia speaks openly today. For shining a light where there is darkness, we are grateful for Georgia generously sharing her story.

The impacts of abuse are multifaceted. At the core, the abuse within a faith-based context destroys the survivor's faith journey, distorts their view of Christ as a loving Saviour and thus can irretrievably damage their relationship with God. Abuse not only impacts the survivor but also has significant impact on their family members. Families are often left to support the survivor through their mental health struggles, risk-taking behaviours, self-harm and the like without fully understanding the cause of these behaviours and how best to provide support. Church members and the wider community can also be impacted as they try to understand and respond to what may appear to be irrational behaviour of the survivor. Likewise, the perpetrator's family are impacted as they try to comprehend the abuse that their loved one has perpetrated.

In partnership with God, we are all potential "change agents" to build safe Adventist communities where abuse has no place, and changing and empowering lives so that everyone can equally experience the love of God. Protecting the vulnerable from abuse is a shared concern and a joint responsibility. The part you can play is to work collectively with Adsafe and your local church and conferences, to help build safe faith communities. Like the pastor in the survivor's story, let's listen and believe so we can facilitate a healing journey for those who have experienced abuse and trauma within the SPD.

"Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble" (1 Peter 3:8).

*Names and details changed for privacy reasons.

For further information about Adsafe please refer to our website <www.adsafe.org.au> or speak to your local Adsafe responsible officer (pastor) or the Adsafe compliance assistant at your local church.

Ann Beaumont

general manager of Adsafe Ltd, which is based in Wahroonga, Sydney, NSW.

The **Strange** Request



How would you respond if asked: Would you care for my pet ferret? Or would you please cut my tie? It's caught in the shredder. Thinking about such requests might cause a smile, make us laugh or perhaps bring to mind an equally strange request you have asked someone or have been asked.

Thinking of strange requests—one of the strangest found in the Bible was asked by an Aramean¹ general. And the response this great general received provides a beautiful insight into God's nature. It can also help us in our interaction with others who believe differently. First the back story . . .

The Arameans were northern neighbours of ancient Israel—pesky neighbours at that. How do we know? Because this general's housemaid was a young Hebrew girl, who had been abducted from an Israelite village just across the border by bands of raiders from Aram. For an army general, such actions against the enemy were a measure of success, so it was no surprise that this general was held in high esteem by his king.

However, this general had a problem—he had leprosy!

If you are familiar with the Old Testament stories, you have probably guessed his name—Naaman! His story is found in 2 Kings chapter 5. In verse 1, we read:

"Now Naaman was commander of the army of the king of Aram. He was a great man in the sight of his master and highly regarded because through him, the Lord had given victory to Aram. He was a valiant soldier, but he had leprosy."

Arrrgh! That was like being diagnosed with stage 4 terminal cancer! Here he was—successful, influential, with a devoted wife and the respect of his king—living with a death sentence. How terrible!

Maybe you are fit, well and loving life, so this situation does not get your attention. I propose that we all know how Naaman felt—at least partly—it is the feeling of mortality. In that sense, we are all living with a death sentence. This was never the Creator God's plan. And yes. It stinks.

Every person, says Matthew Henry, "has some but or other

in his character; something that blemishes and diminishes him; some alloy to his grandeur, some damp to his joy; he may be very happy, very good, yet, in something or other, not so good as he should be, nor so happy as he would be. Naaman was as great as the world could make him, and yet the basest slave in Syria would not change skins with him."²

In Israel, a leper was forcibly made to dwell alone. However, in Syria, leprosy was no bar to human society nor offices of trust and honour.³ We do not know how far Naaman's condition had progressed. Even if in its early stages, all would know the signs and the disfigurement that was to come. One can only imagine the embarrassment and frustration that Naaman felt. Naaman was desperate, yet he had no solution to his profoundly personal dilemma, just as we have no answer to our profoundly personal dilemma of mortality.

Then a suggestion came to Naaman from a most surprising source—surprising because of the incredible imbalance of power between Naaman and the one who offered the idea. Remember that young girl who had been taken captive by bands of Aramean raiders? She said to her mistress: "If only my master would see the prophet who is in Samaria! He would cure him of his leprosy" (2 Kings 5:3). Wow! Can you imagine sharing such an idea in this girl's circumstance? Having been taken captive—family members possibly killed—horribly homesick—and—and it is a big "and"—and working as a slave for the wife of the top general in charge of the marauding bands who wrongfully landed you in this situation. Adding a few curses on top of Naaman's horrible dilemma might have been tempting for this young slave girl. "May the fleas of a thousand camels infest his armpits!" But, I digress.

Naaman listens. Hope springs in his heart. He muses: *Could I be whole again?* Naaman acts. He speaks with his king, who responds: "By all means, go. I will send a letter to the king of Israel" (2 Kings 5:4).

The letter was simple and direct: "With this letter, I am sending my servant Naaman to you so that you may cure him of his leprosy" (2 Kings 5:5). As befits royal and important people, the letter is backed by a large purse. Naaman left Aram "taking with him ten talents of silver, six thousand shekels of gold and ten sets of clothing" (2 Kings 5:6). In modern terms, a value of some three million dollars!

Where was the King of Israel? King Jehoram had his palace in Jezreel. This was across the Jordan River and deep into enemy territory for Naaman. Imagine his entourage's vulnerability and caution as they travelled. It turned out that the King of Israel also felt vulnerable about Naaman's arrival. As soon as the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his robes and said: "Am I God? Can I kill and bring back to life? Why does this fellow send someone to me to be cured of his leprosy? See how he is trying to pick a quarrel with me!" (2 Kings 5:7). Jehoram thought that this was some trick that would backfire nastily. And he had good reason to be cautious. As a son of Ahab and Jezebel, he had no doubt witnessed his share of intrigue within his own country—let alone trusting the words of an enemy general!

When Elisha heard what the King did, he sent an urgent message: "Why have you torn your robes? Have the man come to me, and he will know that there is a prophet in Israel"

(2 Kings 5:8). So Naaman travelled still further into enemy territory with his horses and chariots until he reached the door of Elisha's house.

One might think that Elisha's bold invitation would mean he would be keen to meet Naaman and make sure that Naaman knew that there definitely was a prophet in Israel—and look no further—here he is! It seemed that Naaman had this picture in mind as well. How do we know? Well, Elisha never went to the door. Instead, he sent a messenger with the following instruction for Naaman: "Go, wash yourself seven times in the Jordan, and your flesh will be restored, and you will be cleansed" (2 Kings 5:10). On hearing this, Naaman flew into a rage. You can imagine him stomping back to his attendants, cursing, swearing, and yelling out: "I thought that he [the prophet] would surely come out to me and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, wave his hand over the spot and cure me of my leprosy."

Naaman raged on. His rant focused on how much better the rivers of home were compared to "all the waters of Israel" (2 Kings 5:12). It was as if he was saying: "Look, if water is part of the solution, then let's get some proper clean water. I know where some really good water is, and it's not in this country!"

Naaman was missing the point. He was not the source of healing. Water was not the source of healing, even though we know that water is a great metaphor for the true source of healing—Israel's God. Many centuries later, God's son Jesus, the Christ, claimed that God Himself is the water of life, (John 4:14) and the source of healing. This was all new to Naaman. He had much to learn and much to unlearn—just like me. How about you?

We are fortunate when we have friends and associates who can help us to see sense in a situation we hate. Naaman was fortunate. His servants went to him and said: "My father, if the prophet had told you to do some great thing, would you not have done it? How much more, then, when he tells you, 'Wash and be cleansed!'" (2 Kings 5:13)

So Naaman went . . .

As a child hearing the story of Naaman and seeing the picture books about this story, I always pictured Elisha living on the banks of the river and being able to look out the window to check that Naaman did as he was told. Not so. A Google search indicates that it takes 1 hour and 8 minutes to travel the 51.4 kilometres from Samaria to the River Jordan via Route 71 by car. For Naaman and his servants using horses and chariots, and carrying about 300 kilograms of silver,⁴ together with gold, clothes and supplies, the trip would have required a full day's travel. Naaman certainly had time to ponder the instructions given to him. Would he follow through? Would you?

So Naaman went down and dipped himself in the Jordan seven times, as the man of God had told him, and his flesh was restored and became clean like that of a young boy (2 Kings 5:14). Here was an incomprehensible moment. This was like winning the lottery! Of course, it wasn't. This event was much, much better than that! Naaman was carrying the lottery prize money with him, and it meant nothing compared with this healing. Wow! If he yelled with complaint and protest



before, perhaps now he was giving thanks in ecstatic shrills of pure joy.

We all have this need to be healed. Our first great need for healing relates to our misunderstanding of the loving God in whom many believe. Like Luther, we learn to hate the idea of righteousness because we see in it, quite wrongly, a God who is not loving.

"Though I lived as a monk without reproach, I felt that I was a sinner before God with an extremely disturbed conscience. I could not believe that he was placated by my satisfaction. I did not love, yes, I hated the righteous God who punishes sinners, and secretly, if not blasphemously, certainly murmuring greatly, I was angry with God, and said, 'As if, indeed, it is not enough, that miserable sinners, eternally lost through original sin, are crushed by every kind of calamity by the law of the decalogue, without having God add pain to pain by the gospel and also by the gospel threatening us with his righteousness and wrath!'"⁵

And yet, like Naaman, who, centuries earlier, came up out of the water in ecstasy—washed and cleansed—Luther exclaimed, "I extolled my sweetest word with a love as great as the hatred, with which I had before hated the word 'righteousness of God'."⁶

What do you think happened next? I imagine Naaman was eager to return to Elisha to share the good news.

Perhaps he strapped down the silver and goods to ensure they would not bounce out of a fast-moving chariot?

On their arrival at Elisha's doorstep, Naaman stood before him and said, "Now I know that there is no God in all the world except in Israel. So please accept a gift from your servant" (2 Kings 5:15). Huh? What? Elisha refused. Naaman urged Elisha to accept, but Elisha refused again.

Elisha's refusal became a pivotal point for Naaman to make one of the strangest requests I could ever imagine being asked. Naaman said to Elisha, "If you will not [receive my gift], please let me, your servant, be given as much earth as a pair of mules can carry." How strange!

Michael Heiser asserts that "Naaman's unusual request stems from the ancient—and biblical—conception, that the earth is the locale for a cosmic turf war. Naaman wanted dirt from Israel because Israel was Yahweh's territory. The dirt which was in Yahweh's domain was holy ground."⁷ How would I have responded to such a request? How would you have responded? How would many church pastors and ministers have responded? Would we want to sort out Naaman's views regarding his strange theology?

Naaman had revealed his theological heart change: "for your servant will never again make burnt offerings and sacrifices to any other god but the Lord". This was why he needed the dirt. Yahweh was Israel's God and so operated in their land [Israel], right up to the borders, but not beyond. So to wor-

ship the Lord, he would need Israelite dirt. Naaman also had another problem. He outlined the problem in Elisha's hearing: "May the Lord forgive your servant for this one thing: When my master enters the temple of Rimmon to bow down, and he is leaning on my arm, and I have to bow there also—when I bow down in the temple of Rimmon, may the Lord forgive your servant for this" (2 Kings 5:18).

"Go in peace," said Elisha (2 Kings 5:19).

Wow! Naaman was heading back to his home country, committed to worshipping Yahweh only. He would be doing this in a culture without a concept of what Israel's God was like. However, Naaman now knew Israel's God. He had experienced Yahweh's healing first hand. He was not going back to his other gods. He planned to worship Yahweh on his little patch of Israelite dirt and then carry his experience into all sorts of places that any Israelite would simply have refused to go.

"Go in peace," said Elisha.

All of this—all of these amazing encounters—were initiated by a lowly servant girl. Have you ever felt insignificant and struggled to believe you can make a difference? Being open to God enables incredible transformations to take place, provided we are willing to be a servant of Jesus.

So, when I encounter those who experience the good news of a loving

God, a God who brings wholeness and healing, am I tempted to persist in correcting their thinking because their lifestyles are different to mine? Am I offended because they still believe other philosophies that I do not? Do I allow their cultural quirks to irritate me? Or, am I willing to celebrate and marvel in the experience and, with Elisha, simply say "Go in peace!"

We all have this need to be healed. Our first great need for healing relates to our misunderstanding of the loving God in whom many believe.

1. Aram is the name of a south Syrian kingdom, the capital of which was Damascus <oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780195393361/obo-9780195393361-0278.xml>, cited 14 July 2022.
2. *Henry's Complete Commentary on the Bible*, 2 Kings 5, <[studydrive.com/commentaries/eng/mhm/2-kings-5.html#verse-1-8](https://www.studydrive.com/commentaries/eng/mhm/2-kings-5.html#verse-1-8)>, cited 29 July 2022.
3. *ibid*
4. One Babylonian talent weighed about 30 kg <[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Talent_\(measurement\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Talent_(measurement))>, cited 14 July 2022
5. Erik H Herrmann, "The Creedal Logic of Justification in Martin Luther", page 42. This essay was first presented at the 2017 Theological Symposium at Concordia Seminary, Saint Louis.
6. *ibid*.
7. Michael S Heiser, "Naaman in the Bible—and the important detail we forget", <[logos.com/grow/important-detail-forget-story-naaman/](https://www.logos.com/grow/important-detail-forget-story-naaman/)>, cited July 14, 2022.

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How to feed your family *for less*

To help household budgets when money is tight, we asked experts across food, finance and families to share their best tips for putting healthy food on the dinner table for less.

Don't feel pressured to always buy fresh

Even produce experts like Thanh Truong, aka the Fruit Nerd, rely on a freezer stash of frozen fruit and veg. He says green peas, corn and berries are a great convenient option for families and are often a cheaper choice.

Eat seasonally

This simply means eating what is being harvested or in abundance right now. "You don't need to know the seasons, just walk into the supermarket and look for the fruit and veggies that are great quality and are well stocked. They'll be cheaper and fresher too," says Thanh.

Meal plan with the catalogue in hand

For the Organised Housewife, Katrina Springer, easing the mental load and financial burden of grocery shopping starts with meal planning. Take a moment to look through the supermarket catalogue to see what is on special for the week, then plan your meals around those sale items. "Meal planning saves me money, time and petrol! When you leave it to chance, you'll end up buying unnecessary items."

Shop the "dodgy" bin

"There's always going to be some produce that looks a bit sad," says Thanh. If you're doing a last-minute shop for tonight's dinner, he suggests shopping discounted produce first. "While not aesthetically perfect, it's still delicious and often interesting to cook with," says Thanh.



"Use your other senses when reviewing them, not just your eyes but smell and touch."

Cook once, eat twice

Limit your time in the kitchen and avoid wasting leftovers by cooking once but eating two or even three times. Try roasting some vegetables to have tonight, then using them to top a pizza the next night or mixed with pasta and your favourite sauce the following day.

Diversify your fruit and veg

We humans are creatures of habit, which often means buying the same fruit and veg because we always have, but Thanh suggests that autopilot shopping means we are missing out. Whether apples, mandarins, sweet potatoes or brassicas, rotate the types of produce you eat. Diversifying is not only better for your nutrition but your tastebuds too. It also means you can shop what's in season without getting bored. If you always opt for gold sweet potato, Thanh suggests trying purple sweet potato, taro or parsnip. If imperial mandarins are a go-to for lunchboxes, try tangold mandarins. As for swapping broccoli? Go for cauliflower, Brussels sprouts or Chinese broccoli.

For more information and budget-friendly recipe ideas check out the full article on the Sanitarium website.



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Conversations

Our fault

Re: "Community perceptions study highlights areas of opportunity" (News feature, October 15).

Well it is our fault [the fact that the Church is unknown in the community]. In the GLOW leaflet [tract] there is no mention about the organisation producing it. Why was our name not put on it? The people that liked it could have contacted us. Normally when we do public outreach (public evangelism), we do not mention our name. On our letterboxing card you can hardly read our name, if it is on them. If we do not promote our name who is supposed to do it? What about some churches that have only the Adventist name on display, etc.

Yes it is our fault, but when are we going to fix it?

Carlo Ficulle, *via email*

Something to consider

Thank you for sharing this fantastic article ("Community perceptions", October 15) and sharing these stats with us. I am particularly interested in this:

"Australians and New Zealanders are more likely to attend a community service activity, health and wellness program or family social event rather than a Bible seminar or online church service."

Me and my church will take this into consideration when thinking about the future of evangelism in our local community.

Josh Stothers, *NSW*

A hearty amen

A hearty "Amen" to "Do you suffer from generational Adventism?" (Feature, October 15) that addresses the mostly unspoken of experience of many generational Adventists.

While in many ways growing up with a Bible literacy and a Christian home give an advantage in the Christian-life eg winning quizzes and knowing the stories of answered prayer (some that have been mine), it does not necessarily translate into an experience with God—as many parents will sadly attest to.

While there is a biblical injunction to "teach your children" (Deuteronomy

6)—this would rightly include the opportunities to know God on a personal level. It's a very apt statement to say "Christianity is caught, not taught" as we struggle to answer the age-old question of why those with such apparent "grounding in the faith" leave.

An always relevant reminder to us as a Church of the importance of a balanced approach to longevity in the faith. What a great encourager to us to have those conversations about our personal experiences of God, in our homes, churches and schools.

Arthur Hudson, *NSW*

HELLO KIDS!



GOD'S FIGHT

Nehemiah was leading the people of Jerusalem as they rebuilt the city walls that had been broken down. Each family had a section of the wall to work on. Some enemies didn't like the rebuilding and tried to cause trouble. Nehemiah told the builders they would need to work with their tools in one hand and a sword in the other, in case they needed to defend God's city. The builders worked together, finished the wall and had a great big celebration!

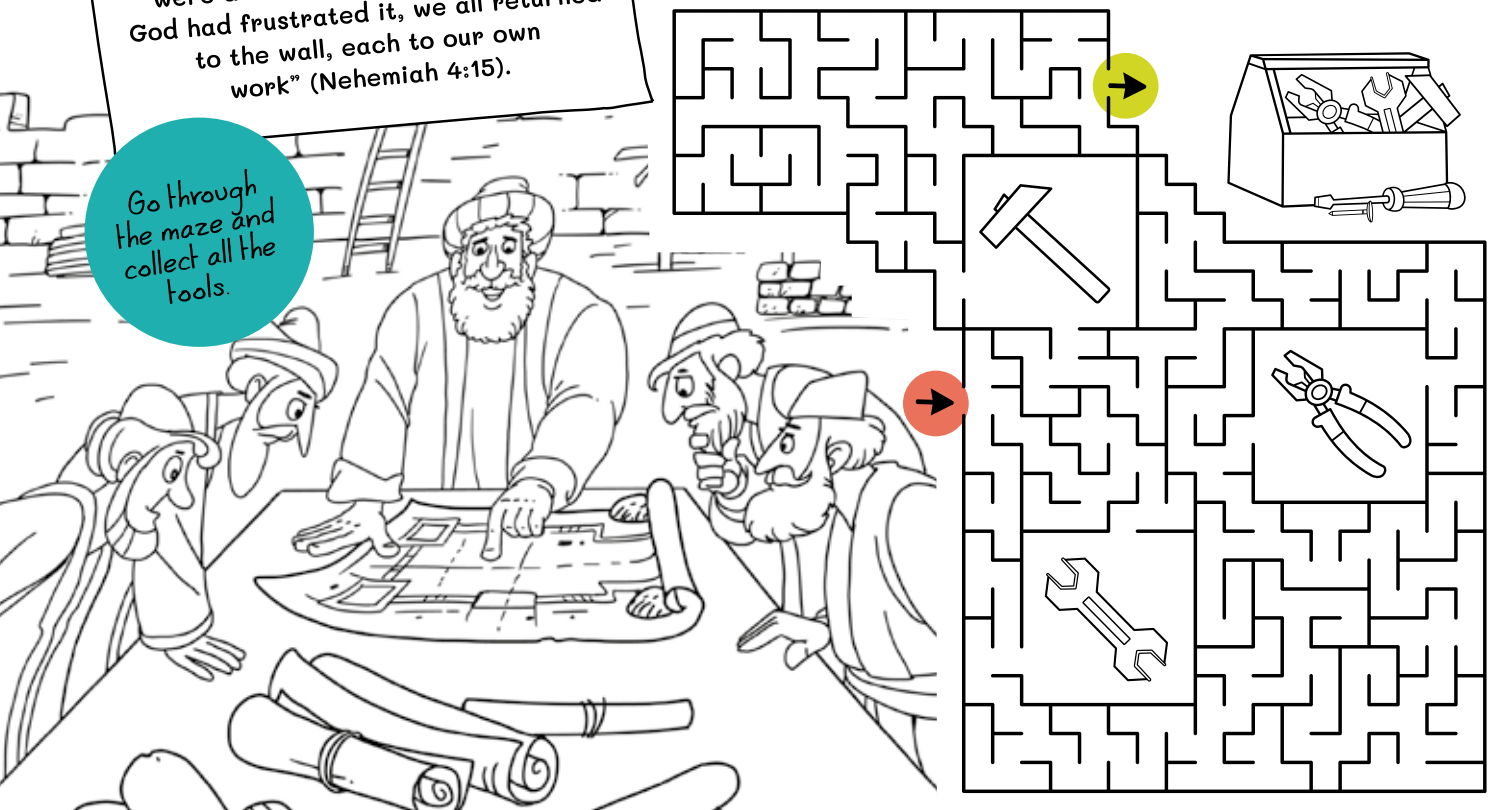
TOOL CHALLENGE

WHAT IMAGES ARE MISSING IN EACH LINE?



MEMORY VERSE
"When our enemies heard that we were aware of their plot and that God had frustrated it, we all returned to the wall, each to our own work" (Nehemiah 4:15).

Go through the maze and collect all the tools.





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2022

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PR DARREN CHEERS

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ENQUIRIES:
snswsinglesministries@adventist.org.au
OR Wilma Falcke 0424097484 (AH or text)

Anniversary



WOOSLEY. On Sunday, September 18, 60-plus friends and family met at Yandina to celebrate the 60th wedding anniversary of Glen and Roslyn Woosley, who were married on September 10, 1962 in the Central church, Brisbane. This much-loved and respected couple have lived predominantly in Brisbane, Sydney and Perth where they have forged many friendships. In their marriage they have endeavoured to ensure God is placed first in all decisions, modelling a home that reflects the attributes of "righteous living, mercy and a humble walk with God" (Micah 2:8).

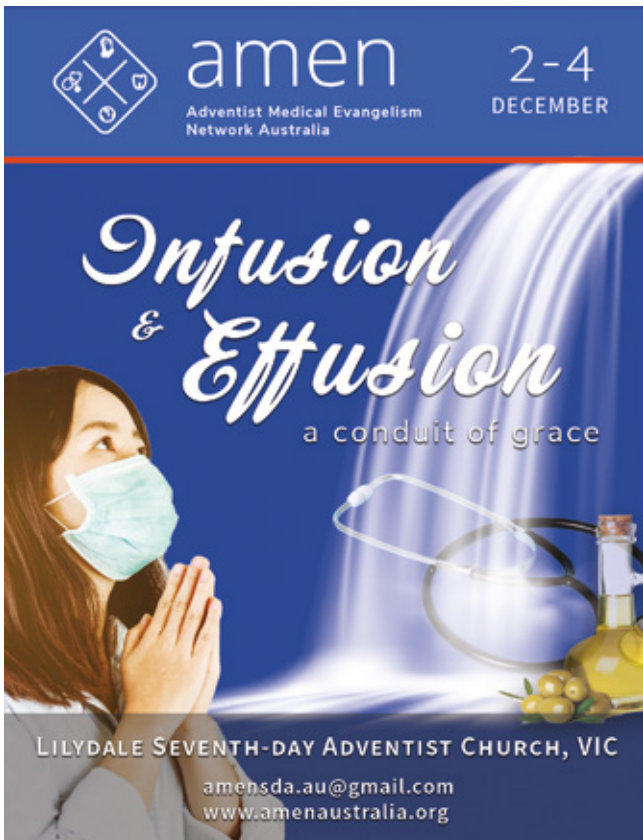
11.9.22 in Murwillumbah Hospital, NSW. Val was predeceased by his wife of 66 years, Elizabeth; siblings, Lynn and Fay; and grandson, Shayne. He is survived by his brothers, John and Bruce; children, Peter, Paul, Sally and Jane; eight grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren. After studying nursing at Sydney Adventist Hospital, Val served 38 years in the NSW ambulance service, including as an emergency paramedic. After an esteemed career, living in ambulance stations for many years and raising their beloved children, Val and Elizabeth retired in Bonnells Bay and later moved to Clothiers Creek. Val passed with the absolute certainty of sins forgiven and eternal life.

SCHOFIELD, June Constance (nee James), born 2.6.1933 in Parramatta, NSW; died 4.6.22 in Taree. She was predeceased by her husband, Jack in 2016. June is survived by her children, Allan and Ilan, Geoffrey, Jennifer and Peter; grandchildren; and great-grandchildren. The James family were among the founding members of the original Kellyville church. June was also a long-standing member of both Windsor and Taree

Obituaries



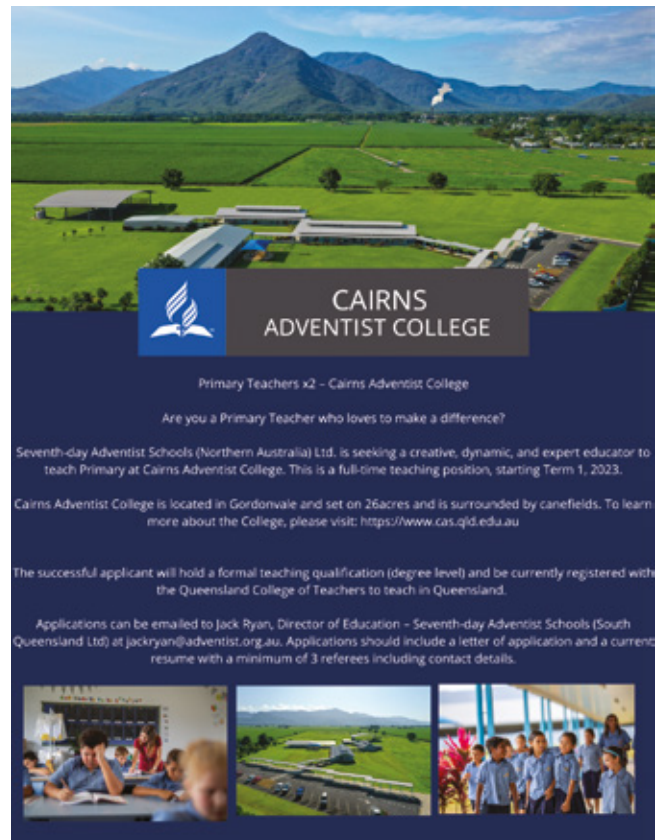
McMAHON, Val Edmund, born 13.1.1932 in Warburton, Vic; died



amen 2-4 DECEMBER
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CAIRNS ADVENTIST COLLEGE

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Are you a Primary Teacher who loves to make a difference?

Seventh-day Adventist Schools (Northern Australia) Ltd. is seeking a creative, dynamic, and expert educator to teach Primary at Cairns Adventist College. This is a full-time teaching position, starting Term 1, 2023.

Cairns Adventist College is located in Gordonvale and set on 26 acres and is surrounded by canefields. To learn more about the College, please visit: <https://www.cas.qld.edu.au>

The successful applicant will hold a formal teaching qualification (degree-level) and be currently registered with the Queensland College of Teachers to teach in Queensland.

Applications can be emailed to Jack Ryan, Director of Education - Seventh-day Adventist Schools (South Queensland Ltd) at jackryan@adventist.org.au. Applications should include a letter of application and a current resume with a minimum of 3 referees including contact details.

churches. June will be remembered for the love of her family, devotion to prayer and dedication to Jesus.

Paul Richardson, Graham Stewart



VYSMA, Judith
Dorothy, born
28.7.1940 in Sydney
Adventist Hospital,
NSW; died 6.10.22 in

Pindara Private Hospital, Southport, Qld. In 1961 she married Heino, who she met at Avondale College. She was predeceased by her sister, Jan Hades. Judith is survived by her husband; children, Karenne and Terry Leach, Sharlene and Ron Williams, and Sondra and Aaron Ford; grandchildren, Caitlin, Maddison, Troy, Jesse and Indianna; and sister, Julie Oliver. Judy and Heino ministered in Victoria and South Queensland conferences for some 26 years. They lived their later lives in the Gold Coast area where Judy conducted a soft furnishings business. Both Judy and Heino were very active in their local Gold Coast Central church.

Barry Oliver, Peter Stojanovic,
Stephen Bewes



WRIGHT, Lorna
Estelle, born
29.2.1936 in Sydney,
NSW; died 6.10.22 in
Avondale House,

Cooranbong. She was married to Barry, who predeceased her. Her children, Jennifer Gauci and Peter Wright also predeceased her. She is survived by sisters, Gwen (Hornsby) and Pamela (Wyong); and her grandchildren, Thomas and Liana Gauci. Lorna was a registered nurse and later a florist. She enjoyed the beauty of flowers and the wonders of God's creation. Lorna was strong of faith and awaits the soon return of Jesus.

Roger Nixon

Advertising

BIBLE LAND TOURS 2023

Five fantastic programs conducted by experienced tour leaders. Peter Roennfeldt: to Jordan/Israel and Turkey/Greece, including Patmos. Four departure

dates. Gary Kent: to Israel, Jordan and Egypt—October 2023. Contact Anita at Allround Travel for tour details. Email <alltrav@bigpond.net.au> or mobile 0405260155.

SABBATH SCHOOL LESSON ON AUDIO CD

Christian Services for the Blind produces an audio CD of the Sabbath school lesson quarterly for those with vision impairment. If you or someone you know could benefit from this free service please contact us. Phone: +61 (0)2 9847 2296. Email <csfbhi@adventistmedia.org.au>. Post to Christian Services for the Blind, Locked Bag 1115, Wahroonga NSW 2076.

Positions Vacant

PEOPLE AND CULTURE MANAGER—AUC OFFICE RINGWOOD, VIC

Are you a people person with a passion for helping others achieve in the workplace? The Seventh-day Adventist Church (AUC) Limited is seeking an experienced HR professional to join the team as people and culture manager. In this role, you will work closely with the Union secretary to ensure a healthy and positive working environment, enhancing the effectiveness of the Church in its mission across Australia. This broad and varied role requires the individual to possess well-developed organisational and administrative skills, including strong attention to detail and the ability to prioritise as well as maintain a high level of confidentiality. The successful candidate will also boast excellent communication skills and the ability to collaborate and work in a team setting. If you have qualifications and experience in HR (or similar) and are looking for an opportunity to serve the Church, please contact Michael Worker at <michaelworker@adventist.org.au> for a position description and application requirements. The appointing body reserves the right to fill this position at its discretion and to close applications early. Only those who have a legal right to work in Australia may apply. **Applications close November 24, 2022.**

MARKETING AND WEB COORDINATOR—ADVENTIST MEDIA WAHROONGA, NSW

Passionate about sharing Jesus? Excited at the prospect of using your digital and web skills in sharing, promoting, and confessing the gospel of Jesus Christ and fulfil His great commission? This is an exciting opportunity for a dynamic and enthusiastic marketing and web coordinator to join the Adventist Media team. In this role you will develop, market and upload to digital and web platforms engaging, instructional and interactive Scripture-based content and resources to make sharing Jesus simple. If this is you, why not contact us by emailing <corpserv@adventistmedia.org.au> for a copy of the full job description. This is a fixed term role. The appointing body reserves the right to fill this position at its discretion and to close applications early. Only those who have a legal right to work in Australia may apply. **Applications close November 28, 2022.**

MISSIONARY LUNCH. 1PM, DECEMBER 10. KRESSVILLE ACTIVITIES CENTRE (Opposite the Village church)

Current and ex-missionaries, descendants and friends are invited to lunch. Please bring a lunch and your plate. Cutlery and drinks provided. Our theme for short talks this year is "Answers to prayers/ miracles". Queries to Warren Martin. 0428 727 384.

AVONDALE FAMILY FUNERALS

offer a comprehensive funeral service, personalised with utmost care, compassion and respect to communities from Sydney to Newcastle. As committed Adventists, our family is here to guide you every step of the way. Contact Mark Windus on 0411 797 854 or <director@avondalefamilyfunerals.com.au>.



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