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telling
our stories

connecting
our family

sharing
our hope



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Conference partners with IIWO

Christchurch, New Zealand

South New Zealand Conference (SNZC) and It Is Written Oceania (IIWO) partnered to run an evangelistic series across Christchurch.

The series opened on February 22 with an audience that included 130 non-Adventists. *It Is Written* presenter Pastor Gary Kent was the profiled speaker.

Due to limitations on venue availability, the meetings were held consecutively every Sunday, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. Despite this, after four weeks, around 50 non-Adventists were still attending each evening.

"More than 40 decisions have been made for baptism and many contacts are already attending church or are involved in Bible studies," reported SNZC president Pastor Damien Rice.

He also noted that the Conference intentionally advertised the program with a clear connection to the Adventist Church's name and logo.

"We found this had no negative impact," Pastor Rice

said. "In time, we believe the Church brand will become better known and trusted in conjunction with biblical and lifestyle programs."

SNZC ministerial secretary Pastor Mike Sikuri believes the success of the campaign demonstrates that there are

people in secular countries who are open to the gospel.

"Historically our Church has grown through media, evangelism and church planting," Pastor Rice said. "With continued emphasis on these strategies and nurturing of healthy churches, strong members and competent leaders, we are optimistic about the future progress of the work in New Zealand." —*Vania Chew/Damien Rice*



SNZC team with advertising.

Pastors challenged to lose weight, maintain health

Nadi, Fiji

Pastors from the Trans-Pacific Union Mission have embarked on a challenge to lose weight and improve their health. During health checks at the Trans-Pacific Union Mission ministers' meetings at Fulton College in February, it was discovered that only seven of more than 120 pastors were in the ideal weight range. The rest were obese—some very—and more than half of the participants were at risk of becoming diabetic.

In response, pastors from the Samoas-Tokelau Mission suggested a weight loss challenge, which started on March 1 and will run until June 30. The aim is to help motivate the pastors to lose weight, reduce blood sugar, hypertension and blood pressure.

While at Fulton, the pastors committed themselves to exercise every day and invited others to join them. They plan to reduce the amount of food they eat and eat less refined food and meat. Every few weeks they will receive health and weight loss tips.

Samoa, Fiji, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands Missions will film three ministers for a Hope Channel program, *Pacific Pastors Weight Challenge*. They will be filmed when they are talking to their family and church, eating, exercising and making some comments to the camera.

—*TPUM newsletter/Jarrold Stackelroth*



Church makes statement on vaccines

Silver Spring, Maryland, US

The Seventh-day Adventist Church has issued an official statement on vaccines, saying it "encourages responsible immunisation" and has no faith-based reason to discourage believers from participating in immunisation programs.

The full statement, titled "Immunisation", says:

"The Seventh-day Adventist Church places strong emphasis on health and wellbeing. The Adventist health emphasis is based on biblical revelation, the inspired writing of E G White (co-founder of the Church) and on peer-reviewed scientific literature. As such, we encourage responsible immunisation/vaccination, and have no religious or faith-based reason not to encourage our

adherents to responsibly participate in protective and preventive immunisation programs. We value the health and safety of the population, which includes the maintenance of 'herd immunity'.

"We are not the conscience of the individual church member and recognise individual choices. These are exercised by the individual. The choice not to be immunised is not and should not be seen as the dogma nor the doctrine of the Seventh-day Adventist Church." —*Adventist Review*





Jesus who?

James Standish

John Lennon once quipped the Beatles were “more popular than Jesus”. Not so fast. In recent years, the Beatles averaged annual sales of roughly 3.5 million physical and digital albums in the US. Not bad for a band that broke up in 1970. The Bible? It’s selling in the range of 25 million copies every year in the US. Not bad for a Book completed nearly 2000 years ago! For those of you who are counting, that’s 700 per cent more Bibles than Beatles.

And it’s not just sales: it’s memories. Baby boomers are tut-tutting about Beatle illiteracy among the “youth of today”. A video went viral recently of New York teenagers struggling to name a single Beatles song. And asked to name a Beatle, guesses included Larry, George Michael and John Legend. John Legend, by the way, is a singer who was born eight years after the Beatles broke up. And this year there was a Twittnado when Kanye West fans asked who that “old guy” was he had been collaborating with. OVO Josh said it best: “I don’t know who Paul McCartney is but Kanye is going to give this man a career w/ this new song!!”

While the Beatles may be fading, a poll in the US found 90 per cent of Americans have a favourable view of Jesus and only 3 per cent a negative view.¹ Today there are roughly 2.3 billion people globally who describe themselves as Christians. And Britain’s *Guardian* newspaper, no friend of enthusiastic Christianity, published an article last year about the most influential people in history. Number one on the list? I’ll give you a hint: His name begins with ‘J’ and it’s not John.

According to Pew Research, 73 per cent of Americans believe in the virgin birth and a Rasmussen poll found 64 per cent believe Jesus rose from the dead. Which naturally raises the question: why do people find it easier to believe a virgin had a baby than a person was resurrected? But that’s only the beginning of the paradoxes.

Even as Jesus rides high in the polls. Even as the Bible is the best-selling Book every year. Even as the number of Christians explodes globally. Belief in what Jesus taught is waning—particularly in the West. Despite the numerous times Jesus cast out demons and referred by name to Satan, 60 per cent of American Christians aren’t sure

Satan exists. And, stunningly, four in 10 American Christians believe Jesus may have sinned while on earth,² despite the centrality of the spotless Lamb to the story of salvation.

But it’s when we go from beliefs to practices that the chasm really grows. According to a Pew study, roughly 80 per cent of Americans disagree with Jesus’ stringent view of divorce and 70 per cent disagree with the Bible’s teachings on sex outside of marriage. And it’s not just Jesus’ views on sexuality that are roundly rejected. His teachings on everything from materialism through to creation are routinely ignored or openly mocked.

So who is this Jesus who is so famous and popular? And how can He be so popular when much of what the real Jesus said and did is so deeply unpopular? The answer may be as simple as ignorance. Here, things get tragically humorous. Albert Mohler summarises the problem as follows:

“A Barna poll indicated that at least 12 per cent of adults believe that Joan of Arc was Noah’s wife. Another survey of graduating high school seniors revealed that over 50 per cent thought that Sodom and Gomorrah were husband and wife. A considerable number of respondents to one poll indicated that the Sermon on the Mount was preached by Billy Graham” (www.christianity.com/1270946/).

The popular Jesus is a caricature without content. A picture without pixels. Like the Rorschach inkblot test, Jesus has become a function of what we want to see. In a knowledge vacuum, Christ is everything, anything and, ultimately, nothing.

But the real Jesus is not a frame on which we can conveniently hang whatever social wind is blowing or personal preference we may have. He is complex and confronting. And the more complete picture we have, the more challenging His message is to our modern culture and our sinful hearts. This Easter, let’s embrace the full story of Jesus, not a shallow substitute. Let’s ask God to conform our lives to His, not rewrite His story to conform to ours. Let’s follow Jesus, not expect Jesus to follow us.

1. <www.publicpolicypolling.com>, “Americans love Jesus, Lincoln and themselves.”

2. <www.barna.org>, “Most American Christians do not believe that Satan or the Holy Spirit exist.”

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Cover Credit: Carrie Unser

“Lynette lost her house in Cyclone Pam but is still helping others.”

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



All about love

Linden Chuang

"Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for his friends" (John 15:13 NIV).

We usually see this verse as a salute to those who have lost their lives through unbelievable acts of heroism. There's the soldier who hurls himself onto a grenade to protect his mate or the surfer who gives up her board to the desperate stranger swept out to sea.

There's no diminishing this sort of self-sacrifice. However, dying for somebody else isn't the only way of showing the "greater love" Jesus was describing.

Few of us will ever face the choice of taking a bullet for a friend but that doesn't free us from the call to lay down our lives. Life, after all, is so much more than breaths and heartbeats.

"My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's [happiness, enjoyment, comfort, success, plans, desires, dreams] for his friends" (John 15:12,13).

The idea of sacrificing such things is difficult, and doesn't come naturally. Society itself is hell-bent on convincing us that our top priority should be our own pursuit of happiness. And we've gladly bought into the lie—at the expense of a lot of time, effort and relationships.

Christians, though, were never meant to conform to the "pattern of this world" (Romans 12:2). We are called to love—and "love" by its very definition "is not self-seeking" (1 Corinthians 13:4). It is a "steady wish for the loved person's ultimate good as far as it can be obtained" (C S Lewis).

"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others" (Philippians 2:3,4 NIV).

We need only look at the life of Christ to discover what "greater love" and self-sacrifice really mean. For not only did He lay down His life on the cross but throughout the 33 years He spent on this earth.

For Jesus, it was never about Himself—He was only focused on the will of the Father and the salvation of sinners. It's amazing to think the Creator of the universe never placed Himself at the centre of it! But that's the persona He adopted and it's one He prescribes to each one of us.

Does that mean we shouldn't seek happiness or chase dreams? No. But if our pursuits are void of love and only lead to personal gain, then perhaps we need to step away from them. The Bible says our lives are nothing but "a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes" (James 4:14). Thus, all the days or years we have left are really ever only "a little more time to love" (Steven Curtis Chapman).

"The measure of a Christian is not in the height of his grasp but in the depth of his love" (Clarence Jordan).

You don't have to die in order to show the world "greater love" but you do have to sacrifice. Choose to lay down your life today—there's no greater thing you will ever do.

Linden Chuang is assistant editor—digital of Adventist Record.



Grace and wisdom

The business session of the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist Church will be held in San Antonio, Texas, between July 2 and 12. Known as the General Conference Session, it is held every five years and attracts church members from across the world. It will be a time of spiritual renewal, reflecting on growth and changes in the Church, setting strategic directions and policy determination.

Of the tens of thousands of people who attend, some 2200 will have been appointed by the General Conference and its constituent bodies (the Unions) to be their representatives. We call them "delegates". These church members have the authority to vote on matters placed before them. This is a very significant responsibility and privilege as there are always matters on the agenda of considerable importance to the Church.

A total of 102 delegates are appointed from within the South Pacific Division (SPD). Eleven are our current SPD members of the General Conference Executive Committee; 65 are appointed from and by the Unions; and 26 are appointed by the Division. This year the delegates will be asked to consider agenda items, including: amendments to our statement of fundamental beliefs; a resolution on the Bible; the theology and practice of ministerial ordination; and amendments to the Church Manual.

Please pray that those who have been asked to assume the responsibility of representing us will be granted grace and wisdom, and that our mission to make disciples for Jesus will be greatly enhanced by the decisions made at this General Conference session.

Dr Barry Oliver is president of the South Pacific Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.



Winning the war

The United Kingdom has drawn worldwide attention by passing plain tobacco packaging laws through the House of Commons, with a strong majority. Australia's plain packaging laws have been part of a successful anti-tobacco policy that has seen smoking rates decline by more than 12 per cent since December 2012. — *The Guardian*



Safety concerns

Veteran NSW parliamentarian Fred Nile has questioned Federal security funding for schools that fear racial or religious attacks. Jewish and Islamic schools form the bulk of the successful applicants. Mr Nile pointed to recent incidents where Sydney churches were vandalised—some of the attacks appeared to be motivated by religious hatred. — *Christian Democratic Party*



Not welcome

Four hundred Christians escaping persecution in Pakistan have run into trouble in Thailand. They've been arrested by local police, who say the Pakistanis—men, women and children—are illegal immigrants who should be deported. Group members have applied for official refugee status and received assistance from local churches before their arrest. — *CBN News*



Making learning fun

The Ellen G White Estate has released a free game on iTunes and Google Play that poses a series of multiple choice questions focusing on the gift of prophecy in the Bible and in the ministry of Adventist Church co-founder Ellen White. Players who successfully complete "Pitcairn" can receive a Pathfinder honour. — *Adventist Review*



Round robin

Bible Society Australia held a fundraising cricket tournament at Sydney University Oval, between the Catholic, Anglican and C3 churches. Despite the Pentecostal C3 team claiming the victory in advance and Calvinist expressions of predestination from the Anglicans, it was the Catholics who held the golden chalice aloft at the end of the day. — *Bible Society Australia*



Captives still

Details about the 200-plus Syrian Christians taken prisoner by ISIS are hazy. Early reports that all had been released turned out to be inaccurate. Only 23 were freed but it seems ISIS has kept the rest as human shields. Local church leaders are pleading for the women and children to be released. — *Asia News*

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Practical book puts power back in prayer

Launching Place, Victoria

A new book about prayer is thought to be the first book published by Signs Publishing from a Papua New Guinean author.

Keeping Connection: Rediscovering the Power of Prayer, by Pastor Zuzai Hizoke, was launched at JumBunna Lodge, Victoria, on March 15. The launch took place during the annual Adventist Book Centre (ABC) managers' seminar. About 30 ABC managers and mission CFOs from Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea (PNG), Solomon Islands, Fiji, Vanuatu and Samoa attended along with representatives from the Australian Union Conference (AUC), the Victorian Conference and Signs Publishing.

"It can be dangerous to claim a 'first' but we believe that this is the first book Signs has published by a Papua New Guinean author, which is an exciting thing," said Signs Publishing book editor Nathan Brown. "We've been working on this project for a number of years. It is a practical, biblical, motivating book on the power of prayer but it also offers us unique insights from the perspective of Papua New Guinean faith and culture."

In launching *Keeping Connection*, AUC president Pastor Chester Stanley quoted from the book and described it as one that anyone can read and be blessed by. He also led a prayer of dedication for the book.

Pastor Benny Soga, president of the Eastern Highlands Simbu Mission (EHSM) based at Goroka, participated in the launch on behalf of the Church in PNG and thanked Signs for publishing the book, which has been a passion of Pastor Hizoke's for many years.

"My main focus is to get people back to prayer," said Pastor Hizoke, who is currently EHSM general secretary.

"'More prayer, more power,' we say—but are we really doing it?"

Pastor Hizoke knows the power of prayer. His parents divorced when he was very young. At 14 his mother remarried, leaving him at a "crossroads". Homeless and unsure whether he should continue his studies, Pastor Hizoke relied heavily on his faith. "If it wasn't for God I wouldn't be here. I rode on the wings of prayer to where I am today," he said.

Pastor Hizoke spent 10 years working on *Keeping Connection*. He had an earlier version of the book bound himself, leading prayer seminars and selling copies to help fund his postgraduate studies at Avondale College.

"Prayer is all about relationship. It shouldn't just be something we go to when we need something, when we are in trouble," he said. "If we can learn to walk with Jesus on Planet Earth [through prayer], we will be ready to walk with Him forever."

The program also included awards for accreditation of ABCs in PNG and the Pacific. North New Zealand ABC was awarded ABC of the Year for Australia and NZ.

Keeping Connection is available from Adventist Book Centres in Australia and NZ, with plans for a book launch in PNG later this year. —Jarrod Stackelroth

Watch the Record InFocus interview with Pastor Hizoke <vimeo.com/122592056>.



Pastors Soga, Stanley and Hizoke with *Keeping Connection*.

Adventist study of work-life balance concerning

Cooranbong, New South Wales

Email is intrusive but employees do not want restrictions placed on their use of it at home, research by Avondale College of Higher Education's Business School shows.

More than 200 administrators, support staff members and teachers employed by Adventist Schools Australia (ASA) and surveyed by academics from the school praised the increased flexibility anytime work email provided but condemned the unrealistic expectations it generated.

Responses to Peter Williams, Warrick Long and Dr Peter Morey's study reveal anytime email leads to longer working hours and generates a sense of being overloaded. The irony, according to a paper the three have had published in the latest edition of the *TEACH Journal of Christian Education*, is that this is "contrary to [ASA's] espoused values of a work and life balance and the importance of family".

Despite this, an overwhelming number of responses suggest administrators and teachers in particular feel limiting access to anytime email would be "too restricting".

"We had respondents who indicated they were checking their email multiple times a day while on holiday," said Peter Williams, lead author and a former primary and high school teacher in Adventist schools. "It just shows how ingrained anytime email is in everyday work life."

The survey also compared the work-life balance of the ASA employees with those of other working Australians. It found the administrators and teachers but not support staff members had higher levels of interference than any group in the national survey. The paper notes this "should be of concern" for ASA because it supports "a holistic view of living including promoting periods of rest and disconnection from the workplace". —Brenton Stacey



Peter Williams.

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NEWS

Vanuatu smashed by Cyclone Pam

Port Vila, Vanuatu

An estimated 50 per cent of Vanuatu's population of 125,000 people has been affected by Cyclone Pam, which ripped through the island nation last month.

At least four Adventist churches in Vanuatu's capital, Port Vila, were completely destroyed in the Category 5 cyclone. At the time of writing there was no word from some of the outer islands.

Potoroki Adventist Church, one of the largest churches in Port Vila, lost part of its roof, the verandah and a house behind the church.

The mission compound itself sustained a little damage and many of the office electronics suffered water damage. Some HopeChannel equipment was also destroyed or damaged by water.

The school at Mamau has sustained serious damage to most buildings. The only report of the Kwataparen school on Tanna is that it is "gone", while at Port Quimi Junior Secondary most of the buildings have lost their rooves.

"There are no Adventist casualties in Port Vila that we know of but people have lost friends, neighbours and loved ones and the Church is committed to supporting our community in any way we can," said Pastor Nos Terry, president of the Vanuatu Mission.

But the danger is not over. Food will be scarce for the next six months as most of the vegetables, bananas and other crops were destroyed. Homelessness and hygiene will also be big problems.

"Ensuring good hygiene is critical following a disaster like this," said Mark le Roux, country director for the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Vanuatu. "Disease can spread quickly and with health services already stretched the situation can turn deadly."

ADRA is playing a key role in securing the health and sanitation of evacuation centres on the main island of Efate, while also continuing to assess the needs of those on other islands as they are revealed.

A regional Emergency Response Team, comprised of ADRA staff from offices around the South Pacific, was also mobilised to provide additional support for ADRA's ongoing activities.

Pastor Terry fears that churches will have trouble meeting for some time as many have lost roofs or suffered structural damage.

"The greatest need of the Church as I speak now, is to put roofs on churches or at least shelters so people can worship again," he said.

The Church must wait for all of its insurance claims to come through.

"I would solicit the prayers of our people throughout the Division for the Church here and the people of Vanuatu," Pastor Terry said. —Jarrod Stackelroth/Braden Blyde



The work of cleaning and rebuilding begins.

REVIVED BY HIS WORD

April 4—25, 2015

READING THROUGH THE BIBLE TOGETHER
ONE CHAPTER A DAY

4 - 2 Cor. 5	8 - 2 Cor. 9	12 - 2 Cor. 13	16 - Gal. 4	20 - Eph. 2	24 - Eph. 6
5 - 2 Cor. 6	9 - 2 Cor. 10	13 - Gal. 1	17 - Gal. 5	21 - Eph. 3	25 - Phil. 1
6 - 2 Cor. 7	10 - 2 Cor. 11	14 - Gal. 2	18 - Gal. 6	22 - Eph. 4	
7 - 2 Cor. 8	11 - 2 Cor. 12	15 - Gal. 3	19 - Eph. 1	23 - Eph. 5	



Mega Project Hope PNG

by Jarrod Stackelroth

In a landmark achievement for Adventist television, Mega Project Hope PNG saw 303 30-minute TV programs filmed in just 20 days at locations around Papua New Guinea (PNG).

Project Hope events enable HopeChannels across the world to build up a stockpile of local content for broadcast in their markets. This is the first time it has been attempted on such a large scale, hence the "Mega".

"The largest Project Hope ever conducted in our world-wide Church did not happen by accident," said Geraldine Przybylko, director of Media Ministries for Adventist Media Network. "It was God unifying His people and institutions to step out in faith and do even greater works so that our Church can broadcast HopeChannel across the nation to bring precious souls to Jesus."

An international crew of 30 professionals representing 17 nationalities joined 25 PNG mission workers and more than 30 local volunteers to film and produce the programs. Hundreds of others were involved, including choirs, business people, pastors, academics and more. Featuring local presenters, the programs were recorded in English and Tok Pisin. A strength of the project is that now local people are trained in making television and can continue producing Adventist programming.

"These people are empowered and are ready to contribute to the Church where possible," said Pastor Andrew Opis, communication director for the Papua New Guinea Union Mission (PNGUM).

"[It was a] humbling experience to see how locals were trained, new talent found and an incredible mateship develop between international and local crew," project manager Edgard Lopez said. "We have made memories for a lifetime!"

The programs include sermons and evangelism, praise and singing, health, finances and personal testimonies. HopeChannel even used a remote-controlled drone to take aerial shots of PNG's Parliament House, the first time this has been permitted.

With a demanding schedule and editors working around

the clock, 82 per cent of the programs are already edited and ready for broadcast. The rest are close to completion. "In the land of the unexpected, we never expected to produce 303 30-minute TV programs in 20 days. This can only be attributed to God leading the project," Mr Lopez said.

There were challenges however: many of the international crew were delayed in Singapore for two days due to aircraft mechanical problems; a protest in Port Moresby led to fuel shortages; a week was lost due to customs issues and there were problems with air-conditioning.

But in the end the project was a success.

"I was impressed with the quality of what the team produced," said Kent Kingston, host of *Record InFocus* and one of the international producers called in to assist. "Not just in terms of the high-tech gear and 'production values' brought by the international team but by the quality of the stories told and issues dealt with by our local producers. I believe what was put together during Mega Project Hope PNG exceeds the quality of much of the local content shown on PNG television."

That quality content is ready to broadcast as soon as HopeChannel secures its free-to-air licence—something that will hopefully occur before the end of this year.

"Thank you to the South Pacific Division and PNGUM who helped with funding, but especially to Pacific Adventist University which has been a major partner in providing venues for filming, establishing studios, assisting in organising air-conditioning, accommodation for international and local crews, catering facilities, transportation and support staff for the duration of the project," Pastor Opis said. "Without them the project would not have been successful."

Project Hope Fiji is planned for April-May 2016 in Nadi. The Trans-Pacific Union Mission would also like to produce 300 programs. Two permanent TV studios are currently under construction in the Fiji Mission, which is hosting the event. Project Hope Fiji will produce programs for Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Tuvalu, Samoas-Tokelau and Tonga Missions.

Easter: good or bad?

heart health and hearing loss

why Jesus had to die?

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Cyclone survivor helps others

Lynette is a mother of five, including a disabled six-year-old daughter.

When I meet her, she's busy organising her team of Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) volunteers.

"We rebuilt two kitchens yesterday—the boys are very skilful," she says with a proud smile.

She and her team of 31 ADRA volunteers have been working for days, going around to people's yards and making sure their rubbish is collected and large debris is cut up and removed.

She's helping those affected by the hugely destructive Cyclone Pam that devastated Vanuatu last month—despite losing her own home in the disaster.

"My roof just flew off," she says, remembering the howling winds that tore apart her home. "All of my family went to a safe house but my son and I stayed at our house."

"I was crying a bit and I told my son to hide under the table."

"We were praying but the wind was so strong and the roof just flew off."

Early the next morning when she ventured outside she saw that not only was the roof gone, but her kitchen and bathroom were also destroyed.

"Early in the morning I said to God, 'if you save us, I will help others.' And that's why I am here today."

Lynette is staying at another house but she still doesn't have clean water. "We are scared of getting sick from the water. We boil, boil, boil it."

I asked her what she would say to others who are interested in supporting the effort in Vanuatu. Her answer was simple: "We just need people to help. Don't wait."—as reported by Carrie Unser, who was in Vanuatu as part of ADRA's Emergency Response Team.



OPINION POLL

How can we best help our brothers and sisters in Vanuatu?

- Allow them to rebuild themselves
- Express our sympathy and support
- Pray for them everyday
- Give generously to ADRA appeal for Vanuatu
- Financially support our Adventist remote clinics in Vanuatu

Visit <record.net.au> to vote.

When God the Father wept?

by Simon Davidson

ALmighty God: ALL-KNOWING, ALL-POWERFUL and eternal. He spoke the world and everything in it into existence. But can you picture God weeping? We know that Jesus wept. But did God the Father? We can't say with certainty but there are indications that make me believe He did.

If we are emotionally affected by the sufferings of people close to us, how did God the Father—the Creator of our emotions—feel when His Son was crucified?

Jesus—His lifeblood pouring out—hanging almost naked on the cross. His cry of rejection, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?", echoed through the universe (Matthew 27:46).

How did these words impact the Father? Was He unmoved? Was He cold, indifferent, distant and unaffected by the suffering of His Son as some perceive God to be about human suffering today?

Could the God who asked, "Can a mother forget her sucking child and have no compassion?" (Isaiah 49:15), be unaffected by His own Son's suffering? Did the God who was "afflicted in all the afflictions" of His redeemed people (Isaiah 63:9), remain unaffected as His own Son died?

Yes, He was afflicted. He was affected—deeply affected.

God the Father was there in the shadow of the cross. He saw everything. Ellen White says, when the darkness covered the earth, the Father descended, "God and his holy angels were beside the cross. The Father was with His Son. Yet His presence was not revealed."¹ He felt it when He saw the soldier thrust the spear into His Son's side. While the Son cried out at the pain of His Father's rejection, did the Father sob at the pain of separation? At the cross, while legions of demons celebrated the defeat of their enemy, was the Father in tears? As the religious leaders and the bloodthirsty crowd cried in delight, did the Father cry in anguish?

In my mind's eye I do see Him weeping—as Jesus

engaged in battle with the devil's legions in the garden of Gethsemane and sweated blood; when He was rejected and condemned to death; when He was engulfed in darkness; when He cried out at His feeling of rejection by His Father. Jeremiah cried, oh that "my eyes [were] a fountain of tears. I would weep day and night for the slain of my people" (Jeremiah 9:1). The fountain of tears in God's eyes may well have burst forth and flowed freely. The fountain of divine compassion was broken at the loss of His only begotten Son.

In this tense and emotional moment He had the power to respond to the Son's cry for help. In an instant He could have displayed His power and wiped out all the enemies of good. But this might have short-circuited the plan of salvation. Instead the mighty God of the universe was grieved. Grief is a sign of helplessness. He chose to grieve—and maybe even weep—rather than use His power and lose His children forever.

To end the pain and weeping that sin had brought, God allowed His Son to die on the cross. Christ's death paid the penalty—His resurrection destroyed the power of sin forever. In the new Eden, restored through the cross, there will be an atmosphere free from pain and weeping. We will never weep again.

In our pain, in our rejection, in our own weeping, when the Father seems silent—like He doesn't care—we must be reminded that He was grieved in the deepest form possible and maybe, just maybe, He wept. He feels our afflictions with us and He's right beside us, even when we weep. He suffered to allow the drama of salvation to proceed to its climax, which will result in a better future, a better life and a better experience—where weeping will be a thing of the past (see Revelation 21:4).

1. Ellen G White, *The Desire of Ages*, 754.

Simon Davidson lectures in the School of Theology at Sonoma College, Papua New Guinea.



PAU student attends Fiji writers' workshop

Lorna Hilan Saguba, a second year student at Pacific Adventist University, was one of three writers selected from Papua New Guinea to attend a five-day prose writing workshop in Suva, Fiji. The workshop was funded by the Commonwealth Foundation in partnership with The University of the South Pacific and Fiji National University. Lorna plans to use her writing talents for God's glory and hopes that He will use her to make a difference in the lives of others. —Glennis Anis



Alstonville church hosts prayer day

Alstonville church (NSW) hosted a World Day of Prayer event for the community on March 6. The Bahamas was the country of focus this year. Ladies representing five local churches were actively involved. Guest speaker Dr Glen Hughes challenged the 85 people present to consider the experience of Bartimaeus, the blind man who allowed Jesus to not only restore his sight, but have the power of the Holy Spirit transform his life. Participants were spiritually revitalised and very appreciative of the fellowship and hospitality at the morning tea. —Lydia Kalinowski



Radio training in Samoa

Adventist World Radio ran advanced radio training sessions for 20 people from Samoa, two people from Kiribati and four from Fiji in a studio in Apia in February. Participants learned how to use radio software, write scripts, do interviews and jingles—all with the purpose of utilising radio to spread the gospel message. —TPUM newsletter



Optimal viewing

HopeChannel has begun broadcasting programs in widescreen format for an optimal viewing experience. If your picture does not fill the screen on your TV, you will need to go to "Settings" or "Picture Aspect" and select "16:9" or "FULL". If you experience difficulties, consult your TV manual or contact HopeChannel. —Patricia Goncalves



No more leaks

More than 200 people gathered in Coffs Harbour church (NSW) on March 14 to celebrate the refurbishment of the 40-year-old building. The congregation is thankful to God for new pews, carpet and an air-conditioned facility that no longer leaks when it rains. —Bruce Manners



Another reason to eat your veggies

A vegetarian diet may reduce your risk of certain types of cancer by 22 per cent, according to a new analysis from the Adventist Health Study-2. Researchers at Loma Linda University Health (USA) found that eating a plant-based diet offers significant protection against cancers of the colon and rectum. The findings, published online in *Internal Medicine*, the journal of the American Medical Association, are the first to emerge from the university's multimillion-dollar Adventist Health Study-2 investigation that links diet to specific forms of cancer. —Adventist Review



First baptism from Vona Vona

Medical mission *Medisonship* has seen 38 baptisms as a result of its work over the past six years. They consider the most recent baptism a special highlight as Andrew and Delphinda are the first to commit their lives to God from the Vona Vona Lagoon (Solomon Islands), where they've been visiting for the past four years. The team are overjoyed to witness the pair's commitment and see the happiness that fills their lives. —Trevor Oliver



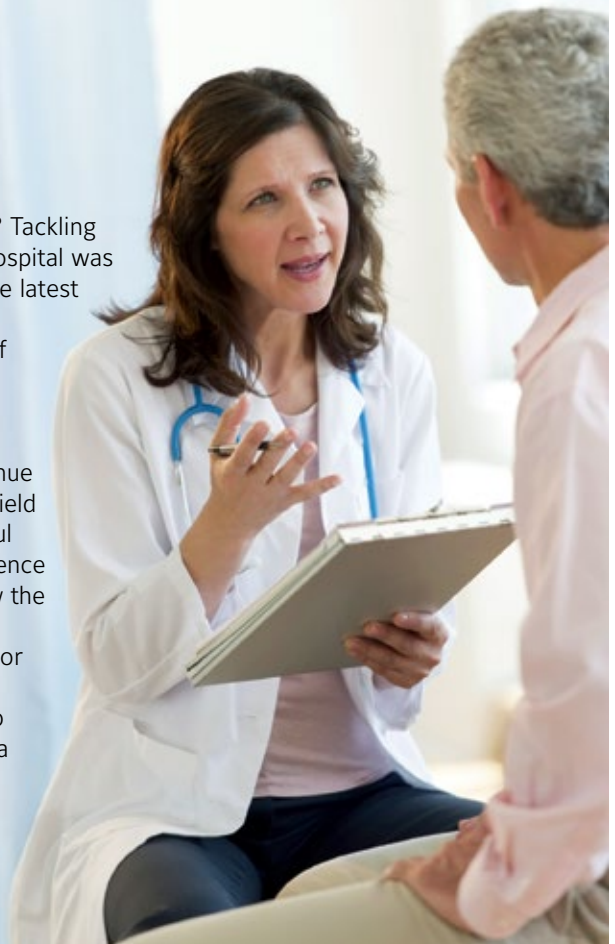
Paleo or plant-based #3

One of the most exciting things about the "Paleo or Plant-based? Tackling Current Controversies in Nutrition" event at the Sydney Adventist Hospital was seeing the room packed full of health professionals eager to hear the latest evidence from some of the world's top experts in nutrition.

What makes this so exciting is that it's a very tangible example of how many health professionals, just like the average person outside the profession, jump at the opportunity to expand their knowledge and keep up to date on the latest trends and evidence.

Most health professionals, like dietitians, need to show they continue their professional education and stay up to date on the latest in the field to maintain their accreditation. But what shone out from the insightful questions put to the speakers following their talks, was that the audience wasn't there for themselves. Question after question centred on how the latest evidence could be put into practice for their patients.

Unfortunately, we live in a time when a debate on the strengths or weaknesses of new or different health recommendations can often change from a genuine attempt to navigate the latest evidence into attacks on those having the discussion. But when you look around a full lecture theatre and hear almost every question include a version of "what does this mean for my patients?", it's a reminder that at times it's possible to be on opposite sides of the debate and still have a common goal. It's often that common goal that deserves the most focus.



Ricotta hotcakes with strawberries

Preparation time: 15 minutes Cooking time: 12 minutes Serves: 4

- 1 cup wholemeal plain flour**
- ½ cup plain flour**
- 2 teaspoons baking powder**
- Pinch salt**
- ¼ cup caster sugar**
- 2 eggs, separated**
- 1½ cups buttermilk**
- 150g low fat ricotta cheese, crumbled**
- 250g strawberries, hulled and halved lengthways**
- 2 tablespoons honey**

1. Sift flours, baking powder and salt into a large bowl. Stir in sugar.
2. Whisk egg yolks, buttermilk and ricotta in a jug. Beat egg whites in a bowl until soft peaks form. Gently stir buttermilk mixture into dry ingredients until just combined. Gently fold in egg whites in two batches using a large metal spoon.
3. Heat a large, greased, non-stick frying pan over medium-low heat. Using about ⅓ cup mixture per hotcake, drop mixture into pan and cook, in batches, for 2-3 minutes on each side until golden and cooked through.
4. Place hotcakes on serving plates. Top with strawberries. Drizzle with honey and serve.

NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVE: 1800kJ (420 cal). Protein 18g. Total Fat 9g. Saturated Fat 4g. Carbohydrate 66g. Total Sugars 8g. Sodium 310mg. Potassium 500mg. Calcium 260mg. Iron 2.3mg. Fibre 6g.

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

Sanitarium

LIFESTYLE
MEDICINE
SERVICES



Owen's offering

by James Standish

IF YOU LOOK AT THE OLD BLACK AND WHITE PHOTO IN a newspaper ARTICLE hanging on the wall of Bainfield Park Residential Care in Waikiwi (New Zealand), you may notice a familiar face. Yes, he's a little thinner. His sideburns were a lot thicker back then. And I suppose it's fair to say Owen Saunders is a bit younger in the photo. He should be. The photo was taken 34 years ago when Invercargill Adventist Church began a long adventure in residential care—an adventure with unexpected outcomes.

It all began when a property came up for sale in town. "The place was shocking. It hadn't been used for two

years," Owen remembers. Three people applied to buy it. One wanted to turn it into a backpackers' hostel. Another wanted it to become racing stables. Each of the proposals was backed by what was big money in 1980. "I went in on behalf of our local church and I had to level with them that we didn't have any money to put in at the outset. But I promised that if they awarded us the facility, we would do our best to use it to do something for the community and we'd make regular payments once we got it off the ground. I walked out thinking there was no way they'd choose my promises over the hard cash offers. I was wrong.

"We started as an aged care facility. A lot of people volunteered their labour in the early days. Just as well, as we had to invest a fortune to comply with all the regulations," Owen says. It was, in many ways, a rough start. There were financial problems. There were personnel challenges. There was even embezzlement. Maybe it wasn't God's plan for a local church to operate such a complicated institution?

"We've had our dramas over the years," Owen chuckles. "If you think it's easy to run a complex entity, try it! A number of years ago, we hit the wall financially. So I put up my farm as collateral. And I took direct control over the operations. I wasn't always loved for doing it but God has blessed. We've grown, put on new wings, expanded the facility and, thanks to God, we've been able to generate a reasonable excess each year."

Walking around Bainfield Park with Owen, it's obvious that everyone respects him. His brand of leadership is very hands on. He knows the details and he cares about the little things. Because when you get all the little things right, big things happen. We sit down in the beautiful recreation room with its vaulted ceilings and magnificent glass wall looking out over a restful little meadow. "Today 10 of our residents are elderly; the other 46 have a variety of long-term conditions that require care. Some have been in debilitating accidents, others have degenerative neurological diseases and there are a variety of other conditions," Owen says.

Bainfield Park has invested its excess for charitable endeavours—it helps support Invercargill Adventist School, pays the salary of an associate pastor for the church, contributed to the development of the Encounter Bible curriculum that is currently used in Australia, New Zealand

We've had our dramas over the years . . . but God has blessed. We've grown, put on new wings, expanded the facility, and thanks to God, we've been able to generate a reasonable excess each year.

and is growing in popularity in the US, and has sponsored a number of students through Avondale College.

Where did Owen learn the skills to lead a complex entity? He runs a 157 hectare farm and is the largest supplier of chaff—horse feed—in NZ. "I couldn't do what I do without my son Brendon and Margaret, my wife," Owen freely acknowledges. "They are my backbone!"

Owen also manages the South New Zealand Conference campground—Pascoe Park—even though he lives 600km from it. "We used to lose about \$NZ50,000 a year on the campground—that's about \$NZ25 for every single Adventist in South NZ. Today we're making a healthy surplus."

What's Owen's secret?

"It's a little word that starts with 'w' and ends in 'k', do you know it?" he laughs.

But it's not just hard work, it's also smarts mixed with compassion. After the Christchurch earthquake, Owen organised a bus to bring residents who were with-

out power and/or water to the campground to wash their clothes, shower and use the bathroom. The buses brought many distressed residents in every day. Seeing the need for a place to stay, Owen decided to expand the number of long-term residents in campers on the campground. Today there are 150 people who call the campground home, and the rent from those residents covers the cost of operating the ground and then some.

It isn't that everyone loves Owen or his style. "I get plenty of criticism. And I've ruffled plenty of feathers over the years. Sometimes in the church we are so busy tiptoeing around issues and keeping everyone happy that we fail to make the necessary decisions to keep our entities healthy. I suppose it's the farmer in me. On the farm we either run an efficient operation or we close. I think we should be at least as efficient in our Church. I'd rather get the job done right and face complaints than make decisions that I know will hurt the viability of our entities in the long run."

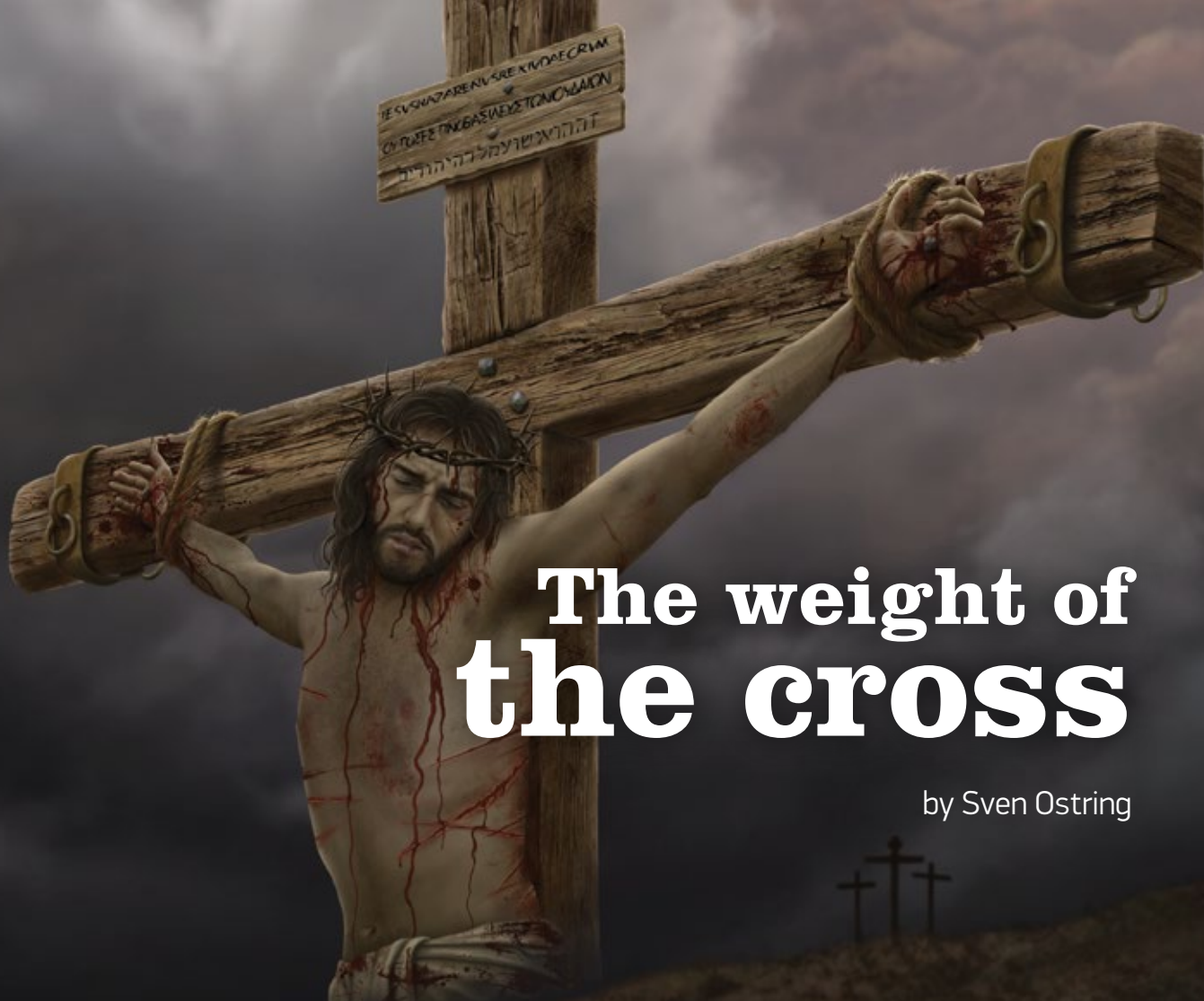
It's not all criticism, however. Invercargill Adventist Church senior pastor Romina Masih recognises how fortunate the church is to have Owen and Margaret's dedication. "They are actively involved in growing our Sabbath School and they not only work hard but bring their creativity to the programs," she says. Invercargill Adventist School principal Ryan Baronian agrees. "Owen's support has been critical to the expansion of our school," he says. "He is 100 per cent dedicated to our success and we are very thankful for his efforts."

The difference between work and holidays for Owen is the location. He has travelled to Cambodia to help an orphanage run by International Children's Care Australia, he has helped build a church in Mozambique and he has volunteered in Vanuatu. Wherever he goes, Owen brings his robust work ethic, business acumen and love for Jesus Christ.



Owen back in the day.

James Standish is editor of Adventist Record and communication director for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the South Pacific Division.



The weight of the cross

by Sven Ostring

WATCH HIM STAGGERING FROM ONE cobblestone to another, His calf muscles taut and trembling. Watch the blood drop running through His eyebrow, then falling to diffuse into the sweat on His muddy cheek. Watch His back giving way to the weight, falling to the ground, then shift the frame to the next millisecond, as the splintery wooden beams come crashing down into the ribboned flesh. Watch the Roman soldiers as they whip reality until fatigue has them whipped. Watch the shock as an African man from the sea of faces is drafted, volunteered by his proximity. Watch the young trance-like shock of Alexander and Rufus as the cross slowly rises, holding their father in its shadow. Watch the Cyrenian and the Nazarene continue their braided path down the Via Dolorosa, tethered by human circumstance and divine eternity.

Yet continue to watch in amazement and look into His face. The weight of the cross is gone and yet it has not. His eyes remain windows into a heavily weighed-down soul. How can this be when He bears the weight of the cross no longer? A lightning revelation into your heart lays bear the reality: He is still carrying a weight greater than those wooden beams upon His shoulders.

It has been said that the cross of Christ will be the

science and song of the redeemed through all eternity,¹ but even now there is so much to mull over, even in our sin-muddled state. Truly it would be well for us to spend a thoughtful hour each day in contemplation of the life of Christ, especially the closing scenes.² The promise of transformation beckons as we stand there beholding with unveiled faces and pliable hearts.³

It's not only the scenes that are worth mulling over. There are also those fascinating, all-absorbing questions. Why was He carrying that weight? And who placed it upon Him? Of course, the simple, obvious answer is that the Roman soldiers placed the cross on Jesus. However, they were simply agents of the Roman Empire and the fact that they could easily transfer the cross to an African bystander named Simon, yet could not remove His greater weight, shows that some greater spiritual transaction had taken place. Making it more personal, we could say that we placed the weight of our sin upon His shoulders, that the hammer was in our hands. Yet this answer is also insufficient because most, if not all, of us would have never even thought about transferring our sin onto Jesus, let alone have the capacity to actually accomplish that personal spiritual transaction.

Looking down through history with prophetic eyes, God

unveiled to the ageing Isaiah the incredible reality:

*The LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.*⁴

What a shock! What an outrage! The loving God of heaven laying the accumulated spiritual debt of this world on this innocent Man.

People with spiritually unregenerate eyes still recoil at the thought. The late New Atheist Christopher Hitchens was openly contemptuous of the whole biblical saga of the cross because he felt that the vicarious redemption that Jesus provided for us on the cross is immoral. It is immoral, he said, because it involves another human being taking responsibility for our sins, when we should take responsibility for those sins ourselves.⁵

Yet in spite of Hitchens' strong objection to the cross, the reality is that without it we all face the relentless, unforgiving wages of sin, namely death. We cannot take responsibility for our sin without facing eternal oblivion—a reality that not even Hitchens could avoid. But what if? What if the Person on the cross was not merely a human being, so the cross did not involve merely a human sacrifice? What if He was actually God Himself, being found in human form, taking on the role of a servant and assuming the spiritual debt that we all need to pay? What at first glance comes across as an immoral and ethically irresponsible act becomes an incredible, divinely-planned, cross-shaped window into hope, eternal life, divine love and grace.

Others have also balked at the thought that God was actively involved in the punishment and death that Jesus experienced on the cross. Psychiatrist Tim Jennings believes that Jesus merely experienced the mental agony caused by the burden of sin He was bearing on the cross. According to Jennings, this was the natural consequence of the spiritual weight of sin that Jesus was carrying.⁶

The difficulty with Jennings' understanding is that there was nothing natural about what Jesus went through. He was an innocent, sinless Man so He was not experiencing the natural consequences of His own thoughts and actions. At the same time, the natural consequence of all of that burden of sin should have been that we, every single one of us, should have died. What happened on the cross at Calvary was a totally unnatural, indeed supernatural event, when God actively and intentionally transferred all of our sin and its punishment onto Jesus. As Hitchens mused, how can an innocent Man like Jesus carry the responsibility and consequences of all of the sins committed by humanity? There is only one answer, the answer Hitchens explicitly rejected: the Lord laid upon Him the iniquity of us until His life expired and our sins were expiated. As Isaiah notes,

"the punishment that brought us peace was on him".⁷

Isaiah goes on to point out, in multiple ways, how God was actively and intentionally involved in this process:

Yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted.


*Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief.*⁸

Does this biblical understanding of God actively laying both our sin and its punishment upon Jesus at the cross

mean that God is an angry, wrathful God, as both Hitchens and Jennings contend? No, quite the reverse. It's because of the power of God's incredible love for us that He was willing to intentionally and decisively intervene and redirect the natural consequences of sin that we were facing in a way that was unnatural and supernatural. We can be forever deeply grateful for what God was willing to do for us through Jesus on the cross.⁹

The cross is also powerful and clear confirmation that in the near future God will step in to intentionally and actively destroy sin

and unrepentant sinners. This is not a picture of an angry, wrathful God bent on laying into people who do not do what He wants. Rather, it's because of God's great love for His faithful followers that He does not let sin continue indefinitely. It also shows His great love, even for unrepentant sinners, that He intervenes so that they do not need to endure indefinitely the hell of their own making.¹⁰

To be honest, I'm really glad that God actively and intentionally steps into this world to deal decisively with sin. It shows me the incredible power of His courageous love. 

What happened on the cross at Calvary was a totally unnatural, indeed supernatural event, when God actively and intentionally transferred all of our sin and its punishment onto Jesus.

1. *The Great Controversy*, page 651.

2. *The Desire of Ages*, page 83.

3. 2 Corinthians 3:18

4. Isaiah 53:6b (ESV)

5. Christopher Hitchens, *Letters to a Young Contrarian*, Basic Books, 2005, p58.

6. Refer to Tim Jennings' information sheet "Punishment for Sin" comparing this concept in his Healing Substitution Model and the Penal Substitution Model: http://comeandreason.com/files/share/Spectrum_Punishment_for_Sin.pdf

7. Isaiah 53:5b (NIV)

8. Isaiah 53:4b (NIV) and 53:10a (ESV)

9. "God's love has been expressed in His justice no less than in His mercy ... Christ shows that in God's plan they are indissolubly joined." *The Desire of Ages*, page 762. For further insight into what Jesus did for us at the cross, read Ellen White's *Testimonies*, Vol. 2 "The Sufferings of Christ", pages 200-215; John Stott's *The Cross of Christ*, IVP 1986, which discusses why Christ died and the self-substitution of God; and Christopher Wright's *The God I Don't Understand*, Zondervan 2008, particularly the section "What About the Cross?"

10. Refer to theological responses by the Adventist Biblical Research Institute to the questions "Does God Destroy Sinners?" <https://adventistbiblicalresearch.org/materials/theology-judgment/does-god-destroy-sinners> and "Does God Destroy?" <https://adventistbiblicalresearch.org/materials/theology-godgodhead/does-god-destroy>

Dr Sven Ostring is Discipleship Movements director for the Greater Sydney Conference's Personal Ministries department.

LETTERS

Note: Views in letters do not necessarily represent those of the editors or the denomination. Letters should be less than 250 words, and writers must include their name, address and phone number. All letters are edited to meet space and literary requirements, but the author's original meaning will not be changed. Not all letters received are published. See Page 4 for contact details.

PRIESTHOOD OF ALL

Steve Cinzio, Qld
Reading the March 7 edition of *Adventist Record*, I realised that I have never expressed my appreciation to those who labour to stimulate and challenge our thinking through this little paper.

Thank you James for your insightful editorials and to those who assist you in the office. Being a bit of a "theology junkie" in the sense that I really enjoy the discussions, I appreciated Peter McGowan's contribution on the issue of women's ordination. Apart from his prediction that "... this vote [by the delegates at the San Antonio General Conference session on whether to allow for diversity in ordination practices] will be judged a very foolish thing to have done", his argument is biblically sound. Between the lines in Peter's letter I sense that he is affirming the Protestant principle of "the priesthood of all believers".

His letter stimulated me to take that a bit further to ask why the Adventist Church Manual attempts to control the actions of those gifted by God to carry out their full ministry including baptism. The 2010 edition (p 73) states: "Baptismal Service—In the absence of an ordained pastor, an elder shall request the conference president to arrange for the baptism of those desiring to unite with the church (see pp. 46–49). An elder should not officiate in the service without first obtaining permission from the conference president."

What is the biblical basis for having to seek permission before baptising someone who wants to unite with the Church after suitable preparation? Seeking enlightenment at conference, division and general

conference level during the past year has not been a fruitful exercise. From whom did Philip the deacon, also called Philip the evangelist (Acts 21:8), get permission to baptise the Ethiopian treasurer? Maybe we need to consider the need to put more of our Immanuel into the Church Manual!

ORDINATION

Afa'ese Manoa, NZ

Seventh-day Adventist members in the Pacific islands are bewildered, confused and puzzled as to what is happening with the Bible in church? Where are the good old days of reading the Bible together as a congregation during church services as a form of active participation during the worship hour?

For many Sabbaths in a row I have not seen a pastor preaching the Word on Sabbath with a Bible in his hand. All we have now are the high technology and sophisticated gadgets that pastors play with from the pulpit. And instead of the people focusing on the preacher during the sermon their eyes are fixed on a white screen trying to read the PowerPoint presentation. This deprives the people and the preacher of "eye contact" which is one of the cardinal rules for good public speaking.

A couple common problems with relying on PowerPoint are:

1. Not all churches have the necessary equipment, and even if they do, it sometimes fails. When these problems occur, the preacher is forced to quickly cook up a sermon within a few minutes to deliver to the waiting souls. These "last minute panic sermons" tend to be either a stale dish or a half cooked meal.

2. More often than not, PowerPoints are poorly pre-

sented. Even when a preacher goes to a well established church with all the technological gadgets you can imagine, more likely than not, the quality of his PowerPoint will be poor due to a bad choice of colours and font that make it very hard for people to read. He struggles himself to read from the screen and the people are totally lost. He loses their interest and attention and his entire sermon becomes a total waste of time.

If a speaker plans to use PowerPoint, he or she should first have to complete training on how to design them. This training should include appropriate fonts, font sizes, colours, images and general design principles. Church should not be amateur hour for technophobes. It should be a time when we focus on the Word rather than being distracted by poorly utilised technology.

Note on the writer: Afa'ese Manoa QSM JP MA MSc DipFCA Dip.Theo is a senior elder at the Tuvalu Seventh-day Adventist Church at Avondale, Auckland, NZ. He is serving a 3 year term as an advisor on Pacific island issues at the Auckland City Council and also a Governance Consultant working with Community groups, churches, small businesses, charitable organisations and NGOs in both Auckland and Wellington regions.

ON THE AIR

Lowin Jacob, via website

Re: "First local Adventist radio station launched in Solomons" (News, March 7).

I praise God for this achievement and I am looking forward to Vanuatu one day also having its own local Adventist FM radio station like this one.

I pray that God will bless you as you continue to bless the people as they listen to God's voice through the station; and to hasten His coming. "To God be the Glory."

Simple formula for a complex world

by Phillip Lomman

IT'S ESTIMATED THAT THERE ARE ABOUT 4200* religions on earth today. No-one knows exactly, and that number increases as the earth's "sands of time" trickle through the hourglass.

The top four general religious groups (by number) account for more than 4.5 billion of the world's population: Christianity 28 per cent, Islam 18 per cent, Hinduism 12 per cent and Buddhism 5 per cent. That leaves about 37 per cent of "other" belief groups. Within Christianity there are about 41,000 different church groups or off-shoots*. When all branches of religious belief are taken into account there is an incalculable number to consider.

Whether a single congregation or a planet-wide established religious group, all have at least one difference in their charter, mindset or practice that keeps them from worshipping under the same banner. Such differences include: doctrine; interpretation; preaching style; Scripture version; social class; ethnicity; and heritage.

But we should never let what divides us theologically divide us as human beings. We are, after all, all children of the same God. But it isn't easy. We are all subject to the attitudes in our society but sometimes it's good to remember how wrong those attitudes can be.

We recently sold our home to an Islamic couple and their six children. Barriers of ingrained attitudes raised themselves as we went through the contract negotiation period and eventual sale. How often we were weighed down by preconceived notions.

After a while it finally dawned on us that this family was the epitome of generosity and friendship. The six children (aged from four to 14) could not have been more respectful or delightful. We have established a lasting friendship with them. It sobered us to think that our attitudes to the hijab or burqa and other cultural and religious symbols used by others, had been so misdirected.

The current widespread hateful attitudes across the globe toward followers of Islam may have its causes. But as in all levels of family and society, we should not use a blanket mindset regarding matters of individuality. In all families and in all religious groups there will be a range of thought

spread between opposite extremes.

Satan has developed conflict as an art form. Not only has he managed to have tens of thousands of religious disciplines through Christianity and other faiths, all at tension with one another, but he manages to create dissension within church organisations, sectors and local churches. Satan in his endeavour to capture every soul on earth in his web of deceit uses the method of "divide and conquer" and effectively destroys anything that points to God.

How is your family—your church family—in this divisive, subversive, satanic attack we see daily? Is he succeeding through division when he may have failed with doctrine? Is he holding up our carriage of the gospel commission because we are too tied up in relatively unimportant issues within our church?

There's a simple strategy for combating Satan's divisive techniques within the Church and in our society as a whole. It's so simple yet so passed over in our complicated world. Jesus said, "Love God with all your heart" and "Love your neighbour as yourself". That's it. When we keep these two commands uppermost in our thinking, the colour choice of the church carpet; the style of our pastor's preaching; the version of Scrip-

ture used; or the host of other relatively unimportant things that sideline our focus, no longer become distractions to the real issues of life. In addition, we won't let how others dress or pray distract us from our duty to love them.

It comes down to "you" and "me" to make love a reality. We are the ones who can make the change in our lives through the strength provided by the Holy Spirit. Of course, as the Spirit takes control of our lives, new characteristics blossom and fruit in full view of our neighbour. And the Father begins to see Jesus in us! "God's Spirit makes us loving, happy, peaceful, patient, kind, good, faithful, gentle and self-controlled. There is no law against behaving in any of these ways" (Galatians 5:22, 23). We live in a complex, fractured world. But there is a solution. And we've had it all along: the love of God.

R

* Statistics from Wikipedia and other internet sources. Numbers are indicative only.

Phillip Lomman writes from Lynne, New South Wales.

There's a simple strategy for combating Satan's divisive techniques within the Church.



OPENING HIS WORD

Gary Webster

Jews in the news: dreamtime omens

The story of the three youths in the fiery furnace is a childhood favourite, but what lessons can God's end-time Israelites discover from it to help them fulfil God's purpose for their lives?

Firstly, God is not only able to deliver us from the most impossible situations but He is with us when we go through trials for His sake.

Read Daniel 3:24,25,29.

Secondly, to make an impact for God on others we must have a faith that is a calm trust in Him, and which is revealed by its active faithfulness or obedience to God and His commandments. Compromise is the language of the devil and was not an option for these youths.

Read Daniel 3:16,17,28,29; Psalm 37:3.

Little wonder Daniel and his friends were Spirit-filled, for it is faith that trusts and therefore lovingly obeys God, which brings to us the Spirit's power, and Christ's presence and passion or love in our lives.

Read John 7:37-39; Act 5:32.

Such faith grows ever stronger as it is exposed to God's Word and as it experiences His power and presence in the trials of life.

Read Romans 10:17; Daniel 1,2,3.

Why not ask God right now to give you this sort of faith so that like these three young men, you too can make a mighty impact for God?

A Greek lyre or psaltery, mentioned in Daniel 3:5, and thought to date to the 5th or 4th Century BC. Such discoveries, along with abundant archaeological evidence that Greek culture penetrated Mesopotamia long before the time of Nebuchadnezzar, help to show Daniel was indeed written in the 6th Century BC.

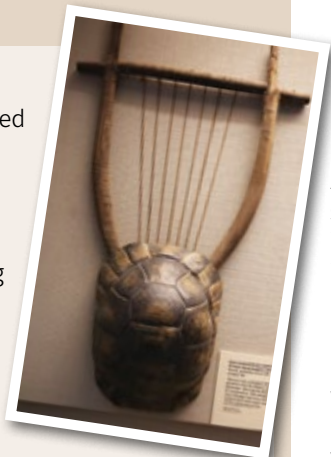


Photo: Webscribe

R RECORD REWIND

Missionary builder

Arthur Elwin Ferris was born into a pioneer mission family. His grandparents, Arthur and Jessie Ferris, were pioneer missionaries to Norfolk and Lord Howe Islands off Australia's east coast. Elwin's parents, Walter and Christina Ferris, had lost three other babies in the islands so Elwin was born at the Sydney Adventist Hospital. The new baby, their only son, returned with his parents to Vatuvonu, Fiji, where Pastor Ferris served as president of the East Fiji Mission for 12 years. The family then moved to Tonga for four years before returning to Vatuvonu. The war years meant Elwin was 11 before his family enjoyed a break in Australia. By then Fijian had become Elwin's first language. He felt at home in Fiji—his strong love and passion for his island family was always with him.

Elwin was sent to Longburn Adventist College in New Zealand for high school but this was cut short after just one year by the untimely death of his mother. He returned to Vatuvonu to be with his father.

In 1956 he went to Avondale College to do building construction. It was here that he met and married Valmae Dyason. This lifelong partnership (56 years) was blessed with four children.

The young family spent four happy years in Mt Hagen, Papua New Guinea (PNG), managing the sawmill for Harley Aveling. It was here that Elwin built his first church in 1966 at the Western Highlands mission station.

The family then returned to Sydney where Elwin worked with Long Industries for the next 22 years. This was fortunate as during this time Elwin's employers allowed him to take time out for building projects in the islands. His leadership in Pathfinder ministry also became legendary. While living in Sydney his passion to build churches was really ignited. Elwin and his friend Clem Long designed the cyclone-tough, steel-framed churches that could be completed in six days by fly'n'build teams of volunteers. Over the years, 30 of these churches and community halls were built, as well as 26 smaller weatherboard churches. Elwin seemed unstoppable—into retirement he continued to build more clinics in Solomon Islands. He was never happier than when he was involved in working with the island people he loved so much.

In 1990 Elwin's leadership was recognised and he became the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) director for the Central Pacific Union Mission. This provided him with opportunities to do ongoing projects for island communities. There were many challenges but he loved it. He had a "can do" attitude. For seven years he gave his all in working with people—whether they had lost all their possessions in a cyclone or just needed a listening ear, he was right there with them.

In retirement Elwin didn't slow down as he and Val became involved in the Adopt-a-Clinic program directed by Dr Chester Kuma and the South Pacific Division (SPD) Health Department. He led volunteer groups of retirees working every Wednesday at the old ADRA warehouse at the SPD office in Wahroonga (NSW). With Dr Kuma, Elwin and Val saw many clinics upgraded or rebuilt in Solomon Islands, PNG and Vanuatu. As a result, medical services were and continue to be provided for many people in isolated places by dedicated nurses and staff. Elwin knew how much the prayers of the church family in Australia meant to those working in these far-flung places and he would say, "Keep it up."

With the passing of Elwin Ferris (see obituary page 23) the Church lost an advocate and a champion of the people of the South Pacific Islands.





During the last supper the disciples argue about who is the greatest. Peter declares that he is ready to go to prison or even die for Jesus. Jesus responds by telling Peter that he will deny Him three times before the rooster crows the next morning. And that is exactly what happens. Peter remembers Jesus' words and he cries.

UNSCRAMBLE THE WORDS, THEN USE ALL OF THE LETTERS IN THE CIRCLED BOXES TO SOLVE THE FINAL PHRASE!

STORORE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
NEYD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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MEMORY VERSE

"I have prayed for you... that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, _____ your brothers." Luke 22:32 NIV



God wants me in His family, even when I fail Him.

*hello in Swahili (Kenya)



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JUSTICE
CONFERENCE

Melbourne
April 17 & 18

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PLUS Join ADRA staff and supporters for a relaxed and scrumptious post-conference breakfast on the morning of April 19 to discuss how the Adventist commitment to justice is changing our world and what we can do to shape a better future.

REGISTER AT

www.adra.org.au/justiceconference

APPRECIATION

Ferris. The family of Elwin Ferris would like to express our heartfelt appreciation to the many people who responded following his recent passing. Your flowers, phone calls, cards and prayers have been wonderful comfort to Val and all our family. Please accept this as our personal thanks to each of you. Also a special thanks to those who

supported his passion to build churches, schools, community centres and clinics in Fiji, Tonga, Samoa, the Solomons and Papua New Guinea. This only happened because of the volunteers. Thank you for being an important part of the team.

ANNIVERSARY

Hale. Allan and May celebrated their diamond wedding anniversary

with family and friends at Glenburn, Vic, on 4.1.15. They have four children and 14 grandchildren. They were married on 4.1.1955 in the Glen Huon church (Tas) by Pastor H Hollingsworth. One of the bridesmaids, Kath Evans, was among the guests. May began her teaching career at Glen Huon Adventist School as a graduate from Avondale College in 1954. Her teaching career included more than 50 years

as director of Diamond Creek Memorial Kindergarten (Vic). Allan retired more than 20 years ago to manage one of their son's farms. We wish them God's richest blessing.

Ray Eaton

WEDDING

Stanton-Sawyer. Ross Stanton and Faenna Sawyer were married 15.2.15 in Launceston, Tas,

POSITIONS VACANT

■ **Chief executive officer—Seventh-day Adventist Aged Care (South Queensland) Ltd.** This position involves giving leadership and representing aged care in South Queensland. Reporting to the Board, you will manage the operational activities of the organisation while driving strategic direction. A major measure of your performance will be an effective and harmonious relationship with residents, families, staff and other stakeholders. Cognisant of industry "best practice", you will ensure provision, delivery and quality of care is in accordance with the needs of residents/clients and in step with aged care standards and ongoing reform. The successful applicant should have high level management and administrative skills, and tertiary qualifications in management. Written applications, curriculum vitae and referees should be forwarded to: Secretary, Seventh-day Adventist Aged Care (South Queensland) Limited, 19 Eagle Terrace, Brisbane, Qld 4000 or fax to (07) 3236 1305 or email to <colinrenfrew@adventist.org.au>. Applications close **April 30, 2015.**

■ **Executive care manager—Seventh-day Adventist Aged Care (South Queensland) Ltd.** This position involves overseeing the care needs of the system, the development and monitoring of consistent policies and procedures, and working with local care managers to ensure the best possible care for residents and the compliance with aged care accreditation standards. The successful applicant should have a tertiary qualification and experience in nursing administration with previous experience in caring for aged and disabled persons, and current registration with the Queensland Nursing Council or ability to achieve such registration. An understanding of Commonwealth Government funding policies and procedures for residential aged care is essential. Written applications, curriculum vitae and referees should be forwarded to: Secretary, Seventh-day Adventist Aged Care (South Queensland) Limited, 19 Eagle Terrace, Brisbane, Qld 4000 or fax to (07) 3236 1305 or email to <colinrenfrew@adventist.org.au>. Applications close **April 30, 2015.**

■ **Assistant accountant—North NSW Conference (Wallsend, NSW)** is seeking to appoint an assistant accountant to provide a range of accounting services. This will include providing information and support for the adoption of best practice accounting principles. Reporting directly to the senior accountant, this position will require a high level of computer literacy. The successful applicant will be involved in training and presenting, and efficiently processing data on a timely basis. To discuss the role or to request a job description, please contact: Gillian Knight (02) 4951 8088 or email <gillianknight@adventist.org.au>. Please submit written applications to <gillianknight@adventist.org.au> addressing the essential and desirable criteria outlined in the job description. Applications close **April 15, 2015.**

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



SUPPORTING MINISTRY POSITIONS

■ **Assistant cook—Cedarvale Health and Lifestyle Retreat (Kangaroo Valley, NSW)** is seeking a person who is passionate about cooking and has good interpersonal skills. Can be either a part or full-time position. Training is available. Position available immediately. For more information phone (02) 4465 1362 or email <info@cedarvaleretreat.com.au>.

■ **Traineeships in health ministry—Cedarvale Health and Lifestyle Retreat (Kangaroo Valley, NSW).** Two positions exist for a one-year program, including Certificate 4 in Massage. Be trained in a health retreat setting and mentored alongside a team of health professionals. A great opportunity to become involved in health ministry. Positions commence July 2015. Visit <cedarvaleeducation.com.au>. Applications close **May 1, 2015.**

■ **Teachers (primary and secondary)—Karatundi Aboriginal Education Community (near Meekatharra, WA)** is seeking innovative and qualified primary and secondary school teachers to join the teaching staff. The position will involve teaching students in Years pre-primary to 12 and also assisting with extra-curricular activities. The applicant will be a motivated individual with a keen interest in encouraging and inspiring students to love learning and have a heart for mission. For more information please contact school principal Stephen Hill at <principal@karatundi.wa.edu.au>.

■ **Grey Nomad volunteers.** Are you travelling through Western Australia and have a heart for helping Aboriginal young people? Karatundi Aboriginal Education Community is looking for volunteers to assist in a variety of ways, including in the caravan park and shop, and in keeping the school and grounds in good condition. If you have current working with children and TRBWA credentials there are also roles open in the school. Accommodation will be in the caravan park and will be without charge for those who are willing to help. There is no minimum time but all assistance will be appreciated. For more information please contact school principal Stephen Hill at <principal@karatundi.wa.edu.au>.

The above ministries are independent of the Seventh-day Adventist Church organisation but are supportive of the Church.

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with the affirmation of family and friends from as far as Malawi and New Zealand. Ross and Fae have lived through a similar journey of grief and have united to spend their remaining years in a happy and fulfilling life together. Fae was the receptionist at the South Pacific Division office for 14 years. Ross has been a contractor and developer in Hobart as well as a local church elder.

Harley Stanton

OBITUARIES

Atkinson, Betty June, born 8.7.1929 in Greytown, New Zealand; died 29.1.15 in New Plymouth, after a short illness. In 1952 she married Dennis Wilby, who died in a tree-felling accident in 1971. Betty was also predeceased by her second husband, Jack, in 2001. She is survived by her children Anne and John Anderson, Julie and Bruce Mason: stepchildren, Glenys, Coralie, Michael, Karyn and Steve; her many grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Treasured are the memories of Betty's dedication to God and her family.

Bob Larsen

station. For seven years he gave his all in working with people—whether they had lost all their possessions in a cyclone or just needed a listening ear, he was right there with them. Elwin served God all his life. [Read more about Elwin on page 20].

Barry Gane

Hancock, Maxwell John, born 25.4.1933 in Gol Gol, Victoria; died 4.2.15 in Mildura. In 1985 he was predeceased by his son Warren. He is survived by his wife Joan, children Steve (Wagga Wagga, NSW), Dellwyn (Orange), Mark and Tammy (Mildura, Vic), and their spouses; eight grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren. Max and Joan set up home at Wemen, Vic, in 1957. Max was a quiet achiever and a hard worker. He was a very successful market gardener and later grew sugar cane at Cudgen, NSW. In 1989, they returned to Irymple, Vic, where they grew oranges and avocados. Max had a well-anchored faith in Jesus and the promises of Scripture. He awaits the call of Jesus on the resurrection day.

Eric Winter, David Butcher

and 13 great-grandchildren. Dorothy is remembered for being friendly, caring, determined and generous.

Mel Trevena

Maughan, Audrey (nee Scott), born 15.7.1933 in Harvey, WA; died 23.1.15 in Sherwin Lodge, Perth. In 1941 she married Stanley Maughan, who predeceased her on 30.4.14. She is survived by her children and their families, Sam (Popanyinning), Geoff (Bunbury), Marjorie (Perth) and Jane (Sydney, NSW); nine grandchildren; six great-grandchildren; and her siblings, Wendy Blakely, Ian Scott, Allan Scott and Jenny Peck. Through many hardships Audrey and Stan developed an active faith in God, praying daily for their families, and were active members of the Bunbury church. She looked forward expectantly to the return of Jesus and the resurrection.

Nicu Dumbrava, Roger Millist



Tame, Annie Escott (Nancy) (nee Rogers), born 23.4.1919 in Mackay, Qld; died 17.2.15 in Avondale House

Nursing Home, Cooranbong, NSW. In 1940 she married Bill Tame, who predeceased her in 2005. She is survived by her sister Iris; her children Warren, Dennis, Estelle (Graham), Joanne (Reece) and their spouses; 13 grandchildren; and 14 great-grandchildren. Nancy accepted the Adventist message after attending an evangelistic program in Mackay by Pastor J W Kent in 1932. She was an amazingly creative, artistic lady whose gregarious nature endeared her to many. She will be sadly missed.

Murray Chapman, Dennis Tame

Finally . . .

Christianity, if false, is not important, and if true, of infinite importance. The only thing it can't be is moderately important.

—Leonard Sweet

Next RECORD April 25



Ferris, Arthur Elwin, born 12.10.1936 in Sydney Adventist Hospital, Wahroonga, NSW; died 13.8.14. In 1956 he attended Avondale College to do building construction. It was here that he met—and two years later married—Valmae Dyason. He is survived by his wife; their four children and their families, Wayne and Hayley, Darryn and Tracy, Raelene and Velinda; eight grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren. Elwin built his first church in 1966 at the Western Highlands mission



Hurrell, Dorothy Evelyn, born 31.10.1925 in Centre Bush, New Zealand; died 5.12.14 in Invercargill. She married Len Saunders, who predeceased her. Later in life she married Clint Hurrell, who also predeceased her. She is survived by her children, Margaret and Peter (Melbourne, Vic), Glenda and Graeme, Owen and Margaret (all of Winton, NZ); seven grandchildren

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■ **Assistant girls'/boys' dean volunteers—L.A.C. House (Palmerston North, NZ).** Positions available, start date July 19, 2015 for 12 months or ASAP. Must be 21 to 30 years old, have a heart to see God's work in young people's lives (aged 11–18), flexible with work hours and fluent in English. Stipend of \$NZ330 p/f, food and accommodation provided on premises. Local transport included. Email <volunteers@adventist.org.au>.

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Avondale
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The tour was fabulous. I had such a wonderful experience. I have learned so much history. Great accommodation, a professional and knowledgeable tour leader, and I will definitely go again.

—Banje Blanch, Casino, NSW

The Digging tour transformed our lives and understanding of Biblical history. It was so special! —Ian & Bev Story, Victoria

The four weeks were one of the best experiences I have had in my lifetime. The value for money of this tour was outstanding. —Ed North, Sydney

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June 16–21: TURKEY Walk the streets of ancient Ephesus, Pergamos, Sardis and Laodicea; journey by boat to the island of Patmos, site of the Apocalypse of the exile of John.

June 21–July 1: JORDAN & ISRAEL Visit the fabulous ruins of Petra and Jerash, and see archaeological sites connected to Roman history, Israelite kings and prophets, and the story of Jesus.

JOURNEYS WITH PAUL

Travel where Paul journeyed; understand Baal worship and the depths of God's grace.

July 1–10: GREECE & CARTHAGE Journey to Athens, Marathon, Thessalonica, Corinth and Philippi, and visit the Canaanite city of Carthage.

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Lachish, Israel

July 10–20: The Dig will give you a taste of the excitement of discovering objects thousands of years old in a dig at the famous ancient city of Lachish. During the Dig also visit Jerusalem, Galilee and archaeological sites of the Bible generally unseen by tour groups.

GENERAL CONFERENCE TOUR

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July 2–12: SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS Two weekends at the General Conference, plus visit New York, Washington DC, Niagara Falls, Adventist historical sites at Battle Creek and Andrews University, and William Miller's home.

AZTECS, INCAS & MAYA

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