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TPUM SPECIAL EDITION

NEWS

TOTAL MEMBER INVOLVEMENT
SPARKS PACIFIC HARVEST

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A VIBRANT ADVENTIST MOVEMENT

Revelation 12 clearly teaches that God has a remnant church at the end time—that church is uniquely identified as a group of people who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

So the first identifying sign of the remnant church is their loyalty to God’s commandments—all of them. We often just focus on the Ten Commandments but I would like to place emphasis on the great gospel commission given in Matthew 28:19,20, which is to proclaim the gospel message.

To proclaim that message to the “uttermost part of the earth”, as the Lord had summoned the apostles (and ourselves) to do, we should be prayerfully pleading like Jabez did, for God to “bless me indeed, and enlarge my territory”.

We have tried to engage everyone at TPUM with the great commission by involving them in the farming cycle-based discipleship model, which entails preparation, sowing, nurturing and harvesting, and multiplying the harvest. It was thus thrilling to see members use their spiritual gifts in preparing the hearts of people, sowing the seeds and nurturing them along the way.

Our harvesting program, which started in July and is ongoing, has had 4753 baptisms so far. We praise the Lord for these new souls and our churches are continuing their nurturing and following up of interests. However, the emphasis was not on the number of baptisms, but on getting everyone involved, being obedient to the great gospel commission.

So how many local churches actually ran their own harvesting programs? There were 705. This is a big number of sites in which to conduct evangelism all at once. We praise the Lord for their commitment. However, we have 1226 churches throughout our Union, so these 705 sites represented just 57 per cent of our local churches. What about the other 43 per cent?

I may add that in the Trans Pacific Union we have a membership of 120,445. The ideal is for one church member leading one person towards baptism. With 4853 baptisms, we have just under 4 per cent of our members

represented. Many people were involved with programs but less than 4 per cent of our membership were able to see someone through to the harvest.

However, this combined harvesting program certainly brought about an exciting synergy within our Union. People everywhere in the Pacific were aware that the Adventists were doing something, saying things like, “the Adventists are everywhere running something”. This synergy extended to social media. Pictures of the harvesting were everywhere on Facebook and other digital platforms. We certainly made a loud noise about and for Jesus that was heard right across the Pacific, creating great excitement for advancing the Lord’s work.

I actually saw a glimpse of what our vision looks like, of a “Vibrant Adventist movement living their hope in Jesus and transforming the Pacific”.

WE CERTAINLY MADE A LOUD NOISE ABOUT AND FOR JESUS.

If we attribute the recent baptisms to the efforts of 57 per cent of our churches and only 4 per cent of our members, then what would Total Membership Involvement look like? Or what if our youth slogan was actually put into practice: “Each One, Reach One”? Imagine the impact that would bring! Jesus said, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few” (Luke 10:2). We are praying for the Lord of the harvest to

send out more workers into the harvest field, just as we often sing that “Far and Near the Fields Are Teeming”!

The first identity of the remnant church is being loyal in keeping His commandments. Our Church has been very careful to keep His Ten Commandments, which is excellent. But what about the great gospel commission commandment? Is there anyone who you love and are praying for that his or her soul be won for Jesus?

Next year, our women will lead out during our Union-wide evangelism and our young people will be at the forefront the following year. We are praying that everyone in our Union will be the worker who God sends out to the teeming harvest fields.

What about you?

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“Teenager following his

baptism at Portoroki Adventist

Church (Port Vila) on July 21.”

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Seventh-day
Adventist Church

South Pacific

AN OCEAN OF OPPORTUNITY

Welcome to the Trans Pacific Union Mission. Our Union supports the Seventh-day Adventist work in nine countries and, wherever you go in this territory, you can expect unique and diverse Melanesian, Micronesian, Polynesian and many other forms of greetings.

While there is great diversity of cultures and languages in this territory, we have one purpose for mission: to prepare people for Jesus' soon return. The heartbeat that throbs throughout this Union is to have churches that are vibrant, that live their hope in Jesus and do their part to transform the Pacific.

This vision produces a great emphasis on outreach, which is put into action through the "farming cycle" model. Prepare the soil, plant the seed, cultivate the plant, harvest the crop, then multiply the harvest. This is not just a strategy but a church lifestyle that is grounded in prayer and Total Member Involvement.

Our Union has a membership of more than 120,000 and, as a result of the farming cycle with its focus on harvest in the month of July, this number continues to grow. During this year, laity were encouraged and trained to run evangelistic programs. While frontline evangelism is strong, our health department is using our ever-relevant health message to address the growing concern of diabetes and other non-communicable diseases.

As I write this in August, we at the TPUM office are still rejoicing at the amazing stories of people who have decided to follow Jesus in baptism.

We record numbers, but it is transformed lives and their stories that make us rejoice. Hopefully you'll read some of those stories in this special issue and rejoice with us. Each member is a disciple who has a unique testimony of Jesus to tell. Recent evangelistic meetings, which played an important part in harvesting souls, show that in this part of the Pacific, there are still oceans of opportunity.



BOB LARSEN
TPUM GENERAL
SECRETARY

TRANS PACIFIC UNION MISSION

NAURU

SOLOMONS ISLANDS

VANUATU

MISSIONS



SOLOMON ISLANDS

197 churches
92 schools
1 media centre
1 medical centre
18 wellness centres
53,472 members
624,962 population
Ratio 1:12



FIJI

166 churches
13 schools
1 media centre
26,558 members
913,182 population
Ratio 1:34



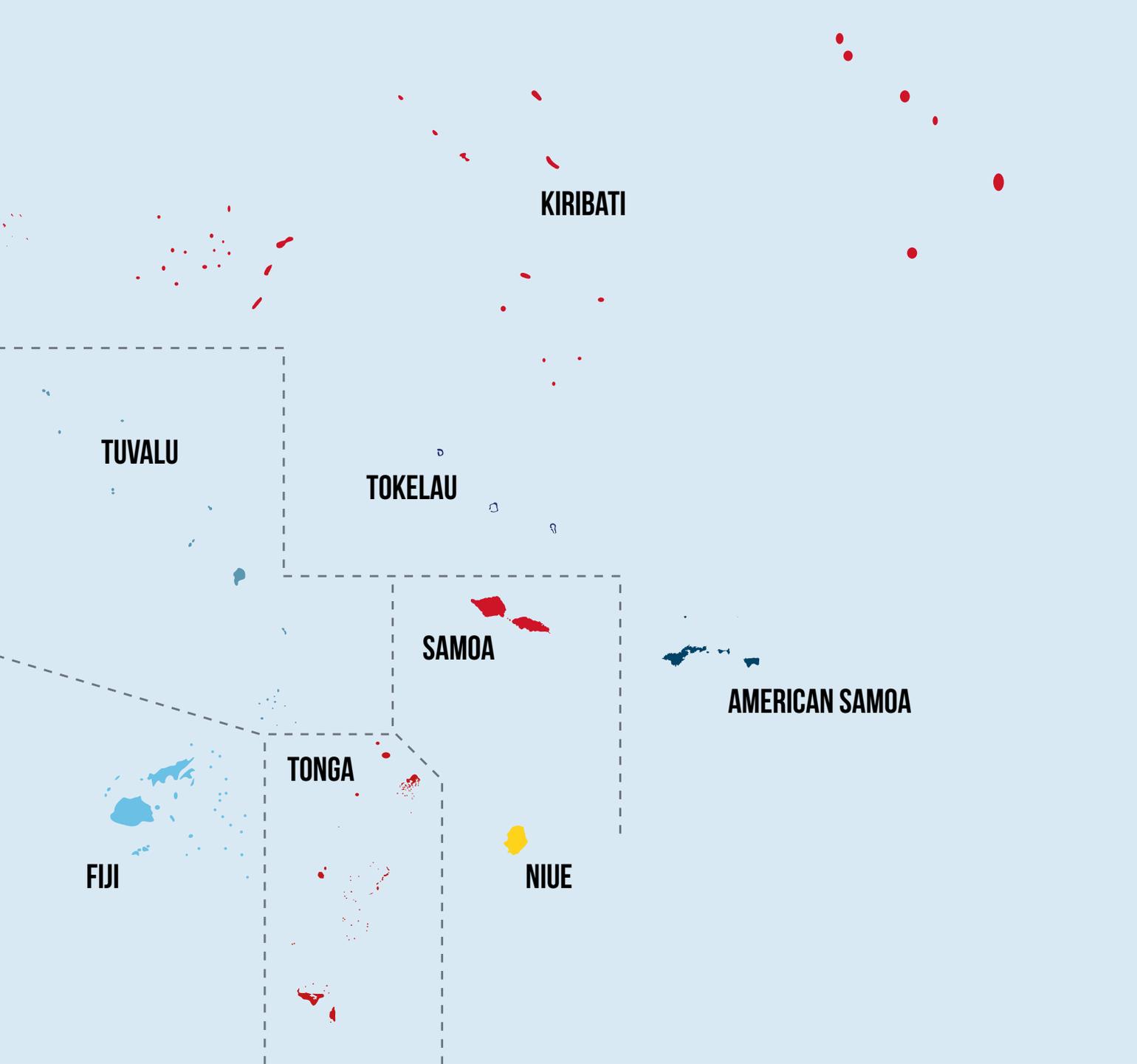
SAMOA

36 churches
2 schools
1 media centre
7743 members
197,870 population
Ratio 1:26



VANUATU

89 churches
32 schools
1 media centre
6 wellness centres
24,721 members
282,945 population
Ratio 1:11



ATTACHED FIELDS



TONGA

16 churches
4 schools
3599 members
109,146 population
Ratio 1:30



KIRIBATI

14 churches
1 school
1 wellness centre
2836 members
118,698 population
Ratio 1:42



TUVALU

1 church
1 school
361 members
11,300 population
Ratio 1:31



AMERICAN SAMOA

10 churches
1 school
1647 members
55,684 population
Ratio 1:34

ATTACHED CHURCHES



NAURU

1 church
95 members
11,305 population
Ratio 1:119



NIUE

1 church
21 members
1625 population
Ratio 1:81

HEALTH MESSAGE BRINGS SUVA TO A STANDSTILL

ALIPATE VAKAMOCEA/RECORD STAFF

The Fiji Mission of Seventh-day Adventists brought Suva to a halt on August 15 when Assistant Minister of Health, Alexander O’Conner, and the Fiji Military Forces Band, led a NEWSTART Health Expo march through the city during the morning peak hour.

The march signalled the start of a week of health emphasis. Mr O’Conner opened the expo and emphasised how it was another way in which the Church, through its health department, can help the wider community in creating more awareness of Fiji’s lifestyle diseases epidemic. He was given a tour of the expo tents, which were themed to reflect the NEWSTART acronym: nutrition, exercise, water, sunshine, temperance, air, rest and trust



WORKING ON SET UP OF THE BOOTHS.

in God. Many people from the community visited the tents.

Pastor Daron Pratt, children’s ministries director for the

North NSW Conference, conducted balloon and puppet training on the eve of the health expo.

Around 100 church members, including women, children and pastors, attended the training, which involved balloon twisting, the basics of puppetry (making a sock puppet) and puppetry scripting. The day ended with each group performing their scripts and preparing for the health expo the following day.

Pastor Pratt also launched a family spiritual app, which promotes parenting awareness in the 21st century. After the app was launched, Fiji Mission president Pastor Luke Narabe offered the dedication prayer.

“God continues to equip and use His people to reach the unreached,” said Dr Alipate Vakamocea, director of Adventist Health for Fiji Mission.



HEALTHY ACTIVITIES AND BALLOONS FOR CHILDREN.

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TEACHERS CHALLENGED TO EXPAND THEIR HORIZONS

PETE NAVOSAILAGI

More than 200 principals, teachers and educational leaders attended the Trans Pacific Union Mission (TPUM) Educational Leaders' Conference in Fiji.

TPUM president Pastor Maveni Kaufononga officially opened the conference, which was held at Fulton College, Sabeto, July 3-5, and themed "O Lord, Expand my Horizon".

Dr Hudson Kibuuku, General Conference associate education director, was the keynote speaker. Workshop presenters included Dr Leigh Rice, Dr Carol Tasker, Dr Daryl Murdoch, Dr Kym Simoncini, Dr Elisapesi Manson, Dr Nemani Tausere, Dr Rejieli Liligeto, Pastor Kaufononga, Christina Hawkins and Rosalie McFarlane.

About 12 participants received a Principal's Award in honour of service. "The TPUM Education Department would like to say thank you for your exceptional work and para-



PASTOR KAUFONONGA AND THE WORKSHOP PRESENTERS SERVING DINNER.

mount dedication through the years," said TPUM education director Dr Bev Norman.

A special dinner was held at the end of the conference, at which Pastor

Kaufononga and the other workshop presenters served the teachers to recognise their dedicated service in the schools.

"I enjoyed the way the presenters presented their topics—the explanations were very clear and contextualised to the life we are living, especially in the Pacific Island schools," said one of the participants.

"The presenters touched on issues that are affecting my school and [provided] great solutions."

After the conference, the participants visited some of the Adventist schools in Fiji. Dr Kibuuka joined the participants in visiting Lautoka Seventh-day Adventist Primary School and encouraged the students to remain faithful to God and strive for excellence in their academic work.

At Naqaqa Seventh-day Adventist Primary School, in Ra Province, the chief of the village was present to welcome the visitors. Head teacher Sakeasi Nakau shared how God has led throughout their recovery from Cyclone Winston, which destroyed all the classrooms in 2016. With strong community and government support, the school was rebuilt. The visitors donated a total of \$FJD700 to the school.



ATTENDEES AT THE CONFERENCE.

ADVENTIST STUDENTS HELP RESTORE SOLOMONS LANDMARK

CLINTON JACKSON/JARROD CHERRY

Students from Brisbane Adventist College (Qld) recently completed the external restoration of the church at Batuna, Solomon Islands.

The team of 16 students and seven teachers travelled to the Marovo Lagoon as a Sonship Action Team to paint the exterior of the church building.

The Motusu church sits on top of a peninsula and is the most visible building when approaching Batuna from either side. Dedicated on June 7, 1934 (*Adventist Record*, August 6, 1934), this church played an important role in the spread of Adventist Christianity throughout Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea.



STUDENTS AND STAFF IN FRONT OF THE MOTUSU CHURCH THEY HELPED TO RESTORE.

"It was a real privilege to be trusted with this historic landmark," said trip leader and BAC teacher Clinton Jackson. "It

is humbling to think of the sacrifices made by all the people who originally built this church."

The team also visited several surrounding villages where they ran children's programs featuring action songs, a puppet show and a drama about Moses delivered in Solomon Islands Pijin.

"We received such friendly welcomes everywhere we went," said college captain Ashlon Ghazali. "Everyone always seemed to be smiling and waving and greeting you. It was very hard to leave behind all the friends I made."

The trip was particularly meaningful for Ashlon, whose great-grandparents, Frank and Ida Aveling, managed the sawmill at Batuna after the close of World War II.

All 23 team members returned to Australia feeling incredibly blessed to have experienced Solomon Islands culture and to have made so many wonderful connections.

"The team's mission was highly appreciated by the surrounding communities. The physical appearance of the church was the talk of the town for days after the team left," said John Pikacha, Batuna Adventist Vocational School deputy principal and chaplain. ". . . the team left behind a legacy that will never be able to be eradicated in the memory of our people."

ADVENTISTS 'EQUIPPED FOR SERVICE' IN VANUATU

LINDEN CHUANG

Thirteen Adventist lay pastors from across Vanuatu are the first recipients of Fulton College's new Certificate in Theology.

The graduates, who have been serving in pastoral ministry for Vanuatu Mission, received their certificates on July 22 at a ceremony held at Portoroki Seventh-day Adventist Church in Port Vila. The theme was "equipped for service".

Vanuatu Mission president Pastor Nos Terry Mailalong described the event as an "historic occasion" for the Church in Vanuatu, which is in "desperate need for more trained ministers".

During the ceremony, Pastor Mailalong paid tribute to Fulton College (Fiji) for bringing the program to Vanuatu. He also affirmed the graduates for the hard work they have put in.

"I want to say thank you and wish you much of God's blessing as you return to your work," said Pastor Mailalong. "Your training will help you in your ministry wherever you go."

Special guests at the ceremony included Johnny Koanapo Rasou, parliamentary secretary to the Prime

Minister's office and a member of Etas Seventh-day Adventist Church, Fulton College principal Dr Glynn Galo and Trans Pacific Union Mission education director Dr Bev Norman.

Addressing the graduates, Dr Norman encouraged them to "take these certificates and move on with your journey boldly".

The Certificate of Theology program commenced in Vanuatu in July 2017. Over the course of the following year, lay pastors from as far as Tanna Island gathered in Port Vila (Efate) to undertake three month-long training sessions.

Fulton College theology lecturer Pastor James Alagappan, who helped the graduates through the final month of intensive training, said the certificate program provides lay pastors with the "core essentials of discipleship and what it means to conduct evangelism".

Pastor Alagappan stressed the value of this "in-field training" as many church members do not have the



opportunity to pursue further tertiary education, due to finances or family commitments.

"As opposed to them coming to Fulton, it's Fulton coming to them," he said.

Dr Galo said Fulton College is ready to pursue similar overseas training opportunities in ministry, whether in Solomon Islands or again in Vanuatu.

A moment of silence was held at the start of the graduation ceremony for Pastor Titus John, who passed away suddenly in March before the completion of the program.

Church leaders remembered Pastor John as a dynamic evangelist with a heart for spreading the gospel.

CHURCH TO HELP SOLOMONS TACKLE DIABETES

TRACEY BRIDCUTT

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is helping the Solomon Islands government devise a strategy to tackle the huge burden of diabetes sweeping the country.

For the Church, this represents an unprecedented level of influence on Solomon Islands government policy, according to South Pacific Division (SPD) health director Dr Chester Kuma.

It follows a visit to the Church's SPD offices recently by Dr Geoffrey Kenilorea, director of the Department of Non-Communicable Diseases for the Solomon Islands Ministry of Health.

Dr Kenilorea was on a fact-finding visit to see what the Adventist Church is doing in the area of lifestyle medicine, including the Comprehensive Health Strategy, the 10,000 Toes campaign and CHIP.

Dr Kenilorea also visited Sanitarium, where he discussed healthy food alternatives with CEO Kevin Jackson, and the Australasian Research Institute, where CEO Dr Ross Grant

spoke about the relationship between diet and chronic disease.

Dr Kuma will share the Church's health strategy with

the Solomon Islands Cabinet in October during a special meeting organised by Dr Kenilorea. The meeting will also look at opportunities for future partnerships and collaboration between the Church and the government.

"We've never had that opportunity in the past. But it's now opening up to us and we are so excited about it," Dr Kuma said. "The aim is to influence the governments right across the Pacific and I think we are making big, bold advances in that area."



FLASHPOINT



REACHING OTHER RELIGIONS

Inter Faith Fiji is a religious-based organisation that invites all religious leaders in Fiji to come and share their different beliefs on certain given topics. Pastor Joape Naroba has been attending on behalf of the Adventist Church, and is encouraged by the chance to share Jesus. "All the major religions from across Fiji and their priests, pastors, reverends and leaders are here," he said. "For me personally, it is a huge blessing, and I cannot ask for more from Jesus for this great opportunity." —*Record staff*



SERVING AT SASA

More than 260 students, parents and friends from schools such as Queen Victoria School, Adi Cakobau School, Nasinu Secondary School, Rampur College, Jay Narayan College, Navesau Adventist High School and Ratu Kadavulevu School gathered on Sabbath, July 22 for the Secondary Adventist Schools Association (SASA) rally. With the theme "Standing up for Jesus", public campus ministry chaplain Viliame Ratumaiale reminded the young people to fortify their minds with God's Word. They also donated boxes of toiletries to boarding students at Ratu Kadavulevu School and celebrated as 19 students were baptised. —*Pete Navosailagi*



TV OUTREACH

Adventist Church member Israel Melemele has long dreamed of bringing an Adventist presence to his home islands of Tokelau. In partnership with Samoa Mission, Trans Pacific Union and Good News—the Samoan Adventist-owned television station that inserts Samoan programs into a Hope Channel feed—that dream is becoming a reality. Mr Melemele (right) has gained permission from the Fakaofu Taupulega (island council) to broadcast Hope Channel on Fakaofu, one of the three island groups in Tokelau. Pastor Sione Ausage (second from right), secretary of Samoa Mission, hopes to travel there in October. —*Eliza Ryan*



SPECIAL VISIT

Nine Indian churches from across Viti Levu, Fiji, held a combined service on July 28 to celebrate the baptism of six people. The service, which was held at the Nasinu Indian Adventist Church, had extra special visitors from the Southern Asia Division. President Ezras Lakra and CFO PE Selvin Moorthy were both able to participate in the service and celebrate the baptisms with their fellow Indian Adventists. —*TPUM/Record staff*



STUDENTS STEP OUT

More than 30 Adventist students studying at secular institutions in Fiji stepped out in faith during a special Sabbath service attended by 250 students. During the rally, held at Wailevu Seventh-day Adventist Church, the students re-declared their loyalty and committed to stay faithful to not sit exams on Sabbath, even if it meant missing graduation. There was a special offering where about \$FJ2400 was collected as a token of thanksgiving and to help complete the church building in Wailevu. TPUM president Pastor Maveni Kaufononga encouraged those attending to continue in faithfulness. —*Record staff*



HARVEST IN TONGA

Following the harvest program held across the Trans Pacific in July, Tongan Mission president Pastor Saia Ve'a joined Adventist Church members to celebrate the baptism of 14 people. The Sabbath baptismal service was held on the Tongan island of Tofoa, and included both children and adults dedicating their lives to Jesus. —*Afua Palu/TPUM*



KIRIBATI BAPTISMS

The last two Sabbaths in July were a celebration for Adventist Church members in Kiribati, as Pastor Luther Taniveke baptised 62 candidates in Betio, the largest township of the capital city Tarawa. In August, Pastor Taniveke travelled to the outer islands of Kiribati to conduct more baptisms, following the harvest program. —*Pete Navosailagi*



VISION FOR NIUE

Niue church members were excited to be part of the July two-week harvest program. Three people were baptised. Church pastor Sione Kakala Moala was the main speaker. "Praise the Lord. It is our vision that by 2020 the church on Niue will become an organised church and [we also plan] to establish a new company in an un-entered area," said Pastor Moala. "We now have a membership of 21 baptised members." —*TPUM*



WHY TOTAL MEMBER INVOLVEMENT MATTERS

“And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations . . .” (Matthew 24:14, ESV).

As someone who hasn’t globe-trotted excessively, I can’t say I’ve seen this happen. After a recent trip to Vanuatu, however, what I have witnessed is the gospel being proclaimed throughout a *whole country*.

It’s evening on Thursday, July 19, and Eric Kaltap from the Vanuatu Mission is showing me around Port Vila. Our first stop is a vacant lot on the main strip of the city, where an Adventist is sharing the “good news” with the gathered crowd and passers-by. A two-minute drive up the road and another Adventist is preaching a similar message, his voice echoing into the cool (warm for me) night air. Another quick drive, another evangelism site. We make our way uphill and . . . you get the picture.

Having lived in Cooranbong (NSW) for more than 10 years, I’m used to seeing Adventist communities gathering in relatively close proximity. But this is different. This is the gospel being shared publicly and unashamedly across an entire city.

Head out of the capital, across Efate and out to Vanuatu’s other islands, and the same thing is happening. In fact, for three weeks in July, the message of “Jesus Our Hope” was shared at a staggering 236 sites throughout the

island nation.

To put the scale of this “harvesting program” in perspective, Vanuatu has a total land area of 12,200 km². That means for 21 straight days, 236 Adventists were proclaiming the message of Jesus across a land area smaller than Sydney.

I wasn’t the only one marvelling at the magnitude of the series. “What are you Adventists doing?” people would ask church pastors and members on the street. “You’re everywhere!” An Adventist taxi driver similarly had a passenger say to him, “Man, these Adventists are crazy. They’re running meetings all over the place!”

The buzz surrounding the meetings also extended to social media, with talk of the harvesting program doing the rounds on Facebook and other digital platforms in Vanuatu. Stop and think about that for a moment—when was the last time you heard of the Seventh-day Adventist Church simultaneously trending online *and* on the street?

“The gospel is going to all of Vanuatu,” says Mission president Pastor Nos Terry Mailalong. “A new door to evangelism has opened up.”

That door is Total Member Involvement, or TMI. Sure, the acronym may not be ideal, but there’s no arguing

with the results. Vanuatu Mission’s harvesting program yielded 1530 baptisms (as of late August), with the Adventist message entering new villages and parts of the country.

Then again, we’ve all heard of stories of large baptisms that are soon followed by a large exodus of new members. Our Church leaders, however, are aware of this too.

“I’m beginning to realise that while the big speakers and evangelists are good, most of the people we reach fall right through the cracks,” says Pastor Mailalong. “Many of them are no longer in the Church.

“I believe for us, the way to do evangelism going forward is what we’re doing this year. Through Total Member Involvement, the local Adventist community gets to own the evangelism, and own the lives coming into their hands too. If they own it, they will look after the people.”

Church members in Vanuatu—and across the Trans Pacific Union Mission (TPUM)—have responded to the challenge, be it through preaching, praying or making personal connections with those attending the meetings.

Now, let’s be clear—this kind of buy-in didn’t come easily.

“For a long time, the local church members thought that only ministers



could minister," explains Pastor Joshua Iso. "But now they think, 'We can do it too. We've been sitting in church with the knowledge of truth but haven't done anything. But we can do it.'"

The turning point for Adventists in Vanuatu came in March when TPUM Global Mission coordinator Dr Ronald Stone ran two weeks of School of Evangelism training in Port Vila. More than 400 lay members from across the country attended, triggering what Pastor Mailalong calls a "shift in mentality".

"It changed the worldview of the lay people. They were empowered and are now excited to get involved."

One such person is bus driver Morris Louis. After attending the training, the lay elder felt inspired to get more involved in "spreading the good news of Jesus".

Morris would go on to be a speaker at an evangelism site in Melema, Efate, in July, despite the fact he was "not confident in public speaking".

"The first night was very hard," he recalls. "I was nervous, but when the first words came out of my mouth, I could feel it was the Holy Spirit speaking. From then on it was very easy."

The end result of his willingness to get involved was eight people choosing to be baptised.

"It's very exciting," he says with a smile. "We thought we might get one, but we got eight. We were in tears of

joy. Now, I just feel like I want to do more. I wish [this series] lasted until December!"

Morris's story is just one example of the amazing things God is doing in Vanuatu (see page 12 for more stories) and throughout the TPUM through Total Member Involvement.

What we need to understand about TMI, though, is it's not about the big event; it's about the *big picture*. In preparation for July's "harvest", the Vanuatu Mission encouraged its members to establish small groups in their local areas. This foresight, along with Revelation seminars, Bible studies and other resources provided by the Mission, meant local church members were/are ready to receive and nurture those newly-baptised.

This "big picture" philosophy stems

from the TPUM's commitment to TMI. For the Union, 2018 is the "year of the lay member". Women will take the lead next year, followed by the "year of the youth" in 2020.

Pastor Mailalong believes this method of evangelism is "the way forward" and not merely a one-off event. "The Trans Pacific Union is committed to giving ministry back to the local members. That's where it's supposed to be."

Indeed, if "this gospel of the kingdom [is to] be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations", we all need to get involved.

LINDEN CHUANG ASSISTANT EDITOR/GRAPHIC DESIGNER, ADVENTIST RECORD.



STORIES FROM THE HARVEST

'IF YOU [PREACH] IT, THEY WILL COME'

For the first week in Emua (north Efate), Vanuatu Mission general secretary Pastor Charlie Jimmy preached only to an empty field. There were times when he asked, "God, what am I doing here? Is this your will for us to have this program here?" During the second week, however, people slowly started to attend, and by the final Sabbath of the program, 13 people had decided to be baptised. Among them were an Assemblies of God pastor and his wife. The evangelistic series not only brought them (and their daughter) into the Adventist family (pictured top left), but it also brought the couple back together in marriage after seven years of separation. On the change that took place in Emua over the three weeks, Pastor Jimmy said, "it's indeed a miracle . . . I just did my best, and God did the rest."

BEAUTY OUT OF ASHES

Wala is an islet off the north-eastern coast of Malakula and a predominantly Catholic community. Despite this, the local chief offered the Seventh-day Adventist Church a place to conduct evangelistic meetings in July. Having welcomed everyone during the opening ceremony, the chief and his family returned home to find their house burnt to the ground. Although very upset, the family continued to attend the meetings. On the final Sabbath of the program, five people, including the chief's wife and son, gave their lives to Jesus in what was the first Adventist baptism ever held on Wala. Others, including the chief, wanted to be baptised but hesitated after ongoing threats from the local community. The Vanuatu Mission is now organising Bible studies for these individuals.

BAPTISM BEHIND BARS

In a first for the Vanuatu Mission, a baptism was held at Port Vila's low risk prison on Sabbath, July 28, with 12 inmates surrendering their lives to Christ (pictured middle, bottom left). The baptisms were conducted by Pastor Nos Terry Mailalong, with MP Ralph Regenvanu, other government dignitaries and police officers also on hand for the special occasion. Half of the prison's inmates are continuing to study the Bible with the help of members from Epauto Seventh-day Adventist Church.

NOT PREACHING, BUT STILL REACHING

Moving to another country, where you don't know anyone or speak the local language, can be incredibly isolating. This was the case for Jung Wang, a Chinese woman who recently moved to Vanuatu with her family. "When she came to the community, she had no other friends," says Johnny Koanapo Rasou, parliamentary secretary to the Prime Minister's office and a member of Etas Seventh-day Adventist Church. "She found friendship with the mothers from our church." Mrs Wang started attending Sabbath programs at Etas church. Then, at the conclusion of July's harvesting program, she and her two daughters were baptised into the Adventist Church family. Mrs Wang's husband, a local businessman, did not attend the meetings, but allowed his wife and daughters to be baptised.



A MISSIONARY SCHOOL



Betikama Adventist College is taking the gospel commission seriously. As a Top National Senior Secondary College, the school attracts students from across Solomon Islands.

Opened 70 years ago, Betikama has always been a missionary school. However, in 2017, it began a push for Total Member Involvement.

According to Betikama principal Denis Kaipa, 18 per cent of the 500 students are from a non-Adventist background. So that's where they started—making sure that they had engaged all of their students first.

This year, the students were divided into nine cultural groups, representing different regions of the Solomons. Students and staff in each group were encouraged to plan outreach trips to their own home regions.

The first cultural group successfully ventured out during the mid-year break as missionaries from Betikama.

The TEMA (Temotu and Makira) group's goal was to visit a remote Adventist village to encourage and support those living there.

Makira Island (also called San Cristobal) has a population of more than 40,000, yet there are only around 200 active Seventh-day Adventists there. It was into this challenging field that the 14 students and two staff entered.

While there they had the opportunity to supply clothes to children and those in need, to witness and visit, and help out around the community with work, cooking, teaching cloth dyeing and screen printing to people interested

in starting small businesses. They prayed with the sick and conducted Bible studies.

"God blessed the students' simple acts of kindness for the communities on Makira Island," Mr Kaipa said. "Many who disliked Adventism now had an interest in what we had to say. Financially it is challenging to visit all the bigger villages but we believe our Makira students will continue the work."

An end-of-year trip is planned for Rendovah Island, in the Western Solomon Islands.

Meanwhile, the mission within the college continues. Along with the rest of the Pacific, Betikama took part in the Pentecost Harvest programs in July. Conducting Bible studies during first semester, the program saw 30 young people decide to be baptised. Of those, eight come from other faith backgrounds and are facing opposition from their parents.

A special offering was collected during closing Sabbath programs to help with supporting needy dormitory students with items like soap, tooth-paste and bedding. They will need prayers and help with school fees, with the college providing some assistance.

Plans are also in place to visit neighbouring senior schools to reach out on Sabbath afternoons, providing students at those schools with the same basic necessities and offering prayer.

The whole school is committed to the missionary spirit.

"We just need your prayers," said Mr Kaipa.

I JARROD STACKELROTH SENIOR EDITOR.



The great *invitation*

A mother was looking over her daughter's wedding guest list and she noticed that all the invitations were addressed "Mr and Mrs" and that there was not a single "Miss", "Ms" or "Mr" in the bunch.

"Why is that?" the mother asked her daughter.

"It's an economy measure," the daughter replied.

"Economy measure?"

"Yeah, if I send invitations to single people they will most likely end up getting married some day and I'll be expected to give them gifts. But if they are already married, I will not have as many wedding gifts to worry about in the future."

The criterion for this invitation is based

on marital status. What do you think of the daughter's reasoning? After all, weddings are expensive these days. Cutting the guest list down is often necessary. Clever thinking or completely unfair?

In the Scriptures, we find wonderful and marvellous invitations that are different from the one I have mentioned. Here we will examine one of them. An invitation that God makes to each and every one of us.

The passage we will unpack is Isaiah 1:18:

"Come now, let us reason together, said the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Before we look at this text, a brief understanding of the immediate background will help us understand the message better.

Isaiah, the author of the book that bears his name, wrote during the stormy period that marked the expansion of the Assyrian Empire and the decline of Israel. Israel was declining in political power and also spiritual power. As history proves, whenever the spiritual lives of the Israelites deteriorated, their political power also declined.

Right in chapter 1, we see Isaiah revealing the spiritual condition of Judah. Verse 2 says, "Hear, O heavens! Listen, O earth!" This is an interesting introductory phrase because Isaiah is using this phrase from the covenant lawsuit, calling upon nature to witness in this declaration because man can't be a witness.

You see, the covenant lawsuit in the Bible requires a witness or someone to guarantee the accuracy of a transaction, and people were always called in to witness the agreement. Those who were called in were reliable and trustworthy. However, in the case of Isaiah, human beings were so evil, so sinful, corrupted and rebellious that God had to call upon nature to be the witness. From verses 3-17, Isaiah further describes Israel's wickedness.

But right here in the midst of the revelation of their sins, God says, "Come now, let us reason together, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow."

This is a beautiful invitation because, when everything else fails, God reaches out His hand. When our dreams are shattered, when our hopes are gone, when our lives are endangered, God invites us.

But let's break this verse down further by analysing some of the words and phrases.

1. "Let us"

In Hebrew, this "let us" expresses a wish, request or command. This of course would suggest that God is not only inviting you, but He wishes that you would reason with Him.

This "let us" may also express "purpose" (in order to) or result (resulting in). Again, this means that God is not only inviting you, but He wishes that you would reason with Him in order for you to "be cleansed, or result in being cleansed". In other words, this invitation is intentional and has a sense of purpose.

2. "Reason"

Now I wonder why God asks us to come and reason with Him? He could have just said, "Come, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." Although, the word "reason" is a term often expressed in a legal setting, I guess reason here indicates that salvation is a free choice. You are not forced to choose, you are not misled, you are not cheated or bribed. Instead, you are given the freedom to reason with Him. Isn't it amazing to see God plead and reasons with His people?

The beauty of the invitation is that it is clear and it is a free choice.

3. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

When we read the text, it seems to suggest that our sins will become white. However, when God says "though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow", He uses a figure of speech where sin is referring

to the person receiving the invitation. Thus, our sins will not be painted white, but we ourselves will become white by wearing the robe of righteousness of God.

This is the beauty of the invitation, for you are the focus, the centre. The difference in this invitation is that you are invited because of you alone and not the occasion. Again, the beauty of this invitation is that you are the reason for the invitation and not the occasion.

4. "Says the Lord"

One may wonder who is doing the inviting. The text says that it is none other than God. The name of God used here is His unspoken name, the four letter word, which means, "I cause to be what comes to pass, I am the existing One" or "I am that I am, and I will be what I will be." The beauty of this invitation is that when we come to Him, He will be there from stage one and He continues to see us through to the end. In fact, only an omnipotent being and a king can do this. Yes, the beauty of this invitation is that it is majestic. You are invited by the King of kings.

5. "Come now"

In Hebrew, the word "now" is an emphatic imperative. It suggests that there is an emphasis, a command and a sense of urgency.

It can be translated also as "come please" or "come straight away and do not delay". This is the most beautiful thing about this invitation—you don't have to wait for a specific date, specific time and a specific place. You just need to come now. The beauty of this invitation is that it is urgent.

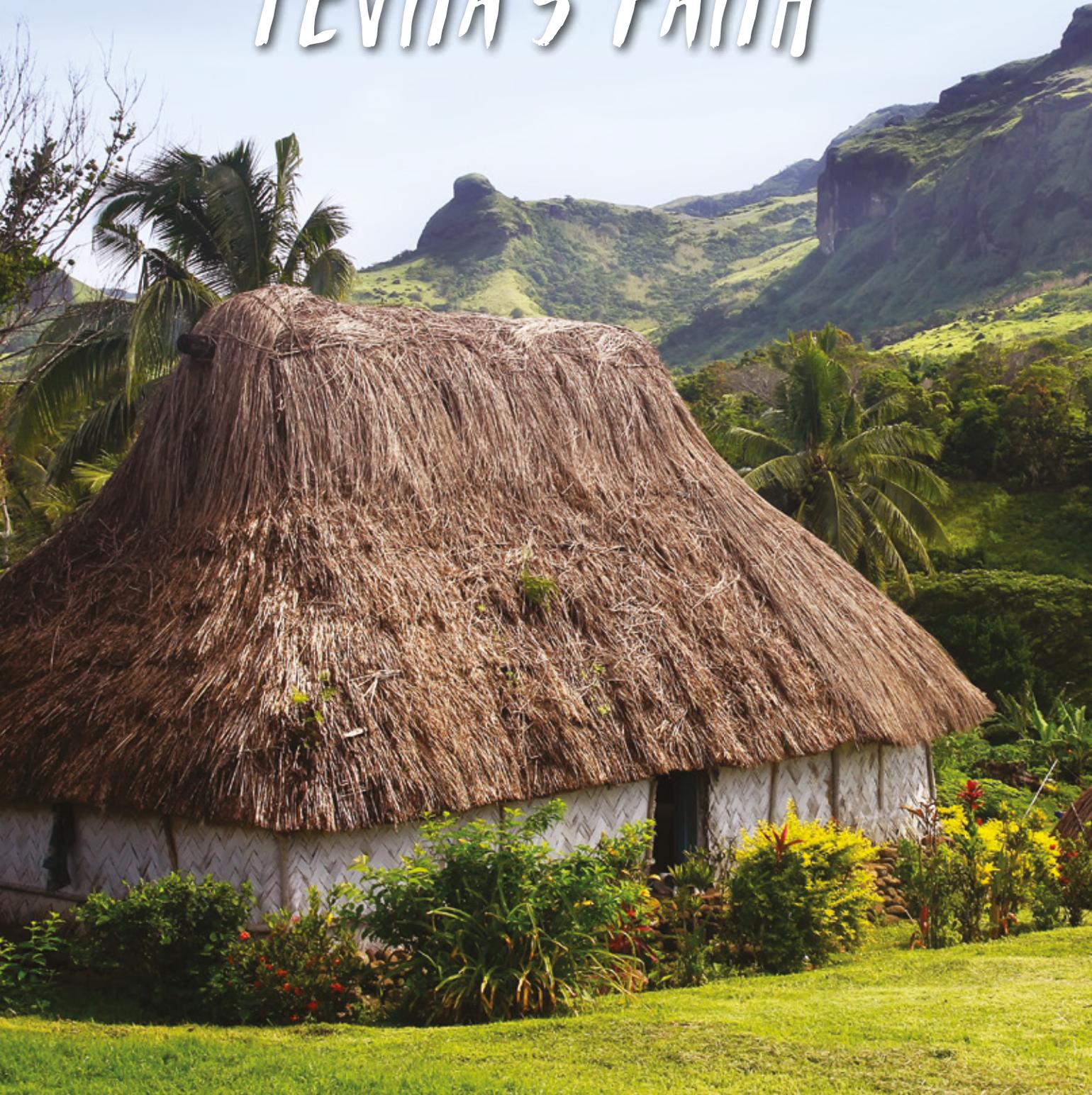
For that reason, this invitation is given to you now and the only criterion is for you to come now.

God wants to invite you to choose Him. He promises that He will make you white and clean, your sins forgotten. And He wants to do it immediately.

Will you accept the invitation?

DR RONALD STONE MINISTERIAL ASSOCIATION
SECRETARY AND GLOBAL MISSION COORDINATOR
FOR THE TRANS PACIFIC UNION MISSION.

THE VANUA AND TEVITA'S FAITH



The *vanua* is the epitome of Pacific identity. In the Fijian context there are multiple interpretations of the *vanua*. It can be the land, the environment, the community, or the cultural and social system in which people are integrated.

The *vanua* offers a sense of belonging, blessing and pride to its people. It is home to knowledge, belief systems, values and a collective identity. It is respected as sacred, safe-guarded and valued. Thus, to enter a new *vanua* or space where there are people, protocols must be respected and adhered to. Disregarding this is a sign of disrespect and an insult to the stewards of the *vanua*.

The Methodist Church, as the first Christian religion to arrive in Fiji in the 1830s, is held with high regard in most traditional/indigenous communities. Historically, when the first Methodist missionaries arrived, they converted chiefs and their subjects followed. Since then, the Methodist Church has been closely associated with the *vanua* and to separate the two is considered dishonorable.

This is one reason Adventism is absent in traditional spaces today. The beliefs and practices of the Church are not always aligned with the practices of the *vanua*.

Adventism arrived in Fiji in 1891, about 60 years after Methodism entered the country. The Advent message spread quickly, however not always to the hearts of the country's chiefs. On the island of Bau, Fiji's dominant power before it was ceded to Great Britain, attempts to introduce Adventism have been difficult. To date there is no Adventist church on this once powerful island.

Just as John I Tay, JE Fulton and the pioneer missionaries to Fiji had the vision and passion to share the Advent light in challenging environments, so do today's frontline missionaries in their effort to share the Advent message on Bau. The missionaries consist of a group of dedicated, retired and unemployed individuals who, in their pursuit to break through to the island, go through a series of personal ministry training and practice events immersed in prayer and fasting.

Tevita and his wife Tima moved from Bau Island to Taro to house-sit an aunt's home. While living on Taro Tevita saw two missionaries and asked them to visit his home. He shared with them the struggles he and his wife were going through. Tevita is a military officer and after years of merry-making and partying, his wife fell very ill, which saw her continually admitted

to hospital. "At this point, I was desperate and started praying, asking God to heal my ill-struck wife," he said. "My two kids are still very young and I cannot deal with losing my wife." The couple started praying and they worshipped at home on Sundays, committing themselves to God and expecting that, through these efforts, Tima would recover and live. However, she was still very ill. She was so ill that the couple decided to make a deal with God: if He would heal Tima, they would follow whichever church God intended for them.

Tevita was convinced that the path of the missionaries was the path to follow. "I saw the consistency the missionaries had and that they would put up with taking a long ride just to see me and my wife," he said. "To me their mission was intentional."

Taro is about an hour and-a-half bus ride from Suva. The sacrifice and dedication that Tevita saw in the missionaries convinced him of their faith. He undertook a series of Bible studies and was baptised during the July Harvest program.

Today Tevita's wife is in good health and both have become frontline missionaries: to be a beacon of light in a predominantly Wesleyan environment. Their goal is to take the gospel to the island of Bau and Tevita's vision is that one day soon, there will be an Adventist church on the island.

Tevita is certain that God has called his family to take the faith to Bau and he is aware that traditional protocol will have to be followed. He also recognises his traditional lineage in the island as *tuinidau* or guardians and protectors of the island's natural resources. This is the link that God can use to have the Advent message enter Bau.

KESAIA VASUTOGA SOCIAL WORK EDUCATOR AT THE UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC AND SAMOA SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST COMMUNITY CHURCH MEMBER, FIJI.



TEVITA AND HIS FAMILY.

THE PACIFIC'S BIGGEST BATTLE: LIFESTYLE DISEASES



Non-communicable diseases such as diabetes and coronary artery disease (a cause of heart attacks and angina) are having a devastating impact upon our Pacific Island nations. It's estimated that 1 in 4 adult Pacific Islanders are diabetic. Complications from diabetes are resulting in an estimated 30,000 amputations in the South Pacific every year. That's one amputation every 20 minutes.

With the current pandemic of type 2 diabetes sweeping across the Pacific there is the unfortunate reality that what is "normal" is being redefined. It is now normal to eat packaged and processed foods containing more energy than we need. It is now normal to buy all our food from the shop. It is now normal to do all our travelling in a vehicle. It is now normal to sit for the majority of our day behind a desk. It is now normal to use screens (computers, phones, TVs) for our entertainment. It is now normal to be overweight and to suffer high blood pressure, high cholesterol, type 2 diabetes and ischaemic heart disease. This is the new normal.

But stop and think for a moment. It wasn't always this way. In our great-grandparents' day it was normal to eat foods as grown in nature. It was normal to get most of our food from the garden. It was normal to walk if you wanted to go somewhere. It was normal to have physically active jobs. It was normal to find entertainment in being physically active. It was normal to live lives largely free of non-communicable diseases. This was the old normal.

While enjoying good health in a culture that is so different to what our great-grandparents experienced is increasingly challenging, there are certain things we can do personally to help reduce our chances of developing non-communicable diseases. Check out our three tips.

In reflecting on how Christians should relate to what society views as normal, the apostle Paul had some wise advice to share: "Do not conform yourselves to the standards of this world, but let God transform you inwardly by a complete change of your mind. Then you will be able to know the will of God—what is good and is pleasing to him and is perfect" (Romans 12:2 GNB).

| DR PAUL WOOD TPUM HEALTH DIRECTOR.

TIPS TO FIGHT LIFESTYLE DISEASES



MOVING MORE

Increasing our physical activity by sitting less and moving more goes a long way towards reducing our risk of non-communicable diseases. This could mean planting a garden or going for a family walk in the evening rather than sitting down in front of the TV.



EAT MORE PLANTS

The research is fairly clear that eating more fruits, vegetables, wholegrains and legumes (beans) is associated with a reduced risk of obesity, type 2 diabetes, coronary artery disease and various cancers, while eating more meat and processed foods increases our risk of these diseases.



RESTING UP

With increasing use of technology, such as computers, televisions and smart phones, we are tending to go to bed later and are sleeping less. This is associated with an increased risk of obesity, which in turn increases our risk of type 2 diabetes, coronary artery disease and several cancers. Most of us need 7-8 hours of sleep per night.



THE SABBATH EXCUSE

Love this! (“The Sabbath excuse”, August 4). I’ve been thinking about this a lot recently. The command to abstain from work is only part of the Sabbath command. In T4 Ellen White suggests we need a revival in Sabbath-keeping—the letter and spirit of the Sabbath. The positive side is more subtle: to remember, to rest, to trust God, to thank Him for creation and salvation, to bless our family, colleagues and strangers. In the end, the command to not work should free us, something similar to a command not to worry. If we struggle with work and stopping labour, then perhaps it’s a hint we love the world’s values and systems rather than God’s values and plans for our lives.

Stephen Wilson, NZ

COUNT THE COST

Thank you for your insightful article “Cursed is anyone who denies justice . . .” (August 4). I personally endorse the sentiments you expressed.

Quite apart from the issue of inhumanity to fellow humans, the cost of keeping these asylum seekers locked up must be enormous. If indeed they are illegally attempting to take up residence in Australia, why do we not immediately return them to their point of departure, the same as we do with those endeavouring to enter this country through our airports with false passports or having a criminal history. Surely the cost of immediate return would be less than incurred by locking them up in inhospitable circumstances!

I wish our Church corporate would express itself on this matter.

Ross Goldstone, NSW

DOING FAITHFULLY

I used to think Australia was being unchristian to would-be immigrants.

Then a year or so ago I heard a businessman on

Manus Island interviewed on radio. He said detainees were not locked up, as the cover picture (*Adventist Record*, August 4) would infer, but were free to go into the community to shop or look for work. But those immigrants didn’t try to become part of the Manus culture. Their great wish was to live in a first-world country.

I spent four years in New Guinea, nearly 50 years ago. At that time the Papua New Guineans were happy in their own country, where anyone could grow their food needs. They didn’t need to wish [to live in] a first-world country.

Six years ago, I spent five months in Kenya, a country where, if a person can find work at all, the income is likely to be at starvation level. Because of overpopulation all ground water is so polluted that Kenyans do not give their animals the water because it would make them sick. It seemed to me that every Kenyan’s dream was to emigrate to a first-world country.

I don’t want my country overpopulated until all the

ground water is polluted. I don’t want my country to run out of land to grow its own food.

I may sound unsympathetic, but I am not. I have tried to help orphan Kenyans with trade skills and the ability to have their own families, but it is such a land of competition for survival that success is elusive.

Rhyll Lister, NSW

AVONDALE EXPERIENCE

I have always felt the product Avondale produced best was the Avondale experience (“Avondale reduces staffing levels”, August 25). While online study is inevitable, it is one every other institution produces. But what they do better than anyone else is “the Avondale experience” combined with a quality education.

Being a distance education provider will not solve the issues. Not even slightly. But those of us who have had the experience of being in the dorms at Avondale want nothing more than for that experience to be had by our children or our

grandchildren.

No-one will ever sit around reminiscing about the mind-blowing online content they received from Avondale or any other uni. They talk about the life-long friends they made, the connection they had with lecturers who often became close friends. The connection of faith and common belief in a loving God.

These people will live on in our lives forever, and these stories will last a lifetime. That experience is not offered anywhere else in the country. I was changed by the people I met and blessed by meeting there. Anyone who has not experienced this has truly missed out. Save the dorms. Save the Avondale experience.

Luke Martin, via FB

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

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COLOUR IN!



QUESTIONS

HOW MANY PEOPLE IN...
this picture? _____
this picture are girls? _____
this picture are boys? _____
your family? _____
in your church? _____

BE COUNTED!

Wedding



FERRY-BRUCE.

Joshua Ferry, son of Ray and Karen Ferry (Melbourne, Vic), and Lorinda Bruce, daughter of Malcolm and Daphne Bruce (Canberra, ACT), were married on 11.3.18 at Mangata Events in St Kilda (Vic) in a lovely bayside setting in front of many family and friends. The couple have set up their home in Melbourne.

Graeme Christian

Rebekah and Kylie Johnson; step-children Lindsay, Cherie and Heidi; Sarah Laws; mother Sylvia Johnson; and siblings Ross, Brian and Cheryl Knight. Noel was a gifted man who, during his life, worked in a diverse range of employment opportunities. During his recent years of ill health, he demonstrated great courage and acceptance of his limited quality of life. Noel was a loving husband, father and grandfather, and now rests in the hope of a soon coming Saviour.

Roger Nixon

\$80, including lunch, lectures and banquet. Contact Dr Lynden Rogers on+61 2 4980 2213, <lynden.rogers@avondale.edu.au>.

to please send any information, photographs or anecdotal stories. Send through information to Lindy Sperring: <lindysperring@adventist.org.au>.

ADVENTCARE WHITEHORSE (PREVIOUSLY CORONELLA)

AdventCare is preparing a history and would like to invite readers

NEXT ISSUE: ADVENTIST RECORD, SEPTEMBER 22

Obituaries



BENARD, Cornelis (Colin) Hendrik, born 12.2.1920; died 31.5.18 on

the Gold Coast, Qld. He was predeceased by his wives Ann and Robertina. Colin is survived by his children Sylvia (Canada), Raymond (Sunshine Coast, Qld), Ross (Murwillumbah, NSW), Judy (Canada), Mark (Gold Coast, Qld) and Graham (Murwillumbah, NSW) and their families. Colin was an active member of the Church for much of his life. He lived to 98 years of age in NSW and Queensland.

Greg Pratt

JONES, Hazel Florence (nee Hunt), born 16.6.1927 in Ipswich, Qld; died 14.7.18 in Atherton. In September 1950 she married Laurie Jones. She is survived by her husband; children Lee and Lyndal; six grandchildren; and 13 great-grandchildren. Hazel became an Adventist in 1941 following a mission by Pastor OK Anderson, and was a charter member of Harrisville church (South Qld). At different periods she was a member of the churches at Warrnambool (Vic), Ballarat, Nunawading, Horsham, North Fitzroy, Mildura and then Malanda (North Qld). In all of these churches her music was greatly appreciated.

Eddie Hastie

JOHNSON, Noel Bruce, born 25.12.1951 in Croydon Park, NSW; died 15.7.18 at The Entrance, NSW. In 1976 he married Roslyn Byron. In 2000 he married Guifu Chen. Noel is survived by Guifu; their children

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ADVENT BRASS-MELBOURNE CONCERT

A Night to Remember! September 15, 2018, 8pm. Salvation Army Hall, 13-17 Nelson Street, Box Hill. Adult \$20, family \$50, student/pensioner \$10. Contact Rebecca 0421 845 264. Launching *Advent Brass Band - A brief history* with photos by Dr Milton Hook, \$25. Mail order +\$11 postage. Contact Ray Boehm 0404 024 045.

SCIENCE REUNION

Celebrate with former staff and students 65 years of science at Avondale (October 26-27, 2018). Guest: Dr Laurie Draper. Cost:

POSITIONS VACANT

PASTOR/BIBLE WORKER TORRES STRAIT

The Northern Australian Conference is seeking expressions of interest for a full-time pastor/Bible worker position in the Torres Strait. This role is for a minimum of three years and requires skills in pastoral ministry, mechanics, building, piloting a boat and cross-cultural sensitivity. Base of operations is on Thursday Island with a church there, plus two other congregations on Moa and Saibai Islands. Applicants must be legally able to work in Australia at the time of application. Interest, enquiries or questions can be directed to Darren Slade: <darrenslade@adventist.org.au>. **Applications close September 30, 2018.**

PUBLIC RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER WAUCHOPE, NSW

Asian Aid is seeking to appoint a highly motivated and experienced individual to join its team, located in Wauchope on the mid-north coast of NSW. Speaking on behalf of Asian Aid, this senior position is instrumental in delivering communications and engagement initiatives aimed at enhancing the positive public image of the organisation through implementation of effective engagement and communication tactics with existing and potential new stakeholders. If this sounds like you, forward your cover letter and CV to <business.services@asianaid.org.au> or visit Asian Aid's website: <www.asianaid.org.au/get-involved/work-with-us>. **Applications accepted until September 30, 2018, or until position is filled.**

CONTENT ACQUISITION MANAGER, HOPE CHANNEL NZ AUCKLAND, NZ

The New Zealand Pacific region administration office is looking for a suitable person to fill the role of Hope Channel NZ content acquisition manager. You will connect with content producers to source appropriate content that will be shown on the Church's official television channel—Hope Channel—and liaising and negotiating with content providers to obtain broadcast and online streaming rights (as appropriate) for the South Pacific region. This is a full-time position. All applicants must hold the necessary immigration requirements to be able to live and work in New Zealand and will need to show proof thereof in order to be considered for the position. Email your resume and a cover letter to Graeme Drinkall, secretary treasurer, Seventh-day Adventist Church, New Zealand Pacific region: <graemedrinkall@adventist.org.nz>. **Applications close September 27, 2018.**

FOR MORE AVAILABLE POSITIONS VISIT:  /SDAJOBS
ADVENTISTEMPLOYMENT.ORG.AU



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-Winkie Pratney

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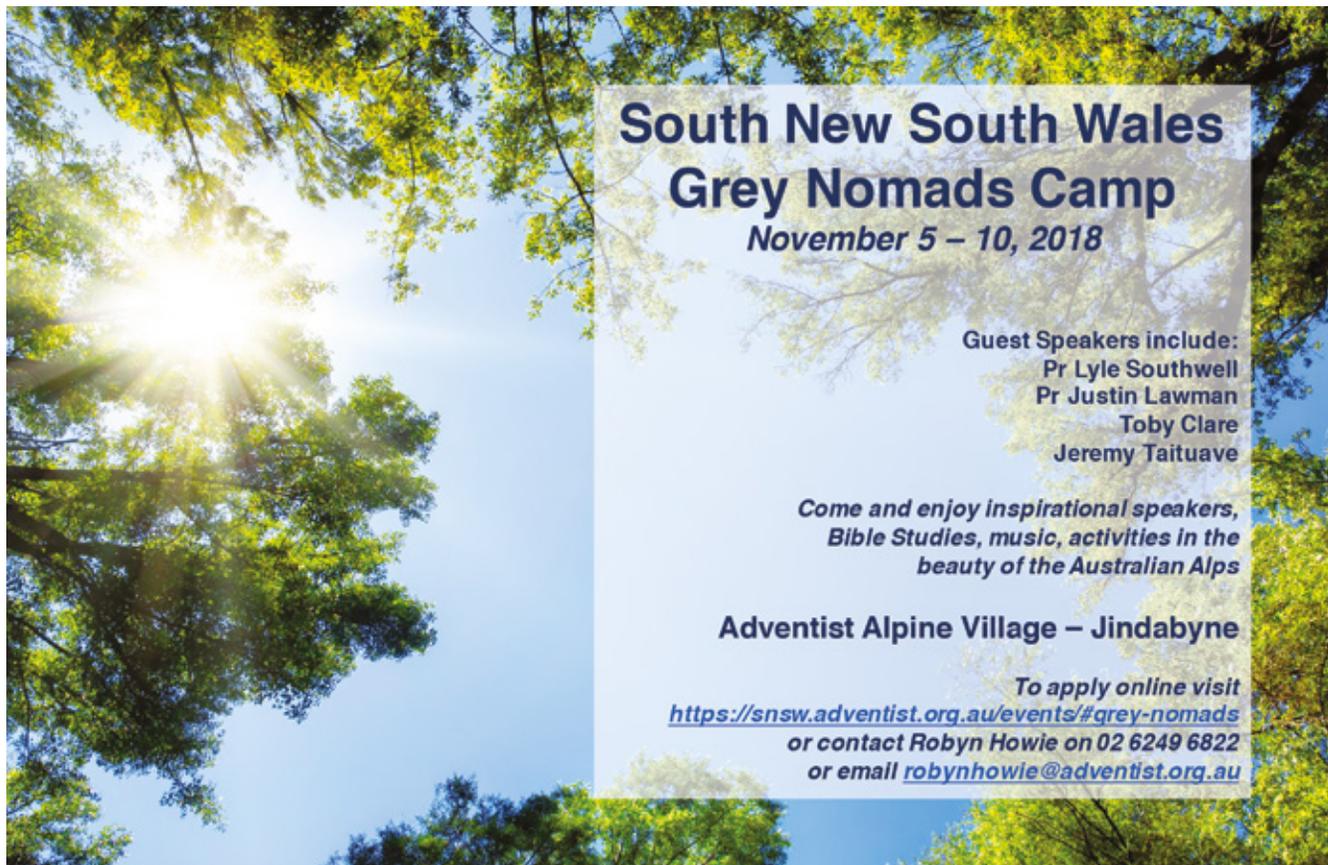
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