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Pray as you can

Persistence in the
hard times ¹⁴

Springwood church
celebrates 50 years ⁶

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A woman with short blonde hair and glasses, wearing a dark blue suit and a green scarf, stands in a classroom. She is looking slightly to her right. In the background, there are blue chairs and a whiteboard.

"I came back to Avondale to help students engage and thrive. But that's difficult to do in classrooms that have, quite frankly, not kept up."

Professor Kerri-Lee Krause,
Interim Vice-Chancellor

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EDITOR'S NOTE:

World refugee day: are we willing to help?

Glenn Townsend
South Pacific Division president

“

The current refugee movement is bringing people who have never heard of Jesus into contact with people who have.

Adventists are keen observers of world events. Often we see the signs that the second coming of Jesus to earth is near. False Christs, wars, famines, earthquakes (Matthew 24:5-7) are such signs and each of them cause devastation and people movement as a consequence.

People flee events such as violence, persecution, the shortage of food or a natural disaster and sometimes become refugees. A refugee is someone who has been forced to leave their country to seek survival and safety somewhere else. It is estimated that there are 103 million forcibly displaced people in the world, with 53.2 million of those internally displaced and 32.5 million are refugees. About 8 million people have left Ukraine alone since the war started. Millions are moving out of Sudan and Myanmar. Drought in Eastern Africa is also forcing people movement.

People who move are looking for hope and a better life. Some have less of a choice than others. As a boy, Jesus went to Egypt with his parents at the call of God to escape the tyrannical grasp of Herod (Matthew 2:13-15). He was an isolated refugee.

Adventists are also willing to help those in crisis from the “signs of the times”. In fire, flood, cyclone, tsunami and war, local Adventist church members have provided whatever is needed—including water, shelter, food, transport . . .

In the recent cyclone in Vanuatu, local churches provided water and food to those who lost most worldly possessions, including houses and gardens.

The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) does this work professionally, with projects in more than 107 countries around the world, often supporting refugees or people in disaster.

For example, in Ukraine and the surrounding countries, ADRA reports having provided nearly \$US40 million in humanitarian assistance, activating more than 5000 church volunteers and transporting more than 60,000 people from the conflict zone. They have provided food, hygiene packages, medical checks, language classes, winterisation projects and integration support as well as many other forms of help.

In Fiji in the past two years, ADRA has piloted the Disaster Ready Churches program: teaching church and community people how to create safe places in disaster, and how to support and not hinder governments and aid agencies. It enables people to assess what is needed at the right time.

Disasters in the past led to the movement of people that changed others' lives. Namaan was healed and followed Israel's God because a servant girl captured in war remembered the power of the prophet Elisha (2 Kings 5:1-19). Daniel and the Jewish exiles took the knowledge of the One Almighty God to Babylon—even Babylon's foremost king Nebuchadnezzar acknowledged Daniel's God as the true God (Daniel 1-4). God reversed the curse of the Tower of Babel at Pentecost as the Spirit enabled the first disciples of Jesus to speak in other languages. These Jews from the diaspora took the message of Jesus back to the places they came from (Acts 2:4-11).

The current refugee movement is bringing people who have never heard of Jesus into contact with people who have. Muslims from the Middle East and North Africa are connecting with Christians in Europe, North America and in the Pacific. The Hindu diaspora is in most parts of the world. Students from Muslim and Communist countries are studying in countries where there is freedom to share Jesus. People within Africa are moving from Muslim areas to Christian-populated areas in search of food. Could God be giving Christians and Adventists all over the world an opportunity here?

If treated well, people in transition are open to explore new ideas and even find faith in our loving God. We are called to do good for God's sake without expecting a payback. But by just doing good we often find people who are receptive to the Jesus who lives in us.



INSIGHT:

PAU poised for innovation and adaptation

Lohi Matainaho
Pacific Adventist University vice-
chancellor

As Pacific Adventist University (PAU) commemorates its 40th anniversary next year, I've been reflecting on its incredible journey and its future—filled with endless possibilities.

PAU is a premier institution of higher learning in the South Pacific, shaping the lives of students and making a lasting impact on the community it serves. PAU consistently upholds its commitment to academic excellence, fostering an environment that nurtures intellectual growth and character development.

With a dedicated faculty and staff, the university provides a holistic education that goes beyond textbooks, emphasising values such as integrity, compassion and service to others. PAU's success is evidenced by the achievements of its graduates—leaders and world change-makers in various fields. Their accomplishments serve as a testament to the quality education and nurturing environment provided by PAU, instilling in them the confidence and skills necessary to excel in their chosen paths.

Looking ahead, PAU continues to be a spiritual place, poised for a future that embraces innovation and adaptation. The rapidly changing global landscape demands new approaches to education, and PAU is ready to meet these challenges head-on. In the past 12 months we have been trialing the use of online technology in augmented reality and virtual reality and plan to introduce such tools to keep students connected virtually.

Additionally, PAU aims to further strengthen its ties with industries and organisations, ensuring its programs remain relevant and aligned with the needs of the job market. By forging strategic partnerships and promoting research and innovation, PAU is positioning itself as a hub for knowledge creation and a catalyst for regional development. PAU now has outgrown its current facilities and infrastructure—we have more student applications than space—and the challenges PAU faces are ones of infrastructure and growth. I know God will continue to lead as PAU navigates the challenges of tomorrow and continues making a positive impact in the lives of its students and the communities it serves.



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- o \$120 to help our mothers learn a skill like tailoring







BLESS MY DAY AT SCHOOL

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- o \$20 for uniforms and books for a year
- o \$50 for regular eye and health check-ups







BLESS MY DAY IN MY COMMUNITY

- o \$100 to improve our schools and keep us safe
- o \$150 to help us solve the issues we face in our community
- o \$700 to provide healthcare for women and girls in our remote communities

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Kingsley Wood and Ben Thomas.

New SPD leaders for tech and development

📍 Wahroonga, NSW | Juliana Muniz

The South Pacific Division (SPD) has appointed two new directors on May 16. After prayerful discussion, Ben Thomas was nominated as director of technology, operations and strategy, and Kingsley Wood as the new director of Pacific capacity development.

Mr Thomas is replacing Eva Ing, appointed associate officer earlier this year. Prior to his appointment, Mr Thomas held the position of director of Pacific capacity development.

Assuming the role immediately following his appointment, Mr Thomas highlighted the importance of his new position: "technology pervades all aspects of our lives, and I believe that it is critical for the Church to utilise technology as a strategic enabler of our mission".

Mr Thomas's career spans more than 20 countries and several sectors. He's held roles within organisations such as Microsoft in Singapore and New Zealand, Pacific Adventist University in Papua New Guinea and Adventist Technology in Australia.

Replacing Mr Thomas is Mr Wood. In his new position, Mr Kingsley will assist island unions and missions to adopt and follow good practices in governance. This includes a thorough understanding of SPD policy and local legislative regimes.

"Good governance practices, consistently followed—from finances to personnel selection and professional development of personnel—are key drivers to stable administration," he explained.

Mr Wood's professional journey in the Adventist Church began in roles such as cashier/clerk and computer programmer at Avondale University. He progressed to serve as an accountant for several institutions within the Church before taking on the role of CFO at the former Central Pacific Union Mission, Australian Union Conference and later at the Trans Pacific Union Mission. More recently, he has served as the secretary and CFO of the New Zealand Pacific Union Mission.

Kheir Boutros has accepted the call from the NZPUC Executive Committee to be the new NZPUC Secretary-Treasurer. Mr Wood and Mr Boutros will now work on a transition process over the next couple of months.

"Kingsley brings huge experience from across the Division to this role," said Mr Thomas. "He has worked in Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific, and has held roles at most levels of the Church. He is one of the few people in our Division who intimately knows our policies," he added.



Scan the QR code to join 24-hour praise, prayer and fasting session on Zoom.

San to hold 24 hours of praise, prayer and fasting

📍 Wahroonga, NSW | Brett Goods/Steve Stephenson

Sydney Adventist Hospital (the San) will host 24 hours of praise, prayer and fasting from Friday evening, June 23, as an expression of gratitude for the way God has blessed the organisation in the past and faith in His leading for the years to come.

The prayer chain will start at 5pm on Friday with a program in the San chapel, and continue through to Saturday evening. The San chapel will be the hub of this event, with music, prayer and Bible readings led by one person each hour. However, those who can't be there in person can participate via Zoom, and via the hospital's in-house TV channel for patients and staff on the wards.

As well as participating in the 24-hour prayer session, people are invited to fast

in a way that is appropriate for them. The season of prayer, fasting and thanksgiving is open to all who would like to join.

"The hospital looks after more than 200,000 patients each year," said Adventist HealthCare CEO Brett Goods. "We have a deeply loyal and supportive community, and this is our opportunity to pray for them and our patients, staff, doctors, volunteers, families and suppliers. We welcome you to join us in person or online. Together we can experience the profound source of peace and hope that comes with community in relationship with God."

For more information, contact San Spiritual Care Services: phone +61 2 9480 6160 or email <SpiritualCare@sah.org.au>.



Kenton Ghona, PNGUM's new CFO.

New CFO for PNG Union Mission

📍 Lae, PNG | Jacqueline Wari

The South Pacific Division (SPD) Executive Committee has appointed Kenton Ghona, 49, as Papua New Guinea Union Mission's (PNGUM) new CFO. Previously serving as under-treasurer, Mr Ghona replaces Russell Strahan.

After serving the PNGUM from 2019 to 2023, Mr Strahan was recalled to Australia by the SPD due to personal and work-related reasons, as announced by PNGUM president Pastor Malachi Yani.

Expressing gratitude for his appointment, Mr Ghona commented, "I'm humbled and honoured to be chosen for this role. Many church members are praying and I am confident God has a plan for His Church in PNG."

He is keen to continue building on the work left by his predecessor, to whom Mr Ghona paid tribute for his contributions, "Mr Strahan has contributed immensely

to the business system of the Church. He has done some mentoring too," Mr Ghona said.

Mr Ghona held the position of under-treasurer for PNGUM from 2015 to 2023. He holds a Bachelor's in Mathematics and Sciences from Fulton College, a diploma in finance from the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education and a Bachelor in Business and Information Technology from Avondale University.

Mr Ghona served as a financial controller for Antek, a Solomon Islands computing company. He then began his tenure at PNGUM as an assistant accountant in September 2005. He later served as senior accountant, system administrator, assistant to the CFO and under-treasurer.

He is married to Lorraine Ghona from East New Britain (PNG), and they have a son.



Springwood's current pastoral team (L-R): Pastors Alina van Rensburg, Paul Goltz and Ray Moaga
[Photo credit: Charmaine Patel].

Springwood church celebrates 50 years

📍 Springwood, Qld | Christina Somerville/Record Staff

More than 700 church and community members gathered to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Springwood Seventh-day Adventist Church, in Queensland, on Sabbath, May 13, honouring its deep roots with a program themed "Planted".

The celebration highlighted the church's rich history and influential role within local and Adventist communities. The event showcased a series of speeches—some presented by former Springwood pastors—musical performances, dramatic enactments and other presentations illustrating the history of Springwood Adventist Church.

Among the speakers were Pastor Barry Oliver, Pastor Peter Cousins, Pastor Travis Manners and South Queensland Conference president Pastor Brett Townend. Australian Union Conference president Pastor Terry Johnson joined in the festivities, extending his greetings via video, along with several past pastors.

Looking back on his first sermon at the newly finished church hall in 1975, Pastor Oliver recalled, "immediately when we came to Springwood, we were struck by the vitality and enthusiasm of this young church". During that first year, around 40

people were baptised.

For church member Christina Somerville, one of the highlights of the day was "seeing so many of the founding members able to be present on the day and honoured in front of the church during the program". They shared vibrant memories of the church's growth.

Springwood's beginnings arose from a need to start a church plant due to overcrowding at Eight Mile Plains Church. Springwood was officially established in 1973 with 103 founding members and 173 waiting for transfer.

In his closing address, Pastor Townend emphasised the importance of celebrating the past without losing sight of the hopeful future. "We ponder the works of the Lord as we look back, but we need to know where we are going, which is where our focus should be. I know the God I serve, and I know that the best days are yet to come."

Current pastoral team members Pastors Paul Goltz, Alina van Rensburg and Ray Moaga reiterated Pastor Townend's message, urging the congregation to continue embracing faith, community and a vision for the future.



Avondale University teaching graduate Margaret Graham in her new workplace, Noosa Christian College [Photo credit: Anita Mitchell-Kerr].

Avondale's teaching courses earn top marks in national satisfaction survey

📍 Cooranbong, NSW | Brenton Stacey

In a recent endorsement of Avondale University's teaching courses, a federal government survey has unveiled a 93 per cent satisfaction rating from its graduates. This rating distinguishes Avondale as the top-ranked higher education institution in comparison with 45 other universities and providers across Australia offering similar courses, well above the national average of 75 per cent.

Recent Avondale alumna and first-year teacher at Noosa Christian College Margaret Graham confirms these results, attributing her successful transition into her new workplace to the nurturing environment she experienced at Avondale.

The Year 5 teacher feels the staff members have "confidence in my ability and back my decisions". A smaller school, with about 400 students across the primary and secondary campuses, seems a good fit for a teacher in their first year. Ms Graham also rates her experience at Avondale highly because of the support she received from the staff members. "The lecturers had a lot of time for you. I got to graduate: that's a testament to them."

A commitment to care "is the way we do things here", said the head of the School of Education and Science, Dr Sherry Hattingh. "We're enacting the values of Avondale and our calling as teachers." The rankings "encourage us to grow best practice. Relationships are what make teaching effective, so we choose to practice this in our workplace by building and developing these."

Ms Graham had limited experience and little confidence when she started studying primary teaching, arriving at Avondale at 18 years old. A big turning point came during her last placement—an eight-week block in a Year 5 classroom at Avondale School. The teacher, alumnus Steve Platt, became a mentor. "If I wanted to try something new, or if I wasn't sure about something, he'd make time to answer my questions. It really helped me apply theory to practice."

Now, Ms Graham is a role model for the 20 children in her class. "I'm very aware of the things I say and do. I'm not perfect, of course—I try my best to be kind and not grumpy so they can see that's how we should treat others." Ms Graham seeks to build genuine relationships with her students. "I want them to know I care and, at least for the six hours a day I have them, that they are my number one priority."

making headlines

Disney health provider

AdventHealth recently hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony at its new offsite emergency room department located near Walt Disney World Resort in Florida, US. "As the official health-care provider of Walt Disney World Resort, AdventHealth is there to offer medical care for our guests if they need it. On behalf of all of us here at Disney, I would like to congratulate AdventHealth as they open this beautiful new facility," said Walt Disney World Resort president Jeff Vahle. —AR



New animated film

Hope Channel International premiered a new animation film that is expected to challenge the norms of the animation industry. *The Great Controversy* was released exclusively on the network's YouTube channel. The film promises to be intriguing for all who see it and is designed to resonate with audiences in a postmodern context. —ANN

Special disability Sabbath

Mongolia Mission's Adventist Possibilities Ministries held a special Sabbath to create awareness and reach families with disabilities. Themed "Sharing the Love", 30 families (19 non-Adventist) were supported and provided with much-needed supplies and gifts. —NSD

Bible sells for \$57 million

A 1100-year-old Hebrew Bible that is one of the world's oldest surviving biblical manuscripts has sold for \$US38 million (\$57 million) in New York. The Codex Sassoon, a leather-bound, handwritten parchment volume containing a nearly complete Hebrew Bible, was donated to the ANU Museum of the Jewish People in Israel. —ABC News



Fiji Mission's digital world-first

Fiji Mission (FM) has introduced an innovative ministry development app called "MDLite", marking a global first in the Church, according to its developers. Launched by FM president Pastor Nasoni Lutunaliwa and pastors Linray Tutuo and Tiko Kabu, the app draws on the same systems that are in the ministry development portal already in use in Australia and New Zealand. Designed by Pastor Russ Willcocks and the Adventist Technology team, MDLite offers a user-friendly platform for ministry development and communication, even in low-data or offline situations. Ministers received onboarding and training following the launch. —TPUM News



Gobsmacked in The Lion's Den

The Lion's Den at Hyve Australia 2023 saw Adventist entrepreneurs pitch innovative missional business ideas for a share of a \$A10,000 prize pool. After extensive deliberation, the judges chose Patrice Patel's Gobsmacked Productions as the top winner. The runner-ups were Mantua Sewing Studio and Without Reason: the Label. The judges applauded Gobsmacked Productions for their service to New Zealand schools. Gobsmacked handles the entirety of a school's musical production process, offering scripts based on biblical and moral themes to both public and private Christian schools. Also operating a free weekly outreach program, Gobsmacked Ministries aims at fostering youth spiritual development through creative performing arts. —Julian Archer



Adventist Ironman

Andrew Thompson completed his first Ironman Triathlon and fundraised more than \$A9700 for ADRA Australia. On May 7, he conquered the 3.8km swim, 180km cycle and 42.2km marathon run in just over 14 hours and 37 minutes. Thompson's motivation stemmed from a desire to support those assisted by ADRA. "What's the point of all that self-inflicted pain just for the superficial bragging rights of being an Ironman? For me, it needed to have a bigger purpose. The people that I'm raising money to help are doing it tough day in and day out, not just for 15 hours," he explained. —Ashley Stanton



Adventist legacy

The Samoa and Tokelau Mission held its Big Camp from May 2 to 7, coinciding with the 132nd anniversary of Adventism's arrival in the country. Themed "Legacy in the midst of storm", the event featured guest speakers, including Samoan Prime Minister Fiaame Naomi Mata'afa. Church members showcased their agricultural and fisheries products, symbolising their commitment to the Adventist teachings. —TPUM News



Thinking Faith

"Thinking Faith", an event hosted by VicASA, the Victorian Conference's ministry for university students, encouraged intellectual discussions on faith among 140 participants from diverse professional backgrounds on May 12 and 13.

"It was inspiring to be surrounded by so many bright minds tackling the bigger topics, expanding our views on the way our faith should influence all aspects of our lives, our careers, actions, thoughts and dreams," reflected Grace Madhuvu, a first-year nursing student at Deakin University.

Chaplain Pastor Moe Stiles highlighted the variety of perspectives shared by presenters. Speakers included Dr Tim Gillespie, lead pastor of Crosswalk Church in Redland, California, who talked about the philosophy of faith, and Perth-based lawyer Lesleigh Bower.

Ms Bower appreciated meeting young individuals pursuing an authentic relationship with Jesus that also transforms their professional lives. "I also appreciated Tim's focus on present truth, which reminded me that God's ways are still being revealed to His people," she said.

Benjamin Pratt, University of Melbourne science student, valued the table discussions and commended Dr Christiana Leimena-Lehn's analysis linking health and faith. He expressed enthusiasm for similar future events. —**Nathan Brown**

have news to share?

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



We still believe

Vagamatatora Hand Church, a small company of Kukum church (Solomon Islands (SI)), joined others around the world in celebrating 160 years since the establishment of the Seventh-day Adventist Church (May 19 to 21). With the theme "We Still Believe", former president Pastor Martin Losi gave four presentations, with topics such as the historical background, the worldwide mission of the church and its arrival in SI. On Sunday SI Mission president Pastor David Filo spoke on the relevance of history as we approach a future clearly described in prophecy. The church expressed their appreciation for the event as being educational and timely. —**James Bourro**



Celebrating 10 years of discipleship

The ARISE class of 2023 celebrated their graduation and ARISE's 10-year anniversary in Australia in a ceremony held at Kingscliff Adventist Church (NSW). Daniel Oehlmann, ARISE boys' dean, reflected on the nostalgic event that honoured the achievements of 42 students, including 17 international graduates. The program showcased ARISE's positive impact over the years, highlighting its role in fostering volunteer ministry, outreach and evangelism. Pastor Matt Parra, former North New South Wales Conference personal ministries and evangelism director, reported on ARISE's positive influence on the Conference. Pastors David Asscherick and Ty Gibson shed light on the beginnings of ARISE, highlighting the Spirit's guidance throughout. The ceremony concluded with a choir performance by ARISE graduates, allowing attendees to appreciate students' growth and God's work within the program. —**NorthPoint**



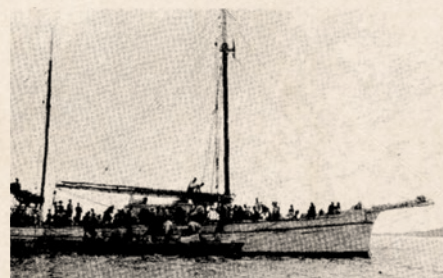
“Romantic cruises under tropic skies” 1950–1955



With the post-war years in the past, mission in the Pacific islands was back in full swing. The weekly reporting of ministers and church personnel travelling around started back up again. Information was included in *The Australasian Record* in 1954, relaying reports from the various union missions at the Australasian Inter-Union Conference Annual Council. Gordon Branster, the first president of the newly formed Central Pacific Union Mission, reported on the Church's work in the various countries under his delegation.

“Last year Suva had the worst hurricane in its history, and only a few weeks ago it experienced its only earthquake in living memory. But while the earth is being stirred and rocked to its foundations, a stirring is also taking place in the hearts of men and women. This is in evidence right through the territory of the Central Pacific Union Mission.

During the past few months five local mission sessions have convened with large numbers of our people in attendance. In every instance we believe they were the largest attendances at such gatherings since the reorganisation of the field. They came by sea and by land, many of them at great personal expense.”



The total member numbers were reported for some countries in this Union Mission; here is how they compare from 1954 to 2021 (unfortunately not all countries had statistics included in the *Record* report).

French Polynesia Mission:

“After over sixty years of labour the membership is only 262 [in 1955]. One of the main reasons for the slow increase is the fact that so many of our boys and girls and young people have drifted out of the church because we have no church schools for them to attend.” The total membership in 2021 was 5259 with an Adventist secondary school in Tahiti.

Cook Islands:

“This is our most widely scattered field, but the most productive to date, in proportion to population. In the group one out of every eighteen or nineteen inhabitants is a Seventh-day Adventist. And on the island of Aitutaki, the second largest in the group, one in every eight is a Seventh-day Adventist. The membership in the group at September was just a few short of 400.” In 2021 the membership was reported as 1030.

Vanuatu:

“Reports from this field reveal that on September 30 the membership stood at 711. But this year it is expected that the baptisms will reach 200, which is perhaps the largest number in any single year in the New Hebrides.” The total membership in 2021 was reported as 26,747.

Tonga:

"The brethren are extending their evangelical programme in this field, and could do much more if sufficient funds could be made available to operate their ship continuously. The only way to get from island to island is by ship, and when the ship needs to have extensive repairs effected, or its base operating budget has run out, there is only one thing to do and that is to tie up the ship until funds are available; and it is a well-known fact that ships depreciate more rapidly when lying idle than when in use. The membership in Tonga at September 30, was 349." In 2021, it was 3918.

In 1955 Dr Gordon McDowell, the educational secretary for the Division, visited the Central Pacific Union Mission to inspect the Adventist schools. In the Cook group he and his companions had a horrifying sea trip, which immensely increased his admiration for the missionaries who constantly had to make such voyages in small ships. An account of this trip is taken from a letter the doctor wrote to friends; the remainder of the report was written for the *Record*:

"From Aitutaki we were supposed to fly to Rarotonga, 250km away, in a DC3 (a propeller-driven airliner). We discovered that this plane had returned to New Zealand the previous week and that the service was discontinued for three months. We were to make the voyage on the *Inspire*. Beware of the name! Of all traps for new chums to the South Seas this is it. No doubt you have heard of romantic cruises beneath tropic skies. Let me take you on one.

"The *Inspire* is a copra carrier eighty feet long and carries a large mainsail and a small jib. She has an auxiliary twin-screw petrol engine. Her speed is six to seven knots, provided the sea is smooth. I discovered such craft record minus figures in a rough sea.

"The hold was full of cargo, the deck was covered with heavy cases and such cargo as would not be damaged by water or easily washed overboard. There was little freeboard, and only a few inches of railing along the sides. We also carried a very large pig and some piglets. The pig was tied up just outside our cabin.

"With the cancellation of the aircraft, arrangements had been made with the captain for Pastors Branster, Aveling, and me to travel with him on this trip. There was really no cabin accommodation, but he kindly offered us his cabin, such as it was. It contained two bunks one above the other—just wooden platforms without mattresses. Pastor Branster fitted with difficulty into the top bunk and Pastor Aveling and I, with greater difficulty into the bottom one. The cabin was so tiny that only two people could stand up in it at one time. Thus we were already crowded. Imagine our amazement when we learned that another four Europeans and eighty-odd natives, including women and children, were to travel with us. They simply camped on top of the deck cargo. You could not walk

along the deck without treading on people. In this condition we set out for the open sea straight into a howling gale. The normal run to Rarotonga takes seventeen to eighteen hours. We left at 2:30 on the Friday afternoon and staggered ashore forty-two hours later, on the Sunday morning. We had had no sleep for three nights and I had had nothing to eat for sixty hours.

"During the first night three natives, a man and two women, plus two children, invaded our cabin. We did not have the heart to drive them out. They could not lie down, but squatted on the floor, half on top of each other, and nursed the children. They were frightfully sick and never left the cabin once. You can imagine the condition of the cabin.

"To walk along the deck one had to clamber over bodies, try to counteract the terrific rolling of the ship, and endure waves crashing round one's shoulders. It was extremely easy to slide over the low rail. As for the details of those forty-two hours—that is better left to your imagination. It was a nightmare experience. We just groaned the hours away.

"The captain said it was the roughest trip for years. If I had not been beyond caring about living, such seas in this small ship would have scared me rather badly. Frequently they crashed over the ship, keeping the deck continuously awash. How people were not swept overboard is still a mystery to me. Apparently we lost no-one. We rolled and pitched and pitched and rolled. It was impossible to sleep. It was even an effort to stay on the bunk."

Mr. S. joined the British Navy in 1943, and after serving for three years was discharged in England. After two years in Scotland he came to South Australia, where he saw the tents of "Israel" at the time of the annual camp-meeting.

"What is that?" he asked a friend. "That is the Seventh-day Adventist camp-meeting," was the reply. "What are Seventh-day Adventists?" asked Mr. S. "Oh, they call them that because they have these tent meetings everywhere—seven days here and seven days there," said the friend!

This snippet from a longer story about how "Mr S" came to be an Adventist gave us a laugh. We have included it for the humour it brought us in seeing an alternate idea on how the "Seventh-day Adventist" name came to be.



The 10

Weather Phenomenons in the Bible

The great flood (Genesis 6-9)

The biggest flood that has ever, and will ever, exist. This flood was so massive that it completely covered the earth, with only a boat load of animals and eight people surviving it.

The plagues of Egypt (Exodus 7-11)

God sent 10 plagues on the people of Egypt to free the Israelites from slavery. Amongst these plagues were weather phenomena such as “a hailstorm more devastating than any in all the history of Egypt” with continuous lightning; locusts which “covered the whole country and darkened the land”; and a “a darkness so thick you can feel it”.

Wind so strong it parted the Red Sea (Exodus 14)

After “the pillar of cloud” turned to fire to separate the Egyptians from the Israelites, a strong easterly wind sent by God created a path through the Red Sea. “The wind blew all that night, turning the seabed into dry land. So the people of Israel walked through the middle of the sea on dry ground, with walls of water on each side!” (Exodus 14:21,22).

Dew so thick it became bread (Exodus 16)

After the Israelites had escaped Egypt and they were grumbling about their hunger while wandering the desert, God sent bread (aka manna) from heaven. One morning they woke up to a layer of dew on the ground, “when the dew was gone, thin flakes like frost on the ground appeared on the desert floor” (Exodus 16:14). They called these flakes “manna”, which they baked and boiled into bread (which they ate for 40 years!).

God's mighty display on Mount Sinai (Exodus 19,20)

When God came onto Mount Sinai to talk with Moses “thunder roared and lightning flashed, and a dense cloud came down on the mountain” (Exodus 19:16). The whole mountain was covered in smoke and the whole mountain shook violently. Even though the Israelites knew it was the Lord and had prepared for this moment, the Bible says that “all the people trembled”.

When the sun stood still (Joshua 10)

In a battle that Joshua and the Israelites fought against the Amorites, God “hurled large hailstones down”, which killed more of the Amorite soldiers than were killed by the swords of the Israelites. In this same battle, “the sun stopped in the middle of the sky and delayed going down about a full day” (Joshua 10:13). They must have been exhausted after a 48-hour day of battle!

A mighty wind during Job's trials (Job 1)

When Satan started attacking Job (because he was a “blameless and upright man”), one of the devastating events that affected Job was when “a mighty wind swept in from the desert” (Job 1:18) and destroyed the house that his children were in. It must have been a very strong wind to cause a house to collapse!

A violent storm caused by Jonah's disobedience (Jonah 1-4)

Running from his godly mission, Jonah boards a boat going in the opposite direction to where God had sent him. “But the Lord hurled a powerful wind over the sea, causing a violent storm that threatened to break the ship apart” (Jonah 1:4). After Jonah is thrown overboard, the storm suddenly stopped and the sea became calm.

Darkness during Jesus' crucifixion (Matthew 27)

During the crucifixion of Jesus, there was a darkness that covered the land for three hours, between 12-noon and 3pm. Shortly after this darkness, Jesus “gave up His spirit”. At that moment, there was an earthquake which split rocks and caused tombs to break open.

A rushing wind on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2)

While the disciples were meeting together, a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the house where they were meeting. Then tongues of fire came to rest on each of them as they were filled with the Holy Spirit.



The Little Vege Patch

builds bridges to the community

The BEST Disability Support van pulls up in the Springwood church carpark in front of the Little Vege Patch. It's Tuesday morning. Ten or more excited young people with disabilities get out. As soon as they see Roger, they smile, call his name, and some come and give him a hug. What is this all about?

Some 4-5 years ago Roger Henley was talking with his friend from college days (Avondale University), who lives now in California. This friend was sharing how community gardens have been a success in many churches there. The local community comes in and are interacting with church members. Since there was an unused section of level ground down at the back of the Springwood church property, Roger suggested to the church board that a community garden could be built there. The church and ADRA Logan drew up a plan to collaborate in this venture. As a certified "Work for the Dole" provider, ADRA Logan was able to use the skills of Work for the Dole participants to work in the garden, to help build fences, garden beds, a shade house and a propagation house.

When the manager at ADRA Logan at the time, Henk La Dru, handed Roger plans to build a rotunda, Roger called on a few of his mates from church who had building skills to help.

One unemployed horticulturist came to do some work in the garden and called it "Work for the Dole Heaven". She then proceeded to introduce Roger to people in the local council's community development team. They were very impressed with the Little Vege Patch.

Skilling Queenslanders For Work trainees, hosted by ADRA Australia, also came to work at the Little Vege Patch to help them complete their studies as part of their training. At times, there are young people doing the training who have just been released from prison.

"It is giving people an opportunity to do something to

better themselves, to take another step in the right direction. Many have moved on to get another job, which is a big win as far as I'm concerned," says Roger with a look of satisfaction. More engagement from people in the surrounding community would also be very welcome.

The garden also has a multicultural influence. An Indigenous Australian and his two daughters decided to paint one of the benches with a traditional pattern. The fence artwork was done by some of the BEST Disability group. I discovered that BEST is an acronym for Believe Evolve Succeed Together. This encapsulates well the ethos of this beautiful organisation and could well be key words to sum up the vision of the Little Vege Patch community garden initiative as well.

Where previously an uninviting area with high grass existed, there is now an inviting, tidy and colourful place. New plants have been planted and seeds sown. Some young people who first came through the BEST program couldn't even hold a rake in their hands; now they have learned new skills by planting and watering plants and enjoying each other's company as they do something useful.

Recently in a Logan newspaper, Councillor Lisa Bradley wrote an article about this community garden and spoke highly about it. "Through this program, it helps to generate employment for many of the trainees involved", she wrote.

With Roger's background as a hospital chaplain and pastor, he has this tremendous ability to take people as they are and build trusting, non-judgemental relationships. Roger states, "Although this is not an evangelistic tool, this is church. This is Christianity in action."

Kristiina Somerville

Communication secretary, Springwood church, Queensland.



PRAY

as you can

I'm going to be honest with you. I find prayer really hard. If I had to give reasons for all my tears over the past few years, most of them have come during conversations with God. Part of why I find it hard is that it hasn't always been this way. I've had periods of life where prayer has been a great joy. Where I would carve out space most days to walk long stretches of sandy beaches to talk with my Creator. Where prayer brought comfort, clarity and direction.

But that hasn't been the case for a while. Instead, prayer has been the source of deep wounds and disappointments. Over and over, I've found myself asking, "where are You?" and if You are there, somewhere, "why does this seem like such a one-way relationship?"

Life has a way of dealing us some rough cards at times. Even as Christians, we aren't immune to suffering. We can be humming along high on life when suddenly we're in a plot we

can't make sense of. The rain dumps and we're like a piece of wet clothing that gets put in a dryer and thrown around on full speed. For some, answers come quickly. As do peace, clarity, healing and direction. But others find themselves stuck in the middle, waiting, wondering, and trying to white-knuckle their way through the mess and hold onto their faith. This is often where our questions about prayer and God get asked:

Do my prayers matter? Why does God only answer some people's prayers? Is there some divine equation that consists of what I ask, the time I spend and the amount of people praying that gets God's attention? If He says everything is possible, why isn't He doing anything?

Some of Jesus' most well-known yet confusing words on prayer were given to the disciples and a crowd of people during the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus said, "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will

be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened" (Matthew 7:7,8).

Jesus' instructions sound pretty straightforward: seek, ask, knock and receive. But that doesn't always happen. So, what do we do when our asking doesn't result in receiving or when our seeking leaves us with more questions than answers?

In his book *Praying like Monks, Living like Fools*, Taylor Staton explains that those three words "ask", "seek" and "knock" are written in a Greek verb tense we don't have a grammatical equivalent for in English. They imply an ongoing action that takes place in the present and the future. The most literal way to translate this passage in Matthew 7 is: Keep on asking, and you will receive. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you. Jesus' response to those asking without getting answers and growing weary is . . . persistence.

But persistence, by definition, is a hard slog. It's not easy to keep coming to God with the same things for weeks, months, years, or for some, decades. When the struggle remains, the sickness lingers, the questions multiply, the heart still hurts and the desires go unmet—coming to God again and again is exhausting. Hence, many give up, others become bitter and some become avoidant in prayer. Just like love and trust, prayer involves risk. Because what if He never answers? What will I make of all His promises? How will I trust that any of what He says is true?

Unfortunately, I don't have answers to all the nitty gritty questions around the theology of suffering. There are some intellectual answers, but they don't hold much water when life seems like it's in a downward spiral or when dealing with profound turmoil. What I'm here to do is offer you some encouragement for the ride.

So, what do we do when the events of our life lead us to prayer, but our prayer leaves us in the same place? How do we maintain the stamina to hold on? Here are some things that I've found helpful:

Be as humanly possible as you can.

We often think we must come to God with our knees on the floor, hands clasped and a softly spoken monologue of poetic praises. But God doesn't expect this from us. The only requirement for coming to Him is that we do so with honesty. Just look at the Psalms. David's prayers were full of grumblings, groanings, complaints, shaking fists, accusations, messy tears . . . and I'm sure some expletives got left out in translation.

If you can't go to God with praise, go to Him with your anger, sadness, confusion and disappointment. If you can't pray with hope, tell Him about your doubts. If you can't pray for an hour, let it all out for a minute and then go on with your day. If you're lost for words, pick a Psalm or a pre-written prayer that you resonate with, write it out or repeat it to God.

Don't limit prayer to words.

The essence of prayer is quality time. Sure, God wants you to speak to Him, but He understands we experience seasons where that is hard. If you're struggling to get out words or

talking about things is overwhelming, try spending time with God in other ways. Listen to worship music and let the lyrics be your prayer. Go out into nature. Express yourself creatively through art. Write your prayers as poems or letters. Have communion. Or, in the words of David, "be still . . ." (Psalm 46:10).

Take up the discipline of remembrance.

It's easy to remember the things that cause us pain and suffering. As it's said, the body keeps the score. But it's not always easy to remember our blessings, especially during a difficult period. Yet we can often find hope for the future when we identify what God has done in the past. Pete Greig, the founder of the 24-7 prayer movement, says, "Remembering is at the heart of the Bible. You could say it's why it got written . . . It is an essential spiritual discipline." Take time to think about the big and small things that are going well, the blessings in your life and the lives of those around you. Write them down so you can see the list of things add up over time.

Surround yourself with people who will pray for and with you.

According to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, after food and water, love is the most important need we must fulfil as humans. Not only do we have greater life satisfaction when we're connected with others, but our mental health improves and we have more resilience when we experience trials. Too often, we stay quiet and try to carry our doubts and difficulties alone. If I can give you one piece of advice that's helped me most, it's to find people you can trust, be open with them about what you're going through, and let them help you carry your burdens. Ask them to pray for you and especially with you. Often people can speak hope into our situations and hearing their prayers can be a balm to the soul.

I still find prayer hard, and I'm still waiting for questions to be answered, desires to be met and healing to be had. But I'm holding onto hope that God is good, that He wants to answer us, give us our heart's longings, and see us have joy and freedom in this life. He knows the latter can be painful and promises it won't be this way forever.

As Staton writes, "God bends history so that the moments of greatest pain become the moments of greatest redemption, twisting the story to be sure that the pain we feel releases the power of new life, and the tears we cry become the foundation of a better world. We are promised that a day is coming when the Father himself will wipe away every tear from our eyes. But until then, we live on an in-between promise: 'I will not let a single one of your tears be wasted.'"

If you're wading through the mess and muddle of your story or navigating some uncomfortable twists and turns you didn't see coming, keep on asking, keep on seeking, keep on knocking. And when you've grown impatient with the waiting and are struggling to hold onto hope, heed the words of priest Dom John Chapman: "pray as you can, not as you can't."

Zanita Fletcher

assistant editor, *Signs of the Times*.

Your faith will make you well



Suffering is as much a part of the human experience as death and more so than taxes. As a physiotherapist, I see people every day in the clinic who are seeking help with their pain. I too have had my own personal struggle with pain. I have prayed, yet no healing has occurred. I have screamed out to God in anguish asking, “Where are You?”

If you’ve been in pain yourself, you may know the pain and suffering that comes when waiting for healing. Though miracles happen for some, many have seen clinician after clinician, hoping to find answers, only to be disappointed after many “cures” have been promised yet failed. Once exhausting modern medicine and alternative therapies, some turn to the only glimmer of hope they have left . . . a divine miracle. They pray, partake in anointing services, go on healing retreats and when their pain remains, they are left questioning their faith.

Despite the reality that pain and suffering are part of being human, I’m yet to see someone who has completely come to terms with it. There is something about suffering that is just not right. Perhaps the only logical conclusion is that we were “made for another world”, as CS Lewis surmised.¹

The Bible begins telling of a world free of pain and suffering and ends telling of a world free of pain and suffering. We are stuck in the middle, which if you know the story of the Bible—or simply if you breathe and bleed blood—is one that is full of pain and suffering. But I’m here to tell you that there is hope at the end of the tunnel.

Jesus brought healing from suffering everywhere He went, declaring to people, “Your faith has made you well” (Matthew 9:22; Mark 5:34; Luke 17:19). I believe in the miraculous, instantaneous, unfathomable healings of Jesus. And despite lacking miracles experientially in my own life, I believe miracles still occur today.

In mainstream 21st century thought, the concept of faith healing is met with zealous opposition.

This scepticism is twofold: science attempts to completely explain away the supernatural realm and experientially, many of faith have sought miracles, only to be left frustrated, angry and doubting their faith altogether. But there’s another option that I want to bring to the table. That is that faith can bring slow, scientifically measurable healing.

The claim that faith brings about healing is hard to back up with rigorous science in a community of faithless scientists. Lisa Miller is one scientist that, despite heavy scrutiny, has swum against the tide. Dr Miller is known for her research on spirituality and depression. Her studies show that spirituality is protective and healing of many depressive disorders², inferring that faith can make you well . . . not instantaneously, but slowly, progressively, bit-by-bit.

After reading her book *The Awakened Brain*,³ I was intrigued by how her research related to my field of physiotherapy—musculoskeletal pain. The research suggests that psychological distress plays a role in the development of persistent pain and it can be reduced by addressing contributing factors like depression.⁴ Also, the joyful heart is the faith-filled heart, which reminds me of the ancient proverb that declares “a joyful heart is good medicine” (Proverbs 17:22).

This doesn't mean you can't be a depressed person of faith—but that it is simply less likely for a person of faith to feel “down” due to the hope inherent in the Christian faith.

Considering the relationship between depression and pain, can faith bring healing from pain also? The research shows that one in five people suffer from persistent pain.⁵ In my home country of Australia that is 5.1 million people, which is an enormous amount of suffering. Yet, there are many ways in which faith in God can bring healing from pain in ways that are supported by modern science.

Pain is a helpful protective mechanism. If you put your finger on a hot plate and turn it on, the pain will increase as the temperature increases. When it becomes unbearable, you will react by pulling your finger away from the hot object to protect your finger from damage. It goes without saying, please do not try this at home. If your pain system is functioning as it should, your finger would not be damaged due to the protective buffer between the onset of pain and tissue damage. Again, please don't try it.

Consider pain as an alarm system, warning us of impending danger. Unfortunately, it can become overprotective in people who suffer from persistent pain, like a fire alarm that is so sensitive that it wakes the family up when all you're doing is making toast.

One thing that makes us more sensitive to pain is fear. If you are fearful, your body goes into a heightened protective mode and becomes more sensitive to danger signals, producing even more pain.⁶ The apostle John declares that perfect love drives out fear (1 John 4:18). What if I told you that the faith that grasps the perfect love of God could bring healing from pain? I believe this can happen and that the love of God can rewire the neural pathways away from fear and pain, towards hope and love. It might take longer than we imagined, but when we're in pain, any progress is a win.

Belief alters our pain. Positive expectations bring about relief from pain (placebo) and negative expectations bring about increased pain (nocebo). Individuals who are given a sugar pill will get pain relief despite the pill not containing any active pain-relieving substance due to the belief that their pain will be relieved. In the same way, if prior to getting a needle you are told it is going to hurt, you will have more pain than if you were told that it would be a light prick. This shows that our beliefs

and expectations influence the pain we experience.⁶

Pain thrives in hopelessness and I believe faith in Jesus is the antidote. Faith in Jesus brings hope that restoration can be our ultimate reality rather than pain, suffering and death. The apostle Paul describes that while we're here on earth “we groan and sigh”, but that one day we will be given new bodies where pain will be no more (2 Corinthians 5:1–5). This hope, grasped by faith, can bring healing from the pain we experience in the here-and-now.

So, to the sceptic who doesn't believe in the supernatural realm, or to the believer who lacks experiences of supernatural healing, there is another option. Faith can bring healing, in slow, scientific ways.

The faith healing I have described is not instantaneous but it is miraculous. If you are in pain, you can rest assured that God is not the author of pain and suffering, rather “the enemy (commonly referred to as Satan) has done this” (Matthew 13:28). If you trust God, He will bring you healing—perhaps through an instantaneous miracle—or more often slowly, as His love works within the laws of nature.

Jesus is able to sympathise with our pain—He suffered and felt abandoned by His Father as He hung on the cross 2000 years ago. But God did not abandon Him and hope didn't die—Jesus rose from the dead and lives today. We can put our trust in Him to receive mercy and grace that will help us in times of pain.

This life will be full of suffering in many forms but my invitation to you is to trust the God who brings healing—if not in this life, then in the life to come where there will be “no more pain, for the former things have passed away” (Revelation 21:4).

This article originally appeared in the June issue of *Signs of the Times*.

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Lachlan Townend

physiotherapist and a youth pastoral worker at Kingscliff church, NSW. In his spare time, he loves surfing, basketball, travel, reading and hanging out with family. He lives on the Gold Coast with his wife, Emily and dog, Otis.

How stress impacts your *immunity*

Stress is an inevitable part of life, and while there's no magic bullet, there are things you can do to help keep it in check.

One of the ways stress impacts our body is preventing our immune system from functioning at its best. So, it's good to recognise when you're feeling stressed and know how to manage stress when it does arise.

Good and bad stress

Some stress can actually be good for us. Stress can help your body conserve energy when it's hungry, instigates the body's natural fight-or-flight response when faced with danger and can help the immune system fight injury or infection. However, chronic or prolonged stress can negatively impacting the body's immune response.

How stress affects your immune system

Stress makes you more vulnerable to catching illnesses by raising your cortisol levels, which can weaken your immune system if they stay high for too long. Stress can also damage your body's own cells and even trigger responses from your immune system, including elevating inflammation, which can make you more susceptible to viruses and infections.

So how do you know if you're stressed?

Stress appears when things feel unpredictable or out of control. Do you find yourself constantly sleepy? Or irritable in some way? These are signs of stress. Other common signs to watch for include acne, frequent headaches, lack of energy and digestive issues. Stress also shows up in the form of increased heart rate and tense muscles.

4 ways to keep stress in check

- 1. Eat a healthy diet:** A varied, healthy diet full of micronutrients is essential for maintaining a healthy immune system. Research has shown that better-nourished people are better equipped to have healthy immune systems. Eat foods rich in nutrients like vitamins C and D and zinc which have been singled out as important for immunity. There's also plenty of plant foods that help mood, anxiety and even depression.
- 2. Exercise:** Getting active can help protect your immune system. Exercise doesn't need to be intense to help manage stress—moderate intensity exercise will do the trick (think a walk, jog or spin on the bike).
- 3. Touch:** Emotions have a big impact on our bodies, so it makes sense that the more connected and supported we feel, the less stressed we are. This is because physical touch stimulates the release of dopamine and serotonin, also known as the "happy chemical", a natural mood stabiliser.
- 4. Sleep:** Quality sleep and keeping our internal body clocks ticking well are essential for maintaining peak physical function. During sleep, the immune system releases proteins which are important for fighting infections and inflammation and also help with our stress response.

For more information and research references, you can read the full article at [<www.sanitarium.com>](http://www.sanitarium.com).



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Receiving Peace

Just before my visit to Jerusalem I had a client make an appointment to change her will. Helen had been a long-term client and was quiet, cool and austere. Life had not been kind. An abusive father, a broken marriage and then a reconciliation with her father. Her father promised in return for her care to leave her a substantial legacy.

The promise soured and her father turned on her at the end of his life, severing their relationships and halving what he had promised to give her. Claims on the estate from her siblings added to the hurt and anguish.

The legal issues had been resolved and I optimistically thought our Monday conference was so I could help her finally plan a happy ever after. Those thoughts were crushed when she shared her diagnosis.

I took instructions and we planned to meet the next week. On Friday I received a message. Helen had been hospitalised and was not expected to survive the weekend. Could I attend to have her sign her will?

No, I was jammed. I had to send a staff member, who returned telling what a sad experience it had been.

It weighed heavily on me and, as I was getting dressed for church the next day, I suddenly thought, *why not go and see her?* Helen beamed when I walked up to her bed and sat down. It was obvious she was in deep distress but she reached out and took my hand and didn't let it go. Extraordinary behaviour from such a reserved woman. Looking death in the face makes us focus on what is really important. We talked about her family and her life.

Helen had not even met some of her grandchildren but had arranged to fly them in so she could say hello and farewell.

She was frightened that she would neither have the courage nor the strength to get through.

I felt impressed to pray with her.

"Helen I don't know what you believe but would you like me to pray with you?" I asked.

There was some hesitation before she gripped my hand even tighter and replied,

"My belief is small but I would like you to pray with me."

I felt a surge of panic, do I pray for healing or . . . ?

I began to pray. I asked that Helen be given the strength and courage to see her grandchildren and I was suddenly impressed to ask that Helen be given peace.

Helen survived the next week and so I was able to see her again exactly one week later.

She was very frail. As I sat down next to her bed she reached out and took my hand. I asked her if she had seen her grandchildren and she nodded and smiled. I sensed she was struggling to tell me something. I stood up and as I bent down I heard her say, "I received the peace."

Helen died soon after I left.

When I entered Jerusalem on a Friday night a short time later, I was reading John 14.

I had always concentrated on the opening verses, "Let not your hearts be troubled . . .", but that night verse 27 radiated: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

We are not guaranteed of receiving the gift of healing but we can always claim the promise of the peace of Jesus.

Stuart Tipple

lawyer who attends Forresters Beach Church, NSW.
He was inspired to write these reflections after reading
"The church is not a building" (April 15).



Conversations

Chocolate idol

Adventist Record (April 1) asks “what is the deal with eggs at Easter?”. I expected to read about the pagan connection between Easter and Ishtar (goddess of fertility) and eggs which are obviously a symbol of fertility. You could put rabbits in there as well, for obvious reasons. Wouldn’t it be better to educate readers about satanic, pagan influences in Christianity rather than promote those same influences? Instead the article seems to promote the chocolate idol, something which hardly fits the health message either.

Francis Branagan, *via email*

Agree to disagree

Responding to “Freedom to think” (Letter, May 20) in response to “Disagreement God’s gift to the church” (Feature, April 15).

One of the gifts the pioneers adopted was “open disagreement meetings” where various issues,

especially doctrinal issues, were “wrestled with”, sometimes to the early hours of the morning. The writer’s response appears to blend “God-given gifts”, and “God-given rights” in the following quote: “The gift of disagreement is the gift of freedom of conscience within the church . . . God created intelligent beings with free will, freedom of conscience, freedom of choice, freedom even to choose to disagree.” However it appears these God-given gifts are quite different and do not impinge upon each other.

The alternative to open wrestling over issues of disagreement is much easier and less stressful, simply “agree to disagree”. One thing appears to be quite clear, as the concept of “agreeing to disagree” will never produce an end-time people who are of one mind, in word, deed and action, “Let us welcome arguments, as a heaven appointed gift, an opportunity to better understand truth as perceived by others and in the

process ‘carry’ a demonstration of God’s character and government to the world and beyond.

“He who is in Christ in word, in life, and in action, bears the living testimony that he has the mind and spirit of Christ” (HM August 1, 1896).

Ranald McLeish, *via email*

No-one but God

“Can I be honest?” (May 20) suggests that “we should come together and confess our sins to one another”.

The verse quoted to support this suggestion is quoted from the NIV and other translations which support the Catholic doctrine of confessing our sins to a priest. The KJV correctly translates the text in James 5:16 requiring us to confess our faults to one another. If we have wronged someone, we are required to go to them and make things right. We are never required to confess our sins to anyone except God (1 John 1:9).

Geoff Hansen, *via email*

HELLO KIDS!

Kids Speak

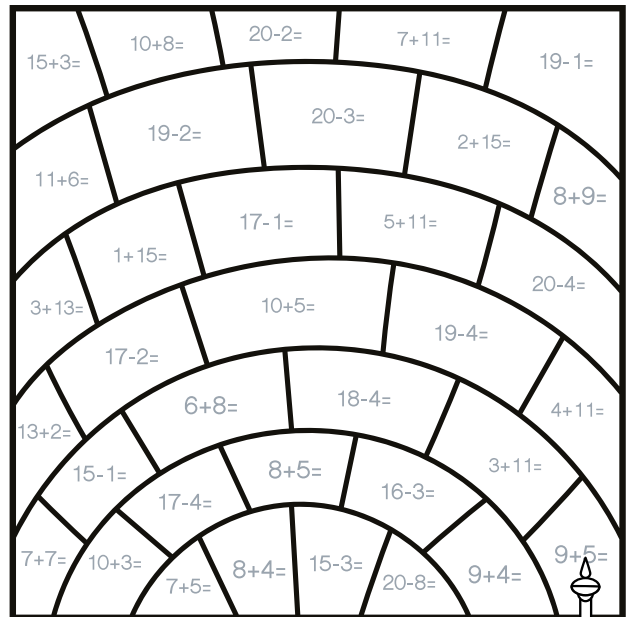
We worship God with our lives.



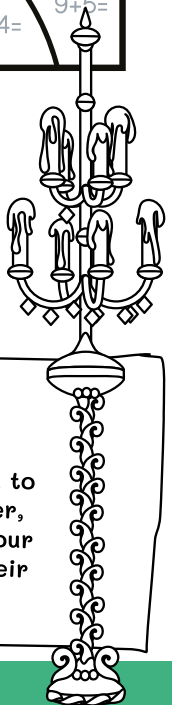
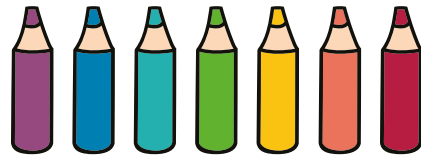
The rainbow around the throne was only one colour. What colour was it?

Draw a rainbow behind the throne

Do the Maths & Colour It In

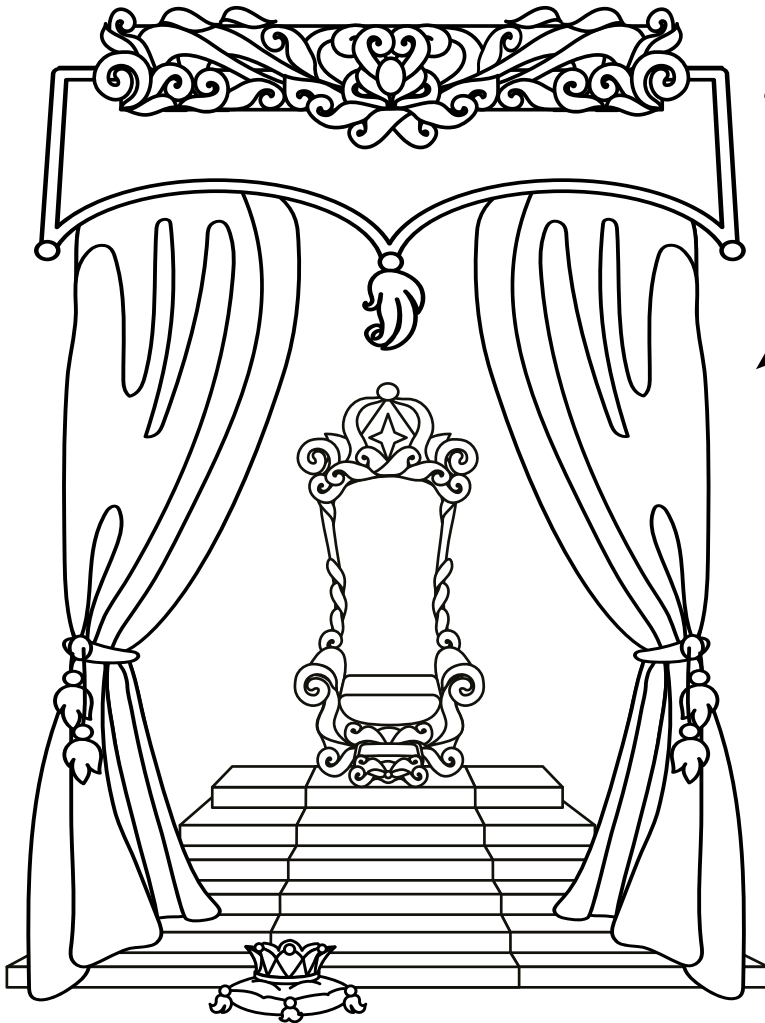


12 13 14 15 16 17 18
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MEMORY VERSE

"You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honour and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being" (Revelation 4:11).



The Emerald Throne

John sees a vision of the throne room of heaven surrounded by a rainbow. All the hosts of heaven are worshipping Jesus for being the Creator of all things. In chapter 5, Jesus Christ is again the centre of praise. Jesus is now portrayed as a Lamb that has been slain. He alone is worthy to open the book because He was slain and has redeemed us by His blood. All creation is pictured as bowing down in worship to Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God. Jesus is the focus of all worship, honour and praise in heaven. Not only has He created us, but He has also paid the ultimate price and redeemed us. We should count it a privilege to join with heaven in worshipping and praising Him.

Obituaries

ASH, Elizabeth Lynne, born 7.9.1939 in Port Lincoln, South Australia; died 19.4.23 in Quorn Hospital. Betty passed away peacefully and was much loved and respected by both her church and extended family. She was adored by her husband. She now rests from her loving service to the Lord, having lived her unshakable faith waiting for the Lord's return.

Dietrich Stahl

ASH, Herbert John, born 20.1.1935 in Quorn, South Australia; died 8.5.23 in Quorn Hospital. John passed away peacefully in Quorn Hospital having laid his wife to rest a week prior. Greatly regarded by friends and family, he was a pillar to Port Augusta church where he had served the Lord with all dedication and faithfulness for many years. He rests now, having lived the hope in his Lord and Saviour to wake him at the resurrection.

Dietrich Stahl

BACON, Geoffrey Paul, born 27.4.1928 in Kangaroo Point, Qld; died 5.4.23 in Caloundra Adventist Retirement Village. He was predeceased by Mary in 2012. Geoff is

survived by his children, Margaret Herbert, Ken, Peter and Julie Parry; nine grandchildren; and 10 great-grandchildren. He is asleep waiting the return of Jesus.

David Yeo



COBBIN, Max Errol, born 16.3.1940 in Maryborough, Qld; died 2.5.23 in Bethshan Gardens,

Wye, NSW. He was predeceased by his wife, Merrill in 2008. He is survived by his second wife, Lucia; children, David and Gai (Newcastle) and Michael and Jillian (Sydney); and grandchildren, Lucas, Isabelle, Alex and Matthew. Family and friends celebrated the life of Max on 12.5.23 in honour of a life so well lived in commitment to God, family and community.

Roger Nixon, Kendell Cobbin



COVENTRY, Dawn, born 3.6.1925 in Girgarre, Vic; died 16.1.23 in Cooranbong, NSW. She was

predeceased by her daughter, Heather Raymon. Dawn is survived by her children, Helen Samuel (Mt Evelyn, Vic), Ruth D'Alessandro (Mt Evelyn), Lynette Budden (Mussel-

brook, NSW), Ken Silva (Brisbane, Qld), David Silva (Darwin, NT), Bruce (Cooranbong, NSW), Wendy Croker (Cooranbong) and Sue Redman (Bonnells Bay); and many grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren.

Resting where she loved her little blue wrens.

Steven Magaitis



HOUSE, Hazel Amy Christina, born 3.2.1928 in Capel, WA; died 29.4.23 in

Blacktown, NSW. On 19.6.1947 she married Stan in Capel. She was predeceased by her husband in 2012 and her son, Robert in 1970. Hazel is survived by her daughters, Jan Eastman (Perth, WA) and Jenny King (Chiswick, NSW); grandchildren, Terina, Melisa, Nevin, Sonya and Suzanne; and great-grandchildren, Nicholas, Anthony, Seth and Ebony. A few years after being married, Hazel was baptised and became very involved in church work especially with the younger people of the church. She led the first Pathfinder club in the area. Hazel and Stan sold the farm after the loss of their son and moved to Sydney to be close to their

daughters who were now residing there. Hazel continued her love for working with the church and held many positions until recently when it was time to hand it over. She had a strong faith and awaits the coming of Jesus.

Chris Manthy, Roger Vince



HUDSON, Maurice Arthur, born 16.4.1942 in Whangarei, NZ; died 28.4.23 in Toow-

oomba, Qld. In 1963 he married Jocelyn Ekdahl, who predeceased him. In 1978 he married Norma Dobson, who also predeceased him. He is survived by his son, Arthur and Andrea (Sydney, NSW); sisters, Mavis and Warren (Cooranbong) and Glenda (Cooranbong); stepchildren, George, Vivienne, Rowan and Heather, Les and Jody, Colleen and Shirley; and grandchildren. Maurice sunk himself into colporteur and trained for the ministry with time in Dunedin, SNZ and Northern Rivers, NNSW churches. He was a pilot, enthusiastic landscaper and gardener. He lived to see his son enter ministry and now awaits the call of Jesus to life again.

Arthur Hudson

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The Incredible Journey

JONES, Dulcie Laura Gwenifor, born 17.11.1940 in Inglewood, Qld; died 8.4.23 in Goondiwindi. She is survived by her children, Jeffrey and Coleen; three grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren. Dulcie lived her life with faithfulness to God, her family, church and community. She was exceedingly generous to all who met her. She lived life with love, grace, joy, humour, humility and service while being the hands and feet of Jesus to so many. She was a faithful and dedicated member to Narrabri, NSW church and later a resident of Inglewood/Goondiwindi area. Awaiting the trumpet call.

Trevor Mawer



SUTCLIFFE, Patricia Jean (nee Hansford), born 25.1.1940 in Brighton, Vic; died 5.5.23 in the Mater

Hospice, Newcastle, NSW. On 4.12.1972 she married David in Wahroonga, Sydney, who predeceased her in 2017. She is survived by her brother, Robert and Glenda Hansford (Port Macquarie); and sister, Gaye and Barry Butler (Murwillumbah); stepdaughter, Leoni and Robert Billings (Koorabyn, Qld); and five nieces and nephews. Patricia, an Avondale graduate, was a competent secretary. Her work included employment in the WA Conference office, Sydney Adventist Hospital, service in Papua New Guinea, Tonga and several years as a personal assistant at Avondale College. She was a cheerful, caring, thoughtful and hospitable Christian. Patricia now rests in peace awaiting the coming of Jesus.

Roger Nixon, Lionel Smith

Advertisements

BOWRAL SDA CHURCH

Celebrating centennial anniversary, October 6-7, 2023. All previous pastors and church members are invited to join us for this special event. Any historical contributions are appreciated. Please contact Pastor Evonn Reyno <evonn-reyno@adventist.org.au>.

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

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