

R

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Rediscovering the purpose of church ¹⁴

Survey reveals new trends in church giving ⁶

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EDITOR'S NOTE:

Of war and peace

Jarrod Stackelroth
Editor

“

This time of year should be a season of peace but is too often busy, stressful and conflict-rich: fighting over parking spaces at the shops, with family members we clash or with ourselves for overindulging on our finances or dietary choices.

I watched as the plane made its way across the interactive map in the back of the seat in front of me. If you've ever been on a long-haul flight, there is a time for watching movies, a time for sleeping and then there are those in-between times when you can't sleep and don't want to watch anything. Suddenly the flight path seems exceedingly interesting.

It was clear the plane was charting a careful course through the sky, between and around war zones. Names on the map jumped out from news headlines of the past few years—Mosul, Baghdad, Raqqa. The Israel-Palestine conflict had just broken out and I watched to see how close we might get to that region, as we flew up across the Arabian Peninsula and on toward Europe. As I looked to find Israel, the top of the map began to reveal Ukrainian cities—Sevastopol and Odessa.

I was heading to Romania, an immediate neighbour of Ukraine, so it was little surprise that those cities would appear on the map. Now, these flight path indicators zoom out yet at one point, the Middle East and Ukraine conflict zones were both visible as we thread the needle between them. In reality, we were hundreds of kilometres from any active conflict, yet it felt a whole lot closer than Australia does. It was surreal to be flying right between two war-zones, even though we soared far above them, and I was reminded how lucky we are in the South Pacific region to be so far from that kind of conflict.

This tired world needs peace. Unfortunately, something in human nature leads us to compete and to believe that we have to get ahead, regardless of who we step on to get there.

Jesus came offering a reset, a resolution to the constant striving against others to get ahead:

“Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, ‘Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests’” (Luke 2:13,14).

Peace on earth. It seems like an unattainable dream.

Yet Jesus can bring peace to our lives, peace to our worries, and peace to any interpersonal conflict we might have. He challenges us to forgive, to love our enemy and our neighbour and to find ways to better the world.

This is not passive peace that means we keep putting ourselves in toxic situations.

We should be people of peace and advocates for peace. We must actively love people we disagree with and dislike. This means serving them.

This time of year should be a season of peace but is too often busy, stressful and conflict-rich: fighting over parking spaces at the shops, with family members we clash or with ourselves for over indulging on our finances or dietary choices.

When my baby son is restless in the night, he often ends up in our bed. While he was tossing, turning and crying out in his cot, he is suddenly serene and still. He knows he is safe, he feels our presence and he can sleep “like a baby”.

Jesus' presence in our lives can give us the same assurance.

This Christmas, let's pray for and remember that, even though we might be having a holiday or a nice safe time with family and friends, there are people in our world who are living in the hell of war, and feel so very far from peace. Yet they too can experience the love and completeness found in Jesus. Let's pray that they can find Him and that war ends. Let us pray we ourselves experience Jesus' peace that passes understanding. And let us look for ways to gift peace to others, perhaps serving those in need, sharing a meal, being a listening ear to someone who is lonely or struggling at this time of year.

The only hope for peace in this world is Jesus. He is the only agent who can bring peace, and when He returns, the city will no longer need gates. But as His followers, we can start the journey toward peace by doing our best to live by His teachings and share His good news with the world.



INSIGHT:

Make a difference

Glenn Townend

South Pacific Division president

Christmas is a time of giving, of coming together as a community, and of sharing love and hope.

Recently I went to the Wyee Community Hub (on the grounds of the Wyee Seventh-day Adventist Church) and assembled Christmas hampers to bring a little joy to those who are doing it tough. It was great to see people of all ages and walks of life coming together with a shared purpose. They were happy to be making a difference. When the doors opened there was joy on the faces of the givers and receivers of the hampers. There was joy as people purchased other goods at low prices.

This ministry is one of many examples I see around the South Pacific where Adventists and their friends are serving real needs of the people around them. When I see this I am proud to be an Adventist.

Christmas is not about the presents under the tree, it's about the love in our hearts. Jesus gave up heaven to show God's love and became a human baby. "Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son, and he will be called Immanuel (meaning, God with us)" Matthew 1:23 (NLT) quoting Isaiah 7:14. God in human form, full of grace and truth, showing us what God is like (John 1:14-18) is the ultimate Christmas gift. And reaching out to our neighbours, our friends, and even strangers, to make their Christmas a little brighter reflects a fraction of Jesus' great gift.

We are called to be the hands and feet of Jesus and at this time of year we have the perfect opportunity to mirror His love and compassion.

So, as we approach this Christmas season, I encourage you to think about what you can do to help others.

It might be a small act of kindness, a warm smile or a heartfelt conversation with someone who needs it. It could be packing a hamper or two, or inviting someone over for lunch.

Let's make a difference, no matter how small, in the lives of those around us.



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Dr Danijela Schubert holds a copy of her new devotional book *The Green Dress: And Other Parables From My Life*.

New book explores God's presence in life's big and little moments

📍 Warburton, Vic | Lauren Webb

Many Christians feel disconnected from God because they fail to notice the ways He is working in their lives—and the lessons He is trying to teach them, according to author Dr Danijela Schubert. Her desire to help others connect with God led Dr Schubert to write *The Green Dress: And Other Parables From My Life*, a new book of personal stories which seeks to help readers deepen their faith and emotional intelligence.

"I believe that God works in our lives," Dr Schubert said, "but unless we are paying attention, we might not notice what He is doing. And how can we love Him—and feel loved by Him—if we don't notice Him being good to us?"

Dr Wendy Jackson, head of Seminary at Avondale University, agrees that this is an important issue. She says many people "fall into the trap of compartmentalising God's work from the everyday rhythms of their lives". This can result in a narrow and unfulfilling spiritual life.

But it is not only God that we fail to notice. We also tend to be ignorant of our own emotions and the triggers that cause us to behave in certain ways. "Emotions move us to act. If we don't examine our emotions, we will live on auto-pilot," said Dr Schubert, who served

the Adventist Church most recently as the director of Women's Ministries for the South Pacific Division. "We will miss opportunities to use the gift of free will God has given us and to become more like Jesus." This is where the parables from her life come in.

Published by Signs Publishing, *The Green Dress* contains 52 devotional readings that prompt reflection on God's presence in our everyday experiences. Drawn from Dr Schubert's childhood in Croatia, her work as a lecturer and church administrator, and life as a daughter, sister, wife, mother and friend, these stories are poignant, and sometimes funny, relating struggle and victory, pain and healing, loss and gain. Each is accompanied by a Bible verse and questions for journaling or discussion with friends.

Women's Ministries departments across Australia and New Zealand have ordered copies of the book to encourage women to grow in faith and self-awareness in 2024.

The Green Dress: And Other Parables From My Life is available from Adventist bookstores in Australia and New Zealand or online.



Fulton students celebrate their graduation.

Fulton celebrates 2023 graduation

📍 Nadi, Fiji | John Tausere

Fulton Adventist University College marked a milestone with the graduation of 173 students at its Sabeto campus.

The ceremony, themed "Embracing New Heights", recognised the academic success of students from Fiji and other Pacific Island nations.

The event was attended by Fiji's Education Minister Aseri Radrodro, who acknowledged the graduates' potential to contribute to national development and stability in their countries. "As you leave Fulton Seventh-day Adventist University College, remember your duty to become an asset for national development," he said. His words underscored the importance of education in shaping the future

of the region. Mr Radrodro, reflecting on his visits to educational institutions across Fiji, expressed his commitment to supporting equitable education. He emphasised the collaborative effort of teachers, school management and stakeholders in this endeavour.

The ceremony celebrated not just academic achievements but also the cultural richness of the Pacific Island communities. The graduates were encouraged to apply their knowledge and skills positively in the South Pacific and beyond. They were reminded of their responsibility to uphold values like excellence, integrity and service.



The survey gathered insights from around 2000 church members.

Survey reveals new trends in church giving

📍 **Wahroonga, NSW** | Juliana Muniz/Julian Archer

The South Pacific Division (SPD) stewardship department has published the results of its comprehensive 2023 AU/NZ Offerings Survey, which gathered insights from around 2000 church attendees across Australia and New Zealand. The survey, run from March 23 to July 2, aimed to understand the habits and motivations behind church offerings.

Julian Archer, SPD stewardship director, praised God that this Division is regarded as one of the most generous in the world Church. "To read the hundreds of thoughtful responses was very encouraging. Adventists know that God is faithful and they love to support God's work locally and globally," he said.

Mr Archer was also encouraged by the respondents' challenges to Church leadership about reporting and transparency, and the need to ensure that communications around offerings are not about compulsion or guilt, but around freewill giving that springs from a deep sense of gratefulness and a love for God.

A big surprise was the number of

parents and grandparents who shared the challenge of trying to teach and be an example to children in the area of giving offerings in an almost cashless society.

"Giving practical feedback like this really helps to guide decisions around the promotion, collection, usage and reporting of offerings. The members in the local churches have the best insights into the way they support God's work and we are taking their feedback seriously," Mr Archer said.

While some of the suggestions require significant resources and have been placed in a long-term action plan, others are simple to implement.

In a message thanking respondents, Mr Archer said, "We have already started making changes and are working on putting your highest priority suggestions in place. We will move forward carefully and prayerfully to ensure God's leading."

To read the full report and compare your thoughts to other responses, visit bit.ly/3uMMfwU.



Rice, potato and onion farming training in Buin District, Bougainville (PNG).

Adventists in PNG empower community to grow their own food

📍 **Bougainville, PNG** | Leslie Yamahune/Juliana Muniz

The Eastern Highlands Simbu Mission (EHSM) in Papua New Guinea organised a 10-day life skills training program in late August to enhance self-sufficiency among locals. Thirty-three church members from EHSM, with skills in business, farming and marketing, travelled to Bougainville to train local church and community members.

The training focused on goat and honey farming, citrus growing and organic farming of rice, potatoes and round onions, aimed at helping locals generate income from their land due to the high cost of imported vegetables in PNG.

Fifty years ago, Bougainville Mission was one of the wealthiest missions in PNG due to its copper mines and coconut plantations. The situation changed with the departure of mining companies, leaving many services non-operational. While the Seventh-day Adventist church

provided health and education services, there was still a significant lack of skills training for self-sufficiency in farming and small businesses.

EHSM stewardship director Pastor Mathew Kamo emphasised the importance of growing food locally, "Agriculture is what will save the community and the country, keep the population busy and engaged in utilising their land to gain sustainable incomes."

The training sessions also served as outreach opportunities and "were a blessing to all those involved from the local community", said Pastor Leslie Yamahune, PNG Union Mission stewardship director.

The initiative is part of a broader trend of Mission-to-Mission life skills training across PNG. These trainings support the government's goals to help all citizens realise the benefits of economic empowerment.



Curtis Hall at Parramatta church in Sydney.

Sabbath school specialist hits the road for training across Australia

📍 Ringwood, Vic | Kimberley McMurray/Lyndelle Peterson

More than 1000 Sabbath school (SS) leaders across Australia were trained during a five-week Sabbath School for Life Roadshow from October 13 to November 11.

Special guest speaker Curtis Hall travelled across seven conferences, visiting 24 locations to undertake Sabbath school training with SS leaders, facilitators and attendees.

Mr Hall is the founder of Hit the Mark Sabbath school training and is a lay SS leader from the United States who has a passion for training leaders to run engaging Sabbath schools. He has been teaching and training leaders for more than 14 years.

During his presentations, Mr Hall used his Flight Time teaching program to encourage SS leaders to take their classes on a journey. Using an aeroplane analogy, he told participants to “get the plane in the air, follow a pre-determined route, deal with any hijackers and make sure you land the plane”.

Australian Union Conference (AUC) SS director Pastor Lyndelle Peterson has worked in conjunction with SS conference directors to coordinate the trip since October 2022. “It’s programs like this that really show that as a Church we are better when we work together,” she said.

“The team of SS directors across Australia are an exceptionally gifted and passionate group. We wanted to do something significant for SS and we worked together as a team to make the roadshow a success,” Pastor Peterson explained.

“This wouldn’t have happened without the AUC and conferences working as a team. It meant some of our smaller conferences that may not have otherwise had the resources could really benefit,” she added.

Church support and development director for South Queensland Conference Pastor Greg Pratt said, “Curtis had the ability to train and equip not only adult SS teachers and leaders but also children and youth teachers, who were inspired to breathe life into their Sabbath schools.”

The AUC has printed a special Australian edition of Curtis Hall’s *Flight Time Teaching* training booklet, and copies are still available. For more information, church members can contact their local conference office.

making headlines

Celebrating 100 in Nigeria

Thousands of Adventist church members gathered at Ikot Ekpene Stadium in Eastern Nigeria to mark the start of a week-long celebration of the Church’s 100 years in the region. Featuring General Conference president Pastor Ted Wilson, who announced plans to establish a new school in consultation with local leaders, the Church’s mission and the imminent return of Jesus were emphasised during the worship service.—**Adventist Review**



Symphonic success at 96

Ninety-six-year-old Adventist conductor Herbert Blomstedt, the oldest internationally performing conductor, won the Opus Klassik Award for his lifelong dedication to classical music at an event in Germany. His profound impact on classical music, spanning over 70 years, was celebrated, highlighting his commitment to music and international cultural relations as a lifelong member of the Adventist Church.—**ANN**

Rebuilding lives

ADRA Brazil has opened a halfway house for homeless people in Porto Alegre (Brazil). The main objective of the Tchê Protege halfway house is not only to take in homeless people but also to rehabilitate them and reintegrate them into society.—**SAD**

Eat your greens

A report by the CSIRO found only 35 per cent of the Australian population is eating enough vegetables and that alcohol, takeaway food and confectionery dominate diets. Experts recommend prioritising fresh produce, steering clear of processed foods, and adopting budget-friendly strategies such as buying in-season fruits and vegetables.—**ABC News**



Going global

A TV series created by the Hope Channel team in New Zealand has been launched to the world. *Finding Home*, a 13-episode series, is now being distributed across the *Adventist Review* TV network for audiences across the globe to enjoy. Hope Channel NZ general manager Ole Pedersen said the series, which launched in 2019, was created to tell stories about people in local communities and how they find common ground—a home—in their local Adventist church. Mr Pedersen said it's a fantastic opportunity to showcase what Hope Channel is doing in New Zealand. "It is also a great way to encourage our church members in other parts of the world to find innovative ways of introducing their local church to their local community." Watch *Finding Home* on <bit.ly/3NAj1YH>.—Tracey Bridcutt



Talking point

A representative of the Seventh-day Adventist Church was among a group of educational leaders who met recently with Attorney-General of Australia, Mark Dreyfus, and Opposition Leader Peter Dutton to discuss the Australian Law Reform Commission (ALRC) report on religious educational institutions and anti-discrimination laws. The report is scheduled to be released by the end of the year and will affect staff and students at faith-based schools. Among those attending the meeting were representatives from Lutheran Education Australia, Christian Schools Australia, The Anglican Schools Corporation, Australian Association of Christian Schools, Associated Christian Schools, Christian Schools National and Adventist Schools Australia represented by Pastor Kojo Akomeah, government liaison officer.—Kojo Akomeah



Winning souls

Clarkson church in WA welcomed three new church members on October 7. Joel Borner and Zoltan Horvath became official church members through baptism and Donna Swinburne through profession of faith. Pastor Geoffrey Plewright, elder Tony Di Florio and Neville Blumears officiated the baptisms. Church deacon and librarian Arthur Pettifor expressed the congregation's joy, "The baptisms and profession of faith are a testament to God's love and power as we continue to win souls for Christ."—Record staff



Invested

A total of 1145 Pathfinders were invested at the inaugural district combined investiture at Koiari Park English Church (Pacific Adventist University) on Sabbath, November 25. During the event, nine Ambassadors (young adults) were certified as pioneers of the Ambassadors Club in the North East District Adventist Youth Ministries. These were the first Ambassadors to be certified since the club's inception in 2001. Other Pathfinders and Ambassadors were invested at their respective local churches.—Simon Doppi



50 years

More students than ever are completing their primary schooling at Prescott Primary Northern (PPN), a Seventh-day Adventist school in the north-east suburbs of Adelaide, South Australia.

PPN, the largest primary-only Adventist school in Australia, has grown significantly over the past decade, culminating in 67 students completing Year 6 this year.

"It's exciting for us to reflect on the journey the school has been on," said PPN principal Mark Borresen. "We now have three classes of every grade from Foundation to Year 6. At PPN, we are blessed to now have the opportunity to share Jesus with almost 500 kids and their families."

The record graduation comes on the eve of the school's 50th anniversary—a milestone they plan to celebrate alongside former staff and students in February 2024.

"Growing from a small three-teacher school to a community numbering in the 1000s doesn't happen without the tireless efforts of a lot of people, and the guiding hand of God. We look forward to celebrating both of these things at our 50th celebration next year," said Mr Borresen.

Prescott Primary Northern's 50th anniversary celebration is happening on February 3 and 4, 2024. If you'd like to attend, visit bit.ly/PPN50th for more details.—**Braden Blyde/Record Staff**

have news to share?

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



Woman of the Year

An Avondale academic has been recognised with a Woman of the Year award for her scholarship and her leadership in the Adventist Church. Dr Drene Somasundram received the award from the Association of Adventist Women during its annual Celebration of Excellence banquet, held at La Sierra University Church (US) on November 4. She is "a shining example of perseverance, dedication and a pioneering spirit", read a biography prepared by the independent, supporting ministry. During the event, friend and fellow Newbold College alum Pastor Kirsten Øster-Lundqvist introduced Dr Somasundram as the first Adventist female minister in the United Kingdom, one who turned struggling churches into vibrant Christian communities.—**Brenton Stacey**



Homeschool camp

Families from NSW and beyond convened at Yarra Holiday Park (Stuarts Point Convention Centre) for the Homeschool Families Camp from November 10 to 12. The camp is an initiative of the Light Carriers Adventist Homeschool Network, supported by the North New South Wales (NNSW) children's and family ministries department. Approximately 115 parents and children, ranging from babies to 15-year-olds, participated in the event. Attendees included families who travelled from as far as Victoria and Queensland. Homeschooling mother and founder of Light Carriers Adventist Homeschool Network Marilyn Östring shared that "connecting Adventist homeschooling families to other families in the same boat is the main objective". The Homeschool Families Camp will return in 2024 on September 26 to 29 at Yarra Holiday Park with NNSW president Pastor Cristian Copaceanu as the guest speaker.—**Megantha Kiruwi**

Moving ahead (2015–2020)

Time to adapt

During the five years spanning 2015 to 2020, the world seemed to “speed up”. Social media became an essential people couldn’t live without, news became instantaneous and available as alerts on our phones, and people finally relinquished their grip on their Nokias and became minions to the giant technology companies of Samsung and Apple. With this technology transformation of the world, *Adventist Record* had to adapt.

During these five years, we saw *Record* adopt a mindset shift from being all about the magazine publications, to being more invested in immediate release of up-to-date media through our website and social media pages (*Record*, January 28, 2017). As the pace of the world sped up, it became a new priority to release stories, news and media instantly as it was happening, rather than restricting these stories to fortnightly prints. The highlights from these instant media releases would then be incorporated into the next magazine issue for publication.

During this time period, we saw another changeover of editorship at *Record*, with James Standish moving back to the United States, and Jarrod Stackelroth being appointed editor in July 2016. Under Mr Stackelroth’s leadership, the *Record* underwent a website overhaul in November 2016, followed by a redesign of the magazine at the start of 2017, and the distinctive R logo being introduced (*Record*, September 23, 2017). The new *Adventist Record* website won the gold award for Best Designed Website at the Australasian Religious Press Association (ARPA) awards ceremony in August 2017, and received 370,000 page views in 2017. In developing this new website, Mr Stackelroth emphasised the role of *Record*, saying, “We want *Adventist Record* to continue to tell our stories, build our community and share our hope” (*Record*, September 23, 2017).

In addition to this, the *Adventist Record* Facebook page doubled its followers in 2017 to 4000 followers (*Record*, December 23, 2017). The production of a couple of books and audiobooks also began during this period, as well as the Record Live digital content and Record Wrap news updates keeping viewers in the loop about news, insights and theological discussions happening around the world (*Record*, May 4, 2019).



Agreeing to disagree

As an assistant editor writing some of the Record Rewind columns this year, I've come across numerous heated topics from the past. One such theological discussion from this period which stood out was that of the topic of women's ordination, due to the General Conference vote on the matter in 2015.

The ordination of certain women pastors in the 1970s in America¹ led to a defeated vote at the 1980 General Conference Session, before the topic emerged once again in the lead up to the more recent General Conference Session in 2015 and the release of the Theology of Ordination Study Committee (TOSC) findings. Every time this topic is raised, many words are expended and passionate rhetoric flies back and forth.

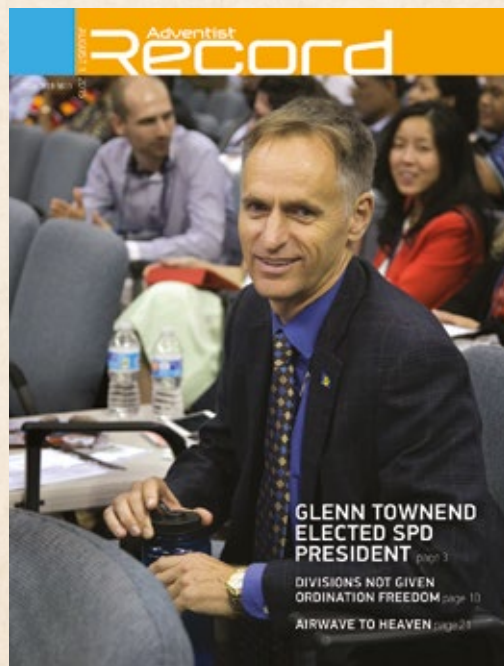
Arising out of the TOSC process were three main views: women should be ordained, women should not be ordained and that not enough is known around the theology of ordination to promote it as it is currently practised. Each of these three stances were represented in the pages of *Record* throughout 2015 in the lead up to the 60th General Conference Session (reported in *Record*, August 1, 2015).

The actual question voted on at this General Conference Session was whether individual Divisions of the world church should have independent authority to allow for women's ordination in their own territories. The vote revealed that 41 per cent of voters were in support of each Division choosing for themselves whether to ordain women, while 58 per cent of voters supported the notion of the Church remaining united in its stance towards women's ordination (*Record*, August 1, 2015). Dr Michael Ryan, retired general vice president of the General Conference, when announcing the final vote declared, "There is nothing triumphal about this . . . there are no winners or losers" (*Record*, August 1, 2015).

It is important to remember that the vote in 2015 did not directly tackle the question of women's ordination, but rather spoke to the independence of church Divisions around the world to determine this matter for themselves. In reflecting on the decision, South Pacific Division president Pastor Glenn Townend said, "To be an Adventist is to be a person of compassion and conviction. To stand for the Sabbath, the state of the dead and to hold distinctive doctrines takes compassion and conviction. I have felt the overwhelming power of God as people explain passion for mission, but I think if the Church for the last 40 years has been discussing women's ordination in various ways, and haven't come to a consensus, it's not something that unites us. We don't need to be uniform in everything. . . . All of our theologians cannot agree. The regions of the Church who have allowed women deacons and elders has not split us" (*Record*, August 1, 2015).

Dr David Trim, director of the General Conference's Office of Archives and Statistics, noted that opinions of voters on the topic of women's ordination have changed significantly over the decades, from only 24 per cent supporting women's ordination in 1990, to 41 per cent supporting women's ordination in 2015 (*Record*, August 1, 2015).

Pastor Townend acknowledged this growth in support for women in ministry, saying, "I am fully in support of women in



ministry. And from my understanding from Scripture and the writings of Ellen White, there is no reason they should not be ordained. We don't all agree and I respect that, too. Every time the Church has addressed this issue, it is getting closer to yes. I'm disappointed. And I know some people are really disappointed" (*Record*, August 1, 2015).

In addressing the hurt and disappointment felt by many at the outcome of the decision, Pastor Townend highlighted the importance of respecting each person's decisions and reasonings for their opinions: "We want to affirm our women in ministry. We also need to think about how to move forward. This includes how we speak to those who don't understand the diverse cultures comprising our world Church" (*Record*, August 1, 2015).

Also of note during this period:

–Glenn Townend was elected as president of the SPD on July 6, 2015 at the 60th General Conference Session (*Record*, August 1, 2015).

–Fifty-three Adventist churches across Vanuatu were destroyed by Cyclone Pam (*Record*, April 25, 2015).

–Ellen White was recognised by *Smithsonian Magazine* as one of the 100 most significant Americans of all time (*Record*, January 17, 2015).

1. Alberto R Timm, "Seventh-day Adventists on Women's Ordination—A Brief Historical Overview" Theology of Ordination Study Committee (January 2014) page 6.

Olivia Fairfax
editorial assistant, *Adventist Record*.



Praying for a miracle

“I want to think about life instead of thinking about when I might die. I want to be able to run and do sports like a normal girl.” – Amelika

When Amelika* was 12 years old, she noticed that something was wrong. She would lose her breath walking from the living room to her bedroom, and she was constantly feeling weak and lethargic. By the time she was 14 years old, she was diagnosed with rheumatic heart disease (RHD) by an Open Heart International team during a screening trip to Tonga, where Amelika lives.

Amelika's heart was functioning at 36 per cent and would only continue to deteriorate. Without surgery, Amelika would die. But the local hospitals were unable to repair the hole in her heart and travelling to Australia for treatment exceeds \$A60,000—far beyond what most people can afford.

And so, on her 14th birthday, Amelika prayed for a miracle.

“Jesus, I want to live, I want to be a foreign missionary like You,” she prayed. “I want to be adopted into Your family and inherit eternal life in a body that cannot break down and a heart that will never leak again. Renew my heart, fix the leak, give me Your strength to live with hope, faith and love no matter how many days I have left.”

In September, Amelika was granted the miracle she prayed for. She received life-saving surgery thanks to an Open Heart International volunteer surgical team.

The surgeons replaced Amelika's faulty aortic valve with an Edwards Lifescience Inspiris Resillia Valve. This high-tech solution will expand as Amelika grows, meaning decades of healthy, stress-free living.

“My prayer or wish on my birthday was fulfilled to the

letter,” Amelika said. “Today, I am truly ‘adopted’ into God’s family and receive an inheritance of new life, with a renewed heart. I will be a missionary after all.”

Amelika is one of the hundreds of patients who have received surgery in the 38 years since Open Heart International was established. While visiting his missionary parents in Tonga in 1985, Russell Lee witnessed the lack of surgical options for those dying of heart disease. Alongside Rudi Morgan and Dr John Wallace, all of whom worked at Sydney Adventist Hospital at the time, the trio volunteered their time and knowledge to make a difference for those without access to best medical practice. By 1986, they had succeeded in fundraising, acquiring the necessary equipment, and coordinating a small group of Sydney Adventist Hospital medical and nursing staff to travel to Tonga. The rest, as they say, is history.

Today, Open Heart International is a partnership between ADRA Australia and Sydney Adventist Hospital, with a purpose that remains the same all these years later: to gift surgical best practice to the most disadvantaged communities on the planet.

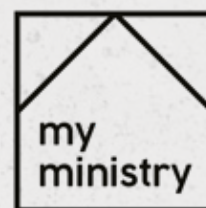
Your gift this Christmas can save a life and heal a heart for children like Amelika, giving them a second chance. Donate today at <ohi.org.au/christmas>.

* Name changed for child protection purposes.

Ashley Stanton

Media and communications senior officer, ADRA Australia.

Bringing H.O.P.E to the streets



Two years ago, Graeme May, pastor of Edens Landing church in Logan (Qld), noticed that the church had no presence in the local community. Motivated to change this, Pastor May contacted the council and they encouraged him to contact organisations that were already serving in Logan.

Pastor May discovered Nightlight, a not-for-profit Christian initiative that aims to cater for the needs of people experiencing homelessness in Logan. Each Thursday evening in the local shopping centre car park, businesses and organisations join forces to provide food, clothing, and medical and laundry services for vulnerable community members.

Experienced barbers from the church congregation have volunteered fortnightly at Nightlight for two years, providing haircuts and a listening ear to the community under the name H.O.P.E Street Ministry.

"The name stands for Helping Others with Purpose and Empowerment. . . . It's about giving people dignity and something in their life that makes them feel good," says Pastor May.

Following the 2022 Eastern Australia floods, donors con-

tributed funds to the church to provide food parcels for the remainder of the year at Nightlight. The church also received a government grant, which they used to secure equipment for the ministry, including a trailer, registration and signage. The church's evangelism budget allocated funds for purchasing second-hand barber chairs, a marquee and battery-operated clippers.

The community members not only receive a free haircut through this initiative, but each cut comes with an option for prayer. "No-one has ever said no to prayer and we have even had one person attend our church from having his hair cut," Pastor May says.

"God tells us that we have a duty of care to the people in our community. . . . We've been blessed to be a blessing. Cutting hair, listening, sharing hope and coming alongside other local community groups to make a difference in our corner of the world."

Megantha Kiruwi
intern, *Adventist Record*.



Jingle all the way

Do you jingle? You might have a little giggle at me asking that weird question or think it quite bizarre or nonsensical to ask. And you'd be right—it is a very silly question to ask.

But nevertheless . . . when the Christmas season comes around, do you jingle like Christmas bells?

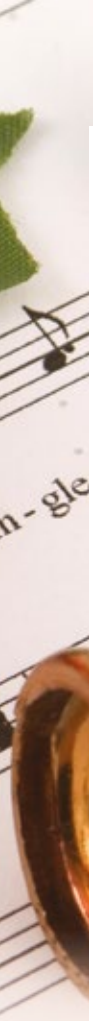
One of the most well-known and unavoidable Christmas songs played everywhere you go around Christmas time is "Jingle Bells". When I used to work in retail, this song would play over the speaker system . . . Every. Single. Day! I wasn't too bothered by it, but my colleagues were driven half-mad having to listen to this song day after day, week after week and month after month. This song, above all other Christmas songs, would get stuck in your head and continue playing through your mind even after you left the shop.

But where did this idea of "Jingle Bells" come from?

The history of bells being associated with Christmas comes from the Middle Ages when the largest building in any city or

town would traditionally be the church, a majestic building carefully designed and constructed to overlook the surrounding landscape with grandeur and authority. And within the towering steeples of each church would hang a bell, or multiple bells, which would ring out loudly and harmoniously across the land. The use of bells in church steeples was first introduced in around AD 400 and adopted on mass scale into churches during the sixth century across much of Europe. Church bells were so highly revered that numerous books and rules were created to govern when and how bells could be rung. It even became a professional career!

But these church bells were not decorative or frivolous in their purpose. The church bell would serve as an announcement system for the whole community, notifying people of important events, such as births, deaths and weddings; as well as warning the community of dangers like storms or invaders. Most notably, church bells would be rung to announce religious commemorations, like Easter and Christmas. The bells



would ring out at midnight every Christmas Eve to herald the beginning of the holy day, Christmas Day. It is from this tradition of ringing bells at midnight that this idea of jingle bells arose and developed into the well-known Christmas emblem. Unfortunately, however, this Christmas emblem has been morphed over the decades and centuries to be more strongly associated with Santa's sleigh rather than the church.

But back in the day when the church was the centre of the community, very few churches were without bells. This was because without a bell, the church could not serve its purpose in the community. It could not warn the community of danger, announce celebrations, bring people together for worship or herald in Christmas Day. A church without a bell was essentially useless.

It is the same still today. A church which does not ring out and announce to its community important spiritual events, warnings and reasons for celebration, is essentially useless.

Now, I absolutely love Christmas. I'm one of those Christmas nuts who listen to Christmas music a bit too early (this year it was May!) and have the Christmas decorations up as soon as possible. Currently as I sit at my desk at work, I can spy two Christmas trees (which I set up), fairy lights, tinsel, bonbons and miniature duckies wearing Christmas hats. I love wandering through the shopping centres, munching on festive treats, marvelling at the magic which shopkeepers bring to their stores and hunting the streets for Christmas lights. I think it is safe to say that I'm a Christmas addict.

But it isn't necessarily Christmas Day which I love. I have had my fair share of Christmas days which I would rather forget, as I am sure many of you have. No, it isn't necessarily the day that I get excited about. Instead, it is the season leading up to Christmas which I can't get enough of. There is just something special about the Christmas season which other times of the year simply cannot capture—a certain bubbling excitement, a sense of relentless optimism and a tenacious tingling of joy.

People's hearts become lighter because they have something to look forward to. They are surrounded by loved ones who all smile more, laugh more and marvel more at the world around them. People become more grateful and thankful at Christmas as gifts are exchanged. They become kinder and more generous as they give donations to worthy causes at this time of year. While this may not be true for everyone at Christmastime, it is safe to say that the Christmas season nevertheless embodies the concepts of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Okay . . . maybe not the last one (especially when it comes to Christmas foods!). But all the other fruits of the Spirit rise and shine in people's hearts during the month of December.

But what is the reason for these qualities emerging at this time of year? We live in an increasingly secular world where Christmas is more often associated with Santa, presents, family, food and cheesy Hallmark movies than it is with the birth of Jesus Christ. And yet the fruits of the Spirit remain steadfastly present in the Christmas season. Why? I believe this is because of hope. In all these emblems of Christmas—the family, food, lights, presents, fables, stories and Christmas carols—there is an irrepressible undercurrent of hope. All these

Christmas festivities remind us that it is possible to experience a better existence, one filled with good tidings and cheer, and our hearts are once again filled with hope that perhaps the year ahead might remain as joyful as Christmastime.

Now like I mentioned, I'm a bit of a Christmas addict. And as with most addictions, when the "high" comes to an end—when Boxing Day finally comes around and the Christmas tree is packed away—what remains are feelings of disappointment, confusion and dejection. A real blue funk comes over me and I become grumpy and annoyed that Christmas is over. In fact, according to a 2015 survey, around 64 per cent of people experience post-Christmas blues! This is where individuals feel anxious, depressed and disappointed when the whirlwind of Christmas ends.¹

The feelings of hope and joy which we experience during the Christmas season do not last. We fall from our euphoric state of bliss and land hard in the reality of pressures, demands and the tedium of life. No longer are there any shiny Christmas lights, baubles, festive carols or presents to look forward to which can muffle out the noise of life's trials. Our reason for hope is gone, only to be replaced by feelings of disillusionment and despair.

Interestingly, however, this experience of post-Christmas blues is less pronounced in Christians compared to non Christians. Research has indicated that Christian religious affiliation is a protective factor against a general decline in subjective wellbeing during Christmas and the post-Christmas period.² In other words, the happiness of those who believe in Jesus does not decrease after Christmas ends.

The reason? Christians have a reason for hope which lasts beyond Christmas Day. Although Jesus is the "reason for the season", He is also the reason. Full stop. He is the reason for our hope, our joy and our delight. I mean, without Him we wouldn't even have Christmas! We wouldn't have gingerbread houses, presents, Christmas carols and the immense source of hope and joy which Christmas brings—we would have nothing without Jesus.

So now I return to the question—do you jingle?

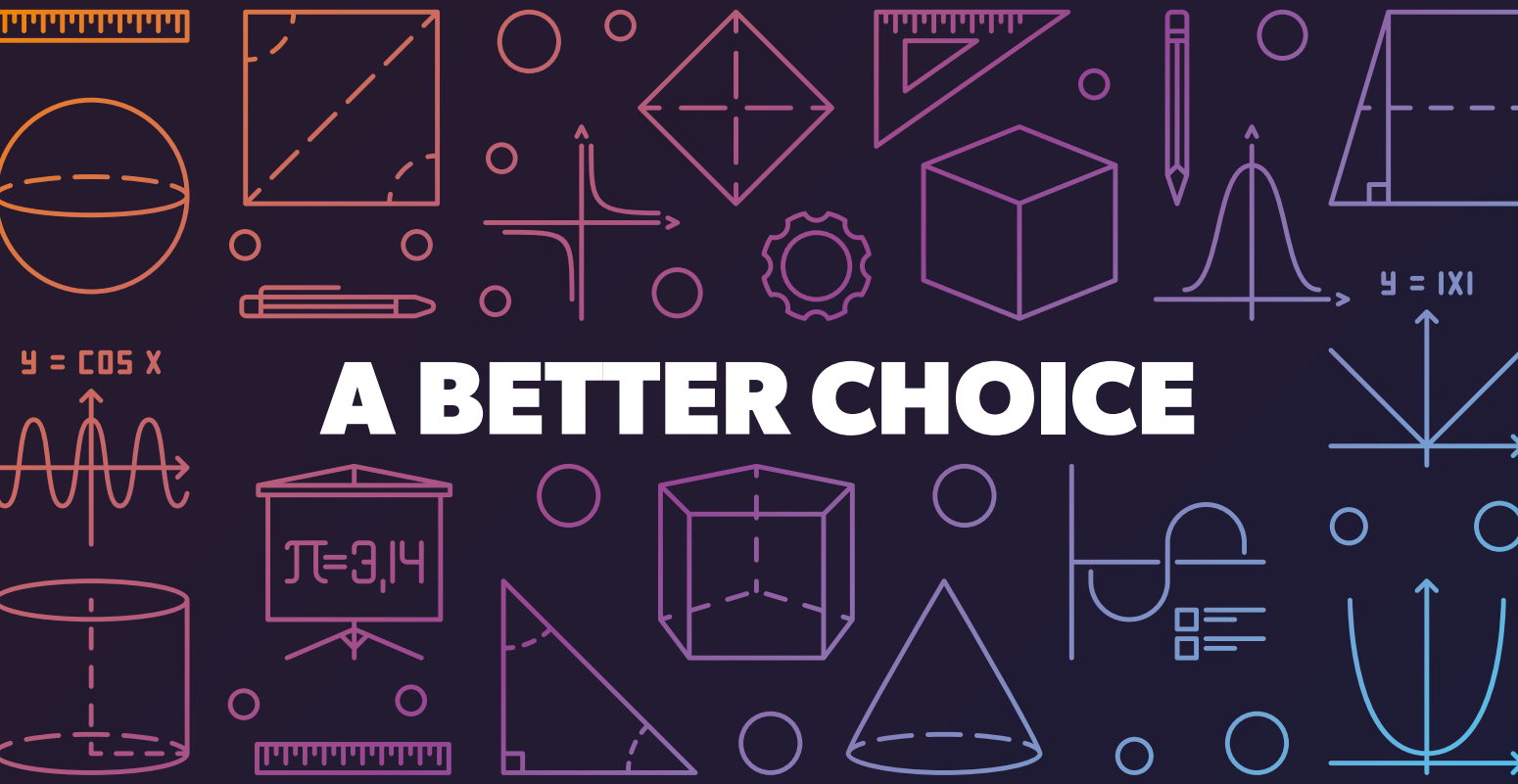
As Christians, we have been given a glorious gift of unending hope to proclaim to our communities and to those we do life with. We have a marvellous hope which lasts beyond Christmas because we have a Saviour! We know firsthand that life doesn't have to be filled with disillusionment, disappointment and despair, such as we see after the euphoria of Christmas ends. Instead, life can be filled with the joy, hope and peace of "Christmas" all year long.

We are the bells in our communities and we have a life-changing announcement to share. So, are we jingling all the way?

1. Luna Greenstein, "Tips for Managing the Holiday Blues" *National Alliance on Mental Illness* (Website, November 19, 2015) <www.nami.org/blogs/nami-blog/november-2015/tips-for-managing-the-holiday-blues>.

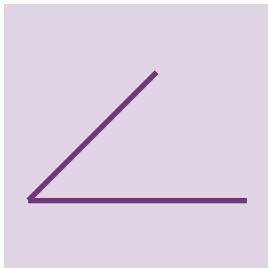
2. Michael Mutz, "Christmas and Subjective Well-Being: A research note" *Applied Research in Quality of Life* (November 13, 2015).

Olivia Fairfax
editorial assistant, *Adventist Record*.



A BETTER CHOICE

Warning! Mathematics question ahead! This alert may leave some with a feeling of mild panic. If that is true, please don't despair. Why? Because you can check your answer and your participation will be rewarded. Here is the critical knowledge you need: the angular measure between the floor and a vertical wall is 90 degrees. Let's begin: What is your estimate of the angle measure between the two lines?



If your answer is about 45 degrees, you are correct. Well done! Now, before revealing the purpose of my question, I want to tell you about Robert Adams¹—a photographer who documented the American West in more than 50 books of pictures. Robert grew up in Colorado and when his family moved to California, he saw

a "landscape of mistakes". He thought this must be the worst place in the world, yet slowly he came to love the landscape he earlier hated. What made the difference? He began taking photos of the urban sprawl around him. Adams remarked, "You could take pictures of suburban tract homes, which are in many ways inhumane, but they were showered with high-altitude sunlight that transformed them in ways that I can't put into words." He used the frame of his camera lens to create a coherent whole using the elements of the scene he was viewing. For Adams, the resulting wholeness in his pictures became a metaphor for wholeness in life.

Now I invite you to experience this process of reframing.

Consider again the two lines presented at the start of this article. Let us add a few additional lines to create a new context. Do you see a representation of a three-dimensional box? If so, what angle measure do you now see between the two original lines?

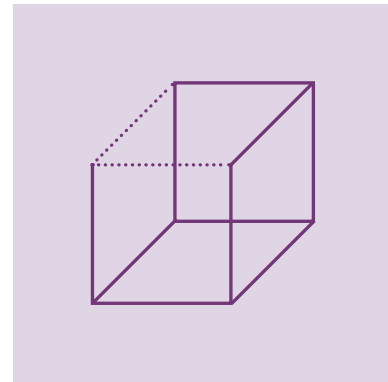
If your answer is 90 degrees, you are correct. But wait. What just happened? How can the angle measure change from 45 to 90 degrees when the lines have not changed? Is maths always this confusing? The truth is this is not really about mathematics at all. It is about the power of perspective. Nothing about the two lines has changed except the context in which you viewed them.

I wonder if we can use this process of reframing to help perceive wholeness and beauty in life, just as Robert Adams uses his camera lens to reframe his photographic subjects.

While pondering such ideas, I encountered two "re-" words that gave me a powerful insight. Firstly, what do I mean by "re-" words? Consider this joke to illustrate.

A couple is having a baby soon. After learning they're having a boy, the husband says, "Let's name him Pete!" But the wife says, "Honey, we're having twins." The husband replies, "Well, we can call the second RePete."²

The "re-" prefix adds the sense of "again". So, the word



reframe means to frame again.

So, what are the two “re-” words I want to share with you? The first of the words is resent. I was surprised to learn that resent literally means to “feel again”. It derives from the Latin *sentire*, meaning to “feel”. When someone hurts, annoys or criticises me, resenting the people or the situation is a natural response. I become aggrieved. I talk about it. Before long, it is “eating me up”. When I resent, I feel it again and again. It’s like having a wound and repeatedly pulling off the scab. The wound never heals. It remains raw and causes me ongoing pain. How do you respond when someone hurts, annoys or criticises you?

The second word is respect. This word’s etymology means to “look at again”. It derives from the Latin word *specere*, meaning “look at”. From this word, we get words like spectacle. Respect is what Robert Adams demonstrated in his photography. He used his camera lens to look repeatedly at what was around him. And through such a process, he could see a beauty that he would otherwise have missed.

In the biblical book of Numbers, chapter 21, we encounter a story of the Israelites travelling south toward the Red Sea to go around the land of Edom. They had pleaded for permission to pass through the territory of the Edomites. “Please let us pass through your country. We will not go through any field or vineyard, or drink water from any well. We will travel along the King’s Highway and not turn to the right or to the left until we have passed through your territory” (Numbers 20:17). Does that sound like a fair request? Sure. Even so, the Edomites refused and threatened war if the Israelites attempted the crossing. The Israelites tried to negotiate, saying, “We will go along the main road, and if we or our livestock drink any of your water, we will pay for it. We only want to pass through on foot—nothing else” (Numbers 20:19). The Edomite refusal stood firm.

What did the Israelites do? They started resenting. They became short-tempered, impatient and aggrieved. Their frustration boiled over and they started attacking those nearest them—Moses and God. “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? There is no bread! There is no water! And we detest this miserable food!” (Numbers 21:5). Whoa! What was this miserable food? The food they detested was manna—the food God miraculously provided every morning to sustain them. Wow! Can you see what nursing resentment does? Ill feelings rage to the point where even the things that should inspire thankfulness become a part of our problem. Have you ever been in this place of resentment? I have. Sadly, too many times to count!

The Israelites needed a reality check—and fast! In this story, the reality check came from venomous snakes. These snakes bit the people and many Israelites died. The people regained their perspective about what was important and went to Moses and said, “We sinned when we spoke out against God and you. Pray to God; ask him to take these snakes from us” (Numbers 21:7, *The Message*).

The solution was an interesting one. God told Moses, “Make a snake and put it up on a pole; anyone who is bitten can look at it and live” (Numbers 21:8). Could God be saying,

“Choose to respect rather than resent? Choose to look again at your situation and see the blessings you receive daily rather than marinate in your ill feelings and perceived injustices, whether fair or not.”

Imagine if one of the Israelites had made a better choice and, instead of resenting the Edomite’s response to their request to shortcut through their land, looked at the situation again and said, “That’s disappointing, but hey, isn’t it amazing that no matter how much farther we need to walk, we get to enjoy a good feed each day—and we don’t even need to carry it or grow it. Wow! Let’s go!” Imagine if that idea had rippled through the multitude!

This process of respecting—of looking again at a situation to see things in a better way—seems to be a tricky thing to master. Even the godly prophet Samuel had problems “looking” at things the way God saw things. When Samuel was grieving over the fate of King Saul, God gave him a significant task. Samuel was sent to Jesse of Bethlehem to appoint one of Jesse’s sons as the new king. When Samuel saw Eliab, the eldest son, he thought, *Wow! Surely this is the new king!*

But God told Samuel, “Looks aren’t everything. Don’t be impressed with his looks and stature. I’ve already eliminated him. God judges persons differently than humans do. Men and women look at the face; God looks into the heart” (1 Samuel 16:7, *The Message*). Isn’t that interesting? God looks into the heart—the part of us that represents the centre of our emotions—positive and negative—destructive and transformational. God discerns our struggles and inclinations and invites us to engage with life and love. This is the challenge of respect—to look again, to look in a new way, to look as God looks.

In our modern digital-based society, taking another look often means doing a Google search. However, as handy as a Google search can be, in some cases, the clever search filters may end up saying more about who I am and what I already believe rather than deliver worthwhile alternative perspectives. “In Pariser’s (2011) TED talk, he says that at first the internet meant a connection to the world, something that brings everyone together, yet it is doing the opposite.”³

That seems to describe a movement away from respect and potentially toward resentment as we each protect what we believe is true based on what we hear in our personal or tribal echo chambers.

As challenging as things may be in what we see around us, I am heartened by the lives of those who choose to respect rather than resent. One such person is the late Father Bob McGuire. Radio personality John Safran said of Father Bob, “He attracted all manner of outcasts, not all pleasant, but he was open-hearted to those people too. I asked him how [he] did this and he said, ‘You don’t have to like people to love them’.”⁴ That’s respect! What will you choose more of today? Respect or resentment?

This question is not an appeal to throw away emotions and feelings in preference for an unfeeling clinical look. Feelings alone can be blind, yet a look without feeling can be cruel. Instead, this is an appeal to love—to see ourselves, others and situations in a new way. Just as 45 degrees with a flat view became 90 degrees with a three-dimensional view; perhaps

we can practise looking again—respecting—to discern matters of the heart in ways that demonstrate compassion and empathy without resenting.

Just as Moses said to the Israelites: "I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses" (Deuteronomy 30:19), let's respond by committing to a better choice.

1. "Robert Adams: Photographing a 'landscape of mistakes'", San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, <www.youtube.com/watch?v=XuhxLv_f2k>, cited December 29, 2022.
2. <[laugh_00778032/>, Joke 93, cited June 25, 2023.](http://www.momjunction.com/articles/funny-baby-jokes-that-makes-you-</div><div data-bbox=)

3. Kristen Allred, "The Causes and Effects of "filter bubbles" and how to break free" <medium.com/@10797952/the-causes-and-effects-of-filter-bubbles-and-how-to-break-free-df6c5cbf919f>, cited April 27, 2023.

4. Charlie Lewis, "Father Bob Maguire's remarkable life was defined by a moral coherence our politicians lack", *Crikey Daily*, April 20, 2023.

Craig Mattner

Mathematics and photography teacher,
Prescott College Southern, Adelaide, South Australia.

Once upon a starry night

Once upon a starry night
In Bethlehem of old
Some shepherds watching o'er their
flocks
Although the night was dark and cold

When in the east a star appeared
Which caught the watchers eye,
And as they gazed it brighter grew
'Til it was close nearby.

As wonder grew fear gripped their
hearts
And then in quite melodius voice was
heard
Fear not, for unto you this night
Is born a Saviour, Christ the Lord.

And then the star came to its rest
Above a stable behind the inn,
To where the shepherds gathered
round
And Joseph let them in.

And there they bowed and wor-
shipped
Beneath that Heavenly Light,
The Saviour in a manger
Once upon a starry night.

Then three magi came in from the East
For they had seen the star,
And followed it to Bethlehem
They had come from lands afar.

They brought with them gifts fit for a
King
Gold, frankincense and myrrh,
And bowed and worshipped before
the child
In that stable where they were.

And the angels hovered around the
child
And gloried at the sight,
Of Earth's redeemer born to reign
Once upon a starry night.

Barry McGuire,
28/11/07 Scottsdale, Tas.



Conversations

Close to heaven

I am inspired by the artwork placed with “The Ten: people who were visited by angels,” (November 18). I don’t think I have adequate words to describe the mesmerising drawing towards the image and what it symbolises. Thank you to the unnamed artist, incredible work! Thank you *Record* team for gathering the 10 stories listed. Seen or unseen, thank you for the spirit-shifting communication of our closeness with the heavenly realm.

Sharon Willis, WA

Sifting time?

I was staggered to read Dr David Trim’s report that many so-called Seventh-day Adventists do not believe in some of our Church’s key beliefs (“Church member survey uncovers uncertainties around key theological beliefs”, *Record* eNews). Where have these people been all their lives in the Church? Did they believe the same way when they were baptised? Were these subjects not covered in their baptismal studies?

I suppose it is partially understandable that people coming out of paganism, ancestor worship and like devil’s doctrines may still have a connection with ingrained satanic beliefs, but 30 per cent?! How sad!

And as far as disbelief in the divinity of the Holy Spirit as the third Person

of the Godhead, it seems clear people who are having a struggle with this doctrine have not read Jesus’ very clear statements about the Holy Spirit’s personality and work in John 14. Did they stop at verses 1-3? And another statement by our Lord in Matthew 28:19 where He instructs His believers to be baptised in the name (singular) “of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (NKJV).

The careless habit some have gotten into when praying concerns me too. In praying to the Father as Jesus instructed us to do, they make some reference to “Your Spirit” instead of referring to the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit who is our contact with God as is clearly stated in Romans 8:26,27.

Dr Trim’s report also refers to the familiar unbelief as to what happens when we die. When we die, we die, completely, as a whole person, no bits of us flying off to the nether regions or to heaven. It’s bad enough when the unbelieving public make some quasi-religious statement about some tough guy who has recently died and who is “looking down on us”. The Bible has hundreds of statements about how things are when we die—there is not sufficient space here to list even the key ones.

It seems the sifting time is already with us.

William Ackland, NSW

Paraphrase

For the most part I thought “Israel, Palestine and Armageddon” (November 4) was a great article and it was the reason I picked up that edition of *Record*, as it was on the cover.

However I just want to bring to your attention that it appears that the author has misquoted the Bible with his paraphrase.

According to the article, 2 Thessalonians says Jesus will destroy Satan with the splendour of His coming. I was confused by this as it was in quotation marks followed up with the Bible reference which led me to believe initially it was a direct quote from the Bible. The reason I was so confused was it left me wondering when is Satan then held for 1000 years in the abyss if he is destroyed at this time.

When I looked up the verse I couldn’t find any version that supported this quote. It was then I noticed the little reference note to say it was paraphrased. If someone is to paraphrase the Bible it may be better if they don’t put quotation marks around it with a Bible reference.

It is not Satan who is destroyed at this time at all—it is the lawless one (I presume the antichrist).

I think it is extremely important we understand last-time events clearly so we ourselves are not deceived.

Jenna Morgan, Qld



Weet-Bix ice-cream bombe

Serves 8

Prep 15, plus freezing

Cook 0

Take ice-cream to the next level with this impressive, and festive, no-bake dessert!

Ingredients

- 2 Weet-Bix, roughly crushed
- 1 litre So Good Vanilla Bliss frozen dessert
- 1 cup raspberries, fresh or frozen
- ½ cup unsalted macadamias, toasted and roughly chopped
- 100g dark chocolate, divided
- Extra fresh raspberries and toasted macadamias, to garnish

Tips:

- Swap raspberries and macadamias for any fresh fruit or nuts you prefer.
- Dessert can be prepared to end of step 5, then stored in the freezer until ready to serve. Allow to sit on the bench for 5 mins before cutting.

Nutritional Information (per serving)

ENERGY	CALORIES	PROTEIN	FAT	SATURATES	CARBOHYDRATE
1040kJ	248	4g	12g	4g	21g
SUGARS	FIBRE	CALCIUM	SODIUM	IRON	POTASSIUM
13g	2.2g	15mg	32mg	1.2mg	177mg

Method

1. Line a 1½ litre pudding basin or deep bowl with a double layer of plastic wrap.
2. Place So Good Vanilla Bliss into a separate large bowl and roughly break up with a knife. Leave to soften for 10 minutes.
3. Roughly chop 70 grams of the chocolate. Add chopped chocolate, Weet-Bix, raspberries and macadamias to the bowl with the softened frozen dessert. Use a large metal spoon to fold ingredients together.
4. Transfer mixture to the lined bowl and smooth surface. Gently cover with overhanging plastic, and freeze for at least 4 hours, or overnight, until firm.
5. When ready to serve, use a vegetable peeler to create shavings from remaining 30 grams dark chocolate. Remove plastic from surface of dessert and invert bowl on to a serving plate. Cover the bowl in a warm, damp tea towel for a minute or two. Remove bowl, peel off the plastic wrap and discard.
6. Garnish with shaved chocolate, fresh raspberries and extra macadamia nuts.



Recipe of the Week

Subscribe to receive delicious plant-based recipes straight to your inbox.

Dietitian approved!

Find out more



Hello!

KIDS SPACES



The Best Christmas Gift

BREAK THE CODE

Christmas is a really special time of year. On Christmas, we visit our friends and relatives. We eat . . . a lot! We have fun and we make special memories. But we should never forget why Christmas is so important. This is the day we remember when Jesus, the Son of God, was born. His birth wasn't planned by Mary and Joseph; it was a miracle! So, as you're opening your presents or eating your Christmas feast, remember Baby Jesus. The birth of Jesus Christ and His saving gift is what Christmas is all about!



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(John 3:16 NIV).



KEY

A	B	D	E	F	G	H	I	L	M
N	O	P	R	S	T	U	V	W	Y

Use this key to help you find this week's Memory Verse.

Appreciation

POSSINGHAM. Bob Possingham and his family would like to thank all those who sent cards and emails and especially those who took time to attend Noreen's funeral. Please accept this as a personal thank you and we look forward to the resurrection morning.

PEUSER. Belinda and the extended Peuser family would like to express their thanks to friends, family and colleagues for the many letters, cards, flowers and phone messages we received following the passing of Kelvin. It was such a comfort to know that he had touched so many lives. Your support helped us to cope at this sad time and we all appreciate the condolence messages more than we can say. I would also like to thank Prof Gavin Marx and the Integrated Cancer Team at the Sydney Adventist Hospital for caring for Kelvin over the last 18 months of his life. The loving care of the nursing team on ward six was greatly appreciated.

Anniversary



ESPINOZA. On Thursday October 19, Francisco and Tomasa celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary. They did not want a party, so decided on a brief trip to Queensland Capricorn Coast for a more intimate celebration. They had a great day, enjoying a meal at a local restaurant, strolling along serene beaches and treating themselves to gelato. Both expressed sincere gratitude to God for the abundant blessings in their lives. Francisco and Tomasa have five daughters, two sons and seven grandchildren.

Obituaries



BOEHM, Kenneth Alvin, born 2.9.1937 in Port Moresby, PNG; died 1.11.23 in Wyong Hospital, NSW. He was predeceased by his brother, Robert in 2018. Ken is

survived by brothers, Ray and Don. Ken dedicated his life to the service of God, particularly in Papua New Guinea. As a skilled builder and carpenter, he led numerous fly-n-build projects, constructing vital infrastructure such as schools and churches. His years of teaching at Sonoma inspired a new generation of builders and teachers for the Church. His unwavering commitment and tireless efforts left a lasting impact on the lives of countless people. Ken's legacy of faithfulness will continue in those he taught and mentored throughout his 65 years in PNG. Now he rests from his labours and awaits the call of Jesus.

Joseph Talipuan, Danny Phillip,
Wayne Boehm

BUTLER/PARR, Fern, born 5.10.1920 in Auckland, NZ; died 27.9.23 in Cooranbong, NSW. She was predeceased by her stepson, Greg in 1997 and her husband, Robert in 2013. Fern is survived by her stepchildren, Mareta and Jenny; grandchildren, Nicole, Kylie, Melissa, Ashley, Clinton, Christopher and Dean; and great-grandchildren, Charli, Cody, Tyler, Levi, Maisie and Obadiah. Fern served the Church for nearly 30 years, mainly in the SPD treasury. Upon marrying Bob, she faithfully supported him in his various ministry roles as editor of the Signs, Greater Sydney Conference president and local church pastor. She was an Adventist with a rich heritage, strong convictions and loved by her family who greatly miss her. She rests beside the one she adored awaiting the wake-up call of the Master.

Adrian Craig, John Kosmeier

LANG, Frederick (Fred) Charles, born 13.9.1935 in Bunbury, WA; died 30.10.23 in Advent Care Whitehorse, Melbourne, Vic. On 6.9.1963 he married Irma Rohwedder, who predeceased him in 1980 while on mission service in Africa. On 10.1.1982 he married Sharyn Barnard. He is survived by his wife; children, Karen Lang and partner Lyndon Voigt, Stuart Lang and partner Pauline Hayes; stepdaughter, Louise Parslow; grandchildren, Taylor and Jordan; and stepson, Mark Taylor. Fred was a dedicated church worker and missionary working in Melbourne, Hobart, Zaire/DRC, Rhodesia/Zimbabwe and then again in Melbourne until his retirement in 1996. In his retirement he enjoyed travelling, gardening,

tennis, golf, cooking and playing his tuba in the Advent brass band of which he was a long-term and very valued member.

Russell Bryan



MALYCHA, Darcy Thomas, born 3.3.1945 in Whyalla, SA; died 17.6.22 in Mildura, Vic. He is survived by his wife, Joylene; sons, Andrew, Shane and Tony; eight grandchildren; brothers, Kevin and Maurice; and sister Pamela. Darcy started his career at Signs Publishing Company in Warburton and eventually settled in Mildura. He was an active member of the church and the community, running the ADRA shop and with his ADRA bus, relentlessly served the wider community, especially the elderly.

Mladen Krklec



McMURTRY, Pastor Laurence Charles, born 5.12.1931 in Blenheim, NZ; died 16.10.23 in Brisbane, Qld. In 1965 Laurie married Patricia Millar, who predeceased him in 1973. He was also predeceased by his daughter, Patricia Jean Kasemsri in 2011. In 1973 he married Beth Nicholls. Laurie is survived by his wife (Carindale); children, Lyndel Smith (Sydney, NSW), James (Central Coast), Pamela Wickham (Sydney) and John (Brisbane, Qld); and 10 grandchildren. Laurie served in NNZ and NNSW conferences where major highlights were the building of the Royal Oak church and the obtaining of land and establishing Macquarie College and the new Wallsend church in Newcastle. He was also executive director of the Avondale College Foundation from mid 1981 to 1987. Laurie was a man of God, a prince of preachers.

Beth McMurtury, John McMurtury

NORMAN, Alan, born 12.5.1934 in Adelaide, SA; died 4.7.23 in Wallaroo. He is survived by his wife, Janette (Kadina). Alan was a devoted husband, loving father and a faithful friend and lived a life full of compassion and service. He is now sleeping in Jesus, awaiting His glorious return. Until the resurrection.

Scott Heitmann



NORMAN, Marina (nee Dureta), born 16.9.1976 in Zagreb, Croatia; died 11.4.23 in Dandenong

Hospital, Vic. She is survived by her husband, Ross; and son, Michael (both of Melbourne). Until the resurrection.

Paul Ketanko



PEUSER, Kelvin John, born 10.5.1958; died 26.10.23 after a courageous battle with cancer. On 1.7.1979 he married Belinda Lord. He was predeceased by his brother, Raymond. Kelvin is survived by his wife; and sister, Nancy Marshall. Upon graduating from Avondale College with qualifications in teaching and accountancy, he and Belinda accepted a teaching appointment to Betikama High School (Solomon Islands). Returning to Australia, Kelvin taught at Avondale High School, then moved into finance and accounting, working at the North NSW Conference office, Avondale and the South Pacific Division. Kelvin's service for his church totalled more than 42 years and he passed away while still employed at the SPD. He loved Belinda, his German family, his church, his work, sailing and gardening. Kelvin awaits the resurrection when his Saviour returns.

Ray Roennfeldt

RYAN, Thomas Peter (Silver), born 27.1.1929 in Pambula, NSW; died 22.5.23 in Albion Park. He was predeceased by his son, Pete and daughter, Vicki. He is survived by his wife, Ann. Silver loved the Lord, his family and his neighbours very much. He served his community through the ADRA food bank giveaway at Dapto for several years.

Tony Moala

STIDOLF, Cheryl June, born 20.3.1949 in Tenterfield, NSW; died 20.8.23 in Haddington Nursing Home, Tenterfield. She was predeceased by her husband, Ronald in 2002. She is survived by her daughter, Kayleen; and grandchildren, Joshua, Christopher, Kevin, Caitlin and William. Cheryl was a long-time serving member of the Tenterfield church. She spent her remaining years in the Haddington Nursing Home, where she actively shared her faith until she finally took her rest at the age of 74 years. She loved Jesus and looked forward to meeting Him at the second coming.

Brad Cooke



YOULDEN, David
Ross, born 1.4.1949 in Melbourne, Vic; died 8.11.23 in Adelaide, SA. He was married to Joy Major, who predeceased him on 12.7.20. David is survived by his daughter, Darlene Jaekel (Adelaide, SA); son, Danny (Brisbane, Qld); and their families. A humble, hardworking man, Ross lived with hope in the goodness of God and His salvation. This hope has been a comfort to Ross and his family as they look forward to the resurrection.

Lilian Panozzo



YOUNG, Lavinia
Candice, born 17.9.1981 in Qld; died 28.10.23 in Rockingham, WA. She is survived by her life partner, Richard Birkin; children, Jackson and Tahlia; parents,

Cameron and Maree, and Renae Stirling-Young; siblings, Camille Foster, Donny, Rebecca Schmunk, David Schmid, Clarissa, and Christopher Schmid; 11 nieces; and 10 nephews. Lavinia was a loving, caring and compassionate person and was the glue that kept her family connected. She shared her love of animals and Lego with her family. Lavinia was lost to her family much sooner than expected but we know that we will be together again. Now she is resting in the arms of Jesus.

Cameron Young, Dale Arthur

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The South Pacific Division (SPD) is seeking expressions of interest from qualified and experienced internal auditing professionals to support the work of the Church in this full-time internal auditor role. For full details please visit <adventistemployment.org.au> or email <hr@adventist.org.au>. To apply, please email a cover letter addressing the selection criteria, your CV, three work-related referees and the contact details of your Adventist church pastor, to <hr@adventist.org.au>. **Applications close January 15, 2024 or once an appointment is made.**

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editor@record.net.au

News & photos
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Subscriptions
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+ 61 (03) 5965 6300
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Website
record.adventistchurch.com

Mailing address
Adventist Media
Locked Bag 1115
Wahroonga NSW 2076
Australia
+ 61 (02) 9847 2222

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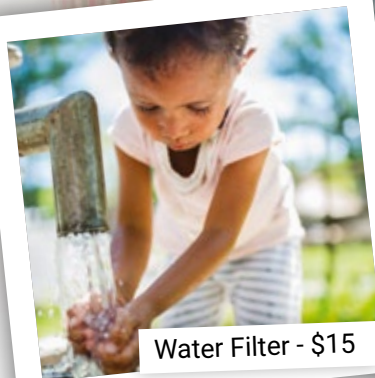
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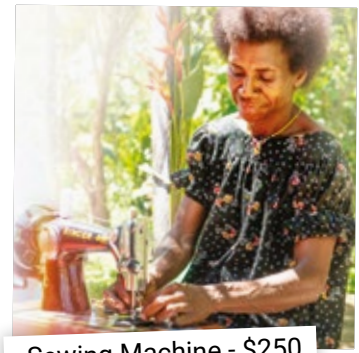
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