



# R

## The voice among voices

Finding clarity in the  
cacophony <sup>14</sup>

Missionaries return after years  
of service <sup>7</sup>

## OUR IMPACT

Over  
**454,000**

Lives touched in  
**AU & NZ**

# A LIFESAVING HEALTH CHECK



Mary Ann begins a health monitoring assessment with Volunteer Firefighters at Blenheim Station.

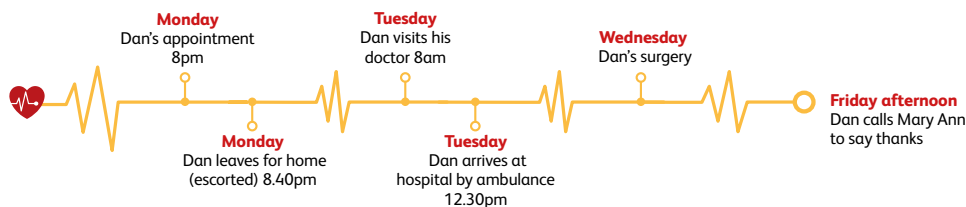
## "Thank you for saving my life!"

Around 8pm one Monday evening in the South Island, Fire and Emergency New Zealand (FENZ) Fire Officer, Dan\*, sat down for his Vitality Works workplace health monitoring assessment. On the Wednesday he found himself undergoing life-saving surgery prompted by a condition identified during the assessment. On Friday, an emotional Dan phoned Vitality Works Occupational Health Nurse, Mary Ann, who conducted the assessment, to express his gratitude for her role in saving his life.

### Vitality Works and FENZ's Partnership Journey:

- Vitality Works has partnered with Fire and Emergency New Zealand for over 11 years, offering regular workplace health monitoring assessments under the Building Healthy Workplace Communities program.
- The 40-minute health monitoring assessment includes a cardiovascular disease assessment, hearing test, health metrics, and a psychological assessment.
- The program aims to save time for employees, ensuring regular health checks remain a priority.
- Vitality Works has conducted 29,882 health monitoring assessments for FENZ since 2015<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Data prior to 2015 not available \* Not his real name



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EDITOR'S NOTE:

## Prosper: what pop culture thinks of the church

Jarrod Stackelroth  
Editor

“

Families are messy and unfortunately, Christian families are often forced to put up a front to survive.

My wife and I recently watched the Australian drama series *Prosper*, about the leading family of a Christian megachurch—and their shortcomings.

While the show is purely fictional, there is no doubt some inspiration has been drawn from real world headlines from the past few years, especially from a certain Australian megachurch that has become world famous.

While I am not writing to endorse the show (and would encourage Christian discernment as it includes some questionable elements), I am always fascinated by mainstream entertainment that features Christianity in some way. I find it helps to crystallise my own thoughts to learn how Christians are portrayed in popular culture and how that fuels perception of Christians in our communities.

I'll give you a brief rundown of the plot. Cal Quinn (Richard Roxborough) is pastor of evangelical megachurch U Star. His wife Abi (Rebecca Gibney) helps him run the church, while his children jostle for position and succession rights. The church is looking to expand into the US market, while the family is busy putting out fires at home that include fallout from a church member's death, a secret adoption, a wayward celebrity and tax pressure from the government.

Some things I appreciated: They gave faith a more nuanced portrayal that didn't rely on the common caricatures used when Christians appear in the media (judgemental or hypocritical). There was no atheist character talking down Christianity and the faith of the protagonists seemed genuine. Even though Cal's character does some incredibly unethical things, he is not portrayed as just exploiting the faith community but as a man who has deep convictions and faith, even if he's a little lost and broken at times. Most of the characters have a story arc that has them wrestle with their faith and how it squares with the bad choices they make and the ambitions they hold.

Jed Quinn (Jacob Collins-Levy) is a prodigal son. While his older brother has stayed "faithful", he has left the family, fed up with their excesses and hypocrisy. Yet he has not abandoned his faith (an easy option for the show's writers). Instead, he pursues what he believes is true faith, living with and helping the inner-city homeless. I appreciate that he is held up as an example of "true" Christian faith, because it shows what the community expects from churches—to be serving and caring for the community, not just looking for members and tithes.

Some lessons we can learn? Families are messy and unfortunately, Christian families are often forced to put up a front to survive. This leads to people seeing behind the facade and becoming more cynical and disillusioned than if we were more honest with our struggles.

The show depicts characters wrestling with public confession and the damage secrets can do when hidden, but also the damage that can be done when everything is put out in the open and people are forced to share more than discernment should allow for.

In the series, church leadership try to leverage a relationship with a music superstar, baptising him, but also getting burned when he winds up in hot water. As Adventists we are not immune from the attraction to celebrity and fame (think Ben Carson, Obama's grandmother, the pope's brother—the last one at least turned out not to be true). When we seek fame and connection to celebrity to legitimise our standing in the community, it can come back to bite us when those stars eventually (or inevitably) fall.

Will this show lead people to try Christianity? Probably not (although the Lord works in mysterious ways). But from time to time, it is good to look into a mirror and see ourselves through someone else's eyes. It is tempting to watch a show like this (or even some of the news pieces on other denomination's failings) and think, *Thank goodness WE'RE not like that*. But if we do that, we miss the point. Shows like *Prosper* give us the opportunity to challenge ourselves by understanding where we fall short and where we can be better as a community. It is a good reminder that we should always strive to be a community who are becoming more like Jesus.



INSIGHT:

## Global Mission

Glenn Townend  
South Pacific Division president

My favourite General Conference meetings usually take place over Easter. Not that I like being away from family at Easter but the GC “Spring Meetings” focus on how we reach the billions who have not heard of the everlasting gospel of Jesus.

Enthralled, I listen to frontline missionaries who have left their home countries, learnt other languages and cultures to work with very different people groups from atheist, Muslim, communist, Buddhist and other backgrounds. They share the challenges of not having many who understand them, of meeting people and having no response, but also the joys of new friendships and people dedicating their lives to Jesus. These people are my Adventist heroes.

The challenge is real. One of the Church’s unions has a population of 601 million and only around 7000 Seventh-day Adventists. Adventist membership in that Union has nearly doubled in the past seven years—so God is blessing their pioneer missionaries in a place that seems impossible to reach.

We heard of a Muslim sheik visiting an Adventist friend because of a dream he had. He was told to find people who lived according to their beliefs. The Adventist was faithful in sharing the message of God from the Koran and Bible. The sheik went back to his people and asked them to consider the new messengers and message. His people did not like churches but valued the message and have been sharing it from house to house. They now have a network of house churches with more than 3000 people involved and many newly baptised members trained as lay house church pastors.

Adventist house churches are proving to be an effective way to evangelise around the world. The Global Mission committee is discussing ways to integrate this growing movement in the Church without imposing obstacles to its growth.

The South Pacific Division is open to innovative ways to share the last-day gospel to the world. We want to ReFocus on Mission in and outside of our Division and bless our nearest neighbours in Asia. We dream of sending 20 full-time missionaries in the next five years, 100 people for one year in mission and 2000 on short-term mission trips. This will help expand God’s last-day, disciple-making movement there and here.

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The proposal would see production of these breakfast items cease by mid-2025.

## Sanitarium set to streamline product range in response to changing Kiwi breakfast trends

📍 Auckland, NZ | Record staff

Sanitarium in New Zealand will cease production of its muesli, granola, flake, clusters and puff cereals by June 2025, under a new proposal, as Kiwi breakfast eating trends shift consumer demand.

If confirmed, the proposal will see the company move to streamline its product ranges to focus on growing iconic Weet-Bix, Weet-Bix Bites and UP&GO brands.

Sanitarium New Zealand general manager Michael Barton said research shows over 20 per cent of Kiwis consume something in the morning besides traditional flaked breakfast cereal, mainly a hot drink or a portable liquid breakfast.

"Our sales for muesli, granola, clusters, Light 'n' Tasty and puffed cereals represent just 10 per cent of sales and have been declining steadily over several years," Mr Barton said.

"The breakfast market is changing. We need to align our production with evolving consumer appetites and demand trends."

Mr Barton said the granola, muesli, puff and flake cereal production lines, which began production from the 1940s, would require a \$NZ28 million building and plant upgrade to sustain production, which is not viable in view of changing consumer preferences and declining sales for this type of cereal format.

"If the proposal proceeds, it would mean the loss of 49 roles across

manufacturing, logistics and head office," Mr Barton said.

"Our immediate priority is to work through the consultation period with our staff, ensuring they are fully supported through this unsettling and challenging time.

"We are like a family at Sanitarium and considering this proposal was tough. If the proposal goes ahead, staff impacted by the change would receive full entitlements, financial and personal counselling support, along with career support and advice to transition to other employment, if they are unable to transfer to other roles within the company," Mr Barton added.

The proposed 15-month plan would see production of Sanitarium Muesli, Granola, Light 'n' Tasty, Honey Puffs, Weeties, Weet-Bix Clusters, Cluster Crisp and Puffed Wheat cease by mid-2025. However, the products will remain available in most major supermarkets or individual and bulk food services until then.

Popular products Skippy Cornflakes, Ricies, Weet-Bix and Marmite will continue to be made at Sanitarium's Auckland manufacturing facility.

The announcement applies only to Sanitarium's New Zealand business as Australia doesn't carry this range of products.



Esther Haslam with Adventist HealthCare CEO Brett Goods.

## Esther reaches 69 years of service to the Church

📍 Wahroonga, NSW | Alexandra Ristway/Record staff

Esther Haslam has achieved an extraordinary milestone—celebrating 69 years of service to the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Adventist Healthcare CEO Brett Goods has acknowledged her commitment and dedication, with most of her working life spent at Sydney Adventist Hospital.

"She was incredibly diligent and professional," he said.

Ms Haslam began her career with the Church on December 19, 1954, in the United Kingdom where she worked at the Stanborough Nursing and Maternity home in Watford, northwest of London.

She later migrated to Australia and began working at the San in July 1967.

"For the first seven years I performed clerical duties and then, when the Clifford Tower was being constructed, I worked for the deputy project manager," Ms Haslam said.

Former colleague Sandra Andrew said, "Esther was always very helpful and loved to share humorous stories with us. She was very attentive to detail and made sure the on-call rosters were up to date."

Now retired, Ms Haslam is enjoying having some spare time on her hands.



The new NNSW Conference office.

## NNSW office settles into permanent location

📍 Cooranbong, NSW | Henrique Felix

The North New South Wales Conference (NNSW) has completed its move to a permanent location. The new office, based on Site 9 of the former Sanitarium Engineering Division office on the Avondale estate in Cooranbong, opened on April 5 with a dedicatory prayer.

The former Wallsend office, where the conference office was based since 1988, has been leased to generate significant income for the Church's mission within NNSW. Moving out on June 16, 2023, the office staff operated temporarily from the Education Hall at Avondale University while the new permanent building underwent renovations.

The Children's Resource Centre has already been operating at Site 9 since June 2023 and the Faith FM studio is scheduled to start operating from the new office in the coming months.

NNSW president Pastor Cristian Copaceanu explained the benefits of the permanent location. "In addition to the financial benefits, the new office location

enables the NNSW Conference team to interact daily with Avondale University students and staff—the heartbeat of future church, education, health and business leaders. The mission, mentoring and networking synergy will be invaluable to the work of the Church in NNSW and beyond for many years to come."

Project manager and Natural Church Development coordinator Gillian Knight coordinated the move to the new space. The NNSW office staff expressed their appreciation for Mrs Knight's professionalism and careful management of the final stage of the relocation process.

New signage will soon be installed to direct visitors to the parking area, Children's Resource Centre, NNSW Adventist Education building, and the conference office.

The conference thanked Avondale for its support and hospitality during the transition. "Avondale University has been a wonderful and accommodating host," said Pastor Copaceanu.



Conference hosts Olivia Fairfax and Tim McTernan opening the program. [Credit: Clayton Gallego]

## Online Digital Discipleship event goes global

📍 Wahroonga, NSW | Juliana Muniz

More than 1200 people from around the world registered to learn professional secrets to digital evangelism at this year's Digital Discipleship Conference on March 9. Hosted by Adventist Media (AM), the conference connected a diverse global audience with its online format, livestreamed on YouTube and Facebook.

Jan Rhais, AM marketing assistant and event co-organiser, shared insights into the conference's impact. "We had an average of 126 concurrent viewers throughout the 9-hour livestream, with numbers peaking at 174. The engagement levels were truly inspiring, with the conference amassing a total of 67,662 view minutes—half of those from outside the South Pacific Division," Mr Rhais said.

The event featured insights from leading digital evangelists and discussions on the psychological impacts of social media use, such as preventing burnout among content creators.

Feedback from participants highlighted the practical applications of the pres-

entations. "The response to our sessions, particularly those on managing content creation to prevent burnout and the practical use of social media by churches, was overwhelmingly positive," said Mr Rhais.

The conference also laid the groundwork for future initiatives, including specialised training and the development of a comprehensive digital discipleship website offering courses on various topics from graphic design to storytelling.

Looking ahead, organisers are planning targeted workshops for regions with unique digital landscapes. "One example is Papua New Guinea, where most people there don't have access to social media and WhatsApp is one of their primary sources of communication and evangelism. Conducting future specialised seminars that targets the local mode of communication is a must," Mr Rhais explained.

You can watch the event on <youtube.com/@digitaldiscipleshipau>.



Attendees at the missionary re-entry retreat.

## Missionaries return after years of service

📍 Wahroonga, NSW | Kiera Bridcutt

Six Adventist missionaries have been welcomed back to Australia after years of service overseas.

The South Pacific Division (SPD) held a re-entry retreat to welcome the missionaries home and help with their reintegration into Australia. Led by mission service and support manager Carol Boehm, the retreat provided a space to thank the missionaries for their service, celebrate what they have achieved, debrief their experiences, equip them for the future and to worship.

According to Mrs Boehm, many missionaries return home and expect to slot back into their old life, but things have changed, friends have moved on and they've missed a lot of "life" with their family. She encourages them to see the next chapter as a re-appointment and not a "coming home", as many find it difficult to pinpoint where "home" is.

"Many people find that re-entry is harder than heading out to service," said Mrs Boehm. "Reverse culture shock is a real thing."

Long-time missionaries David and Carol Tasker were among those attending the retreat. The couple is retiring after 50 years of denominational employment, most recently at Pacific Adventist University in Papua New Guinea (PNG) where Carol served as director of research and postgraduate studies and David as the dean of the School of Humanities, Education and Theology.

The other recently returned missionaries were Kaye and Kevin Judge, and Suraj and Gillian Grolimund. The Judges have returned from roles at Sonoma Adventist College in PNG: Kaye as the staff development and quality assurance officer and Kevin as the human resources and student service officer. The Grolimunds were serving at ADRA in Laos: Gillian was the country director and Suraj a project manager. Australian chaplains Allan and Wendy Walshe also attended the retreat.

Mrs Boehm is keen to encourage everyone to remember that we are all called to be missionaries.

"Living a life of service doesn't need to happen overseas—although it might, and if God calls you there don't hesitate. But it may mean walking across the street to your neighbour, across the hall to your work colleague or across the country to an old friend or acquaintance. It's time we embrace all that being a missionary means so we can spread the good news and finally go home."

Currently, there are 26 families serving in the Pacific Islands as International Service employees, from a variety of places including Australia, Africa, Philippines, Indonesia, Myanmar, Alaska and New Zealand.

## making headlines

### ADRA app victory

ADRA Poland won first place in the Start-Up-Med 2024 competition for their "GiveAndGetHelp" app which is the largest help-seeking digital community in Poland. Offering free psychological support to individuals while ensuring complete anonymity, the app operates in Polish and Ukrainian, is completely free of charge and incorporates artificial intelligence to ensure 24/7 assistance.—TED



### Canadian aid for Indigenous

Young Canadian volunteers partnered with ADRA Canada and the Independent First Nations Alliance to serve Indigenous communities in northern Ontario. They provided fire prevention and safety assistance, including installing fire alarms and clearing debris for fire guards, while undergoing sensitisation training to ensure interactions with Indigenous people were as respectful as possible.—NAD

### Young evangelists

Eight hundred and thirteen Adventist children in Ecuador were trained as evangelists through the "Evangelism Kids" program which aims to strengthen the missionary spirit of kids so they become preachers and fishers of other children for Christ.—SAD

### How great thou aid

A new version of the Christian hymn "How Great Thou Art" has been released by 16 of the world's biggest worship artists to raise money for humanitarian relief in Eastern Europe due to the war in Ukraine. Titled "How Great Thou Art (Until That Day)", it features Matt Redman, Chris Tomlin, Kari Jobe and Taya among others and marks 75 years since the hymn was translated into English.—Vision Media



## Praying women

Wainadoi English church in Fiji celebrated International Women’s Day with a special program on March 2, highlighting the importance of prayer and support among women. The event utilised the “Ignite Your Prayer Life” resource package created by former General Conference children’s ministries director Linda Mei Lin Koh. Guest speaker Trans Pacific Union Mission secretary Jane Gibson-Opeteia commented on the importance of the celebration. “Today has been touching to see our church community give such loving support for women, and we pray for more opportunities like this to mirror God’s love in our relationships with each other.”—TPUM News



## Market for mission

Adventist Media (AM) staff hosted a fundraising market on April 3, collecting more than \$A600 for a mission trip to assist Tangibangara church in the Solomon Islands. The event was part of broader fundraising efforts, including a permanent “fundraising fridge” at the office, which sells lunches and snacks to support charities and mission trips. The project aims to purchase and install solar panels, new chairs, curtains and ceiling fans, enabling the church to spend resources on frontline mission rather than on petrol to run a generator. “AM’s mission is ‘Sharing Jesus Made Simple’, and in a sense, by doing this project, we would enable Tangibangara church to do this more effectively in the surrounding communities,” said one of the project organisers, Gilmore Tanabose. With a fundraising target of \$A20,000, the team plans to continue their efforts through additional market days and other initiatives to reach their goal.—Juliana Muniz



## Community work

Youth from Suva Rotuma and Hilltop churches in Wainadoi, Fiji, gathered at the Suva Adventist College to clear overgrown bushes and plant flowers on Sunday, March 31. According to minister Melisa Vakaloloma, their weekend was fulfilling. “Despite the gloomy weather, we had a combined Sabbath at the Wainadoi church and continued the fellowship on the following day over some community work,” said the minister.—Fiji Mission staff



## Planting community

Taree church (NSW) recently planted the inaugural seedling of its first community garden project. Funded by ADRA Australia, the initiative aims to connect and share fresh produce with the local community. The financial support for this project was part of the contributions collected during the ADRA Appeal in October. The church hopes that the garden will not only provide nutritious food to local residents but also cultivate relationships.—Lazio Crescentini





## Easter special

Hillview church in Morisset, NSW, celebrated Easter with a special three-part program. Titled Christ the King, Christ the Servant and Christ the Saviour, each part portrayed crucial moments in the Easter story.

The journey started on Palm Sabbath—the Sabbath before Easter—with the celebration of Christ as the King. Featuring dramatic re-enactments, “attendees were taken back to the jubilant atmosphere of Jesus’ triumphant entry into Jerusalem”, explained church member Mary Fedorow.

The observance continued on Good Friday with an Agape feast and communion service, where the focus turned to Christ the Servant.

The celebration culminated on Easter Sabbath, where the theme centred on Christ the Saviour. “Vignettes brought to life the diverse array of individuals who played a role in the Easter story,” said Mrs Fedorow.

“Easter is a time when the world focuses on the death and resurrection of Jesus. And at Hillview, as we reflected on the events of Easter, we were challenged to renew our commitment to live and share the message of hope and redemption,” Mrs Fedorow added.—**Record staff/Mary Fedorow**

## have news to share?

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



## Spiritual education

The Trans Pacific Union Mission (TPUM) Education Department, in collaboration with Adventist Schools Australia (ASA), launched the ABIDE Bible Project on March 26. The initiative aims to enrich spiritual education across Adventist schools in the TPUM region by providing educators with specialised Bibles designed to enhance the teaching and learning experience. Attending the launch virtually, associate education director for ASA Jacques Calais discussed the critical role of integrating spiritual education with academic learning and the value these Bibles will bring to teachers. Taloga Pita, TPUM education director, said the project’s goal is to transform spiritual education by encouraging the use of biblical principles in teaching methodologies.—**TPUM News**



## Rugby team goes to church

Rugby player Ngamata Miriau, who was recently baptised and appointed youth leader at Ngatangia church in Rarotonga, Cook Islands, preached his first sermon to the congregation and the Titikaveka Bulldogs rugby league team on March 23. The Bulldogs, known for scheduling their games on Friday afternoons to accommodate young Adventist players, attended the service at Mr Miriau’s invitation. The youth leader shared a personal testimony, drawing a parallel between the Parable of the Lost Sheep and a life-changing car accident he had in January 2023. The experience resulted in Mr Miriau’s baptism and his friend Mark, who is now the team’s coach and was involved in the crash with him, has since abstained from alcohol. At a communal lunch hosted by the church, team captain Timo Tangirere expressed gratitude for the church’s hospitality and Mr Miriau’s inspiring message.—**Anthony Brown**



# Heartbeat of our community:

## A DAY IN THE LIFE OF ADRA VOLUNTEERS



In the heart of our community lies an organisation that serves as its backbone—ADRA Logan Community Centre. As we take a moment to reflect on a typical day at ADRA, it's truly awe-inspiring to witness the incredible work being accomplished, all driven by dedicated volunteers who consistently give back to their community. This article pulls back the curtain to reveal the daily routine and impactful moments that make ADRA Logan Community Centre an invaluable institution within our neighbourhood.

### The Morning Toolbox: a spiritual foundation

Each day at ADRA begins with what can only be described as a “toolbox” for the soul. This toolbox comprises a carefully curated set of elements designed to set the tone for the day ahead. It commences with a word of the day, followed by inspirational quotes related to that word. The morning reflection culminates with a Scripture passage that resonates with the chosen word. Remarkably, all the words and quotes

seem to find their roots in the Word of God.

The morning toolbox isn't just a routine; it's a deliberate practice. It serves as a reminder that ADRA is built upon the foundation of faith. It offers a moment of stillness in a noisy world, grounding volunteers and reminding them of the higher purpose behind their actions. It underscores the idea that each individual is a valuable and appreciated part of the community effort, and that their contributions matter. Most importantly, it fosters unity among the team and demonstrates the organisation's genuine care for its volunteers.

Volunteers who have moved on from ADRA often return to share stories of how the morning toolbox left an indelible mark on their lives. One volunteer recounted how it helped her refrain from reacting negatively to a neighbour's provocation, choosing kindness and patience instead. Such stories exemplify the power of coming together, connecting and praying as a community.

### Diverse teams, enriched learning

After the morning toolbox, volunteers disperse to their respective tasks. The conservation trainees head to the community gardens, accompanied by their supervisor to start their day. The hospitality trainees head to the kitchen, accompanied by their supervisor to start their daily cooking duties, which become the centrepiece of the day's lunch.

What makes ADRA Logan's learning experience truly unique is the diversity of its trainee teams, composed of individuals from various backgrounds, ages and beliefs. This diversity enriches the learning environment, fostering a deep respect for one another's cultures and beliefs.

### A continuous blessing: two intakes a year

ADRA Logan's two intakes a year, each accommodating 20 trainees, are a continuous blessing. These programs allow us to connect with and assist a diverse array of individuals. It's not uncommon for former trainees to return, either as volunteers or simply to visit and chat. The sense of community built during their time at ADRA Logan remains a powerful draw.





### The face of compassion: reception volunteers

The reception area serves as the welcoming face of ADRA Logan, and the volunteers who staff it play a pivotal role. They encounter people who have had rough days, years or lives, often coming in with emotions like exhaustion, sadness, depression, anger, fear or confusion. It is the smiling faces and the non-judgemental, empathetic demeanour of these volunteers that can make a world of difference to each person seeking help.

### Supporting our neighbours in need

The heart of ADRA Logan beats with a commitment to community, and one of the ways this commitment manifests is through our dedicated food parcels team. Every day, these passionate volunteers embark on a mission to ensure that no-one in our community goes hungry. From bagging up fresh fruits and vegetables to collecting donated bread from local stores like Woollies and Coles, every detail is considered. This meticulous preparation ensures that the parcels we distribute are not just a collection of food items but a gesture of care and support.

### A weekly journey to Foodbank

Once a week, our volunteers head to Foodbank. Here, teamwork is at its finest as everyone pitches in to unload and organise the produce received from Foodbank and Second Bite. This weekly pilgrimage ensures a steady flow of supplies to those who depend on us.



### Blessings from Oz Harvest

Oz Harvest, a trusted partner, brings fresh produce to us once a week. With gratitude, we accept this bounty and make sure it's properly stored and distributed. This weekly contribution helps us maintain a varied and nutritious selection for our community members.

### Managing the Influx of donations

Our commitment to aiding the community often attracts more generous souls who wish to contribute. These additional donations, ranging from non-perishables to everyday essentials, are diligently managed by our food organising team. This ensures that every contribution is used effectively to benefit those in need.

### More than a shop: our op-shops

ADRA Logan's reach extends beyond just providing food. We operate two op-shops, one for furniture and another for clothing and bric-a-brac. These shops are more than just stores; they are places of community and care. Our volunteers work tirelessly to keep them tidy and organised. They facilitate the pickup and drop-off of furniture and goods daily. Moreover, they ensure that customers who walk through the doors are treated with kindness and respect. In cases of emergency, such as when someone urgently needs clothing or furniture, our op-shop volunteers step up to provide emergency relief at no cost to those who need it.

### A listening ear: volunteer counsellor

One day a week, our volunteer counsellor is available to anyone seeking support or someone to talk to. We believe that mental and emotional wellbeing is just as important as physical sustenance, and this service is a testament to that commitment.

### Laughter and community at the centre

Amidst the tasks and responsibilities, the sound of laughter resonates throughout our centre. Our volunteers joyfully perform their duties, knowing that they are making a real difference in the lives of others.

### Lunchtime: building community and sharing stories

At midday, we all gather around the table to share a meal. This daily ritual isn't just about nourishing our bodies; it's about nourishing our sense of community. It's an opportunity to catch up with one another, to build connections and to learn each other's stories. Through these shared moments, we grow stronger as a team and as a community, reinforcing the bonds that make ADRA Logan a cornerstone of support for our neighbours in need. In every action we take at ADRA Logan, there's a thread of compassion that runs through it all. It's not just about providing food or material support; it's about fostering a sense of belonging and care within our community, one act of kindness at a time.

ADRA Logan Community Centre is more than an organisation; it's a living, breathing testament to the power of community, faith and compassion. The volunteers who dedicate their time and hearts to ADRA Logan create a profound impact on the lives they touch, and the ripple effect of their work extends far beyond the walls of this remarkable community centre. ADRA Logan is, without a doubt, the backbone of Logan community, standing as a beacon of hope, unity and support for all who need it.

In all my years of work experience, I've never encountered a place quite like ADRA Logan Community Centre. The comprehensive support and services it offers are truly unique. Moreover, the sense of fulfilment and joy it has brought to my heart is unparalleled. It's a testament to the immense joy that a close-knit community can bring.

We extend a warm invitation for you to come and visit us at ADRA Logan. When you do, we'll be delighted to give you a guided tour. You can be sure of a warm and enthusiastic welcome from our ADRA community.

**Brigita Djakovich**

Assistant Manager/Training Coordinator  
at ADRA Logan, Queensland.



# Faith, sacrifice and evangelism



The Vakasisikakala family's story is one of unwavering commitment to God's calling, transcending borders and cultural barriers to make a lasting impact in their new community.

Their journey began in 2015 when they moved to Australia from Fiji in search of better opportunities and ways to support their family back home. Despite facing numerous challenges, Siliveno Matai Vakasisikakala remained steadfast in his belief that God had called them to be witnesses for Him in this new foreign land.

Years of hard work and dedication paid off when Mr Vakasisikakala was promoted to general manager at the farm where he worked in Shepparton, Victoria. A pillar of strength and mentor to many, his ability to gather people together and provide help became instrumental in sharing his faith with others. As a result of the family's influence, no-one works on the farm on Sabbath. The family actively participate in Shepparton Adventist Church, where a community of Fijian nationals also congregate each Sabbath.

The Vakasisikakala family have put their efforts into providing love and care for the local communities of Shepparton and Mooroopna. These efforts over nearly a decade laid the groundwork for an evangelistic mission in Shepparton, held January 8-20. Ten days of prayer preceded the mission, setting the scene for the impactful messages that followed. Over the two-week campaign, guest speaker Pastor Joape Narobe presented a spiritually enriching experience for the attendees. The farm closed during the mission, allowing everyone to attend the nightly services.

At the end of the mission, 18 precious souls were baptised—believed to be the largest baptismal event in Shepparton's history, and affirming the transformative power of faith and a unified community.

Mr Vakasisikakala's focus extends beyond his own faith community; he is committed to helping others regardless of race, religion or social status. His conviction that each person possesses unique gifts and talents to be used in sharing the love of God underscores the broader impact of his mission in Shepparton.

The Vakasisikakala family's story serves as an inspiration to all to embrace God's call and trust in His power to make a difference.



**Maika Tuima**, media creative producer for the Trans Pacific Union Mission.



# The 10

## Times God supplied nourishment

There are many instances in the Bible where God supplied sustenance through food or drink to people. Can you think of any others not on this list?

1. God gave Joseph insight to decode Pharaoh's dreams, which allowed the Egyptians to build up their food storehouses before the seven years of famine hit (Genesis 41:15-40).
2. Three days into the wilderness, the Israelites were disappointed when the water they came across was too bitter to drink. God showed Moses a log to toss into the water, which miraculously turned the water sweet (Exodus 15:22-25).
3. When the newly-freed Israelites complained that they were starving in the wilderness and should have stayed in Egypt, God provided them with manna for 40 years (Exodus 16:11-35). When they asked for meat, He sent quail.
4. After Elijah warns King Ahab about the impending drought, God instructs him to go hide by a brook where ravens brought him bread and meat each morning and evening (1 Kings 17:4-6).
5. Elijah then goes to hide at the Widow at Zarephath's house, where she gives up the last flour and oil she has to make Elijah something to eat. Her sacrifice is rewarded, with God providing enough flour and oil to last until the drought ended (1 Kings 17:8-16).
6. When Queen Jezebel threatens Elijah, he flees again into the wilderness where an angel provides him with bread and water twice, giving him enough strength to travel 40 days to Mount Sinai (1 Kings 19:4-8).
7. Upon receiving a donation of bread and grains, Elisha instructed it be given to the people, which was miraculously multiplied to feed 100 men, with some left over (2 Kings 4:42-44).
8. After being taken into Babylonian captivity, God gave Daniel favour and compassion in the sight of the chief of eunuchs, who agreed to him eating a diet of vegetables and water rather than the King's food and wine. He is so healthy after 10 days, the diet for all the young men is changed (Daniel 1:8-16).
9. Jesus twice miraculously feeds the multitudes who had come to hear Him speak using only meagre resources: 5000 people fed using five loaves and two fish, and 4000 people with seven loaves and a few small fish (Matthew 14:13-21; Mark 6:31-44; Luke 9:12-17; John 6:1-14; Matthew 15:32-39; Mark 8:1-9).
10. After the wine ran out at a wedding Jesus was attending, He turned six stone jars of water into wine (John 2:1-10).



# THE VOICE

among voices

**A** voice is an important vehicle for communication. Under normal circumstances not a day goes by without hearing voices or using your own voice. Indeed, life would be more challenging if our ability to use our voices or hear voices was impaired in any way—as some members of our community experience daily.

The concept of “voice” is an interesting one that usually consists of several avenues of meaning all of which relate to the communication of a message. Indeed, a voice without a message usually has no real meaning. This implies some sort of intelligence associated with both the delivery and receipt of the underlying message. Additionally, the range of meanings associated with “voice” exists on a spectrum from physical to metaphorical depending on context and use. “Voice” can relate to the physical components and characteristics that produce sound to the metaphorical and symbolic implications related to the content or intent of the message.

I have noticed recently that our culture has been significantly impacted by many voices from different directions. Some of these voices appear to be helpful while others appear to be destructive. As we consider all these voices, one can’t help wondering about the voices we as Christians, or more specifically Seventh-day Adventist Christians, are influenced by. Did you know that there are several places in the Bible where a voice is heard calling to God’s representatives on earth?

One of the most famous voices in the Bible relates to the message and work of John the Baptist in the preparation for the first advent of Jesus. All four Gospels draw our attention to the prophetic fulfilment of John’s important work to prepare the hearts and minds of God’s people in his day. This was to be accomplished by Spirit-inspired repentance where “the high places of human pride and power [were] to be cast down”.<sup>1</sup>

It’s a preparatory voice that has its roots in the days of Elijah and echoes down to the people of our day (Matthew 11:13-15; Malachi 4:5,6).

The Gospel of Mark, pulling language from Isaiah 40:3, hauntingly describes

this voice as the “voice of one crying in the wilderness” (Mark 1:3).

This description ignites the imagination somewhat. It is not many voices, but one lone voice that is heard in a place where you would not expect to hear a voice. It also encourages several questions. Why is the voice in the wilderness? Who is responsible for the voice? What is it saying and why? Can it be ignored?

Another cry from an unidentifiable voice is heard by those slumbering young women waiting for the procession of the bridegroom in the parable of the ten virgins (Matthew 25:1-13). The symbolism within the parable is alarming, particularly as it relates to the church in our day that is prophetically described as sleeping, unprepared and unaware of or choosing to trivialise the lateness of the hour!

This “voice” also raises some interesting questions. If the church is depicted as sleeping, who is it that gives the “Midnight Cry”? Why did the five foolish virgins fail to prepare—what held their attention to the point of distraction? Why do you need an illuminated lamp to join the procession?

A third voice is one that really revved up our early pioneers and is probably the best-known voice within Adventism. It is found around the middle of the last book of the Bible, and it is made by a celestial being gliding through the heavens proclaiming the “everlasting good news”, which oddly enough includes a call to Creator worship in the light of a judgement message that has something to do with the fall of a mystical city called Babylon (Revelation 14:6-12).

Strange as this may seem, it only gets stranger! This prophetic voice calls again four chapters later—only this time there is a sense of desperation (Revelation 18:1-5).

It’s almost like the first proclamation hadn’t been taken seriously. Why? What was it about the previous voice that failed to gain attention? Was the problem with the messenger, the receivers or the message? Why the effort in repeating the message “shouting with a mighty voice”? What is so important about that message that it warrants such desperation?

The final voice in this small but

targeted cluster of biblical voices is one that some of us are looking forward to hearing. However, it’s a voice that is proclaimed with mixed feelings. While there is joy that fills all heaven when the voice of the archangel finally calls forth those who have slept in the loving arms of Jesus and that time-shattering event sometimes called the eschaton unfolds, our Creator God internalises the eternal loss of those who ignored all His previous voices (1 Thessalonians 4:16-18).

God’s assurance to His children is that all our tears are eventually wiped away by the closing work of our wonderful Creator God’s salvific and demonstrative work (Revelation 21:4). However, there is no mention of the loss associated with God in honouring the decisions of His wayward children in their absolute rejection of all the voices He used to try to get their attention and draw them home. Only those who have experienced the loss of a child will have a small glimpse into the eternal depth of loss that our wonderful God will hold and never let go—He is the eternal God; He does not forget.

So, as we all contemplate the cacophony of voices that flood our attention it is well to remember that there are some voices that are more important than others, especially for members of a church with such an affinity with the “voice” of end-time prophecy. Indeed, our ability to appropriately respond to any voice is negatively impacted when we don’t listen to the right voice! When we do listen to the right voice, our Spirit-empowered voice becomes a representative voice that with Spirit-guided humility invites others home.

Our wonderful Creator God invites us to dig deeper into His Word—the best voice—to peer into and plumb the depths of eternal truths which hold amazing insights about His character and government.

We just need to be willing to listen.

1. White, Ellen G. *The Desire of Ages*. Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1898. p215.

**Randall Ibbott**

freelance IT consultant from Central Coast, NSW.

# Paul's gospel in HIS first Century context

It is not always recognised that Paul's letters are the oldest witnesses to the life and times of the early Jesus-movement available to readers today. They precede the earliest Gospel (Mark) by at least a decade and several decades in the cases of the other Gospels.

The first thing one notices when focusing on Paul's own context is that his gospel is hammered out within a polemical environment (2 Corinthians 11:1–13; Philippians 3:1–11). Most of Paul's adversaries feared that his gospel to the Gentiles (Galatians 2:2; Ephesians 3:6) would "change the customs that Moses handed on to" the Jews (Acts 6:14). These opponents were particularly zealous of God's choice of Israel as His people to the exclusion of all other nations. Every book of the Torah affirms God's sworn promise that the descendants of Abraham, and they alone, would be His chosen people (Genesis 17:7;

Exodus 6:7; Leviticus 8:2; 26:12; Numbers 15:4; Deuteronomy 14:2) and His special or treasured possession (Exodus 19:5; Deuteronomy 4:20; 7:6; 14:2; Psalm 135:4).

Paul may assert that "circumcision [Jew] is nothing, and uncircumcision [Gentile] is nothing" (Galatians 5:6; 6:15; 1 Corinthians 7:19), but for his opponents circumcision was everything; it was the tangible guarantee that Jews were the custodians of the promised seed. Paul rather grimly wished that they might accidentally mutilate their testicles (Galatians 5:12) and thus disqualify themselves from belonging to the people of God (Deuteronomy 23:1). Yet the fact is that many Christian Jews stood by their exclusive relationship with God; for them the only means of becoming a child of Abraham was by birth as a Jew (circumcised on the eighth day, Luke 2:21; Philippians 3:5) or by circumcision as an adult in the case of a pagan.

God's sworn covenant to Abraham and to his heirs included three promises: "I will make you exceedingly numerous"; "I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land" of Canaan; and "I will . . . be God to you and to your offspring after you" (Genesis 17:2–7).

Circumcision was integral to

these covenantal promises, and its obligation could not be stated more forcefully: "So shall my covenant be in your flesh an everlasting covenant. Any uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin shall be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant" (Genesis 17:13b–14).

Paul's opponents had a multitude of texts that supported the election of Israel as God's people, so Paul was forced to be more selective and to use his texts more creatively. His first key text was Genesis 15:6 ("And he believed the LORD, and the LORD reckoned it to him as righteousness"), which referred to Abraham's response to God's promise of an heir from whom a multitude would descend as the stars of heaven in number (Genesis 22:17). Abraham trusted God to fulfil His word that he and Sarah, despite their advanced years, would produce an heir. Trust put him into a right relationship with God.

Paul quotes Genesis 15:6 in Galatians 3:6, and the next verse clarifies his meaning: "so, you see, those who believe are the descendants of Abraham" (v7). It is crucial to Paul's gospel that "believed God . . . reckoned . . . as righteousness" is inclusive of Gentiles as recipients of all God's promises to the Patriarchs. Paul emphasises this strongly in Galatians 3:

- "God would reckon as righteous the Gentiles by faith" (v8a).
- "All the Gentiles shall be blessed in you [Abraham]" (v8b).
- "in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles" (v14).



- “in Christ Jesus you are *all* children of God through faith” (v26, italics added).
- “There is no longer Jew or Greek” (v28)
- “And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to the promise” (v29).

Thus, being a descendant of Abraham and an heir of the covenant promises is neither a birthright nor a right procured by circumcision, but a privilege granted to those, both Jew and Gentile, who emulate the trust in God that Abraham manifested in Genesis 15:6.

In Romans 4 Paul takes his use of Genesis 15:6 a step further in two important ways. First, he notes that Abraham was uncircumcised when he put his trust in God’s promise; circumcision is not mandated until two chapters later (Genesis 17:10–14). Paul states his conclusion very clearly: Abraham “received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the ancestor of all who believe without being circumcised and who thus have righteousness reckoned to them, and likewise the ancestor of the circumcised who are not only circumcised but follow the example of the faith that our ancestor Abraham had before he was circumcised” (Romans 4:11,12).

Second, Paul conjoins Genesis 15:6 and Psalm 32:2 by focusing on the verb that is common to them both, namely, “reckoned” (*logizomai*, which is used seven times in Romans 4:3–11). By bringing Psalm 32:1,2 alongside Genesis 15:6, Paul makes it clear what he understands by the phrase “reckoned as righteousness”; it means “blessed is a man to whom the Lord shall certainly not reckon (*logizomai*) sin” (Romans 4:8, author’s translation), which in context means “whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered” (v7). CK Barrett rightly notes “that the reckoning of righteousness is virtually equivalent to the non-reckoning of sin and differs little from forgiveness”.<sup>1</sup>

Again Paul is adamant that the blessings pronounced in Psalm 32:1,2 include the Gentiles: “Is this blessing, then, pronounced only on the circumcised or also on the uncircumcised? We say, ‘Faith was reckoned to Abraham

as righteousness’”; a faith or trust that is available to Gentiles as well as Jews. The Gentiles “were circumcised with a spiritual circumcision” (Colossians 2:11). Hence, “a person is a Jew who is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit” (Romans 2:29). The words “reckoned to him as righteousness” apply also “to us who believe/trust in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead” (Romans 4:22–24).

Paul’s second key reference is found in Genesis 18:18 (see also Genesis 26:4), which he quotes in Galatians 3:8: “And the scripture, foreseeing that God would reckon as righteous the Gentiles by faith, declared the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, ‘All the Gentiles shall be blessed in you’.” The first half of this verse sums up his point drawn from Genesis 15:6 in Galatians 3:5,6, but the final clause is a close quotation from Genesis 18:18 (LXX). For Paul this promise to Abraham of him being a blessing to the Gentiles (see Genesis 12:3) is equivalent to the gospel which was preached beforehand to him (*proeuēngelisato*, v8).

Genesis 22:18 is a close parallel to Genesis 18:18 but with a vital addition: “and in your *seed* shall all the nations (*ethnē*) of the earth be blessed” (author’s translation). The word “seed” becomes here an important part of Paul’s defence of his gospel to the Gentiles. Paul notes that the noun “seed” is singular and to his mind it thus points to “one person, who is Christ” (Galatians 3:16).<sup>2</sup> The temporal references in Galatians 3 focus on the fulfilment of “every one of God’s promises” (2 Corinthians 1:20) in and through him: “until the offspring [seed] would come to whom the promise had been made” (v19); “before faith came” (v23); “until Christ came” (v24); and “now that faith *has come*” (v25). Thus for Paul, Christ is the climax (“the fullness of time”, Galatians 4:4) of the covenantal promises and Israel is the “parenthesis” not the church as many Christian groups assert.

From Galatians 3:23 through to 4:8 Paul alternates between the first person plural, “we/our” (3:23,24 [twice], 25; 4:3,5,6) and the second person plural, “you” (3:26,27 [twice], 28 [twice], 29 [twice]; 4:6,8,9 [twice]). Why does he

do this? During his altercation with Peter (Galatians 2:11–17), Paul emphasises that both Jews by nature and Gentile sinners are put right with God “through faith in Jesus Christ” (Galatians 2:16) and thus he continues to address “we Jews” and “you Galatians/Gentiles” in the passages cited above. It was Jews who were kept separate from the Gentiles by the Mosaic Law, which acted as a 24-hour minder “until Christ came” (3:26) and it was the Galatians who “did not know God” (4:8), but now in Christ “there is no longer Jew or Greek” (3:28), “for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith” (3:26); “if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s offspring [seed] heirs according to the promise” (v29, see 3:8).

It is incredible how Christians are able to read Paul’s letters and not notice how vital it was for his gospel that the Gentiles be included into the people of God. Christ died so “that he might create in himself one new humanity in place of the two, thus making peace, and might reconcile both to God in one body through the cross, thus putting to death that hostility through it. So he came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off [Gentile] and peace to those who were near [Jew] for through him both of us have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then, you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints [Jewish Christians] and also members of the household of God” (Ephesians 2:15–19).<sup>3</sup>

1. C K Barrett, *Freedom and Obligation: A Study of the Epistle to the Galatians* (London: SPCK, 1985), 24.

2. It is a generalised singular, but it did begin with one person—Isaac.

3. Ben Witherington, *The Letters to Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on the Captivity Epistles* (Grand Rapids, MI/Cambridge, UK, Eerdmans, 2007), 261.

#### Dr Norman Young

lectured at Avondale College (now University) for 31 years (1973-2004). In retirement, he still enjoys studying and writing the occasional article.

# Double Vision



**E**arly in 2023 while visiting my brother, I suddenly developed double vision. At first, I thought I had just strained my eyes and needed some rest, so I went to bed early.

The next morning it was worse! I couldn't walk properly and the double vision was making me nauseous. It is very disconcerting to see two of everything!

I ended up going to Emergency at the local hospital, and after multiple tests—checking for stroke and diabetes etc which failed to find any obvious reason for my double vision—I was discharged from the hospital, with a patch over my left eye so I could see straight. I was advised to follow up with my GP when I returned home and get an MRI scan. My GP gave me the form for the MRI and referred me to a neurologist whose final diagnosis was isolated sixth cranial nerve palsy—which means they couldn't determine a cause for my double vision (possibly a virus?) and I was advised it should get better on its own over the next several weeks.

I am very thankful that this proved to be true and when I saw the neurologist again, six weeks later, my vision was back to normal. However, during those weeks my whole life was turned upside down.

Reflecting back on this experience I will share a few things I learned. Firstly, it has given me a whole new perspective on the challenges of vision loss. Even with one good eye simple tasks became much more difficult. Pouring water into a glass could be problematic! Routine tasks all took longer to do, and I needed more help, especially with shopping and appointments. I wasn't confident to drive with one eye, so my husband became my personal chauffeur and I worked from home rather than going to the office. Even walking outdoors was difficult, especially on uneven surfaces, as my depth perception was affected. I started to wonder what it would be like if my eye didn't recover and how that would impact my life. I love reading but with one eye that was harder to do as well, so the Bible on audio and other audio books became my best friends. I used larger fonts on my phone and computer screen to make it easier to read. I was grateful for the technology that allowed me to adapt and saw how important it is to provide these services.

Secondly, it helped me to grow and heal emotionally and

spiritually. Like all of life's difficulties it was a time to reflect and bring to God my worries and fears, hopes and dreams, sadness and grief. Often one challenging time can connect to other things in our past—and resurface them—and this happened for me. It became a time for me to heal from some previous losses I hadn't fully grieved. Jesus is so faithful and gracious to us in all of our trials, and He puts the right people in our path to help us, which in my case included a Christian counsellor. The promises of the Bible were very comforting and strengthening to me, reminding me that I wasn't alone, and God was still in control. The whole experience deepened my spiritual walk as I depended on Jesus and allowed Him to comfort and heal my heart, while my eyesight was being physically restored.

Thirdly, this experience showed me how resilient I was. During my illness—even with one eye—I was determined to be as independent as possible. On the one hand it was humbling to ask for help when I couldn't do some tasks alone but on the other, it was motivating as I learned to adapt and do things differently. The last thing I wanted was for others to feel sorry for me. I still went out in public with my one eye covered and told my husband I was a "pirate". I didn't care what others thought, I just wanted to keep doing the things I had always done.

Finally, it reminded me to be grateful for all the blessings God brings to me each day and to focus on what I could control and not what I couldn't control (which is easy to say and can be hard to do!) Being grateful also motivates me to do what I can to help others and to look at ways of improving services for those with any kind of vision loss.

*CSFBHI may be able to assist you with alternate options such as large print or audio recordings of the Sabbath school lesson. Email <csfbhi@adventistmedia.org.au> or call +61 2 9847 2296. April 20 is Possibility Ministry Sabbath for the Seventh-day Adventist Church worldwide.*

**Linda Thomas**

department assistant, Hope Channel, South Pacific.

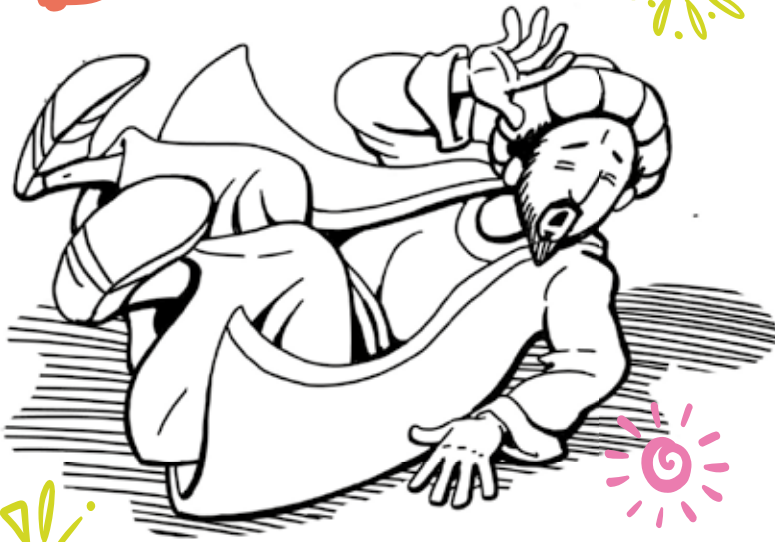


# Hello Kids!

We experience God's love in our church.

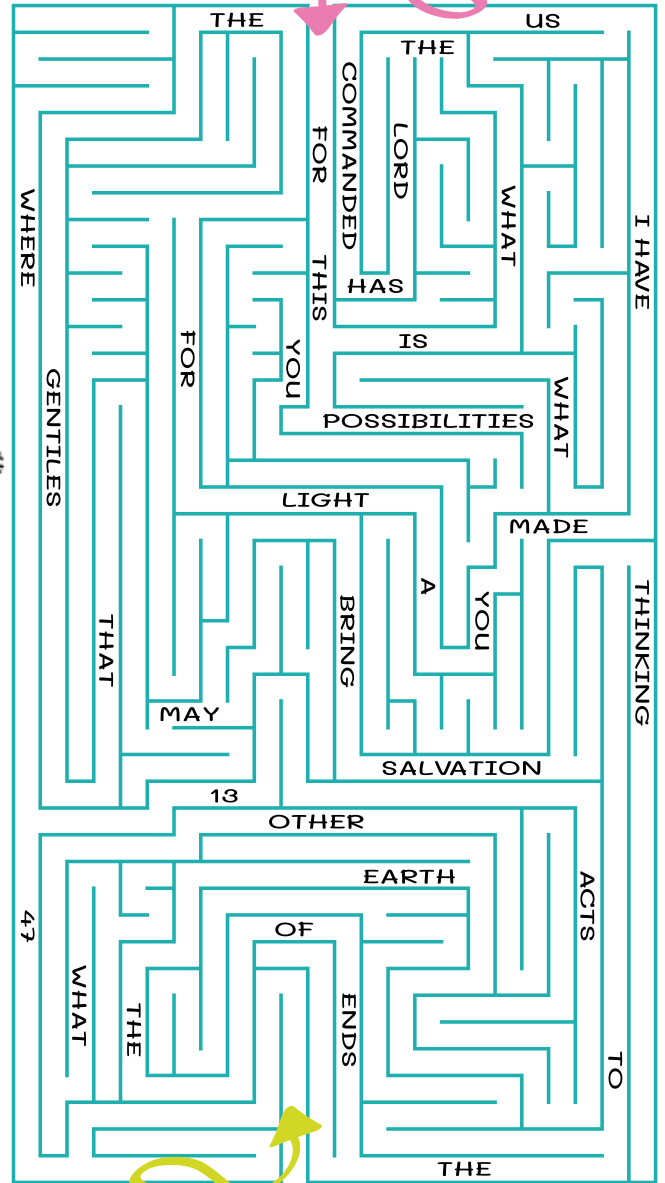


# Blinded



When the early Christians look at Saul, they see a fierce and determined opponent. When God looks at Saul, He sees a strong leader with all the possibilities for sharing the gospel with those who have never heard the story of Jesus. When God looks at us, He always sees what we will be when we give our lives and hearts to Him. God still calls us to use our strengths to tell others of His love. God uses the gifts and talents He has already placed within us to help others.

START



MEMORY VERSE " \_\_\_\_\_ :  
6 \_\_\_\_\_ 9 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ " ( \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ ).



# Vibrant bean and corn tacos

Serves 4

Prep 15

Cook 15

Refresh Taco Tuesdays with this recipe that is bursting with flavour, colour and crunch. It's a good source of mixed vegetables to help you meet the optimal target of 30 different types of plant foods a week.

## Ingredients

- 8 small soft wholemeal flour tortillas
- 1 onion, finely diced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 x 400g can kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 cup corn kernels (fresh, frozen or canned)
- 1 tbsp Mexican seasoning
- 1 cup celery, thinly sliced
- 2 cups cabbage, shredded
- Juice of 1 lime
- 2 tbsp spring onions, chopped
- 1 tbsp olive oil, for sautéing
- 2 tbsp low fat Greek yoghurt or light sour cream, for serving

## Method

- In a large pan, heat olive oil over medium heat. Sauté the onion and garlic for 2 minutes to soften.
- Add the kidney beans, corn and Mexican seasoning and cook for 5–6 minutes until heated through, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat.
- In a separate bowl, combine the celery, cabbage, lime juice and spring onions. Toss well to coat the vegetables with the lime juice. Set aside.
- Warm the tortillas according to package instructions.
- To assemble the tacos, place a spoonful of the bean and corn mixture onto each tortilla. Fold the tortilla in half, pressing gently to seal the filling inside.
- Serve the tacos with the celery, cabbage, lime and spring onion salad on the side.
- Top with low fat Greek yoghurt or light sour cream.

## Nutritional Information (per serving)

ENERGY	CALORIES	PROTEIN	FAT	SATURATES	CARBOHYDRATE
1710kJ	409	16g	12g	4g	52g
SUGARS	FIBRE	CALCIUM	SODIUM	IRON	POTASSIUM
10g	10.3g	190mg	605mg	2.1mg	673mg

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# Conversations

## Partial acceptance

In the *Adventist Record* feature "Where are the Christians" (April 6) it was good to see an acknowledgement that Christians can have a "partial" acceptance of some of the modern social concerns is expressed.

God may give "partial" acceptance to those who have "better" motives and actions, irrespective of claimed "labels", religious or otherwise (see Romans 2:12-16).

Any virtue that we may have cannot make us superior to others in God's sight but can be useful in showing compassion to others in opportunities that we do have as we feel led by God. There is the good news that we can only be "complete" in Christ, and look forward to the ultimate fulfillment of the kingdom of Jesus that the author mentioned.

Ryan, via email

## Evangelists extinct?

With reference to the news article (*Record*, March 16), "New platforms to boost public awareness".

Good luck with that project.

Many people think that those who came knocking on their doors pre-COVID with the *Watch Tower* magazine are Seventh-day Adventists.

Many evangelical Sunday-keeping Christians think that we are a strange group who obtain all our doctrines just from the Old Testament.

With the current wars and unrest in Eastern Europe and the Middle East we could gain some public

awareness by having our preachers present evangelistic programs based on the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation.

However, that would require preachers who are capable of presenting evangelistic programs. With our current pastors appearing to be more like social workers, I am not sure if there are any evangelists left.

Brian Abrahams, Qld

## Seek God first

I write this in response to "About Authority" (Feature, February 17). I was brought up Adventist, had some Adventist schooling, still have Adventist friends, married a newly converted Adventist, brought my children up mainly as Adventist, but left the church about 25 years ago. I bear no ill feelings towards them. I am currently not affiliated with any particular church but am committed to my walk with God. On occasion, I see Adventist publications, the February *Record* being one of them.

I would like to applaud [this] article. I've always believed in the Adventist health message, even though I don't adhere to all of it myself. It seems to tie in with biblical teaching.

However, I would like to comment on my limited experience with what I have seen of Adventism (but not limited to them) over the past few years whereby less and less credence is given to God and His principles and more and more given over to science. People are sicker

today than they have ever been and yet seemingly look after themselves better than they ever have, and yet they don't. Still drinking vast amounts of coffee, alcohol, eating "healthy" processed foods and defending their benefits because science says so.

If our walk with God is where it should be—solid food consumers (as according to Hebrews 6), should not our first port of call be Christ Himself? This also means that what works for one may not work for the other. Obedience being the pattern we should follow—not the pattern of the last person who had whatever illness. Seek first the kingdom of God . . . My belief is that if we seek God first, the ways of the kingdom will be open to us. That might mean go see a doctor. But it could also mean stop eating certain foods, or sort something else out in your life—or trust God in this, He will heal you (the least acceptable of plans in modern Western society). But most prefer a pill or an op. A quick fix to something that may have taken a long time to develop.

So I guess my point in all of this is to encourage believers to seek God first. Our trust in Him will be His glory. To teachers of the Word and God's way, may I also encourage you to teach people to endure to the end no matter their circumstance. That includes me. Being different is what we are called to. Walking it is not easy and we all need that encouragement.

Regine Cope, via email

## Appreciation

**WALTERS.** Maurice Walters and his family would like to express their thanks to friends, family and all those who sent cards, emails, and text messages and especially to those who were able to attend Karen's funeral. It was a great comfort to realise Karen had touched so many lives throughout her life and ministry. Please accept this as a personal thank you as we look forward to the blessed hope.

## Weddings



**EATON—MURRAY.** Jayden Alan Eaton, son of Stephen and Joanne Eaton, and Olivia Fleur Murray, daughter of Phil and Trudy Murray, were married on 24.9.23 at the Murwillumbah church, NSW. It was a wonderful occasion surrounded by family and friends.

Ashley Smith

**LI—JAP.** Hans Li, son of Jahja Djumadi and Liliwati Wajaya (both deceased), and Ella Heldawati Jap, daughter of Tjhen Kiang Jap and Wan Moy Choeng (both deceased), were married on 24.3.24 at the Prospect International church, Adelaide, SA. Hans and Ella were classmates during their school years in Indonesia. The recent passing of Han's mother brought their paths together again, bringing them love and comfort after years of being alone. Supported by family and friends from around Adelaide, interstate and overseas, they were married in a simple but heart-warming ceremony. We wish them much happiness and God's rich blessings.

Wolfgang Stefani



**STEVENSON—BAXTER.** Alistair Stevenson, son of Ian (dec) and Jacquelyn Stevenson (Wangaratta, Vic), and Annali Baxter, daughter of Stephen and Rochelle Baxter (Wahroonga,

NSW), were married on 31.8.23 at Springfield House, Dural. The couple have currently set up their home in Pakenham, Vic, where Alistair works in forest management and Annali as a secondary teacher.

Michael Worker

## Obituaries



**BRITTEN,** Lindsay, born 26.4.1935 in Bendigo, Vic; died 8.3.24 on the Gold Coast, Qld. He was predeceased by his wife, Betty two months earlier. He is survived by his children, Karen and Doug Kraa, Sherilyn and Malcolm Ace and Rod; grandchildren; and great-grandchildren. He is missed by his family, friends and the community at Melody Park Retirement Village, Nerang. We look forward to Jesus' return.

Stephen Bews

**BROWNHILL,** Pastor Michael, born in 1949 in Sydney, NSW; died 25.1.24 at home in Redridge, Qld. Mike is survived by his wife, Brenda; children, Sam, Joanna and Anika; grandchildren, Vinnie, Felix and Alexandra; brothers Jim, Bill and

Mark; and former spouses Dawn Strydom and Nancy Smith. The celebrations of his life were held at Maryborough and Pine Rivers churches. Over his 34 years of ministry, Mike served as church development director and district director in Vanuatu and pastor and evangelist at churches throughout Western Australia and South Queensland. He is remembered for the gusto with which he lived his life and his enduring passion for evangelism and planting churches. He had no doubt that he would be found singing and dancing at the resurrection.

Russ Willcocks, David Kelsey

**NEWITT,** Joy Estelle (nee Dixon), born 5.6.1949 in Kalgoorlie WA; died 15.3.24 in Brisbane, Qld. In 1972 she married Colin. She is survived by her husband; two sons, Andrew and Matthew; daughter-in-law Rebecca; and grandsons, Joshua, Nathan and Micah. She trained as a nurse at Sydney Adventist Hospital and worked for many years at Freeman Nursing Home, Rossmoyne, WA. Joy was active in church life, Pathfinders, the great outdoors, her gardens and her family. She was a loving daughter, sister, wife, mother,



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IAM Journal

nanna, aunty and friend. She lived to serve others, loved Jesus and was always a quiet yet steady witness of her faith in Him. She will be thrilled to see her loved ones once more on the resurrection morning.

Bob Possingham



**RUSSELL, Leslie** Harrold, born 9.5.1935 in Horsham, Vic, died 3.1.24 in Benalla. He was predeceased by his children, Paula and Richard. He is survived by his wife, June; children, Lex, Leanna and Cheryl; stepson, Terry; siblings, Nola and Julia; grandchildren, Shane, Lachlan, Chantal, Elisha, Sebastian, Luca and Frankie; and great-grandchildren, Eli, Benji, Lennon, Emerson, Amira and Gianna. Les was an active member in the Benalla church, faithfully witnessed for his faith and looked forward to the second coming of Jesus.

David Pearce



**THOMPSON, Kristina Caroline**, born 6.2.1977 on Lord Howe Island, NSW; died 2.3.24 in Mossman, Qld. She was predeceased by her mother, Carol Belfour in 2007. Krissy is survived by her partner, Damien Britnell (Port Douglas); sons, Chase and Arlo (both of Port Douglas); father, Bruce (Lord Howe Island, NSW); stepmother, Tokassa (Lord Howe Island); brothers, Mark (Vic), Grant (Vic) and Jonathon (Julatten, Qld); half-sisters, Maritha (Kempsey, NSW) Leilani (Lord Howe Island) and Lossy (Malanda, Qld). A large gathering of relatives, friends and members from the community remembered Krissy as happy, kind, energetic and a good listener. She loved her boys. Krissy and her eldest son, Chase were baptised together in Mossman in July 2023. Waiting for the blessed hope.

John Wells

## Advertisements

### EUGOWRA CHURCH HOME-COMING WEEKEND—JUNE 1, 2024.

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### ASSISTANT MANAGER—CAMP HOWQUA HOWQUA, VIC

Camp Howqua is seeking a full-time assistant manager to join our management team at Camp Howqua. Camp Howqua is an educational, recreational and camping facility owned and operated by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The position is "hands-on" in a predominantly outdoor work environment. The successful applicant will have solid general all-round building/machinery maintenance experience and will be able to demonstrate outstanding customer relations skills across a diversity of ages and cultures. Recognised outdoor qualifications such as high ropes, etc would be a distinct advantage. Attractive remuneration package including onsite house. Applicants must be practising, baptised members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and have a clear commitment to its mission, vision and values. Only persons with an existing right to work in Australia will be considered. For more information, visit the South Pacific Division's employment website <adventistemployment.org.au>.



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