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TPUM votes new team to focus on discipleship

Nadi, Fiji

The Trans-Pacific Union Mission (TPUM) has announced that they will also have their departmental directors work together in a discipleship ministries team.

This happened at the TPUM session, held recently at the Fulton College campus near Nadi, Fiji from September 20-23. Those chosen to be part of the team were Pastors Nasoni Lutunaliwa, Fa'afetai Matai and Dr Silent Tovosia were selected as members of the TPUM's new Discipleship Ministries team. Dr Ron Stone and Bev Norman will work closely with the team as the Union's ministerial secretary and education director, respectively.

"The Discipleship Ministries team brings all the departments and liaison officers under one team banner," Mr Norman said. "What we have is a team that has strengths in youth, health and family life, as well as children's and women's ministries."

Pastor Luther Tainveke was the Stewardship, Personal Ministries and Sabbath School director but asked to return to his home country Solomon Islands for ministry.

A leader for the new ministry has yet to be appointed, something that the TPUM executive committee will address later this year.

Luke Bapty and Fraser Alekevu were named associate CFOs for the Union, with former associate CFO Eparama Drou taking on the role of internal auditor.

The leadership restructure has allowed the TPUM to

place a health specialist within the ministries team. Dr Tovosia, who has been on study leave this year, takes on the role, having previously served as

Health Ministries director for the Solomon Islands Mission.

"There is a health crisis in the Pacific," said HopeChannel South Pacific director Pastor Wayne Boehm, who has served as the TPUM's Health Ministries liaison previously. "The addition of the health portfolio at the Union will provide crucial support to the missions as they seek to disciple and transform the Pacific in accordance with the Union's vision."

New TPUM president Pastor Maveni Kaufononga, who was appointed to the position during the SPD's executive committee meetings, will also serve as the Union's communication director. —Linden Chuang



NNSW officers returned at constituency meeting

Stuarts Point, NSW

Delegates—the youngest just 13 years old—met at the Stuarts Point Convention Centre for the 2015 North New South Wales (NNSW) Conference constituency meeting on August 23.

Australian Union Conference president Pastor Chester Stanley shared a devotional time, where he focused on the importance of the Adventist Church's heritage and vision, noting that the Church has the fastest growth rate for any Christian denomination in Australia. "It's time for us to put our shoulders back as Adventists, stand tall and tell the world who we are," he said.

This was followed by reports from the president, general secretary and CFO. They each shared highlights of the things that have been achieved since the previous constituency meeting, some of which include the establishment of ARISE Australia, 14 extra field budgets, Leadership in the Local Church weekends and the UR Church program.



Pastor Justin Lawman.

Delegates voted to return Pastor Justin Lawman as Conference president, Pastor Paul Geelan as general secretary and Russell Halliday as CFO. They each received more than 350 votes (with around 380 delegates present), which Pastor Stanley said affirmed the leadership team and their plans going forward.

Following lunch, Pastor Steve Piez, director of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ministries for the Australian Union Conference, shared a report on the situation facing Currawah. It was voted that support continue to be given to the school in an attempt to re-open it in 2017.

After this report, delegates voted on the departmental leaders for the Conference. All were returned, with the addition of Bethany Chapman as the women's ministries director.

A thank-you card and gift were presented to Pastor Stanley by the Conference team for his years of service to the Church. A special presentation was also made to Neil and Karen Radford to thank them for their years of service at Stuarts Point.

A full 2015 conference constituency meeting report will be included in this month's issue of *NorthPoint*. —Adele Nash



Hiring rights

James Standish

Health, education, aged care and our other services aren't just functions of the Adventist Church—they are expressions of our faith. And our faith touches every aspect of how our services should be delivered. For this to happen, those delivering the services must share an active Adventist Christian faith. But should Adventists have the legal right to hire along faith lines in our institutions? Yes. Here's why.

1) Religious hiring standards are legitimate in faith-based entities. When religious discrimination occurs because of prejudice or animus it should be outlawed. Someone's religion, for example, has no bearing on their ability to work for secular entities like Google or the ANZ bank. But in other circumstances religious beliefs are directly related to the mission of the employer. In this case, religious hiring criteria are not based on prejudice but rather on the legitimate needs of the organisation to preserve and pursue its unique mission. It is, in these cases, no different from Greenpeace restricting hiring to committed environmentalists. To ban faith-based entities from hiring those who share their vision would disadvantage them in a way that society does not disadvantage secular entities. So a ban would itself be a form of invidious discrimination.

2) Hiring rights are necessary for all positions—not just clergy. An entity is faith-based not because of the name hanging over its doorway or its history, but because the human beings working there share a common faith, vision and mission. While it has become fashionable to dismiss the influence of lower paid workers on the mission of an organisation, sometimes it's these workers who have the greatest influence on the ethos of an institution. For example, Andy Beattie was a gardener at Sydney Adventist Hospital. Some would dismiss his position as irrelevant to the mission of the institution. But nothing could be further from the truth. He was the embodiment of the hospital's motto, "Christianity in Action". He frequently brought vegetables grown on the property to those struggling in the area, shared his Christian faith with patients who talked with him in the garden, and encouraged nearly all who met him to live a healthier life free of tobacco, alcohol and other

harmful substances. He embodied the hospital's values so well that when it asked for proposals for the naming of a new building, it was voted it should be named after Andy and his brothers. Today the Beattie Complex serves as a proud reminder that it's not just administrators or chaplains who are ministers for Christ, but every Christian.

3) Diversity is harmed by denying religious hiring rights. It is argued that recognising the religious hiring rights of faith-based entities stifles diversity. The opposite is true. In the area of Australian education, for example, parents can choose from a wide range of options. Roughly 7/10 children attend state schools, 2/10 attend Catholic schools and a little more than 1/10 go to independent schools—which themselves are broken into a variety of educational opportunities ranging from secular private schools through to Jewish, Muslim and a wide range of distinct Protestant school options.

If governments deny faith-based entities their hiring rights, it destroys the diverse educational options offered by this broad range of schools, as the ethos of schools is directly tied to their staffing. When we lose the unique character of these schools, we homogenise the education sector—destroying diversity rather than enhancing it.

In addition, faith-based entities provide employment for people often excluded from the more general workplace. For example, an Adventist teacher interviewed for a position at a Sydney school did extremely well in the interview until the issue of Saturday work came up. When she indicated she could not work Saturdays, she was turned down for the job. She now teaches at an Adventist school, where she is making an outstanding contribution. The unique, faith-based community with its specific ethos and culture created a position, that, because of her faith, she was barred from elsewhere. The workforce is more diverse, more efficient, fairer and more inclusive, when faith communities can hire along faith lines.

Faith-based hiring rights are an indispensable component of a healthy, diverse, free society. And maintaining these rights is essential to the survival of the precious ministries God has entrusted to the Adventist Church.

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"Pastor Luis Bermudez and his siblings fled war to come to Australia."

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Me, my job and my Church

Linden Chuang

It's amazing the sort of reactions I get when I tell people I work for the Church. "Oh!" some exclaim, with an excitement that could rival winning a free holiday. "Oh . . ." others groan. You'd think I had just run over my neighbour's dog.

So what's Church employment really like? There's no definitive answer to that question. But I will share some of the things I've learnt and observed during my few years working with *Adventist Record*.

1) I like my job

I'll admit staring at a computer screen for most of the day can be a bit dull. This isn't the dream job of my childhood but I can honestly say it's rewarding knowing that the work I do has the potential to impact lives and introduce people to Jesus. Yes, sometimes I wish I could observe this happening firsthand. But then I remember it's God who's in control—it's not about me or what I can see. I'm simply happy to be a thread in His tapestry.

2) Good work, good people

No BS (bad stuff) here; it's true. Knowing that I work with a group of people committed to sharing Jesus is really special. That's not to say we don't have our issues or disagreements. The Church, after all, is made up of imperfect people. And perhaps we're better off that way. "My grace is sufficient for you," says the Lord, "for my power is made perfect in weakness" (2 Corinthians 12:9). When we are weak, He is strong.

3) Practice, practice, practice . . .

I'm glad my days of working in a factory are over (touch wood). No longer do I have to put up with hot oven fumes and hourly "F-bombs". Yet there is one thing that I miss: my faith being challenged.

"Why do you believe in Jesus?" "If God is real, why is there so much evil in the world?" "What happens when you die?"

Faith is like a muscle; it needs to be worked to stay healthy. My current job—and lifestyle—often leave me feeling out of shape. Thus, if you're working for the Church, make sure you also plug into a community where your faith can be exercised and tested.

4) Look after yourself

Working for the Church can become an unhealthy obsession. There's a very real danger of giving too much of yourself. We are called to serve and sacrifice, not commit suicide. Even Jesus took time-outs from the throngs of people. He knew that in order to love and serve people properly, He had to look after Himself. Church work shouldn't come at the expense of your health—both physical and mental—or your relationships.

5) Make personal devotion a priority

Nor should your spiritual walk suffer. Service to the Church is no substitute for your personal relationship with God. That one-on-one time with Him—whether it's reading, walking, singing or praying—is so important. "Come near to God and He will come near to you" (James 4:8).

My role here at *Adventist Record* is but an infinitesimal part of the much bigger picture of Church work. Yet a lot can be seen through a small crack in a wall, and I'd like to think one or two of you can learn something from my experience thus far.

Linden Chuang is assistant editor of *Adventist Record*—digital.



Tithes and offerings

After the CFO's report at the Australian Union Conference constituency meeting a delegate asked how the Church could raise more funds to complete the mission that God has given us. The response was that we need to encourage more of us to give on a regular basis.

Dr Robert McIver, research director at Avondale College of Higher Education, completed a study of tithing in the Western Australian Conference in 2006. The research revealed that more than 90 per cent of those Adventists surveyed believed in tithing, however only about 50 per cent returned tithe on a regular basis. Why the difference? They needed reminders and motivation until they had gotten into the habit of tithing.

How often in Sabbath worship have you heard a reminder to tithe? I'm not talking about the occasional sermon from the pastor. In each worship service of the church every Sabbath someone leads the congregation into the worship of giving, "It is now time to collect the offering for today, will the deacons please come forward to collect the offering." If you are a regular worshipper you have probably heard this nine out of every 10 Sabbaths. It's not motivating is it? Tithe is rarely mentioned and no thought is put into how we call people to worship with their "means" that God has given them.

What would happen if elders and worship leaders put a little effort into the call for tithes and offerings—would the funds increase? Calls for tithe and offerings could be biblical, creative and focus on the vision and mission of the Church. Testimonies at times could be given. Anecdotal evidence tells us that when this is done tithe and offerings increase. Also the new egiving app is used mostly between 10.30am and noon on a Sabbath. Giving people more options to return tithe and offerings will increase funds for the mission of the Church.

I'm keen for people to return tithes and give offerings because when they do they receive the blessings that God promises (2 Corinthians 8:9, 9:8, Malachi 3:10-12).

Pastor Glenn Townsend is president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the South Pacific.



Food choices

After a 24-year study, researchers suggest the best foods for weight loss are high fibre fruit and vegetables with a lower sugar content or lower glycaemic index. Good examples are berries, apples, soy products, cauliflower, and cruciferous and green leafy vegetables. Starchy vegetables—including corn, peas and potatoes—contribute to weight gain.—*Public Library of Science*



Adventists killed in Cameroon

A night-time attack in the northern Cameroon village of Aissa Harde left nine people dead, including seven Adventists. Although Nigerian-based terror group Boko Haram has not claimed responsibility, they are active in the region and locals say the attack is typical of their methods. Adventist leaders have called for prayer.—*Adventist Review*



Helping out

A multicultural group of Adventists from the UK has been providing emergency supplies to an informal refugee camp of 5000 people in Calais, France. The R3 mission group coordinated with other volunteers to sort donated clothing and other goods at a large warehouse and then distribute the supplies at the camp.—*R3*



Ration challenge

ADRA Canada is supplying standard refugee camp rations to people wanting to understand the refugee experience and do a bit of fundraising. The ration packs supply the bare minimum of an average person's daily nutritional needs—450g of grains, 50g of beans/legumes, 50g of vegetable oil and 5g of salt.—*ADRA.ca*



Seven-day Adventist

For a 49-day period, Maryland (USA) Adventist pastor Tim Madding is illustrating a sermon series by spending seven days without a series of seven basic human needs. Pastor Madding has already spent seven days being homeless and seven days without shoes. Coming up is seven days without food, clean water, speech, freedom and health.—*Beltsville Adventist Church*



Cross purposes

Despite the ever-present threat of ISIS to the very existence of Christians in Iraq, the handful of armed Christian groups defending their land are struggling with political differences. Each of the three Assyrian Christian militia groups has allied itself with a different faction—the Kurdish Peshmerga, the Shiite resistance and the Assyrian independence party, respectively.—*Niqash*

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San hospital first ‘centre of excellence’ in NSW

Wahroonga, New South Wales

Sydney Adventist Hospital has been recognised as the first hospital in New South Wales to be a “centre of excellence” in prostate magnetic resonance imaging.

The announcement was made by Jelle Barentsz, professor of radiology at the Raboud Medical Centre in Nijmegen, Holland, during a ceremony at the San on August 25. Raboud is a world leader in medical imaging of the prostate to diagnose cancer.

The process to gain the “centre of excellence” status follows lengthy training of San radiology staff in Holland. Two new state-of-the-art MRI machines have also been installed in the hospital’s new purpose-built, light-filled suites.

“The recognition validates the San as an expert in the use of MRI to diagnose and help fight prostate cancer,” said Corporate Communications manager Leisa O’Connor. “It confirms the expert status of its radiologists and urologists.”

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in Australia, with approximately 32 Australian men diagnosed every day, according to 2012 statistics.

While effective imaging technology to detect breast cancer has been around for about 25 years, accurate prostate cancer detection hasn’t been as easy.

Recent advances in MRI technology, however, mean life-threatening prostate cancer can now be detected in 90 per cent of cases, according to a recent clinical trial.

Speaking during the ceremony, Prof Barentsz was effusive about the expertise at the San.

He cited a recent radiography assessment in which the team from the San and experts from Holland achieved the same findings. Prof Barentsz said it was the highest accuracy he had experienced of all his international partnerships.—*Leisa O’Connor/Record staff*



New San buildings.

Church destroyed, Adventists told to leave

Anuta, Solomon Islands

A new Adventist church building in Solomon Islands has been demolished by angry locals and the small congregation ordered to leave their island.

Anuta Island is an Anglican stronghold in Solomon Islands’ far eastern Temotu province. Local Adventist Selwyn Faramarama has been working on the island since last year as a Bible worker funded by Volunteers in Action (VIA) and supported by the Solomon Islands Mission (SIM) of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Three people have been baptised and Mr Faramarama has been studying the Bible with five more people in preparation for baptism.

The new church building was erected with the agreement of the Adventist landowner but not, according to the *Solomon Star* newspaper, with the permission of local authorities.

“I’m the son of the first chief,” said Putanakupenu Arikifaka to the *Solomon Star*. “Although worship is a freedom on the island, what the Adventists are doing is not acceptable to our chiefly system . . . We told them that they can go ahead with their worship in their own homes but not to build a church on the island.”

According to Pastor Irving Vagha, who holds the portfolios of Adventist Volunteer Services and Global Mission for SIM, Anuta’s Anglican priest together with a large group of supporters demolished the church. Mr Faramarama is now in the capital, Honiara, where he is seeking advice and support from SIM. Church leaders have been disappointed

at media reports that Anuta Adventists have now been ordered into exile from their island.

“We are chasing them out from the island,” Mr Arikifaka said to the *Solomon Star*. “They should listen to us while living on the island. We have our own laws. We only listen to our chiefs. We [do] not even recognise the government . . . we are asking all Adventist members living on the island to . . . leave on any available transport that reaches the island this month.”

Mr Faramarama is keen to return to Anuta to seek reconciliation. He plans to collect donations of rice and other food from Adventists in Honiara and distribute it to the Anuta chief and other islanders who are suffering food shortages after their crops were damaged by Cyclone Pam in March.

“We have sent a message to all our pastors about this and we are praying,” said Pastor Vagha. “Please ask for everyone to pray.”—*Kent Kingston/Solomon Star*



Author's second story confronts more youth issues

Warburton, Victoria

Eating disorders, sexual abuse and plans for revenge might not seem like the raw materials for an uplifting story for young adults. But *Summer Fades*—a new book from author Amanda Bews, published by Signs Publishing—is also a story of healing, hope and forgiveness.

"The issues grow out of my interaction with contemporary culture," explained Ms Bews, a school teacher and a parent. "After I have worked out which issues are being addressed, the characters and their stories develop."

Her research includes reading biographies, newspaper articles and academic journals but also—at a later stage of the writing process—input from relevant experts and professionals. In the writing of *Summer Fades*, this consulting team included paramedics, a doctor, a psychologist, a counsellor and a sexual abuse survivor.

"Authenticity is important," Ms Bews said. "I would never want someone to read one of my books and say, 'No . . . it would never happen like that!'"

So why a story rather than a textbook? "Stories impact our hearts," Ms Bews explained. "They are memorable and can lead us to knowledge that mere delivery of information cannot do. In the case of *Summer Fades* and *Heaven Sent*, the stories generate discussion and allow serious and often uncomfortable issues to be explored in non-threatening ways."

For Ms Bews, the question and possibilities of faith are also an important part of a response to these social issues—and of her stories. "When they read the books, I hope young people are encouraged to explore how God wants to be a part of everyday life, give wisdom in all areas of life and see how biblical principles apply to contemporary issues," she said.

Following the publication of *Heaven Sent* in 2013, Ms Bews said she has a greater appreciation of the number of people involved in the publishing process. "The words might be mine but so much more has to take place before it finally makes it into the hands of a reader," she said. "I want to acknowledge the support and help I've had from all these wonderful people. I am so grateful for every one of them."

Discussion guides are being prepared to be used with *Summer Fades* in settings such as youth groups and classrooms. These will be available soon for free download from <www.amandabewsbooks.com>. —Nathan Brown



Summer Fades, as well as *Heaven Sent*, is available from Adventist Book Centres.



Author Amanda Bews picks up a freshly printed copy of her book.

Germanwings Flight 9525 was deliberately smashed into the French Alps.



I was nearly on board.

Sanitarium employee John Menzies says close encounters with death have made it clear what his true priorities are and where he stands with God.

Watch the interview with Kent Kingston:
vimeo.com/140150450

Record infocus

Church prepares for religious freedom roundtable

by Kent Kingston

The debate over religious freedom has become an ideological battleground. Scan through the reader comments at the bottom of almost any online article that touches on religious issues and you'll be overwhelmed by a flood of contempt for churches, religious people and the very idea of God. And then there are the clergy abuse scandals, religious resistance to the LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) agenda and the apocalyptic threat of ISIS. Each of these factors makes calls for religious freedom increasingly difficult for the community to hear.

Faced by this barrage, the temptation is to raise the drawbridge and prepare for siege warfare. It's the wrong response.

Australian Human Rights Commissioner Tim Wilson (pictured left) has taken the much more constructive approach of dialogue and will host an inaugural roundtable gathering focusing on religious freedom issues next month. This is one of many conversations he's engaging in as he struggles with the challenge of accommodating competing rights.

Submissions have been called for in the lead-up to the roundtable. The Seventh-day Adventist Church has contributed a six-page submission that sets out the "four interlocking freedoms" that comprise religious freedom: freedom of speech, freedom of association, freedom from state discrimination and freedom from unreasonable private discrimination.

"Australia has a robust history of finding a middle ground in which rights in the broadest sense are respected," says the submission, authored by lawyer and Adventist religious liberty director James Standish (pictured right). "Australia must resist the triumphalist formula employed in the US that has seen minor conflicts that could have easily been reasonably resolved, turn into nation-wide controversies."

Mr Standish is referencing what's often called the "clash of rights": the unfortunate reality that each and every human right cannot be completely exercised without impacting on other rights. A classic example is the recent case of Kentucky (US) court clerk Kim Davis who was jailed for five days in connection with her refusal to issue marriage licences to same-sex couples. In this case it was clear that Ms Davis's rights to act according to her Christian beliefs were considered by the State less important than the rights of same-sex couples to have their marriage

documents processed. "In such cases," Mr Standish says, "there is almost always a way to protect the religious rights of the individual while delivering the state's service. This isn't a novel challenge—we've faced it in everything from conscientious objectors in the military through to Sabbath keepers in a wide range of workplaces. Accommodating religious freedom rights doesn't impede society's stability or progress—it enhances both."

The Adventist submission to the Commission highlights another clash that goes to the heart of how the Church connects with its community: faith-based hiring rights. Last year the Victorian state government began to push for religious schools to open up all employment positions to people of any or no religion unless there was an "inherent requirement" that the employee—a chaplain or religion teacher, for example—shares the employer's religious identity. The Adventist Church sees it quite differently. "This misunderstands the role of employees in a faith-based organisation," the Church's submission states. "Each employee is expected to reflect and advance the values of the Church, and those values should touch on everything they do . . ."

Mr Standish dismantles suggestions that faith-based organisations shouldn't be eligible for government funding if they operate according to distinct values. He also recommends stronger protections for free speech, ". . . even speech that makes us uncomfortable or represents small minority views. Law to protect free speech only works when it protects unpopular, marginalised voices that make the majority uncomfortable."

It's a principle that the upcoming roundtable would do well to be guided by. "Too many voices calling for a balance of human rights in Australia do not have freedom of religion and conscience even on their radar," says Pastor Ken Vogel, from the Australian Union Conference. "This submission is ensuring that these core human rights are also heard and better understood."

It's doubtful consensus will be reached on every point, but if the gathering can achieve the delicate balance between respect and frankness, there's every chance progress will be made. —Kent Kingston

An excerpt from the Adventist Church's submission forms the basis of this week's main editorial. A full copy of the submission is available at <record.net.au>.



DIGGING INTO THE WORD

Gary Webster

Manasseh and the superabounding abundant grace of God

The discovery of a clay prism of King Esarhaddon of Assyria supports an amazing story of God's incredible grace.

They don't get worse than Manasseh. He built pagan high places and altars for Baal; worshipped the sun, moon and stars; built pagan altars and set up a statue in God's temple; sacrificed his children in human sacrifice rituals; tried to contact the dead; and killed innocent people till he filled Jerusalem with blood. To put it succinctly, under his leadership Israel was worse than the surrounding pagan nations.

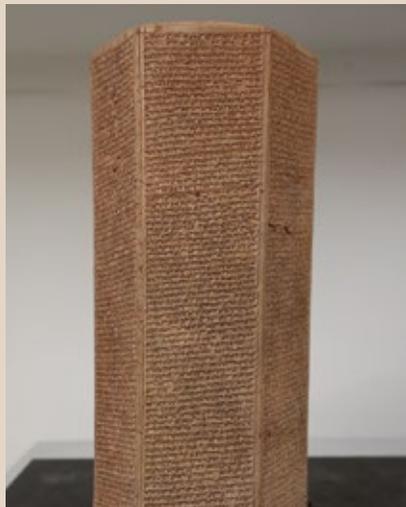
Read 2 Kings 21:1-7,9,16; 2 Chronicles 33:1-7.

But where Manasseh's sin abounded, God's grace abounded much more. When God first spoke to Manasseh to bring him back he would not listen. In His love, God allowed tragedy to bring Manasseh to his senses, allowing the Assyrians to take him prisoner to Babylon. There, sensing his lostness, he turned to God, who in His mighty loving grace forgave him, brought him back to be king again in Jerusalem and powerfully transformed his heart, enabling him to initiate a great reformation in Judah.

Read 2 Chronicles 33:12-16.

God can do the same for us. His grace not only forgives, justifies and reconciles, but also transforms our hearts. Turn to God now and allow His superabounding abundant grace to revive and transform your life.

Read Ephesians 2:1-10; Titus 2:11-14.



The Esarhaddon prism in the British Museum mentions Manasseh, king of Judah looks a lot like this one.

MY STORY

Pastor Luis Bermudez

I was born in Nicaragua, in Central America, during a period of civil war. Children as young as 13 were sent to fight in the war, never to return home. My parents didn't know how long this war would last. As they watched their two children grow, they knew that we would soon be considered old enough to fight. It was this fear that led them to make a risky decision that would change our lives forever—they decided to leave Nicaragua in the heat of the conflict and head to neighbouring Costa Rica.

We began walking through the jungle. The 45-day journey came with all kinds of potential dangers—sickness, starvation, getting lost and being found by fighting soldiers. This experience was not easy but it cemented my faith. We lived through many things that we can only attribute to divine intervention.

When we finally made it to Costa Rica, we were taken in as refugees. We had to miss many meals and opportunities were limited but we didn't care. We were safe.

We found a Seventh-day Adventist church in Costa Rica where we could worship. Friends there told us about a country that would take applications from anyone seeking refugee status. We had no idea where Australia was. We had no idea what Australia would be like. But we were told it was a country of opportunity. And that was what my parents wanted for us.

We decided to apply, just to see what would happen. When we turned up for the application process, we had to join a queue of more than 1000 people, all applying for refugee status in Australia. We waited in line for hours.

A year went by and we had not heard anything further. We thought nothing more of it, until one day there was a knock on the door. The person at the door told us that we needed to go to the public telephone box straight away. Someone urgently needed to speak to us.

There was a woman on the other end of the line. "I'm calling to let you know that you have won the lottery," she announced. We looked at one other in surprise. What was she talking about? We hadn't entered any lottery.

"Out of the thousands of people who applied," she clarified, "you have been selected to go to Australia as refugees."

The news was both exciting and terrifying. What would it mean to go to a country with a different culture and a different language? How would we manage?

The move to Australia happened faster than we expected. We gave away the few possessions we owned. Literally with only the clothes on our backs, we made our way to the airport and boarded the plane.

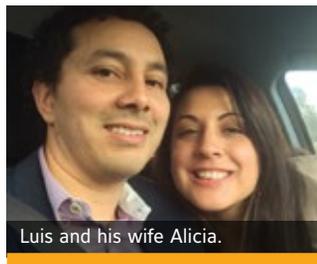
When we landed in Australia, our first view was of tall buildings and picturesque scenery. We were amazed by how beautiful this country was. Once again, we knew that God was leading us.

Our parents never let us forget that God had brought us to Australia—this land of opportunity—for a greater purpose. They often reminded us that we were not to waste our chances here. God had not delivered us from the dangers of war

and seen us through a 45-day jungle trek in vain.

As I listened to my parents' reminders, I wondered what greater purpose God might have in store for me. Never did I imagine that it would be to serve Him in full-time ministry as I do today, as a Seventh-day Adventist pastor.

Looking back, it's so clear to me that God had a plan and purpose for my life. And I strongly believe that He has a plan and purpose for you too.



Luis and his wife Alicia.



Pastor Luis Bermudez is pastor of Warrnambool, Camperdown and Portland churches in Victoria.

LETTERS

REWIND

Mary Trim, NSW

Thank you for Lester Devine's article (September 19) that gave names of some of the pioneer women preachers of the nineteenth century whose ministry was greatly effective, even exceeding that of some men.

He also reminded readers of Ellen White's comment that "the refining, softening influence of Christian women is needed in the great work of preaching the truth" (*Review*, January 2, 1879).

Please continue to provide such Record Rewind articles that teach lessons from our denominational history.

GREAT JOB

Bev and Murray Chapman, NSW

We loved the program last night (*Record InFocus*, August 28). Especially enjoyed the interview with Phil and Bel. Well done! May God bless your work each week.

THE ROCK

Judy Walker, via website

You're so right in "Wise" (Editorial, August 29) [when you state] "all who truly heal must first shatter".

We first fall on the Rock, which shatters our self delusions of independence, ability and competence that prevent us relying totally on Him. Once "shattered" we can be built up and remoulded. Humility comes from this.

Thanks for such a thought-provoking editorial.

OPTIMISTIC

Michael Were, NSW

You put forward an optimistic viewpoint in the article "Change" (Editorial,

September 19). While I do agree with what you are saying, I cannot help thinking about the reverse. What could this technology do in the wrong hands? Could this be used as a modern day version of Hitler's ideals? And does extreme genetic modification interfere with God's infinitely more wise plans?

GETTING IT WRONG?

A E Hobbs, ACT

Three months on from the General Conference decision to not ordain women as pastors, the push to overturn this decision continues to be gently agitated within the South Pacific Division through various forums.

But are we doing this whole minister/elder gig wrongly to begin with? At the time of its establishment in 1863, the Seventh-day Adventist Church was guided by the New Testament model of church leadership. Simply put, ministers were ordained for evangelistic work, taking the gospel message to the unconverted and planting new churches. Once a new church was formed, ordained elders, with the assistance of deacons, were given oversight of the local congregation and were to function as its pastor.

After the death of Ellen White, the New Testament model was abandoned. Ministers became "settled" and took on the church leadership function (an "inwards" focus), bumping the responsibilities of the elder down to a mere pastor's assistant.

Restoring the biblical model of leadership could be a powerful catalyst to inspire our mission once again and contribute to the worldwide

revival of Revelation 18.

HOT TOPIC

Lorraine Chambers, NSW

I have been a baptised member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church for some 40 odd years but have become disillusioned with certain happenings in our Church both locally and worldwide.

At the recent General Conference session, women's ordination was a hot topic and seems to be getting hotter (instead of cooler).

We as a Church are advocates of prayer, with prayer being the "key to heaven"—our connection with God. All the delegates, and many other members around the world, spent much time in earnest prayer over this very subject. Then the vote was taken and women's ordination was not passed.

Why then are we as presidents, ministers and members questioning the result of this vote?

Don't we believe God's will has been done?

Come on women, we don't need to be ordained to do God's work. Nobody needs a title; it's God's work. Are we going to be still debating this, instead of doing the work that many so desperately want a title to do.

We don't need titles. We can do God's work in all aspects of life.

Let's accept it as God's will and leave it at that, instead of causing disunity and disharmony amongst our churches.

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



Entertaining seniors

Senior members of the community in Labasa (Fiji) were treated to a night of feasting, entertainment and laughter, courtesy of the Labasa Seventh-day Adventist Church women's ministry and the Northern Adventist Students Association. The group of senior citizens enjoyed a four-course meal at the Labasa church hall. The 22 elders present took the time to introduce themselves and socialise throughout the night. This event happens each year and is hosted by the Labasa Adventist women's ministry, known as Dorcas. —*Fiji Times*



Ordinations for PNG pastors

More than 2000 people witnessed the ordination of two pastors in the Central Papuan Conference into full-time ministry at Koki Hill Seventh-day Adventist Church in National Capital District (PNG). Miller Kuso is the current senior pastor of Koki Hill church. He is married and has one son. Excel Geno pastors five organised churches in Port Moresby. He is married with three children. The ordination was officiated by Pastor Blasius Managos from the Papua New Guinea Union Mission and Conference president Pastor Kove Tau. —*Cameron Wari*



Blooming display of biblical women

During the annual Toowoomba (Qld) Carnival of Flowers, the Flowers To Impress school of floristry put together displays in St Patrick's Cathedral. This year, students designed seven displays on prominent women in the Bible. The school is run by Adventist florist Debby Birach-Mayer and this is the eighth year they have participated in the event. Each year, around 3000 people view the displays. —*Nathan Birach-Mayer*

Grandma participates in fun run

Enid Webster, grandmother of ADRA Australia CEO Mark Webster, recently participated in the City2Surf in Sydney (NSW). The event covers a 14km course and is the world's biggest fun run. Enid was the second oldest participant and raised \$4275 for ADRA. The Webster family were represented by four generations at the event. —*Josh Dye*

Sharing is caring

Students at Riverside Adventist Christian School (Qld) have been growing vegetables and giving the produce to the community. Fifteen bags of lettuce accompanied by handwritten notes have been given away. The students have also donated a box of vegetables to the local Community Pantry Project, which provides food for people in need. —*Top News*



Celebrating Hope

Several Seventh-day Adventist churches across New Zealand, including Whangarei, Manna Park, Papakura, Waihi, Tauranga, Mt Maunganui and Napier, hosted events on September 12 to celebrate the launch of HopeChannel New Zealand on free-to-air television. Feedback on the launch was overwhelmingly positive with individuals expressing appreciation for HopeChannel's quality Christian programming and sending up prayers for the ministry. —*Record staff*



Child sponsorship focus

The Avondale College academic who co-edited the first book to objectively critique child sponsorship has now completed the doctoral degree on which it is based. The research Dr Brad Watson conducted for his Doctor of Philosophy thesis contributes to almost half of the 15 chapters in *Child Sponsorship: Exploring Pathways to a Brighter Future*, a scholarly text published by Palgrave Macmillan. The book and Dr Watson's thesis—"Child Sponsorship NGOs: Origins, Evolution and Motives for Change"—explore the origins, the controversy, the diversity and the challenges of the billion-dollar industry. —*Bianca Reynaud*



R HEALTH FEATURE

with Cathy McDonald

Small choices, big benefits

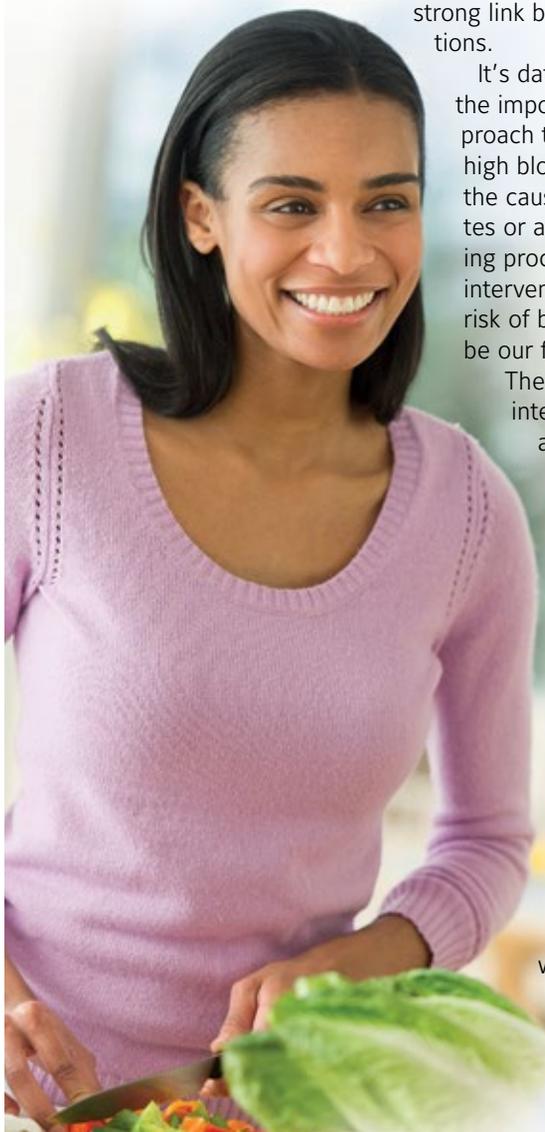
Chronic diseases seem to love company. If one is present the risks are often increased for others. A recent study in the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology* builds on the idea that chronic diseases aren't isolated conditions.

Researchers looked at the validated linked electronic health records of 4.1 million adults without diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Among the group, researchers found that a 20mmHg higher systolic blood pressure (the higher number in the reading) was associated with a 58 per cent higher risk of new onset diabetes.

This kind of study can't show that diabetes is definitely caused by high blood pressure. But the large number of participants and reliable data the study used does indicate a strong link between the two conditions.

It's data like this that shows the importance of a holistic approach to prevention. Whether high blood pressure is one of the causes of type 2 diabetes or a sign of an underlying process common to both, interventions that reduce the risk of both conditions should be our focus.

The good news is we have interventions literally right at our fingertips. If you smoke, research has shown that quitting can drastically reduce your risk of developing high blood pressure and type 2 diabetes. Adopting a whole food, plant-based diet can also reduce your risk, as can getting active most days of the week. Chronic disease is not an inevitable part of ageing; simple daily choices like the foods we eat or making time for a daily walk can have a powerful, wide-ranging effect on our long-term health.



Beetroot hummus

Preparation time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 20 minutes Serves: 6

2 beetroots, trimmed, washed and halved

1½ cups canned chickpeas, drained and rinsed

3 tablespoons tahini paste

2 cloves garlic, peeled

3 tablespoons lemon juice

2 tablespoons vegetable stock

1. Microwave beetroots on HIGH for 10-15 minutes or until tender. Slip the beets out of their skin and roughly chop.
2. Place beetroot and all of the other ingredients into a food processor and process until smooth.
3. Serve as a dip with toasted pita or Turkish bread and fresh vegetables.

NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVE:
360kJ (85cal). Protein 4g. Fat 3g. Carbohydrate 9g. Sodium 220mg. Potassium 275mg. Calcium 40mg. Iron 1.3mg. Fibre 3.

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

Sanitarium

LIFESTYLE
MEDICINE
SERVICES



On this day . . .

by Jarrod Stackelroth

OCTOBER 17 IS AN HISTORIC DAY AND NOT JUST because it's the day that this Adventist Record is coming out. According to Wikipedia, on this day in 1964, then Australian prime minister Robert Menzies opened Lake Burley Griffin, a man-made lake in the centre of Canberra, the nation's capital. If we go further back, things on this date aren't quite as rosy. In 1943, the extermination camp Sobibor was closed. In 1941, a German submarine attacked an American ship for the first time during World War II. In 1917, the first British bombing of Germany took place and in 1905, Tsar Nicholas II issued the October manifesto.

But amidst all of these events, the first Wikipedia entry stood out—a Bible prophecy was fulfilled on this day. It was a prophecy about a shepherd king, the anointed one (messiah) who would liberate his people. His name was Cyrus.

According to Wikipedia, October 17, 539 BC was the day Cyrus the Great, king of the Persians, marched into Babylon to become emperor of the known world.

Snippets of the story come from the Bible, the archaeological record and ancient historians. Babylon was under siege but the situation had reached an impasse.

During Belshazzar's famous feast, when God wrote on the wall, Cyrus's soldiers entered the city by damming up the Euphrates and walking down the river channel under the walls.

It is incredibly unusual that by all reports Cyrus was treated to a hero's welcome. Usually foreign conquerors were greeted with fearful glares, uncertain stares or outright hostility and sabotage. But not Cyrus. What made this conqueror different?

Unlike others, Cyrus ruled with a high level of religious freedom and tolerance, he installed local administrators and freed many captive or exiled foreigners throughout his empire.

In a prophecy made more than 100 years prior, Isaiah 44 says: "I am the Lord who has made all things . . . (v24) who says of Cyrus, 'He is my shepherd and will accomplish all that I please; he will say of Jerusalem, 'Let it be rebuilt,' and of the temple 'Let its foundations be laid (v28).'"

The passage about Cyrus continues in chapter 45: "This is what the Lord says to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I take hold of to subdue the nations before him and to strip kings of their armour, to open doors before him so that gates will not be shut (v1)."

Cyrus was the only non-Jew to be given the title of "messiah".

Cyrus was the only non-Jew to be given the title of "messiah". Usually it is reserved for Jesus, the Christ, who came to save His people from their sins. Cyrus saved the Jews from 70 years of exile and sent them back to Judah to rebuild the temple and the city.

So what relevance does this story about a long dead king have for us in the 21st century?

Firstly, it proves that God is in control. Even though around us the world seems sometimes to be spiralling out of control, with economies crashing and violence escalating against many Christians around the world, God still saves His people, often by unexpected methods. Isaiah even says in chapter 45:5: "I am the Lord, the God of Israel, who summons you by name . . . though you have not acknowledged me." Tradition says that Cyrus was shown the Isaiah scrolls and he liked the prophecies and sought to fulfil them.

Secondly, Cyrus gives us an example of how to treat other people. The religious freedoms he instituted were well ahead of their time. Even though he had ultimate power, he showed tolerance, respect and humility, stating in Ezra 1:2: "The Lord, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and he has appointed me to build a temple for him at Jerusalem in Judah." Not everything went perfectly during his reign. The temple work was held up and there is no record of him ever "converting".

However, God can use people who are not His children to influence us, turn us to Him and remind us of His sovereignty. We should allow ourselves to learn from those outside our faith more often. God is at work throughout the world, even in the halls of power.

Finally, God loves His people. So much so that He sent Jesus to be the ultimate Messiah and save us all eternally.

So this day and every day, we should be comforted in knowing that if God can raise kings and take down empires for His people, we should more readily surrender our plans and our lives to Him and give Him complete control. 

Jarrod Stackelroth is associate editor of Adventist Record.

ADRA: Connecting with community



"It's so great that our church has been able to personally connect with someone in need in our very own neighbourhood. And the only reason we met her was because we were on the ADRA Appeal."

This comment came from a Penrith (NSW) church member who, in 2014, was door-knocking for the ADRA Appeal when he met Nancy*.

When the church member asked for a donation, Nancy abruptly explained

that she couldn't help because she didn't even have enough money for herself and her children. Then she started crying. "Can you help me?" she asked.

Nancy was caught in a violent marriage and, being from another country, didn't know where to turn. She struggled to provide enough food and necessities for herself and her children. She didn't know what services and support she could access and felt totally alone. Meeting compassionate church members on the ADRA Appeal allowed her the opportunity to finally ask for help.

Members from the local Adventist church have supported Nancy in several ways, including providing some cooked meals, connecting her to local services and providing friendship. Nancy now knows that there are people who care about her and her children, and are there to help. She now knows that she's not alone.

Matthew 5:13-16 says: "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden . . . In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."

Throughout the year, as Adventist Church members we can support the work of ADRA through our personal contributions, but in October we have a chance to shine our light for people in need by volunteering to raise funds for those experiencing poverty and hardship. The ADRA Appeal offers a great chance for our churches across Australia to unite as a community of believers and show people that as a Church we care for those in need.

It is the act of going door-to-door or running a public place collection that allows us to connect with people we might otherwise not have had a chance to meet and to share about the amazing things that the Adventist Church through ADRA is doing for people in need both in Australia and overseas.

And as we share with our neighbours, work colleagues, sports clubs or online communities, we can shine a light about what it means to be a follower of Jesus. What an amazing witness!—*Aleksander Ewing/Candice Jaques*

**Name changed to protect privacy.*



Desire

by Paul Fua

IT WAS AN EPIC ADVENTURE FOR A VERY GOOD CAUSE. Lynden Parmenter and I had hit on a plan to raise money for Sydney Adventist Hospital by being the first to circumnavigate Australia on jet skis. That's a lot of kilometres bouncing over the waves. It took three months. And at the end of it I knew Australia a lot better than I ever thought I would, and in some ways, I knew myself better too.

Looking back to that time, I think most people would have considered me to be a good Adventist. I was working at Sydney Adventist Hospital and an active member of Gosford church. But the insipid scourge of Laodicea had dulled my awareness to my actual state. I wasn't bad in the normal sense of the word; I was just your regular church member.

I was raised in an Adventist home. My dad is Tongan and my mum is a white Australian pastor's kid. I studied teaching but after seven years I thought it was time for a change. I worked in a number of administrative roles including at the San, then purchased an American master franchise.

We were very fortunate. Initially our efforts prospered. The service was well received in Sydney. As we established the business in an Australian context many of our manuals and practices were brought back by the parent company in the US. With such a strong and promising start, plans to expand nationally were launched.

Late in 2007 the first rumblings of the GFC started to hit our shores and without warning the bank pulled our finance. We had leases, employees, manufacturing orders for expansion equipment and a considerable amount of pride at stake. Our precarious market position required expansion and growth yet the bank robbed us of our means to fund this growth. Solomon was right when he wrote, "pride goeth before a fall" (Proverbs 16:18).

We spent a considerable amount of time trying to secure additional funding but maybe God had other ideas. I was sitting in our study one day and I looked over and saw Ellen White's *Desire of Ages*. I'd never read it. In fact, I didn't even know what it was about but I had heard I should read it. So I picked it up. I have to say it was initially

slow going. I struggled with the writing style and the quotes from the King James Version of the Bible, but there was something calling me to keep going—it was the Holy Spirit's guidance. I struggled along until about page 60 and then the beautiful story of Jesus took complete control of me. I was heartbroken in a way I had never been and my spirit was renewed in the process. I had been a church member for years but now I committed to being a genuine disciple.

As we were nearing the end of our business journey we came into contact with an extremely wealthy businessman who spent considerable time looking at our business to determine whether he would become an equity partner. He immediately saw its potential for a global opportunity and realised that the heart of the business rested in the intellectual property we had developed. Out of the blue he offered for us to close our business and end our relationship with the international franchise and start again under our own banner in Australia, Europe, the UK and Asia. Gratefully by this time the Lord had removed my ambition for wealth and replaced it with a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart (Psalm 51:17). The businessman reminded me that there was no legal obligation to stay under the international franchise.

But things were different for me now and I was unable to place any value on the promised gain if it was not based on the platform of integrity. As I gave my answer, in light of the enormous financial potential, he asked the question, "Paul, do you realise what you are walking away from?" "Yes," I said. "I am walking away from hell."

As my wife and I considered what we would do next, I received a call from Dr Malcolm Coulsen—then principal of Darling Downs Christian College—regarding a teaching position. It had been 12 years since I had been a teacher and I was apprehensive about the change.

I was grateful for Malcolm's godly leadership. He taught me so much. Before the start of school for the year the community came together for the P&C "Meet and Greet". When addressing the students and parents—most of whom were non-Adventist and from homes with no active Christian influence—Malcolm said: "The reason we are here is to

prepare your children for the soon return of Jesus Christ." Any doubts I may have had were quickly extinguished. I knew at that moment I was exactly where God wanted me to be. That year the Lord brought about a beautiful revival to the school and many of those students have continued to walk in His ways.

The following year I was called to be principal of Tweed Valley Adventist College. Only the school wasn't called that then. It was one of the many Adventist schools that had dropped the "Adventist" out of their name in order—or so the theory went—to attract more non-Adventist students.

It hadn't worked.

When I arrived student enrolment was under 100 for K-12, and there was a real question about whether the school would survive.

Before commencing I read Ellen White's book *Education*. I don't know why I hadn't read it previously. But as I read, I was inspired. I made a commitment: "We're going to follow God's counsels!"

And that's exactly what we've tried to do. That began by putting "Adventist" back in our name. You know, in 2 Chronicles 7:14, God says: "if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land."

We know from Ellen White that God has given His Church a name. We decided to call ourselves by it, to humble ourselves and to ask for forgiveness, and see if He would honour His promise. To some it seemed risky and there were concerns about making such a radical change at a time when the college was so precariously placed. I was given lots of reasons not to do it—it would scare non-Adventists away; it would cost money to rebrand; strategically it was just all wrong.

I'm grateful to have the strong support of a godly school council who were prepared to move ahead in faith when logic strongly suggested otherwise. We also understood that using a name carried a moral obligation to live up to the values it represented. To incorporate the Adventist name and logo was one of a number of reforms, which included a commitment to having all Adventist teachers, teaching Adventist distinctive doctrines, introducing agriculture, maintaining the already strong service culture, a new mission statement and establishing curriculum time for Bible studies.

God responded in a mighty way. It was as if He was just waiting to pour out His blessings! Our enrolment jumped to 220 students in 12 months and this had a considerable impact on our morale, budgets and culture.

Enriched by the lessons on faith we took one more bold step. We lowered our fees by 40 per cent. In a development meeting with members of our conference administration and school council we looked at our fee schedule

in comparison with our nearest private competitor and observed that our fees were considerably higher and out of reach of the community to which we were trying to minister. One of our council members commented, "This is wrong! There is no way that Adventist education should only be for the rich." After considerable, prayerful discussion, our conference administration decided to back this bold move to see what God could do. At this stage of our journey we needed 36 more students to make the experiment viable. We got 80. God is so good!

In 2014 the college achieved its highest enrolment since its humble beginnings in a few rooms beside the Murwillumbah Seventh-day Adventist Church in 1959.

In 2 Timothy 3, Paul outlines some of the characteristics of people in these last days—lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power (verses 2-5). Thankfully, he also reminds us that where sin abounds grace abounds more abundantly (Romans 5:20).

It isn't easy. The issues some kids struggle with today are heartbreaking: family dysfunction; exposure to pornography; graphic violence in the media; physical and sexual abuse; and easy access to dangerous drugs. The devil is very, very hard at work in our world—and every single school in this country is seeing the results. I do believe we are nearing the end and God's presence is withdrawing. That creates all the more desperate need for Adventist education where the goodness of God is uplifted every day.

I love being a principal. It is hard work. Sometimes it's discouraging. Sometimes I get tired. But then I look into the eyes of the kids at my school and I see the image of God looking back at me. Every child is His child; I see someone Jesus gave everything for. It's an amazing feeling to connect a child to their heavenly Father. To see that spark of love go off in their eyes and to see them begin their life journey, hand in hand with Jesus.

As I look back over the Tweed Valley Adventist College journey I praise God for not only what He has done in our school but also for what He has done for me, and the peace I have found in Him. I was 40 when I first really became a disciple of Jesus. We have made a lot of mistakes and have much more to learn but I trust that our experience can provide encouragement for our institutions to be a light on the hill.

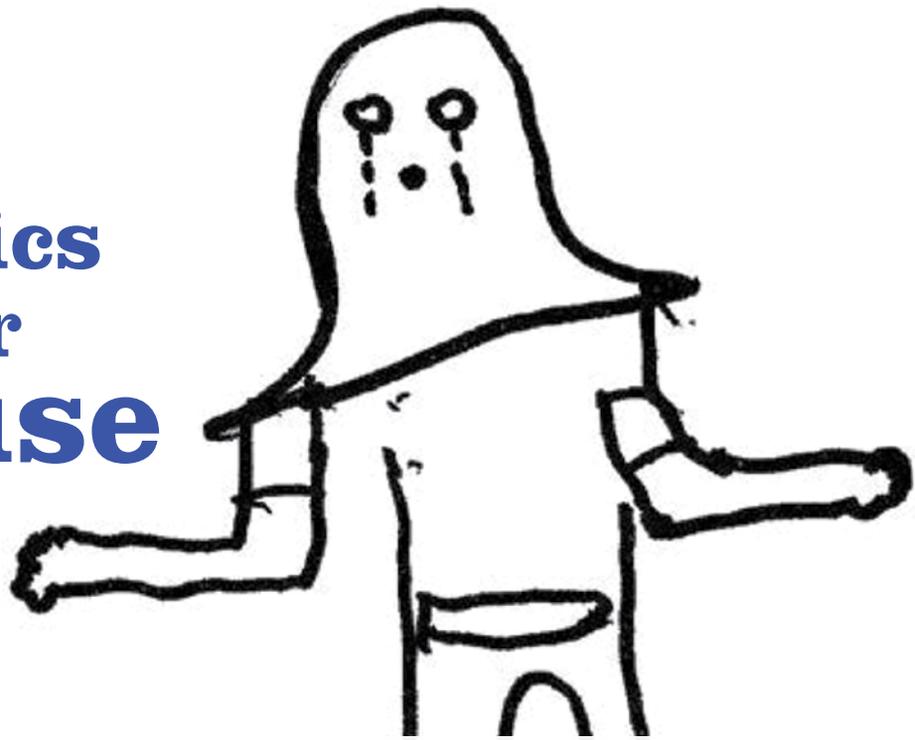
Our new mission statement is taken from Luke 2:52: in the footsteps of Jesus Christ . . . to increase in wisdom and stature, in favour with God and favour with men. Surely this must be our goal for our students. I thank God for Jesus, our Saviour and Example . . . the Desire of Ages. 

Paul Fua is principal of Tweed Valley Adventist College.

There is no way Adventist education should only be for the rich.

When politics is no longer an excuse

by Bruce Manners



THE DRAWING SHOWN HERE IS DISTURBING. What's more disturbing is that it was created by a seven-year-old. When I asked a psychiatrist friend who works with children in trauma what she read into it, she said the drawing, in all likelihood, depicted torture. Not torture of the child—the drawing would have been more fragmented than it is if that had been the case—but of an older person, probably a parent or relative.

She pointed out the hood and the ligatures on the arms where this person is bound with arms outstretched and the sense of helplessness it depicts. Then, in her words, "The tears depict the emotions for which there are no words!"

What my psychiatrist friend did not know was that it was drawn by an asylum seeker in detention. I'm not suggesting that torture is occurring in Australia's detention centres but this drawing could be an expression of trauma experienced by this child before coming to Australia. This child needs help, not more punishment by being locked up in a detention centre.

And this is part of the humanitarian issue our detention centres have created. Yet there's this fascinating Adventist phenomenon where we hold back from standing up for a child like this because it is a "political" issue. It isn't our problem because "we" don't get involved in politics.

As one who values the separation of church and state, I understand this position. But as a human I sense the pain being felt by this child. And as a follower of Jesus I ask, aren't there times when human need is bigger than politics?

Adventists taking on the government

The problem with the "we-don't-get-involved-in-politics" position is that we have and we do. In Australia, the Adventist Church became a major force to bring change to the proposed constitution in the late 1890s. Though small in

number, we were a force to be reckoned with.

The concerns we had were, predictably, about the separation of church and state: the mention of God in the constitution; and the fear and possibility of a state religion being set up.

We protested. We organised two meetings in Parramatta where 500 turned up each time. We created a quarterly magazine, *Australian Sentinel and Herald of Liberty*. It was sent to every politician and influential person in the land. It looked at clauses in the constitution with religious connotations.

God was left in the constitution but the insertion of Section 116 giving the free exercise of religion was a victory. Historian Richard Ely paid tribute to us when he wrote that despite our belief in separation of church and state, "Adventist[s] played politics very well."¹

Religious liberty has always been for us a political favourite. When the United Nations was set up, we had three representatives there to argue for religious freedom. They even lobbied Eleanor Roosevelt on the issue. We still have a representative at the United Nations. The current editor of *Record* held that position before we stole him away.

I'm proud of the work we do on religious liberty. Despite it being somewhat self-serving—as a minority Christian group we want freedom to worship on Sabbath—we have a proven record of defending religious freedom for many and various groups around the world. Religious liberty—a political issue—is bigger than mere politics.

In many of our churches in Australia last year petitions against same-sex marriage were circulated. How can this be if "we" don't get involved in politics? It was seen as a moral issue—something bigger than mere politics. The same could be said of the recent Australian Union Conference decision to commit our Church to tackling gambling.

Some things are more important than mere politics.

Of course, we should work with governments and be loyal citizens. But there are times when loyalty to God's way comes first. We may never be confronted with a Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego challenge but we're often confronted with human need. How we respond, or don't respond, demonstrates where our real loyalties lie.

Adventism's broader position

From our beginnings we've taken a stand on a number of political causes and issues. These include "civil rights and anti-slavery, religious liberty, health and temperance reform, leadership in prevention of alcoholism and drug dependency, anti-tobacco lobby, education, welfare, aid and development and so on".²

In the past decade, in the United States, our Church has been actively involved including supporting the freedom to build churches, mosques and other houses of worship, legislation to prevent rape in prisons, visas for those who have been trafficked, the regulation of tobacco products, and more.

In a statement on church-state relationships, our Church has defined the role of governments to serve the needs of the governed. That includes such things as the protection of human rights, public order, health, a clean environment, an atmosphere that encourages the growth of its people, and to eliminate discrimination. "When we are faced with a situation in which the law of the land conflicts with biblical mandates, however, we concur with the scriptural injunction that we ought to obey God rather than man," the statement says.

Some things are more important than mere politics.

Then, there's this: "States have a responsibility not only to protect all those living within its borders but also to work for the protection of human rights in the international community and to provide a haven to those fleeing persecution."³

The evidence is overwhelming that our detention centres are not havens for asylum seekers.

It's bigger than politics

There are times we need to make a stand—particularly when people are being hurt. We currently have asylum seekers in detention centres in Australia and on Manus and Nauru islands. Some of them have been in detention for more than six years. That's far too long. Too many people are being harmed.

Professor David Isaacs, a Sydney-based paediatrician, was recently interviewed on the ABC's *7.30 Report*. He told of a visit to Nauru and meeting a six-year-old girl. He noticed her neck was scarred and asked about what had happened. She had tried to hang herself.

There's something evil happening when a six-year-old thinks killing herself is a solution to what she is facing. We can't allow mere politics to guide our reaction to what is a humanitarian issue.

Under recently passed legislation, Professor Isaacs said he was in a situation where if he didn't report child abuse in Australia he would be in trouble. However, if he reported child abuse on Nauru he could go to prison. There's an unfortunate and skewed kind of morality at work here.

If you aren't convinced that holding asylum seekers in detention centres isn't bigger than politics, look again at the drawing created by the seven-year-old seeker.⁴ And remember that Jesus warned religious people to not get so caught up in their religious observance that they forget "justice, mercy and faith" (Matthew 23:23, NLT). R

1. Richard Ely, *Unto God and Caesar*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1976, pages 44, 45.

2. www.adventist.org/information/official-statements

3. www.adventist.org/en/information/official-statements/documents/article/go/ol-church-state-relations

4. Image in the 2014 "Forgotten Children" report, page 172, which can be found at www.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/document/publication/forgotten_children_2014.pdf

5. Figures from ABC Fact Check: www.abc.net.au/news/2015-07-14/cost-of-offshore-processing-united-nations-fact-check/6609764

Bruce Manners is a retired pastor and a member of Adventists Supporting Asylum Seekers in Detention Centres.

The problem with detention centres

Australia's current use of offshore detention centres has created three major issues that need addressing:

The resources issue: The United Nations spends \$3.72 billion a year to support 46.3 million asylum seekers and refugees around the world. Australia spent more than a third of that—\$1.3 billion—to keep fewer than 2000 asylum seekers on Manus and Nauru Islands (2014-15 financial year).⁵

The ethics issue: There is an ethical problem with punishing one group of people (asylum seekers placed in offshore detention) to stop others from attempting to get to Australia. That's like my father punishing me for something I haven't done wrong (being an asylum seeker is not illegal) so my brother won't do it—and to keep on punishing me for six years (how long some asylum seekers have been interred).

The human issue: Obviously this is the most important. So many people are being damaged by a policy that locks up people for an indeterminate time. And because of recent legislation, we no longer hear about some situations—which is, of course, another issue in a democratic society.





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OPINION
Julian Archer

The conspiracy cure

"Global Economic Crisis in September!"
"Pope and President to set up New World Order!"
"US Dollar's Collapse Imminent!"
Sensational headlines shout out from "IMPOR-TANT! MUST READ!" emails.



The Bible definitely predicts these types of "end time" events—without giving specific dates. The days before Christ's return will be traumatic. We must watch and act with God-given wisdom but we are not to fear the coming crisis.

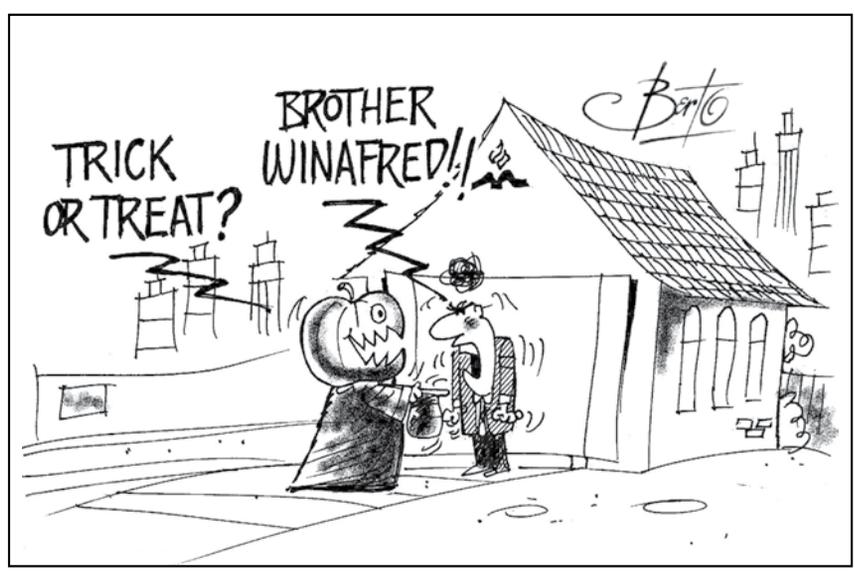
One day economic doomsayers will guess the right dates. However, even then the only things that will carry us through are a mind fortified with the truths of the Bible and a daily relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

The time is coming when it won't matter whether our earthly treasures are invested in shares or gold or US dollars or real estate—or even tins of beans! Only those who are "under His wings" will get through the final crisis safely.

So next time you have a conspiracy-prompted, sickening fear of the future, remember God's cure in Isaiah.

"Do not call conspiracy everything this people calls a conspiracy; do not fear what they fear, and do not dread it. The Lord Almighty is the one you are to regard as holy . . . He will be a holy place" (Isaiah 8:12-14 NIV).

Julian Archer is the author of Help! I've Been Blessed!, and writes from Queensland.



Kids' Space



HI KIDS!

God had great plans for Samson. But Samson decides his plans are more important when he falls in love with a Philistine woman, Delilah.

Delilah was paid a bribe to find out about Samson's secret strength. While he sleeps, Delilah cuts Samon's hair and his strength disappears.

Although Samson does wrong, God forgives him.

FIND THE MEMORY VERSE

Cross out the following letters to find the Memory Verse: B, F, J, K, L, S (Psalm 51:10)

B J C R E A T E J K F I N K
 F K J L K L F S K L J K J L
 J M E S A S J B L S K L K S
 K S L B S B K P U R E S L B
 L B S F B F L J B F S B S F
 S H E A R T S K F
 B J F O H K B L
 F K J L K L F S
 J L K S L S J B
 K S G O D B K
 L B S F B F



COMMUNITY MESSAGE
 God loves me and uses me
 even though I make mistakes.

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APPRECIATION

Jones. Dafne and Glenda Jones, together with the Rivera family, would like to thank everyone who kindly sent messages of love and comfort following the death of Paul. Your prayers and thoughts were greatly appreciated. —*Jones family*

ANNIVERSARIES



Redig. Frank and Peg (nee Rundle) were married 25.7.1945

in St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, New Plymouth, NZ. They celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary with a quiet family dinner at Wayne and Marilyn's home in Brisbane, Qld, with Wayne, Philip and Brett, their wives and some of their grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Distance prevented Barry, Paul, Kevin and Bronwyn from attending. Frank and Peg were active members of the New Plymouth church for many years. They now live at the Victoria Point Retirement Village where Peg is an active member, playing for workshops, happy hours and sing-a-longs.



Wainwright. Milton and Rosalie (nee Felt) were married

3.8.1965 near Springfield, Missouri, USA. They celebrated 50 years of marriage with family and friends at the Woodville Organ Museum, Woodville, NZ. The couple had two daughters; one of them, Judi Thompson, is principal at the Springfield church school in Missouri, US. Their younger daughter, Beth, died in a plane crash. Their grandson Kelly Larsen played the organ at the celebration. Granddaughter Melissa Larsen lives in Christchurch, NZ. They also have a great-granddaughter, Emma-Lee Larsen. Milton is a retired carpenter, and Rosalie ran the Truelife Health shop in Palmerston North for nearly 19 years. They are members of the Feilding church.

WEDDINGS



Green—Beels. Kristoffer Randall Green, son of Randall and

Charmaine Green (Brisbane, Qld), and Tiani Tai Beels, daughter of Mark Allan (Townsville) and Denise Carey (Brisbane), were married 23.8.15 in the Mt Gravatt church, Brisbane.

Bob Possingham

Murray—Hilder. Lester Murray, son of the late Ralph Murray and Betty Steelmaker, and Jenny Hilder, daughter of the late Pastor Larry Laredo and Ruby Laredo, were married 5.7.15 in the Morisset Hospital chapel, NSW. The glorious sunny day was ideal to begin their lifetime relationship. Lester and Jenny have made their home on the Central Coast of NSW.

Bob Bolst



Simonetti—Ward. Jason Peter Simonetti and Ernestine

Gaye Ward were married 30.8.15 in The Elizabethan Village, Bedfordale, WA.

Lynn Burton

OBITUARIES



Clarke, Ethel May (nee Bode), born 5.6.1919 in Wickopin, WA; died 25.7.15 in Rossmoyne

Adventist Retirement Village, Perth. On 25.6.1938 she married Lewis Burrows Clarke. She was predeceased by her husband and her sons Geoff, Murray and Kenneth. She is survived by her sons: Rob and Joan (Mt Barker) and John and Sandra (Bunbury); eight grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren; and her sister Bett (Albany). Throughout her life Ethel was a hard worker with a large smile and a cheerful word. Together with her husband she spent many years as a colporteur throughout the south-west region of Western Australia. Ethel was quick of step and strong in her faith in Jesus to the very end.

Roger Millist

Fraser, Margaret (nee Eade), died 3.7.15 in Ross Home, Dunedin, NZ. She was predeceased by her husband Jim. She is survived by her children: Steven and Lindy (Gold Coast, Qld), Robin (Roxburgh), Paul and Lorna (Palmerston), Carmen and Kelvin (Dunedin); grandchildren and

great-grandchildren: Scott, Jaymee, Saviyon, Eve, Jordan and Annalicia. Margaret was a lovely, faithful, caring and musical lady in the Dunedin church. She was loved by all children, students—everyone who knew her. Despite living with diabetes from the age of eight, she never complained or stopped being a wonderful witness for the Lord.

Nell Gaudelius



Harrop, John Thomas, born 17.2.1940 in Northam, WA; died 20.8.15 in Glengarry

Hospice, Perth. On 20.4.1963 he married Patricia Jean Bushell. He is survived by his wife; their children: Michelle and Darren May (Canberra, ACT) and Darren and Anita (Kingsley, WA); and grandchildren Parhyse, Neave and Brianna. John was a loving family man with a great sense of humour who took an interest in everyone he met by making sure that he always knew their name and addressed them accordingly. Moreover, he was a man of faith who lived his life according to his Christian principles.

Lynn Burton



Hodge, Doreen Dorothy (nee Bartholomew), born 9.4.1917 in Friskney,

England; died 13.8.15 in Albury, NSW. Doreen was baptised in Albury in 1940 by Pastor Eric House. On 6.4.1939 she married Harold Hodge in the Methodist Church, Albury. He predeceased her in 1995. She is survived by her only son Brian (Vic); three grandchildren; six great-grandchildren; and two great-great-grandsons. Auntie Doreen, as she was lovingly known, lived and served as one graciously and generously gifted by the Lord. She served tirelessly and extensively in the church. Her home was home to many; her beautiful craft work was given away to friends, family and many needy causes.

Lawrence Landers

Hutabarat, Advent Flora (nee Manullang), born 4.11.1923 in Sumatra, Indonesia; died 22.8.15 in Cooranbong, NSW. On 15.5.1941 she married Mangara Hutabarat. She is survived by her children: Milton (Singapore), Jasper (Parramatta, NSW), Jeremy (North Ryde), Floris (Cooran-

bong), Florena (Battle, UK), Matthew (Singapore) and Arnold (Illinois, US) and their respective spouses; 16 grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren; and her brother and six sisters. Flora was named Advent because her mother had accepted the Advent message shortly before her birth. Flora and Mangara served as missionaries in Borneo teaching at the Adventist Secondary School in Tamparuli, Sabah; then at Sunny Hill School in Kuching, Sarawak; and in Singapore. She later worked in the business office of the Southeast Asia Union College and was Dean of Women at the college. Her profile is featured in the book, *Notable Adventist Women of Today*.

George Drinkall

Marinus, William Peter (Wim), born 2.12.1930 in The Hague, Netherlands; died 30.8.15 in Orange, NSW. Wim came to Australia in 1951. On 10.2.1964 he married Joyce Mitchell (nee Schick) in Orange. He is survived by his wife; daughter Annette Leahey; granddaughters Laurice Thomas and La Toya Leahey; great-grandchildren Te Paea, Hudson and Azeem; and brothers and sisters-in-law Pastor Lyndon Schick, Dawn Blandford, and Maurice Schick. Wim was a well-known businessman in Orange and though not a church member, had made considerable donations to its support in the past.

Colin Richardson, Alvin Schick



Markey, Ronald Merville, born 30.1.1921 in Mullalyup,

WA; died 22.8.15 in Rossmoyne Adventist Retirement Village, Perth. On 20.9.1950 he married Joan Marnie Lyell. He was predeceased by his wife in 1965 and his son Stephen in 2005. On 1.1.1975 he married Joyce Phillips. He is survived by his wife (Perth); children Joe Markey (Perth) and Edna Lockington (Brisbane, Qld); Sandra Walker and Janet Crabbe (both of Perth, WA); nine grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; and two great-great-grandchildren. Ron was a man of unwavering faith in God which enabled him to face and rise above the many difficulties of life. He supported his church, his family and those in need.

Roger Millist, Barbara Reynolds



Merritt, Gail Lynette (nee McDonald), born 23.11.1940 in Brisbane, Qld; died 7.8.15 in Brisbane. She married Ken G Merritt on 12.12.1982. She is survived by her husband; and Tracey McCallum, Gavin Devlin, Andrea Hartley and Warren Devlin. Gail will be sadly missed by her husband, family and friends. She is sleeping, waiting for the resurrection when her Saviour returns.

Bob Possingham, Adrian Ebens

Miller, Edgar Henry, born 21.1.1931 in Cootamundra, NSW; died 25.7.15 in Ocean Shores. On 30.3.1958 he married Joy. He is survived by his wife (Ocean Shores); Kathie and Craig Chermiside (Cooranbong), Julie and Marshall Judd (Goulburn), Todd and Colette Miller (Perth, WA); and six grandchildren: Bennett, Madilyn, Emily, Claria, Isabella and Riley. Ed was a man who was much loved by his family and all those he came in contact with. His integrity and honesty were always foremost in his relationship with others. He will be greatly missed by his family and community at large. He had a quiet but strong relationship with God.

John Lang, Ray Dabson



Smith, Anthea (nee McBurnie), born 8.12.1945 in Brisbane, Qld; died 25.8.14 in Bundaberg. On 12.6.1967 she married Geoffrey John Smith. She was predeceased by her son Matthew. She is survived by her husband; and their daughters Karen and Melissa (Robina, Qld). Anthea served the South Qld Conference youth department for 25 years in a voluntary capacity as cook for many camps. She will be remembered by many young folk (who may not be so young now!!), not only for her great meals but also as a generous person in her care and compassion for the youth. Anthea was a wonderful wife and loving mother who is sadly missed.

Lloyd Grolimumd



Smith, Thirzah Florence (nee Rice), born 21.7.1920 in Howard, Qld died 12.2.15 in Victoria Point. On 6.4.1942 she married Cliff Smith, who predeceased her. She is

survived by her children: Geoffrey (Bundaberg), Judith (Cooranbong, NSW), Florence (Brisbane, Qld), Jennifer (Mt Isa) and Lyndell (Brisbane); 13 grandchildren; and 12 great-grandchildren. Thirzah served the Church in many capacities. During World War II, while Cliff was serving in Papua New Guinea, she worked as a colporteur in the Bundaberg area. She loved leading out in the children's Sabbath School divisions and for a number of years, together with her sister-in-law Ivy Rice, organised a community outreach program of craft and cooking demonstrations.

Andrew Litchfield



Walker, Douglas Stirling, born 19.2.1927 in Lakemba, NSW; died 3.7.15 in St John of God Hospital, Subiaco, WA. On 13.11.1958 he married Patricia Ellen Prout. He is survived by his wife; their children: Bronwyn and Rob Crawford (Thornlie), Greg and Ali (Stoneville), and Amanda (Parkerville); and five grandchildren. Doug was one of the most likeable and sociable people you could ever meet. He would say hello to "every man and his dog" in his locality. As a result, he was nicknamed "the mayor of Parkerville" by the community. Doug wasn't an in-your-face believer who wore his heart on his shirt sleeve as far as his faith was concerned; he was one of those people who quietly went about doing what he could to make the world a better place.

Lynn Burton

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Mullumbimby Adventist Church

celebrating 75 years—November 21, 2015. To register your interest, share photos and memorabilia, contact Carol Alt, email <carolalt@outlook.com> or phone (02) 6687 1247 by November 6, 2015.

Bendigo Adventist Church

invites you to join our December 5, 2015 thanksgiving for 125 years of the Advent message in our city; 40 years in the present dedicated building. For more information please ring (03) 5443 0177.

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Finally . . .

Sometimes you win . . . Sometimes you learn.

—John C Maxwell

Next RECORD Oct 31

SUPPORTING MINISTRY POSITIONS

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■ **Manager—Cedarvale Health & Lifestyle Retreat (Fitzroy Falls, NSW)** is seeking a person with good management skills to oversee an exciting and growing health ministry. Other skills useful in a health retreat setting would be helpful. (Current manager and cook heading up a new outreach department.) Applications close November 30, 2015 for early 2016 commencement. For more information phone (02) 4465 1362 or email <info@cedarvaleretreat.com.au>.

■ **Cook—Cedarvale Health & Lifestyle Retreat (Fitzroy Falls, NSW)** is seeking a person passionate about healthy cooking with good interpersonal skills. Commences early 2016. Applications close November 30, 2015. Phone (02) 4465 1362 or email <info@cedarvaleretreat.com.au>.

The above ministry is independent of the Seventh-day Adventist Church organisation but is supportive of the Church.

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