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Church planting training aims to reach Pacific

Honiara, Solomon Islands

The Trans-Pacific Union Mission's (TPUM) new initiative, Pacific Reach Movement, was run recently in Solomon Islands and is designed to see more local churches planting new churches.

"We have a vision that each local church will have a church planting project," said TPUM president Pastor Ma-veni Kaufononga.

The training session was attended by 225 pastors and members. Of those, 150 were hand-picked by local churches with the rest made up of church members who were interested in getting involved.

During the training, the groups from each local church worked on a plan that they could implement when they

returned home. "With God's help, we will see more churches planted around our region," Pastor Kaufononga said.

The training will now take place in Vanuatu and continue around the rest of the TPUM region. —Jarrod Stackelroth



Pacific Reach Movement participants.

Lifestyle medicine courses now count towards fellowship

Cooranbong, New South Wales



Is your lifestyle a medicine?

Units from Avondale College of Higher Education's postgraduate courses in lifestyle medicine will now help health sector employees in Australasia to earn a new professional fellowship.

The fellowship is an initiative of the Australasian Society of Lifestyle Medicine.

"It's a real advantage to the society and to our fellowship

candidates to enrol immediately in an established tertiary program," said the society's executive director Stephen Penman. Mr Penman and the convenor for the lifestyle medicine courses at Avondale, Dr Darren Morton, began formalising the arrangement as they collaborated on a one-night symposium exploring the future of health care and the contribution of lifestyle as medicine. The Adventist health message is the foundation for Avondale's innovative courses in lifestyle medicine. "An affiliation with a professional society builds awareness of our courses and credibility for our Lifestyle Research Centre," Dr Morton said. —Brenton Stacey

President urges support, stewardship for Fiji

Wahroonga, New South Wales

South Pacific Division (SPD) president Pastor Glenn Townend has called on church members around the region to help Fiji recover from Cyclone Winston.

"As disciples of Jesus many of us will help because we can and because we feel compelled to relieve suffering," he said.

The Adventist community has quickly mobilised support, including two concerts organised by Fijian young people from Sydney and Cooranbong that raised close to \$A18,000. One of the concerts, held at Avondale Memorial church, was supported by about 400 people, with slightly fewer at the second concert, held at Mountain View Adventist College (Sydney). The money will be directed to Fiji Mission's Cyclone Appeal account, set up in Australia for donations. The Enmore Fijian church is also planning to hold a concert.

Other initiatives include the organisation of containers of school supplies to be sent to Fiji, and individuals and teams travelling to the disaster areas to help out with the recovery and rebuilding efforts.

The Fijian locals remain positive and are well into

the rebuilding stage. Sawakasa church was rebuilt by local members using a Maranatha one-day church. Church elder Simeli Nalomaca said the members who hadn't been involved in the rebuilding effort

would be so excited to see the new church.

Pastor Townend is glad that the support is flowing in but recognises more needs to be done. "Besides funds and fly'n'builds, the Church in Fiji, like in many other places in the SPD, needs to understand the stewardship of insurance," he said. Some of the 70 church buildings destroyed in Fiji were not able to be insured while others that could have been insured were not. "There are cultural and financial issues that need to be worked on," Pastor Townend acknowledged. "Your support in helping Fiji in both rebuilding and the stewardship of insurance would be appreciated." —Jarrod Stackelroth



Fijian youth ran two fundraising concerts, raising \$A17,779.



Just kids

James Standish

I was standing in the garden of our Wahroonga home where my family was living temporarily. We had recently returned to Australia from Malaysia, my dad was working at the Sydney Adventist Hospital and I was plonked into my third school in as many years. It was in that milieu that my eight-year-old self had the most profound spiritual thought of my life: *What if the man I become later in life walks away from the God I love today? What control do I, just a kid, have over the future adult me?*

It turns out that they were the right questions to ask. And the right time to ask them.

George Barna concludes from his research that a person's worldview is developed by the time they are just nine years old. "Habits related to the practice of one's faith develop when one is young and change surprisingly little over time," he found. He also found that the younger a person is when they adopt a faith, the more likely they are to remain committed to it.

Standing in the sunny garden, I decided that I would never, ever, ever give up my love for Jesus Christ. And here I am, 42 years later, writing this note to you from an office across from where that old house once stood—precisely and entirely because of the decision that my eight-year-old self made all those years ago. It hasn't been a straight path. Nor unblemished by any stretch of the imagination. But the faith I have today is because of the decision I made then.

Now that I have my own children I think about what I can do to ensure they find a trusting relationship in Christ while they are young, so when they are old they don't depart from it. I've asked children's ministry experts. And I've had the very good fortune of visiting Greg Pratt's family service at Reedy Creek church in Queensland.

Personal experience, research and the Reedy Creek service convinced my wife and I that we couldn't afford church to be a boring irrelevance during our children's early years. And so we worked together with a group of friends and a couple of outstanding pastors—Mark Baines and Alban Matchiti—to create a church service aimed at engaging and inspiring kids. So what does the church service look like

and is it working? Timing matters. Kids at my daughters' school eat lunch at 11 am Monday to Friday, so we decided not to put church in the middle of their lunch hour. Instead, we start at 8.45 am, just like at school. We begin with a couple of songs that the kids lead. Then one of the children gives a welcome and says the opening prayer.

About 10 minutes into the service the sermon begins and lasts 15–20 minutes—like a TED talk. Not to dumb it down—but to smarten it up. Do sermonettes make Christians? Maybe. And that's why we aim for serious, thoughtful, spiritually challenging sermons that are well constructed and well delivered. Because how much you communicate is related to how well your sermon is prepared, not how long you take to deliver it.

Remember, the Sermon on the Mount only takes 11 minutes to read. Churchill's "Blood, Toil, Tears and Sweat" speech? Only five minutes. Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address? Less than three minutes. We agree with William Shakespeare that "brevity is the soul of wit". And, so far, it seems our kids do too . . .

Why have the sermon so early in the program? Because sermons require the most intense amount of attention. So we front-load the sermon when our concentration is fresh. Make sense?

And after the sermon? An interactive activity. Why? Because people learn not just from hearing but by interacting and exploring.

Time to build relationships in and out of church is integral to the service. Not an accidental add on to the "real church business"—loving each other IS the church business! As Jesus said, "Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples" (John 13: 35).

So how is our adventure in church service utopia going? Judging by the enthusiasm of the children who attend, it's going extremely well. And that matters. Because inside their hearts and their minds is who they will be, not just now but for the rest of their lives. They may be "just kids" but these kids are determining right now who their adult selves will be.

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Our vision is to be a church that...
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The least of these

Tracey Bridcutt

She sits atop an old milk crate, years of hardship written across her face. She mutters incoherently to the morning crowd—rushing to get to work, sipping on their lattes, eyes glued to their phones. Next to the crate is an old blanket. The woman appears to be in her early 40s but it's hard to tell. Her clothes are worn; she has no shoes. Where did she come from and how did she end up here?

But she's not alone. In the doorway of an empty shop a shirtless man is asleep. Across the road another man, covered in tattoos, sits cross-legged on the ground, strumming the Beatles' song "Here Comes The Sun" on his guitar, hoping that a few coins will be thrown his way. In a nearby park, people sleep on the grass, others on benches.

This is a part of Sydney you won't see in any glossy tourist brochures. It's hectic—home to Sydney's busiest railway station. It's dirty—fast food wrappers and cigarette butts litter the gutters. It smells—something akin to rancid milk. It's a place where you see humanity in all its shapes and forms: a cultural melting pot.

It's where a growing number of Sydney's destitute call home. The poor, the vulnerable, the marginalised. It's confronting, heartbreaking. And it's just a small drop in the ocean—more than 105,000 Australians currently have nowhere to call home, according to Homelessness Australia. Across the Tasman there are up to 20,000 New Zealanders "in temporary accommodation unsuited for long-term habitation", according to a report to parliament. In capital cities the problem is being exacerbated by high rents that are forcing more people onto the streets.

So what's our attitude? Do we throw a few dollars and continue walking, hoping that the money will be spent on food and not alcohol and cigarettes? As Seventh-day Adventist Christians we want to help; indeed we are compelled to if we heed the words of Jesus in Matthew 25 to love and help "the least of these".

Last year US pastor Tim Madding went a step further than most of us would be willing to go when he spent a week as a homeless person in Washington, DC. He ate in soup kitchens, slept next to the homeless and hung out with them on the streets. In an interview with *Adventist Review*, he said the question is not whether to help them but *how* to help them.

"It's important to take time to research the ministries in your city that are best able to serve the homeless and then team up with them," he advises. "Consider donating funds. Or better yet, grab a handful of people from your church and volunteer at their facilities on a regular basis. Ask the ministry for small information cards and in a loving, compassionate manner, give them to people on the street, letting them know where they can get real help."

And let's not forget the power of prayer. Pray for these defenceless souls as they struggle through life, daily battling the elements, searching for compassion but mostly receiving indifference.

I've long admired the efforts of The Salvation Army and other agencies that regularly provide food and care for the homeless. I've often wondered whether our Church is doing enough in this area. If Jesus was on earth right now I know where He'd be—sitting alongside the homeless woman on the crate, comforting her, providing her with food and hope, and showing her the love and acceptance we all so desperately need.

Tracey Bridcutt is copyeditor for *Adventist Record*.

Showing off!

Solomon Islands university students in Suva (Fiji) asked me to speak at one of their programs recently. The theme was "Showing off"!

At first I was puzzled by this theme because showing off is something I'm very much against. But in discussions with their leaders I came to understand where they were coming from. The theme was about discipleship and discipleship is about showing off that we are with Jesus. It's about being proud to acknowledge that we are with Christ.

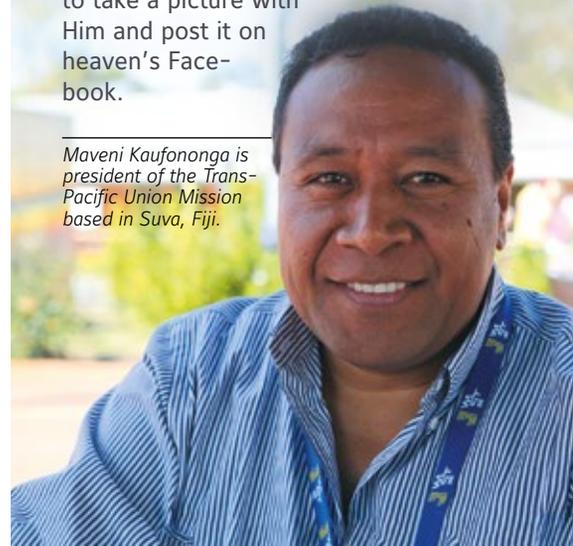
On Facebook I post pictures of myself with people I'm proud to be with. Some depict my family, who I love very much. Some show close friends and work colleagues; others are of high profile people who I happen to be near at the time. There are moments where we can't help but be proud when we are with great people.

How proud are you that you are with Jesus? How much of Him would you like to show off to those around you?

To mention just a few things about Jesus that make me so proud—His sacrifice on the cross for my sins and His willingness to forgive my sins. His power to calm the storm, heal the sick, raise the dead and to change lives. His plan for humanity that is beyond our world—it's eternal. How real He is and yet unseen.

He is a real Hero who I'm so proud to be with and I want to show Him off. When Jesus comes back in the clouds I would like to be the first one to take a picture with Him and post it on heaven's Facebook.

Maveni Kaufononga is president of the Trans-Pacific Union Mission based in Suva, Fiji.





Kiwis hurting too

Abuse survivors groups say an official government inquiry into institutional child sex abuse is long overdue in New Zealand. The ongoing Australian Royal Commission has brought the issue into sharp focus, with churches, community organisations and state institutions scrambling to improve their child safety policies and negotiate fair compensation arrangements. —*Newshub*



Christian uni club threatened

Sydney University's Evangelical Union (EU) has been told it must remove the requirement for club members to be Christians if it wants to maintain its registration with the student union. EU leaders are concerned atheist students may attempt to take over the club if the faith requirement is removed. —*Honi Soit*



Men make the difference

Married couples are happiest when the husband regularly attends church. US research of 1600 married adults found that the percentage of happy individuals jumped from 67 to 78 per cent when the husband attended church, regardless of whether his wife accompanied him. When the wife attended alone, the percentage dropped to 59 per cent. —*Institute for Family Studies*



Adventists vs Zika

Thousands of students from Adventist institutions around Brazil have embarked on a mass public awareness campaign that informs the public about the Zika virus and how to prevent it. Seminars are being held, pamphlets are being handed out on the street and a website has been set up. —*Adventist Review*



Warning

The head of the Chaldean Catholic Church has distanced himself from Chaldean and Assyrian Christian militia groups formed in response to ISIS. Patriarch Louis Raphael I warned the formation of specifically Christian armed groups may result in a "holocaust". Instead, he said, Christians can join official Iraqi or Kurdish forces. —*Agenzia Fides*

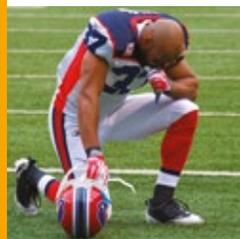


Photo credit: Ed Yourdon

Extremist Christians?

A study of 1000 US adults found that a majority of the religious sceptics surveyed identified traditional Christian behaviours and beliefs as "somewhat" or "very" extreme. Examples? Attempting to convert others (83 per cent), teaching children that same-sex relationships are wrong (76 per cent) and praying out loud in public for a stranger (63 per cent). —*Barna Group*

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Church repents, forgives

Madang, Papua New Guinea

Tears and pleas for forgiveness marked a reconciliation meeting of the Adventist congregation at Boroï, between Wewak and Madang along Papua New Guinea's northern coastline.

The gathering came at the close of week-long revival meetings last month featuring preaching by Madang Manus Mission president Pastor Gary Laukei and local district director Morris Mania.

"For a very long time the church, school and members experienced defeat," Pastor Laukei said. "They did not know why they were not successful. Children did not go to high school, businesses were not progressing well, the church building was not completed and the atmosphere was not pleasing because of hatred, gossiping, accusation and fighting."

The idea of a reconciliation gathering came from former Adventist pastor Danny Mukar and was embraced by church leaders, with a committee established to organise the event. Pastor Laukei prepared the congregation, saying that "having come to the light, we are to walk in the light as children of the light". He said the foundation to a blessed life is obedience to God while disobedience is the basis for a cursed life. When we obey God, he said, we will receive abundant life.

The reconciliation finale brought everyone together, with members of the church saying sorry to one another and crying for the harms that had taken place. Forgiveness was willingly granted and members promised one another not to repeat the mistakes that had been so damaging for

the church, the community and themselves. Adventist owners of local trucking companies who had been conducting their businesses on Sabbath and had been

unfaithful in returning their tithes and offerings, felt that a restitution should be made. They came forward to give their tithes and offerings during the reconciliation program. Church members and members of the community came with their sin offerings and asked God for forgiveness. Parents prayed, asking God to forgive their mistakes and to allow their children to succeed in life.

"This is an historic moment for Boroï church to put up this reconciliation program and we praise God for this," Pastor Laukei said. "If all the churches in Madang Manus Mission can do the same, the whole Mission will experience success and the church will become a better place to serve God."

Kelvin Karbo, chairman of the reconciliation program, said the congregation is now ready to work together as a united family to carry out the disciple-making mission of the church. —Kelvin Karbo/Garry Laukei/Kent Kingston



Members brought fruit and vegetables as offerings.

Church made visible

Silver Spring, Maryland, US



Ryde's new 6m sign with high resolution LED screen.

South Pacific Division communication director James Standish represented the SPD at a recent discussion on Adventist branding at the World Communications Advisory in Maryland, United States.

The discussion took place at the request of General Conference (GC) president Ted Wilson in response to the new SPD church signs that are designed to be visible, legible and consistent.

"I want to congratulate the SPD for their work on the Adventist brand," said Brian Gray, the designer of the Adventist logo, at the beginning of his presentation.

"It was a pleasure to present on behalf of the South Pacific to Adventist communications directors from around the world," Mr Standish said. "The re-

sponse to the exhaustive work the SPD has undertaken was very encouraging."

"You had overwhelming support from Division communication directors," wrote Dan Weber, communications director of the North American Division, summarising the discussion that followed the SPD presentation. Julio Munoz, his associate, concurred: "I'm just so impressed with what [the SPD has] developed . . . This is much needed and long overdue."

"We have let the GC and other divisions know we are pleased to assist in any way we can to raise the profile of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the message we're entrusted to share," Mr Standish said. "This is one tool in that direction." —Record staff

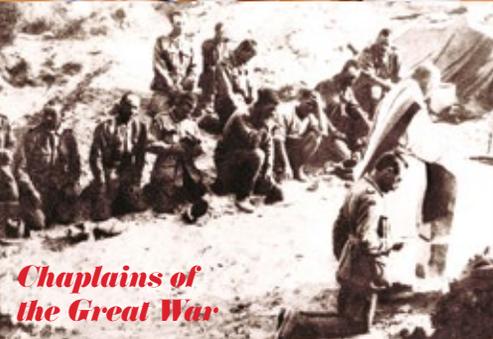
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Avondale student and talented musician dies in car accident

Cooranbong, New South Wales

An Avondale College student who died in a car accident looked forward to studying chaplaincy so he could share his faith with others through music.

Lafai Michael Key, 20, was a talented musician and singer who often led praise and worship at Avondale School, Central Coast Seventh-day Adventist Community Church and The Haven, the Adventist church on the campus of Central Coast Adventist School.

"He was meant to study teaching but when he enrolled he changed his mind and chose ministry," said Robert Collins, an uncle Mr Key lived with in Cooranbong. "He wanted to get into chaplaincy to share his talents with children and young adults. He wanted to use his talent to bring people to know his God."

Following the March 15 accident, staff and students on the college's Lake Macquarie campus remembered Mr Key at the beginning of their weekly community-building event The Pulse. President Professor Ray Roennfeldt prayed for Mr Key's family and friends then encouraged those praying with him to consider in silence the meaning of life and the meaning of the young student's life. His conclusion offered hope. "Lord, we thank you for the promises in Your Word that Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life," he said. "We thank you for the promise that there will be a day when there will be no more death or sorrow or pain. We all look forward to that day."

On-campus access to counsellors, to the chaplain and to the senior minister of Avondale College church was made available to all students in the days following the accident.

Mr Key, a first-year Diploma of General Studies student, had been attending classes with students from Avondale Seminary this semester after enrolling in the units Introduction to Theology and Gospels A. He died after his car collided with a school bus on its afternoon run. The bus had about 30 children on board; one was treated for a minor injury. —Brenton Stacey/Record staff



Lafai Michael Key, 20.

OPINION POLL

Did you experience any intentional follow-up after your baptism?

- Yes, I was placed in a new class/program and disciplined further.
- Yes, someone continued studies with me.
- Yes, someone visited me (at least once).
- No, I moved on soon after.
- No, nothing happened.



What is the biggest obstacle to

BAPTISM?

by Sara Bolst

When it comes to baptism, Seventh-day Adventists have a lot to say and, thanks to a new study, now have a place to say it. Almost 1500 Adventists aged 18 years and older participated in the *Before and Beyond Baptism* study, which the Church in the South Pacific sponsored to investigate the relationship between the Church's baptismal practices and its membership, Christian maturity and commitment to core Adventist beliefs.

Their responses surprised Barbara Fisher, a retired senior lecturer in education, religion and literacy at Avondale College of Higher Education and the study's lead researcher. She used a 38-item questionnaire as her survey tool. Almost one-third of the participants wrote additional comments—some up to two pages—on the back of the questionnaire.

"Thanks for the opportunity," one participant wrote. "It was slightly cathartic. No-one has ever asked me before."

The questionnaire asked about background, ideal baptism age, re-baptism and the participant's past and current relationship with the Church. The findings of the preliminary report, announced in August last year, were, on the whole, encouraging. Eight out of 10 participants indicated they could "definitely" see themselves as a member of the Church in 10 years; one in five had accepted Jesus as their Saviour before or by age nine.

The findings of the final report reveal strong affirmation of Adventist core beliefs across all age groups but confusion about the use of terms—is baptism "into Christ" or "into the Church"? Some participants felt baptism should be separate from church membership while others felt it should not. One commented that "wanting to be baptised without becoming part of the Church is like wanting to get married without having a spouse".

Participants listed both pre- and post-baptism mentoring as areas needing improvement, with many suggesting ways mentoring could be implemented in local churches. But despite most saying they had not received the mentoring they believed necessary, 95 per cent of participants indicated they were attending an Adventist church. "Baptism was an important turning point in my life, perhaps the most important day of my life," one said.

Many participants emphasised the need to take requests for baptism seriously, regardless of the individual's age.

They cited lack of follow-up on requests for pre-baptism study as a reason why many church attendees, particularly young adults, had not yet been baptised. "I put up my hand a number of times at Big Camp," a young adult participant said. "They took my name but never followed up."

One participant aged 20-25 had attended Adventist schools for 12 years but let his church attendance wane when requests for pre-baptism study were not followed up. "I know others in my generation with exactly the same reason who have now left the Church to pursue other things," he said.

"It's heartbreaking to know that, for some young adults, the biggest obstacle to baptism is follow through," Ms Fisher said. "This epitomises the saddest reason for not being baptised. There hasn't been a forum to address issues like this before, so I hope the study is a good first step."

It appears it has been. Since announcing the findings of the preliminary report, Ms Fisher has noted that presidents of the Church's conferences have been highlighting the importance of follow through with their ministers and implementing methods to ensure requests are taken seriously. For example, the North New South Wales Conference has developed an app called *For The One* that logs all incoming requests for baptism study. "Barbara's research has been very helpful in making us aware of this issue," said Pastor Justin Lawman, president of the Conference. "We've got to be faithful in following through with the requests we do have before we solicit new ones."

For The One establishes an accountability system that places initial responsibility with the local church minister. If the request is not followed up within two weeks, responsibility moves to an area mentor and then to the Conference. The app is being trialled this year. "It's early on but we think *For The One* has the potential to be a game changer for our Church," Pastor Lawman said.

For Ms Fisher, the knowledge her research has helped bring about change is pleasing. "If one young adult has been listened to as a result of this study, then it has all been worth it," she said.

Sara Bolst is assistant public relations officer at Avondale College of Higher Education.

... the biggest obstacle to baptism is follow through.



Nehemiah's surprising leadership lessons

by Younis Masih

ASKING QUESTIONS OFTEN SEPARATES successful people from those who are unsuccessful. Why? Because you only get answers to the questions you ask. No questions—no answers,” observes John C Maxwell.¹

If there was one leader who knew how to ask the right questions it was Nehemiah. Nehemiah conquered leadership heights not because he had answers for all questions but because he asked the right questions and then looked for the right answers. According to David Anthony Clarke, “an inquisitive leader asks more questions than average leaders ask, makes better decisions than average leaders make and achieves greater results than average leaders achieve.”²

Nehemiah was an inquisitive leader. He wanted to hear a first-hand report about his people. He wanted to get involved. Nehemiah was greatly concerned about what was happening in Jerusalem. This is what separated him from others in his context—but it wasn't the only thing. To understand the other factors, let's look again at the story.

During the 20th year of the Persian King Artaxerxes I in the month of Kislev (December 5, 445 to January 3, 444), Hanani (likely to be the actual brother of Nehemiah, see Nehemiah 7:2) and some other men returned from Judah to the citadel of Susa. Susa was one of several Persian capitals, located 161 kilometres north of the Persian Gulf.³ Most probably, when Nehemiah heard about the arrival of his brothers from Jerusalem he immediately went to meet them and ask questions about the Jewish remnant who survived the exile, and also about Jerusalem (Nehemiah

1:2). The Hebrew word translated as “questioned” implies that Nehemiah longed to have some information about his people. This word can also be translated as “to inquire or demand” an answer.⁴ The fact that Nehemiah approached his brethren and enquired or questioned them implies his love and concern for his people.

It must have been a joyful time for the Israelites when under the Persian king Cyrus they received the first decree in 537 BC to return to Jerusalem (Ezra 1:1). About 536 BC Zerubbabel returned to Jerusalem with around 50,000 Jews (Ezra 2:3). By 515 BC the temple was most likely dedicated (Ezra 6:15) and by 510 BC the second decree was issued by Darius I for the Israelites to return, but not much was achieved in regards to rebuilding the city (Ezra 6:1-12). Hanani reported to Nehemiah that those who survived the exile and went back to Judah were in great trouble and disgrace, the wall of Jerusalem was broken down, and its gates had been burned with fire.

Imagine the feelings of those who returned to Jerusalem after about 70 years of captivity. They must have heaved a sigh of relief after years of slavery, cruelty and suppression. They were free at last to return and rebuild their lives and their city. However, that sigh of freedom and joy wouldn't have lasted too long. As soon as they stepped into their homeland, which appeared more like a no man's land, they were welcomed by trouble and disgrace (Nehemiah 1:3). The broken walls, charred, rotting gates and ruined city welcomed them. The broken walls were a constant reminder of insecurity against their enemies.

The Hebrew word translated as disgrace can also be

translated as “reproach, sharp, cutting, penetrating, piercing”.⁵ The Israelites were being ridiculed and slandered by sharp, cutting and piercing comments of enemies of the true faith. And because of the ruined city of Jerusalem God’s Name was being dishonoured and ridiculed. It pained Nehemiah’s heart when he heard the report about his people and his homeland.

Nehemiah could have chosen to respond to Hanani’s report in two ways. Firstly, he could have simply ignored it. Secondly, when he heard the report he could have expressed his sadness somewhat in this way: “Well Hanani, I’m sorry that our brethren are experiencing hardships and troubles. I wish they had never left Persia. Perhaps it wasn’t the right time for them to return to Jerusalem. I wish I could do something for you all but I have got my life here. I stand in the presence of the Persian king and God has given me this amazing job and life.” I’m glad that Nehemiah did neither of the above. He didn’t ignore the report and he didn’t make any excuses. He did what any godly leader must do: he wept, he fasted, he mourned. Not just for a day or two either. Yes, almost for three to four months. He heard the report during the month of Kislev, the ninth month (December 5, 445 to January 3, 444 BC), but he took the matter to the king in Nisan, April 2, 444 BC (Nehemiah 2:1).

Ever wondered why Nehemiah waited three or four months after he heard the report? Why didn’t he immediately use his position of influence and do something for his people? The delay could have been for a number of reasons.

Firstly, it’s possible that the king was absent from his capital.

Secondly, even if the king was there, his moody character may have forced Nehemiah to wait for an opportune moment for placing the petition before him.

Thirdly, about 14 years earlier (Ezra 7:8,9), under the leadership of Ezra, some Jews had already journeyed back to Jerusalem in the month of Nisan (verse 9). It was usually very dry at that time of year and was a suitable time to make such a journey, one that a caravan required several months to complete. Nehemiah shared with the Persian king about the sad condition of Jerusalem in the month of Nisan and perhaps in the same month he also journeyed to Jerusalem. Could it be that Ezra’s earlier departure from Persia in the month of Nisan was another reason why Nehemiah waited three to four months before he shared with Artaxerxes I about Jerusalem? If this was the case he stands out as an extraordinary planner.

Fourthly, probably Nehemiah waited intentionally because he first shared the matter and his true feelings with the King of heaven before he shared them with the king of Persia.

So what lessons of leadership come from Nehemiah’s

Broken leaders build broken walls.

story? There are at least seven lessons worth considering:

1. A great leader never stops asking questions. It’s often asking questions that separates successful people from those who are unsuccessful.

2. A leader’s concern for his/her people originates from the deep love he/she has for them and that love prompts him/her to take action. Hanani’s burden for his people motivated him to travel all the way from Jerusalem to Persia (a distance that took several months to cover).

3. A leader is enthused by the burden for those he/she leads.

4. Broken leaders build broken walls. The broken walls and disgrace of Jerusalem broke firstly the hearts of Hanani and those who were with him and then the heart of Nehemiah and motivated them to take action.

5. Godly leaders can see the disgrace and trouble of their people and they cannot bear to hear God’s Name being ridiculed. They show genuine concern for their people.

6. A true leader feels the pain of his/her people and makes their problem his/her own.

7. A godly leader takes the matter to God before proposing any solution.

Nehemiah’s leadership example has inspired me to examine my own leadership style. You may want to also consider these questions:

1. Am I an inquisitive leader?

2. How have I expressed my love and care for those I lead and do I know what they are going through and do I genuinely love them?

3. How can I help my people to come closer to God?

4. Today, I am surrounded by broken homes, broken marriages, broken families and broken lives. Does it pain my heart when I see people struggling?

5. What are some of the ways through which God’s Name is being ridiculed around me and what am I going to do about it?

6. Am I a genuine leader who shows genuine concern for people, feels their pain and makes their problems my own?

7. Am I willing to take urgent, important or even minor decisions to God before moving ahead with my own solutions? R

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2. David Anthony Clarke, “Inquisitive Leadership,” Cited 2 March 2016. Online: <http://www.pastorclarke.com/Inquisitive-Leadership>.

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4. John A. Beck, “שׁוֹשַׁן,” NIDOTTE 4:7-10.

5. John E. Hartley, “הֶרֶץ,” NIDOTTE 2:280-82.

Younis Masih is associate pastor of Invercargill church, New Zealand.

Don't forget the kids

by Daron Pratt

IN 2003 GEORGE BARNA WROTE A BOOK THAT redefined the children's ministries movement. *Transforming Children Into Spiritual Champions* identified the following:

- 1) Children are more likely to make a decision to follow Christ before they reach their teenage years.
- 2) Unless we disciple a child before the age of 14 we will face an uphill battle after that!
- 3) Our moral compass is set by the age of nine; the chances of changing after that are slim. We tend to go after the slim pickings and leave the harvest (children) to rot in the field.

4) Children are more likely to adopt the faith of their parents than any other influencer. We can't expect schools or churches to make up for a lack of authentic Christianity at home.

Many books and a huge amount of research have since come on the scene that support what Barna found. Are we at all surprised that modern research backs up the ancient wisdom found in the Bible. After all, it's in Scripture that we read:

"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6).

Do we focus on this biblical truth? Have we implemented the lessons from the research that follows from it?

A whole generation of children have been born since 2003 and are now teenagers. Have we kept them? Or have we continued focusing our resources and energies on bringing older people to the faith and losing our own children? This question should shape our corporate structure, strategies and spending. Have we focused effectively? I don't believe we have.

Most of our church budgetary spending goes to youth and adult ministries. We begin discipleship too late.

We continue to discuss discipleship from an evangelistic perspective—reaching the people "out there". But the great commission begins at home. Often we are out trying to

win the recalcitrant masses to the detriment of our own children and marriages. I have seen it too many times.

We continue to promote discipleship models that are based in the church or school. We often see children and children's ministries in our churches and in other levels of power as a women's thing—leaving the dads out of the picture. Reaching our children is the most important thing both parents can do—and like most things in the family it's best done as a team.

Parents sometimes say they're too busy to disciple their children. But if we're too busy for our own children what does that say about our skewed priorities? We can't just send our children to church school and Sabbath School and expect someone else to do what we have failed to do. Yes, those are important to support parents' work of spiritual leadership but they are not substitutes for parents' leadership.

When it comes to discipleship incarnation trumps proclamation every time. (Deuteronomy 6:4-12). Discipleship is 24/7 living and it has to be in the home. Children need a mum and a dad who will show them what living as a Christian looks like.

It's time to focus all that we do on the home. Unless the church is equipping the home we are not doing discipleship.

Let's not let another 13 years go by and lose another half of our children! Every church leader, every pastor and every parent should read *Transforming Children into Spiritual Champions*. The Bible-based, research-confirmed answers are in our hands. It's up to us to implement them. Our mission is discipleship. Let's focus our resources on our children. Because children nine and younger are most ripe for the seeds of the gospel.

Jesus focused on children. We need to, too.



Daron Pratt is Children's Ministries director for North New South Wales.



R HEALTH FEATURE

with Cathy McDonald

Make your move

Regular physical activity has amazing benefits for our health. It can help manage stress, alleviate depression and anxiety, and boost self-esteem, mood and mental alertness. It can also provide great social benefits, with team and group activities especially benefiting children. In children activity has been associated with improved school performance, a greater sense of personal responsibility and less drug and alcohol consumption.

So it's concerning that only 10 per cent of Australian children aged 13 to 17 are meeting their daily requirements for physical activity. Of even more concern is that young females are twice as likely to be sedentary than their male counterparts.

Building healthy habits for life starts in childhood so it's important to understand the barriers standing in the way of girls getting active. The 2016 *Physical Activity and Sport Participation Campaign Insights Report* found that the fear of being judged or ridiculed was a key barrier for young women wanting to become physically active.

To help with this, the Australian Government has recently launched the Girls Make Your Move campaign to help young Australian women get active, with resources for young women, parents and teachers to help build activity into everyday life.



For more information on the campaign and some great resources for building healthy activity habits, visit www.health.gov.au/girlsmove



Caramelised banana and fresh date pudding

Preparation time: 8 minutes Cooking time: 50 minutes Serves: 6

- 30g margarine**
- 8 slices fruit bread (toast thickness)**
- 3 bananas, thinly sliced**
- 6 fresh dates, seeded and chopped**
- 2 cups Vanilla flavoured Sanitarium So Good**
- 3 eggs**
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon**
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar**

1. Spread margarine on both sides of bread and cut off crusts. Cut bread slices in half.
3. Place one layer of bread in a 20cm base, square, ovenproof dish and arrange half banana over the top.
4. Sprinkle with dates. Repeat layer of bread and banana.
5. Combine So Good, eggs and cinnamon in a jug.
6. Pour milk mixture over bread.
7. Sprinkle with brown sugar.
8. Bake in a moderate oven, 180°C, for 45-50 minutes. Serve with grilled pineapple.

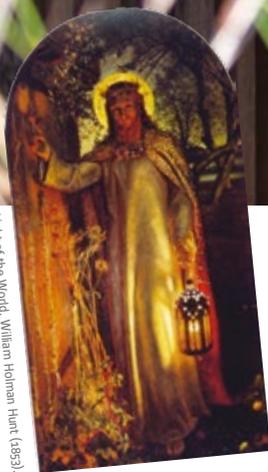
NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVE: Kilojoules 1345kJ (320 cal). Protein 10g. Total fat 10g. Carbohydrate 47g. Sodium 210mg. Potassium 515mg. Calcium 144mg. Iron 2.2mg. Fibre 5g.

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

The picture of *Jesus* by Pauline Ferkula



Light of the World, William Holman Hunt (1853)

THERE'S A PICTURE I'VE seen of Jesus knocking on a door while holding a light. I've always understood that the scene is a picture of a person's heart. However, it wasn't until many years later that I noticed and

understood a tiny detail—the door in the picture doesn't have a handle. Jesus can't invite Himself into our hearts. We have to let Him in.

About six or seven years ago, I got a knock on the door of my home. Looking back, it was almost as though the picture came to life.

Culture and religion

My name is Pauline Ferkula. I'm a Dunghutti Aboriginal woman originally from Kempsey on New South Wales' mid-north coast. I grew up in a very large family with strong connections to my family members as well as to our cultural ways. In the midst of that, Jesus, Christianity and Adventism were a real part of my childhood. Thinking back, there was always a bit of confusion around believing in our cultural ways as well as in God; understanding how to relate Him to it all.

My uncle was the first Aboriginal pastor in our church

and Adventism was widespread in our community—it still is. Looking back, I can see that a seed was being planted in my heart that would sprout many years later. In our Adventist community we took part in many activities like Pathfinders and ATSIM (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ministries) camps.

My father was Seventh-day Adventist and my mother was from a Catholic family. She later converted to Adventism and had a very strong influence on my Christian experience. They say women are the teachers in the family. Well, as a kid, my mother was the one who let us know what ministry was all about. My mother didn't have her driver's licence so walking was a big part of my childhood. I have clear memories of walking for ages with her to the hospital after church to visit people and sing for them.

Experiencing God

Although I grew up surrounded by Christianity, the experience and the relationship with Jesus was something I understood in my head but not yet in my heart. As a child, I carried out all of the actions of being a Christian but I didn't have a true understanding in my heart of what it meant to live Christianity. As I grew older and approached adulthood, I began to drift from my upbringing.

As an adult, several tragic things happened that caused me to not only disconnect from Christianity but also to

question God and His love. In 1998, after carrying my son for many months, I gave birth to a stillborn baby. This crushed me. Three months later, my father passed away. He had always been a great confidante for me so this hit me just as hard as the loss of my son.

Around the same time, my sister lost her little one two days after giving birth. The combination of all of these things was really hard for me to deal with. I began to journey through my darkest time ever. I stopped smiling and the anger began to mount. I started shutting myself in my house—I was living in Sydney by then—only leaving to see family members and always carrying around a cloud of anger wherever I went. So it's understandable that when I heard the knock at my door that day I quickly shushed my children so the knocking would stop.

The knock at the door

I remember the day distinctly. During that time everything I did seemed to happen in slow motion. I sat with a slump. I walked as though I had a big bag filled with rocks resting on my back. It felt like the weight of the world was on my shoulders, and let me tell you, the weight of the world is pretty heavy! Looking back, I can see that the enemy was tormenting me, though I wasn't spiritually savvy enough at the time to realise this.

I was so depressed. I'd recently had a car accident that prevented me from looking after my children the way other mothers do. My children had to practically teach themselves to do things I otherwise would have done for them.

So when I heard a knock at the door that day, as I sat under the weight of the world, my immediate reaction was, *don't answer*. I wanted to avoid detection from whoever was outside my door.

However, the strangest thing happened. In the midst of not wanting to answer, I felt the strongest urge that I must answer. I felt so strongly compelled to open the door that I did.

Opening the door

That was the first day in a long time that I had let Jesus into my heart, just like I saw in the picture. On the other side of the door was Danuta Stockwell, a literature evangelist. After a conversation she invited me to have Bible studies, which I accepted. That was how my journey to getting baptised began.

Danuta and the local Adventist pastor, Johnny Murison, began visiting regularly and giving us Bible studies. Their love and persistence were the key to me attending church again regularly. Along with that, the ATSIM camps—a strong memory from my childhood, along with things I'd learned in Pathfinders and at church—were crucial to my return.

Focus on family

Initially I found it very hard to be the only Spirit-filled person in my home. I realised that God wanted me to focus first on my family and then to go from there. My husband, though not an Adventist, supports our family spiritually, attends church with us and participates with us in ministry. There's even a noticeable difference in my son now that he knows Jesus. A year ago, my two older daughters were baptised in Kempsey. This confirmed for me that I'm doing my work as a mum who believes in the truth.

Now my daughters and I do ministry together, just like I used to do with my mum. Though we don't have the greatest voices, we love to gather in my room and practice songs together. When God prompts us, we go and minister to people in the community. Recently, we sang to a woman admitted to Royal Prince Alfred Hospital. We took her a big basket of toiletries from the women's ministry at Mountain View church (Doonside, Sydney). She later asked us if it was too late to go to church. For us, if we can bring someone to Jesus, that's what it's all about.

A mother's struggle

Ministry has become so fulfilling for me. I've seen God work in miraculous ways in the lives of many people around me. God has even entrusted me to share Jesus with various women I meet. One of them is Jenny. Jenny and I have a lot in common and so I'm able to identify with her struggles. Like me, she's a mum who has been through a lot. Over time I've seen her life change so much, which is a testament to the

power of Jesus. Jenny is very connected to the community; she knows everyone and how they're connected to each other. This is brilliant knowledge to have and she's using it in a good way to reach people. Jenny is now beginning to come to church and has the desire to work for God.

It's fulfilling to know that God has been right beside me throughout my journey, from childhood until today. He was only waiting for me to invite Him in. Now I see ministry in everything I do. As a family, we minister in the Adventist community and with all of God's people, wherever He places us.

I was recently appointed as a church elder at Mountain View church. I was thinking, *God, do you really want me to do this?* There was a bit of doubt there but I know that fear holds us back and fear is of the enemy. With this in mind I thought to myself, *I'm going to do this with 110 per cent of my effort and energy.* With that resolve and with the conviction of what God has done in my life and in the lives of my family, I'm going to help whoever God puts in my path.

Pauline Ferkula, as told to Rachel Lemons Aitken. Article reprinted courtesy of IntraSyd.

I was so depressed. I'd recently had a car accident that prevented me from looking after my children the way other mothers do.



Celebration!

Coralee Wainman recently celebrated her 104th birthday at Avondale Lifestyle Community's Aged Care facility (Cooranbong, NSW). Coralee moved to Cooranbong as a young child and lived in the historic Ellen G White "Sunnyside" home. Later she married Frank Wainman, a pioneer Adventist aviator, who flew with her to Sydney to buy an engagement ring in Charles Kingsford Smith's Southern Cross plane, which had completed the world's first Trans-Pacific flight only a few years earlier. According to her daughter, Coralee's recipe for longevity is "lots of sugar, salt and chocolate, Weet-Bix for breakfast and no exercise whatsoever". — *Adventist Senior Living*.



Men's ministry

Peter Shuttleworth, leader of men's ministry at Edmonton church (Qld), recently organised a three-day camp for men aged 18-plus. Themes included expectations and roles for men in family, society and Scripture, spiritual leadership in marriage and keeping one another accountable. The church has committed money and personnel to a permanent men's ministry in 2016. — *Top News*



Live deliberately

Professor Ray Roennfeldt, president of Avondale College, challenged staff and students to live deliberately during his speech at the college's Opening Convocation, held on the Lake Macquarie campus on March 2 and on the Sydney campus on March 3. Prof Roennfeldt expressed his hopes that students would develop the power to think and do and "to, as Ellen White says, train youth to be thinkers and not mere reflectors of the thoughts of others. That's what education is about." — *Brenton Stacey*



Age no barrier for Mary

At 94, Eileen Johnston continues to play an active role at Parkes church (NSW). Known to her church family as "Mary", she started a craft group in the church hall four years ago. She is also the Sabbath School leader. The craft group is attended by up to 16 people, including members of the community, and has sent 90 rugs to Vanuatu over the past four years. They have also donated rugs to Ronald McDonald House at Orange and a nursing home in Parkes, and have sent 90 bags of emergency supplies to a women's refuge in Forbes. — *Ann Tasker*



Focus on addictions

Visiting US speaker Cheri Peters was recently in Sydney (NSW) to share her personal testimony and provide information and encouragement for people struggling with addictions. Working with Greater Sydney Conference, Ms Peters presented for a number of churches, including Ryde, Mount Druitt, The Way, Fountain in the City and Church in the Fields. — *Record staff*



Recipe for success

Kilcoy (Qld) Adventist Church's Recipe Club was nominated earlier this year for Somerset Council's Australia Day Community Group award. For the past eight years the small congregation has been presenting regular vegetarian cooking demonstrations and health information programs for their rural community with consistent attendance of 20 to 25 local people. "Although we did not receive an award on Australia Day," said Kilcoy member Cheryl Granter, "we celebrate the knowledge that obviously someone in our community felt we were worthy of recognition for endeavouring to present healthy lifestyle habits and showing that we care." — *Kilcoy Adventist Church*



The King's island:

How God rescued one small church on the edge of oblivion

by Vivian Hill

IT WAS ABOUT TWO YEARS AGO THAT FAITHFUL Adventist patriarch, Laurie Morgan, passed to his rest just prior to his 95th birthday. That left a young man, Freddy, as the only King Island (Tasmania) resident regularly attending our monthly Adventist worship services.

I had begun visiting King Island in June 2009 and quickly became aware that we had a beautiful Adventist church near the centre of the main town, Currie. Twice on Sabbath mornings I had turned up wishing to participate in fellowship and worship.

However, I was soon to learn that not long before the death of Laurie's wife Nora, this aged but very faithful couple had stopped opening up the church each week. Any infrequent get-togethers were held at Laurie's home.

It was against this backdrop that I met up with Barry Whelan, who was conducting Laurie's funeral. Back in the early 1980s, Barry was the resident Adventist minister on King Island for two and-a-half years. He organised the building of the church with help from the locals and he was the dynamo, under God, responsible for building up the church membership to around 40.

Barry and I, a pastor and retired educator, respectively, shared the burden we felt for the King Island church and its people and our keen determination to do something about rescuing the church from oblivion. We agreed that church services had to happen every week—not just once or twice a month—and that they definitely needed to happen in the church building.

So early in 2014 I sought out sponsorships and we raised enough money for Barry and I to fly over to the island on a weekly basis for two months. We agreed to review our involvement after this trial period.

Of course, once we started there was no way that God was going to allow us to stop. Financially, the Lord has continued to provide through donations from family and a few friends, plus support from the Leongatha and Yarra Valley Adventist churches in Victoria. Barry and I also put

in. And the Tasmanian Conference also helps with one return airfare each month.

Our first service in the re-opened church was held during Easter 2014. We started with one but we now have 22 (including Barry and me) on our informal roll. It's amazing what can happen—even in a place where the population is just 1500—when people start talking and sharing and when the wonder of God's great love is promoted. Only nine of these 22 are formal Adventist members and much of the growth has come about when non-members have spread the word amongst their friends.

Boosting our numbers and offering the potential of strong local leadership has been the recent arrival of a family of four. This family farmed pecan nuts in rural South Africa and, looking to escape the country's political instability, bought a cattle property on King Island. The delightful thing is that they've said that they wouldn't have considered settling on King Island if there hadn't been an active Adventist church there.

Also pleasing is that eight of our 22 attendees are in the 15–35 age range. This augers well for the fellowship's future; in contrast the other King Island churches have virtually no attendees in this younger age bracket.

Recently, we've had people asking us to commence Bible studies. It's amazing to see how God has worked and is continuing to work. To God be the glory, great things He is doing—even on King Island! ✂



Vivian Hill is a retired Adventist educator living in Melbourne, Vic. He and Barry Whelan, a palliative care minister, alternate travelling to King Island to lead the worship service each Sabbath. Article originally published in Tasda.



The power of choice

by Patricia Gonçalves

L-R: Gustavo (brother-in-law), Everton (husband), Patricia, Juliana (sister), Ines (mother) and Gustavo Filho (nephew).

HAVE YOU EVER MADE A BAD DECISION without considering the consequences?

Well, if you haven't, I congratulate you. Unfortunately I wasn't so wise.

I grew up in a Catholic family but I don't remember attending church as a child. Religion was more a part of my culture than a part of my life. And at that stage my family was more important to me than God.

I loved my mum and my sister but I was particularly close to my dad. He was my hero and I loved him unconditionally. Each day I couldn't wait to get home from school so that I could spend time with him.

Sadly, when I was in fourth grade, my parents divorced.



Patricia's dad.

It came as a complete shock to me. I'd never even seen them have an argument. My father found another place to live while my mum, my sister and I went to live with my grandparents. With one painful choice my world was torn apart.

My school friends loved talking about their parents—what fun they had together, the cool adventures their fathers took them on, the family vacations they were planning. I didn't have much to contribute. Because I had a broken family.

I started blaming my mum for the divorce and for separating me from my dad. I couldn't accept that I had to live with the consequences of something that had been their choice. Why couldn't my parents see that I was hurting? I wanted them to feel the pain that they had caused me.

I was only 11 years old and in Year 5. What could a little girl do that would affect her parents? I didn't have many options but I eventually came up with an idea.

Mum had always stressed the importance of education.

She had always been top of the class during her school years and seeing her children getting good grades never failed to make her happy. I didn't want her to be happy anymore. I decided I would forget about studying and stop paying attention in class. My grades would slip and I would fail my exams. Maybe then Mum would notice that something was wrong.

Things went according to plan. My grades did slip. At the end of the year I failed and was told I would have to repeat Year 5. All of my friends had passed and would be continuing on to Year 6. Suddenly I realised I wouldn't be following them.

It was right about then that I came to understand how much my choice would cost me. Of course, Mum was really upset that I had failed. But I was the one who ultimately would be paying the higher price. I would have to study the same subjects again—and lose all my friends in the process.

I praise God for His mercy. I made a careless choice without considering the consequences. And He still found a way to reach me.

When I started Year 5 for the second time, I met a new student named Giannina. She was a faithful Christian girl and after a couple of weeks we became best friends.

In April of the same year, my dad died in a car accident. Once again my world was rocked by pain, trauma and suffering. And I thought that nothing could heal me again. But I thank God for bringing Giannina into my life. She helped me to see the love of Jesus and find hope in Him.

God has always given us the power of choice. In Deuteronomy 30:19, He says, "I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live."

I choose life. I choose God. What choice will you make?



Patricia Gonçalves is administrative assistant for HopeChannel.

RECORD REWIND

Lester Devine



OPENING HIS WORD

David McKibben



Load the ships with Weet-Bix

Born in Christchurch on May 10, 1902, Samuel Bearpark accepted Adventism at the time of J W Kent's mission in Christchurch (New Zealand) in 1924-25. He worked as a colporteur and trained as a nurse at the Sydney Sanitarium and Hospital before commencing his life work with Sanitarium Health Food Company as a traveller and sales representative for 35 years. There was a break when he served in the Medical Corps in the South Pacific during World War II.

In retirement he was the director of a health clinic in Christchurch. He is affectionately remembered by young and old as Uncle Sam.

In 2006 Sanitarium recognised Sam when it established its annual Sanitarium Ambassador Awards, one of them being named the Sam Bearpark Award. It is said he had a broad smile and happy disposition and was counted as a friend by every grocer in his territory. No job was too big or too small for Sam and no person too great or too lowly for him to acknowledge and befriend.

In 1951, when strike after strike threatened to paralyse trade in NZ, Sam and other sales representatives were there to ensure Weet-Bix and Marmite got to the grocers. During a waterfront strike they loaded products themselves onto fishing trawlers to be shipped to Paremata in the North Island.

Synopsis obtained from: Sanitarium Health Food Company and *Adventist Record*, November 4, 1974.



Samuel Bearpark (1902-1974).

Post-resurrection appearances of Jesus: part 2

In the introduction to the book of Acts, Luke states that Jesus provided many convincing proofs that He was alive, and he specifically refers to the appearances of Jesus in the 40-day period between the resurrection and the ascension.

What do these appearances tell us about Jesus?

—They reveal His compassion. For example, He made a special appearance to Peter, the disciple who denied Him in the hours before His death.

Read Luke 24:34 and 1 Corinthians 15:5.

—They reveal His patience and understanding. All of the disciples did not believe the report of the women about the empty tomb. **Read Luke 24:9-11.** Jesus made a special appearance to Thomas to answer his doubts. **Read John 20:24-29.**

—The appearances show that Jesus is faithful to His word. Prior to His death Jesus promised that He would meet His followers after His death and resurrection. **Read Matthew 26:31,32; 28:8-10,16; Mark 14:27,28;16:6,7.** Right up until the ascension Jesus wanted to spend time with His disciples.

Jesus only appeared to His followers after the resurrection. Does this weaken the evidence for the resurrection?

Note the attitudes of the people to whom Jesus appeared. Thomas doubted the report of the resurrection; James the brother of Jesus had not been a believer during His ministry (see John 7:5); the two men on the road to Emmaus were downcast and had no expectation of a resurrection (Luke 24:13-24). A general atmosphere of unbelief and doubt pervades the Gospel accounts of the resurrection. **Read Matthew 28:17, Mark 16:9-13 and Luke 24:9-11.**

The accounts of the resurrection in the Gospels are free from sensationalism and display a sincerity and openness about people's responses to the news of the risen Jesus. May our testimony to this glorious truth be similar to that of Thomas: "My Lord and my God!" (John 20:28).

David McKibben is pastor of Chatswood and Galston churches, NSW.

MYSTERY HISTORY



Do you know?

- The people in the photo.
- The date the photo was taken.

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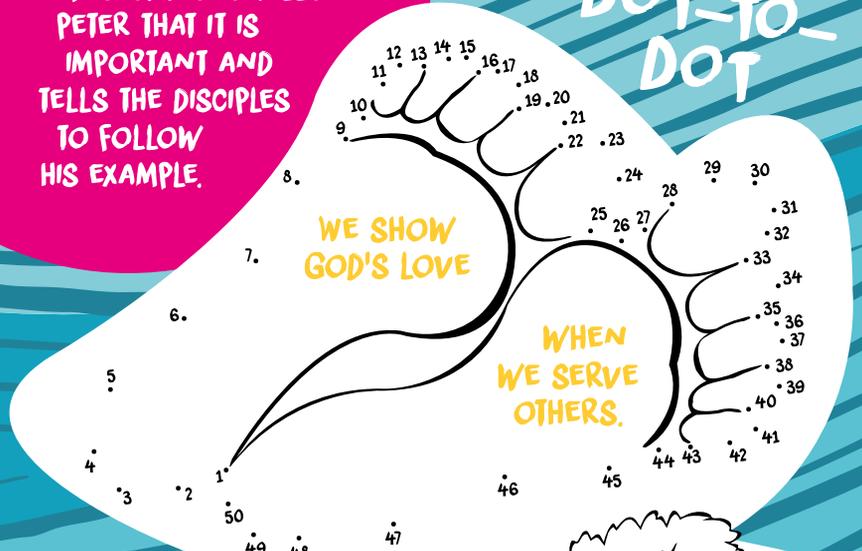
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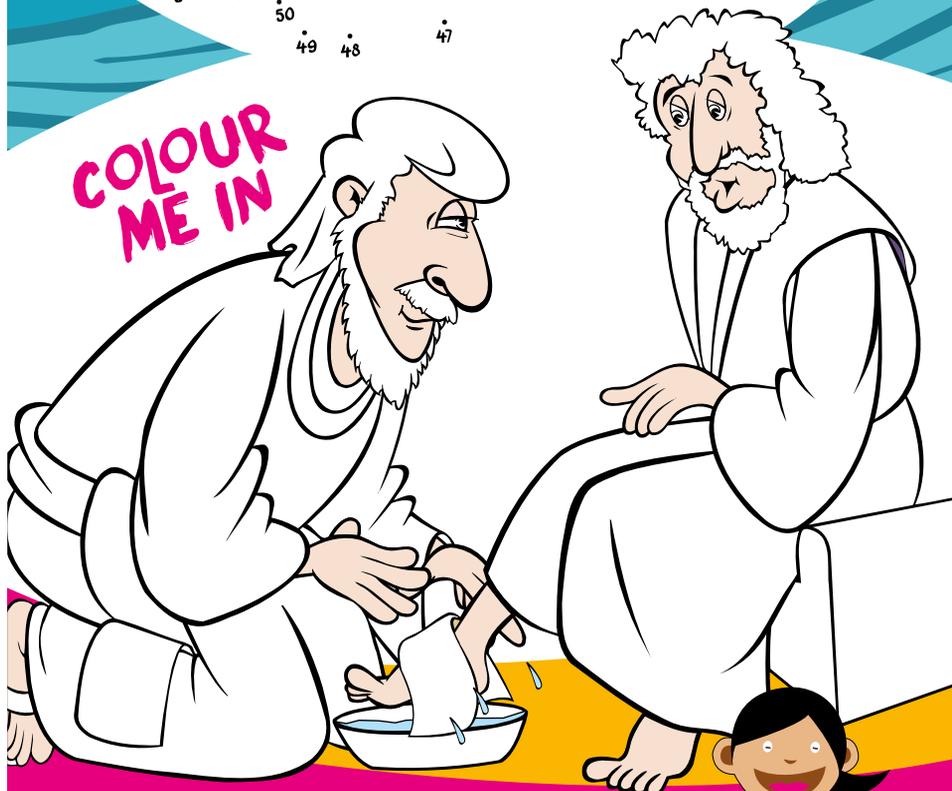
Kids' Space

JESUS SERVES HIS DISCIPLES BY WASHING THEIR DIRTY FEET. PETER FEELS UNCOMFORTABLE AND REFUSES. JESUS TELLS PETER THAT IT IS IMPORTANT AND TELLS THE DISCIPLES TO FOLLOW HIS EXAMPLE.

DOT-TO-DOT



COLOUR ME IN



MEMORY VERSE: "NOW THAT I, YOUR LORD AND TEACHER, HAVE WASHED YOUR FEET, YOU ALSO SHOULD WASH ONE ANOTHER'S FEET." JOHN 13:14, NIV

LETTERS

BIBLE-BASED?

Darlene Douglass, NSW

(Re: "Is wine fine?", Feature, November 21, 2015).

Too many Adventists take a good idea and turn it into gospel! If the writers of the Holy Bible wrote under inspiration, why are there so many stories recorded regarding wine? Righteous Noah is not reprimanded for getting drunk, no, but his son is for showing no respect to his father. The people who took the Nazirite oath gave up drinking wine and strong drink. What were the rest of the Israelites doing? If God's people didn't touch the stuff, why all the statements on the subject?

Clearly wine is not a health product and one might be better off without it. But that should be a personal health and lifestyle choice, not a requirement of belonging to our Church, which, as we proclaim, is based on the Bible alone. Having high health goals is good but our goals should not be confused with what the Bible actually says.

Editor's response:

Editor: Why do Adventists teach total abstinence from alcohol? First, as MacPherson ably demonstrates, wine available today is far stronger than in the ancient world and therefore far more likely to intoxicate. The Bible says intoxication is sinful—and can even keep us out of heaven (1 Corinthians 6:10). So we avoid modern wine and other products designed to intoxicate.

Second, we live in cultures where alcohol is indisputably the most destructive drug in society—fuelling abuse, violence, crime and untold heartache. The most loving

Christian thing we can do is to avoid this scourge and teach others to do as well.

Third, even "moderate" drinking is deeply harmful. A Harvard study published this year found that one drink—just one—per day substantially raises the cancer risk in women. If we want to get rid of breast cancer and other diseases that rob kids of their mothers and husbands of their wives, we have to start by eliminating alcohol from our diet. And, of course, no-one knows if they will have an alcohol problem until it's too late.

Finally, it is all about Christ-like unselfishness. Would any of us wish our parents drank alcohol, knowing it fuels domestic violence and causes cancer? Would we want our kids to drink, knowing it fuels high risk behaviour and violence? What about the people who work for us—knowing alcohol is a major detriment to productivity? Do we want our doctor or lawyer to drink, knowing it inhibits judgement? If the answer is that we don't want anyone else drinking, why would we think it is a Christian, selfless thing for us to do? Christ gave us an example of an alcohol-free life. As Christians, let's follow Him.

DISCIPLESHIP

Wilf Rieger, NSW

The South Pacific Division-wide focus on discipleship, as reported in *Adventist Record* (March 5), is very commendable. Discipleship presumes the existence (at different church levels) of informed, dynamic servant leadership. This, however, can only be sustained by the prayerful support of followers (2 Corinthians 1:11; 2 Thessalonians 3:11). Further-

more, discipleship indicates top-down decision-making, which is helpful only when it is the outcome of discerning listening followed by Spirit-filled reflection.

Faithfulness to Jesus' great commission should not be interpreted by the church merely as baptismal statistics but broadly, as in Luke 10:27—wholeheartedly loving God and one's neighbour as oneself. Effective discipling, however, requires believing followers to reflect on specific actions that apply to their everyday lives, ranging from business to farming, to helping and caring, the trades and beyond. For example, in a school context, discipling students may mean modelling how to: learn, worship, serve, live lovingly in community, persevere, pursue excellence, be creative, positive and constructive, be humble—among others. How to do this is no less important than the "why" and the "what".

Above everything else in any discipleship endeavours, our confidence must rest in Jesus, the ground of our being and salvation.

FRIENDLY CHURCH?

Scott Wegener, via website

Re: "Challenge your thinking" (Insight, March 2). [People] may say yes [when you invite them to church], but I fear for their experience . . . We've done some church-hopping recently, having moved to a new area, and have struggled for friendly interaction to make us feel like returning. People: bypass your chit-chat with friends after church and go say g'day to those people you don't know sitting in your church and find out their story—or we, err they, may never return!

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.

ANNIVERSARY



Malley. Vlad and Ivy celebrated their 60th wedding

anniversary with family and friends. They were married on 25.1.1956 by Pastor G G Stewart in Woy Woy church, NSW. This was the first wedding in the newly completed church, where the bride's father was an elder. After the ceremony they were presented with a large family Bible, which is still treasured today. They have two children, Paul and Ruth, son-in-law Ron and two grandchildren (all of Sydney). Vlad and Ivy have remained loyal members of the Church.

WEDDINGS



Bladin—Cowan. Pastor Grant Bladin and Kay Cowan, both

widowed, were married 22.11.15 in Mitchelton church, Qld, in the presence of many friends and family.

*Grant Bladin,
Eveline Cornell-Trapp*

Nolan—Lane. Brendon Roy Nolan, son of John Nolanal (Hobart, Tas) and Marlene Maud (Penguin), and Nikki Louise Lane, daughter of David Lane (Hobart) and Pamela Lane (Rosebery), were married 17.1.16 in Ulverstone church.

Ross Baines

OBITUARIES

Brown, Ormonde, born 14.2.1928 in Prospect, SA; died 6.1.16 at Churchill Retreat Aged Care, Kilburn, SA. He married Lucille Tutty, who predeceased him. He then married Shirley. He is survived by his wife; daughter Cynthia, sons Nigel and Bradley; and

grandsons Jaryd and Damien. Ormonde was a dental technician who was very good at creating things with his hands. He is missed by his family and friends. Ormonde loved the Lord and now awaits his Maker's return.

Stephen Bews



Cameron, William George, born 29.4.1924 in Deloraine, Tas; died 30.9.15 in

Perth, WA. On 13.2.1951 he married Maureen, who predeceased him. He is survived by his children Kim and Monica (Perth), Paul and Sharon (Melbourne, Vic), Lee and Jenni (Brisbane, Qld), Dean (Maleny) and Susie and Peter Baskin (Perth, WA); 16 grandchildren; 18 great-grandchildren; and sisters Monica Reid and Jessica Reid (both of Launceston, Tas). A hard worker in timber mills and earth moving, Bill decided to move to Perth so that his family would benefit from a Christian education. A wise and cheerful man, he was the beloved patriarch of a large family and a spiritual father to Carmel College church for more than 40 years. Bill had a thoughtful yet strong faith and looked forward to the resurrection day.

Miranda Leijser, Paul Cameron



Doolan, Howard, born 1.1.1944 at Teyon Station between Kulgera Roadhouse

and Finke community, NT. As a young man he worked on a number of stations in NT and SA and was good at riding and breaking in horses. He was a true bush mechanic and was involved in building the Aputula (Finke) store. Howard met his wife Millie Myson in 1999. He was a gentle person with a good sense of humour. Howard was baptised in 2012 in the Oodnadatta swimming pool by Pastors Eric Davey and Alan Tuionetoa. He loved Jesus and faithfully came to church. His favourite hymn

was "The Old Rugged Cross". His many family members will miss him but look forward to seeing him on resurrection morning.

David Gilmore, Don Fehlberg

Gaal, Alexander, born 9.4.1932 in Bucharest, Romania; died 8.11.15 at Wantirna Health, Vic. He is survived by his wife Maria; daughter Mary and her husband Joe; and grandchildren Rachael, Samuel, Isaac and Benjamin. Alex and Maria immigrated to Australia (to Mooroolbark) when Alex was 40 years old. Alex loved and praised Australia for it gave him everything he needed, including the freedom to believe and to worship God as he chose. As Alex neared the end of his life he said God was in charge whatever was to come his way and that God would provide.

Robyn Stanley



Jones, Dr Alan Albert, born 18.3.1932 in Sydney, NSW; died 20.1.16 in Emerald

Beach. On 21.1.1958 he married Florence Marie Burdett. He is survived by his wife; children

Kara, Evan and Margaret; and grandchildren Nicholas, Kate, Phoebe and Edward. Alan graduated in medicine from Sydney University in 1956. He worked at Sydney Adventist Hospital, Royal Newcastle and Maitland hospitals before doing five years mission service at Saigon Adventist Hospital in South Vietnam. While there Alan and Florence helped to establish a school of nursing. For 20 years Alan had a private practice in Port Macquarie and an orthopaedic practice in Coffs Harbour. Six years were also spent in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Alan's hobbies and interests included snow skiing, scuba diving, flying and playing trombone with a local brass band. Early morning daily devotion was a priority and he regularly prayed for his patients.

Eric Winter, Abel Iorgulescu

Mau, Cyril Prout, born 20.6.1921 in Mackay, Qld; died 20.9.15 at home in Mackay after a short illness. He is survived by Graeme and Dorinda, Terry and Luba, Ian and Denise; grandchildren Karl,



Grey Nomads Camp Perth - WA

4-11 SEPTEMBER, 2016

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Lauren, Rachel, Nicola, Nikki, Renee and Kathryn; and great-grandchildren Meela and James. Seventy years ago he married Hope in Glen Innes, NSW, and six years later they discovered the Adventist faith and actively served their Church and God in many ways throughout life. Cyril, a sugar cane farmer all his life, was very generous and after retirement showed great love and devotion in caring for Hope at home until her passing seven years ago. His family have certainly been blessed by him and will miss his cheekiness! They look forward to the resurrection.

*Tom Osborne, Simon Gigliotti,
Chris Kirkwood*

Searle, Gail Christine (nee Hewett), born 14.5.1955 in York, WA; died 9.2.16 in Busselton Hospital. On 16.9.1972 she married Chris Searle. She is survived by her husband; her children:

Geoffrey and Caroline (Perth), Glenn and Tina (Perth), Adam and Jodie (Geraldton) and Emily and Kelvin Barrett (Busselton); and 10 grandchildren. Gail was passionate about her family, and about Jesus, His mission and His church. She was a great sports-woman who was well connected with her community, making many friends wherever she went. She was a committed wife, mother and grandmother who always preferred a full house with lots of family and friends. Gail and Chris began their relationship as childhood sweethearts and had been together for 44 years.

Clark Riggins

CORRECTION

The article "New independent office for protection of children" in the March 19 issue of *Adventist Record* stated that the office was

being set up by the South Pacific Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. In fact, it is an initiative of the Australian Union Conference and was approved by the AUC Administrators Council on October 18, 2015.

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in the beauty of the Australian Southern Alps, numbers are limited to 150 attendees. To receive an application form and details of accommodation options please contact Robyn Howie. Phone: (02) 6249 6822 or email <robynhowie@adventist.org.au>.

Finally . . .
One generation
plants trees;
another sits in
their shade.
—Chinese proverb

Next RECORD
April 16

POSITIONS VACANT

■ **Assistant manager—Crosslands Youth & Convention Centre (Sydney, NSW).** A vacancy exists for a full-time assistant manager at the Crosslands Youth and Convention Centre, Greater Sydney Conference. Crosslands is a Christian campsite located in the Berowra Valley and Hawkesbury River region of Sydney. The successful applicant will have trade and/or handyman skills, communication skills, an understanding of and compliance with Work, Health and Safety requirements and be a committed member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. For more information and a position profile please contact Adrian Raethel on (02) 9868 6522 or <adrianraethel@adventist.org.au>. Applications close **April 11, 2016.**

■ **Specialists/managers/leaders—ADRA (South Pacific Division) (Wahroonga, NSW)** is seeking expressions of interest from suitable candidates who are specialists in the area of leadership and strategic management within the NGO context. The ideal candidate will provide visionary and strategic leadership to local ADRA offices in the South Pacific to fulfil its mission as the humanitarian development and relief agency of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The role ensures that the quality of ADRA's humanitarian aid and community development programming is participatory, innovative and results in positive impacts in the lives of beneficiaries. The role would also make certain that ADRA's administrative operation is professional, efficient, financially accountable and sustainable, provide a positive and challenging work environment for personnel, and is an exemplary model of Seventh-day Adventist values. For more information visit <www.adventistemployment.org.au>. Please send a letter of interest, your latest CV and three references, including one from your church pastor, to: Human Resources, Seventh-day Adventist Church (Pacific) Limited, Locked Bag 2014, Wahroonga, NSW 2076 Australia; email: <hr@adventist.org.au>; fax: (02) 9489 0943.

■ **Lecturer/senior lecturer, education (primary)—Avondale College of Higher Education (Lake Macquarie campus, Cooranbong, NSW).** The appointee will be required to undertake teaching,

research and consultancy in primary key learning areas with an emphasis in ICT and HSIE. The successful applicant will have relevant recent experience in schools; qualifications in education to the level of a doctoral degree; ability and enthusiasm to lead teams of professionals and to draw together persons of disparate skills and interests; ability and willingness to integrate faith and learning in a Christian tertiary institution; vision for the development of primary ICT and HSIE and other primary key learning areas in the discipline and the faculty; demonstrated ability and willingness to work as a team member; and be supportive of the mission, values and ethos of Avondale. For more information visit <www.avondale.edu.au/information/employment>. Applications addressing the selection criteria, with contact details of at least three referees, should be emailed to <employment@avondale.edu.au>. Applications close **April 15, 2016.**

■ **Lecturer/senior lecturer, education (early childhood)—Avondale College of Higher Education (Lake Macquarie campus, Cooranbong, NSW).** If you share our passion for supporting the delivery of Christian tertiary education and can align with our mission, ethos and lifestyle principles, then we encourage you to apply. The appointee will be required to undertake teaching, research and consultancy in early childhood curriculum and child development. The successful applicant will have relevant recent experience in schools; qualifications in education to the level of a doctoral degree; ability and enthusiasm to lead teams of professionals and to draw together persons of disparate skills and interests; ability and willingness to integrate faith and learning in a Christian tertiary institution; vision for the development of early childhood curriculum and child development in the discipline and the faculty; demonstrated ability and willingness to work as a team member; and be supportive of the mission, values and ethos of Avondale. For more information visit <www.avondale.edu.au/information/employment>. Applications addressing the selection criteria, with contact details of at least three referees, should be emailed to <employment@avondale.edu.au>. Applications close **April 15, 2016.**

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