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NEWS

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DIRECTOR 6

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2017—BY THE NUMBERS

If you hadn't guessed, I write.

I like to write and my job involves writing. So I write a lot. But this year I had to write one of the hardest things I've ever had to write: the exegesis requirement of my masters degree. It was just one of the challenges completed in what has been an interesting year.

I don't know about you but for me 2017 has had lots of personal and professional challenges as well as good positive

events. Personally, there have been family health issues, overseas trips, amazing weddings and mourning those lost—it has been a mixed bag.

I'm so thankful I've finished my masters requirements and await my results. I've had enough of writing (50,000 words later). So for this editorial I thought I'd get away from words and bring you the year in numbers.

So here it goes, 2017 by the numbers:

20 MILLION Seventh-day Adventist Christians across the world.

1,557,500 staples used for *Adventist Record* in 2017.

778,750 individual *Adventist Record* magazines printed this year at Signs Publishing Company and shipped out to Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific.

490,294 Seventh-day Adventists in the South Pacific Division at the end of 2016.

370,000 page views on the *Adventist Record* website this year, our highest ever and a significant improvement over the old website's statistics.

300,000 Seventh-day Adventist Church members in Papua New Guinea this year: a new milestone reached.

217,000 sessions on the *Adventist Record* website.

144,000 followers of Gener-

al Conference president Ted Wilson's Facebook page at one point this year.

125,500 unique visitors to the *Adventist Record* website this year.

60,000 Seventh-day Adventist Church members in Australia.

20,000 Seventh-day Adventist Church members in New Zealand Pacific Union territories.

4000 followers of the *Adventist Record* Facebook page: double that of last year and reaching the goal we set ourselves for 2017.

1760 subscribers to the *Adventist Record* weekly e-newsletter.

500 years since Martin Luther posted his 95 theses, beginning the Protestant Reformation and changing the world. We have a final look at the impact the Reformation

had on Adventists in this issue.

215 countries from where people have accessed the *Adventist Record* website.

125 years since *Steps to Christ*, perhaps one of Ellen White's most important works, was published.

67 different feature writers for *Adventist Record* this year (not including the *Record* team).

35 days until the next issue of *Adventist Record*.

21 days until the next issue of *Adventist World*.

3.5 countries in our Division that use French as their official language.

3 languages used in full *Record* articles this year—English, French and Tok Pisin.

2 special editions of *Record* this year, highlighting God's

work through the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Papua New Guinea Union and the New Zealand Pacific Union.

1 reader makes all the difference. That is you! Thank you for your support of *Adventist Record* this year. We hope that you've been informed, nurtured, educated, challenged, inspired—maybe even taken some action of faith or begun a ministry because of something you've read in the pages of *Record*. You are the church and *Adventist Record* exists to serve you, just as you exist to serve the world and to share the good news of Jesus.

There is much to be thankful for in those numbers and I would like to thank God for His blessings as well as to thank the whole team—our printers, designers, content contributors, accountants and our families—that make the magazine possible. Have a safe and happy year end.



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NEWS

GOD'S DECISIVE INTERVENTION

Why doesn't God intervene for the starving children of Yemen? Why is there little support for refugees from Syria? Why has North Korea remained so isolated, threatening the world with nuclear bombs? Why the mass rape of women in political conflicts? Why did it take so long to remove Robert Mugabe's cruel leadership from office?

In so many areas, from our limited perspective, God seems inactive. We are not alone in this viewpoint. The psalmists asked similar questions (see Psalms 10, 22, 42, 43, 44, 74, 88).

These questions become personal: Why did my son's wife leave him? Why did my daughter lose her job? Why can't I find a meaningful relationship? Why is there no relief from the constant demands of people? Why have my friends deserted me at this time of need?

The stories of God's intervention in other people's lives are encouraging but can give us feelings of jealousy and abandonment—why them and not me? When will God intervene?

While the above questions are significant, humans have two major issues to solve: evil (within and without) and death. If God has any value these issues must be dealt with.

God's decisive intervention was Jesus. God became human. Jesus overcame the evil within (Hebrews 4:15). He actively confronted evil with healing and compassion. Jesus took the penalty and punishment of all this evil and conquered death (1 Corinthians 15). These are our realities if we choose to believe in Jesus.

It's no wonder the angels sang with joy, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace and goodwill among the people" (Luke 2:14). Jesus was born a Saviour from evil and death. He deals with our ultimate needs. I'm sure you and I will keep asking God questions but let the Almighty's relentless favour, unending love and perfect peace be in our hearts and minds—not just this Christmas but all year.

GLENN TOWNSEND
SPD PRESIDENT
[/SPDpresident](https://www.facebook.com/SPDpresident)



FIRST AUSSIE CHAPLAINS' CONFERENCE

SOUTH QUEENSLAND FOCUS

A first-ever conference for Seventh-day Adventist school chaplains from around Australia focused on team building and discipleship.

Held at Stuarts Point (NSW), from October 23–26, the conference was an initiative of Adventist Schools Australia and was attended by 80 chaplains.

Australian Union Conference (AUC) education director Dr Daryl Murdoch began proceedings by celebrating past achievements of school chaplaincy and casting the vision for schools across Australia to be actively engaged and supporting the mission of the Church.

The chaplains, from all conferences across Australia, expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to attend the conference and the sense of affirmation and support they felt from the South Pacific Division (SPD), AUC (major financial contributors to the event) and local conference administrations.



NIMO MAUA PRESENTS TO CHAPLAINS.

"This has been a most excellent program of team building, resourcing, fun, creativity and inspiration in a worshipful atmosphere," said guest presenter Dr Peter Roennfeldt.

Disciple-making was central to the agenda. Dr Roennfeldt conveyed to those present the key ideas from his book *Following Jesus*. He also spoke about how to motivate students, teachers and parents to become disciples of Jesus who multiply and build. The school and church connection was another main theme discussed using forums and TED-style talks presented by those currently serving in campus churches.

VANUATU BUILDING WOMEN'S REFUGE

JOHN LEEMAN/RECORD STAFF

Founders of "El Haven" gathered on November 14 for a ground-turning ceremony, which marked the start of their planned women's refuge and orphanage, just outside Port Vila.

Representatives from the government, including the police commissioner, attended along with representatives from the Vanuatu Mission of Seventh-day Adventists. They all expressed excitement about the project and pledged their support, including to the chief who owns the land.

Sheds have already been built at the site, with septic tanks installed and lots of other work completed.

The idea for a refuge was the dream of Pastor Dorolyn Laloyer, who wanted a place to help young mothers, and unwanted or aban-



AT THE SOIL-TURNING CEREMONY.

doned babies.

Leon and Shirley Coombs are living on site and are overseeing the project.

Lay people from New Zealand and Australia are funding the project and the Vanuatu people are anxious to contribute. "This is God's project to save many infant lives and our prayer is that this home will be a beacon of light to many people," said Pastor John Leeman, former president of the Vanuatu Mission.

TED WILSON SPEAKS TO 10,000 DURING SOUTH PACIFIC VISIT

TRACEY BRIDCUTT

More than 10,000 people gathered at ANZ Stadium in Suva, Fiji, on Sabbath, December 2 to hear the words of General Conference (GC) president Pastor Ted Wilson.

Fiji was the final leg of a busy six-week world tour for Pastor Wilson and his wife Nancy, who also visited Sydney, Australia, last month.

During his time in Fiji, Pastor Wilson took a combined worship for staff at the Trans-Pacific Union Mission (TPUM) and Fiji Mission. He emphasised that every church member, young and old, needs to be involved and engaged in God's ministry.

He and GC communication director Williams Costa officially launched Hope Channel Fiji onto the Walesi digital TV platform (see page 7). The GC president also visited the Church's new "centre of influence" in Suva.

The full-day Sabbath program in-

cluded a free breakfast for about 2000 people. Despite heavy rain on Sabbath morning the stadium was filled by 7am and by 10am the sky had cleared and it was fine for the rest of the day.

Fiji Mission collected an offering of FJD 77,700 that will be used for special projects over the next 2 to 3 years.

"Thank you so much for the offerings we've collected today," said Fiji Mission president Pastor Luke Narabe. "[It is the] first time ever as a Church that we have collected this amount. We praise God for the spirit of giving."

During the afternoon program, Pastor Wilson presented a message on the high price Jesus paid through His sacrifice on the cross.

Pastor Wilson also spent the weekend of November 17 and 18 visiting Adventist churches and schools in the Greater Sydney Conference (GSC), encouraging Church members to reach



PASTORS LUKE NARABE AND TED WILSON.

Photo credit: Petero Navosailagi.

people for Jesus.

The Wilsons visited Macarthur Adventist College on the Friday evening, Wahroonga Seventh-day Adventist Church on Sabbath morning and Mountain View Adventist College in the afternoon.

"It was a privilege to have Pastor Ted and Nancy Wilson with us," said GSC president Pastor Terry Johnson. "Pastor Wilson's emphasis on mission to the cities resonated with me and with those who heard him as we focus on reaching the Greater Sydney area."

CHURCH PROVIDES FREE HEALTH CARE FOR FIRE-DAMAGED VILLAGES

PAUL KEMO

Seventh-day Adventist Church members in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, have provided free health care to more than 1500 people from two communities affected by fire earlier this year (see *Record*, October 7).

After months of preparation and prayer, Hohola Seventh-day Adventist Church carried out a two-week health ministry at the Hanuabada and Elevala villages. This Total Member Involvement (TMI) campaign partnered with health ministry volunteers from October 15 to 29 to support the two Motuan villages where homes were destroyed by fire.

Hanuabada and other surrounding villages are not far from the CBD of Port Moresby and have an estimated population of almost 20,000 people. Due to their village setup, health and sanitation continues to be a major issue in these communities as they respond to the growing challenges of modern urbanisation.

The health program, "Our Hands, His Touch", included a free daily medical clinic and nightly health messages. The clinic was set up in the Elevala United Church hall by a nursing team from Port Moresby General Hospital, coordinated by health leader Serina Tamita, with about eight volunteer nurses each day. The team conducted general health checks, screening and treatment of patients. Specialist eye, skin and surgical doctors, also from Port Moresby hospital, made time to examine and provide medical advice and referrals to patients. By the end of the two weeks more than 1500 patients had received basic health care. Each day's activities opened with a short devotional thought and prayer.

People had tears in their eyes after being treated with so much love. "When you receive healing praise God,



SISTER MADO MINISTERING TO A HANUABADA VILLAGER DURING DAILY CHECKS.

for we are only here to share God's love and it is His power that brings healing to your life," Sister Serina told one overwhelmed patient.

The team of Adventist medical specialists, led by Dr Robin Oge, presented nightly messages from a biblical and scientific perspective on current health issues affecting communities in PNG—lifestyle diseases, HIV, tuberculosis, cancers and kidney problems, with an emphasis on preventive measures and healthy living.

FIRST INDIGENOUS ATSIM DIRECTOR

MARITZA BRUNT

Pastor Darren Garlett has been named the new director of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ministries (ATSIM) for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Australia (AUC).

Pastor Garlett is a Whadjuk/Mineng Nyoongar from the southern region of Western Australia and is the first Indigenous minister to be appointed ATSIM director. After joining the Adventist Church in 1993, Pastor Garlett studied Christian Ministry and Theology at Nungalinya College in Darwin. His experience at Nungalinya helped to guide the development of the ATSIM Bible College in WA, now known as Mamarapha College. Pastor Garlett was one of the first students enrolled to study at Mamarapha in 1997, and was among the first graduating class in 1999.

"ATSIM is a dynamic ministry that covers this vast continent of diverse First Nations people," said Pastor Garlett. "It's an exciting ministry to be

called to lead and it is very humbling to know that the Church recognises we have qualities that can contribute to this awesome work.

"We are looking forward to the new role. Sure, we have big shoes to fill, but it has always been God's work and we will be faithful to the task He has called us to do."

Pastor Garlett's appointment comes after Pastor Steve Piez, who has served as ATSIM director for 11 years, announced he was taking personal leave.

"I am very pleased with the appointment of Pastor Garlett as our new national ATSIM director," said Pastor Piez. "Darren has become well known and is loved and respected by the Australia-wide ATSIM community. It's a proud day for ATSIM and it is fitting that Pastor Garlett has been tasked with leading this work."



PASTOR GARLETT WILL BEGIN THE ROLE IN JANUARY 2018.

Pastor Garlett was most recently ministry coordinator at Mamarapha College and national ATSIM advisor.

"ATSIM work in Australia is a strong and vibrant ministry, and is growing rapidly across the land," said AUC president Pastor Jorge Munoz. "This is a historic time in the work of ATSIM in Australia and we are excited to see what God will do through Pastor Garlett's leadership. We invite our Church to pray for him, his wife Cathy and their family as they begin this new ministry."

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HOPE CHANNEL FIJI GOES DIGITAL

TRACEY BRIDCUTT

Hope Channel Fiji began broadcasting on the free-to-air Walesi digital TV platform on November 1.

Fiji is in the process of transitioning from analogue TV to digital. Walesi is the name of the platform providing this digital service. Many homes already have the Walesi digital set-top boxes, including all of the Suva to Nausori corridor, Nadi and parts of Lautoka city.

"As analogue will be phased out, Walesi will be the only free-

to-air television service available, carrying all the current



HOPE CHANNEL DIRECTOR JOHN TAUSERE.

free-to-air major channels," Hope Channel director John Tausere said.

"What this means to Hope Channel Fiji is we will have the potential to reach 94 per cent of the population. That is the conservative figure—Walesi has recently mentioned that potential reach will go up to 100 per cent, with plans to go via satellite to also reach all smaller outer islands in Fiji.

"This is a milestone in media communications for our Church in Fiji. As it stands we are the only 24-hour Christian TV station in the country."

Trans-Pacific Union Mission president Pastor Maveni Kaufononga thanked the Fiji Hope team for their good work.

"We praise the Lord for His leading and we are praying that the media will continue to grow in reaching the people of Fiji," he said.

NEWS GRABS



PRAYERS FOR EGYPT

Adventist Church leaders in the Middle East and North Africa have responded to the Egypt mosque attack, condemning the terrorist act and urging Church members worldwide to pray for the families of victims. More than 300 worshippers at the Al-Rawdah mosque were killed in the bomb and gun attack on November 24.—*Adventist Review*



SPECIAL BAPTISM

Samuel Saw, president of the Southern Asia-Pacific Division, received his first-ever hug from his 76-year-old father recently. The hug came right after Pastor Saw had baptised his father, after praying for strength to overcome childhood pain.—*Adventist Review*



KOROBU CHURCH AND THE KIRIBATI MISSION OFFICE.

ADVENTIST RADIO COMING SOON TO KIRIBATI

COLIN DUNN/RECORD STAFF

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in the small island nation of Kiribati has big plans to win souls for Jesus.

The Trans-Pacific Union Mission is building a 500-watt FM radio station on Tarawa Island in the Kiribati Mission, one of the poorest missions in the South Pacific Division.

Volunteer project manager Pastor Colin Dunn said Hope Radio FM Kiribati will be able to reach 60 per cent of the 103,500 citizens of Kiribati.

"Once we had primary schools but they were nationalised by the government, leaving the Church with one junior level high school, Kauma, which moved on to become a senior level high school when the government nationalised the lower high school level," Pastor Dunn said. "Kauma has had a good influence on thousands of i-Kiribati [indigenous] young people, both academically and spiritually. Many young people accept Jesus while students there but on returning home revert to the faith of their family.

"This dynamic, combined with another radio station that is not friendly towards Adventists and which is deliberately opposing our Church, has made kingdom growth in Adventism difficult."

Radio is an ideal vehicle to nurture the ex-students and present biblical truth in the local language to people in their homes, according to Pastor Dunn. Hope Radio will be run from the Mission office by "a very experienced and well-known radio presenter", he said.

"Finance is a struggle, so please pray that from under the somewhat derelict mission roof, Kiribati Mission will be able to get the three angels' messages out."



BICYCLE LOVE

Adventist Church members in Colombia distributed 400 new bicycles to needy families in the Wayuu ethnic community. The initiative, called "Wheels to Educate", promotes education in early childhood by facilitating the transportation of children to their school. So far, 1000 bicycles have been donated to children in the most drought-stricken regions.—*IAD*

HOT TOPICS



PLASTIC SEAFOOD

A team of British researchers has found diets that include seafood could mean swallowing up to 11,000 pieces of plastic a year, and warned that the danger is also likely to get worse. The study, conducted at the University of Ghent in Belgium, also found the average portion of mussels contains about 90 plastic particles, while six oysters contain about 50 particles.—*The Sunday Mail*



NO HOT WHEELS

Pope Francis was recently gifted a new luxury Lamborghini—but the \$200,000 Huracán will be auctioned off for charity. The Pope, who blessed the flashy car, chose three charities, including one that's helping to restore Christian communities in Iraq that were destroyed by Islamic State.—*NY Post*



BY GEORGE

A gay Scottish priest from St Mary's Cathedral in Glasgow has caused a stir by saying he hopes four-year-old Prince George turns out to be gay so the Church of England is forced to accept gay marriage. Kelvin Holdsworth tweeted that English people could "pray in the privacy of their hearts for the Lord to bless Prince George with a love, when he grows up, of a fine young gentleman".—*The Sunday Mail*

COMPLETE HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM FOR EVERY DOCTOR IN FIJI

TRACEY BRIDCUTT

The Fiji Medical Association (FMA) is to make the Complete Health Improvement Program (CHIP) available to every doctor in Fiji.

The resolution was made at the FMA's annual conference, which this year focused on what non-government organisations are doing to tackle the problem of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), including diabetes and cardiovascular disease, which are on the rise in Fiji.

FMA secretary Dr Alipate Vakamocea, who is also health director for the Fiji Mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, gave a presentation on CHIP.

"I talked about how four Fijian doctors had died from NCDs since the last conference and they were quite young, aged from their late 20s to early 40s," he said.

"This was a shock to those at the conference. Then I talked about CHIP and its benefits, and there was a lot of interest."

One of Fiji's leading pathologists shared her testimony about how CHIP had changed her life. International doctors attending the conference also expressed their support for CHIP, saying it was a good initiative.

"Due to the theme of the conference being about NCDs, the lunch was vegetarian, which came as a shock to many of the doctors because they love their meat," Dr Vakamocea said.

"However, we wanted to get the message out that it's time that we doctors take care of our own health and practise what we preach."

The conference accepted five resolutions, before adding a sixth: that the



DR VAKAMOCEA WITH A VAN USED TO TAKE HEALTH CARE TO THE COMMUNITY.

FMA makes CHIP available to all doctors in Fiji.

Dr Vakamocea said this was an exciting development and testimony to the power of CHIP to change lives.

Fiji Mission is also looking at other health initiatives, including opening a wellness centre, featuring a café, health food and book shop, and medical suites.

"We have received funding from a 13th Sabbath offering for a wellness centre," Dr Vakamocea said.

"We would like to set it up in Suva because it would fulfil so many aspects of Adventist mission, including comprehensive health and mission to the cities.

"We want to establish relationships with the community so that when we come to run an evangelism program their hearts are already softened. God is really blessing our health ministry and we are seeing some amazing things being achieved through His leading."

These activities reflect the vision of the Trans-Pacific Union Division (TPUM), as expressed by president Maveni Kaufononga at last month's South Pacific Division Executive year-end meetings. Pastor Kaufononga said health is a major focus of the Union.

"Nearly everything we do in TPUM involves health," he said. "In Fiji we may have the most unhealthy nation in the South Pacific Division now, but by 2030 we will have the most healthy."

FLASHPOINT



MULTINATIONAL SABBATH

Newcastle Polish & International Adventist Church and West Wallsend Adventist Church (NSW) recently combined for a "multinational service" of food, fellowship and phenomenal faith. South Pacific Division president Pastor Glenn Townend was guest speaker, sharing a powerful service on how to become a disciple-making movement, while the small West Wallsend church orchestra, with children aged between 7 and 13, also made the worship service extra special. After lunch, Pastor Townend held a Q&A session and received a barrage of questions, which he handled faithfully and with great encouragement.—Michael Liliakas



JOY AT GYMPIE

Gympie church (Qld) was "bursting at the seams" on Sabbath, October 14 as relatives and friends joined the congregation to witness Pastor Steve Hubbard lead nine candidates into the waters of baptism. Ranging in age from 14 to 58, each gave their testimony and chose a meaningful hymn that reflected on their journey and experiences. Some had wandered away but were returning and recommitting their lives to the Lord. For others, it was a first time event. Afterwards, around 120 people shared a fellowship lunch.—Sandra Lee



HOOP DREAMS

Final year Fulton College (Fiji) students recently had the privilege of helping to construct a basketball court. The project cost about FJD 15,000 (\$A9400) and with the help of former students, teachers and donors, the final year students were happy to complete the project on time. The court was named "Talemaot Court" in honour of Vanuatu Mission, which contributed FJD 12,000 towards the project. "Fulton has produced a lot of prominent and successful people in the South Pacific, and the Vanuatu Mission would like to give back and support them in completing the new basketball court," said Vanuatu Mission president Pastor Nos Terry Mailalong.—TPUM



GRANT FOR GILSON TEACHER

Gilson College (Vic) teacher Johnson Alagappan and Dr Sharyn Livy from Monash University were awarded the Teacher Education Partnership Grant at a recent Australian Teacher Education Association (ATEA) conference in Brisbane. They received the grant for their research project entitled "Building relationships between universities and schools to enhance pre-service teacher knowledge". The findings of this project will be published in several education journals and Mr Alagappan and Dr Livy will present a paper at the 2018 ATEA conference in Melbourne.—Record staff



TREE PLAY PROJECT

Students at Whangerei Adventist Christian School (NZ) have been busy transforming space under their trees into a play area. After a working bee in Term 1, students spent Terms 2 and 3 clearing the ground, removing stumps and filling holes. They also worked hard to lay weed mat, bark mulch and bark peel to create a soft play surface. Swings and hammocks hung under the trees and mini gardens built in tyres completed the look. To add to the excitement, student Maea Charlie created a short film capturing the Tree Play Project and entered it in the Northland Short Film competition, where it won a prize in the Primary School section.—Anna Charlie



SPELLING SUCCESS

Kukudu Adventist College (Solomon Islands) held its inaugural spelling bee recently. Principal Encie Dionie said the event was very successful, with the students excited to take part. Winner of the junior competition was Uday Rusa, while the senior category was won by Annalizah Salato. For many participants it was the first time they'd ever entered a competition of any type.—Solomon Star



BETTER HEALTH FOR BALLARAT

A team from Ballarat church (Vic) conducted a health expo in the pavilion at the local Sunday market on November 19. People were invited to take a health assessment by visiting different stations, including blood pressure and sugar checks, and a lung function test. A total of 55 people took part in the assessment and responded positively to the experience.—Jan Donelan



RAISING AWARENESS

To support White Ribbon Day (November 25), which raises awareness about the prevention of domestic violence against women, 25 team members from Adventist Media wore white and held a special lunch. Although entry to the lunch was by a gold coin donation, more than \$A130 was raised to support ADRA Australia's women's refuges in New South Wales and Queensland.—Record staff



NEW CAMPAIGN TO SAVE LIVES AND LIMBS IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC

At 16, Sharon should be at school. Instead, she finds herself beside a hospital bed occupied by her mother who awaits surgery on her right foot due to complications relating to diabetes.

"I had to leave school and look after my mother," Sharon says. "I have now missed so many classes that I am not sure I can go back."

The Pacific Islands are often imagined as idyllic tourist destinations but there is another, far sadder side to the Pacific story. People like Sharon's mother are losing their lives and limbs to a rapidly growing epidemic of lifestyle diseases like diabetes.

The statistics tell a sobering story of a region with diabetes prevalence among the highest in the world¹:

- One-in-four Pacific Islanders have diabetes—around 1.4 million people.²
- With a rise in diabetes comes an increase in coronary heart disease, kidney failure, hypertension, stroke and cancer. Lifestyle disease contributes to 80 per cent of the disease burden in the South Pacific today.

• 17 per cent of diabetes sufferers in the Pacific will have toes or limbs amputated and 47 per cent will experience loss of vision.^{3,4}

• In Fiji, only 16 per cent of the population is older than 55 years due to premature death primarily caused by diabetes and other non-communicable diseases¹, and 75 per cent of all deaths across the Pacific can be attributed to diabetes and other lifestyle diseases.

Type 2 diabetes is approaching pandemic proportions in the Pacific. The promotion of traditional healthy foods has fallen significantly, as people eat cheap, highly processed, non-nutritious foods loaded with sugar, salt and saturated fats—instant noodles, white rice, corned beef, lamb flaps, sausage and carbonated drinks. This is compounded by a lack of physical activity, causing obesity rates to skyrocket to 50 per cent of the population in Melanesia and more than 90 per cent in most Polynesian countries.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church not only has the right health message for this time but also the understand-

ing, the tools and the will to address this crisis. With a network of churches, hospitals, clinics, schools and health professionals across the region, the Adventist Church has the opportunity to stamp out diabetes and help people like Sharon and her mother live a long, full and fulfilling life, as God intended.

The 10,000 Toes Campaign, a partnership between Adventist Health and the Adventist Development and Relief Agency, aims to:

1. Equip local churches in the South Pacific with the tools and skills needed to conduct health assessments for members and their community for the early detection of diabetes and other chronic diseases.
2. Train and resource lifestyle coaches to help prevent, arrest and reverse type 2 diabetes through community health training and lifestyle intervention programs such as localised versions of health training programs, including CHIP (Comprehensive Health Improvement Program), CHEP (Community Health Education Program) and Live More.
3. Support the capacity building of health professionals and community health workers on diabetes management and foot care throughout the Pacific.

Right now the Adventist Church has the opportunity to transform the lives of thousands of people—all we need are resources and financial support to make it happen. Just \$A100 is enough to save the life and limbs of someone suffering from, or at risk of, type 2 diabetes.

The 10,000 Toes Campaign is the focus of the 2018 Big Camp mission offering. To learn more about the campaign or to give a gift online go to <www.10000toes.com>.

1. <<http://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/88/7/10-010710/en/>>. 2. <www.who.int/diabetes/country-profiles/>. 3. Dr Temo K Waqanivalu, technical officer for nutrition and physical activity WHO Suva, Fiji. 4. Fiji-based Pacific Disability Forum (PDF).

THE love DILEMMA



Imagine you were Mary, Jesus' mother. Imagine the joy of His birth. The pleasures: watching His first steps; hearing His first words; His intelligence and quick learning; His wisdom and kindness as He grew into a young Man. You felt the wrench of your heart as His independence grew and He no longer needed you as much—as He left home and travelled from place to place, trying to teach people about the love of God. He had a passion and intensity about Him that you loved—even as you had to defend Him against friends and family who found Him a little odd. And the miracles—amazing! The things your Child could do!

And then the confusion. Church leadership turned against Him. The knot in Mary's stomach when they arrested Him on serious charges! I'm sure as a mother she'd prayed for her Son every day of her life but now those prayers had a tone of urgency and fear. I'm sure she believed God would care for Him, keep Him safe. After all, he was God's Child! Surely God needed Him, doing the great things He was doing!

Imagine the sick ache in the pit of her stomach as she watched her beloved Boy, broken and bleeding, staggering under the weight of that cross of shame. Watch as she fought her way through the dense crowd, to

stay as close as she could—longing to reach out and touch His face—to kiss His forehead, to pour love from her eyes into His. But He was wrenched from her. Her body shuddered with sobs as the hammer rang out on the nails. Exhausted, she clung to her place, as near as she could be, until His final breath.

What mother could bear the weight of that terrible pain? Her hopes died with Him. How could He be the Saviour that the angel had promised now He was dead? Why hadn't God done something? So many prayers! So many people praying. Did God not hear them? Did they not believe enough? Were they too sinful?

Brokenness. Intense disillusionment. Where was God when he'd been needed most?

Now follow God, Jesus' Father, for a moment. He'd watched His Son with pride as He accomplished each step of His mission. He'd nurtured Him, encouraged Him, helped Him to stand strong against the evil one who was determined to end Him in His human frailty. But now, at the very end, when His precious Son needed Him most—when the devil was laughing in His face and beating His Boy to a pulp—He had to allow it to happen. He had to stand silent.

While prayers from tortured hearts, like those from Mary, tore at Him, He

could not give them what they wanted. So He stood in terrible silence, willing His Son to be strong! And at Jesus' last breath, His grief—mixed with finality and fury at the cost—thundered in the heavens, shook the earth and ripped the divide between God and man apart forever!

God is good. His love for His Child is beyond anything we know. And that includes you! You are His child! He loves you with a deep and reckless love. He hears your prayers. Those deep, gut-felt prayers that cry out from your soul. He feels your pain. He answers, in wisdom and deepest love—not always the way we'd hoped but always in His mind is the hope to bring His children home, as many as absolutely possible. To a home beyond this world of pain. And sometimes that means He can't answer us the way we beg him to. Even though His heart breaks for us. And although every child's story is a big deal to Him, He must make moves to fulfil that bigger story.

Never think that God hasn't heard your prayers or He doesn't care. If He hasn't given the gift you've ached for, be very sure, there is a bigger reason.

TANYA CALDWELL WIFE AND MOTHER OF TWO TEENAGERS, SHE BLOGS HER "MORNING MUSINGS WITH GOD" AT WWW.CALDWLMT.WIXSITE.COM/ REFLECTIONS



Erna Johnson is a woman of compassion, courage and commitment. She confronts challenges head-on and isn't afraid to speak her mind.

For 17 years, Erna has been on a crusade—to stop domestic violence. Despite its prevalence in society, many Adventists have not recognised it as a problem within the Church. Erna has been determined to bring it into the spotlight in order to stamp it out.

This week marked the end of an era for Erna as she retired from her role as Women's Ministries director for the South Pacific Division (SPD). She is the longest serving person in the role, notching up nine and-a-half years. Prior to that she led women's ministries at Greater Sydney Conference and the New Zealand Pacific Union Conference. She also started women's ministries in New Caledonia.

"I think my greatest pleasure of my whole 20 years as a women's ministry director is to see the women realise that they have gifts and talents, to see the smiles on their faces," Erna says. "They recognise, 'Wow, I am a somebody, I'm not just this person out there who doesn't know anything; I actually can do something.' To see that, that's enough for me to be happy about what I have done."

Erna has left an enormous legacy through her advocacy for women and her countless hours of training and mentoring them. She has achieved widespread awareness of the issue of domestic violence within the Church.

"The problem in the beginning was nobody wanted to believe me," she says.

That was until she surveyed a group of women and teenage girls at a church conference in the South Pacific: 67 per cent of the women reported being abused. But it was the response from the girls that was particularly staggering: of the 147 teenage girls, 142 reported being victims of domestic violence.

"That was 98 per cent. I looked at those girls in front of me, tears streaming down my cheeks and thinking, what is happening in our Church?

"Seeing the abuse has been absolutely heartbreakingly. I have had threats against me by husbands who didn't like the fact that their women returned home and didn't want to accept abuse any longer.

"But I didn't take any nonsense from these guys. I'm not afraid of them. I'm not afraid to stand up for what is right when I see something wrong."

"Abuse is not acceptable in our Church."

Erna's work with teenage girls has left a lasting impact. She developed a training program that has been integrated into the ministry of the Church throughout the SPD. Hundreds of girls have received opportunities to enhance their lives, relationships and leadership skills.

SPD Family Ministries leader Pastor Trafford Fischer has worked closely with Erna on various campaigns over the years.

"If there are key attributes for Erna's ministry, they include commitment to women, a passion for women and a love for her ministry," he says. "She was driven by a desire to see fulfilled 'A purpose for every woman'—the byline for women's ministry."

While Erna is retiring, it is not the end of the story for her ministry.

"I am not going to sit back and do nothing, you can count on that," she says. "Maybe I could go and volunteer at schools and talk to the girls and the boys about domestic violence, teach them what it is, how it starts and what to do when they see it happening. Passion doesn't end when you retire . . . passion stays with you. I'm not going to let it die, it's too important."

TRACEY BRIDCUTT HEAD OF NEWS AND EDITORIAL, ADVENTIST MEDIA
 @tracey_findlay

30 AND COUNTING



The world looked very different in 1987. Mobile phones were the size of a brick. The Simpson family made their television debut. United States president Ronald Reagan delivered his famous "tear down this wall!" speech in West Berlin.

Fast-forward 30 years, and we now have the iPhone X. *The Simpsons* is in its 29th season. US president Donald Trump wants to *build* a wall.

2017 has been an interesting year, and a special one for me. I turned 30 . . . and so did my church.

The Melbourne Asian Seventh-day Adventist church (MASDAC) celebrated its milestone birthday on November 17–18, almost 30 years to the day from when it was first dedicated. More than 250 people gathered together for the special event, which doubled as the official opening of the church's new building in Scoresby.

Dr Wayne Krause, from the South Pacific Division's Discipleship Ministries team, served as guest speaker for the weekend. The celebration also included the cutting of a 30th anniversary cake and a Saturday night concert by Woody's Big Band.

The highlight of the anniversary, though, was the opportunity for the MASDAC family to relive their memories of the church.

Founding member Linnie Pohan, now based on the Central Coast (NSW) with husband Francis, described how the MASDAC story actually began in the 1970s when waves of refugees from Southeast Asia began arriving in Australia. Many of these "boat people" were sent to Melbourne, where the Seventh-day Adventist Welfare Service (SAWS) would help to provide clothing and other needs.

Mrs Pohan, who was part of the SAWS team, recalled how some of the refugees asked her if they could come to her church. "[But] where can I take them? Our new friends didn't know Christianity nor the [English] language!"

There was a small contingent of Chinese Adventists living in Melbourne at that time, and together they approached the Victorian Conference for a place in which they could worship. The group were offered a classroom at the Nunawading Adventist High School (now

Nunawading Christian College) and were given access to the school bus, which Mr Pohan and the late Pastor James Wong would use to pick up refugees for church on Sabbath.

In the early '80s, the small company found a church in Forest Hill they hoped to purchase. However, they only had \$A6000 at their disposal (the asking price was \$160,000).

"But we had faith," said Mrs Pohan, "and God honoured that faith."

Through the financial support of the Conference, the Chan Chun Foundation and other generous donors, as well as several fundraising efforts, the building in Forest Hill was eventually purchased in 1984. Three years later, on November 21, 1987, it was dedicated to the work and mission of the Adventist Church.

In the 30 years since, MASDAC has seen hundreds of people baptised and a sister church—the Gateway Adventist Centre—planted in the city, through which another three (soon to be four) congregations have been established. Having moved to Scoresby after outgrowing their old church building, MASDAC continues to be open to people from all walks of life; 19 countries are currently represented at the church.

Speaking on the Friday night of the anniversary weekend, Dr Krause encouraged the church to forge ahead with its disciple-making mission. "MASDAC exists to make disciples," he said. "If it doesn't make disciples, is it a church? You are a church if you are following God's command to make disciples."

For me, returning to MASDAC for its 30th birthday was bittersweet. While I enjoyed spending time with family and old friends, I couldn't help but think of the faces that are no longer there—those who have either passed away (such as church founders Pastor Wong, Lee Yan Tuck and my dad) or moved away (like me).

At the end of the day, though, I am grateful to MASDAC for being what I believe a church ought to be: a place where people can grow and then "go out" . . . but are always welcomed home.

LINDEN CHUANG ASSISTANT EDITOR—DIGITAL,
ADVENTIST RECORD

UNCERTAIN HOPE



Over the past few years, as I have talked about and wrestled with our call to faithfully seek out and create beauty and goodness in our world, I have been frustrated by the seeming disparity between the imagery and language of our two realities. Too often, it seems, we witness violence, tragedy, hunger and horror, then try to respond by talking about flowers and sunsets, butterflies and rainbows. Even when we talk about love—"the greatest of these"—it can feel so easily overwhelmed by its opposites: fear, hate and death.

Why do goodness and beauty, hope and love seem so flimsy, ephemeral and uncertain? When trying to argue that these are more important, powerful and sustainable, this language—and the apparent realities—seems to let us down.

Until we remember that such weakness is the way of God.

The dramatic imagery of Revelation 12 pictures a confrontation between a newborn baby and a great and destructive dragon (see verses 1–5). In

the Christmas story, the beginning of God's great act of redemption played out in all the uncertainties, messiness and creaturely humanity of pregnancy and childbirth, then the fragility of infancy, poverty and subjugation threatened by the brute force of Herod's murderous soldiers (see Matthew 2:13–18). While many of the details remain a mystery, there seemed real peril for God Himself in this project of incarnation and redemption. As such, it seemed an unlikely way for God to intervene in our world. But if uncertain hope was good enough for God, it should be enough for us. Further, our understanding of faith maintains this is the most God-like, the most true, the most poetic and the most powerful.

But there are other elements of the story that underline this counter-intuitive aesthetic of God and His ways. For example, theologian Walter Brueggemann contrasts the Roman emperor's census decree with the angels' announcement of the birth of Jesus: "The grim holding action of census was penetrated by the un-

scheduled and unextrapolated song of angels who sing a new song for a new king. . . . The beginning is with a song that stands in conflict with the decree. All the old history is by decree, but the new history begins another way."¹

Both the decree and the song claimed the attention of "all people" (compare Luke 2:1, 3 and 2:10, 14), but one was an act of bureaucratic oppression and economic exploitation, the other a celebration of joy, glory and peace.

In the history of our world, songs are usually less powerful than decrees. But in the way of God, a song can overwhelm a decree, a baby can confront an empire, an infant can overcome a dragon, love can conquer fear, hate and death, and somehow a flimsy beauty is more enduring than a horrific headline.

In our faith, an uncertain hope is always more important than a hopeless certainty. This is why our first argument for faith, hope and love is not an argument; it's a story. And this is why it's important to insist on retelling this story year after year—and that particular occasions and seasons for doing so are such a valuable part of our faith traditions.

As we tell the story of the birth of Jesus again this year, let's tell it with the assurance of uncertain hope. Let's also tell it in the way of God. Let's retell it with all the beauty, kindness, generosity and goodness we can employ. Let's retell it in surprising, humble and creative ways. Let's retell it in our actions, our choices, our compassion and all our lives.

We yet need new language and better imagination to talk about and create beauty and justice and goodness in our world. But we can begin by reclaiming the language that we have—and the stories and the songs that God has used to speak and act in the history of our world. And this new history began with the birth of Jesus.

1. Walter Brueggemann, *The Prophetic Imagination* (Second Edition), Fortress Press, 2001, page 103.



LIVING HIS WORD WITH WAYNE BOEHM

GENESIS: LESSONS FROM A NAME

It seems every second verse throughout the book of beginnings mentions a new name, particularly the genealogy chapters of 4, 5, 10 and 11.

Consider the name Abel. Derived from the Hebrew root word "habel", it is a term that is not used in other personal names at any time or place throughout Scripture. The word "habel" conveys the idea of "passing", "leaving no lasting impact or mark". The Hebrew name of his brother Cain, however, is part of a wordplay that connects future generations with his ideologies, perpetuating a lineage that would act in defiance of God.

CONSIDER THE CHOICES MADE BY THOSE LISTED IN GENESIS 4:17-24 THAT CONTINUED THE CHOICES AND VALUES OF CAIN AND HIS REBELLION AGAINST GOD.

CONSIDER THE NAMES AND LIVES OF THOSE LISTED IN GENESIS 5. WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM EACH NAME AND LIFE?

I was reminded recently of the gospel encoded in the names in Genesis. Below is a list of names and their meanings from Genesis 5:

HEBREW	ENGLISH
Adam	Man
Seth	Appointed
Enosh	Mortal
Kenan	Sorrow
Mahalalel	Blessed of God
Jared	Shall come down
Enoch	Teaching
Methuselah	His death shall bring
Lamech	The despairing
Noah	Rest or comfort

Man (is) appointed mortal sorrow; (but) the Blessed God shall come down teaching (that) His death shall bring (the) despairing rest.

The good news of this coded message results in the giving of a new name to the victorious overcomers in Revelation 2:17. This name, untainted by history, personal baggage, reputations and sins, is given to symbolise a new life that is experienced by those who live in the power and light of the gospel.

| RAEWYN FISH

Papanui youth (New Zealand) have started a Feed the Homeless Project in Christchurch. Youth elder Beulah Thoroughgood says, "I am humbled by the generosity of our church. It is amazing to watch our church come together."

As a result of the catastrophic series of earthquakes from 2010 to 2013, many Christchurch residents were made homeless. Finding accommodation near the city is still difficult and many people also suffer mild to severe post-traumatic stress disorder.

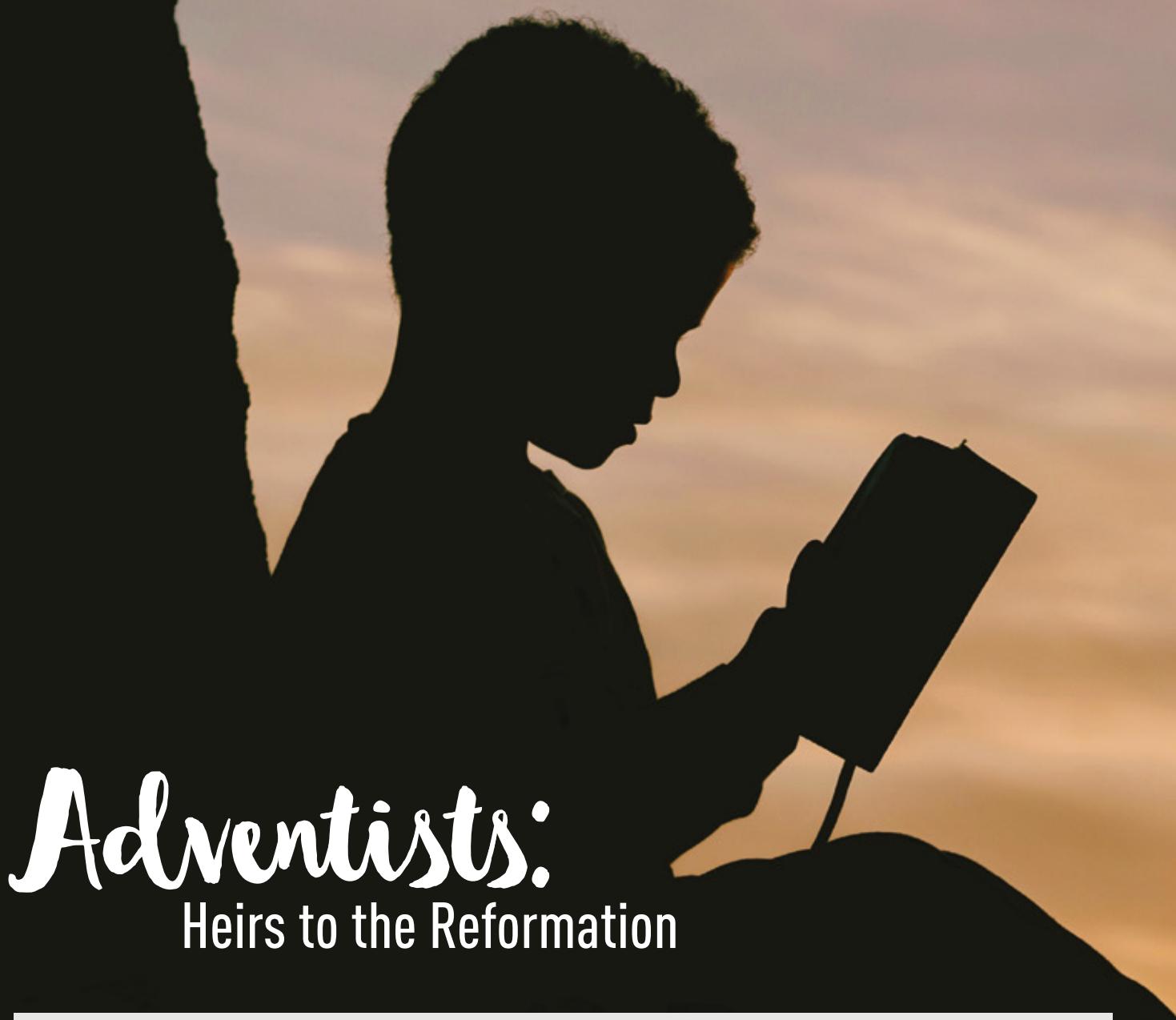
Unfortunately this combination means some residents continue to struggle with what most of us would consider normal everyday life.

As a result, those who were already vulnerable due to abuse and/or mental illness have found the added trauma of the earthquakes, the destruction of their familiar surroundings and the stress of life too

much to manage. There are many more homeless people now than at any time in the past and as the city struggles to rebuild, services for the vulnerable are stretched beyond capacity.

Papanui youth investigated and discovered that a Christchurch boarding school is feeding the city's homeless during school term but is unable to do so during school holidays. The youth have enlisted the support of the church family to prepare simple, nutritious, hot food dishes and filled rolls, ensuring that the homeless can continue to enjoy a decent meal during the school holidays.

The young people are enjoying the opportunity to interact with the homeless and to work together as a team with the church family to do something useful in the community.



Adventists: Heirs to the Reformation

After 500 years do we still remember the central issue that brought about the Protestant Reformation? According to both Protestants and Catholics, it was justification by faith. Adventists acknowledge it as "the great truth that, more than any other truth, brought about the Protestant Reformation".

Despite Catholics stating they teach, as do Protestants, "that the whole of justification is the work of God's grace", there are five areas where Catholics and Protestants differ on the issue of justification: (1) the meaning; (2) the basis; (3) the means; (4) the effect; and (5) the nature of sin and depravity.

Ellen White says that Luther clearly

taught "justification by faith"; it was central to the 1888 message, and "is the third angel's message". "Seventh-day Adventists see themselves as heirs of . . . the Reformation . . . teaching on justification by grace through faith alone."

The Council of Trent (1545–1563) formulated the Catholic Church's doctrine of justification in opposition to the Reformers' teachings. To the question: "How can sinners stand before God's holy law in the judgement and be acquitted?" came two radically different answers.

TWO VIEWS OF SALVATION

Trent ruled that the meaning of justification was "to make righteous" and

it included sanctification. In contrast, the Reformers taught that justification meant "to declare righteous". Irish theologian Alister McGrath summarises the Reformation view: "Justification is the forensic declaration that the Christian is righteous, rather than the process by which he or she is made righteous. Luther insists that justification involves a change in an individual status before God, rather than a fundamental change in his nature."

For Adventists, as Protestants, Ellen White states, in justification sinners are "declared righteous . . . before the universe". Two recent Sabbath School pamphlets, *The Gospel in Galatians* and *Justification by faith alone: The Book of Romans*, state it well: "Jus-

tification . . . is a legal term . . . the verdict a judge pronounces when a person is declared innocent of the charges brought against him or her. It is the opposite of condemnation." And, "The Greek verb ['justified'] represents the action as being completed. We have been declared righteous, or regarded as righteous, not through any deeds of law but through our having accepted Jesus Christ."

The basis of justification for the Reformers is Jesus' perfect life and death imputed or credited to the believer—an act of grace for us. For Trent it was on the basis of an inherent righteousness infused or imparted—sanctifying grace in us, "which is poured forth in their hearts by the Holy Ghost".

For Adventists, sinners "are justified alone through the imputed righteousness of Christ". Again from *The Gospel in Galatians*: "imputed righteousness" means "to credit" or "to place something to one's account . . . [W]hat is placed into our accounts is righteousness." The "words just and righteous come from the same Greek word . . . 'to be justified' means that the person also is counted as 'righteous'. Thus, justification involves more than simply pardon or forgiveness; it is the positive declaration that a person is righteous." And from the lesson on Romans, the "perfect life" and "law-keeping" of Jesus "has been credited to us".

Trent denied that the means of justification is by faith alone in the merits of Christ. Justification was by God making us righteous "through rebirth in Christ" and the infusion of righteousness in sanctification through the Holy Spirit. For Luther it was by faith alone in the completed work of Christ—plus nothing.

Adventists agree that "justification" comes "alone through faith in Christ". The fourth lesson in *The Gospel in Galatians* is entitled, "Justification by faith alone". Author Carl Cosaert adds, "faith itself doesn't add to justification, as if faith were meritorious . . . Faith is, instead, the means by which we take hold of Christ and His works in our behalf. We are not justified on the

basis of our faith but on the basis of Christ's faithfulness for us", accepted by faith.

For the Reformers, the effect of justification was full and complete pardon and acceptance the moment a sinner believed in Christ (Romans 8:1). New birth and sanctification were the immediate fruit. Luther acknowledged, while obedience is whole-hearted, complete obedience is impossible due to our sinful nature (see Romans 3:10–20; 1 John 1:8, 10). White concurs: while "justification is a full, complete pardon of sin", the best efforts of "true believers" are "so defiled" by the "corrupt channels of humanity".

In opposition, Trent maintained that justification, based on sanctification, was incomplete. It could be increased by good works. The Council said no-one should say "the observance of the commandments . . . is impossible for one that is justified. For God does not command impossibilities."

The basic difference between the two views is their understanding of sin and depravity. Trent taught the will was not affected by the Fall. It limited sin to conscious wrong-doing, denied sinful propensities constitute sin and considered depravity curable in this life. Thus, sinless perfection and complete obedience are possible in this life through indwelling righteousness by the Holy Spirit.

Luther taught, however, that we are born sinners and depravity affects every area of our being. Sin will not be eradicated from our nature until glorification (see 1 Corinthians 15:51–57).

Similarly, in the Adventist view, White declares that sin is the "inheritance of children". It has "deranged" the "whole human organism". We have "a bent to evil", which "unaided" we "cannot resist" and which is not eradicated until Jesus comes again. Cosaert agrees: "By the Spirit's power we certainly can subdue the desires of the flesh, the conflict [because believers possess two natures, Galatians 5:17] will continue in various ways until we receive a new body at the second coming."

A SUBTLE SHIFT

Trent substituted the transforming work of the Holy Spirit for the work of Christ as Saviour. The new birth and progressive sanctification (God's grace in us) is made the basis of justification, instead of the completed work of Christ.

For the Reformers, justification and sanctification, while inseparable, are distinct. Adventists would agree. "Justification is what God does for us, while sanctification is what God does in us." Adventist author Clifford Goldstein states while we "must never separate them" we "must keep distinct, theologically, the imputed righteousness of Christ (that justifies us) from the work that the Holy Spirit does within us to change us [sanctification]."

THE JUDGEMENT

"How can sinners stand before God's holy law in the judgement and be acquitted?" Because Trent made justification depend on sanctification there can be no assurance of salvation until we are perfect. By limiting sin to conscious wrong-doing and lessening the effects of the Fall, Trent could advocate perfectionism. All theories of perfectionism lower the standard of righteousness and lessen the enormity of sin.

For Adventists, believers have perfection credited to them—even the righteousness of Jesus—the moment they believe and accept the free gift of grace in Christ. On this basis alone, they are acquitted in the judgement. Obedience is the loving response of the believer to this gift. White says, "We do not earn salvation by our obedience; for salvation is the free gift of God, to be received by faith. But obedience is the fruit of faith."

Adventists, as Protestants, are heirs of the reformation.

For full reference list, see online article at <record.adventistchurch.com>.

ERROL WEBSTER RETIRED PASTOR LIVING IN BATHURST, NSW, AND AUTHOR OF THE 'TRY JESUS' BIBLE LESSONS



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A SIMPLE SOLUTION TO A BIG PROBLEM

It sounds too good to be true. But it's been revealed that one of the secrets to a healthier and longer life could lie in what you do in your lunch break.

Last month the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare released a new report on the impact of physical inactivity on the quality of life and longevity of the Australian population.

Crunching data from 2011, the report found that 2.6 per cent of the total disease burden in Australia was due to physical inactivity. While this figure may not seem like much, when physical inactivity was coupled with overweight and obesity, the disease burden increased to 9 per cent—a figure equal to that of tobacco smoking, the country's leading risk factor for disease burden. In other words, the behaviour most likely to cut your life short.

But in good news, the report also found that when it comes to physical inactivity it was relatively easy to reduce its impact. Quite simply, if everyone did an extra 15 minutes of brisk walking, five days each week, this would reduce the disease burden due to physical inactivity by about 13 per cent.

This amount could be achieved by taking a short power walk on your lunch break or getting off the bus a few stops earlier. Better still, the report found if the walking duration doubled, so did the disease burden reduction.

Seven diseases were closely associated with physical inactivity. Diabetes topped the list, followed by bowel cancer, uterine cancer, dementia, breast cancer, heart disease and stroke. Modelling showed people of all ages would benefit from the 15-minute activity boost, but particularly those aged 65 and over who had the highest rates of many of these diseases. So slip on some comfortable shoes and get moving. Walking is an easy step you can take towards a happier, healthier and longer life.

BEST WAYS TO GET YOUR 15-MINUTE WALK



GET OUT AT LUNCH

Whether it's to step out to get your lunch or get away from your desk after you've eaten, a 15-minute power walk in the middle of the day is a great way to take a break from the office and do wonders for your health.



EVENING DEBRIEF

Grab the family or meet up with a friend and get out for a brisk walk around the neighbourhood after work. It's a great chance to get active and process the events of the day.



A FAST WALK WITH FIDO

A recent study out of Sweden found dog owners lived longer and had lower rates of cardiovascular disease. One of the reasons was believed to be that dogs prompted owners to have a more active lifestyle. So get out for a 15-minute walk with your furry friend to reap the benefits.

Sanitarium
health & wellbeing

ESTABLISHED TRUTH

Responding to the letter "Sola Scriptura?" (November 18). The Bible is held as the first and highest authority in the Church and the Spirit of Prophecy supports this: "I recommend to you, dear reader, the Word of God as the rule of your faith and practice. By that Word we are to be judged. God has . . . promised to give visions in the 'last days'; not for a new rule of faith, but for the comfort of His people, and to correct those who err from Bible truth" (*Early Writings*, p78). Also, "little heed is given to the Bible, and the Lord has given a lesser light to lead men and women to the greater light" (R&H, January 20, 1903).

WONDERFULLY EQUAL

Dr Steve Currow's informative article "Exploring equality" (November 18) gets us thinking.

The value of anything mostly depends on the price that is paid for it. Generally, the more something costs, the greater we value it.

The same price is paid for every human being: the blood of our Saviour. This makes every human being of equal worth.

Wonderful, isn't it?
Jennifer Phillipiadis, Vic

REMEMBERING MISSION

Your story of the *Melanesia*'s 100 years ("Remembering the *Melanesia*", July 1) unearthed memories told to me by my grandfather, William (Bill) Mitchell, of his time as boilermaker/engineer of the *Melanesia* while plying the waters of the South Pacific many years earlier. Stories of men and women and nature that invariably ended with recognition of God's hand over the running and maintenance of His vessel and the lives of those touched by

the *Melanesia*.

Having a deep impression on myself as a child were the stories of people and their journeys in meeting their Lord. Added to these memories were those of my missionary aunt, Verly Mitchell/Weir, as she dedicated eight years of service to the Kendu Mission Hospital in Kenya. I felt and learned much of God's hand over His children during those precious years.

Grandfather had earlier worked as the boilermaker for the Sanitarium Weet-Bix factory at Cooranbong, while helping to support two of his brothers, Tom and Albert Mitchell, attending their studies at Avondale.

At some time either prior to, or after his time with the *Melanesia*, Grandfather also manned the boilers at the dairy of Wahroonga Sanitarium/hospital, where he eventually met a young nurse from Tasmania, Esther Mary Fehlberg, who was later to become my much-loved grandmother.

I take this opportunity to publicly thank my God for

I note, firstly, Holy Scripture, in all its authority, sanctions the Spirit of Prophecy; secondly, like the Bible, Ellen White's writings were inspired by the same infallible Author and thus also have divine authority and will therefore be harmonious with the Bible, despite being of lesser significance.

It is clear that all new divine truth will be perfectly consistent with that already revealed. While new ideas should be tested by the Bible, it is perfectly reasonable to subject them to the Spirit of Prophecy for consistency as well. Established truth should have veto power over new interpretations and ideas.

Samuel Whitehead, Vic

those of my family, including my much-loved parents, Loris and Alva Mitchell (Wangaratta church, Vic), who lovingly gave a small child real life examples of the meaning of service to my God, of faith and trust in God, and an example and understanding of the value and power of prayer.

Kay Duursma, Vic

MEN'S MINISTRY

Re: "Men's ministry plan developed for Australian Adventists" (September 23).

To me, this is something good that the Church is moving into.

It saddens me this issue wasn't looked into more some 20-30 years ago. As a young bloke growing up, I see many issues affecting and surrounding males. If some of those issues are looked into and discussed with our young boys, we will grow up having that spark and contribute more to the Church.

Just recently here in Port Moresby there was a retreat for the young girls titled "Real Me". That retreat [led]

me to question if the Church has a similar [program] like that for us young boys. It's not only young girls who are affected; we all have issues rising within us. We need these sort of meetings so we can be guided with biblical truths.

I'm grateful the Church is looking into this now. I didn't spend [much] time with Dad as he was a seafarer. I wish I could repeat time to spend time with my dad again. I know he knew that heartache because before he died, in 2013, he told me not to work on the ships because "you will be away from your family" most times.

Jonathan Dage, PNG

NOTE: Views in "Have your say" do not necessarily represent those of the editors or the denomination. Comments should be less than 250 words, and writers must include their name, address and phone number. All comments are edited to meet space and literary requirements, but the author's original meaning will not be changed. Not all comments received are published.

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HI KIDS!

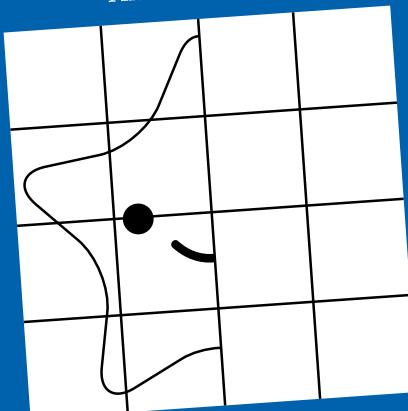
KIDS SPACE

MEMORY VERSE

Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. Luke 2:10, 11

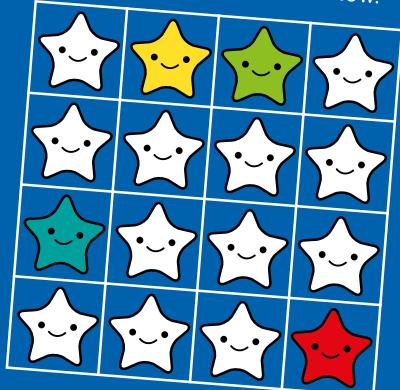
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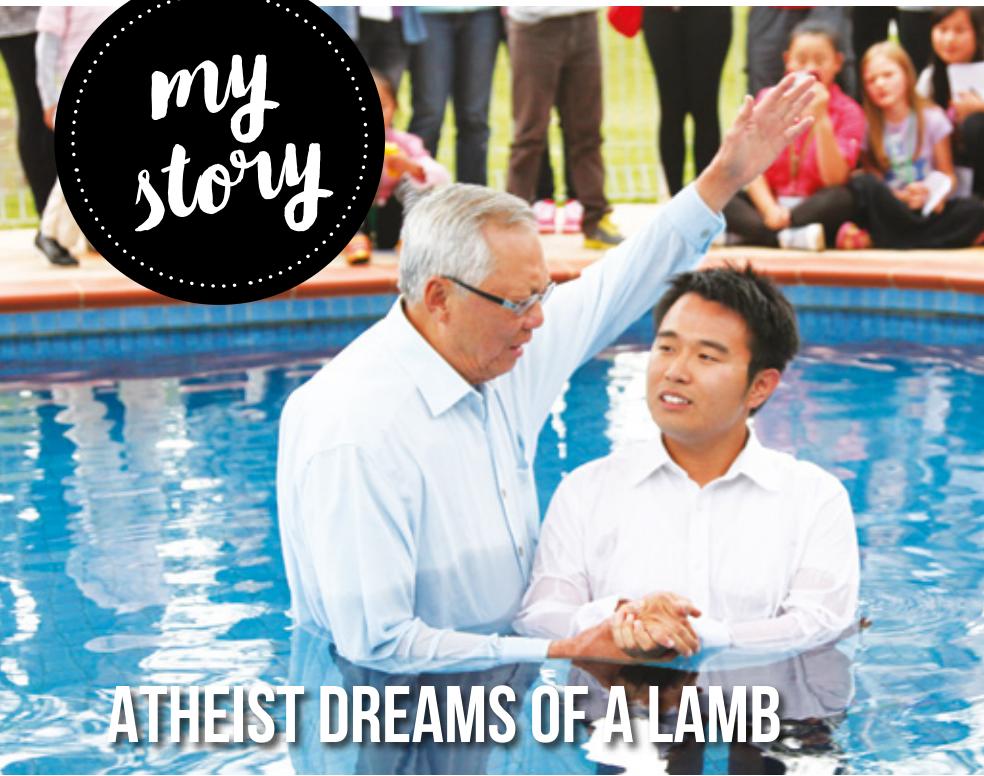
ANGELS SPEAK TO SHEPHERDS

Some shepherds are watching their sheep at night on a hillside outside Bethlehem. Suddenly a bright angel appears and tells them not to be afraid, but to be happy! He brings joyful news of the Saviour's birth in Bethlehem, the city of David. Just as suddenly a great company of angels joins the first angel and the sky glows with angels praising God in joyful song. After the joyous angels leave to go back to heaven, the excited shepherds go to find Baby Jesus.



Sudoku Answers





my
story

ATHEIST DREAMS OF A LAMB

Growing up in a "typical" household in China, Dante Xu had no interest in any type of religion—especially Christianity. In his mind, religion was a crutch for foolish people who lacked the ability to reason or think logically.

When Dante decided to pursue further studies in Australia, his parents were concerned that he might get involved in religion.

"Australia is a Western country with Western ways of thinking—including Christianity," Dante's dad warned him. "Make sure you don't become a Christian."

"Of course I won't!" Dante laughed. Did his parents think that a lifetime's worth of learning could be swayed by an overseas move? "I'm a mature adult, you don't have to worry about me."

But approximately 10 days before he was due to leave China, Dante had an unusual dream.

It involved a lamb that picked him up and somehow carried him on its back. But that wasn't the strangest aspect. The lamb actually spoke to Dante—it told him that Australia was a great country with wonderful oppor-

tunities in store. It also reassured him that it would be with him and carry him during his time in Australia.

Confused, Dante shared his dream with his parents the next morning.

"There are a lot of sheep in Australia," his dad reasoned. "That's probably why you've been dreaming about sheep!"

Dante was doubtful but he couldn't think of another rational explanation. He pushed thoughts of the dream aside and concentrated on preparing for his big move.

During his first week at university in Australia, Dante noticed a flyer advertising free violin lessons.

He couldn't help but remember a girl whom he'd liked in high school, who had chosen another guy over him because he played the violin. He decided that learning the violin might be a good way to meet new people—plus it was free! What did he have to lose?

If he had paid closer attention to the flyer, he would have noticed that the violin lessons were being offered by the campus Christian club, Australian Christian Fellowship.

"If I had seen that it was a 'Christian' thing, I wouldn't have gone,"

Dante says frankly. But as it happened, he didn't notice and he did go.

After the violin lesson, Dante was startled when he was asked if he would like to stay behind for a Bible study.

He wanted to say no. But he'd just accepted a free violin lesson from these people—the least he could do was stay a while longer. It wasn't as though he had to become a Christian.

To his surprise, the people he met impressed him. These Christians weren't foolish or unintelligent. They were logical deep thinkers who had an explanation for everything they believed. Eventually Dante decided that he wanted to be a Seventh-day Adventist Christian and he was baptised in 2013.

Dante's family were angered by his commitment and decided to cut him off financially. Although Dante had some money in savings, it was barely enough to pay his rent. There were many days where he would have starved if it were not for the kind intervention of a fellow church member.

"But that didn't matter to me—I was still determined to follow Jesus," Dante says staunchly. Despite the financial hardships, he continued to faithfully attend church and serve where he could.

A year after Dante's baptism, he went to China to celebrate Chinese New Year with his family. Before he returned to Australia, his father pulled him aside and said, "Son, I don't know much about your religion but it looks like you are faithful about what you believe. Your God somehow has made you become a better man. Mum and I can't agree with your beliefs but we are happy to see you living a new life—a better one."

A few months later, Dante became a Bible worker, helping to introduce others to Jesus. Although he is still the only Christian in his family, he will continue sharing the gospel with them through the testimony of his life.

VANIA CHEW ASSISTANT EDITOR, ADVENTIST RECORD
 [@vania_chew](https://www.facebook.com/vaniam Chew)

Wedding

SZESZERAN-BENNETT, Nicholas Andrew Szeszeran, son of Cornelius and Desiree Szeszeran (Cooranbong, NSW), and Ashlee Taylor Bennett, daughter of Andrew and Lynette Bennett (Brisbane, Qld), were married on 26.11.17 at The Joinery, Brisbane. Nick and Ashlee met at Springwood church when Nick was the church's volunteer youth pastor. They plan to live in Brisbane while they complete their studies.

Barry Gane

Obituaries



EAGER, Beryl Olga (nee Yeti), born 14.4.1930 in Poona, India; died 13.11.17 in Toronto, NSW. In 1953 she married Ron in Wahroonga. Beryl is survived by her husband (Cooranbong); children Sherrie (Newcastle) Nerida (Newcastle) and Robert (Sydney); three grandchildren Sebastian, Zachery and Patrick; three great-grandchildren; sister Evelyn; and nieces and nephews. Both business professionals, Beryl and Ron served the Church in numerous conference and division positions in Australia and New Zealand. During these years Beryl was also actively involved in the local church, fostering music and caring for children's Sabbath Schools. Her last professional service to the Church before retirement was in the office of the Adventist Retirement village at Victoria Point, Qld. Beryl was a loving wife, a selfless mother, a loyal and true friend. She went to sleep in Jesus with an unwavering faith in the "blessed hope".

M Kennaway, H Harker



GILMORE, Thomasina Williamene (nee North), born 16.3.1928 in Murwillumbah, NSW; died 7.9.17 in Murwillumbah. On 7.9.1949 she married Douglas. Tommy is survived by her husband (Murwillumbah); brother David and June North (Murwillumbah); children Byron and Ann Gilmore (Healesville, Vic), Diane and Stuart Hillier (Murwillumbah, NSW), Juliane and Bryan Derrick

(Murwillumbah), and Haydn and Romney Gilmore (Woodford); 10 grandchildren; and 16 great-grandchildren. Tommy's life reflected her love for Jesus in her love of life, her musical talent as church pianist/organist from the age of 10 years in many churches, in her community work, her family and friendships. Her life was lived by her favourite text: "Let all that you do be done with love" (1 Corinthians 16:14).

Ashley Smith

KUZNIARSKI, Regina (nee Cichocka), born 1.8.1920 in Poland; died 10.10.17. In 1942 she married Karol Kuzniarski, who predeceased her. She was also predeceased by her son Richard. She is survived by her children Kazimierz and Krystyna; eight grandchildren; and 18 great-grandchildren. After her baptism in 1946, Regina devoted her time, talents and kitchen to aiding the ministry work of her church. The family moved to Australia in 1978 where Regina continued to support the church with her culinary skills, her hospitality and her solid faith in Jesus.

Trevor Mawer

MANCE, Leopold, born 20.10.1933; died 18.11.17. Leo is survived by his wife Nada; and children David and Lydia (born to his first wife Lydia). Leo used his skills in building to establish the first church for Yugoslavs in Melbourne in 1967. While Leo's health declined in his later years his passion for Jesus increased. He will be sadly missed by all at the Summit and Stanthorpe churches.

Trevor Mawer

SPARKS, Joyce Bessie (nee Anderson), born 10.6.1927; died 25.10.17. Joy was predeceased by her husband Eric. She is survived by her children: Sharon, Loen, Athol, Coral, Elwyn and Brian; nine grandchildren; and 18 great-grandchildren. Joy had a passion for serving God through her music and pursued training at Avondale College from 1946–1948. Joy was a faithful servant to the Lord in the churches she attended, expressing her love for

Jesus through her music, friendship, kindness and love.

Trevor Mawer

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AND NO DETAIL TOO
SMALL.**

—WOODROW KROLL

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