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MANNA HAVEN MAKES AN IMPACT

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TO THOSE DOING IT TOUGH 11

NEWS

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GOD HAS PREPARED HIS CHURCH

Sharing *Following the Apostles' Vision* has been timely for members, pastors and leaders across the South Pacific Division. This book and related resources have helped some fields and local churches flourish during COVID-19 lockdowns.



During this time of isolation and uncertainty, Peter Roennfeldt's book challenged me to focus on the reality that Jesus has called me to be part of His disciple-making movement. Nicu Dumbrava

For 17 years I believed that if I worked hard and grew a big church with functional ministries, I would have a successful ministry. But reading *Following the Apostles' Vision* by Peter Roennfeldt—at this time of COVID-19 isolation, I am now convinced that households of faith empowered by the Holy Spirit was the New Testament model that facilitated exponential growth. This is church. Levi Mote

We praise God ... this crisis and lockdown has given us an important opportunity to return to a biblical model of doing God's work. Benjamin Kola

When Jesus started the church, did He envisage what we currently do? In *Following the Apostles' Vision*, Peter Roennfeldt again stretches the boundaries of our thinking and practice as he builds on Jesus' and the apostles' vision to present us with a refreshing, exciting, and yet challenging picture of how we can truly 'be' the church in our 21st-century world. Alvin Schick



NEW BOOK COMING SOON

CONSPIRACY IN A TIME OF COVID

I was looking through old *Record* archives online when this unusual news item caught my eye. More than 20 years ago, in the late '90s (wow, does anyone else feel old reading that?), something happened in Papua New Guinea that caused a stir:

"Some Adventists in PNG are refusing to have their children immunised against polio following claims it leads to eternal damnation. An independent ministry, operating in the Eastern Highlands Simbu Province, says the Sabin vaccine contains a metal labelled '666', meaning children and their families will be under constant satellite surveillance. . . . According to South Pacific Division Adventist Health director Dr Percy Harrold, the claims are creating fear . . . [and] spreading dangerous misinformation about a lifesaving program. The consequences are serious. In the interest of public health and the credibility of the church in PNG, I'd discourage any further financial support of the ministry" (October 25, 1997).

It seems that history does repeat itself. In this current COVID-19 situation, conspiracies are rife.

A recent report on news.com.au suggests that one in eight Australians believe Microsoft founder Bill Gates is somehow responsible for the COVID-19 outbreak and the 5G phone network is spreading the disease. One in five believe the media and government are fudging the death toll to scare people.

I'm sure these statistics would hold true in the Church. If we're honest, we set ourselves up for it. We believe our biblical knowledge gives us special insight into things that are hidden. We even use the biblical phrase "even the elect will be deceived" (Matthew 24:24) to pat ourselves on the back and show that we are not in that boat. Except that's not what the text means. We are unlikely to be deceived by not knowing some secret conspiracy. It is more dangerous to believe something that is not true (or not entirely true) and to stake our faith and salvation on it. We've become hypervigilant looking for secret knowledge and special understanding—often sacrificing our credibility.

But even if the conspiracies are true (for argument's sake, let's suppose some are), understanding is most

often used by us as an excuse not to care. We circumvent or avoid obeying the commands of Jesus, we actively duck doing good, run from civic responsibility or allow bad people to get away with real and measurable destruction and greed, because we don't want to be associated with some shadow organisation's secret agenda.

I can include myself in this category. There are terrible things going on in the world that I'm aware of but choose not to do anything about.

Enough is enough. Whether these theories are true or not there are a few things we must keep in mind.

The apostle Paul, who suffered at the hands of the powers that be, exhorts us, "Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and you will be commended. For the one in authority is God's servant for your good" (Romans 3:3,4). Paul, in this passage, makes a number of points, including that the government rules because God allows it.

We must also remember that, ultimately, evil cannot triumph. So we must focus on the good and live as though Christ has already won the victory (which He has). Proverbs 14:22 tells us: "Do not those who plot evil go astray? But those who plan what is good find love and faithfulness." (This could also be evidence that some of these conspiracies aren't real because any evil plot will inevitably go astray.)

As Luke 6, among other passages, tells us, it is our fruit that ultimately matters: "A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of" (v45).

So live and love well. If a theory or idea doesn't point you to God and help you to serve people, it's not worth investing your passion and energy in . . . or wasting your time on.

JARROD STACKELROTH
SENIOR EDITOR
@JStackelroth



South Pacific

abn 59 093 117 689
vol 125 no 11

senior consulting editor

glenn townend
senior editor
jarrod stackelroth
assistant editor
maryellen fairfax
copyeditors
tracey bridcutt
kent kingston
melody tan

graphic designer

lindien chuang
template designer
theodora pau'u
noticeboard
julie laws
letters
editor@record.net.au
news & photos
news@record.net.au

noticeboard

ads@record.net.au
subscriptions
subscriptions@record.net.au
+ 61 (03) 5965 6300
mailed within australia and
nz \$A43.80 \$NZ73.00 other
prices on application.
website
record.adventistchurch.com

adventist media

locked bag 1115
wahroonga nsw 2076 australia
+ 61 (02) 9847 2222
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COVID-19 GLOW TRACTS MAKE BIG IMPACT

MARYELLEN FAIRFAX

In light of widespread concern about COVID-19, Hope Discovery Centre (Wahroonga, NSW) produced “Coronavirus Versus Your Immune System” GLOW tracts—small brochures of information for church members to distribute to their communities.

Until recently, South Pacific Division (SPD) president Pastor Glenn Townend and his wife Pamela were daily distributing the tracts around their Central Coast neighbourhood, following government health advice and using sanitised hands and gloves.

“Glenn bought 10,000 of them, so we’ve managed to get other people from the SPD to help us distribute them,” Mrs Townend explained. “We[d] go out most mornings and letterbox around 200-250 of them.”

Church members and literature evangelists across Australia also distributed the GLOW tracts, with a woman in Western Australia finding one in a public toilet and contacting the Hope Discovery Centre as a result. She was then put in contact with local literature evangelist Paul Bodor, and ordered 100 tracts to distribute.

“She read it and was so excited that we are talking about strengthening our immune systems,” explained Hope Channel administration assistant Linda Thomas. “She said, ‘No-one is talking about this, everyone is buying junk food when the fresh veggie aisles have an abundance of food we need.’”

“People want answers—a GLOW tract in a letterbox as people walk for exercise is something anybody can do and it has a huge impact,” added Pastor Townend. “I know the impact letterboxing has done in the 500

houses around my home. I had an Adventist health professional say that they need such a tract now to give to patients. Now is not the time to be conservative in such outreach. We have a message and this is a real and valued way to get it out.”

In addition to distributing thousands of GLOW tracts, the Townends also letterboxed more than 400 “Here to Help” cards—produced by the Australian Union Conference—to offer practical help and emotional support to locals in their area.

“I’ve made note of everybody who contacted me, and have been in touch with 24 people on a regular basis as a result,” explained Mrs Townend. “Some of the seniors just want to chat, and a lot of people gave me their personal details and shared stories with me.”

Pastor and Mrs Townend sent two follow-up messages of blessing to their contacts—one at Easter and another on Anzac Day. Having received many positive responses and invitations to meet up, they are now planning to invite everyone to a “break-out” party at their home when restrictions are lifted.

“People really want to connect and letterboxing is a way of doing it that is non-threatening,” Mrs Townend explained. “It gives someone the option to respond if they want to. I really encourage people to take a step out of their comfort zone, because God will reward in an amazing way.”

LOCKDOWN LIFE

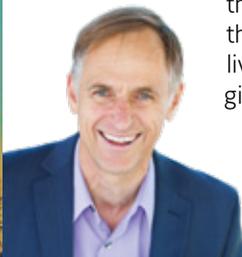
During COVID-19 lockdown, my wife Pamela and I have set a record. We haven’t been home with each other for longer than a month at a time for more than 17 years—half our 34 years of marriage. As I write, we’ve been together for 10 weeks, and it could be more to come. Pam says it’s nice having me around. She doesn’t like lonely days when church work takes me away for weeks. We used to joke that part of our secret to a good marriage was spending up to a third of our time apart and we enjoyed catching up together after travel. However, being together for an extended period is all right too!

But not everything about the lockdown is positive. Humans were made to be “free” (Genesis 2:16). When freedom is restricted—little movement, limited face-to-face contact—it does impact us. On personal reflection, I am more anxious and focused on my needs and less sensitive to the needs of others. My children, who act as a brilliant mirror, have lovingly revealed a selfish streak and a weakness I was blind to in our online family catch-ups. Lockdown is revealing some less-than-Christ like characteristics in me.

How about you? What are you enjoying about the lockdown? What are you finding difficult? What is it revealing about yourself?

Not spending 1.5 hours in a car commuting each day means I have invested time into extra and deeper Bible study—I love it. I received an answer for my sinful nature issues from Colossians 3: Focus on Jesus; choose His grace, mercy, power, peace and holiness to be a part of my life; think about the end goal; let Jesus live within; put to death the evil by not giving it thinking time; check your behaviour—there are a wealth of practical insights. Knowing

that Jesus, who is the fullness of God, lives within me, gives me hope.



GLENN TOWNEND
SPD PRESIDENT
@SPDPresident



THE FRONT COVER OF THE GLOW TRACTS.

ADRA NZ PROVIDES ESSENTIALS TO 1000 FAMILIES

SARAH RYAN

The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) New Zealand is working with a network of Seventh-day Adventist churches throughout the country to provide essentials to more than 1000 Kiwi families in need.

During the level 4 lockdown in New Zealand, many non-essential workers lost either all or a percentage of their income. Many families have struggled throughout this time, but it has been especially difficult for families already living in poverty.

In response, ADRA NZ launched the “Love Thy Neighbour” campaign, which encourages everyone to do something to show love to their neighbours, especially during difficult times.

ADRA NZ worked alongside “community champions”—people involved in community initiatives—in local churches to identify families in need and distribute food packs and grocery vouchers.

Each pack that a family receives includes a contact number of their local pastor and a lead church representative with hopes of connecting again in the future. After two weeks, the families were given a second gift card to help them over a longer period of time.

“It’s been an amazing experience, I’ve been able to witness firsthand the gratitude that people have when receiving these gift cards and food packs,” said Sally Lavea, ADRA NZ coordinator for national programs.

All volunteers were provided with the appropriate PPE gear—gloves, face masks, sanitiser, and a safety manual providing relevant health and safety guidelines to ensure the safety of those they were delivering to as well as their own safety.

“In one of the homes we visited during deliveries, we met with a mother who shared with us that it was her daughter’s birthday. It was



special to see her face light up when she realised she would be able to buy her daughter a cake, along with other essentials needed at home,” shared one of the volunteers.

ADRA’s hope is that through this response, churches are encouraged to engage with the vulnerable in their community and create genuine connections.

ADRA will continue to distribute grocery gift cards and food packs to Kiwi families in need during level 3 lockdown in New Zealand.

To learn more or to donate, please visit <www.adra.org.nz/love>.

REMOTE CHURCH REDEDICATED IN KIRIBATI

JARROD STACKELROTH

One of the first churches to be established by early missionaries in Kiribati, Taribo Seventh-day Adventist church on Abemama Island, was rededicated on March 12.

Originally made of local bush materials, it has finally reached the point of becoming a permanent brick and timber building after changes over many years.



During the rededication, Kiribati Mission president Pastor Luther Taniveke and his wife Florence were joined by the Kiribati government’s Minister of Lands, leaders of other denominations, chiefs and local people.

Mrs Taniveke cut the ribbon to open the church while Pastor Karebwa Roroa invited members into the church.

“Church pastor Karebwa Roroa

and the church members put on a beautiful program that ended with a big feast and presentation of gifts in their cultural ways,” said Pastor Taniveke.

COVID-19 has had only a small impact on the remote nation. The

government moved to ban international flights early, and no cases have been recorded there, meaning church services can continue. However, the Church in Kiribati still faces plenty of challenges, according to Pastor Taniveke.

“Kiribati Mission is the poorest mission in this Union. We have less members supporting the work through tithes and offerings, but a very big area of responsibility, with islands scattered over a quarter of the vast Pacific Ocean. To reach these islands is very difficult and costly.”

Young people in Kiribati are currently preparing for the planned harvest program. They are visiting homes to find out who has been listening to Hope Radio and offering Bible studies. Some have taken up the offer.

“Please pray for Kiribati Mission,” said Pastor Taniveke.

POCKET EDITION OF WELLBEING BOOK RELEASED

NATHAN BROWN

A new Pocket Edition of *Live More Happy* offers opportunities to share its insights into emotional wellbeing with family and friends, as well as the wider community, at a time when its message is “so needed”, according to author Dr Darren Morton.

“Recently we saw the appointment of Australia’s first deputy chief medical officer for mental health,” said Dr Morton, director of the Lifestyle Medicine & Health Research Centre at Avondale University College, speaking of the Australian government’s response to the mental health concerns amid the COVID-19 crisis. “Many people are struggling and this resource can give people practical strategies for maintaining and building their mental wellbeing.”

First published two years ago, *Live More Happy* brings together current scientific understandings in neuroscience, positive psychology and

optimal lifestyle, which has been published in two previous editions, but has now been condensed into this smaller volume. “I always love it when people tell me that they enjoyed and benefited from my book so much that they shared it with others,” said Dr Morton. “The pocket edition makes it so easy to do that.”

Coordinator for literature ministry at Adventist Media, Brenton Lowe, agrees that this new edition has arrived at an important time. “Amid the coronavirus crisis and social isolation, we are seeing increasing mental health concerns. The *Live More Happy* pocket book and the related brochures are great gifts to share,” he said.

The brochures are a series of three small samples of *Live More Happy* content—on the topics of stress, gratitude and service—that can be shared widely, with an invitation to

Online Sharing Resources



RESOURCES ON THE LITERATURE MINISTRIES WEBSITE.

purchase the larger book or access further resources for living well. The brochures are also available for sharing in electronic form.

According to Mr Lowe, tens of thousands of the pocket books and brochures have been pre-ordered by conferences in Australia and New Zealand, but they are also available for purchase from Adventist bookstores in packs of five for personal distribution.

“Everyone loves to receive gifts,” said Dr Morton. “And giving a gift like this offers the opportunity to create connections. [It’s] an easy way to show someone you care.”

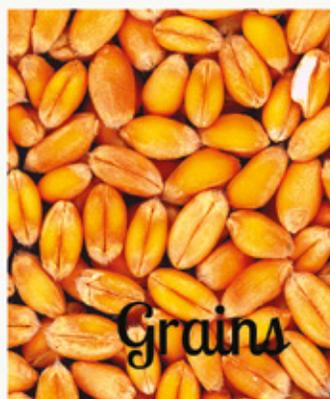
Visit <https://bit.ly/2yjJRR9> for more online sharing resources.

AsianAID Family Food Fund

Give Hope TODAY

Families around the world have been all affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, never more so than in the developing world. As food becomes more expensive and harder to obtain, help us provide food relief for children and their families in our communities, teaching staff at our schools and other children who remain under our care.

For
\$40
per month
WE WILL PROVIDE
BASIC STAPLES SUCH AS



FOOD HAMPER MINISTRIES MAKING A DIFFERENCE

MARYELLEN FAIRFAX

Young people in Adelaide (SA) and Brisbane (Qld) have been reaching out to international students struggling to make ends meet during COVID-19.

“A number of them haven’t been able to go back home,” explained South Australian Conference youth director Pastor Joel Slade. “Many of them have also lost their jobs because hospitality industries have been shut down. The government doesn’t provide support, and many of their parents are also struggling financially back home so can’t help.”

Every Wednesday, young people involved with South Australia Youth Ministries (SAYM) have been gathering at College Park Seventh-day Adventist Church, under the leadership of Marek Jantos, to collect and assemble food into hampers to be sent out to an international dormitory in Adelaide, home to mostly PhD students from the city’s three major universities.

Food is being sourced from FoodBank by Pastor Jan Pollok, who has experience running the ADRA community pantry at Trinity Gardens Church. In addition, a local cafe has been donating meals to add to the hampers.

“We were delivering individual hampers to 80 students, but now we just supply them a large delivery of goods for their communal kitchen,” Pastor Slade explained.

In a similar vein, more than 40 church members—mostly young adults—from eight Adventist churches around Brisbane partnered with ADRA in South Queensland on the weekend of May 2 to 4 to assemble 112 food hampers to assist international students and local families.

“It was a way for local churches to connect and to be involved with ADRA, especially during COVID-19,” said ADRA SQld director Dr Irena Pule Dr Pule. “I thank God for the opportunity to serve and that churches responded to the call.”

Calling themselves the “ADRA South Queensland Care Crew”, the volunteers worked hard on Saturday night and Sunday to pack grocery items into parcels. The initiative was made

possible thanks to support from ADRA Australia, ADRA Eight Mile Plains and Vital Connection (an ADRA project) in partnership with Foodbank. In addition, a pallet of products was donated by Sanitarium. Church members also turned up on the day with trolleys of groceries to include in the parcels.

The Brisbane initiative was held to support Brisbane Spanish Seventh-day Adventist Church, who have been distributing food parcels to international students struggling to make ends meet during COVID-19.

“I got a call from [Pastor Yimi Duarte from the Brisbane Spanish Church] asking for help,” said Dr Pule.

“We distribute food parcels from 9am to 3pm every Saturday,” added Pastor Duarte. “The first week it was 16, then 30, then 65, now 90. So many students don’t have work at the moment and they don’t even have enough food.”

Meaningful and longlasting connections are being made with students as a result of both ministries. While students in Brisbane are now seeking Bible studies with Pastor Duarte, SAYM is creating plans to continue building relationships with students through follow-up small-group ministries.



PASTOR JOEL SLADE (FAR LEFT) AND SAYM VOLUNTEERS PACKING BOXES.



BRISBANE VOLUNTEERS WEARING PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT.

NEWS GRABS



PREVENTING SEXUAL ABUSE

During recent annual Spring Meetings on Zoom, Adventist Church leaders discussed concrete steps to prevent and treat sexual abuse in the Church. General Conference associate secretary Gary Krause shared evidence that every church division around the world is rolling out measures to prevent and treat sexual abuse.—*Adventist Review*



GROWING FOR GOD

Member of Philipsburg Adventist Church (Dutch Caribbean) Jacky Barry started a vegetable garden at her home during COVID-19, which has now become an online ministry reaching 776 people. She started with a Facebook livestream of herself transplanting lettuce, which soon became an online group of likeminded individuals.—*IAD News*



MEMORISING SCRIPTURE

The Southern Asia-Pacific Division’s Adventist Youth Ministry launched #MemoriseABibleVerseChallenge on April 25, which has attracted more than 300 enrolments. Participants have been posting videos of themselves to Facebook reading Bible verses and tagging their friends to gain momentum.—*SAPD News*

HOT TOPICS



CHURCH SAVING LIVES

A new Harvard University study of more than 100,000 people found that women who attend religious services once a week or more are 67 per cent less likely to die from suicide, unintentional alcohol or drug overdose, chronic liver diseases and cirrhosis. In comparison, men were 33 per cent less likely to die from these causes. —*The New Daily*



COPING WITH SOCIAL ISOLATION

According to a new study by the University at Buffalo, “nontraditional” social strategies such as watching TV shows, listening to music or reading books can fulfil critical social needs in a similar way to familial or romantic connections. They suggest practising nontraditional methods during social isolation, labelling it a “good substitute”. —*Healthline*



A GRAVE DISCOVERY

Dozens of paving stones made from Jewish headstones have been found during the opening phase of a £10.6m redevelopment project in Prague’s tourist district, Wenceslas Square. The find confirms suspicions that the former communist regime raided synagogues and graveyards to find building materials. —*The Guardian*

THIEVES STEAL FRUIT TREES, COMMUNITY SPIRIT STILL STRONG

MARYELLEN FAIRFAX

Thieves broke into the private garden of Cannington Community Church (CCC) in Western Australia last month to steal 10 fruit trees, the produce of which was to be included in community food parcels.

“They dug under the fence and took the roots and all. And they stole our wheelbarrows to transport the trees. I’m just disappointed they didn’t feel they could come and ask for help,” explained ADRA representative and church project coordinator Heather Stewart-Johnson.

Recognising the church’s generous community involvement, Canning Mayor Patrick Hall, in partnership with the local Bunnings Warehouse, coordinated the supply of new trees, seedlings and wheelbarrows to compensate the damage.

In an interview with *Cannington Times*, Mr Hall said the theft reflects the sad reality of desperation felt by some in the community.

“At a time when the work of the Cannington Soup Kitchen is more important than ever, having valuable equipment and so many fruit trees stolen is a real blow,” he said.

Since CCC was forced to close its soup kitchen a month ago due to COVID-19 restrictions, volunteers have been handing out 30-40 food parcels every Friday instead, thanks to a team of volunteers.

“Our community cafe, as we like to call it, was held every Friday night and we’d sometimes feed up to 120

people,” said Mrs Stewart-Johnson. “People come because they’re hungry, or because they are just lonely and really want to connect and have a chat. Now we’re doing food parcels for the time being instead, but it will be good when we start the cafe up again.”

The food parcels, which include fruit, vegetables and grocery staples, are mostly sourced from food pantry service Second Bite.

“When our current pastor first came, there weren’t very many members,” explained Mrs Stewart-Johnson. “He challenged us and said, ‘If we closed our doors today, would anyone miss us?’ Maybe no-one would. That’s when we started the community cafe.”

Thanks to the generous work of volunteers, CCC’s ministry is not only meeting the immediate needs of individuals, but also helping to reduce community crime rates.

“At one point we’d been talking to a local police sergeant who said a throwaway line, ‘We know what you’re doing, and crime rates are dropping in the area. So don’t stop what you’re doing,’” said Mrs Stewart-Johnson.

When there is leftover food, CCC has partnered with the school across the road to give to families in need. CCC also runs a clothing op-shop, a street library and has plans to open its garden to the community. “We’re trying to reach as many areas within our community as possible,” she said.



THE CHURCH GARDEN WHERE THEIR COMMUNITY CAFE ATTRACTS HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE.



TESTING 1, 2, 3

Hope Channel Fiji has doubled content production rates in recent weeks, leading to a need for new equipment and resources. Due to extraordinary circumstances as a result of COVID-19, audiences are seeking messages of encouragement. In response to this need, Fijian Adventists in Melbourne gifted Hope Channel a new wireless microphone set. The microphones were dedicated and immediately utilised in program production. —TPUM Facebook



39 YOUNG PEOPLE BAPTISED

A “lamb shelter”—a facility where children and young people to have Sabbath School and Bible studies—has been built by young people from Bumbu Sand Church in Lae, Morobe Province (PNG), to facilitate groups meeting for World Changer Bible studies. So far, 39 young people have made the decision to be baptised—22 from the World Changer group, three former church members, six existing baptismal candidates and eight new interests. Morobe Mission president Pastor Blasius Managos visited the site on Sabbath, May 2, for a dedication service where dozens of World Changer Bibles were handed out. —Record Staff



BAPTISMS IN GLEN INNES

Glen Innes Adventist Church (NSW) recently celebrated the baptism of five people. Two men—Jon Fletcher and Ken Amy—were baptised this year after completing Bible studies with Pastor Afi Tuaoi. Mr Fletcher came to the faith through his wife and a carer he had as a child, both Adventists. Mr Amy became an Adventist through the church’s “Glen Food Hub” ministry, which he says made him feel like he had “come home”. In addition, Pastor Tuaoi baptised his three children—Maria, Elana and Jesiah—last year. Family travelled from Sydney and Melbourne to witness their baptisms. —Michelle Barber



WHAT A TREAT

Young adults Elisha and Shuree Davey and the Women’s Ministry group at Caboolture Church (Qld) teamed up with the local Kings Bakery to honour the staff at Caboolture Hospital. They wanted to thank the doctors, nurses and security staff for their hard work and compassion during COVID-19. Eleven beautifully wrapped gift boxes containing Anzac biscuits, cream buns and chocolate brownies were delivered to the hospital on two Sabbath afternoons in April. One of the nurses posted a FB message saying, “thank-you for your kind gesture, our hospital staff are very grateful for our treats.” —Lynette Ashby



CHILDREN LOVING CHILDREN

COVID-19 didn’t stop Korobosea Adventurers, parents and teachers from delivering food, toiletries and gifts to homeless children at the Born Free Sanctuary (BFS) in Port Moresby (PNG) on March 21. The children were extremely happy to receive the gifts, and the Adventurers played, sang songs and read scriptures to the BFS children. The visit was originally planned as part of Global Youth Day, but after the event was cancelled, the group decided to go and share Jesus’ love with them anyway. —John Nebare



HARMONIOUS ZOOM CHOIR

“The Musicionaries”, a choir from Auckland International Seventh-day Adventist Church, filmed a beautiful rendition of “Psalm 23” composed by Heather Sorenson and shared as a message of hope during COVID-19. The group has also been doing performances for Sabbath schools and children’s programs, Bible studies and worships on Zoom. You can watch the performance at “The Musicionaries” YouTube account. —Hugh Heenani



HILLS ADVENTIST SHINES

The *Rouse Hill Times* recently reported that Hills Adventist College was the second-highest-ranking school in Sydney’s Rouse Hill region for NAPLAN in 2019. Incorporating students’ literacy and numeracy performance data from Years 7 and 9, the school received an average score of 584.1. According to the data, high schools in the Rouse Hill area outperformed students at schools across the state. —Record staff



A NEW WAY TO GIVE

The Fiji Mission launched “M-Paisa” last month, an online platform for members and treasurers to return tithes and offerings. Funded by the Trans Pacific Union Mission and South Pacific Division, pastors and ministers in the central and western division are now equipped to train members and treasurers in their local churches to use the platform, helping to avoid the long and expensive commute to Tavua. —TPUM Facebook

An opportunity to share **HAPPY**

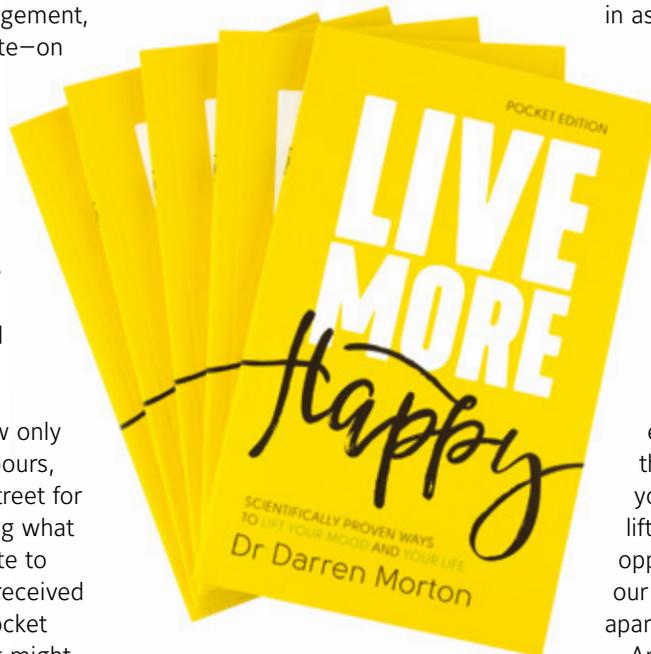
It was an effective way to get our attention—a small package of chocolates delivered on the eve of Easter, “packed with sanitised hands”, with an introductory letter complete with details of their family, work and pets.

Over the following few weeks, amid the ongoing social-distancing restrictions, the 21 houses on our street have exchanged a number of letters and created a “Hope Fence”—including artworks by children and young people, messages of encouragement, jokes and an Anzac Day tribute—on the high wire fence of the public tennis court next to the community hall. While “isolated” like never before, our neighbourhood is growing closer together, thanks largely to the initiative of one family and with the invitation to a neighbourhood barbecue planned for when restrictions are eased.

Like many others, we know only a small number of our neighbours, despite having lived on our street for years. As we were considering what we might be able to contribute to this neighbourly exchange, I received the first copies of the new Pocket Edition of *Live More Happy*. It might not have been as instantly gratifying as our neighbour’s chocolates but we decided to respond to the invitation to follow this first neighbourhood family’s example and write to our 20 neighbours to introduce ourselves. And we chose to include this little book as “something that Nathan has worked on in the past couple of months. As he was editing the original edition of this book, Nathan read it more closely than anyone else ever will (and quite a

few times), and we have both found its ideas useful. . . It seems that many of us could do with a little help with our emotional wellbeing and resilience at the moment—so [we] hope it might be of interest.”

Our personal introductions and recommendation make this more than junk mail—and offer opportunities for future conversations. And we have since received a few responses and thank-yous in our letterbox.



Like many neighbourhoods, appropriately distanced conversations and friendly waves in the past few weeks have been more common than previously, at least partly because we are at home and out walking more often.

But I appreciate the timing of the new small edition of *Live More Happy*. Of course, we have been working on this project over the past six months, but with the books available right now,

it seems an important time to share this practical resource for wellbeing, feeling better, and seeking happiness and hope. And as I have been walking the dog up and down our street, I have also been praying for our neighbours and neighbourhood, as well as our nation and the wider world.

One of the challenges of this time is feeling like there is nothing we can do. But *Live More Happy* quotes Dr Martin Seligman—former president of the American Psychological Association—in asserting that doing something for others “produces the single most reliable increase in wellbeing (happiness) of any exercise we have tested”. The new Pocket Edition of *Live More Happy* is a resource for doing this, particularly at a time when some of our regular opportunities for serving are not available to us. So share this with your neighbours, write them a letter either introducing yourself or thanking them for being part of your community. This might be the lift that each of us needs and the opportunity to get to know more of our neighbours even while we are apart.

And if you haven’t yet read *Live More Happy*—that’s a great place to start. I recommend it.

Live More Happy (Pocket Edition) by Dr Darren Morton is available in a 5-book pack from Adventist bookstores in Australia and NZ: <https://adventistbookcentre.com.au/live-more-happy-pocket-edition.html>.

NATHAN BROWN
BOOK EDITOR, SIGNS PUBLISHING.

VEGAN CAFE DISTRIBUTES MEAL VOUCHERS TO THOSE DOING IT TOUGH

Well-loved community cafe Manna Haven—a ministry of Byron Bay, Alstonville and Ballina Seventh-day Adventist churches (NSW), among others—is distributing meal vouchers to backpackers, families and individuals struggling to make ends meet as a result of COVID-19.

Customers, church members and people from the community have so far purchased more than 200 meal vouchers to feed people in need, at a cost of \$A14 per meal.

"I've been giving the vouchers to the local fruit and veggie shop, the local organic shop," explained Manna Haven head chef and Alstonville church member Bryce Wegener. "I gave some to lady who lives with a house full of backpackers out of work. Some I've given to social workers at the local hospitals to give to people in need."

The meal-voucher initiative was proposed during a Manna Haven board meeting where members—representatives from various Adventist churches in the area—made the decision to keep Manna Haven open during COVID-19.

"When COVID-19 hit and we didn't know whether to continue operating or not, our regulars were begging us not to close," said Mr Wegener. "[But] we've lost about 70 per cent of our customers."

Despite the drop in sales, Mr Wegener says that the uncertain times have caused customers to be more open to spiritual conversations.

"In the initial stages of COVID-19, many locals

coming in were asking questions. A guy from the dress shop down the road was asking if it was the end of the world. People aren't so safe in their worldliness anymore, and it creates opportunities," he explained.

With a large proportion of Byron Bay's population being internationals and tourists, people's spiritual beliefs and practices are diverse.

"It's a real battlefield. New Age practices and meditation are huge here and anything goes spiritually. What's a real battle for me is that people are happy that you believe in Jesus and that you're a Christian and a lot of them will say they believe that too, but still believe in and practise [New Age spirituality]," Mr Wegener explained.

Despite the diversity, people from all walks of life are attracted to Manna Haven because of its focus on healthy living and creating a better lifestyle, and everyone is welcome.

"The community knows who Adventists are now," said Mr Wegener. "I'll walk down the street and know people by name. The homeless guy is a good friend of mine, so are the bus drivers and buskers. It's because people love good food and it creates community."

If you would like to support Manna Haven in these tough financial times or purchase food vouchers for those in need, visit mannahaven.com.au.

MARYELLEN FAIRFAX
ASSISTANT EDITOR, ADVENTIST RECORD.

THE NEW NORMAL

back to church in Papua New Guinea

As Pastor Gaza Asitore stood up to deliver his message he was hit with a rush of mixed emotions. Looking out, he saw just a few church members, physically distanced, who had come to dedicate the safety and hygiene items to be used by the Rainbow Adventist Church and its six branch churches in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea (PNG).

The last time the church was filled to capacity was on March 21, for a health talk by Dr Moses Lester of ASPEN Medical about awareness of COVID-19.

On March 23, the PNG government declared a State of Emergency (SOE) after WHO declared COVID-19 a pandemic. A 14-day lockdown of the country after PNG's first reported case meant all church gatherings were prohibited. Church members were having Sabbath worships at home for seven Sabbaths as Parliament extended the SOE a further two months. So all who were present in the church were feeling both happy and sad as the "new normal" would see a drastic change with the way Sabbath

worship programs will be conducted in Rainbow Adventist Church and also all over the world.

Pastor Asitore shared from the scripture, 3 John 1:2, "Beloved I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in good health, just as your soul prospers."

God's desire for us is to enjoy the fellowship with our fellow church family. During the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown it has truly made the church family come to treasure the joy of fellowship and unity in adversity.

As soon as the restrictions were lifted (April 29) and worship gatherings were allowed, Rainbow Adventist Church held a special church board to effectively open the church building on the basis of being compliant to the National Emergency Order 28, regulation No. 9.

The church approved the purchase of church hygiene kits to ensure that the main church and six branches commenced with pastoral care for the congregation. The kits are comprised of an infrared thermometer, bars of soap, two litres of antiseptic detergent, isopropyl and a box of gloves. The deacons, deaconesses and elders were trained during the week on the use of the kits and standard operation procedures for Sabbaths. The training was conducted by the church's Health Pillar co-leaders, Dr Tekie Purewa and his wife, Hayley.

Finally, after seven Sabbaths, Rainbow Adventist Church and its branch churches in Barakau, Dogura, Granville, Momokoura (Baruni), Moale Heights and Baruni Bay Side conducted their first Sabbath services on May 9.

It was not an easy transition for everyone. Church member Gabriel Porolak shares that he watched people entering church that Sabbath and wondered if he should have fellowshiped at home. "Everything felt distant, including the presence of God. . ." However, he recalled the verse in Deuteronomy 31:6 and found reassurance: "My sadness turned into joy as I slowly smiled and I thanked God for the great honour to be able to attend church that glorious morning."

While there are challenges for the present and in the future, as adhering to the new normal will take some time and as church membership grows, there are some benefits already experienced.

"The feeling of reverence is there inside and outside the church due to less noise and movement in, out and around the church," shared Rainbow church member Veronica Bonasu.

For now, Rainbow church prays: "Beloved I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in good health, just as your soul prospers." To all of God's people in Papua New Guinea and around the world.

WILLIE KUNSEI
EMERGENCY COORDINATOR, ADRA PNG.





12-year-old feeds the homeless during lockdown

It's 5am on a Sunday morning in early April. Although Fiji's capital of Suva is in lockdown, 12-year-old Nasoni Junior is already awake and ready to feed the homeless on the city streets.

Today, Junior is joining his parents like he has done so many times before, but this time he is more reluctant. The police have been very strict in arresting people, and authorities have not made it clear whether Junior and his team are allowed to continue their ministry.

Junior's team is called "MISSION-1", named after the mission work they do on Suva's streets every Sunday morning. They have been doing this for a year now, but it's getting harder. Half of the team were recently forced to return home to Australia due to the pandemic. The Wood boys from Campsie, NSW (sons of Dr Paul Wood, Health director for Trans Pacific Union Mission), would normally be here. They have been serving with Junior for 12 months, providing the homeless with breakfasts of hot chocolate, muffins and homemade buns, and singing

songs and praying with people.

The situation is different now. The remaining team are wearing masks, gloves and have bottles of hand sanitiser, and only three people are allowed to go out together because of social distancing. But this morning, they still ministered to 40 people—providing them hot drinks, homemade buns, rice and stir-fry in takeaway packs.

The recipients responded with words like "thank you for your love", and "God bless".

Knowing that the homeless in Suva depend on the city opening for business each day, the MISSION-1 team kept ministering for four weeks during lockdown. Despite their hesitation, they were overwhelmed with a deep sense of compassion to reach out.

Junior and the MISSION-1 team feel that this is a unique way to share the good news of Jesus' love and salvation with the forgotten people of Suva City.

NASONI LUTUNALIWA
DISCIPLESHIP MINISTRIES, TPUM.

LIVING HIS WORD

WITH WAYNE BOEHM

SOWING SEEDS

In recent weeks, we've been forced into a new world. The pandemic has not discriminated, devastating communities and resulting in loss of life and jobs, mental health impacts, strains on global financial markets and potential trade issues. In light of these challenges, how do we carry out our calling to be disciple-makers?

Mark's first three chapters record Jesus' interaction with people—some responded positively while others rejected Him. As you review these interactions, **WHY** did people reject Jesus and **WHAT** do you learn from these stories?

CONSIDER the story of the sower in Mark 4:13-20. Jesus identified four types of soil but only one kind of seed. Jesus, at the outset of His ministry, gives a lesson to His listeners on emotional intelligence (EQ). As you sow seeds (disciple), you will meet four types of people: v15, v16, v18, v20.

Jesus identified three enemies of the gospel seed—hard hearts, shallow hearts and crowded hearts. When the seed is sown, the hearer has a responsibility to act upon it, otherwise it is in danger of being snatched from them. In contrast, the good soil were the ones who acted upon the seed that was cast upon their heart. **CONSIDER** the words Jesus spoke in Mark 4:26-29 as it relates to our mission to make disciples—the seed grows and the sower reaps.

So in these times, keep casting the seeds of the kingdom upon all types of soil. Demonstrate the love and compassion of Jesus because, just maybe, the seed that is sown will fall upon the good soil and will produce a crop 30, 60 or 100 times that which was sown.



PENTECOST *AND* MISSION

Fifty days after the Passover came the feast of Pentecost. This was the third feast in Israel's yearly cycle of feasts. It celebrated the harvest of the first fruit and served as an annual reminder of God's blessing. In spiritual terms, "first fruits" is a mission concept. It is a celebration of people won to Christ.

The Church's nature has always been a continuing witness to the salvation and power of God. This is true for the Old Testament where God raised up a people out of nothing to be His witnesses in the earth.

In the covenant made to Abraham (Genesis 12) we

find the theme of God's salvation embedded in the first three verses: "I will make you a blessing to all people." However, this is also an indication of mission.

The stories in the Exodus and the book of Judges also show a saving God.

Then came the Babylonian captivity. This was a wakeup call. But unfortunately the wrong lesson was learned. Faithfulness to the law and rituals became confused with faithfulness to God and Israel's role to be a light to the world.

When we get to the New Testament the theme of a saving God in the Gospels leads into the book of Acts.

Here we see God raise up the Christian church to replace a failed Old Testament church, a church that had become institutionalised. It no longer was interested in being on the cutting edge of mission, but had become satisfied in maintaining its structure and forms. Its nature had changed and purpose subverted.

God's plan for His New Testament church was for it to be a continuing witness to the crucified and resurrected Messiah, Jesus Christ. This is still the church's nature and purpose. It is still to be a missionary church.

Harry Boer in his book *Pentecost and Mission* argues that Pentecost and not the Great Commission was the conscious ingredient in the mission thinking of the early church.

Think about that for a minute.

We usually hear that it is the Great Commission that gives us our imperative for mission. We have heard a lot about Matthew 28:19,20, "Go, and make disciples of all nations," baptise, teach, etc. But in our preaching of mission have we given thought to the place of Pentecost?

If Harry Boer is right, and Pentecost was the motivating factor for mission in the early church, what does this say to us as a church today, and how should we view Pentecost?

Perhaps Acts 1:8 sums it up for us: "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit is come." Or in other words, mission and witness can only really be accomplished through the power of the Holy Spirit. The command to "Go, make disciples" anticipates the promise "You will receive power". In truth, you can't have one without the other. If the Great Commission gives the church its instructions, Pentecost provides its initiation, initiative and power. (For example see the stories in Acts 2, 3, 4, etc.)

And so Pentecost stands at the beginning of the Christian church shaping its nature, which is mission. When we talk about the mission of the church we must not stop at the Great Commission, but understand that the power for mission is experienced in Pentecost. The church's work of mission therefore, must also be rooted in every member of the church having a Pentecost experience.

In Acts we read, "When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place." The KJV puts it this way: "they were all with one accord in one place" (Acts 2:1). Now this is not talking about just being in the same room together. This is talking about a certain type of harmony and unity. About seeking God's will through prayer and the study of Scripture and moving forward together to achieve His purpose. Too often everyone wants their own way and they think that they know what is best. And so the church pulls in different directions. And sometimes it even pulls itself apart. Independent groups break away from the church, each thinking they know best.

But what do we see here?

That the prerequisite for mission requires that the church be in one accord. That it be in the same place with the same goals and purpose. For it is through a church united in the worship and service of God that God can do great things and that mission can truly be accomplished.

However, the phrase "being of one accord" may indicate far more than just the principle of unity. For within it are the seeds that form the foundation for a revival of mission. And what we read here at the beginning of chapter 2 is expanded into a far more detailed picture of unity and activity for the church at the end of chapter 2.

After the dramatic entrance of the Holy Spirit appearing as flames of fire, and after the disciples going out and preaching powerfully and in tongues, we read how a large group of people are convicted and converted and join this new Christian movement. And then we read, "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer" (Acts 2:42).

How many great revivals have resulted from a fervent study of the Bible and prayer? Even our own history evidences such beginnings. This is what we see on the day of Pentecost. Bible study, fellowship, prayer, sharing with others and the Holy Spirit. These are the foundations for mission.

So what is the state of the church today? How ready is it for a Spirit-led revival that will usher in the close of this world's history? Have we grown complacent and become the lukewarm church of Revelation 3? Do we take seriously our need to know Christ each day? Are we spending a thoughtful hour in Bible study and prayer with our Lord and Saviour? And are we sharing Jesus with others? Or have we lost our awareness of the urgency of the hour and our great need to "put off the deeds of darkness and to put on the armour of light" (Romans 13:12).

Towards the end of *The Great Controversy* is the following statement: "Before the final visitation of God's judgments upon the earth there will be among the people of the Lord such a revival of primitive godliness as has not been witnessed since apostolic times. The Spirit and power of God will be poured out upon His children."¹

Isn't this what we are longing for?

If the church therefore—meaning you and me—is to take seriously its mission and purpose, it must take its lead from Pentecost. We must call the church to unity and fellowship. We must call the church to pursue meaningful study of God's Word and intimate prayer. And we must call the church to become dependent on its relationship and fellowship with Jesus through His Spirit. For without the Spirit's presence in our life we face the very real danger of becoming like the Old Testament church that had lost its way because it came to rely on its forms and structures² and not its heavenly Leader.

May God help us start such a revival and may we each determine to be His instruments in calling men and women back to an experience of "primitive godliness".

1. EG White, *The Great Controversy*, 464.2.

2. See Jeremiah 7:3,4 and Isaiah 1:11-20.

DR BRAD KEMP
CEO, ADVENTIST MEDIA.

On July 1 the online Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia will be launched. Entries for the Encyclopedia continue to be written, but at its launch it will have approximately 2000 articles, including more than 600 from the South Pacific Division. This article on Lance Gersbach is a sample of a biography. There are also articles on denominational institutions and organisations, supportive ministries and issues that impact on the Church and its ministry. It will be one of the most exciting and helpful resources that the Church has ever produced. And it is written by contributing authors from around the world, including 140 authors from the South Pacific Division.



ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

Gersbach, Lance Russell (1942–2003)

By Milton Hook

Lance Gersbach worked in Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. He was brutally killed while working as business manager at Atoifi Adventist Hospital, Malaita, Solomon Islands.

FAMILY BACKGROUND

Lance Gersbach's grandfather, Albert, was converted from Roman Catholicism to the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Church in Eugowra, New South Wales (NSW), Australia, after reading *The Great Controversy*, sold to him by colporteur Fred Reekie. The Kent family in Eugowra made the same response at that time. Albert Gersbach eventually took his family to Warburton where he worked as gardener at the Sanitarium.¹ He had 10 children, one named Albert [Jr.], who worked at the Signs Publishing Company and the Sanitarium Health Food Company (SHF).² Albert, Jr. managed the Carmel SHF factory near Perth, WA, and then took up farming in the southwest of the state.³

EARLY YEARS

Lance was born into the family of Albert Gersbach Jr., in Perth on November 19, 1942.⁴ Another son, Alwyn, later became a pastor and gave a life of service to the Church. Lance was raised on a farm near Busselton and attended the Margaret River SDA Church. Most of his early education took place locally, his final secondary years (1958–1959) spent as a boarder at West Australian Missionary College.⁵

CAREER PATH

Leaving Western Australia, Lance worked as an office clerk at the Sanitarium Health Food Factory in Adelaide, beginning in November 1959.⁶ After four years he attended Avondale College, NSW, graduating with the Accountancy Certificate in 1964. He remained with the SHF until May 1970, serving as senior clerk at both the Cooranbong and Warburton factories.⁷

With a sense of adventure and a desire to travel he joined the firm of Ernst and Young in 1970 as a senior audit accountant, working in their London, Calgary and Sydney offices until 1977. During this period he improved his qualifications, becoming a certified practising accountant in 1971 and a chartered accountant in 1975. In 1978 he gravitated back to Western Australia, taking some temporary accountancy assignments before accepting the position

as office manager at SS Engineering and Foundry in Perth. He continued his studies, earning a diploma in business administration from Curtin University, Perth, in 1984. The following year he transferred east to work as accountant and auditor for Walker and Company, Belmont, New South Wales. He held this position until 1990, during which time he also studied at Newcastle University. He was awarded a master's in business administration (1989) and was subsequently accepted as a Fellow of Certified Practising Accountants.⁸

MARRIAGE AND MISSION FIELD EXPERIENCE

Lance married Jean Tilley in the Galston SDA Church on September 3, 1989.⁹ Jean had graduated from the Sydney Adventist Hospital (1974) and completed a post-graduate Midwifery Certificate (1975).¹⁰ Late in 1990 they accepted an appointment to Sopas Adventist Hospital in the Western Highlands of Papua New Guinea. Lance was second in charge of the 100-bed training institution and Jean was Director of Nursing.¹¹

In April 1993 Lance accepted a transfer to Auckland Adventist Hospital, New Zealand, assuming the role of director of finances. Eighteen months later Jean's mother had become so ill it became advisable for the Gersbach family to return to Australia. Lance resumed his association with Walker and Company in Newcastle, NSW.¹²

A second request from the mission field came in late 2002. Lance was asked to fill an urgent need as business manager at Atoifi Adventist Hospital, Malaita, Solomon Islands. He agreed to take his family for a 12-month emergency stay, arriving at the hospital in February 2003.¹³

HORRIFIC TRAGEDY

An incident allegedly arose between a local Kwaio man and the hospital's maintenance supervisor. A Kwaio young man was refused free passage on a boat chartered by the mission. The man felt aggrieved because, according to his culture, he had lost his honour over the refusal. He was reported to have threatened the supervisor's life. A senior hospital staff member paid the angry man compensation, but it apparently did not satisfy him. Instead, it is alleged that the aggrieved man engaged a devil priest to obtain permission for an honour killing according to Kwaio protocols. Lance was not told of the developments and was therefore unaware of danger to the hospital staff. On May 18, four months after Lance arrived at Atoifi, he was ambushed and brutally beheaded at a building site on campus. His body was brought back to Australia for burial near his home.¹⁴

RETROSPECT

Suspects were brought to trial, but not convicted, chiefly because the devil priest refused to attend court and other key witnesses garbled their answers. Did the aggrieved young man regain his honour? No. Instead, a local member of parliament called it "an evil killing, an attack on the very

heart of the people of East Kwaio".¹⁵

Jean and her two daughters, Louise and Anita, returned home, crushed with grief. Church officials and friends brought them some solace, but the crime seemed so senseless, indeed, satanic. Forgiveness for the criminal was unresolved in Jean's soul. She wrestled for a long time, seeking closure, until a visiting Kwaio chief, a Christian, awakened within her a deep desire to offer unqualified forgiveness. She finally wrote a letter of forgiveness to the accused man and found peace of mind. Her initiative was a most moving Christian testimony. She has since continued her own career as a nurse educator at Newcastle University, NSW.¹⁶

In 2013, on the anniversary of his death, a scholarship fund was set up by the South Pacific Division in the name of Lance Gersbach. The fund is administered by the Trans Pacific Union Mission and provides an annual scholarship or award for selected nursing students at Atoifi Adventist Hospital.¹⁷

1. TF Judd, "Albert Gersbach obituary," *Australasian Record and Advent World Survey*, May 23, 1960, 15.
2. C M Snow, "Gersbach-Ellis," *Australasian Record*, April 2, 1928, 5.
3. Milton Hook, personal knowledge as result of father working with Albert Gersbach in SHF factory, Carmel, Western Australia.
4. Desmond Ford, Alwyn Gersbach and Graeme Loftus, "Lance Russell Gersbach obituary," *Record*, June 28, 2003, 13.
5. Jean (Tilley) Gersbach, interview by author, Hornsby, New South Wales, August 28, 2016.
6. Lance Gersbach Work Service Records, Sanitarium Health Food Company Archives, Berkeley Vale, NSW, Work Service Records, Folder: Lance Gersbach. Document: "Lance Gersbach Work Service Records."
7. Lance Gersbach, [Curriculum Vitae] Resume, 2000, unpublished manuscript, personal collection of Jean (Tilley) Gersbach.
8. Ibid.
9. Thomas H Ludowici, "Gersbach-Tilley," *Record*, September 30, 1989, 14.
10. Jean Lynette (Tilley) Gersbach Work Service Records, South Pacific Division of the General Conference Archives, Wairoonga, NSW. Work Service Records. Folder: Jean Lynette (Tilley) Gersbach. Document: "Jean Lynette (Tilley) Gersbach Work Service Records."
11. Lance Gersbach, [Curriculum Vitae] Resume, 2000, unpublished manuscript, personal collection of Jean (Tilley) Gersbach.
12. Ibid.
13. Jean Tilley Gersbach, interview by author, Hornsby, New South Wales, August 28, 2016.
14. Ibid.
15. Brenton Stacey, "Missionary Murdered in the Solomons," *Record*, June 7, 2003, 5.
16. Jean Gersbach, "Ten Years on ..." *Record*, June 15, 2013, 14-15.
17. Barry Oliver, president of the South Pacific Division in 2013, interview by the author, Cooranbong, NSW, May 3, 2020.

If you wish to donate towards the Lance Gersbach Scholarship Fund, which will assist nurses in training and Atoifi Hospital in the Solomon Islands, please send your donation to the South Pacific Division treasurer with instructions that it be added to the fund which is administered by the Trans Pacific Union Mission.

DR BARRY OLIVER

RETIRED SPD PRESIDENT. DR OLIVER HAS WORKED ON THE SPD SUBMISSIONS FOR THE SDA ENCYCLOPEDIA.



Recipe of the Week

Vegan Sticky Date Pudding

This sticky date pudding creates a layer of spiced caramel sauce under the cake as it bakes. Goes perfectly with a dollop of low fat dairy-free greek yoghurt and an extra sprinkling of cinnamon.

Find this recipe and hundreds more at:

Australia: sanitarium.com.au/recipes
New Zealand: sanitarium.co.nz/recipes



OUR FAVOURITE WAYS TO KEEP CELEBRATING

Now, more than ever, it's important for people to find ways to stay connected with loved ones. Whether it's talking, listening or a hug, connecting with someone helps us feel soothed, especially when things feel out of control. Here are our four favourite ways to connect and celebrate the best things in life, albeit a little differently.

HOST A VIRTUAL DINNER PARTY

Dinner parties are back in vogue—this time with a twist. Virtual dinner parties are as simple as using Zoom or a chat room to dial in friends and family and enjoy a meal together online. It's a chance to laugh, share frustrations or worries and connect, and gain those important physical and mental benefits associated with sharing meal times.

LOG IN FOR LUNCH

If you're working from a home office, it's easy to skip your lunch break or mindlessly eat at your desk. So, if you find yourself working through lunch, or you're missing your workmates, try taking a virtual lunch break with them. Creating a virtual lunch hour will help draw a line between work, create space for those important brain breaks and may also be one of the few moments in the day to laugh and just chat.

GIFT OF BAKING

It's no wonder COVID-19 has prompted a boom in baking. It's far more than a boredom buster. Baking focuses your attention on a calming activity, just like the mindful colouring-in craze. It's a creative release that can make you happier and it also stimulates the senses, which can increase feel good endorphins.

TAKE A COOKING LESSON WITH AN EXPERT

Many celebrated chefs are offering virtual cooking demonstrations to stay connected with passionate foodie followers and offer up the flavours they can't serve up as they normally would. Tune in and gain useful culinary skills, which you can then serve up as something new to your household.

TIPS FOR CELEBRATING DIFFERENTLY



MAKE IT FUN

It's still possible to spend quality time with friends and family and link up whether they live in the next suburb or in another country. To make a virtual dinner party even more fun set a theme, dress up, play a game or try all cooking the same dish.



SHARE THE JOY

If you're worried about eating all your baking creations, try looking for ways to share your cakes—it will make someone's day and yours too. Why not drop a cake off at a friend's or family member's house or try a driveway cuppa with a neighbour?



HONE YOUR SKILLS

If you have a family member who makes a dish that's always the star of the family dinner or an heirloom recipe, ask them for a virtual cooking lesson—the next expert in the family might just be you.



KUDOS FOR CREATIVITY

It was an insightful article “Jephthah’s daughter and a kilogram of flour” (*Adventist Record*, May 2), pointing out the unnecessary sacrifice on Jephthah’s part, as there were provisions in the Levite services for rash oaths.

However, there are two perspectives on Jephthah’s vow summarised as i) the “sacrifice view” or ii) the “dedication view”. The second viewpoint believes Jephthah’s daughter was set apart for a lifetime as “belonging to the Lord”.

Supporting evidence is the focus of lamentation by daughter and friends on her virginity, not her upcoming death. On return to her father he follows the vow and the sentence concludes “and she knew no man” (verse 37).

There are also elements of the Hebrew language regarding the vow itself and I recommend a read of the Prof Rabbi Jonathan Magonet article “Did Jephthah actually kill his daughter?” for a more detailed case for the second viewpoint.

Paul Sharp, *Tas*



IN THE FACE OF GRACE

I refer to “Is obedience possible?” (*Adventist Record*, May 2).

It is clear the New Testament calls those who receive God’s grace to obedience. Paul even refers to himself as “the slave of Jesus Christ” (Romans 1:1).

However, this same apostle had a much greater focus—that of grace. It was God’s free grace that rescued Paul, not his obedience. Not even his obedience through God’s strength. It is God’s grace that makes Christianity distinctly different to every other world religion.

It is within the context of this grace that all exhortations to living and acting appropriately are made. In the New Testament we are called to a new relationship with God because Christ died for us while we were yet sinners (Romans 5:8).

Get this right and most other things are easy to understand.

Yes, we are called upon to “accept one another” (Romans 15:7). Yes, we are admonished to “bear one another’s burdens” (Galatians 6:2). Slave masters are to give up threatening their slaves (Ephesians 6:9).

Notice how all these calls to obedience are practically and socially focused . . . because of grace! So is obedience important? You bet it is! Is it possible? The New Testament just does not seem too concerned about whether your obedience will help you make the cut or not. In the face of grace, some questions simply dissolve!

Steve Sleight, *NSW*

COMPLEXITY

Is there some confusion behind the message of “How Sad” (May 16)?

The mandated closure of churches was not an attack on Seventh-day Adventists or the Sabbath. It applied to all mass gatherings, Christian or non-Christian, religious or secular, for public health reasons.

By remaining open would we not be showing disregard for our communities by increasing their chance of contracting the virus? Witnessing of our God is much more encompassing than standing up and telling what we believe. Is it not equally about showing them that we care—care enough to forgo our regular Sabbath worship for their good?

The Rev Gerald Glenn thought it was right to defy his state authorities by keeping his church open and telling his congregants to trust in God. He contracted the virus and soon died. His mother-in-law also contracted it (*Washington*

Post, 13 April 2020).

Ellen White confronted serial cholera pandemics in the USA in the 1850s when there was no identified cause, let alone a cure. She emphasised that fasting and praying were insufficient—we should try to understand and defeat the disease. In our case that means “social distancing”.

Maybe in the present pandemic the injunction of Romans 13 trumps that of Revelation 13.

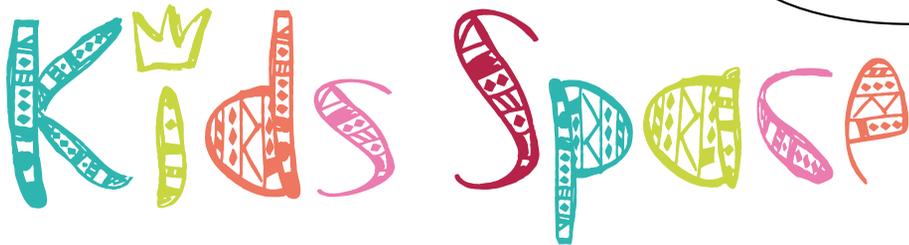
Harwood Lockton, *NSW*

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.

Hola Kids!

(Spanish for Hello)

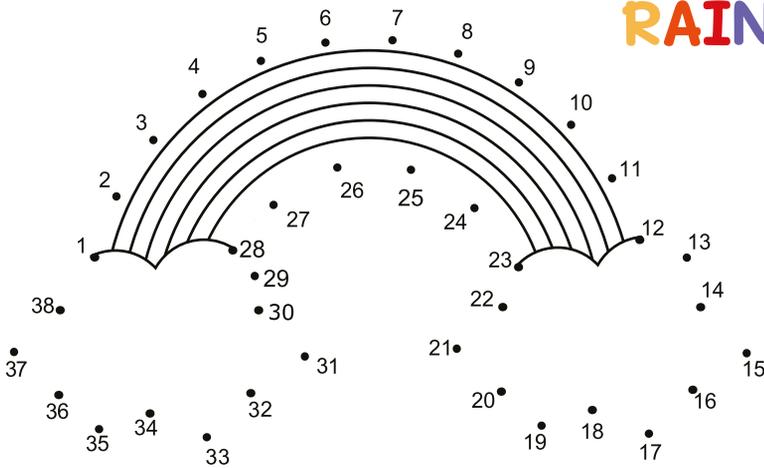
God's people rejoice because He cares for them.



A RAINBOW PROMISE

After Noah and his family and all the animals leave the ark, Noah builds an altar and has worship with his family. God puts a rainbow in the sky and blesses the family. He promises never again to destroy all the earth with a flood. God instructs Noah to regard the rainbow as a reminder or a sign of His pledge, His agreement.

RAINBOW ACTIVITIES



N	O	F	A	M	I	L	Y	AGREEMENT
M	O	G	P	X	V	K	E	ALTAR
H	D	A	I	A	S	G	L	ANIMALS
G	E	F	H	D	N	F	L	BLESSING
T	R	L	S	A	N	H	O	BLUE
E	P	O	R	G	P	I	W	FAMILY
L	R	O	O	R	X	G	V	FLOOD
O	O	D	W	E	G	N	H	GREEN
I	M	A	O	E	P	I	N	INDIGO
V	I	N	B	M	L	S	E	NOAH
N	S	I	N	E	E	S	E	ORANGE
R	E	M	I	N	D	E	R	PLEDGE
C	U	A	A	T	G	L	G	PROMISE
G	L	L	R	Y	E	B	S	RAINBOW
I	B	S	R	A	T	L	A	RED
								REMINDER
								SKY
								VIOLET
								WORSHIP
								YELLOW



MEMORY VERSE
 "I will remember my covenant between me and you and all living creatures of every kind. Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life"
 (Genesis 9:15, NIV).

Obituaries

MACK, Philip Kevin, born 21.10.1955 in Nottingham, England; died 25.3.20 on the Sunshine Coast, Qld. On 16.3.1997 he married Diane. Phil is survived by his wife (Caloundra); son, John Stringfellow (Sunnybank Hills); daughter, Ellen and Victor James (Heathwood); grandchildren, Oliver and Stephanie; brothers, Chris and Fi (Sandstone, WA), and Ady and Nik (Langwarrin, Vic); and sisters, Adele and Rod Vincent (Rainbow), and Peggy and Terry Casey (Berwick). Phil always had a smile on his face. We all knew him as a kind and caring gentleman who adored his family. He will be in our hearts forever.

Janice Mengersen

MCCUTCHEON, Dulcie Mavis, born 26.11.1917 in Taranaki, NZ; died 3.4.20 in Newcastle, NSW. On 28.4.1936 she married Freeman in Hamilton, NZ, who predeceased her in 1998. Living to 102, she was predeceased by her siblings, Isabel Balle, Gordon Roberts, Malcolm Roberts and Ila Harris. She is survived by her nieces and nephews and many friends who mourn her passing. With her husband, Dulcie spent 30 years of her life in mission service—living in Fiji, Tonga, Vanuatu and Papua New Guinea. Her penchant for social fun and high jinx meant that when life was a bit quiet on the mission compound, she could play tricks.

Adrian Craig



MOODIE, Donald Edwin, born 18.3.1931; died 17.3.20 in the Calvary Mater Hospital, Newcastle, NSW. In 1954 he married Noeline Bird in the Concord Church, Sydney. He is survived by his wife; his children, Robert (Auckland, NZ); Richard and Greg (both of Cooranbong, NSW) and Sheryl (Silverwater); 12 grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren. Don was a successful builder, a gifted musician and ministered in the church as an elder and Pathfinder leader. He was a wonderful husband, a loving, devoted Dad and much-loved grandparent. Don was a warm, kind-hearted and unselfish Christian. Jesus was clearly his Saviour and he now rests, awaiting the Second Coming.

Roger Nixon

ADVERTISING

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NEXT ISSUE:
ADVENTIST WORLD,
JUNE 13

Position Vacant Chief Executive Officer - ADRA Australia

ADRA Australia seeks applications from qualified and experienced professionals for the role of Chief Executive Officer. This is a rarely available opportunity to lead ADRA Australia to accomplish its Purpose in harmony with its Values.

This role involves the oversight and direction of the operations of ADRA Australia Limited giving particular attention to visioning, strategic planning and management.

The successful applicant will be a management professional who loves to make a difference and who will meet the challenges of this diverse role with energy and enthusiasm.

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Further details including the applicant information pack is available on our website: <www.adra.org.au/work-for-us/> or by contacting the Australian Union Conference People and Culture Manager at MelissaHill@adventist.org.au.

Closing date for applications is **June 15, 2020**, at the close of business.

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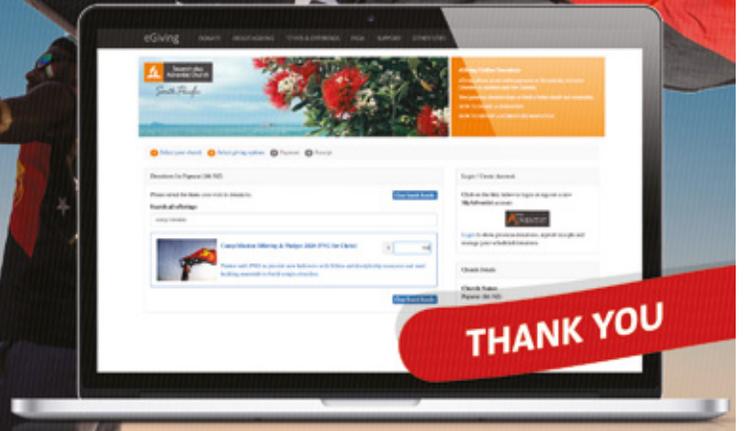
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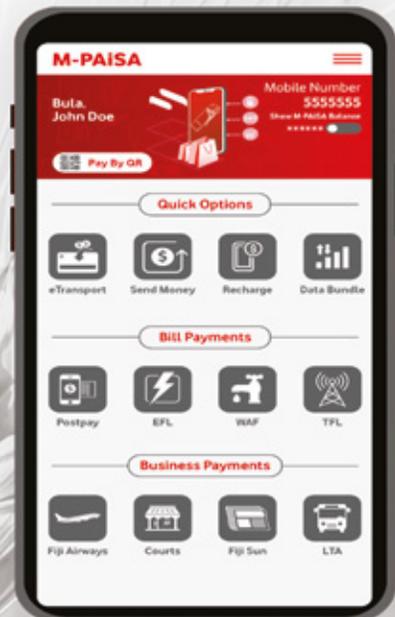


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ADRA volunteer

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