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## SURVIVING A FINANCIAL CRISIS

FIVE BIBLICAL TIPS FOR STAYING  
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### NEWS

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#WERTHECHURCH 4

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## THE VALUE OF ONE LIFE

"I'm having a hard time getting my head around that," said the young person I had been sharing with. "I just don't feel like it's true." We were not discussing some mystery of the universe or the nature of God. It wasn't some win-every-argument apologetics trick or a scientific principle. The concept was that he was valuable. Infinitely valuable.<sup>1</sup> He couldn't get his head around his intrinsic value. Not that his will or his contribution or his race had value in and of itself, especially more value than anyone else—but that the essence of who he was, his very existence, was planned, purposed and prized by God.

This point of belief is incredibly important. It is the hinge that a lot of our behaviour and practice swings off. Knowing human life is valuable impacts how we treat others and ourselves. Understanding our value in God's eyes is a truth that stands against all the lies we tell ourselves, and all the lies the world tells us through advertising, profiling and prejudice.

A lot of arguments for uniquely Adventist doctrines are made compelling due to their associated value component: the Sabbath, a personal rest and recuperation from stress and overwork; our health message, the body is the temple and dwelling place of God that must be looked after; Jesus is coming back physically to take us physically . . . I could go on, but you get the point.

The doctrine comes from two vital pieces of information: that humankind is *imago dei*, made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27) and that Jesus "gave himself as a ransom for all" (1 Timothy 2:6).

This has never been more relevant than in 2020, a year that seems stalked by tragedy and disaster.

The value of a single human life is a doctrine the Church needs to rediscover—and live out—quickly: divorced from political manoeuvring, from economic rationale, from eschatological prognostications.

Every single life lost is a tragedy. And yet life has never seemed so cheap. We've seen the death toll rising around the world from COVID-19 and yet we argue about the cost to the economy. People around the world march and protest the killings of unarmed African-Americans, while many of us turn a blind eye or

change our social media status, without finding ways to learn, come alongside and serve those who might be hurting at this time. We look scornfully over the seas without looking closer to home, at some ways we treat indigenous people and immigrants.

Each death we hear about on the news was an individual made in the image of God. If the death is of a Christian, then a brother or sister has been taken from us. If not a Christian, then they may not have had their opportunity to know Jesus and be saved. We should be more moved by all of this.

Our fundamental beliefs affirm the doctrine of the value of human life. "We are all equal in Christ, who by one Spirit has bonded us into one fellowship with Him and with one another; we are to serve and be served without partiality or reservation" (Fundamental 14).

It is not enough to affirm this value; we must actively enact it by ministering to others.

"We are also called to follow Christ's example by compassionately ministering to the physical, mental, social, emotional and spiritual needs of humanity. As we give ourselves in loving service to those around us and in witnessing to His salvation, His constant presence with us through the Spirit transforms every moment and every task into a spiritual experience" (Fundamental 11).

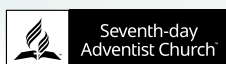
In light of the high value that God places on man, can we call ourselves His followers if we value human life less than He does?

We must navigate our way through the partisan politics to a middle ground that challenges both sides to value human life and protect and improve it.

Like my friend, we may have a hard time accepting our own value in God's eyes. We need to rediscover the beauty of this truth. God loves you infinitely. God loves your neighbour just as much, so you are called to love them too.

1. E G White, "The Necessity of Labor," *Review and Herald*, March 13, 1888.

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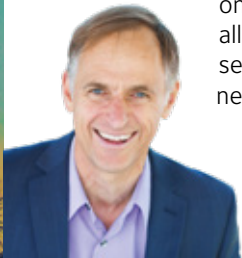
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## CHURCH POST-PANDEMIC

The local church elder on the phone was a friend: "I cannot wait to get back to the church building for worship so I can talk with people face to face." Earlier in the week I had talked to another friend, "The COVID pandemic has helped me get my Sabbaths back—instead of leading in programs I am doing Bible studies with my family and spending time in reflection with God in nature. I'm not sure I want to be in the church building as much." Another friend emailed, "I like meeting in small groups on Sabbath more than going to the big church service. I participate more, am growing spiritually and know the others in the group better." Others have shared, "There are great sermons on the internet. I don't need to go to church to worship God." All of these friends are very faithful Adventists but see the pandemic's affect on the church and themselves quite differently. The Church in the SPD is not going to be the same as it was before coronavirus.

Church leaders are discussing the effects of the pandemic on local congregations. The church has been agile and creative, but we don't want it to become screen-dependent. The closing of church buildings has reminded us that #weRtheChurch and we cannot be stopped. Ministry to the needy will increase, people will be more open to scriptural truths for a time. Perhaps God is giving us an opportunity to resemble the early New Testament church—as recorded in the book of Acts—where people were a mighty disciple-making movement, a network of family-centred house churches who gathered to worship God, fellowship and encourage each other, and to serve and be witnesses for Jesus. More than ever Hebrews 10:24,25 provides valuable insight: "And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near."



**GLENN TOWNEND**  
SPD PRESIDENT  
@SPDpresident

## THOUSANDS UNITED BY #WERTHECHURCH

TRACEY BRIDCUTT

A special Sabbath event has united thousands of Adventists from around the South Pacific Division (SPD) like never before.

The #weRtheCHURCH Division-wide Sabbath connected church members in a special way at a time when many churches were temporarily closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The event was the first of its kind in the history of the Church in the South Pacific. Hosted by SPD president Pastor Glenn Townend and Children's Ministries leader Litiana Turner, it began on Friday evening (May 22) with a fellowship program and continued on Sabbath with a morning family program and afternoon mission program.

Among the many highlights were the inspiring reports and stories that were shared from around the Division showcasing how the mission of the Church is continuing in new and creative ways despite the challenges of COVID-19. It was an opportunity to find out what is happening in other parts of the Division while also enjoying beautiful worship music, encouraging devotionals, creative children's stories and much more.

The programs, put together by the team at Adventist Media, were streamed across four time zones on three platforms—web, YouTube and Facebook. The "chat" functions on these platforms enabled members to interact with each other while watching the programs. Many people left comments, expressing their gratitude for the opportunity to connect with other members, and for the uplifting stories that were shared.

As Peter and Jan wrote, "Sorry to see this whole program end. How

inspiring today has been. Thank you for the messages, stories and the beautiful music. We have truly been blessed."

The programs were also aired on Hope Channel Fiji.

#weRtheCHURCH reinforced the importance of collaboration, and that despite our different cultures and languages we are all united with the same mission.

SamLynne wrote, "Praise the Lord for His Church. There is power in unity. United we stand."

Pastor Townend has received many messages of appreciation from those who participated in the #weRtheCHURCH Sabbath.

"It was wonderful to see the Church come together in worship and praise, and to share some of the ways in which we are making a positive impact in our communities during this time of crisis. The Church and its ministry—through us as people—is alive," Pastor Townend said.

"I have been inundated with text messages, phone calls and emails from people saying how much they were blessed and inspired to be more active by the programs. I pray that this initiative is a source of inspiration and encouragement for our members as we continue to become a thriving Adventist disciple-making movement."

For those who may have missed any of the programs, they can be viewed at <[adventistchurch.com/werthechurch](http://adventistchurch.com/werthechurch)>.



**PASTOR MAVENI KAUFONONGA PRESENTING DURING THE SABBATH AFTERNOON PROGRAM.**

## COVID-19 SPARKS SURGE IN BIBLE STUDIES

LINDEN CHUANG

Interest in Hope Discovery Centre (HDC) courses has spiked recently, with dozens of people expressing their desire to learn more about forgiveness and other faith-based topics.

The HDC team, based at Adventist Media in Wahroonga (NSW), sent letters to contacts who had previously completed a course on forgiveness (entitled "Forgive to Live"). Of the 80 people who received letters, 40 wrote back asking to be enrolled in the follow-up "Forgive to Live 2" Bible study.

HDC manager Sharon Martin said the 50 per cent return rate was "very unheard of".

"It's the quickest and largest response I have seen during my 14 years of working at the Discovery Centre," she said.

Twenty of those who responded are currently enrolled in the Forgive to Live 2 course, which, unlike the initial study, presents the topic within the framework of "God's forgiveness".

"It's very exciting to see people

searching for and exploring spiritual topics," said Mrs Martin. "When it comes to forgiveness, I think it's something that triggers people's interest. Everybody relates to it. We have all had something happen in our lives where we need to offer or receive forgiveness."

Mrs Martin believes the ongoing coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions have contributed to the increase in responses, with people and families dealing with new and existing relationship issues while in isolation.

The Forgive to Live courses are based on Dr Dick Tibbits' book of the same name. The second study, released only a couple of months ago, is already helping people to mend broken relationships.

"I was able to share [the course] with my colleague who was facing difficulties in forgiving someone who wronged him," wrote one participant.



"After sharing it with him, he had the courage to personally approach the person who he had an argument with, and they were able to reconcile.

"Thank you for sharing the message of forgiveness."

In addition to the Bible study "arm" of their ministry, the HDC team have also been busy reading and responding to the 40 to 50 prayer requests that come in every week.

"These are difficult times," said Mrs Martin. "People are searching for something and reaching out, and we are blessed with the opportunity to help guide them."

For a list of DBS courses, visit [www.hopechannel.com/learn](http://www.hopechannel.com/learn).

## NEW EVANGELISTIC SERIES BY FIJIAN YOUTH GOES VIRAL

MARYELLEN FAIRFAX

Youth preacher Samu Koro is attracting an unprecedented response from viewers tuning into his evangelistic program with Hope Channel Fiji, accumulating hundreds of thousands of

views across different platforms.

The program, which commenced on May 24, was broadcast on Hope TV and Hope Radio as well as Facebook and YouTube. Currently, each Facebook

video alone has received 10,000 to 20,000 views and more than 600 live viewers during peak periods.

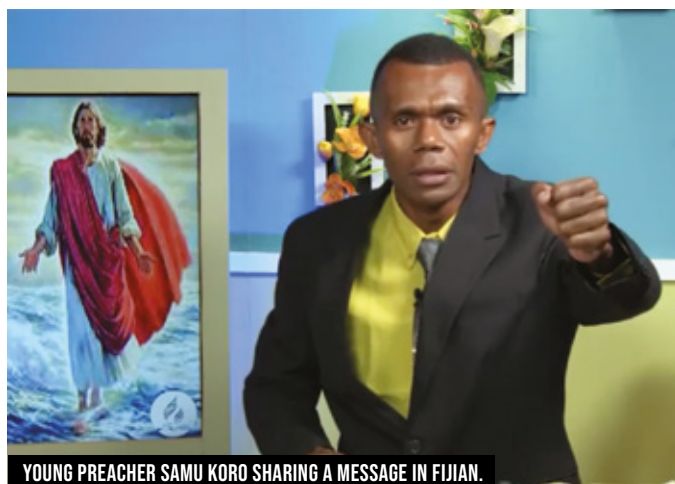
John Tausere from Hope Channel Fiji says there has been an overwhelming number of phone calls and requests for prayer.

"We started to receive calls [on the first night], which began halfway during Samu's sermon and continued after the sermon until 11pm," he explained. "Most of the callers wanted prayers and thanked and praised God for Samu's powerful presentation. Interests have also requested study guides to Samu's presentations."

Mr Koro's sermons are being broadcast in preparation for the Trans Pacific Union Mission's harvest program in July.

The Hope Channel team has asked for prayers and support for Mr Koro, the technical equipment and the viewers who are watching and hearing his messages.

The programs, presented in Fijian, can be watched via the Hope Channel Fiji Facebook page.



## TRUE STORY OF FAITHFULNESS AND FREEDOM

NATHAN BROWN

A new book tells the story of a family who found, lived and shared their Adventist faith through world wars, Communism in the former Yugoslavia, and escape and migration to Australia.

*Far Away From Home* is the story of the Kavur family from the perspective of Josip Kavur—as the youngest of their large family—who, in retirement, is a member of the Lakeside Church, near Morisset, New South Wales.

"I had no inclination to be a writer," said Mr Kavur, "but my habit was to collect all the letters that I received over the years and then my sister Ljubica gave me one of my father's diaries. That seemed a starting point for a special task that God had for me to do by His providence—and this book became a reality."

After finding Adventist faith as a prisoner of war during World War I, Mr Kavur's father became one of the first

Adventist missionaries to Macedonia. With the outbreak of World War II, the family was forced to return to their native Croatia, where Mr Kavur's older brothers each had to stand up for their faith during compulsory military service in the Communist army. To escape these trials, Mr Kavur escaped his homeland to Austria with two of his brothers and a sister-in-law, before they were accepted as refugees and assisted in migrating to Australia.

Published by Signs Publishing, *Far Away From Home* includes "stories that show that there is joy and adventure in faithfulness" even amid trials and opposition, according to Signs' assistant book editor Lauren Webb.

"Stories put truths into new clothes and help us to see them afresh," she said. "The truth of our right to freedom of conscience shines through these stories."

Mr Kavur was assisted in telling his



MR KAVUR HOLDING HIS NEW BOOK.

story by Pastor Clive Nash, his former church pastor, who found his story an inspiring testimony to the way God led the Kavur family. In telling his story in this new way, Mr Kavur would agree. "I have been blessed through writing this story," he said. "God has a perfect plan for each one of us and He can be trusted."

*Far Away From Home* is available from Adventist bookstores in Australia and New Zealand or online at <[adventistbookcentre.com.au/far-away-from-home.html](http://adventistbookcentre.com.au/far-away-from-home.html)>.

A black and white photograph of a young child in a striped shirt, looking directly at the camera. The child is sitting at a table, and there are some items on the table. The background is slightly blurred.

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## RECORD KEEPS MEMBERS CONNECTED

JARROD STACKELROTH

Churches in Western Australia are using *Adventist Record* to connect with their members, especially those who may not be internet savvy, while churches remain closed due to COVID-19 restrictions.

"Many of our churches are using *Record* to connect with church members by dropping off copies with people who appreciate knowing they are cared for," said Pastor Steve Goods, WA Conference president.

According to Ross Craig, who pastors in Manjimup, Boyup Brook, Kulikup and Katanning churches, a significant number of members have limited or no internet, for a variety of reasons.

"In Manjimup [we] have actually seen an increase in *Record/Adventist World* consumption via the hard copies," he said.

Copies are delivered, with a pastoral letter, church bulletin, tithing envelope, *Signs of the Times* (when available) and *Connect* (WA conference magazine) to attendees' homes within a 40-kilometre radius. The church has also installed a "Record Box", a weatherproof box secured to some exterior seating on a covered veranda on the side of the church facing the pastor's residence, and advertised to all members on the roll (via phone, email, letter drop, Facebook) that copies of the *Record*, *Adventist World* and *Signs* are in the box should they wish to collect at their own time.

"We are now running out of hard copies and this could only be due to 'missing members' also dropping by and grabbing copies, which is wonderful."

Some of the members who no longer attend have also been joining the Zoom services. "I feel that these folk are starting to, God willing and leading, reconnect with the church in some form by being able to obtain copies of publications and 'engage' with sermons etc without needing to set foot inside the church. It's amazing how the Holy Spirit can use any situation to the glory of God!

"During this time it's actually been a wonderful way of simple reconnection with some and a strengthening of bonds with others."

Manjimup church is also connecting with their community at this time, converting their relatively new food pantry ministry into a "drive-thru". Food parcels are also being delivered if and when needed. A core group has begun working closely with other community and charity groups in town and on a number of occasions actively assisted in helping those made recently homeless into new accommodations, supplied necessary furniture items and stocked the pantry.

It is not only regional churches who are finding this model useful. Gosnells church pastor Kyle Richardson estimates that about one-third of Gosnells members don't have access to online resources. He makes sure that, as part of the continued care and connection with Gosnells members, there is a weekly drop-off of all the materials they might need to keep them connected—the bulletin, *Adventist Record*, Sabbath school pamphlets and other motivational materials.

Daniel Salazar, pastor of the Mandurah church and the Kwinana church plant, has a similar story. "Many of our attendees like the hard-copy *Record* and other materials.

"I find that members greatly appreciate still being connected to their local church even if it is only through the *Record* magazine," he said. "The 'ministry of presence', even if only to bring a copy of the *Record* to our church members who are missing the fellowship at church, really makes a big difference."



"RECORD BOX" OUTSIDE MANJIMUP CHURCH, WA.

## NEWS GRABS



### JUSTICE FOR GEORGE FLOYD

The Central States Conference has issued a statement about George Floyd's death on May 25, saying that they are "saddened, angered and horrified" by the tragedy and that they "fully support any and all non-violent protests, boycotts and public pressure necessary to achieve justice for George Floyd".

—CSC website



### CHURCHES REOPEN IN INDIA

After years of disrepair and closure, 53 churches in east-central India have been recently reopened thanks to the work of US-based ministry It Is Written (IIW), which began an initiative in November 2018 to reopen 50 churches that were closed due to lack of funds. To keep the churches active, new church leaders are being trained and paid.—IIW



### SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE ABOUNDS

To strengthen belief in the biblical account of Creation, South American Adventists have produced "Adventures in Galapagos", a two-episode television series as part of a science learning program for Adventist schools. Galapagos islands were chosen as a filming location for its diverse natural resources, marine life and volcanoes.—ANN

## HOT TOPICS



### RAVI ZACHARIAS DIES

Apologist, popular author and Christian teacher Ravi Zacharias died on May 19 after announcing that he had cancer just two months earlier. In his 48-year career, he preached in more than 70 countries and authored 30 books, focusing on the apologetic arguments for the existence of God and the reasonableness of Christianity. —*Christianity Today*



### TEMPLETON PRIZE AWARDED

While working 100 hours a week to combat COVID-19, US National Institutes of Health (NIH) director Francis Collins has been awarded the \$US1.3 million Templeton Prize. Dr Collins led the Human Genome Project and established the BioLogos Foundation, which seeks to establish harmony between Christianity and evolution. —*Christianity Today*



### NO MORE SUFFERING

A Duke University (USA) research team has found an area of the brain in mice that can reduce pain responses. Unexpectedly, it is located in an area where few people would have thought to look: the amygdala, often considered the home of negative emotions and responses. Now researchers are looking for drugs that can activate these cells to suppress pain. —*Science Daily*

## TITHE UP DESPITE CORONAVIRUS CHALLENGE

TRACEY BRIDCUTT

Despite the challenging economic conditions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Australia has seen a rise in tithe.

According to Australian Union Conference CFO Peter Cameron, it was anticipated that tithe contributions might drop as a result of the temporary closure of churches due to COVID-19 lockdown measures. However, the opposite has happened.

"We had expected the level of tithe to reduce in April as a result of the first full month of not meeting together at church, but, in fact, there was an increase of 3.2 per cent compared to the same four-month period last year, and an increase from March to April of 1.47 per cent. We thank God for the faithfulness of our members in Australia," Mr Cameron said.

Notably, in the South New South Conference tithe was up 18 per cent for the first four months of 2020, compared to the same period last year. This is despite the region suffering five years of drought, the horrific January bushfires and now the impact of COVID-19. Tithe in North New South Wales is also up by 14.8 per cent.

The news is not all positive, however: offerings are down on previous years, which could have an impact on the work of the Church.

Mr Cameron said the Sabbath school offering has fallen by 12 per cent for the January to April period, compared to the same time last year, while thirteenth Sabbath offerings are down by 39 per cent.



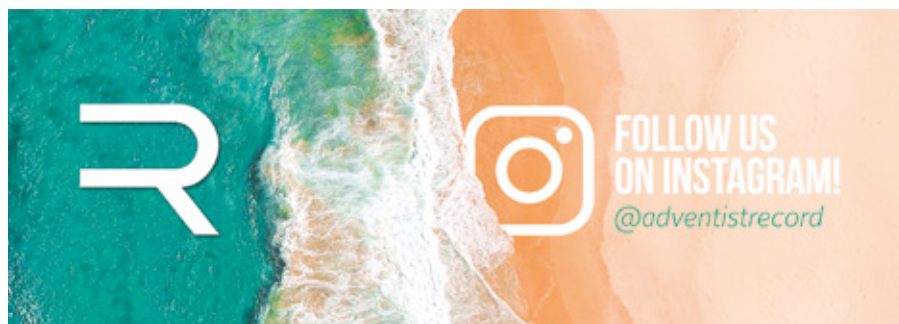
"We would encourage all our members to continue to support their local church as the basic operating costs are not disappearing as a result of the doors being closed," he said.

While offerings are down, there has been a noticeable increase in the number of Australians and New Zealanders making contributions via the eGiving platform.

SPD stewardship leader Christina Hawkins said the number of people using eGiving for Sabbath school offerings has grown from around 600 per month to more than 2000.

"We are encouraged with how many church members are shifting to eGiving at this time," Mrs Hawkins said. "Thank you so much for adjusting. It is enabling the mission of the Church to continue strongly.

"Our mission and the gospel commission remain the same, even in this complex environment. And new opportunities are opening up for reaching secular people with the gospel while people of multi-faiths are becoming more curious about Scripture and prophecy."





## FLASHPOINT: SCHOOLS DURING COVID-19



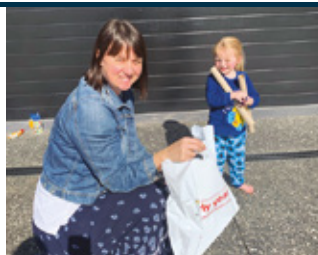
### STAND AT DAWN

Students from Rotorua Seventh-day Adventist School (NZ) took part in the “Stand at Dawn” Anzac Day ceremony despite being in Level 4 lockdown. Students made Anzac biscuits, painted poppies and created mini displays to put at their front letterbox to remember Anzac soldiers. School families shared photos of themselves, up before the sun at 6am, standing on their street alongside others at the usual dawn service time. The school believes that keeping relationships, community and *whanaungatanga* (kinship) is important during this time. – *Lanea Strickland*



### SEEDS OF HOPE

Students at Tweed Valley Adventist College (Murwillumbah, NSW) are harvesting fresh produce after seed packs were sent home for students to plant while in isolation. The school developed a new timetable to limit screen time, encourage physical activity and make time for the home agriculture program. Teachers also developed a service program entitled “COVERT 19” to encourage students to perform random acts of kindness at home, like doing the washing up or cooking the evening meal. Although students have now been welcomed back to school with a celebratory breakfast, the response to the program has been overwhelmingly positive. – *Paul Fua*



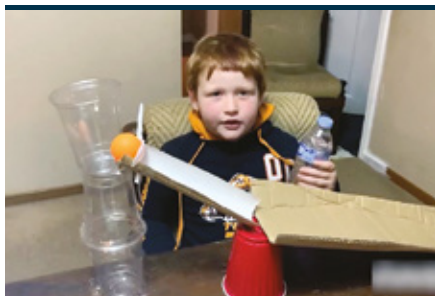
### ACTIVITIES TO YOUR DOOR

Early Years coordinator for Avondale School (NSW), Terrina Mesaric, went above and beyond to help students aged 2-5 continue participating in their chosen activities for the term—art, reading, sport or cooking—during social isolation. She put together five art packs with instructions and materials and eight cooking boxes filled with ingredients and food for a tea party, and delivered them to each child’s home. In addition, she organised six educators—including the principal, kindy teachers, the librarian and the ELC director—and uploaded a YouTube video of them reading to replace “story time” each week. Both the kids and their parents have expressed their heartfelt appreciation. – *Record staff*



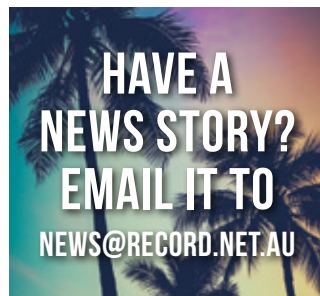
### HYGIENE AND HEALTH

The World Health Organization in partnership with the Tonga Ministry of Education elected Beulah College and Primary School as one of 20 pilot schools to be part of their Health Promotion School program. Through this program, staff and students were introduced to hygiene and sanitation awareness. The program has provided Beulah with the materials to install 10 washing basins. With the school now resuming as normal, the schedule includes Wednesdays for class sharing time with healthy lunches, while Friday is fruit and water day. On Fridays, the teachers also allocate an hour for the students to exercise to help them stay fit and healthy. – *Patea Aho*



### MAN-MADE MACHINES

While in isolation, students from Kempsey Adventist School (NSW) were challenged to design a machine that performs a task—like opening a door or pouring a drink—from different items found at home like dominos, balls, wheels, pulleys or kitchen utensils. More than 30 teams entered their machines into the competition and everyone received a prize for entering. Awards were given for the best cinematography, best story telling, best use of pets, best humour and most complicated machine. – *KAS Facebook*



| Day       | Activity | Time | Location |
|-----------|----------|------|----------|
| Monday    | ...      | ...  | ...      |
| Tuesday   | ...      | ...  | ...      |
| Wednesday | ...      | ...  | ...      |
| Thursday  | ...      | ...  | ...      |
| Friday    | ...      | ...  | ...      |
| Saturday  | ...      | ...  | ...      |
| Sunday    | ...      | ...  | ...      |

### MOVEMENT MAY

While in lockdown, Whangarei Adventist Christian School (Whangarei, NZ) started a health initiative called “Movement May” as a way of connecting with families and helping them keep active. The school set up a Facebook group to encourage students and families to get involved and to facilitate connection as part of the initiative. – *Rosalie McFarlane*



### GETTING FIT AT HOME

Gilson College (Mernda, Vic) implemented a wholistic approach to learning during lockdown, with PE teacher Ryan Starrett starting a May fitness challenge for students. Using the STRAVA app, students were encouraged to document and increase their physical activity each day. So far, more than 40 students have accepted the challenge, completing more than 211 activities, 3000 kilometres and 15,000 minutes of exercise. – *Helen Jakupec*



### HEALTHY MINDS, HEALTHY STUDENTS

Teachers at Prescott College (Adelaide, SA) sent out a survey to gauge the mental health of their students during isolation and to ensure that measures were in place to keep students healthy. Chapel services and class workshops were conducted online, and PE teachers prepared humorous and motivational videos to encourage students to remain active. – *Denise Nelson*



## Upgraded Adventist campground changing lives . . . and hoping to change more

Spring Beach Youth Camp is an amazing little facility owned by the Seventh-day Adventist Church near Orford, in the beautiful south of Tasmania. Tucked away in a pine forest, with a beautiful inlet beach within a stone's throw, Spring Beach Youth Camp is equipped with a flying fox, kayaks and comfortable dormitory accommodation. It is a very special place where the presence of God's Holy Spirit is tangible.

The caretakers, Ian and Robyn Dunlop (as well as a number of church members), have been doing a fantastic job, working hard to repair and upgrade the facilities and the experience that campers and supervisors have when they attend. The new additions of a wood-fired pizza oven, a commando course, an abseiling wall and a new chapel, as well as regular and thorough maintenance of the grounds, have made Spring Beach Youth Camp the preferred school camp destination in Tasmania, with many schools saying they wouldn't take their students anywhere else.

As a Conference, our tween, youth, women's ministry and leadership camps that run at Spring Beach are some of the best ever, due to the improvements at the venue. From a financial perspective, Spring Beach is now cashflow positive for the first time, despite having a highly competitive fee structure. This camp, owned by the Church since 1978, really is a wonderful asset to our Church and to our young people.

Jenay Menzie, 23, says this about the role of the youth camp in her spiritual development:

"I owe a lot of who I am to the experiences that I have had at Spring Beach Youth Camp and it is, without a doubt, one of the biggest contributing factors in my spiritual journey and my desire to stay in the Church.

"Camps at Orford are among my happiest of memories because it is there that I learnt that having a

relationship with God can be fun. Each time I go to Spring Beach, as a camper or as a summer camp staff member, I develop an even stronger relationship with God.

"Without the memories and experiences that I have from the peaceful surrounding nature and the Christ-centred environment of Spring Beach Youth Camp, I wouldn't be the person that I am today, nor would I have the friends that I do."

However, with improvements come new challenges. Spring Beach is now highly sought after as a venue for larger groups beyond its capacity. For that reason, the Adventist Church in Tasmania has some big plans for the future—to extend and to modernise the camp facility to ensure that it will continue to grow, reach and influence for God. These plans involve extending the main facility, adding rooms to increase the sleeping capacity to 150 people (from 100), relocating and upgrading the kitchen, extending and dividing the dining and basketball court areas, and creating a suitable meeting space.

We know when these renovations are completed, our work through Spring Beach Youth Camp will grow. Heaven alone knows the lives that are and will be changed through Spring Beach's awesome ministry.

In Mark 10:14 (NKJV), Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not forbid them, for of such is the kingdom of God."

The Tasmanian Conference is appealing to its constituents and all interested parties to help support the camp by contacting the Conference office on (03) 6273 6277.

**DANIEL MATTEO**  
 YOUTH DIRECTOR, TASMANIAN CONFERENCE.

# Hubs of hope

One word that has been bouncing around in my mind for the past few weeks is *hope*.

While 2020 has certainly brought its fair share of uncertainty, doubt and fear, I come back to the calming power of hope.

Jesus often spoke about hope and His words hold a special kind of meaning right now: "In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world" (John 16:3, ESV).

I truly believe it is because of His overcoming that we can have hope, despite our current circumstances.

The world is in crisis, and no-one is more deeply affected than those who are already vulnerable. But I have hope. Hope because I believe in a God who has already overcome the brokenness of this world, and hope because I believe that by acting together we can help others overcome crises today and in the future.

"I was really struggling to scrape money together for even the basics, including food."

This is what Jodie, who was at crisis point, says. A reduced disability pension and inability to work made her incredibly vulnerable.

"A friend told me about a place that would help me out with food," she remembers. "So, he brought me down to the ADRA Food Pantry at the Ferntree Gully Adventist Church."

Here, Jodie received not just the food she needed, but also the support and friendship she desper-

ately missed.

"The first time I came in I was in tears with thankfulness, just with the help and how lovely people were. I just wanted to be part of it. The very next week I started volunteering—that was two years ago," she says. "It's amazing to be a part of it."

Having overcome her own crisis, Jodie is now helping others do the same. As Australia was forced into isolation, Jodie and the food pantry team quickly adjusted their program so that, instead of people coming to them, they'd take the food and friendship to people's doors.

"People are so grateful to have deliveries because they don't have transport or can't get to the shops," she says. "A lot of people haven't been outside their doors for so long; they are just happy to see someone's face, stand outside and chat for a few minutes."

"A lot of people are wanting to give back for the help they've received. Just like I did."

Jodie's experience is similar to another group of ladies from Nepal, who I'll affectionately call "The Pickle Sisters" (for reasons you'll soon understand). With ADRA's support these three women—who had only ever experienced housework, manual labour and generational poverty—were transformed into budding entrepreneurs.

As women in a culture that didn't value them, they faced ridicule at every turn, but soon they had a growing business selling pickles to expanding markets.

The Pickle Sisters overcame doubt, scorn and the all-pervading crisis of poverty in their lives. And, just like Jodie,



their next thought was to help other women do the same.

"Our objective is to help other women, who are only limited to kitchens, to become entrepreneurs and to earn an income by themselves," they say.

As a result of the current crisis, more people at home and overseas have been made vulnerable, and those who were already vulnerable have been pushed to the edge.

I don't ever recall overcoming anything significant in my life by myself. In all my memories of challenging times, there were always other people rallying around to support me and help me through. That's the nugget: people help people overcome. Without people willing to help people, ADRA is nothing more than a name.

It's people like Jodie and The Pickle Sisters that our country, and our world, need right now—people willing to serve and give help to the most vulnerable, to overcome crises.

Across the country we've seen closed churches transformed into hubs for helping others. And I believe they're offering the world something crucial in this difficult time: hope.

*With your help even more people will have stories like Jodie's to tell—stories of overcoming crises and helping others do the same. Your gift by June 30 can be matched 10x to help even more vulnerable people overcome crises today, and in the future. Visit <a href="http://adra.org.au/overcome">adra.org.au/overcome</a>.*

**PAUL RUBESSA**  
CEO, ADRA AUSTRALIA.



# THE TEN: BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES FOR A HAPPY MARRIAGE

## 1. WORK TO KEEP CHRIST AT THE CENTRE OF YOUR RELATIONSHIP

Hearts that are genuinely filled with God's love won't stay angry for long. Actively seeking Him—both individually and as a couple—is the greatest thing you can do to maintain a strong marriage (Psalm 127:1).

## 2. CREATE A NEW FAMILY UNIT WITH YOUR SPOUSE

When you get married, it's important to create a home together and learn to navigate life's responsibilities as "one flesh". Finding independence and forging a family culture of your own is important (Genesis 2:24), even in cultures where you may not physically leave your parents' home (or they join yours).

## 3. LEARN TO PRAY TOGETHER

The Bible encourages us to pray together (Matthew 26:41; James 5:16). This practice allows your spouse to see and understand what is on your heart and will help you to remember what you prayed for, which may help you see His answers more clearly.

## 4. SPENDING QUALITY ONE-ON-ONE TIME TOGETHER

The Bible encourages men to praise their wives, and wives to please their husbands (Proverbs 31:28; 1 Corinthians 17:34). It goes without saying that doing this requires intentionality and spending quality time together.

## 5. GUARD AND MANAGE YOUR THOUGHTS

The Bible warns us that our thoughts can become self-fulfilling prophecies (Proverbs 4:23, 23:7). Often, it's not life's circumstances that affect our emotional wellbeing, it's how we think about those circumstances. The devil loves to tempt us with negative thoughts or make us discontented in our relationships, so identifying and constructively reframing those thoughts is important.

## 6. TRY TO FIND BALANCE AND ORDER

Overwork can take a toll on your marriage, as can laziness. Being overworked can lead to eating poorly and lack of sleep, causing you to become moody and difficult to live with. But laziness can also lead to resentment from your spouse. It's important to find a balance between hard work and relaxation in the day to day (1 Corinthians 9:25-27; 2 Thessalonians 3:10; Proverbs 31).

## 7. NEVER GO TO BED ANGRY

The Bible is very specific about warning us not to go to "let the sun go down on our anger" (Ephesians 4:26). This is especially important when you're sharing the same bed!

## 8. SPEAK KIND AND UPLIFTING WORDS TO ONE ANOTHER

Even when arguments arise, it is possible to resolve conflict with mutual respect and gentle words. This requires active listening, not jumping to conclusions or shutting down your spouse with harsh words and may even require some time apart before speaking to each other (Proverbs 15:1; Ecclesiastes 9:9).

## 9. DON'T NAG OR CRITICISE EACH OTHER

King Solomon likens a nagging, criticising or angry wife to being tortured (Proverbs 27:15) and says it is better to dwell in the wilderness than to be around her (Proverbs 21:19). Expecting perfection from your spouse is often a sign of deeper discontentment in Christ. Remember it is He who promises to fill your needs, not your spouse!

## 10. BE REASONABLE WITH MONEY

Money is a necessity for living and can cause a lot of stress when not managed appropriately. Sharing a bank account allows couples to deepen trust but may also cause issues when there is a lack of communication. Both spouses should mutually agree on their roles in budgeting and managing finances, and it is important to take intentional time to communicate about money (1 Corinthians 13:4,5; 2 Corinthians 9:7).

*What are your secrets to a healthy marriage? How do you stay connected with each other and God? We'd love to hear at <[news@record.net.au](mailto:news@record.net.au)>.*





## A VICIOUS CYCLE

*Stuck in isolation . . .  
stuck in your head*

**C**urdled milk sits in the breakfast bowl, remnants of yesterday's dinner. It's raining again today. You load the clothes into the dryer and turn on the news, searching for some semblance of normal. The monotone warnings and humdrum rhythms bring strange comfort, wordless lyrics to life's repetitive tune.

*Ba dum.*

"Key federal ministers deny the PM's push for a global COVID-19 inquiry . . . *ba dum, ba dum* . . . tensions between Australia and China increase . . . *ba dum* . . . violence escalates in the US capital, tear gas and rubber bullets . . . *ba dum, ba dum* . . ."

The whitewash thudding drowns out the sounds of unfolding chaos. You stare at the clothes, round and round they go, a quiet merry-go-round oblivious to the anarchic theme park, Earth. *Ba dum, ba dum.* Round and round and round, like your revolving thoughts.

You knew this would happen; that society's foundations would crumble, that Babylon would fall.

"Domestic violence incidents are on the rise as women are unable to leave their homes. *Ba dum.* A son greets his elderly father through the window, heartbroken by his blank stare. *Ba dum.* A young doctor contracted it last week, now two young boys face adoption."

*Ba dum. ba dum.*

It doesn't feel real. Like a fat blowfly on the screen of a horror movie, you can't comprehend it all. So you self-soothe in silence, gorging yourself on "God's blessings" and life's luxuries, glad it's not you.

Bottomless drawers of track-pants, bottomless bags of potato chips, weekly screen time overdose reports, all signs of life in the one per cent. KPIs and weekly progress updates, those once-looming yardsticks of self-worth, are now bent by the time warp. At first, life was cocoa cereal for every meal. Now, it's curdled in your stomach, sweet turned sour.

*Lord, wake me up! Put new oil in my lamp!* you half-heartedly ask while watching videos of celebrities, cakes and comedy. *Set my heart on fire!* you plead, trying to rid yourself from the guilt of the binge. Your Bible gathers dust on the shelf.

As you watch the clothes dance round and round you remember the words of the teacher, "Everything is meaningless, completely meaningless" (Ecclesiastes 1:2). You've spent years buckled into the merry-go-round by temptation, luxury and possessions, enjoying the bright lights and loud music . . . maybe it's time to get off.

*Ba dum. Ba dum. Beeeep.*

**MARYELLEN FAIRFAX**  
ASSISTANT EDITOR, ADVENTIST RECORD.

## DIGGING IN HIS WORD

WITH GARY WEBSTER

### ADVENTIST SADDUCEES

The Sadducees were religious materialistic sceptics who denied the existence of angels, the Holy Spirit, the resurrection of the dead and a future life. They believed that, after creating the world, God left humans to themselves, independent of any higher influence. Unbelievably, the priests in New Testament times were generally Sadducees. **READ** Acts 23:8.

On one occasion, they came to Jesus with a curly, clever question that cloaked their intellectual doubt and scepticism. Lovingly but directly, Jesus answered, "Your problem is you don't understand scripture or God's power—scepticism causes you to lack God's power in your lives." **READ** Matthew 22:23–28, 29–33.

Peter predicted that in the last days unbelief in creation by God's word, a global flood and Christ's return would abound. Have you become sceptical of the same truths and about prophecy and the prophetic gift? Do you have God's power in your life? God pleads, "Don't make a shipwreck of your life. Ask for My Spirit and His help in reading My Word and I will put your feet on solid ground and fill you with My power." **READ** 2 Peter 3:3–6; Psalm 119:18; Romans 10:17; Luke 11:13; Acts 4:31.



ARCHAEOLOGISTS DISCOVERED THIS JERUSALEM HOME, BURN'T BY THE ROMANS IN 70 AD. IT BELONGED TO A WEALTHY PRIEST WHO WAS LIKELY A SADDUCEE.

# biblical tips for surviving a financial crisis

**A**t different points in our lives, we will face financial challenges. Some of these will be so severe as to reach crisis level. We might not know where the financial crisis will come from or how long it will last—but one will come, and we will have to deal with it. We can be ready!

Personal financial planning for a crisis is simply preparing to meet future uncertainties. The crisis could be caused by war; natural disasters like volcanic eruptions, bushfires and cyclones; famine; or disease, like COVID-19. It could be more personal, like sickness, loss of employment or family breakdown.

As human beings, we cannot see the future (see Ecclesiastes 8:7). Even listening to talking heads on TV or reading opinion pieces from various economists and journalists is unlikely to give us reliable insight. This should not stop us preparing to meet the uncertainties of the future for the sake of ourselves and our families.

Wise King Solomon stated, “A prudent person foresees danger and takes precaution while the simpleton goes blindly on and suffers the consequences” (Proverbs 22:3).

From past and present experiences, as Christians we also receive special wisdom from God about how to deal with crises. We know a financial crisis could be just around the corner; because of this we should develop a financial plan so we can better manage through the issue.

## **GOD-FIRST PRINCIPLE**

Genesis 1 declares that, in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. God also declares in Haggai 2:8 that silver and gold are His. The Bible clearly signifies God as Creator and Owner of everything on this planet and, as such, He holds the keys to everything. So, in all our planning we ought to put God first.

He knows what is ahead of us and encourages us not to worry about anything for tomorrow, but to seek the kingdom of God above all else and live

righteously, and He will give us everything we need (see Matthew 6:31–33). Therefore, as the first step in your financial planning, prayerfully seek God. Let Him be your Financial Advisor, Manager of your budget, and Accountant and Auditor of all your financial transactions. He owns it all; we are managers for a temporary period. He has all ownership rights and we as stewards have only responsibilities.

## **BE HONEST WITH YOURSELF**

No-one can deny the fact that people suffer the consequences of decisions that are blindly made. Therefore, being honest with yourself is vital in every planning and decision-making process. Be honest in admitting how much of your current struggle is due to a lack of proper financial planning and management. Be honest in admitting the likelihood of future suffering and do not sugarcoat this or see it as less important.

Consider how a financial crisis will really affect your life and your family. Admit your weaknesses relating to your spending. Be honest with yourself if you lack knowledge and need assistance with your planning. Be honest with God and confess to Him if you have been unfaithful to Him in returning tithes and offerings and if you have not been consulting Him in all your spending and financial decision-making.

Admitting your weakness and repenting to God sets a proper foundation for your financial planning.

## **SACRIFICE**

Our human tendency is to live it up during good times. The concept of sacrifice runs counter to this tendency.

We would rather spend in the present than set aside money for the future. But there is a good model in Christ’s sacrifice that every Christian should adopt into their financial planning. Jesus came into this world and sacrificed His life to set all people free from the burden of sin. He sacrificed for the future of His people so they will have life to enjoy for eternity.

Likewise, if we want to enjoy financial freedom in the future, sometimes we must sacrifice our lifestyle in the present. For example, if you are living a short distance from your office, you can sacrifice by not sitting in your comfortable vehicle to commute—instead take a walk every morning and afternoon. If you are someone who spends money every lunchtime on fast or processed food, you can look for cheaper—and healthier—alternatives. Or if you are someone who wants to gain a big name by making a splash at big parties with your family or tribe, you ought to sacrifice your position and limit your contributions—even though you might lose status in your tribe, as practised in some Pacific countries.

Jesus did not think of His position in heaven. Instead, He left His position to come and die as a sinner for the future of His people (see Philippians 2:5–8). He was even mocked on the cross, but He chose to remain focused on His mission to save humanity. His experience can be our experience, if we choose to sacrifice for our future.

### A CULTURE OF SAVING

We find another good biblical example for our financial planning during the famine in Egypt. Led by Joseph and his God-given insight, Egypt was advised to save for the future (see Genesis 41:37–57). They sacrificed during the time of plenty to save themselves from a future financial crisis. Joseph instructed the Egyptians to save some of their produce from the land each year. They took to that task for seven years, setting grain aside in storage bins.

Joseph was not taking any chances and he never stopped collecting the grain. In fact, the Bible tells us Joseph piled up such a huge amount of grain that they couldn't count it anymore and stopped keeping records (see Genesis 41:49). They had more than enough to meet the needs of the people during the time of famine. Joseph's story can be our model to set apart 20 per cent of our income to meet future uncertainties.

When saving money, it is wise to save in an interest-bearing deposit or any banking institution that offers good monthly or quarterly interest. Avoid

illegal fast interest and money-laundering schemes because hasty shortcuts are high risk and often illegal.

Your savings can be classified in two ways: long-term and short-term. Long-term savings are for long-term goals. Short-term savings are there to meet an unforeseen crisis or unbudgeted expenses.

### SET UP A BUDGET

Good planning and hard work lead to prosperity, but hasty shortcuts lead to poverty (see Proverbs 21:5). This advice from King Solomon demonstrates that budgeting is a biblical concept. The person who sets up a good budget plan is better placed to enjoy profit and prosperity, while the person who does not have a budget plan to guide his or her expenses and is looking for shortcuts to get rich will likely become poor and suffer financial consequences in the future.

Further advice is found in Luke 14:28, which asks "If one of you wants to build a tower, what is the first thing you will do? Won't you sit down and work out how much it will cost and if you have enough to pay for it?"

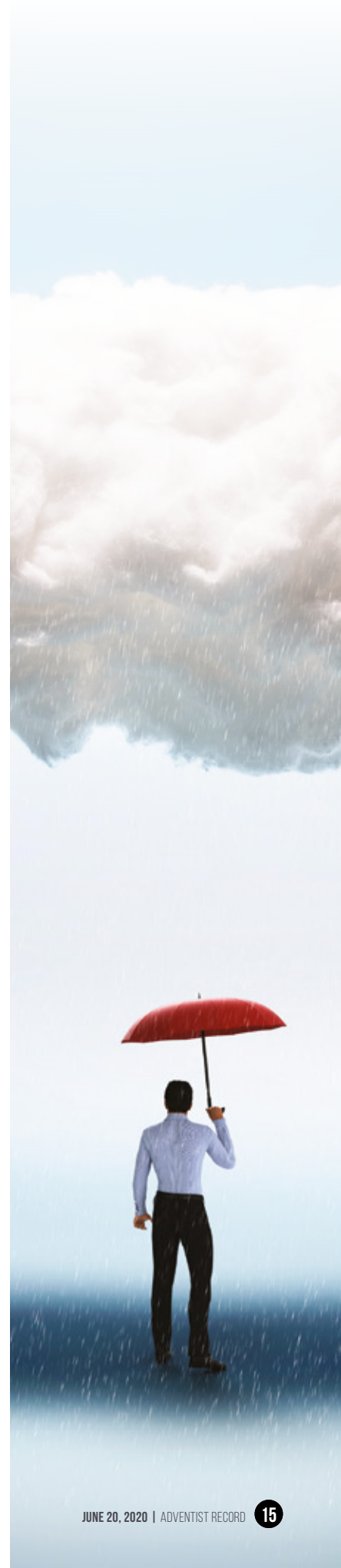
We have all seen people suffering financially, perhaps even been there ourselves—no money for school fees, impacted by natural disasters, suffering and dying from health-related crises with no money to meet hospital fees. Whatever the cause, families suffer because they don't have extra money in their savings account. Some of these things could be alleviated by proper budget planning.

Setting up a budget and faithfully sticking to it will help you save money and hopefully survive any coming financial crisis.

*The advice provided here is general in nature. For specific advice on your situation please contact a financial professional.*

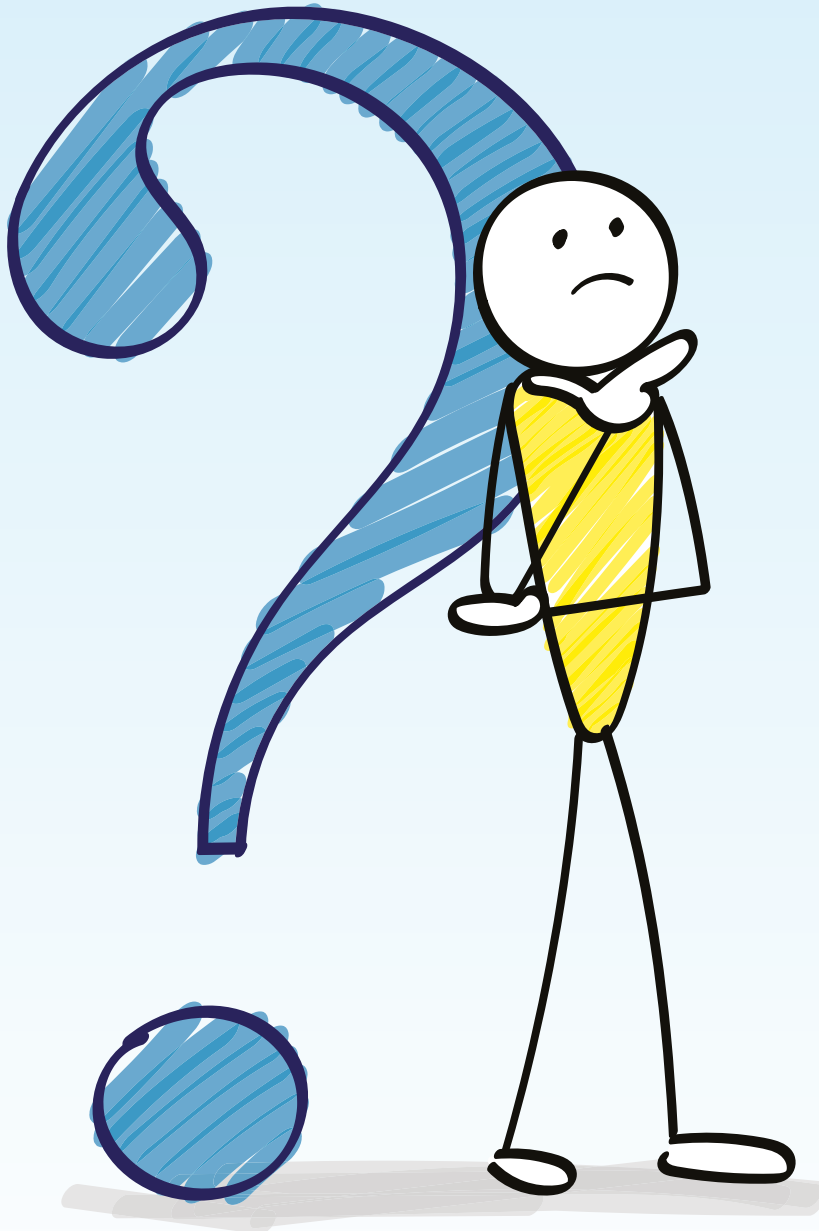
Some information taken from R Blue and J White (2008), *Faith-based family finances*; A Cook (2016), *Simple steps: for the journey to financial freedom*; J and A Witt (2009), *Effective Stewardship*.

**THOMAS ARIKU MOTOU**  
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER, EASTERN HIGHLANDS SIMBU  
MISSION, PAPUA NEW GUINEA.



# BIT OF A STRETCH:

## Speculating about God



I call it the “been-sitting-slouched-for-wayyy-too-long” stretch. You know the one—chest forward, back arched, head tilted skywards, arms extended overhead as far as possible (or, if you fancy, out to the side). Go on, try it now. I’ll wait.

...

*Sigh.* It’s a good stretch. Although it once landed me in a bit of hot water.

A group of friends and I had gathered together for a movie night. I would have been 13 or 14 at the time. As the credits began to roll on the first film, I leaned back and stretched out. Then it happened . . .

“Look! Look! Linden’s putting his arm around Connie!”

Before I realised what was going on, all eyes were on me and a chorus of “oohs” broke out.

I don’t remember much about the rest of that night (perhaps I blanked it out). What I do recall, though, is my “actions” generated a lot of conversation and speculation when we returned to school on Monday.



Just so we're clear, I was just stretching. There was nothing else to it—no attempt at a “smooth move”; nothing scandalous.

Why is this important, almost 20 years on? Well, it really isn't. All that resulted from the misunderstanding was some small embarrassment on my part. The same can't be said of some allegations.

I recently watched the film *Just Mercy* and learned the story of Walter McMillian—an African-American man wrongfully accused of murdering an 18-year-old college student in 1988. Mr McMillian spent six years on death row in Holman State Prison (Alabama) before finally being exonerated, thanks to the tireless efforts of his attorney, Bryan Stevenson.

For Mr McMillian, the cost of the false allegations stretched far beyond those six years in prison.

“I lost my job. I lost my life. I lost my reputation,” he lamented. “I lost my—I lost my dignity.”<sup>2</sup>

“I thought I was going to be okay, because I got the truth,” says Mr McMillian's character in the film. “Then the police keep calling you a killer . . . News people saying you did it. Judge and jury saying you did it. Now you on the row. Two, three, four years. Your friends, and your kids, they ain't calling you like they used to.

“After a while, you start wondering what they think about you.”

I'm sure there are a lot of people who feel this way. I sometimes wonder if God feels this way . . .

Several years ago, I listened to a sermon in which an Adventist preacher claimed God orchestrated the events of September 11 in order to shake up the world and wake up believers. I've heard and read similar claims recently in regard to the Australian bushfires and the current COVID-19 pandemic.

In each case the message was the same: “God did it.” No ifs, buts or maybes. *God did it*.

Or did He?

Stephen Ferguson recently wrote an article (*Adventist Record*, May 15) about whether or not we give Satan too much credit. Do we also do the same with God? When we accuse or attribute certain things to Him, are we speculating or speaking the truth?

“Who is this that obscures my plans with words without knowledge?” (Job 38:2).

This is how God opens up His longest unbroken speech in the Bible. The charge comes on the heels of much talk and speculation (30-plus chapters worth, in fact) on the part of Job and his friends.

God's response over the next four chapters is noteworthy. He does not explain *what* He is or isn't doing; He simply establishes *who* He is.

“Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation?

Tell me, if you understand. Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know! Who stretched a measuring line across it? On what were its footings set, or who laid its cornerstone—while the morning stars sang together and all the angels shouted for joy?” (Job 38:4-7).<sup>3</sup>

I think the book of Job serves as a metaphor—and a warning—for how we, as believers, may be tempted to respond in times of crisis. We sympathise and sit still for a while (see Job 2:11-13), but when the suffering and questions remain, we talk, theorise and speculate. We create hypotheses about what God may or may not be doing, rather than focusing on who He is. Job acknowledged as much in the end: “You asked, ‘Who is this that obscures my plans without knowledge?’ Surely I spoke of things I did not understand, things too wonderful for me to know” (Job 42:3).

As Christians, we believe in God, and we believe He makes Himself known to us. But we don't always know the ways in which He acts or moves. “Tame” lions are still unpredictable. But God? Well, “He's wild, you know. Not like a tame lion.”<sup>4</sup> Through Jesus we have seen and known the Father (see John 14:7-9), but that hasn't removed all the wonder and mystery surrounding Him. His ways are still “higher” than our ways; His thoughts “higher” than our thoughts (see Isaiah 55:8,9).

“Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgements, and his paths beyond tracing out!” (Romans 11:33).

I think all of us need a healthy dose of “I don't know” from time to time. It reminds us of our place as finite creatures who don't have all the answers. This is a good thing. The book of James says that in order for us to be lifted up, we first have to be brought low (see 4:7-10). It's from that lowly place that God, through His Spirit, can speak into our lives and lead us in our search for answers.

The world is in turmoil right now. Each of us is also in the midst of our own personal battles and struggles. We can speculate as to *what* God may or may not be doing, or we can simply trust in *who* He is.

“Be still and know that I am God” (Psalm 46:10).

1. Name substituted.

2. Quote recalled by Bryan Stevenson in his book, *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption* (2014, Spiegel and Grau).

3. Read God's entire speech in Job 38-41.

4. Mr Beaver's description of Aslan in C S Lewis' *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (1950, Harper Collins).

**LINDEN CHUANG**

**ASSISTANT EDITOR (DIGITAL), ADVENTIST RECORD.**



### Oven baked mushroom risotto

Oven baked risotto is an excellent weeknight meal. It's quick and easy to make, taking just 10 minutes to prepare and will satisfy fussy eaters. Expose the mushrooms to sunlight for a vitamin D boost.

Find this recipe and hundreds more at:

Australia: [sanitarium.com.au/recipes](http://sanitarium.com.au/recipes)  
New Zealand: [sanitarium.co.nz/recipes](http://sanitarium.co.nz/recipes)



## CAN YOU GET ENOUGH VITAMIN D IN WINTER?

Also known as the sunshine vitamin, vitamin D is famous for its role in helping our bodies absorb calcium to keep our bones strong and reduce the risk of osteoporosis. But it actually plays a much bigger role in keeping us healthy.

Vitamin D helps support a strong immune system, helps maintain muscle strength and function, and keeps our teeth and skin healthy. It may even play a role in reducing the risk of dementia and depression.

### HOW MUCH VITAMIN D DO WE NEED?

Adults need 5-15 µg of vitamin D a day, increasing as we get older. Kiwis and Aussies get about 90 per cent of their vitamin D requirements from the sunlight on their skin and 10 per cent from the food they eat.

### CAN WE GET ENOUGH VITAMIN D DURING WINTER?

Spending a lot of time indoors during winter is a risk factor for low vitamin D. Australian data on vitamin D levels shows that, in summer, 14 per cent of people are low in vitamin D, while in winter this increases to 36 per cent. In New Zealand, between 27 and 46 per cent of Kiwis have less than optimal vitamin D levels. So, it's important to try to find ways to get outside during the colder months.

### SO HOW MUCH TIME IN THE SUN DO WE NEED?

This will depend on a range of factors, including where you live, what time of day it is, the colour of your skin and how much skin is exposed. Depending on latitude, walking outside at lunchtime for 7-40 minutes, with as much skin exposed as feasible, should do the trick.

### WHAT HAPPENS IF I DON'T GET ENOUGH VITAMIN D?

Low levels of vitamin D can increase your risk of bone and joint pain and the chance of fractures and broken bones, especially if you are over 50. It's also a risk factor for osteoporosis. Cardiovascular disease, severe asthma and cancer have also been linked to low vitamin D levels. In infants and children, moderate or severe vitamin D deficiencies can lead to soft bones or rickets.

## TIPS TO HELP YOU GET ENOUGH VITAMIN D



### VITAMIN D FOODS

You can get vitamin D in small amounts from foods, including eggs and UV-irradiated mushrooms. There are also several foods that have been fortified with vitamin D, including soy milks, almond milks, margarines and dairy milks.



### UV-IRRADIATED MUSHROOMS

What are these you ask? Mushrooms convert the sunlight they absorb into vitamin D, so placing them in the sun can increase the amount of vitamin D they contain. A 100g serve of mushrooms left in the sun for an hour will provide your daily dietary vitamin D needs.



### GET OUTSIDE

Even if it's chilly, get outside for a cuppa on the balcony, some gardening in the backyard or a chat across the fence with neighbours—any time in the sunshine counts.



## SAYING NO TO GOD

It's embedded in the name of God's people throughout most of the Bible's story. As the sun was about to rise by the Jabbok River, Jacob was given a new name by his mysterious assailant: "Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome" (Genesis 32:28, NIV). According to Matthew Korpman's fascinating new book—*Saying No to God*—this affirmation of struggling faithfully with God has been overlooked too often and invites us into a better way of reading the Bible.

Of course, there are many Bible stories that we might think of in which the characters argued with God. We could reflect on Abraham bargaining with God over the impending destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, Jonah's petulance over Nineveh's repentance or Thomas' stubborn resolve to see the resurrected Jesus for himself. But *Saying No to God* re-reads these stories with greater nuance and depth, as well as leading us through some of the stories we might not have included in this list.

Amid the recurring formula of the Pentateuch, Psalms and Proverbs—that God blesses the righteous and punishes the wicked—we stumble across the story of Job. Ironically, it is Job's friends who follow the "biblical" pattern, but it is Job who insists otherwise and is ultimately affirmed by God. We also spend time with Mary ignoring Jesus' resistance to performing a miracle at a village wedding that had run out of wine (see John 2:1–12), immediately after one of the Bible's chapters that most emphasises Jesus as God. We even are invited to see the Ninevites' repentance as a rejection of Jonah's message from God, with

both Jonah and the heathen people suspecting that their threatened destruction did not fit with the truly merciful nature of God.

Korpman's reading of these Bible stories demonstrates how seriously he takes the text, even while urging we read it in some different ways. Having built this foundation, the second half of *Saying No to God* takes up the task of using the Bible differently to address some of the controversial and troubling ways in which the Bible is used and abused in the world today, including questions with Adventist connotations like belief in hell and questions about the role of women.

For Adventist readers, Korpman's own faith experience and background is of particular interest. Growing up in a conservative Adventist family, he assumed that the prominent evangelists he saw on Adventist TV channels—one of whom baptised him—were the Bible scholars. He discovered that the scholarly study of the Bible was something quite different only when studying at an Adventist university. This opened much larger horizons and possibilities—and led him to his current graduate studies in Religion at Yale Divinity School in Connecticut, US.

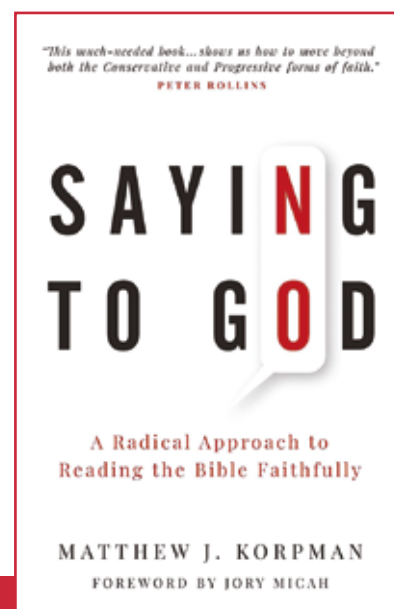
As such, *Saying No to God* weaves together historical and contemporary theology, with Korpman's personal faith journey and Adventist background, including occasional quotations from Ellen White. In one sense, this makes the book feel somewhat patchy, combining the familiar with the challenging—but what is familiar and challenging will vary greatly for its different readers. On the other hand, perhaps what Korpman is doing is modelling precisely what the big ideas of

theology should do. They should interact with our personal experiences and everyday lives; they should prompt us to a deeper engagement with the stories of the Bible; and they should challenge some of the dearly held assumptions of our received faith. *Saying No to God* also demonstrates the place that distinctly Adventist theology should have in contributing to broader Christian thinking in healthy and constructive dialogue.

How we read the Bible and then apply it to the issues of our lives and our world is a foundational project for authentic and sustainable faith. *Saying No to God* offers a fresh approach to this task and deserves our consideration as people called to continue to wrestle with God in and through the sacred text He has given us.

*Matthew J Korpman, Saying No to God: A Radical Approach to Reading the Bible Faithfully, Quoir, 2019, 356 pages.*

**NATHAN BROWN**  
BOOK EDITOR, SIGNS PUBLISHING.



# Bonjour Kids!

(French for Hello)

We worship God when we choose to obey Him.

# KIDS SPEAK WORDS OF LOVE



Moses is presenting his last message to the Israelites. Soon he will go to Mount Nebo where he will see the Promised Land from afar. There he will die. His message speaks of love that results in obedience and service, which results in great blessings from God. In this farewell speech, Moses reminds the Israelites of God's care as He led them from Egypt and throughout more than 40 years in the wilderness. God had blessed His people throughout their journey to the Promised Land. Although they had rebelled again and again, He still loved them with a love that called for a response of love, loyalty, service and obedience—all of which are a part of worshipping Him. God calls us to that same commitment today and offers us the same blessings as we worship Him through obedience to His commands.

## SPOT THE 10 DIFFERENCES & COLOUR THEM IN!



**MEMORY VERSE** "Love the Lord your God and . . . serve him with all your heart" (Deuteronomy 11:13, NIV).

## TOTAL SURRENDER

Re “Continual Surrender” (April 4)—doctrines are important because they “testify of Jesus” (John 5:39). Doctrines and the law define and describe Christ’s work and His will for our salvation and keep us from straying through the power in them. . As disciples and followers of Jesus, our Rabbi, our faith must be an intelligent faith learnt from the doctrines of Jesus—not an emotional one. (see Matthew 16:24-26).

This is what being a disciple involves. Praying without ceasing, but allowing God’s Word to talk to us and following it is equally important.

We don’t tell people we are disciples, they tell us we are because we allow Christ to live in us (Galatians 2:20; 5:22-25). This fruit is a miracle of God’s grace. It is not natural to have love, compassion, truth and righteousness in our hearts. To enter God’s eternal kingdom there is no other option than to be born again (John 3:3), have a heart replacement (Ezekiel 36:24-27), be connected to the True Vine (John 15:1-5 and bear Christ’s fruit not ours), and be partakers of the divine nature. (2 Peter 1:4). This new nature God gives us should transcend our old one (2 Corinthians 5:17) and we will abhor evil as Jesus our Master did, a total surrender to Him, fit and ready for His coming today (Revelation 22:14). Even with our lights shining, if others are not hungry and thirsty for Christ’s righteousness (applied) and heaven, there is sadly nothing either God or we can do for them until they “wake up” as did the Prodigal Son (see Matthew 25:35, Matthew 5:6, Amos 8:11-13).

Eric Hort, WA



## COMPLEXITY

Wow! You have no idea how appreciative we were during this shut-in time to finally get a *Record* in our hands three weeks ago—thanks to the mailout team.

I too feel sad that my Sabbath school team cannot meet in person; that [our] class cannot sit side by side, hug, share, pray together; or “make a joyful noise” unto the Lord. BUT I also am thankful that a committee higher than our local church board saw fit to shut the doors of our churches for the time being. This decision has caused solitude to be considered and thought about; for innovation in ways and means of encouragement to strengthen; for our young people to become involved in good deeds and Zoom and live-stream and reaching out—that may not have even-

tuated without this drastic push. That “evangelistic” campaigns and fly-in fly-out committees have been put on hold matters not. God has gifted our church family with other avenues of gospel ministry.

The author of “How sad” is sad they cannot open the church doors on Sabbath morning. So are we all. [But] there are so many Christians who are finding time and original ways to do what Jesus would do—in fact, they are golden opportunities to witness.

Heather Hagen, *Qld*

## SET BACK GOD'S CAUSE

A quick response to the letter “How Sad” (*Adventist Record*, May 16).

The writer challenges the Church to break the law of the land by defying the quarantine restrictions for church attendance during

this pandemic.

Quarantine, however, has a firm biblical basis (Leviticus chapters 13–15). Did God say to Moses, “I will protect you from disease regardless of your practices”? Of course not. He gave to Moses very strict hygiene principles that are still applicable in 2020. In fact, the health of the children of Israel depended on strict adherence to those principles, as well as their faith in God.

Weren’t we as a denomination given even more health principles through the inspired vision of Ellen White? Did we ever decide to abandon them and presume that God protects us, even when we defy such advice? To suggest we ditch good hygienic principles, whether or not mandated by government, in order to allegedly make a missional

statement, is based on presumption.

Such presumption is akin to that demanded of Christ by the Jewish leaders, that He should perform miracles as proof of His divinity.

For us to defy government restrictions—placed for good medical reasons—will not engender good publicity for the Church—but invite mockery, fines and bad press. It will set back God’s cause, not advance it.

Dr David Pennington,  
*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.

Weddings



**JOHNSON-SAGULIN.** Levi Johnson, son of Kevin and Darnelle Johnson (Kingscliff, NSW), and Veera Sagulin, daughter of Seppo and Ritta Sagulin (Finland), were married on 10.5.20 in a magnificent setting on Karen North's farm in Limpinwood, NSW. Instead of a large number of guests for their wedding in Finland, they were limited by the coronavirus laws. Levi and Veera met while attending ARISE at Kingscliff and share a united vision for ministry. Levi is halfway through his theology course at Avondale, while Veera has one year to complete a degree in agriculture. Levi has already demonstrated his calling to ministry, having served for a significant time as a Bible worker and as a powerful preacher. Both are excited by the prospect of serving in full-time ministry sharing the gospel.

*David Asscherick, Vern Parmenter*



**KRUGER-RADOVAN.** Gustov Kruger, son of Izak and Rienette Kruger (Auckland, NZ), and Alexandra Radovan, daughter of David Radovan and Carol-Rae Campbell (Bunbury, WA), were married on 2.1.20 at Barrett Lane, Perth. The beautiful couple brought in the new year with a bang, celebrating with friends and family in an outdoor wedding at Barrett Lane.

*Derek McCutcheon, Piroska Vranjakne-Feith*



**RUTO-TIMMS.** Alford Ruto, son of Samuel and Hellen Letting (Kenya), and Lydia Timms, daughter of Lindsay and Bonnie Timms (Perth, WA), were married on 31.3.20 at Kings Park Gardens, Perth, WA. The wedding date was brought forward due to COVID-19 restrictions and was attended by many via Zoom for the ceremony. Terry Johnson officiated the wedding online due to flight restrictions. It was still a beautiful day for the lovely couple and they look forward to a proper celebration with family and friends when restrictions are lifted.

*Terry Johnson, Derek McCutcheon*

Obituaries



**AXTHELM,** Nathan, born 4.11.1979 at Lilydale Bush Nursing Hospital, Vic; died 31.12.19 at Box Hill. Nathan is survived by his parents Reinhard and Gisela; sister Karen and brother-in-law Tim; and nieces Emily and Caitlin; and nephew Leo. Nathan, affectionately known as "Big Nath", had a big heart and a big impact on so many. Nathan's sudden and unexpected passing left a big hole for all who knew him, especially the Axthelm family and Lilydale Church. His passing was marked by a packed memorial service and funeral. John 3:16 was his favourite Bible verse. He lived the gospel in the way he cared for so many, was always happy and positive, and reliable to a fault. We are better people for having known him and we look forward to Jesus' second coming when we will be together again.

*Darren Croft*



**BOARD,** Laurie Constance (nee Steicke), born 15.7.1933 in Mount Barker, WA; died 10.2.20 in Mount Barker. On 6.12.1969 she married Dr Tom Board. Laurie was predeceased by her sister Ruth Warne. She is survived by her husband (WA); sister, Eunice Vaughan (NSW); and nieces and nephews all over Australia. Laurie was adored by her immediate and extended family. Church members loved her as their own grandmother. Whichever community Laurie was called to, she lived to serve and beautifully reflected the love of Jesus. We look forward to being reunited when Jesus returns to claim His own.

*Geoffrey Plewright*



**COZENS,** Pastor Matthew Penberthy (Bert), born 16.12.1924 in Wahroonga, NSW; died 3.2.20 at the Gosford Private Hospital. On 4.1.1945 he married his first wife, Norma McKinlay, who predeceased him in 1995. He was also predeceased by his son, Elwyn in 1947 and his daughter, Leonie Bellchambers in 2013. In 1997 he married Merle Bruce. Bert is survived by his wife (Cooranbong, NSW); son-in-law, Neville Bellchambers (Humburg Scrub, SA); sons, Glen and Julie (Terranora, NSW) and Irwin and Irene (Wagga Wagga); granddaughters, Fiona, Karena, Nerissa, Joanne, Lynde,

Narelle, Kristin, Lauren and Charlotte; and nine great-grandchildren. Bert graduated as a primary teacher from Avondale Missionary College in 1943 and spent 41 years in denominational employment as a teacher and pastor, including 21 years as the principal of five schools and colleges in the mission field: Vatuvonu (Fiji), Aore (Vanuatu), Kabiufa (PNG), Sonoma (PNG) and Fulton (Fiji). He was ordained to the gospel ministry in 1953. Bert also taught in six Australian schools and at Avondale College. He spent the last five years of his employment as pastor of the Alice Springs church. Bert will be remembered for his lifelong passion for the mission of the Church and for his commitment to selfless service for God and others.

*Alex Currie*



**DOBLE,** William Henry, born 19.8.1926 in Portland, NSW; died 10.5.20 in Wyong Hospital. In 1966 he married Margaret (nee Gosling) in Wahroonga. He is survived by his wife; son, Wayne and Lynda (Bendigo, Vic); and grandchildren, Ella and Levi. Bill, during his years of ministry, pastored many large congregations in NSW, WA and Victoria. He was much loved by his congregations and highly regarded by his ministry peers. His commitment to ministry was whole-hearted. He was recognised as a good student of the Bible and practiced what he preached. Bill will be remembered as a caring, selfless, thoughtful Christian. Bill loved his wife and family and now awaits the great reunion day.

*Roger Nixon*



**EMMETT,** Margaret (nee Hart), born 8.12.1925 in Taree, NSW; died 13.5.20 in Coopers Plains, Qld. On 13.4.1957 she married Victor. Margaret was predeceased by her son, Ian in 2008. She is survived by her husband (Waterford West); son, Mark (Marsden); and daughter, Helen Von Schrottky (Paraguay, South America). Margaret was a devoted wife to Victor and a wonderful mother and grandmother but most of all she was a compassionate and sympathetic woman, honest and humble and she is etched in the hearts of all who loved her.

*Neil Tyler, Harley Southwell*

**GARDNER,** Wallace Frederick, born 27.1.1928 in Martins Creek, NSW; died 21.1.20. On

7.10.1962 he married Evelyn Gabel. He is survived by his wife; son, Russell; daughters, Kim and Kathryn; six grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren. Much loved and missed by all his family and friends. A kind hearted gentleman to all.

*Raymond Dabson*

**GRIGG,** Cedric Myles, born 18.8.1933 in Adelaide, SA; died 3.5.20 in Mont Albert North, Vic. Cedric is survived by his wife, Helen (Month Albert North); daughters, Jacquelyn and Sam Ghantous (Mont Albert) and Sharon and Rohan Williams (Skye); grandchildren, Jessica Michael, Emily, Georgia, Jack and Madeleine; and great-grandchild Mackenzie. Cedric passed away peacefully at home. His caring nature, thirst for knowledge and devotion to serving others has left a lifetime impression on all who knew him. Rest peacefully faithful servant until your Heavenly Father awakens you to take you home.

*Tony Campbell*

**HUGHES,** Beth (nee Miinchow), born 6.8.1937 in Mackay, Qld; died 28.5.20 in Caloundra. On 30.1.1966 she married Wesley. Beth is survived by her husband (Caloundra); children, Bronwyn (Ipswich), and Frank and Martha (Marsden); and grandchildren, Charlotte and Kymberly. Beth was baptised at the same time as her parents at Ayr, North Queensland, when she was 14 years old. She was a dedicated RN who also certificated in general midwifery and aged care. She spent two years at the Togoba Hansende colony in New Guinea. She served as a deaconess at the churches she attended over the years. Her hobbies included crochet and knitting, producing many blankets for the Sunshine Sanctuary and the hostel at the Caloundra Adventist aged care facility. Beth loved her family but above all she loved her Lord and Saviour Jesus and had total confidence in Him.

*Scott Wareham, John Rabbas*

**ROWE,** Ruth (nee Miller), born 12.9.1932 in Dundowran (near Maryborough, Qld); died 21.4.20 in Toowoomba. On 11.1.1954 she married Les. She is survived by her husband; children Gail Ormsby (Toowoomba) and Russell; grandchildren, Jade, Micah, Anna, Casey and Elias Rowe (Gold Coast, Qld); and sister Beth Miller (Cooranbong, NSW). Ruth is probably best remembered for the meals she

prepared at the Charles Harrison Nursing Home, for her home, for her singing in church, and for her generous hospitality to students and friends at Avondale College where Les was in charge of security for 20 years, from 1979. Ruth suffered a number of health challenges, but always retained her ability to meet them with a smile. Her trust in her Lord was strong until the end, and she looked forward to the resurrection morning. Ruth's funeral was subject to coronavirus social limitations, so only immediate family were permitted to attend at the chapel and the graveside.

Allen Sonter



**THOMSON, Leonie Mary** (nee Wallis), born 31.1.1961 in Melbourne, Vic; died 13.3.20 in Newcastle, NSW. On 29.8.1982 she married Wayne. Leonie is survived by her husband (Cooranbong); sons, Cameron and Paula (Sydney), Pastor Martin and Tanay (Kempsey); grandchildren, Aria, Johana and Elijah; and brother, Hayden and Sandy Wallis (Melbourne, Vic). Leonie graduated from primary teaching at Avondale College. She loved teaching and began her career at Morphett Vale, SA. Leonie spent many years teaching kindy at Macquarie College. She was an active member at Avondale Memorial Church for many years. Leonie's joy was her family, always loving, caring and putting

them first. Leonie was an inspiration to all during her 19-month struggle with cancer. We look forward, with great anticipation, to that wonderful day when Leonie will be restored to us again, in full health and strength.

Abel Iorgulescu, Danny Milenkov,  
Steven and Susan Magaitis,  
Peter Watts

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