



THE COMEBACK KING

EVERYBODY LOVES A GOOD
COMEBACK STORY 15

NEWS

NEW ADVENTIST ENCYCLOPEDIA
LAUNCHED 4

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HEY MUMS!

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TOO MUCH SCREEN TIME?

Video call fatigue is something not many people had really encountered before Lockdown 2020 came along. According to a *World Economic Forum* article, video conference users are complaining of exhaustion and feeling worn-out and run-down—even though they are no longer working in the office.

The same article suggests a couple of reasons why this might be the case. Firstly, heightened self-awareness/consciousness. Seeing themselves on screen, they are more conscious of how they look and sound to others . . . constantly. Another reason suggested is that trying to process all the non-verbal communication takes a lot more effort on those small screens than in real life.

For a time, video conferencing was the only way to “see” family and friends, to conduct church and small groups, and for businesses to function. But it has also meant our lives are even more dominated by screens than ever before. We’ve lost interpersonal interactions to the empire of screens.

Now, more than ever before—as digital spaces become the only spaces we are interacting in, working in, watching church in—there might be value in taking a digital Sabbath. We need to find ways to detox and to slow down our rapid consumption, while still using the platforms provided to introduce Jesus to a fast-paced modern world that needs to know Him more than ever.

In this always-connected world, perhaps it’s time to put your phone aside for the Sabbath hours if you can. I’ve tried it before, I think it’s time I started again. I have a carved wooden bowl shaped like a pineapple. It’s about the right size to fit my phone, and perhaps one or two others. I call it the Pineapple of Power! It traps my phone for the Sabbath hours. I even leave it at home when I go to church. I find it liberating not to have access for the whole day but it is hard. I always reach for it, feel its loss, have to intentionally do other things to allay the boredom.

Digital Sabbath can help but it’s not a magical fix-all. It just shows that we need more space and time for deeper connections.

Rebecca Rosen, in her article for *The Atlantic* called

“We don’t need a digital Sabbath, we need more time”, put it this way:

“We need to realise that at the core of our desire for a Sabbath, isn’t a need to escape the blinking screens of our electronic world but the ways that work and other obligations have intruded on our lives and relationships.”

In a time where we’ve seen the usefulness of technology for ministry and connection, we can’t be all in or out. We can’t see technology as evil or a blessing but instead should see it as a tool that is neutral—it is how we use it and what for that counts. I’ve been blessed to video call my parents, often during the Sabbath hours during this lockdown, so they can see their new granddaughter, the only contact they’ve had.

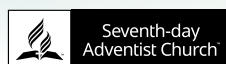
But we do need to examine our practices.

In the Pacific, where the spread of smart phones is increasing and as data gets better and the temptation of endless scrolling is more widespread, there is a chance for the Church to get ahead of the curve and help members cultivate healthy online habits. There are some innovative outreach ministries taking place through texting and a young Fijian’s evangelistic videos recently went viral on Facebook. So I’m not talking about legalistic rules of what can and can’t be done on Sabbath, or scrapping technology altogether, but looking at ways to use the digital space most effectively.

I personally receive a lot of edification and spiritual content on my various social media platforms.

As the Church comes out of lockdown and relying so heavily on technology, we need to find a balance. There are amazing ministry opportunities online at the same time as there are distractions and dangers. As Christians we need to navigate the digital space, even if we may need to detox for a while to make us more effective online disciples.

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PRACTISING GOD'S PRESENCE

Every day we do many routine tasks. We walk to the train station, hang up the washing, water the garden, shower, shop, pray, read an email, cook, talk on the phone, watch TV, pick up the children or grandchildren from school, read the Bible, talk to friends, drive the car . . . We don't think much about doing most of these things—they just happen. Habits that can bring meaning and value to life or just things to do. But where is God in all of this?

We can say we spend time with God in prayer and Bible reading—our worship and devotion—which is great. However, there is a danger we can compartmentalise God—God's time is first thing in the morning and the seventh-day Sabbath. But where is God in the rest of life?

The truth is that God sees, hears and knows every thought and action (Psalm 44:21, Isaiah 40:28). For the Christian, Jesus lives in each person through the Holy Spirit (John 14:17, 2 Corinthians 1:22). God is in us and with us every moment of every day. The problem is not the biblical truth but the fact that we forget about God's presence.

Knowing that God is with us and in us could help us when we have lost a contract, or having a difficult conversation with a work colleague, or disciplining our child for the hundredth time for behaving inappropriately, or taking an exam . . . Emotions can take over at those times. "You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you" (Isaiah 26:3 ESV). "Set your mind on things above . . ." (Colossians 3:2). Focusing our mind on God at all times is a challenge for every disciple.

Knowing that God loves us, forgives us and keeps us is worth remembering at any time of the day whatever we are doing. Let's practise the presence of God more each day—it will make a difference.



GLENN TOWNEND
SPD PRESIDENT
@SPDPresident

NEW ADVENTIST ENCYCLOPEDIA LAUNCHED

TRACEY BRIDCUTT

Pioneer missionary Peni (Benny) Tavodi and popular evangelist George Burnside are among the many individuals from the South Pacific Division (SPD) whose biographies feature in the new Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists (ESDA), which launched on July 1.

ESDA is an exciting global project several years in the making. Of the 8500 entries documenting the history and life of the Adventist Church around the world, 611 are from the SPD, with a further 19 currently being edited. The benefit of the digital format is that ESDA can be continually updated and expanded.

Scholars, teachers and authors from every division have contributed to the project, including 140 writers from the SPD.

In his role as ESDA regional editor, former Division president Dr Barry Oliver has been busy coordinating local writers and entries for the project. There are articles on each union, conference, mission and institution, as well as on significant people and events from the South Pacific.

"No project ever attempted by the Church has had this breadth of input," Dr Oliver said. "We are a global Church and it is entirely appropriate that our encyclopedia should be produced by the contributions of writers from right around the globe. They come from every continent except Antarctica as far as I know."

Some of the stories have left a lasting impression on Dr Oliver. "The amazing courage . . . blew me away," he said.

"The stories of people and places are so good that they can be used for serious research or enjoyable reading. Like me, I am sure you will be amazed at what you learn."

Dr Oliver hasn't shied away from including some of the more

colourful and controversial characters and events from our past. "It's not all sanitised history," he said.

And this is just the beginning—much of the story is still to be told. "We have made a good start but more needs to be done," Dr Oliver said. "And it can be done because for the first time we have a resource that is online. Not only can each article be expanded, supplemented and if necessary, corrected, but we can add articles on people and places that have been important in our Church."

SPD president Pastor Glenn Townend said ESDA will be an incredibly valuable resource for those interested in the history and development of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

"Reading the encyclopedia will not only inform with researched history, but it will also inspire you to continue to serve in the footsteps of those who have sacrificed much to create the dynamic Church that we have today in the South Pacific," Pastor Townend said. "There is much interesting history for sermons, study papers, talks and more."

ESDA was originally due to be launched at the now-postponed 2020 General Conference Session. Instead the launch took place on the Seventh-day Adventist Church's official YouTube channel on July 1.

For more information and to access the Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists go to <encyclopedia.adventist.org>.



ADVENTIST CHURCH SIGNS UP TO NATIONAL REDRESS SCHEME

TRACEY BRIDCUTT

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Australia has confirmed that it is signing up to the Australian National Redress Scheme (NRS) for survivors of institutional child sexual abuse.

The Federal Government scheme is aimed at helping abuse survivors access counselling, a direct personal response and a redress payment.

Institutions were required to formally notify the NRS of their intention to opt into the scheme by June 30, 2020. This was done on behalf of the Adventist Church by Adsafes on May 28.

Natalie Renshaw, from Adsafes survivor services and redress, said Adsafes has been working closely with the NRS Taskforce towards the Church and all its entities joining the scheme.

"It is anticipated that the Adventist Church will be a fully participating member of the NRS well before the

deadline of December 31, 2020," she said.

"In the meantime, for those survivors who wish to access redress now, Adsafes continues to operate its own internal redress scheme."

The Seventh-day Adventist Church established its internal redress scheme in early 2017, based on recommendations from the Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and prior to the NRS being set up.

The Church's internal redress scheme will continue to provide access to redress for survivors both in Australia and New Zealand up to the time the Australian Church officially joins the NRS. After that Australian



ADSAFE OPTED INTO THE NATIONAL REDRESS SCHEME ON MAY 28, 2020.

survivors will be able to choose to access redress either through the NRS or the internal scheme. New Zealand survivors will be able to continue to access redress through the internal scheme.

If you would like to make contact with Adsafes for support, advice or to make a report please contact 1800 220 468 (Australia) or 0800 442 458 (New Zealand). For more information go to: <adsafes.org.au>.

NEW DIRECTOR FOR ELLEN G WHITE RESEARCH CENTRE

TRACEY BRIDCUTT

A new director has been announced for the Ellen G White Research Centre at Avondale University College (Cooranbong, NSW).

Pastor Mark Pearce has been appointed to the role, which will soon be vacated by Dr John Skrzypaszek, who is retiring at the beginning of August. He has held the position since 2005.

Pastor Pearce is currently the director of the Pacific Adventist Research Centre and a lecturer in the School of Humanities, Education and Theology at Pacific Adventist University (PAU), Papua New Guinea.

His vision for the Ellen G White Research Centre is that it "is known as the place where Ellen White is portrayed as the Adventist founder who loved Jesus and pointed people to Jesus".

"Because the centre also has responsibility toward the South Pacific islands, I would like to see the centre have a more positive impact there in order to help facilitate balanced perspectives on Ellen White's ministry. I would also like to see more of an uptake of modern technologies to spread a factual understanding of

her ministry to all ages—especially the young."

In accordance with protocol, the appointment of Pastor Pearce was officially ratified by the White Estate Board in Silver Spring, United States.

South Pacific Division president Pastor Glenn Townend welcomed Pastor Pearce to the role while also thanking Dr Skrzypaszek for his 15 years of service to the research centre.

"John was known for giving people ideas and a framework for applying Ellen White's writing to this current and very different world in which she wrote," Pastor Townend said.

Meanwhile, tours of Ellen White's former home, Sunnyside, have been temporarily halted as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. This is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of staff, volunteers and visitors in accordance with government restrictions around social distancing. Inquiries: <sunnyside@adventist.org.au>.



PASTOR PEARCE AND HIS WIFE PAULENE.

#WERtheCHURCH BACK TO INSPIRE AND ENCOURAGE

TRACEY BRIDCUTT

The inaugural #weRtheCHURCH Sabbath program received such a positive response that it will now be held quarterly.

Organisers of the Division-wide initiative are planning to share more stories on what the Church is doing across the South Pacific through three Friday night programs, the first to be held on August 28. The fourth program will be a Friday night/Sabbath event similar to the one held on May 22-23.

Each program will be themed around discipleship using the harvest cycle model. The first will focus on "Preparing the soil", featuring mission stories and testimonies from around the South Pacific Division (SPD).

The SPD's decision to make #weRtheCHURCH a regular initiative follows widespread enthusiastic feedback for the first program, which showcased how the mission of the Church has been continuing in new

and creative ways despite the challenges of COVID-19. Up to 200,000 viewers are believed to have tuned into the event.

"I have been inundated with positive messages from people from around the SPD expressing gratitude for the #weRtheCHURCH weekend," said SPD president Pastor Glenn Townend.

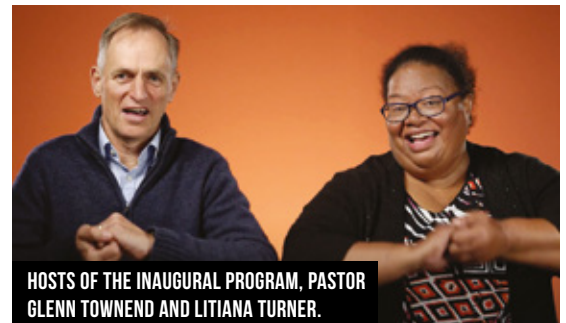
"It was wonderful to see how the program united and inspired our members during such a challenging time of church lockdowns.

"Church leaders throughout the SPD have also shared their thoughts on the #weRtheCHURCH program and its impact. They were pleased to see how it brought incredible unity to such a diverse Division and expressed interest in having more of these programs.

"I am delighted that #weRtheCHURCH is becoming a regular event—I believe it will be a real blessing and encouragement for the Church in the South Pacific as we continue to become a thriving Adventist disciple-making movement."

Adventist Media is working with the unions and Division entities to source content for the upcoming programs.

For more information and updates, email <werthechurch@adventist.org.au>.



HOSTS OF THE INAUGURAL PROGRAM, PASTOR GLENN TOWNEND AND LITIANA TURNER.



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NEW BOOK RECALCULATES THE VALUE OF GIVING

LAUREN WEBB

According to Sydney business consultant Dr Ken Long, many people are reluctant to give because when they do, they are left with less to live on. It can feel like a threat to our independence, standard of living and economic security—especially with so many people being out of work.

But Dr Long's first book *The Giving Equation*, released recently by Signs Publishing, recalculates this equation, offering a biblical and mind-shifting perspective on why we should give. He shows that giving has significant benefits and that we actually have more to gain if we give than if we hold on to money.

"I believe that God asks us to give for our benefit," said Dr Long. "And God is so compassionate to our human way of thinking that He often describes giving from a consumer perspective—what's in it for me."

The Giving Equation presents two ways of thinking about money: the Me-economy and the G-economy. A Me-economy mindset is about holding on to money to protect our lifestyle and achieve financial security and independence—it's the natural human way of thinking. On the other hand, people with

a G-economy mindset find freedom in trusting God to provide and experience the abundant life He promises to those who give.

"Ken's insights into biblical stewardship are exciting, fresh, transformative and hope-filled," said South Pacific Division stewardship leader Christina Hawkins.

As well as providing food for personal thought, *The Giving Equation* is also a practical resource. "It contains five Bible case studies that draw out principles of giving," Dr Long said. "These are summarised and presented in study-guide form at the back of the book."

The Giving Equation is available from Adventist bookstores in Australia and New Zealand, or online.



DR KEN LONG WITH HIS NEW BOOK.

Photo credit: Nerissa J Photography

SCHOOLS PROVIDE HOPE DURING COVID-19 CRISIS

MELE VAIHOLA/RECORD STAFF

Adventist schools in the Trans Pacific Union Mission have resumed face-to-face classes following COVID-19 lockdowns.

For several of the schools, the pandemic has been a blessing in disguise.



TEACHERS FROM SUVA ADVENTIST COLLEGE VISIT THEIR SISTER SCHOOL, NAVESAU ADVENTIST HIGH, WITH GROCERIES TO SUPPORT THE TEACHERS AND THEIR FAMILIES.

Samoa Adventist College and Mizpah Adventist High School in Tonga have seen enrolments increase following the lockdown. Although Iakina Adventist Academy in American Samoa faced financial challenges, the government stepped in and paid outstanding school fees—three times more than anticipated.

In addition, Suva Adventist College (Fiji) delivered groceries to support teachers and families at Navesau Adventist High School, and Funafuti Adventist School in Tuvalu was uplifted during a week of prayer themed "Be Firm in Faith".

NEWS GRABS



SHOCKING TRIPLE MURDER

Adventist churches in Reading (UK) have posted a statement of condolence following a triple murder committed just 20 minutes from Adventist-run Newbold College of Higher Education. One of the victims, James Furlong, was a teacher at a nearby school that a number of youth from Newbold Adventist Church currently attend. —TED



CHURCH TURNS 125

The Adventist church in Gaspar Alto, Santa Catarina, Brazil, recently turned 125 years old. Founded in 1895 by 10 German immigrant families, a virtual celebration was held on June 15 to mark the anniversary. The event was attended by Adventist Church world president Pastor Ted Wilson, descendants of the pioneers, local pastors and members. —SAD



STOPPING THE SPREAD

The AdventHealth Medical Group has implemented kerbside "waiting lots" in more than 700 locations across the United States. Rather than entering a hospital and risking a COVID-19 infection, patients can utilise touchless registration and check-in and stay in their vehicle until called by hospital staff. —AdventHealthNews

HOT TOPICS



CHRISTIAN TV SUSPENDED

Israel's Council for Cable and Satellite Broadcasting has suspended the licence of *Shelanu TV*—a Christian evangelical TV channel—for proselytising to Jews as its "primary mission". The council found that the channel was targeting Jews and not Christians—as originally agreed in its licence terms.—*Jewish Press*



WHITE BLESSING

In mid June, a video of Louie Giglio, Lecrae and Chick-fil-A CEO Dan Cathy talking about racism was heavily criticised for suggesting that "white privilege" could be renamed "white blessing". He created a follow-up apology video, saying, "I'm deeply sorry. It was a horrible choice of words." —*Relevant Magazine*



PAYING TAX DEFIES GOD?

A family from Tasmania that refused to pay income tax on the grounds doing so went "against God's will" closed its honey store on June 30, after being ordered by the Hobart Supreme Court to pay more than \$2 million to the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). "The authorities walk in open defiance to the Almighty God," their statement read.—*ABC News*

INNOVATIVE GROUP MAKES MEMORISING SABBATH SCHOOL LESSON TEXTS EASIER WITH MUSIC

MARYELLEN FAIRFAX

For many of us, memorising the weekly Sabbath school lesson (SSL) memory texts can be quite a mental challenge. As such, a small group of musically-minded folk from several churches in Canterbury, New Zealand, have been working to make this process easier by putting the adult SSL memory texts to music.

This creative team desires not only to make the memory texts easier to memorise but to make the Word of God more meaningful and beautiful.

The group originally began with a choir and a recording studio. However, this involved many practice sessions, and hiring the studio was proving too expensive. Another problem the team found when using a choir was that the words were not clearly audible. Thus, the decision to combine the simplicity of a solo voice with a single instrument made things a lot easier. Using a soloist removed the need to blend and hone several different voices.

With one or two instruments and a few soloists, the team is able to produce 13 tunes each quarter with minimal effort. Furthermore, by recording at the Ilam Seventh-day Adventist Church, using the personal equipment and technical expertise of church member Craig Savage, it can be



L-R: GRACE JOHNSTONE, TESSA BAGRIE, TREVOR BROWN, CRAIG SAVAGE, GINA TAGGART, GRACE SHEFFIELD AND DRIEKIE PHEIFFER.

Photo credit: Rodney Bagrie

done at virtually no expense.

The words of each memory text are sung exactly as they appear in the adult SSL. Sometimes the shorter texts are repeated, and the Scripture reference is always given, usually at the end of the tune.

The team plans to continue producing the SSL memory texts set to music as an ongoing help to everyone wanting to commit them to memory.

The recordings, which begin with the first quarter of 2020, can be downloaded at adventist.org.nz/resources/ss-memory-texts.

The songwriters for this project are Sonja Whitehouse, Driekie Pheiffer, Trevor Brown and Gina Taggart. Accompanists are Driekie (piano) and Gina (guitar). The singers are Sonja Whitehouse, Tessa Bagrie, Trevor Brown, Grace Sheffield and Grace Johnstone.

RECORD LIVE

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THURSDAYS 4PM (AEDT) ON FACEBOOK



SPECIAL AWARD

The Australian National University (ANU) College of Asia and the Pacific has awarded Adventist church member Dr Bal Kama the Hank Nelson Memorial Award for 2020 in recognition of his commitment to Papua New Guinea (PNG), and for submitting the best PhD thesis internationally on PNG, entitled "Reconceptualising the Role of the Judiciary in Papua New Guinea's 'Home Grown' Constitution". An expert in public and constitutional law and governance in the Pacific, Dr Kama lives in Canberra with his wife and daughter, but is originally from Gumine District of Simbu Province, in the highlands of PNG. —ANU College of Law



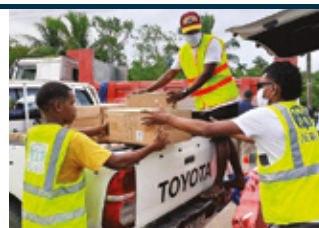
100 YEARS AND COUNTING

Ohiyanu Hamura, a dedicated member of the Adventist Church in Papua New Guinea, celebrated her 100th birthday on June 7 with family and friends. She is mother to nine children—the eldest being Pastor John Hamura—and 23 bubus (grandchildren). All of her children play active roles in church. Mrs Hamura and her late husband were an example to their children, actively serving in the Church for 33 years, before Mr Hamura passed away in 2000. —John Hamura



STUDENT OUTREACH

Students from Tenakonga Adventist Community High School (Solomon Islands) embarked on an outreach program at Sukiki village in West Guadalcanal over the weekend of June 19–21. During the trip they stopped by their sister school, Kopiu Adventist Community High School, to visit and encourage the students and staff there. Tenakonga has also been running a Sabbath school program in the nearby village of Susui, using resources such as picture rolls provided by the Solomon Islands Mission education department. The Susui village chief requested that the school also visit on Friday evenings to present spiritual music videos. The first of these programs was held on June 19 and attracted many people. —Chareen Simbe



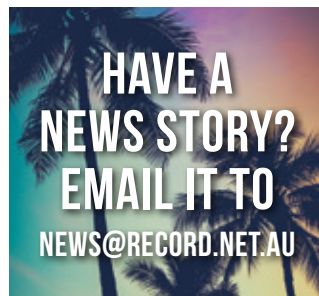
25 YEARS OF SERVICE

ADRA Fiji is celebrating 25 years of serving the community. From small beginnings with just one worker, the agency has grown into a dynamic team of more than 40 dedicated individuals who are making a real difference in the lives of people around Fiji. Over the years, the ADRA team has provided emergency response to assist communities affected by natural disasters, the most recent being Tropical Cyclone Harold. The team has also been working on a range of projects focused on community development to improve livelihoods and food security. Trans Pacific Union Mission president Pastor Mavani Kaufononga congratulated ADRA on its achievements over the past 25 years. —Record staff



EDINBURGH WELCOMED BACK IN STYLE

Edinburgh College (Victoria) went the extra mile to encourage students during lockdown, with Year 7s receiving personally delivered care packages to thank them and their families for committing to eight weeks of online learning. Chaplain Jamie Stanley said it was a small gesture in comparison to the huge sacrifice it has been for some families. Students were then welcomed back to school with a red carpet, Sesame Street characters Elmo, Cookie Monster and Big Bird, and colourful balloons. —Victorian Conference



STUDENTS SING TO NEW MUMS

Students at Funafuti Adventist School (Tuvalu) recently visited the maternity ward of the local hospital as part of their weekly community service activities. The program began with the sharing of a Bible text followed by singing. The students said the outreach brought them joy and they would participate in similar activities in the future if given the chance. —Record staff



NEW INTERIM SECRETARY

Trans Pacific Union Mission (TPUM) officers recently appointed Pastor Fifita Vatulesi (pictured in centre) as the new interim secretary for the Adventist Church in Fiji, to replace Pastor Josateki Talemaitoga (right). The interim appointment will be filled by Pastor Vatulesi until November 18–21 when the full TPUM Session will be held and leadership positions elected. —Pete Navosailagi



KIDS SUPPORT RECONCILIATION

Students and staff at Ipswich Adventist School (Queensland) came together on June 4 to support National Reconciliation Week by walking 1.14 kilometres (the length of Sydney Harbour Bridge) around the school oval and across a specially-made wooden bridge to show their support. "In this together," their Facebook post read. —IAS Facebook

Meet Avondale's new president

Kevin Petrie, Avondale University College's recently appointed president/vice-chancellor, taught in primary schools for about 24 years, mostly in the New Zealand system. A proud Kiwi, originally from Christchurch, Kevin cut his teeth in higher education at La Trobe University in Melbourne before he was given an opportunity to lecture at Avondale's School of Education. Now in his seventh year at Avondale, Kevin sat down with *Adventist Record* editor Jarrod Stackelroth to talk about his new role, his vision for Avondale and what makes the "Avondale experience".

JS: AVONDALE'S PREVIOUS PRESIDENT WAS A THEOLOGIAN. WHAT DOES A PRIMARY EDUCATOR BRING TO THE ROLE?

KP: As a teacher, I'm always thinking of the education experience and the quality of it. There is a hunger in most teachers to want to see the teaching and learning experience be the best that it can be. I've always had a really strong interest in school culture because, putting myself back into that primary context, there's the recognition that the climate and culture of the school has a huge impact on wellbeing and all sorts of student outcomes.

I really want this institution to have the positive spiritual impact that Adventist education can have.

JS: 2020 HAS BEEN A ROUGH YEAR. HOW HAVE YOU NAVIGATED YOUR NEW ROLE AND BROUGHT AVONDALE THROUGH THE CHALLENGES OF COVID-19?

KP: My first week in the role, we were beginning to realise the need to transition to an online environment. There had to be a lot of change in that first month—we were starting to move



staff off-campus, trying to transition students to distance mode.

We did it together with our critical incident management team and, as much as anything, it was the sheer time commitment that we had to spend navigating the space that was a real challenge. You find yourself living in a world you haven't lived in before so, like everyone else, you're trying to guess what the weeks and months ahead are going to bring; you're trying to be flexible and react to changing circumstances. We did it as a team and navigated this space.

JS: IS THERE ANYTHING THAT WILL CHANGE GOING FORWARD BECAUSE OF THE PANDEMIC?

KP: We now have improved ways of supporting distance students. We've tried new things. Lecturers are more confident, comfortable and capable working in that space. There are some things we've learnt that we'll just keep doing. It will improve the way we do education by distance. For a number of our students, the educational experience didn't change because they were distance students. Their personal lives changed, but many don't come near campus anyway. Even in the pastoral care area, services that chaplains and student support services have implemented are great and we want to keep doing them.

JS: WHAT ARE SOME OF THE BROADER CHALLENGES FACING AVONDALE?

KP: First of all, being a rural institution, we struggle more. There seems to be a drift of students to the urban areas. Combined with that there is an increasing reluctance for school leavers to say, "I think I'll go away from home and board somewhere else and study at Avondale." Increasing numbers will go, "I'm comfortable at home, I've got my church family and I'd really like to stay put" and I think in the society we live, parents are increasingly wanting to keep their school leavers close too. There's probably not the same "you need to go to Avondale" culture there once was. That leads to financial challenges. Our enrolments are not as high as they were, but we still have a certain infrastructure that we need to maintain, so one of our challenges at the moment is certainly the financial space. Looking at the year or two ahead, that's one of the challenges we have to get on top of.

JS: ARE THERE ANY STRATEGIES THAT YOU ARE ALREADY WORKING ON TO ADDRESS THOSE PROBLEMS?

KP: We're looking at the way we're structured, set up to operate, and ways we can do that more efficiently. If you have less students, you need to find efficiencies in the way you deliver

your services. We need to find ways to increase income as well, so we're looking through a number of different options: scholarships for the students to come to the dorms for it to be more affordable; one-year courses or shorter courses, so that even if people want to take a course we don't offer, they could come for a year experience, for a semester or two; and with the services we have, there is an opportunity to encourage others to come and use our facilities. COVID has complicated what was already a challenging financial situation.

JS: WHAT ARE SOME OF THE BENEFITS OF AN AVONDALE EDUCATION?

KP: The number of students that I've seen whose lives have been totally changed by their experience here.

Whether this is safe to publish or not, I was one of those parents who wasn't going to send my kids to Avondale. When my daughter tried to talk to me about going, I did my best to try and talk her out of it. I just felt a safety in keeping my children closer, in the church community where they were already embedded. Why risk a change? Why risk the unknown?

When I did allow my daughter to finally come here, I was pleasantly surprised at the spiritual nourishment she got, the group that she got into—a good group of friends who all wanted to pursue their spiritual walk and faith journey. I saw her grow in ways she wouldn't have if she didn't come to Avondale. I didn't know at the time I was going to come and work here, but I've seen that over and over again in students' lives. There is a genuine interest and effort to engage students in a faith journey. We don't make it a pressure but an encouragement.

You'll see that in so many different areas: in lecturers who weave the faith journey into classes, in the worship times that we have, in the ability of College Church to involve students and to draw students in like it has, to encourage them.

Very ironic that I'm now sitting in this position as a total advocate for the ability for Avondale to transform

lives. We are here to transform lives who then go out and transform their communities—that's our purpose. We believe the strongest transformational influence a person can have in their life is the Spirit of God working, so we encourage that journey. Students who choose to respond—for us it makes the whole effort worthwhile, whatever the challenges we have here.

JS: THE BIG NEWS FOR AVONDALE RECENTLY IS ACHIEVING UNIVERSITY COLLEGE STATUS. WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN NOW FOR AVONDALE TO BECOME A FULLY FLEDGED UNIVERSITY?

KP: In a nutshell, we have to continue with the journey we've taken over the past three or four years. That means our research output and the integrity of our learning and teaching programs have to stay really strong. So it's not so much an additional hurdle as maintaining what we have largely achieved. Not that easy to do when you're faced with financial challenges—it's still going to be a challenge.

JS: HISTORICALLY, A LOT OF UNIVERSITIES STARTED AS CHRISTIAN INSTITUTIONS BUT LOST THAT CONNECTION. AS AVONDALE CHASES UNIVERSITY STATUS, HOW CAN IT MAINTAIN ITS ADVENTIST IDENTITY?

KP: Good question. I acknowledge that it is easy to take your eye off the ball when you're intensely focused on something.

I also know there is a really strong belief and commitment by staff to see Adventist education retain its mission focus. One of the ways we're looking to do this is by beginning our whole strategic planning cycle early.

Even though our strategic plan runs to the end of next year, we're looking to start in the middle of this year again. We've begun to talk a lot about our purpose, making that a central focus. We know in our heart of hearts what our purpose is, what our mission is, why we're here, so all the other things—whether university college status or whatever it is—they're all things that are important only so far as they tie into our mission and our purpose.

JS: AVONDALE PARTNERS WITH OTHER UNIVERSITIES. WHAT DO YOU SEE AS AVONDALE'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE SECTOR AND WHAT HAVE SOME OF THOSE PARTNERS, CHARLES STURT FOR EXAMPLE, CONTRIBUTED TO AVONDALE?

KP: Charles Sturt has been a valuable partner for us. They've been open about the fact that they've learnt from us and we've learnt from them. It's been a collaborative journey. Our contribution to the sector? High profile scholar, Ernest Boyer, for example, said the biggest challenge of higher education is not necessarily more excellence in academia, but actually finding the purpose, a higher purpose. He wasn't talking in a religious sense, he was just saying we need a higher purpose to exist, we need to find what really matters. So we have an opportunity as a higher education institution in Australia to say we believe what really matters is the whole development of a person, including their spiritual side. True transformation comes when we support a person wholistically, including their spiritual side. To be able to do that with excellence has the potential to have a real impact for Christianity, for Adventist education.

JS: AVONDALE IS EDUCATING A LOT MORE STUDENTS WHO ARE NOT ADVENTISTS.

KP: Yes, we certainly do have more than a few years ago. A lot of them say they enjoy the smaller classes. Some, from other Christian backgrounds, like the Christian ethos; others aren't from any Christian background, but just enjoy the more personal attention they feel they receive; some live in the local district and [Avondale] is convenient.

The impact on some of our students, even if they don't choose to engage in a faith journey, can be substantial. We had an education student a few years ago who would count themselves as being, at best, agnostic. Yet after their journey through Avondale, they felt totally changed; they felt they left a different person. This particular person won an Australian teacher of the year award two or

three years ago. We flew him back to Avondale to talk to the students. He was open about the fact that, while the “God thing” wasn’t his cup of tea, Avondale had changed him and because of the impact of Avondale, he went out and achieved what he did.

God aims to reach a whole variety of people through us. They may not be people who decide to adhere to our personal philosophy, now or in the foreseeable future, but that doesn’t mean we can’t have an impact and change lives and make a difference.

JS: YOU MENTIONED THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ONLINE SPACE AND THE RETICENCE OF PARENTS TO HAVE THEIR CHILDREN FAR FROM HOME. IS THE FUTURE OF BOARDING AT AVONDALE UNDER THREAT?

KP: Honestly, our numbers have continued to drop the past few years. But we are committed to finding ways to revitalise that space.

An Avondale without on-campus residence is not on our agenda. We’re looking for ways to make it more affordable and ways to provide support for the on-campus residences, whether academic or emotional support. We’ve got work to do in that space but I believe we can do it.

JS: AVONDALE HAS BEEN ACCUSED OF LIBERALISM, EVOLUTION BEING TAUGHT AND THINGS LIKE THAT. HOW DO YOU RESPOND TO THOSE WHO CLAIM AVONDALE ISN’T DOING WHAT IT’S SUPPOSED TO?

KP: First up I would encourage people to contact us and find out what the truth really is. There were many things that I found not to be the case when I arrived to work at Avondale. The best thing they could do is to actually make contact and find out the truth, what is really being said and what is really happening. This also means we need to do a better job of getting the right stories out there. Sometimes we are not proactive enough in getting the truth out.

Secondly, I’d like Avondale to be a place where all groups of people can feel comfortable, where we give opportunities for every student to grow from whatever point they’re at.

I don’t think we’ll ever have a point where everything that we do at Avondale is going to appeal to everybody. We are an adult education institution and there will be times that students will make choices that don’t necessarily represent the general culture or tenor of the place. We would see it as our job to continue to work alongside students to encourage the right choices.

We’re not perfect. Any church community is full of humans—are they perfect? We’re not going to claim to have it all together, but like any group of human beings we’re trying to aim towards the faith journey that God is asking of us and it’s not going to be a perfect journey.

JS: IF WE WERE TO SPEAK WITH YOU WHEN YOU WERE FINISHING UP YOUR CURRENT ROLE, WHAT WOULD YOU HOPE TO HAVE ACHIEVED, A LEGACY THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO LEAVE?

KP: I would like for every area in our institution to have a culture of continually looking for ways our purpose can be fulfilled better. Almost a restless energy that we’re never quite satisfied and we’re always looking for our mission and purpose to go forward stronger. It is really easy to be caught up in the mundane.

Whether your job is maintenance or cooking or teaching, we’re so busy, we’re so caught up in what we’re doing. If we can have our constant focus on how we can fulfil our purpose better and that becomes so culturally embedded it is just the first thought that comes to our mind in our daily tasks, for me, I feel like that’s going to be a success.

And I would tie with that, continually looking for excellence in our processes—everything from the very first contact someone makes with Avondale to every part of the student journey—an absolute focus on excellence and on being the biggest support we can for the journey. The thing I dislike the most is mediocrity. If any aspect of our operation was still mediocre at the time I finished, I’d feel like I hadn’t succeeded.

JS: WHAT ARE YOU MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO IN THIS ROLE?

KP: I’m really looking forward to working with the staff and students to promote our transformational agenda. That journey of how we can make it happen in real ways in each area of our operation, to me, is incredibly exciting. Because that’s where we actually make change. Education is about change, it’s not about leaving people where they are. So how can we work together to facilitate it?

JS: WHAT IS “THE AVONDALE EXPERIENCE”?

KP: I think it is about belonging, community and connections. It’s about that ability for students to connect with each other and with staff. There is closeness and synergy between students and staff that is just a lot more powerful than you can find at some of the bigger institutions. I’d add another C and that’s change. Students will reflect afterwards on the change that has occurred in them through the “Avondale experience”.

JS: ANYTHING ELSE YOU’D LIKE TO ADD?

KP: I’d really encourage our alumni and wider church community to find ways to be involved. We love getting messages from them: they’re welcome to send comments and advice. We love the prayers and those messages of support and feedback we get.

There might be people willing to volunteer. We even have volunteer work people can do from a distance. I’d love to put the invite out there for the church community to find ways to become involved in what we do. And of course, if God puts it on people’s hearts to donate, we have so many projects that could make Avondale a better place. We’d be really happy to hear from people and to chat with them.

A longer version of this interview appears on our website <record.adventistchurch.com>.

HOW READING THE BIBLE CHANGED MY SCHOOL . . . AND MY LIFE

Janet Kues is a Grade 5 teacher at Carr Memorial Adventist Primary School in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea. While teaching, she has begun keeping Sabbath and shares how the Bible summary reading program has helped her and her students walk closer with God. This is her testimony:

When I first came to Carr Memorial, it was totally different from the government school I taught at before. The atmosphere, the environment—even the smiling faces of teachers and students—welcomed me to the school.

I joined Carr Memorial in the middle of Term 2 in 2018. I am happy and blessed to serve in a godly institution like Carr. To live and work in a God-fearing institution and living in Christ is the only way to experience true happiness.

Throughout my time serving at Carr Memorial, I have been through many struggles, but God has been good and turned all my struggles into possibilities. My daughter, who is in Grade 2 now, was in Prep when I transferred her to Carr Memorial in 2018. When she came, all her classmates were ahead of her in phonics. The thing that really helped her to catch up with her friends was reading the Bible. Now she can read confidently and fluently and also pronounces difficult words. That's the greatest thing that God has ever done for my child and it has been a blessing to me.

In early 2019, we began teaching Bible summary lessons, as well as Bible lessons. As a teacher rolling out the Bible summary program, it helped me a lot as well as the students. Teaching this was like a discovery lesson for me and it really taught me the hidden meaning of the Scriptures as I was going through each chapter of the Bible with the students.



Bible summary also improves the students' performance academically, in their handwriting, reading skills and ability to summarise main ideas when reading.

Bible reading also has a great impact on students' behaviour and attitudes. The students are well-disciplined and well-behaved both outside and inside the classroom and this makes the class much easier to manage, as I have more than 50 students in my class. Sometimes I find a few students who are naughty. These are the students who are sent to the prayer room to pray and say sorry for what they have done wrong. Then they, by themselves, identify the commandment they have broken and write it down so that next time they won't make the same mistake. By doing this it really helps the students to be obedient, respectful and God-fearing.

I am always blessed with the wonderful messages received during teachers' fellowship and the Bible reading helps me draw closer to God. To know God and His miraculous ways is to study His Word daily. Feeding daily on God's Word is the only armour that can be used to defeat the devil in our daily lives. I am very happy and grateful to roll out this Bible summary program at Carr Memorial. A very special thank you to my Adventist family for the privilege given to me to teach at Carr Memorial, and my special request is that you will please pray for me and my family.

DIGGING IN HIS WORD WITH GARY WEBSTER

NAZARETH: FORGIVENESS AND VICTORY GUARANTEED

Can Jesus really forgive sin and give us victory over it? His virgin birth, name and Nazareth connection answers that question.

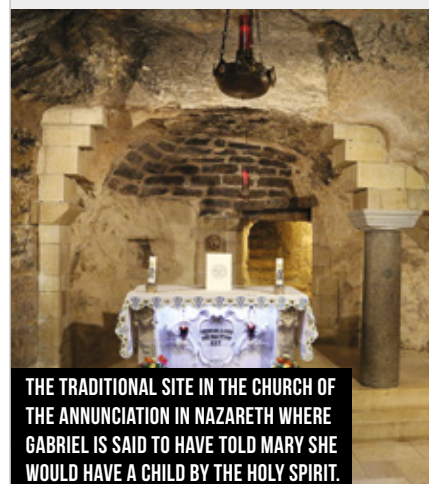
READ Isaiah 43:14; 44:6; Exodus 34:6,7; Luke 5:21.

In Nazareth, Mary, by Gabriel, and Joseph, in a dream, were informed that her child was the eternal King of Israel, the Son of the Highest (of God Himself), the Holy One and the Saviour from (not in) sin.

READ Luke 1:26,27,32,33,35,37; Matthew 1:20,21.

In applying the Old Testament titles of LORD (Jehovah) to Jesus, God is informing us that Jesus too is the LORD, Jehovah God! No wonder He could say, "Be of good cheer, your sins have been forgiven!", "Go and sin no more." Little wonder He was given the name, "Jesus", which means Jehovah saves (in the context "from sin"). As God almighty He says to you today, "I forgive your sin, and give you power over it." Claim it now, for with God *nothing* is impossible! His virgin birth guarantees it.

READ Matthew 1:21; 9:2; Luke 7:48; John 8:11; Romans 6:14; Luke 1:37.



THE TRADITIONAL SITE IN THE CHURCH OF THE ANNUNCIATION IN NAZARETH WHERE GABRIEL IS SAID TO HAVE TOLD MARY SHE WOULD HAVE A CHILD BY THE HOLY SPIRIT.

New home-church network for young people

When Jeremy Choo identified a desire for genuine connection and relevant conversation among young Christians and non-Christians in his community, he decided to do something. What started as a Monday night gathering evolved into a church plant that is launching soon.

"We sensed a need among youth our age to talk about things that don't normally get talked about at church: relationships, mood, addiction, anxiety," says Jeremy. "We felt a need to have a space where people could delve into those topics and not be judged; where they could feel at home."

Jeremy (19)—who is currently in his first year of theology and ministry at Avondale University College and is a pastoral worker at Gilson College (Mernda campus)—teamed up with his friend Jack Stott and a group of young leaders to create Avenue community, a different kind of "church", in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne, Victoria.

"It's not associated with a specific [local] church and we [started] it as a small group in my friend's backyard on Monday nights. Sometimes [we'd] do music, sometimes discussion or a message, and sometimes it [was] just social," says Jeremy.

Originally worshipping at houses around Melbourne, the leadership team would set up music outdoors.

Avenue community rapidly grew and the leadership soon adopted the vision to turn the small group into a church that meets at 4pm on Sabbath afternoons.

"We chose this time because it's attractive to youth. They can attend their regular church in the morning, or sleep in, or invite their non-believing friends over for lunch and then come in the afternoon. Also, there are usually community events or sports games on in the morning, so this allows non-believers to attend both."

A dual focus of Avenue church is to provide a space for young Adventists or Christians disillusioned with traditional church, and to empower them to invite non-Christians into their caring community.

"At the moment, it's mostly Adventists and some Christians who are part of it, but we are branching out and inviting and connecting with those from the wider community and those who aren't Christian too."

After being approved as a group by the Victorian Conference, Avenue church was on track to officially launch in April. However, COVID-19 restrictions postponed and altered their plans. The church will now launch later this year when restrictions have lifted.

"We've had to revisit the model and now plan on doing it as a multi-site house church network," says Jeremy. "We'll be prerecording messages and worship music and then we've got this software that news reporters use, which allows you to connect different callers into a broadcast, a bit like Zoom, but much better quality. It will be broadcast online as well."

Currently, the church will be spread across four houses in Melbourne's eastern suburbs, with an expected attendance of around 12 people in each, as well as a host and facilitator. Larger group events will also be held as government restrictions continue to ease.

"Initially we were annoyed; the lockdown changed all our plans. [But] it forced us to reimagine church a little bit. God has used this time," Jeremy encourages. "Definitely, when the pandemic finishes there will be larger gatherings. People are missing larger group events, but we still want to continue the house gatherings too."



Avenue church keeps a casual conversational vibe that is attractive to young people. Their multigenerational leadership team has people assigned to administration, communications and social media, design and branding, music and worship, first impressions and connections to make sure that no visitors or regular attendees fall through the cracks.

As for the continued vision and growth for Avenue church, the sky's the limit. Jeremy and the team have discussed plans for integrating the ministry with other community initiatives and spreading across Melbourne.

"I would like to see it as a movement that is manifested in different church plants across Melbourne, or being integrated with other community places like gyms," shares Jeremy. "We're in the east at the moment, but eventually want to plant another campus too. We'd love to have an online global audience. We're thinking really big about how we can use our influence and creativity to minister to this generation."

To follow what Avenue church is doing, visit their Instagram page @avenuemission or head to their website, <avenuemission.com>.

MARYELLEN FAIRFAX
ASSISTANT EDITOR, ADVENTIST RECORD.

THE COMEBACK KING



Everybody loves a good comeback story. There's just something exciting and heartwarming about watching a down-on-your-luck individual or sports team somehow overcome the odds and win! We love to cheer for them and history is awash with such stories.

Comebacks are the basis for many good books and movies. It might be the only thing Michael Jordan, Robert Downey Jr.'s acting career, lost dogs, homing pigeons and Jesus of Nazareth all have in common.

For a large portion of the world's population, Jesus is the most important person who ever lived. His life, death and resurrection literally changed the course of human history forever. He experienced the ultimate setback and then had the greatest comeback of all time! Despite being a perfect person and living a perfect life, Jesus' time on earth was not a smooth run and things progressed less than perfectly for Him. Setback after setback was thrown His way; plotting church leaders, backstabbing friends and followers, and a biased jury which all led to Him being murdered on a cross, considered to be one of the most cruel and torturous methods of death in the ancient world.

If death isn't the biggest setback anyone has ever faced, I don't know what is! Jesus willingly died for the sins of the world—every sin that has been committed and will be committed He paid for by going to the cross.

When He uttered the words, "It is finished" and then bowed His head and died, everyone thought that was it. After being crucified on a Friday, Sunday brought good news when Mary and Mary, two of His friends and closest followers, went to mourn His passing at His tomb. Amazingly, it was empty! At first they were devastated, thinking someone had taken His body, and then confused, but they were confronted by an angel who said, "Jesus told you He'd come back. And He did. He's alive!" (Matthew 28:6).

Jesus made the most epic and victorious comeback of all time when He was raised back to life and, in doing so, beat sin once and for all. It's the most pivotal, highly debated, beautiful and important moment in the whole story of Jesus, and it is the cornerstone of the Christian faith. Jesus died for our sins so we wouldn't have to, and now He is alive and well, and, together with the Holy Spirit, He's present and working in our lives today.

Because Jesus was raised from the dead, and because of His victory over death and sin, we get to experience forgiveness and eternal life. Because of what Jesus went through, we can now overcome any setback through the strength He gives. We can do everything in Christ who gives us strength (Philippians 4:13)!

No matter what mistakes we make, no matter what we're caught up in, distracted by or addicted to, our setbacks don't define us under God's grace and forgiveness. You are never too far, never too lost and never too behind on the scoreboard for God to orchestrate an epic comeback for your life.

We can have a personal relationship with God, experience His plan for our lives and spend eternity with Him.

Oh, and just in case you haven't heard, the best part of it all: after His resurrection, Jesus finished His personal ministry here on earth and left to prepare a place for us in heaven!

Next on His agenda? To come back.

Interested in knowing more? Subscribe to Waymaker TV or download the Waymaker App to watch "Comeback", the seventh episode in a series of 26 WHAT DO YOU THINK episodes on Waymaker.TV.

NATALIA MELVILLE

FREELANCE ARTIST AND WRITER WITH A BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN FILM AND TV PRODUCTION.

OUT OF THE PIT

"I'm afraid that's impossible," the interviewer said. "You'll have to change your habits if you want to get a job."

Mihaljo Kavur (or Miso to his family and friends) was 22 years old and was a qualified motor mechanic. But because the Communist Regime in Yugoslavia dictated compulsory military service, this was his first time looking for work since completing his motor mechanic apprenticeship. The only problem was that the working week went from Monday to Saturday.

Miso tried explaining that he was willing to work on Sunday instead of Saturday or to have one day's less pay, but it made no difference. Miso thanked the interviewer and started to look for another opportunity.

A different company interviewed him, but the same thing happened when Miso asked to have Sabbaths off work. After four rejections, Miso was getting desperate and frustrated; he was qualified to do these jobs well. He started to reason within himself, *Perhaps if I just showed them my skills, then maybe they would keep me.*

Then there was a position advertised for an army mechanic, fixing diesel pumps at a gravel pit. This time he didn't tell them about the Sabbath during the interview and he was hired on the spot. The system of work was fortnightly and he was fortunate to start on a Sunday. During the week he worked hard, fixing the diesel pumps and replacing them on different excavators in the gravel pits.

This is how he tells the story:



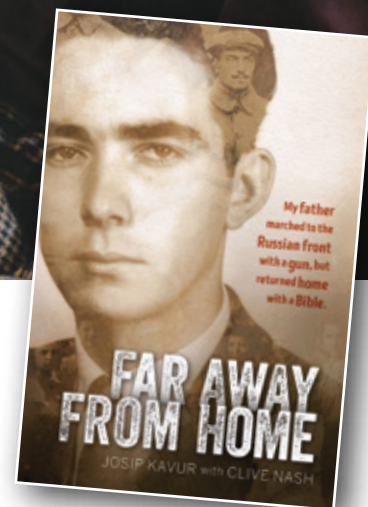
When the first Sabbath came, I took the day off and went to church. No-one mentioned my absence when I came in to work the next day, so I went on with fixing the diesel pumps. I was now in my second week there, with no problems so far.

That day, I was sitting on a small chair near an excavator, fixing a pump, when I noticed a group of soldiers cheering and shouting. I couldn't see what they were shouting about and curiosity got the better of me. I went to see what they were doing. As I approached them, I saw that they had thrown a young soldier into a gravel pit, stripped to his waist. The pit contained water, which came up to the man's stomach, and I knew that it must be icy cold because the water in the pits comes from deep underground. The soldiers were taunting and shouting at the man in the pit, and they didn't notice me as I watched what they were doing.

I was hit hard by what I was witnessing. I recognised the officer in command and tapped him on his shoulder. Filled with indignation, I looked him straight in the eyes and said, "You ought to be ashamed to treat a soldier that way. How dare you treat him so brutally—jeering at him and mocking him! His mother cared for him and brought him up to be a man, and you're treating him as if he weren't human."

Turning to the rest of the soldiers, I told them that they should be ashamed too. As I watched, they hung their heads and began retrieving him from the pit. It was an amazing thing that somehow my words had authority over the mob of soldiers, and even the officer. I was a civilian, in civilian's clothes, and they were members of the army. I could have been tortured myself or lost my job on the spot, but I believe that the Holy Spirit convicted them as I spoke.

Many years later, on the other side of the world—in Brisbane, Australia—Miso found the man, Vlado Jakovac, who was pulled out of the pit. He was telling the story at a table at his niece's wedding, when a man on the other side of the table suddenly stood up and exclaimed, "I'm that soldier! I was the one in that gravel pit." Remarkably, Miso's brother had married Vlado's sister, and they had never realised the connection before. They hugged each other as brothers would. It was a special moment for both of them.



Vlado's story also had a Sabbath twist. This is how he explained it:

A few weeks before Miso saw me in that gravel pit, I had decided that I would stand firm and not do any work on the Sabbath, even if I was ordered to. It was a serious thing for a soldier to disobey orders. The officers started to lock me up in the army prison each Sabbath when I refused to work, but I was glad to be alone, to dwell on the Bible and its promises and to pray to God. That part was okay, but the army unit also subjected me to some harsh, humiliating treatment—like the incident in the gravel pit.

In that freezing cold gravel pit, I could hardly bear the mockery from my comrades as they shouted at me, "Where is your God now?" It was the mockery that hurt me the most. So, I prayed to Jesus, "Please, if it be Your will, save me from this torture." That's when I saw Miso standing among the soldiers.

I listened when Miso spoke to them and I knew he was sent by God—he was an answer to my prayer. Then they pulled me out of that cold pit. Afterwards, all of them came and secretly apologised, one by one. They told me that the sergeant had asked them to torture me.

What could I do but forgive them? They didn't understand the mercy of Jesus and His great unconditional love toward us all.

Things in the army improved somewhat for Vlado, but Miso's army mechanic employers soon noticed his Sabbath-keeping. His skill and dedication as a mechanic was not enough to save him from losing his job, but when Miso walked away from the gravel pits, he left having shaken those soldiers to the conviction of their shared humanity and having strengthened the faith of a brother in Christ.

Like Miso, we may not know the impact of our actions for many years—or perhaps until Jesus comes again—but his story shows us that when we defend the abused, when we recognise that we are all children of one Creator, there will one day be embracing and joy.

Adapted from Far Away from Home—the true story of Lakeside Seventh-day Adventist Church (NSW) member Josip Kavur and his family—by Josip Kavur and Clive Nash. Adventists like Miso (Josip's brother) and Vlado were discriminated against and persecuted under the Communist regime in Yugoslavia following World War II. Their experiences in the army, in trying to make a living and while escaping to a life of freedom demonstrate God's faithfulness in ways that will inspire your own faith.

Far Away from Home is available from Adventist bookstores and online at adventistbookcentre.com.au.



Baked vegetable casserole

A hearty winter warmer, this vegetable casserole is full of vitamins and minerals that can help support your immune system. Using vegetables, beans, potatoes and cheese, it's a dish the whole family will love.

Find this recipe and hundreds more at:

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



WHY YOU NEED A HEALTHY GUT FOR GOOD IMMUNITY

Gut health plays a crucial role in supporting our immune system. To put it simply, a healthier gut means you have a better chance of warding off bugs and germs. But why?

Our immune system and our gut microbiota (the bacteria in our gut) work together to create our body's first line of defence against invaders—preventing harmful bacteria, or pathogens, from living in our gut. In fact, the majority of our immune cells actually live in our gut and help shape the composition of bacteria in our gut.

Our gut bacteria talk to our immune cells, “training” them so they can identify what is a dangerous invader, like a virus, from what is a friendly substance, or even our body's own cells and tissues.

This “training” also helps to regulate our immune system's responses, so our immune system doesn't over-react. We want our immune system to be in balance, springing into action if we catch a cold, but not going into defence-mode against substances like a new food or pollen.

Our gut bacteria also digests our food, breaking it down into nutrients and metabolites that help trigger a range of functions in our body that are important for good immunity. This includes telling our body how to fight harmful pathogens and helping to manage inflammation.

The association between a healthy gut and a healthy immune system remains throughout our lifetime. If the health and diversity of our gut bacteria declines or is out of balance, it can throw our immune system out of balance too. As we get older the diversity of our gut bacteria also naturally declines and can impact our immunity. This makes it even more important to look after our gut as we age.

Diet is thought to be responsible for around 57 per cent of the variation in our gut bacteria, compared with only 12 per cent for genetics. Eating a variety of plant foods is the best way to increase diversity and improve gut health.

WHAT FOODS ARE BEST FOR A HEALTHY GUT?



WHOLEGRAIN BREADS AND CEREALS

Wholegrains and cereal fibre help increase the diversity of gut bacteria and provide the prebiotics to fuel them. They contain resistant starch and soluble fibres that are “fermented” by gut bacteria to produce short chain fatty acids that help prevent the growth of many pathogens and increase absorption of some nutrients.



FRUIT AND VEGIES

Fruit and vegies contain fibre, prebiotics and powerful plant compounds that help to increase diversity of bacteria. Asparagus, onions, cabbage, apples and pears, chickpeas and tree nuts are all naturally high in prebiotics.



PROBIOTIC FOODS

Probiotics are beneficial live bacteria or yeasts found naturally in the gut and in some foods. This includes some yoghurts and fermented plant foods like sauerkraut, kimchi and pickles, and fermented drinks such as kombucha and kefir.



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STAND UP AND SPEAK OUT

Re: "Church makes statements on George Floyd" (July 4). It is encouraging to see good men, leaders, doing something and speaking out publicly on injustice. May we each have the courage to seek to right wrongs by promoting the love of Jesus in practical and helpful ways at all times. Evil prospers when good men and women do nothing.

Margaret Major, *via*

INSPIRED MESSAGE

"Pentecost and Mission" (June 5) was such an inspired message. Everyone in the Church, both laity and leaders, would do well to take it to heart and allow the Holy Spirit to begin changing our lives and the Church.

Once we, the church, are filled daily with the Holy Spirit and live connected to the vine, Jesus Christ (John 15:1, Romans 8:9), the Spirit will begin to grow fruit (Galatians 5:22) in our lives showing we are truly Christ's disciples (John 15:8).

With the Spirit's power in us (Acts 1:8), we will then begin to focus on mission, making disciples of our families, friends, workmates and community members, rather than expecting the minister and church programs to carry out this process. Thank you for highlighting what was behind the powerful ministry of the New Testament Church: the Holy Spirit working through feeble human beings, giving them a boldness to proclaim the love of Christ.

The same can happen today if we desire to give up self and rely on the Spirit. (Zechariah 4:6).

David Lawson, *WA*

SECRET ACTORS

"Conspiracy in a time of COVID" (June 6): A great editorial. Because conspiracy theories crop up in all manner of places, and blame all sorts of agencies as the ultimate source of evil, we can't blame our Adventist "construct" as the cause of conspiracist thinking.

Even so, within Adventist eschatology, there is a cluster of propositions to serve as lively receptors to the virus of conspiracism. We are primed by our understanding of prophecy to believe in the overarching influence of secret actors, exercising power "behind the scenes", shaping events in our world and hurtling us toward the time of the end. And if the conspiracy theorists take over a church, then you are likely to see that congregation decline.

When the conspiracists capture control of a congregation, especially if

the minister is the instigator, then it's probably time to initiate a recall on the defective product.

Philip Smith, *via website*

GOD IS MERCIFUL

I'd like to thank the writer of "Jephthah's daughter and a kilogram of flour" (May 2) for pointing out the well-known alternative interpretation of what Jephthah did with his daughter in order to fulfil his vow. No doubt for modern people being condemned to lifelong virginity is much better than being sacrificed, but we need to remember that in the culture of the time of Judges, for a woman being permanently virgin was a fate almost as bad as death, a living death.

The point of my article was not so much what happened to this young woman, but three other issues.

The first—that God did not demand either the sacrifice of this young woman's life, or her lifelong slavery, but had already made provision in the (to us) "tedious" sacrificial laws that ultimately pointed

to the all-inclusive, overwhelmingly efficacious sacrifice of Jesus Christ our Saviour. God is incredibly merciful. We are saved by faith in Jesus Christ, not anything we can do, no matter how sacrificial.

The second point is that it is only by diligent study of the entire body of Scripture that we can come to understand the provision God has made for us, and the wonderful salvation He offers. Too often we focus on our favourite passages of the Bible, without recognising the impact of other passages on our total understanding of salvation.

Finally, although Jephthah may have misunderstood, as we often do, God still knew his heart, and accepted him.

Elizabeth Ostring, *NZ*

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.

HI KIDS!

Kids Space

GOD ENCOUNTERS

We all desperately need to encounter Jesus to build a faith that lasts a lifetime. That is why we go to church and Sabbath School - it makes a huge influence on whether we just learn about God, or whether we have a relationship with Jesus with a passion to keep growing, learning and following. I hope this prayer calendar makes praying to Jesus more fun. Put it up on your fridge or wall!



PRAYER CALENDAR

How to use the prayer calendar: 1. Find the square that matches today's date
2. Do the prayer activity 3. Follow ladders up and snakes down for more ideas

Share your
life with Jesus

Read your
Bible and be
like Jesus

Pray
every
day.

Jesus is
listening. You
can tell Him
everything.

MEMORY VERSE

"Let the children come to me and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these"
Matthew 19:13-15



Obituaries



COX, Pastor James John (Jim), born 12.6.1925 in Kakanui, NZ; died 13.4.20 in Apopka, Florida, US. On 15.3.1948 he married Alice Cameron, who predeceased him in 2004. Jim is survived by his son, John (Apopka). Early in his career Jim worked as a minister in the Tasmanian and North NZ conferences. His love of learning and academic aptitude led him to Walla Walla College (US) to earn a bachelor's degree and later his master's at the Theological Seminary in Washington where he also taught. Later Jim was accepted into the PhD program at Harvard University. He went on to chair the New Testament Department at Andrews University. He was a much appreciated professor whose insights opened up whole new understandings for many students. In 1980 Jim

and Alice headed to Avondale College (NSW) where he served as president until 1984, then back to Maryland, US, where he worked on a project called "The Washington Institute". When this ended he again joined the faculty of Columbia Union College until his "retirement" in 1991. During retirement, Jim was still in high demand and served as academic dean of the newly established Florida Hospital College. In total, Jim was employed by the Church for 46 years as well as 10 years in academic study. In New Zealand, Australia and the United States and the many countries from which his seminary students came, Jim enriched lives by giving the gospel deeper meaning and by just being a true friend.

James Coffin

KOPP, Walter Frank, born 11.8.1927; died 9.5.20. He is survived by his wife Valda; daughters, Norelle and Leonie; sons, Lex and Timothy;

five grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren. Walter was dedicated to the practical service of the Lord. He was instrumental in the building and development of the Springwood, Edens Landing and Hervey Bay church infrastructures (Qld). He is now awaiting the upward call and the room prepared for him.

Trevor Mawer



KOUNIS, James (Jim), born 13.5.1928 in Perth, WA; died 2.6.20 in Rossmoyne Waters.

On 1.6.1963, he married Eve Turner. Jim was predeceased by his brother, John in 2017. He is survived by his wife (Perth); children, Lynda, Jamie and Thea, Donna and Matt, and Adam and Kay (all of Perth). Though quietly spoken, Jim was a man of drive and determination who found his purpose in life in caring and providing for his family and in a job well done. He was a successful businessman, but above all, a loving husband and father and a consistent Christian gentleman. Jim looked forward to Jesus' promise of a new, eternal, perfect world.

Roger Millist



MAGERL, Kurt, born 12.4.1930 in Leoben, Austria; died 13.6.20 in Rossmoyne Waters,

WA. In 1952 he married his first wife, Kathe (Kitty), who predeceased him in 1987. In 1996 he married Hilda Merifield, who predeceased him on 3.4.20. Kurt was also predeceased by his daughters, Lorraine in 2017 and Monica in 2018. He is survived by his children, Ron (Perth), Kevin (Tas) and Chris Martin (Caboolture, Qld); 12 grandchildren; and 28 great-grandchildren. Kurt came from Austria to Perth in 1951 as a contract builder for the WA government and chose to stay on after meeting Kitty, a fellow Austrian immigrant. He lovingly cared for both Kitty and Hilda during their prolonged illnesses. Kurt served as a deacon in his church, always caring for the needs of others.

Roger Millist



MANN, Patricia (nee MacFarlane), born 17.3.1925 in Hobart, Tas; died 26.5.20

in Adventist Care, Rossmoyne, WA. On 1.12.1947, she married Alan, who predeceased her in 2012. Pat is survived by her children, Noeline, Julie, Wendy and Graham (all of Perth); eight grandchildren; and 14

great-grandchildren. Pat lived her life serving and caring for her family and others. After attending Avondale College she completed her nursing training and then worked as a maternity nurse. During World War II she served her country in the signals division. Pat served with Sanitarium in the retail shops in Perth, and then served as a nurse with Adventist Care at Rossmoyne until her retirement. Pat assisted many refugees from Vietnam, El Salvador and Thailand to establish new lives in Perth.

Roger Millist

OSBORNE, Helen May (nee Robertson), born 3.5.1937 in Merredin, WA; died 23.3.20 in Millicent, SA. On 20.1.1960 she married Trevor, who predeceased her. She is survived by her sons, Victor (Adelaide, SA) and Jamie (Warwick, Qld); and daughters, Heather (Millicent, SA) and Debbie (Adelaide). Helen and Trevor met at Western Australia Missionary College and after marriage moved to Millicent, SA. Helen became church treasurer in 1967, a position she held for more than 50 years. In later years she became a church elder and preached on many occasions in her own and local churches. In 2015 she received an award for 22 years service as the local president for the Bible Society. She also provided ADRA emergency relief locally for 12 years.

Brenton Wilkinson

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ADVENTIST RECORD,
AUGUST 1



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Pacific Adventist University Council
Avondale University College Council
ACA Health Benefits Fund Board
ADRA Australia Board
AdSafe Board
NZPUC Executive Committee
ADRA New Zealand Board
Sanitarium Health & Wellbeing Boards
Division Executive Committee
Risk Management Service Board
Adventist Media Committee
PNGUM Executive Committee
TPUM Executive Committee
Board of Adventist Education

Over the last 5 years in the South Pacific Division, church members with diverse skills and experience have made a valuable contribution to the work and mission of the Church by giving their time, skills and experience to key boards of management and committees. As we approach the beginning of another quinquennium (5-year period) of church management we are again looking to the Church's rich resource of members to fill positions on key boards and committees.

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