

R

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SERIOUSLY ENOUGH? 14

NEWS

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ADVENTIST RECORD | DECEMBER 19, 2020
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2020: ENEMY OR CONVENIENT EXCUSE?

There are only 12 days left in 2020. Go ahead—count 'em up . . .

What a year it's been. Bushfires burned more than 11 million hectares across Australia¹, claiming the lives of 34 people and countless animals. The world was introduced to the coronavirus.² Prince Harry and Meghan Markle stepped away from their roles as senior royals. A Ukrainian flight was shot down in Iran, killing all 176 passengers on board. Kobe Bryant, his 13-year-old daughter and seven of their friends died in a helicopter crash. Brexit finally happened.

And that was just January. Things only continued to snowball from there.

As the months dragged/flew by, something interesting happened. We began to regard—and refer to—2020 not so much as a run-of-the-mill calendar year but as a sort of villain or enemy constantly on the attack.

Global recession . . . *Yep. Thanks, 2020.* Beirut explosion . . . *2020 strikes again.* Biden declared winner; Trump declares conspiracy . . . *Makes sense. It's 2020.*

I too was/am guilty of this anthropomorphising. A few weeks ago I took my car to a mechanic for what I thought was going to be a routine service. What I got instead was a rundown of all the things that needed to be fixed, the final quote being 10 times more than the car is probably worth.

Just to be clear, I love my car. My dad bought it for me in May 2009, seven months before he suddenly passed away. It's old and the paint is shedding like a lizard, but it's *my car*—the only one I've ever owned.

"Ahh, that sucks," I said to the mechanic, upon realising and accepting my car's impending demise. "2020, hey? Sounds about right."

While such comments are tongue-in-cheek, there is a danger of taking this personification too far, whereby we look at 2020 not so much as a record of events but as the *reason* for our hardships and failures, ultimately excusing us of any responsibility.

There are things we could pin on the pandemic, such as the loss of a job or the lack of time spent with

family and friends. Yet there are other things for which we must take ownership. We can't blame 2020 for the rise in domestic violence.³ We can't blame 2020 for the increase in online abuse and revenge porn.⁴ We can't blame 2020 for the loss of our own spirituality. While this year's unique set of circumstances have infringed upon the way we do life, they haven't inhibited our ability to choose. As noted by Austrian Holocaust survivor and psychiatrist Viktor Frankl, "Everything can be taken from a man [or woman] but one thing: the last of the human freedoms—to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way."⁵

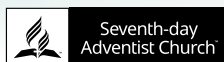
It's much easier to focus on external events than it is to take inventory of our own thoughts, words and actions. However, that's exactly what we are called to do. "Let's take a good look at the way we're living," wrote Jeremiah, "and reorder our lives under God" (Lamentations 3:40, MSG).⁶

This is something we often aim to do at the beginning of a new year. However, as author Gretchen Rubin once said, "What you do *every day* matters more than what you do once in a while."⁷

As crazy as this year has been, 2021 can wait. There are still 12 days left in 2020. Go ahead—count 'em up . . . and make 'em count.

1. The total area burned increased to more than 17 million hectares by the end of February.
2. While the first cases were reported in November 2019, the virus—known then as 2019-nCoV—was brought to the attention of the World Health Organisation on January 7, 2020.
3. Mills, T. "New report of family violence spike in COVID-19 lockdown, study finds." *The Age* (online). June 8, 2020.
4. Curtis, K. "Pandemic drives rise in revenge porn but platforms have 'lost control'." *The Sydney Morning Herald* (online). September 8, 2020.
5. *Man's Search for Meaning*, 1946.
6. See also 2 Corinthians 13:5.
7. *The Happiness Project*, 2009. Emphasis added.

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JESUS IN QUARANTINE

An empty church. Sadly, that's been the reality for most of us this year as COVID-19 meant churches were closed. Life in 2020 has become two-dimensional, a flat screen world. My wife and I missed the first three months of our granddaughter's life, a family wedding and we have not seen our three grandsons for nine months.

We connect via Zoom, FaceTime or social media, but there is no touch, no hug, no hallway or dinner conversations. Our 13-month-old grandson knows us from a screen, and it's heart-warming having him chat to us, taking the phone from his mother to kiss it! That interaction is precious. But after a while you crave a cuddle or a handshake—a real, live person there with you.

The news has reported others facing even more trying challenges: children unable to see their fathers for months; people unable to minister to their dying parents; and people denied life-saving treatment just a few kilometres away due to border closures—not to mention lost jobs, businesses and lives. COVID-19 has hurt everyone.

At a time when we gather together with family and friends to celebrate, many of us will be apart because of the pandemic. We know this Christmas will feel different. Does the Christmas message have any relevance for the world in a pandemic?

Imagine Jesus, Creator of the universe, confining Himself as a human and entering the world, like each of us, by being born. He came to rescue us from the isolation and quarantine that sin, death and the devil caused. For 33 years, He was quarantined on earth—unable to return to His home and heavenly Father. Jesus made prayer a priority. It wasn't even two-dimensional—He connected relationally by voice, being heard and hearing God. Imagine how Jesus longed to see and touch the Father and Spirit.

With all its hardships, Jesus' death and resurrection overcame sin, death and the devil—the issues that isolate us from God. By believing in Him, we'll be able to see God and be touched by God. We'll be able to explore life in the universe for eternity because of Jesus' isolation and quarantine for us. Let's remember the hope in the real Christmas message.

GLENN TOWNEND
SPD PRESIDENT
/SPDpresident



NEW LEADERS APPOINTED FOR TPUM

MARYELLEN FAIRFAX

Trans Pacific Union Mission (TPUM) delegates came together to report on leadership, finance and discipleship methods in the Adventist Church over the past five years, at their constituency meetings on November 18-21.

Leaders and delegates from American Samoa, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu met in local board rooms and joined for the first time via Zoom, to participate in the meetings and present reports from their local region.

One of the first matters discussed was the change of status for American Samoa from an attached field to a mission, as approved at the recent South Pacific Division (SPD) Executive Committee meetings. This news was well received by all.

TPUM president Pastor Mavani Kaufononga—who has been re-elected president for the next quinquennium—presented an encouraging report on the overall progress of the Union, including the work of media, discipleship strategy and methods of outreach.

Beginning next year, Pastor Kaufononga will serve alongside a new CFO Fraser Alekevu and a new secretary (yet to be appointed).

Outgoing TPUM secretary Bob Larsen presented an encouraging report on membership growth from 2015 to

2019, which showed that overall, missions are moving forward and baptisms are increasing. However, he outlined the difficulty of collecting accurate data on baptisms and church membership, and presented some new methods to combat this issue.

Outgoing TPUM CFO Kingsley Wood presented a financial report which showed that overall, tithe has outperformed its budgeted amount this year. He highlighted that the TPUM gifted generous financial packages to some missions, including Vanuatu and Fiji, which had their tourism industries severely impacted by cyclones and COVID-19 this year.

Except for confidential matters—like the selection and nominating committees who appointed new departmental and mission leaders (see table below)—the entire event was livestreamed to the TPUM Facebook page.

Messages of love and support flooded to social media, with leaders congratulated on their appointments.

TPUM Departments	Appointment
Associate CFO	Matthew Brown
Associate CEO	Emma Dakua
Ministerial secretary	TBA
Education director	Mele Vaihola
Associate education director	Joseph Pitakia
Family life, children's and women's director	Lollet Worwor
Youth director	Uili Tinomeneta
Health liaison officer	George Kwong

Missions	President	Secretary	CFO
Solomon Islands	Silent Tivosia	David Filo	Geoffrey Samuel Faisi
Fiji	Nasoni Lutunaliwa	Dr Ronald Stone	Apisilome Seru
Vanuatu	Charlie Jimmy	Kaio Timothy	Tom Noka
Samoa/Tokelau	Sione Ausage	Neru Nuuarii	Ben Tofilau
Tonga	Fanueli Mataele	N/A	N/A
Kiribati	Taabua Tokeatau	N/A	N/A
American Samoa	Kenneth Fuliese	N/A	N/A

NEW ALBUM A REMINDER OF GOD'S PRESENCE IN PANDEMIC

BRENTON STACEY/RECORD STAFF

Songs recorded before COVID-19 by Avondale vocal ensemble The Promise were launched as an album on November 21.

Now a reminder of God's presence in the pandemic, *It Is Well* is the sixth album released by the group.

The launch was livestreamed from Avondale University College Church and featured The Promise, with support from the Avondale Jazz Ensemble, Avondale Conservatorium director Aleta King, Avondale Jazz Ensemble director David Pudney and The Promise alto/tenor Elyse Atkins. The program was hosted by Avondale Conservatorium patron Dr Lyell Heise.

It Is Well begins with the traditional African American spiritual "Kumbaya", a call for God to "come by here". Two arrangements of the hymn "It Is Well With My Soul", written by lawyer and Presbyterian church elder Horatio Spafford after a family tragedy, form the album's thematic core.

Vocalist Sandra Entermann commissioned Naomi Crellin from Australian ensemble The Idea of North to arrange the first song and music academic Associate Professor Andrew Legg, who began his gospel career supporting Aretha Franklin and Stevie Wonder, arranged the second.

Other songs on the album include the hymn standard "Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus", Ralph Carmichael's soothing "A Quiet Place" and "As the Deer", which Martin Nystrom wrote during a period of fasting. Also on the album: "I Will Lay Me Down In Peace". Artistic director Aleta King found the score handwritten on brittle paper in the Avondale Conservatorium library. She and The Promise dedicate the song to Peter Duncan, who funds the Duncan-Kranz Choral Scholarship. The dedication is in memory of Peter's wife, Valerie, who died this past year.

Ms King, the director of the conservatorium, prepared the liner notes for *It Is Well* during the imposition of public health order rules to slow the spread of the virus. "As I write, singing in public is illegal and potentially deadly," reads her introductory message. "Singing? Who could object to singing? It reveals our deepest emotions, echoes our faith and builds bonds between people." She ends by expressing hope songs on the album "encourage you to look forward to singing together again".



SCHOOL STORIES HIGHLIGHT OF #WERTHECHURCH PROGRAM

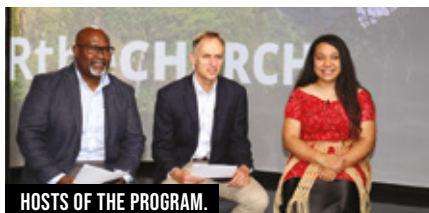
TRACEY BRIDCUTT

Inspiring stories about the power of Adventist education to shape young lives were a highlight of the latest #weRtheCHURCH program.

Reports were shared from Naha Adventist Primary School (Solomon Islands), Kempsey Adventist School (NSW), Samoa Adventist School, Central Coast Adventist School (NSW) and the Tonga Mission Education Department, showing the significant impact Adventist education is having on young people and their families across the South Pacific.

"Sowing the seed" was the theme of the November 20 program, which was broadcast live from the Adventist Media studios in Sydney. There were some changes from the last program in August, including a new set and the inclusion of two live interviews. Fijian Adventist Savenaca Siwatibau, a police sergeant, was interviewed about his

involvement in a digital evangelism initiative using mobile phones. In the second interview Melbourne pastors Roy and Jinha Kim shared some of the creative ideas they had used to "sow the seed" and reach people during the coronavirus lockdown.



Division president Pastor Glenn Townend, Sydney anaesthetist Dr Narko Tutuo and Avondale University College theology and ministry student Renée Vaovasa hosted the program, which was filmed in two live sessions to cater for the different times zones of

the South Pacific. Stories were shared from a number of countries including Tonga, Samoa, Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and New Caledonia. Sydney singer Marleta Fong gave a beautiful live performance to close the program.

Viewers enjoyed the opportunity to interact with each other through the live chat and to share their enthusiasm for #weRtheCHURCH.

"I'm amazed at the many creative ways that are being used to spread the gospel," shared Shirley Westacott.

"It's good to see what God is doing in different parts of the South Pacific," commented Leticia Moreno.

This was the third #weRtheCHURCH event in 2020, with the other two programs attracting many thousands of viewers. If you missed the program it is available for viewing at <adventistchurch.com/werthechurch/>.

MEMBERS TRAINED FOR DISCIPLESHIP AT TWO-WEEK CAMP

RECORD STAFF

More than 375 lay people gathered for training and spiritual revival during an Adventist Emphasis Week program organised by the Central Papua Conference (CPC) at the Bautama Camp-ground in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, from October 18-31.

The attendees were men and women who desired to be empowered, support their local churches and serve the CPC.

Pastors from across CPC presented training workshops for attendees. Pastors Gibson Lohia, Simon Vetali, Wally Kapi and Matthew Walters led classes on the 28 Fundamental Beliefs, evangelism, practical stewardship and prophecy, respectively. Pastor Kapi also presented on leadership, and Max Lassah, CPC CFO, presented sessions about Adventist music and Sabbath school Discovery Bible Reading.

CPC president Pastor Kove Tau also gave a presentation on leadership,

and presented certificates to each of the attendees for graduating from the two-week event.

Adventist Record editor Jarrod Stackelroth was the featured speaker for the second week of evening worships. His presentations, centred around the theme “Pillars of Hope”, examined how the 28 Fundamental Beliefs could be practically implemented in the life of a disciple—including reflections from recent book *Living 28*—each evening via Zoom.

“Thank God for technology. Previously we could only uplink and watch only the preacher. Today, it’s the preacher and the audience together going up live!” one attendee said.

According to one event organiser, “It was a week of revival, dedication and mission, especially for the laities

who were charged for the mission. For some, it was new to them when they saw the 28 Fundamentals presented in such practical ways.”

Event attendees have now gone back to their local churches to provide support and manpower in the areas of discipleship and nurturing.

Two young men, Atai and Patrick, attended the program, completed the training courses and were baptised two weeks after the event.





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Give Hope TODAY

NEW TV SERIES ILLUSTRATES HOW GOSPEL CAME TO MAORI PEOPLE OF NEW ZEALAND

GINA TAGGART/RECORD STAFF

About 50 Seventh-day Adventist volunteers have helped to create *Te Harinui*, a television special that tells the story of how the gospel of Jesus Christ was delivered to the Māori, the indigenous people of New Zealand.

With filming commencing in early 2020, the program was developed in response to a live Christmas performance at Ilam Seventh-day Adventist Church in Christchurch at the end of 2019, which told the story of the birth of Christianity in New Zealand.

"We've done everything!" explained producer and Ilam church member Gina Taggart. "There was some real talent in the team, great singers and songwriters, people making props and costumes, musicians, technical people, actors. Adventists from several churches throughout Christchurch were really dedicated to the project."

Te Harinui tells the story of a friendship between a Northland chief named Ruatara and the Reverend Samuel Marsden from Port Jackson, Australia. Their chance meeting onboard a sailing ship in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean led to the development of a strong bond between the two men. Ruatara was extremely ill and Marsden and his family were able to nurse him back to health.

On arrival in Port Jackson, Marsden invited Ruatara to stay on his farm. The young chief quickly developed a fascination for the agricultural practices he saw while working there, and greatly desired to establish the wheat industry in his homeland.

Ruatara also attended Marsden's church services and quickly saw the benefit of a religion that taught forgiveness and peace rather than the custom of *utu* that prevailed in his homeland. *Utu* demanded payback or the obtaining of satisfaction for a wrong, which often resulted in warfare.

The friendship between

Ruatara and Marsden was crucial in opening the door for the gospel to be shared with the Māori people, and resulted in Ruatara inviting Marsden to bring missionaries to New Zealand. Marsden duly responded and arrived on the shores of New Zealand on December 23, 1814. He preached on Christmas Day of that year, expounding on Luke 2:10 which declares the birth of Christ to be the tidings of great joy, or *Te Harinui*.

Te Harinui covers the outcome of that day, which over the next couple of decades resulted in a paradigm shift for the Māori people. By the 1840s virtually all Māori were aligned with Christianity and before long many of them became missionaries in their own right—Māori teaching Māori about the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Te Harinui is narrated by a *kuia* (Māori grandmother) and a young *mihinare* (missionary) woman, who explain the story. Re-enactments and songs interspersed between their dialogue help to illustrate the story.

"Our church team has had a great time working together to produce this program. It's amazing how doing something like this pulls people together. It's an in-reach project as much as an outreach one! Everyone has been so enthusiastic and helpful. It's been such a blessing to everyone involved," said Mrs Taggart.

Te Harinui was filmed and edited by Revelation 18 Media and will be screened in the week leading up to Christmas.



A MAORI WOMAN SHARING THE GOSPEL WITH HER COMMUNITY.

NEWS GRABS



FOOD FOR SERBIA

ADRA and Adventist churches in Serbia provided financial and logistical support to young people (aged 18 to 26), who shopped for and delivered food parcels to elderly or disabled church members during lockdown. ADRA also helped church members distribute food and other essentials to more than 1000 homeless individuals. —ADRA



MUSICAL MILESTONE

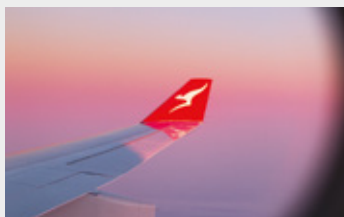
The Northern Asia-Pacific Division Media Centre celebrated 17 years of producing Golden Angels music videos this year. Recorded by a team of just four people, the songs are sung in English, with subtitles later added in Korean, Japanese, Chinese and Mongolian. Over the years, Golden Angels' music has been loved by millions globally. —NSD



HEALTHY ONLINE COMMUNITIES

Montemorelos University, an Adventist university in Mexico, has launched a virtual community centre to promote wholeness and wellness. The online platform features interviews with specialists, seminars, support services and blog posts about health, and is monitored daily by medical professionals. —IAD

HOT TOPICS



VACCINATE OR STAY

Australian airline Qantas has announced that passengers will require a COVID-19 vaccine for international travel when it becomes available. The same is being considered for domestic travel, with a “vaccination passport” proposed as an effective method of proving passengers have been vaccinated.

—ABC News



RECORD-BREAKING MUM

A 64-year-old woman has made New Zealand medical history by becoming the country's oldest woman to give birth. The previous oldest mum was 57. The retired Auckland professional travelled to eastern Europe for specialist fertility treatment. Her baby boy is younger than her grandchildren.

—NZ Herald



TRANSPARENCY

Beginning next year, internet giant Google is bringing its political ad reporting to Australia, allowing residents to see how much money political parties and other groups spend to target people with ads on its search engine, YouTube and other platforms. This change will bring transparency to how parties run their online campaigns.

—ABC News

ADRA AND THE CHURCH RESPOND TO COVID-19 CRISIS

KIMI-ROUX JAMES/RECORD STAFF

A new report from the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), the global humanitarian arm of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, highlights the significant impact of the agency's global response to the COVID-19 pandemic, including 422 projects in 96 countries so far.

Since the onset of the pandemic, ADRA has been responding globally to help nearly 20 million people through the significant health challenges and economic impact of the pandemic. This global response has resulted in historic collaboration between ADRA and the Adventist Church during a time when many churches were closed.

Across the South Pacific region, ADRA created 49 new projects, serving 125,000 people. The 49 projects totalled \$US1.9 million and were implemented in at least six countries.

In Papua New Guinea (PNG), ADRA launched prevention awareness initiatives with multiple communication and education campaigns to ensure communities understood the threat and reduced their risk of infection. ADRA also trained women and other vulnerable community members to make soap, masks and other products to sell to improve incomes in the community.

In Australia, ADRA provided food and counselling to more than 10,000 low-income residents, migrant families and vulnerable international students who cannot access government benefits.

“Many of ADRA's projects already focus on health, sanitation and hygiene. We expanded the scope of these projects to include education around how to reduce the spread of the virus,” said ADRA Australia CEO Denison Grellmann. “But there was also a need to

expand or create projects to address the demand for food services and growing mental health services as people faced unemployment and growing difficulties.”



VOLUNTEER JODIE HELPING OUT AT THE FERNTREE GULLY COMMUNITY CARE CENTRE (VICTORIA).



PASTOR JEFF PARKER, AUC YOUTH DIRECTOR, SERVED AS A DELIVERY DRIVER FOR EMERGENCY FOOD HAMPERS.

ADRA's COVID-19 Global Report outlines how the agency pivoted from existing development projects to scale up a major response by establishing a global taskforce.

Seventy per cent of ADRA's COVID-19 response operations were established or adapted rapidly in partnership with the Adventist Church with minimal or no funding. Despite the office closures and disruptions caused by the pandemic, ADRA successfully executed projects in multiple countries and multiple continents including North America (69 projects), Inter-America (10 projects), South America (101 projects), Europe (32 projects), Africa (47 projects), Asia (75 projects) and Middle East and North Africa (27 projects).

To read the full detail of ADRA's projects in each of these global regions, please visit <bit.ly/ADRAresponse>.



LASER FUNDRAISER

Hills Adventist College (NSW) has welcomed a much-anticipated addition to the Technology Department. Thanks to the consistent fundraising efforts of the Home and School Association, a new laser cutter machine now has pride of place in the college's "Maker Space". It will benefit students across multiple learning areas, such as textiles, art, science, engineering and digital technologies, and particularly assist HSC students who are required to complete major works in Year 12. Teachers say they are looking forward to creating lessons to take full advantage of the laser cutter, and are very grateful to the Home and School for their efforts. —HAC



CAVING UP NORTH

During the school holidays, young people from the Northern Australian Conference had a great time at their Teen Expedition Camp. The theme for the week was "Conquerors" and the main activity was caving at Chillagoe Caves. The guest speaker for the camp was Pastor Pat Tuialii from Mount Isa Church. Pastor Pat shared, through his life stories, how we can conquer life by having Jesus with us in the storms that we go through. Other pastors from the Conference came during the week to take morning devotions. The young people thoroughly enjoyed their camp experience and connecting with Jesus after a difficult start to the year. —TopNews



RETIREMENT READY

Pastoral colleagues and Church administrators from the South Queensland Conference affirmed and honoured the work of Pastor Michael and Doris Faber, and Pastor Wolfgang and Julie Stefani on November 25, in light of their retirement at the end of the year. With more than 80 years combined pastoral, administrative and teaching experience in Australia and overseas, the pastors were thanked for their tireless service and prayed for as they enter a new chapter of ministry. —SQ Facebook



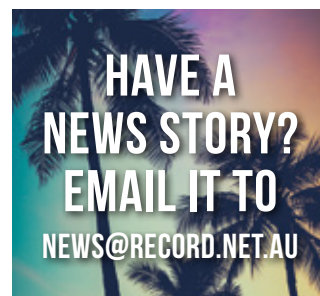
TARGETING FOOD WASTE

Kempsey Adventist School, alongside other NSW schools, participated in a pilot "Lunchbox Leftovers" program to cut food waste and help families save money. Working with MidWaste, BehaviourWorks Australia and the NSW Environment Protection Authority, the school explored effective food waste reduction measures including encouraging students to make their own lunches, taking leftovers home and playing before eating. Students who played before eating lunch were found to have eaten more food by the end of the term. Most schools had a noticeable reduction in food waste and an increase in students eating healthier foods at lunchtime. —The Macleay Argus



TUI RIDGE RETREAT

North New Zealand church members attended their annual "Over 60s" weekend at Tui Ridge in November. Guests enjoyed spiritual refreshment, opportunities to socialise and time to contemplate ongoing mission in older age. Tui Ridge manager Norm King led the program with his capable team, who provided music, fellowship and activities. Pastor Anton van Wyk led the spiritual program, invited attendees to share their testimonies and provided the challenge of how we choose to live each day. —Rosalie McFarlane



VISITING THE ISLANDS

French Polynesia Mission president Pastor Roger Tetanui (pictured) visited Fakahine Island (population 155) in the Far East Tuamotu islands in mid October. Island local Yannick Tiaahu had been receiving Bible studies from an Adventist friend and attending daily online Sabbath school classes by Centre Media Adventiste. Pastor Tetanui baptised Yannick. Watch the baptism by visiting <bit.ly/Yannickbaptism>. —Eddie Tupa'i



HOPE IN EXILE

Young adults from South Queensland gathered for "Hope in Exile", an in-person worship night held at Gold Coast Central Church on November 14. The event was comprised mostly of music from a worship band. Anchored in Isaiah 40, the overarching vision was hope in Jesus who provides relief for suffering and sadness and invites us to return to Him for restoration and strength. —Alina van Rensburg



A LIFE LIVED IN HOPE

Adventists from the 17 churches in Efate (Vanuatu) gathered at Beverly Hills Seventh-day Adventist Church to commemorate the life of Hope Book Centre manager Karl George Bambu on October 15. Having served at the Church's headquarters in Port Vila, and also as the Efate District Pathfinder director and the assistant head elder for Beverly Hills Church, his presence will be dearly missed. —Vanuatu Mission Facebook



Thousand Worth a thousand

The path He set to navigate
None of us would ever plan.
He stepped outside Heaven's gates;
Its King became a man.

Each step was worth a thousand,
For the lost would soon be won.
For God so loved the world
He gave His only Son.

Each step was worth as many
As the ones He seeks to save.
Each step He took was more than any
Would make for those who strayed.

The days drew on toward the mark
As hope and light He shared;
Every word and deed pointing
Toward the purpose He'd prepared.

Each day was worth a thousand,
For His days on earth were few.

So frequently forgotten, the multitudes He healed
And the thousands He made new.

Each day was worth as many
As would come to Him in faith,
And come to know the truth:
It was for us He came.

So came that dreaded cross
Made for criminals like me.
It was laid upon His shoulders;
Upon the stripes He held that tree.

That cross weighed like a thousand,
Bearing down with awful force.
Toward a hill with men condemned,
The faultless set His course.

Another man who had compassion
Took it up when strength did lack.
Yet the weight of it remained
A thousand on Jesus' back.

That cross was worth as many
As on Him their burdens lay.
At rest, they know He carries them,
Finding mercy new each day.

The sky was growing stormy
To match the grief within His heart.
The day His life would stop
Was the day which ours would start.

Would He hesitate in dread of more?
Would He hasten to bring its end?
He thought of those dead in sin
Who through His death could live again.

So on the tree they laid Him
With scornful mockery.
Yet He looked on with compassion;
He saw their slavery.

Each nail felt like a thousand,
For though His hands were pierced,
It was His soul which took the spikes
Of sin and guilt so fierce.

Each nail was worth as many
As would fall down on their knees
When they came to know the reason
Why He'd go to Calvary.

Behold, the innocence of Love
In the man whose blood was shed.
No justice for the righteous;
We'd go free instead.

Each drop would clear a thousand
From a history of wrongs.
Mercy spared no greater price
Pardoned by a love so strong.

Each drop was worth as many
As would take the gift of grace
Which soaks into the hardest hearts,
Cleansing sin without a trace.

He struggled for His final breath;
In anguish cried aloud,
Declaring, "It is finished!"
As silence filled the crowd.

His death was worth as many
As would come to Him in grief

Sparing not one cherished sin,
To lay them at His feet.

Inside a tomb they placed Him
As the day was getting late,
And rested there this man of sorrows
Who would think this was His fate?

It felt just like a thousand,
Although it was one day,
To those who felt His absence
In a thousand different ways.

The night set in a second time
Since Jesus passed away,
But the Son was soon to rise
Just about the break of day.

Then the grave that took the thousands
Couldn't take it anymore.
Life itself burst through the tomb
To live forevermore.

Now hear His call of triumph,
"Rise up from the dirt!"
Hear the voice of Love Himself;
He'll tell you what you're worth:

"You're worth a thousand steps
Through a thousand days of grief.
A thousand wounds is what you're worth,
And a thousand mocking Me.

You're worth the cross I carried,
And every painful breath.
You're worth the scars that never fade
From the wounds that sin had left.

The way it felt to be betrayed,
And the weight of all your sins
Was worth it if it means that
Your life with me begins.

You're worth a thousand times
What you're told you should believe.
You're worth the thousand ways I've tried
To draw your heart to see
That I gave my life so you would know
That's what you're worth to me."

ALEX MARTIN
WRITES FROM NEWCASTLE, NSW.

Adventist chaplains appointed to Australian Defence Force

For the first time in its history the Australian Defence Force (ADF) has appointed two Seventh-day Adventists as chaplains to provide pastoral support for members and their families.

After an extensive recruitment process, which took over 12 months, Pastor Miljan Popovic was assigned as an Air Force chaplain and Pastor Gys Seegers as an Army Reserve chaplain earlier this year.

A Defence spokesperson stated that on average, the ADF receives 70,000 applications each year for all available positions in the Navy, Army and Air Force. In the current financial year, they are only looking to recruit 22 chaplains across the ADF, proving that becoming an ADF chaplain is not an easy feat. Applicants need to undergo the full ADF officer recruitment process, which includes several interviews, a medical, aptitude testing, psychological testing and gruelling physical training.

The first two years in a chaplaincy position are considered an induction period as there are academic requirements to learn about the ADF and chaplaincy. Both Pastor Popovic and Pastor Seegers are undertaking professional development where they are enhancing their skills and knowledge of leadership, teamwork, ethics, psychology, counselling and other courses and training programs. All these skills will assist them in their new roles as they care for members of the ADF, and they will also be able to bring these skills to their local church ministry.

Pastor Popovic is currently posted at Amberley base in Ipswich (Qld) where he not only provides assistance through spiritual health and well-

being, pastoral support, advocacy and personal guidance to Air Force members and their families, but he also provides advice to commanders on pastoral, religious, ethical and cultural issues of members.

When asked what it meant to be the first Seventh-day Adventist chaplain in the ADF, Pastor Popovic reflected on watching the ADF's response to the Queensland floods in 2011 and how they lifted the bar by providing help and support to those in need. This reignited his childhood desire to be part of the Defence Force culture, so when he was given an opportunity to apply to become an ADF chaplain he readily accepted. He sees this as such a "great privilege, honour and responsibility". Pastor Popovic understands that "this is not a job. This is a call, and it is a passion. A passion to connect, support and walk with people who serve our country and their families."

Pastor Seegers is based at the Australian Army Cadet headquarters in Perth (WA) where he provides chaplaincy support to full-time and reserve personnel and he is also the coordinating chaplain for the chaplains who support 33 cadet units throughout Western Australia.

Originally from South Africa, Pastor Seegers said that he and his family have come to love the people of

Australia, and that serving the men and women who serve our country is his small way of saying thank you. He also feels it is a blessing and privilege to enter into a new mission field on behalf of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Pastor Seegers explains, "I am humbled by this opportunity to help raise the banner for Christ's kingdom within the ADF and the beautiful people who I'm getting to know—men and women of courage and respect who understand order and what it means to serve and sacrifice themselves for others."

Pastor Michael Worker, general secretary of the Australian Union Conference and the Church's representative on the Associated Protestant Churches Chaplaincy Board (APCCB), stated that, "It's important as the Seventh-day Adventist Church that we are involved in all facets of ministry. Being part of the Defence Force chaplaincy gives us a chance to interact with and provide a positive point of contact for many Australians who would never otherwise come into contact with Adventists. It gives our pastors opportunities to have spiritual conversations with our service personnel."

Being a military chaplain is a strong ministry and the Seventh-day Adventist world Church has had a proud history of pastors serving as chaplains. We are honoured to have Pastor Popovic and Pastor Seegers being the first Seventh-day Adventist ADF chaplains in Australia and we look forward to having many more in the future.

LORRAINE ATCHIA
COMMUNICATION OFFICER, AUSTRALIAN UNION
CONFERENCE





THE TEN: PROPHECIES POINTING TO JESUS' BIRTH

HOSEA 11:1—AN EGYPT CONNECTION

"When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son." While the nation of Israel's origin story starts in Egypt, Matthew (2:13-15) also ties Jesus' Egyptian exile into Hosea's prophecy.

PSALM 2—KINGS WILL BOW TO GOD'S SON

The psalmist speaks about kings of the earth banding together against God and "His anointed". God calls the Anointed One His Son saying, "I will make the nations your inheritance" and warns "therefore you kings, be wise". We see Herod trying to destroy Jesus, while the "wise kings" of the East choose to bow at the manger.

ISAIAH 7:14—A VIRGIN BIRTH?

"Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: the virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel." Matthew directly links Jesus' birth to Isaiah's prophecy (Matthew 1:22,23)—a supernatural event made even more amazing in that it was predicted hundreds of years earlier.

ISAIAH 9:6,7—A FAMOUS PROPHECY

"For to us a child is born; to us a son is given. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." Echoed in the angel's promise to Mary and in the message to the shepherds, this good news was heralded by Isaiah, many years before Jesus' birth. And the son or child of promise, also carried the Divine names of God.

ISAIAH 11:1—(BRANCH FROM JESSE) BEAR FRUIT

"A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit." 2 Samuel 7:12-16 also seems to suggest an everlasting line for David and that the Messiah will establish His kingdom as David's Heir. Both Matthew and Luke list David in Jesus' genealogy.

MALACHI 3:1—CHRIST COMES TO THE TEMPLE

"Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come," says the LORD Almighty." Although Christ came to the temple many times in His life, only two people registered His first arrival there for cleansing rights as a babe—Anna and Simeon. Simeon had been shown that he would see Christ before he died, and he celebrated when he did!

NUMBERS 24:17—A CHRISTMAS STAR

"A star will come out of Jacob; a sceptre will rise out of Israel." During this early and formational time in Israel's history, a star is predicted out of Jacob, pointing to a king. This may have been one of the prophecies that started the magi on their journey.

MICAH 5:2—THE MESSIAH WILL COME FROM BETHLEHEM

"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me One who will be ruler over Israel." When Herod pointed the magi to Bethlehem, his scholars were probably working from this verse.

LUKE 1:67-79—ZECHARIAH'S PROPHECY

Zechariah's song proclaims that God has raised up a "horn of Salvation" from the "house of David". He also proclaims that his own son John will be a voice in the wilderness (see Isaiah 40:3).

ISAIAH 53:3—LOWLY STATION

"Like one from whom people hide their faces; he was despised, and we held him in low esteem." Many link Isaiah's prophecy to Jesus' life of frugality. The fact He was raised in Nazareth of Galilee and born in a manger meant His beginnings were humble and not at all like the royal successor the Jews were expecting (see Matthew 2:23).

A deeper kind of peace



One of the most common sentiments in the cards and carols of the Christmas season is peace. It is biblical—based in the stories around Jesus’ birth—but might also seem one of the most wishful and sometimes ironic.

Peace was a key theme in the celebratory song of the angels who announced Jesus’ birth to the shepherds outside of Bethlehem. You’ll often see their song on Christmas cards in the older English text on which many Christmas traditions are based:

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward

men” (Luke 2:14, KJV).

But given the political and social context in which He was born, the tumult and division that seemed part of His life and that of so many of His followers after His death, the litany of wars that have been attributed to religion in the 2000 years since, and the reputation of Israel and the wider Middle East for violence and conflict even today, the promise of peace can seem like misplaced sentimentality or even a tragic lie.

If the birth of Jesus was to bring a new age of peace, it has seemed a failure for much of our subsequent

history. Yet this was not merely an over-exuberance on the part of the angels—and this was not a new theme in the story. In celebrating the unlikely birth of his new son, Zechariah the priest concluded his song of praise with the expectation that something even larger was about to happen, something that would lead to greater peace:

“Because of God’s tender mercy, the morning light from heaven is about to break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide us to the path of peace” (Luke 1:78,79).

But neither was this an original sentiment. Zechariah was drawing on the old and holy writings of his own tradition. In what has become one of the best known prophecies of the birth of Jesus from the Hebrew scriptures, and another one of those Christmas card verses, the prophet Isaiah wrote:

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6, KJV).

These are bold claims about a newborn baby, but as we have already considered, these claims are at the heart of the Bible's story about Jesus and who He was—before, at and after His birth. Yet "Prince of Peace" is a new title and one that does not fit so well with much of our understanding of history.

Helpfully, Isaiah went further to develop this theme: "His government and its peace will never end. He will rule with fairness and justice from the throne of his ancestor David for all eternity. The passionate commitment of the Lord of Heaven's Armies will make this happen!" (Isaiah 9:7). This verse highlights aspects of this promised peace that are important, if we are not to dismiss it either as merely a noble seasonal sentiment or failed wishful thinking.

True peace is not merely the absence of conflict. Those seeking superficial peace may be content to put an end to obvious fighting or unrest. And for those in war zones, situations of abuse or interpersonal tension, an end to the overt violence and hostilities

is a good thing in itself. The guns falling silent must be an important and necessary first step. But a much deeper peace comes with justice and reconciliation, healing and restoration.

In some of the best moments of human history, the story and teachings of Jesus have been among the catalysts for this deeper kind of peace. People of faith and people of good will have worked for the fairness and justice that characterise the rule of this Child. Peace has been made in some corners of our world and its history by the influence of the Prince of Peace.

However, this is so obviously and tragically an incomplete project: "The world-transforming peace that the angel declared to the shepherds is only found in bits and fragments now. Its eternal fulfilment is to be found only in the future of God."¹

The promise of the angels and of Isaiah and Zechariah before them is also yet to be realised. This is the far larger promise of peace found in the story of the birth of Jesus. It offers and invites reconciliation for the broken relationships between all people and between humanity and God: "For Christ himself has brought peace to us" (Ephesians 2:14). This is not the one-dimensional "silent night" of snowy Christmas cards and carols, on which the whole world supposedly paused in wonder to greet the newborn Baby, but the proclamation that something wholly different had come into the world and a new human reality had begun:

"Here is the forward thrust of Advent . . . the heralding announcement of the arriving God.

The note that is struck is sounded from the future. We are not looking backward sentimentally to a baby; we are looking forward to the only One in whom the promise of peace will someday be fulfilled."²

In His life and teaching, Jesus sometimes did not sound like a preacher of peace. He was blunt about the trouble, the polarisation and the persecution that would be experienced by those who would follow Him. His execution and that of almost every one of His disciples over the following decades bitterly demonstrated His point.

But He also taught peace, in response to those enemies, as an attitude of a faithful heart and mind, and as a tangible expectation for our world and its future. "I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me," Jesus told His followers. "Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).

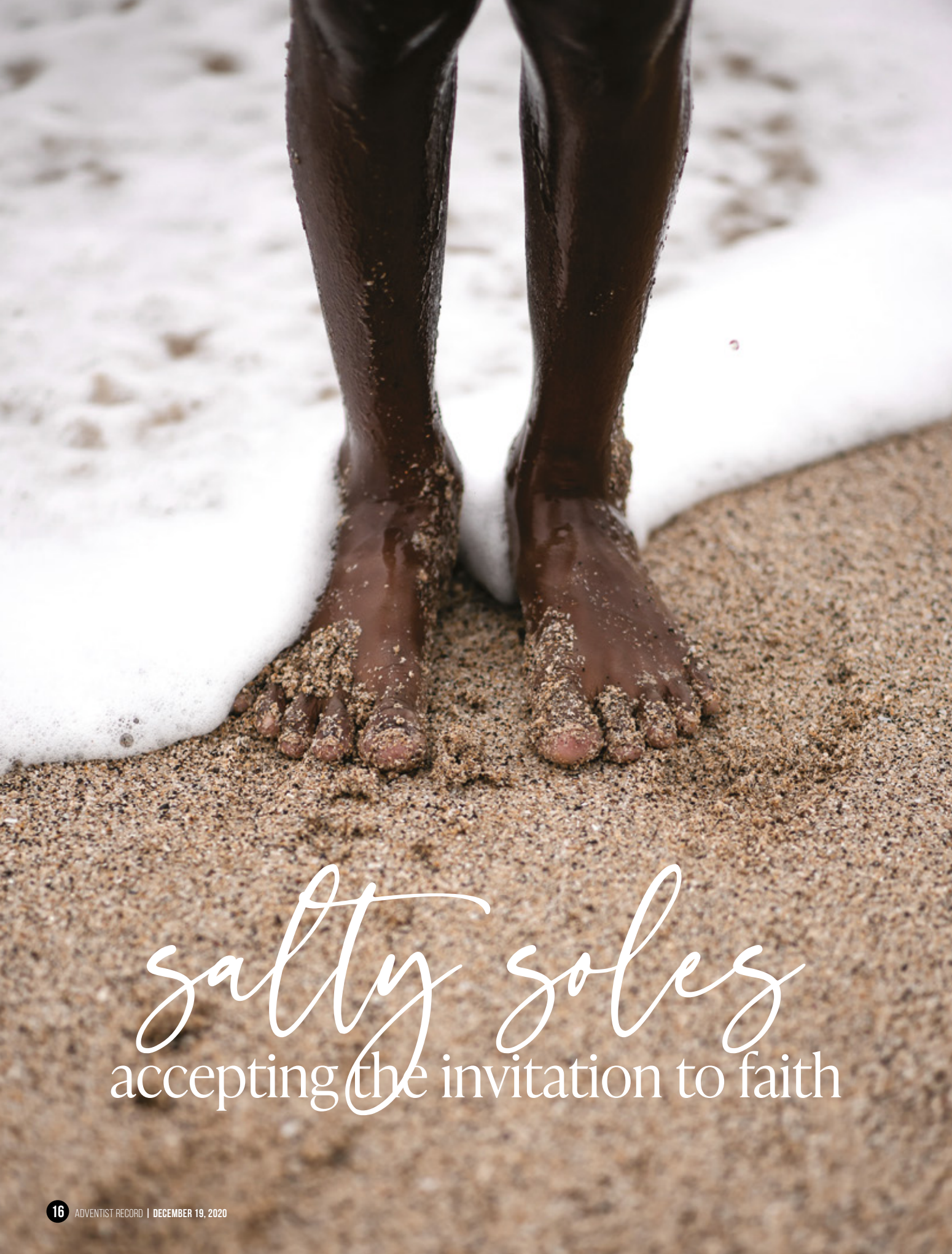
It is not that those Christmas cards and carols are wrong. It is perhaps that they—and we—don't take this promise of peace seriously enough. The birth of the Prince of Peace offers a deeper, more transformative and more forever kind of peace than we often allow ourselves to imagine or to work towards in the world today.

1. Fleming Rutledge, *Advent: The Once & Future Coming of Jesus*, Eerdmans Publishing Co, 2018, page 339.

2. *ibid*, page 342.

Advent: Hearing the Good News in the Story of Jesus' Birth is available from Adventist bookstores in Australia and New Zealand for yourself or as a gift to share.

NATHAN BROWN
BOOK EDITOR, SIGNS PUBLISHING COMPANY.



salty soles
accepting the invitation to faith

This story is about salty soles. Both feet. Simultaneously. Over the side of the boat, and onto the lake in the middle of a treacherous storm that made a bunch of hardened, burly fisherman quake.

The spotlight is on loud-mouthed Peter who is inviting himself into the ultimate game of truth or dare that will either forge his destiny or end his life—"If it is really you Lord, Jesus the Mighty One, tell me to come out there on the water."

It's a TikTok moment. The fish around the boat begin swimming in unison and the opening soundtrack for *The Chosen* begins to play: "Oh, child, come on in, jump in the water. Got no trouble with the mess you been, walk on the water . . ."

The house lights are down, the night hangs like closed black curtains and the black lake churns. Rain-drops as big as grapes pelt the man's exposed face as he white knuckles the side of the boat while it bucks like a rodeo bull. The occasional bolt of lightning highlights Peter's gritted teeth and his bare feet. He precariously stands upright in the boat for a nano-second and as a crack of lightning electrifies the sky so the onlookers can bear witness, the man leaps.

There is no splash. Peter's soles get salty as he walks on water as though it's a concrete path.

Please note that Peter doesn't roll up his suit pants and tuck a wad of theology into his waterproof back pocket, only dipping in his littlest toe while calculating the density of water and the probability of its walkability. Peter doesn't wait til the circumstances are better, like a picturesque calm morning when the water is warm and crystal clear so he can ensure there is nothing dangerous lurking below. He doesn't wait to don scuba gear and he hasn't been doing a few laps in the local pool to get his fitness up in case the walking on water thing doesn't work out. Peter hasn't Instagram polled his mates (who are huddled on the bottom of the boat, sandals on), to find out what they think he should do.

And interestingly, Peter isn't called to this extraordinary opportunity while sitting in the synagogue; he is going about his daily task of following Jesus. Peter leaps out of the boat in one of the gutsiest faith movements recorded in the Bible.

Why did Peter respond with an action when the others responded with motionlessness?

I believe what launched Peter was certainty. While he was uncertain of the outcome, he was certain of his call. Peter responded with an act of obedience.

Faith always involves action. If any of the disciples should be immortalised as an action figure, certainly Peter would be the top choice.

Brazen. Spontaneous. Enthusiastic.

He responded instantly because Jesus was his mate and Messiah. Peter's faith response was a natural overflow of trust. Peter didn't allow the possible (imagined) consequences to outweigh his invitation to faith.

Yes, faith like Peter's sounds incredibly risky and illogical, and you are right. Standing up for an upside-down Kingdom will always contain risk.

But let's talk for a minute about those sitting in boats with sandals on. Isn't it just as dangerous to stay in the boat?

Lethargy is dangerous. A passionless existence numbs. A lack of urgency rocks us to sleep. Safety kills. Comfort stops us recognising our desperate need for God. Living risk-free curbs our innate responses to God; our hearts grow a little bit colder each time we reject the invitation to faith adventures, and our ears grow a little bit more deaf to His whispers. Our feet remain weak and salt free. Same as our souls.

Yes, faith is downright uncomfortable. It is meant to be the refiner's fire (not the refiner's couch). Faith is fortified when we respond at a deep, gut level to Jesus' reckless love for us and we defy our head logic, society's status quo and religious traditions that pathologise faithfulness.

And by the way, faith is only possible when there is a degree of uncertainty. If there is no uncertainty it cannot be called faith. It is not comfortable or peaceful swinging our legs out over the side of the boat.

Don't be fooled, faith is the most uncomfortable thing we can do. The devil loves rocking the pew . . . to put people to sleep. So please stop praying for peace so you can do something in faith and start praying for courage while you unbuckle your sandals. The higher the uncertainty, the more faith is at our disposal. God is the source and completer of our faith.

On our best days when our faith is as small as a mustard seed, God bridges the gap.

Faith is recognising that the possibility of failure is high, and leaning into the belief that impossible things are the very realm that Jesus is sovereign over. "And surely He is with us always, to the very end of the age" (check out Matthew 28:19,20).

Isn't our sole purpose to go-to let our salty souls obey the call to get salty soles in order to reach souls?

ROCHELLE MELVILLE

ART THERAPIST STUDYING SOCIAL WORK FULL TIME. SHE IS PASSIONATE ABOUT HELPING PEOPLE RELEASE THEIR INNATE CREATIVITY FOR HEALING, WELLBEING AND WORSHIP.



GOING OUTBACK:

TRAVELLING THOUSANDS OF KILOMETRES TO SHARE JESUS

Adventists have been travelling to remote outback towns in the Northern Territory and sharing the gospel with Indigenous people and small, regional communities.

Bible workers from Tennant Creek, Martin and Michelle Tanner, were joined by literature evangelist Marian Jones, heading out on a mission trip to the community of Willowra in late September, travelling 300 kilometres south on the Stuart Highway, and then 150 kilometres west along a dirt track.

"We've been in Tennant Creek five years now," Michelle explains. "Generally we've just been working there and in Mungkarta, which is 80 kilometres away. But we recently purchased a caravan that we can use to visit those more remote communities like Willowra."

In Willowra, Mrs Jones spent her time door-knocking in the community, making new contacts and delivering books and resources. Mr Tanner followed up contacts and helped Aboriginal young people enroll at Mamarapha College next year.

Meanwhile, Mrs Tanner spent time doing in-depth Bible studies with local Bayden Williams about the nature of man, the great controversy, and the life, death and resurrection of Jesus

Christ. Mrs Tanner met Mr Williams three years ago when he contacted her after watching 3ABN and the messages of Doug Batchelor. Although legally blind and confined to a wheelchair, he didn't allow this to stop him seeking Jesus.

"Bayden has fully accepted the Seventh-day Adventist message and is preparing to become a member of the Church in the future," explained Mr Tanner. "He is a wonderful young man with a heart for Jesus. As we were leaving, Marian was able to pray with Brayden's dad and invited Jesus into his heart."

On the trip home from Willowra, the group spent a night at the Ti-Tree Roadhouse and met an American backpacker named Katie, sharing with her for three hours on topics like the state of the dead, eternal hellfire, the Sabbath and the perfect love of God.

More recently, the group travelled to Wadeye, more than 1100 kilometres north-west of Tennant Creek, to visit a man who asked for someone to study the Bible with him and his family. "They are the family of some of our community in Mungkarta," says Mrs Tanner. "It's the biggest Aboriginal community in the Northern Territory."

Mr and Mrs Tanner have more trips

planned soon, including one to Ampilatwatja to share Jesus with four relatives of Tennant Creek church members, and two Mamarapha students.

"There's nothing like seeing people who you've studied with come to the Lord and accept the truth," says Mrs Tanner. "We've made amazing relationships with people here; we've been really accepted by the Aboriginal community. And we always really look forward to the ATSIM camps."

Back home, Mr Tanner says Tennant Creek church is continuing to grow with 58 people in regular attendance. Mr and Mrs Tanner also regularly spend Sabbath afternoons at Mungkarta sharing with eight family members.

"When we decided that we wanted to go into ministry, this is where God led us. It's hard sometimes—we've got grown children and grandchildren who we're a long way from, but we believe this is where God wants us. He opened doors for us to come here, and continues to open them. We have been really blessed in ministry. We love the people here. And they're so open to hearing the message of truth."

MARYELLEN FAIRFAX
ASSISTANT EDITOR, ADVENTIST RECORD.



A DIY CHRISTMAS THAT WON'T BREAK THE BANK

For some, Christmas is about carols, cheesy gifts and . . . too many canapés. We tend to get carried away and over-indulge with impact to our wallets and waistlines. So, how can you give this Christmas without the guilt? The answer is simple, and likely found in your pantry—healthy and tasty gifts that won't break the bank.

FOR THE CHOCOLATE LOVER

Bliss balls are easy to make and often require no cooking. For a DIY Christmas gift with a personal touch you can present them beautifully in a glass jar adorned with festive ribbon.

FOR THE GOURMET GRAZER

There's nothing better than having a homemade chutney, pickle or relish in the cupboard—great for entertaining, sandwiches or to serve with flavourful curries. This thoughtful gift is surprisingly easy to make—find out their favourite flavours (sweet or savoury) and find a recipe to suit. It's a long-lasting gift that just keeps on giving.

FOR THE KIDS

DIY Christmas biscuit jars are a clever gift for kids. It gives them the opportunity to get creative in the kitchen and cook up something they'll love to eat. To make them, simply grab a large jar, layer all the dry ingredients from your favourite biscuit recipe, and then tie on a recipe card. You can also use this method to give treasured family recipes for gingerbread, cakes or muffins.

FOR THE NON-FOODIE

You might have a friend or family member who isn't a big foodie. Thankfully, you can still find a gift idea in your pantry! A homemade body scrub is cheap, quick and easy and can be completely customised to the recipient. Use brown sugar or sea salt as a base, then add your favourite scents—anything from essential oils to spices. Bind the mix with olive or coconut oil to achieve a smooth consistency.



Weet-bix ice cream bomb

No time for baking? No problem! Take ice cream to the next level with this impressive, festive, no-bake dessert. This recipe is easily customisable and will impress guests.

Find this recipe and hundreds more at:

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

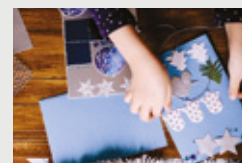


EASY DIY GIFTS



BLISS BALLS

These are simple yet so special. Try mixing cacao powder with your favourite blitzed nuts, nut butter and desiccated coconut for a tasty yet healthy treat, or mix Weet-Bix, sweetened condensed milk, desiccated coconut, cocoa and glazed cherries, coated with chocolate sprinkles, for Christmas-themed delights.



CRAFTY KIDS

Making Christmas cards is a great way to keep the kids busy. And, handmade cards are not only great for family but why not go for a stroll and pop them in the neighbours' letterboxes? The kids will love making their special deliveries and what a wonderful surprise for your neighbours.



GIFT OF TIME

Try and find an hour or so to help a family member, friend or even an elderly neighbour. Simply helping with shopping, babysitting, cooking or cleaning can be a most welcomed gift.



HI KIDS!

Kids' Special

We worship the God who guides us.

THE SHEPHERDS WORSHIP JESUS

The shepherds are in the fields on a hillside near Bethlehem. In the evening, probably around a campfire, they talk about the promised Messiah. They are frightened when an angel appears, but they pay attention, and suddenly a host of angels are there to praise God. The shepherds find Jesus and worship Him. As they leave the stable, they tell everyone they meet about their experience. Then they return to their flocks, "glorifying and praising God for all . . . they had heard and seen" (Luke 2:20).

MEMORY VERSE

"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests"

Luke 2:14



FIND THE 15 DIFFERENCES



Go to <http://thetuis.tv/> and find out the latest adventures from the Tui family.



A Christmas blessing

“It is more blessed to give than receive,” Acts 20:35.

Perhaps my family and friends are right when they tell me that I am a bit crazy, but I believe that if we can do something good for someone, we should do it.

Every Christmas I remember something eccentric I did many years ago. A family had just arrived to this wonderful country of Australia from Chile. They started attending the Spanish church at Springvale, Victoria, where my husband and I were members. I thought it would be a good idea to invite this couple and their lovely children to our house to celebrate Christmas, this being an important time in our culture.

I started adorning the Christmas tree, wrapped all the presents for the children, prepared a special dinner and of course made a beautiful *pan de pascua* (Christmas cake).

In my head I was anticipating the wonderful time that we were going to have on that evening—having a nice meal, listening to Christmas carols and then at midnight opening the presents.

I could almost see the children’s happy faces. It was going to be a memorable evening. On Christmas Eve, there was a special Christmas program at Springvale Spanish church. All went well. At the end of the program, I approached this new family and invited them to our house for the rest of the evening but they stated that the children were very tired and only wanted to go home.

I was extremely disappointed. I had prepared everything for them with such love and care. I was very angry with myself for not giving them enough notice. Sad, I went home but I was not going to give up. I told my husband that the next day we were going to get up early, put everything in the car and visit them. I told him I was going to dress myself as Santa Claus, as I had already bought the Santa costume—with the wig, beard and black boots.

My husband told me I was crazy—that it was too much trouble—but he must have

felt sorry for me as he agreed to take me the following day.

Very happy, I put everything in the car, got a big red bag filled with presents and a loud bell to announce the arrival of Santa Claus.

That morning was very hot. I was steaming in the Santa suit and our car did not have air-conditioning. It was like an oven.

A driver next to us looked over and shouted: “You need a cold drink Santa?” My husband just looked at me and shook his head, perhaps secretly wondering what my next crazy idea would be.

We arrived at the unit. I got out of the car with the red bag, ringing the loud bell, saying HO HO HO. There were some children outside the units, playing with their new toys. They came running to see Santa.

With all the noise and children’s laughter the Chilean family came out to see what was going on. They did not recognise me at first but the mother and father knew who I was when they saw my husband. Their children were very happy to see me.

I apologised to them for being late. I told them I was travelling from Chile, which was so far away. The happiest was the smallest child who kept staring at me. I gave him a big hug and a kiss telling him they were from his grandmother in Chile. He believed me, displaying a large smile. I gave them the presents and we soon left, once again ringing the Santa bell and calling HO HO HO. As soon as I got into the car I took the black rubber boots off—they had been hurting all this time—but in my heart I was happy; I was happy to have given the children a bit of happiness, sharing the blessings that our Lord so generously gives us. Many years have passed; now I am in my 80s. I still remember that unforgettable Christmas. Even though it was hot and uncomfortable, if I had the chance, I would do it again.

GLADYS SAEZ

WRITES FROM BLACKBURN, VICTORIA.

Appreciation

HILLS, Desmond Basil. Val, Allan, Neroni and our extended families want to express our sincere appreciation to all who have sent us an overwhelming number of cards, flowers and phone calls that have supported us through this sad time. We look forward to seeing Des again soon. Des was a much-loved husband, father, grandad and great-grandad. Most of all he was an enthusiastic worker for God.

Obituaries



FRANKS, Arnold John, born 9.3.1929 in Warburton, Vic; died 10.7.20 in Bundaberg, Qld. On 6.2.1994 he married Robyn. He was predeceased by his first wife, Yvonne, in 1992. Arnold is survived by his wife; daughter, Marilyn and Mervyn Chapman (Sydney); son, Gregory and Vicki (Sydney, NSW); grandsons, Christopher, Trevor, Bradley and Glen; six great-grandchildren; and sister, Lois Bailey (Brisbane, Qld). Arnold started work at the Sydney Sanitarium Hospital (NSW) dairy farm in 1945. It was here he met Yvonne and after their marriage, he started driving a truck for his father-in-law from Windsor to the Sydney Markets. Arnold also spent many years working for Rosella Foods in Windsor and later driving trucks and as purchasing officer for John L Pierce transport. He retired to Bundaberg, Qld, in 1996 with Robyn to enjoy the warmer weather. Arnold was laid to rest at Rouse Hill, NSW. Waiting for the return of the Lord.

Dan Kewley, Alwin Hilton

HUSBAND, Peter Denton, born 12.7.1956 in Paddington Hospital, Sydney, NSW; died 16.10.20 in the Lismore Base Hospital. On 14.9.1991 he married Fran. Peter is survived by his wife (Wollongbar); step-daughter; Bodhi (Brisbane, Qld); daughter, Sophia (Murwillumbah, NSW); son, Eli (Brisbane, Qld); and mother, Margaret (Brisbane).

Peter was someone who was the life of the family party, a great wit who was talented at many sports. He was extremely creative, with a love for the earth. He loved Jesus, and although he had been water-baptised decades ago through another denomination, he was baptised again through Pastor Peter Howard at the Alstonville church in 2019. He had a soft spot for those on the fringes of life, often reaching out to them at work and during his spare time. We look forward to seeing Peter again when Jesus returns, fully restored.

Tim Kingston



MARTIN, Lorraine Beverley (nee Horsted), born in 13.9.1939 at Cobden, Vic; died 14.11.20 in Broken Hill, NSW. On 12.9.1972 she married Fred, who predeceased her. Lorraine is survived by her daughter, Andrea (Broken Hill); and son, Wayne (Broken Hill). A polio survivor, Lorraine always wore calipers and used a walking frame, but for years she determined which church members were away and faithfully collected a bulletin and *Adventist Record* and delivered them to the members. Although life was not easy, she loved her Lord and her motto was "one cannot sit in a corner all one's life and feel sorry for oneself. Life goes on." She was a loyal Christian and looked forward to the second coming of Christ and the resurrection.

John Harris, Trevor Groves

MEWBURN, Edmond Lindsey, (Ted), born 25.4.1930 in Peak Hill, NSW; died 20.4.20 in Dubbo Private Hospital. Ted was hard working, committed and dedicated to his work as a farmer and his work for the kingdom of God. He admired God's creation and nurtured it, the same as how he admired God's church and nurtured it. His life was a reflection of him being a true soldier of the kingdom of God.

Jameson Pulelisi

NADEN, Velda Jean (nee Nolan), born 4.3.1934 in Dubbo, NSW; died 10.11.20 in St Mary's

Villa, Dubbo. In 1951 she married Albert Ryan. She was predeceased by her husband; sons, David and Allan; and daughter, Michelle. Velda was a woman who loved God and loved people. She was dedicated and committed to remaining connected with her family and building their relationship with Jesus.

Jameson Pulelisi

ROBINSON, Peter D'Arcy, born 5.9.2002; died 27.10.20 in Gold Coast University Hospital, Qld. Peter is survived by his parents, Darcy and Kerrilyn; and siblings, Rebekah, James, Jared, Nathan, Hannah and Caleb. Peter was someone who was making plans, looking forward to the future, yet his life was tragically cut short while driving his beloved car. Creative with his hands, clever working with stuff and loving the bush, Peter had a quiet and gentle wit with those he knew. We look forward to the day when our Saviour returns to claim His own.

Tim Kingston



THORESEN, Christopher Dale, born 17.12.1959 in Auckland, NZ; died 15.9.20 in Cambridge. Chris was predeceased by his father, Dale, in 1972 and mother, Nolene, in 2019. He is survived by his wife, Liz (Cambridge); children, Kasie-Lea (Nowra, NSW) and Maddison (Cambridge, NZ); and siblings, Cary (Canberra, ACT), Mark (Nowra, NSW), Tania Calais (Brisbane, Qld) and Sharon-lee Campbell (Toowoomba, Qld). Chris was an airline pilot for most of his working life and a committed member of Hamilton church, where he recently served as elder. He courageously battled cancer for nine months and died peacefully with his hope in Jesus.

Ben Martin



WALLACE, Peter Bruce, born 1.3.1955 in Sydney Adventist Hospital, NSW; died 20.10.20 in John Hunter Hospital, Newcastle. Peter is survived by his wife of almost 40 years, Jennifer (Mirrabooka); sons, Stephen (Newcastle) and Andrew (Sunshine); granddaughter, Isabella; and brother, Dr John Wallace (Sydney). Peter had a long and distinguished teaching career in New Zealand and Fiji, and as school principal in Mackay and then at Brisbane Adventist College and Gold Coast Adventist School. Called to Sydney, he was

the e-Learning co-ordinator and STEM consultant for the Greater Sydney Conference schools. Peter was an extremely likeable colleague and friend to all he met and will be remembered for his tremendous contribution to students, teachers and making education fun and efficient. His sudden passing makes the blessed hope in Jesus our certain hope. May it be soon.

Harold Harker

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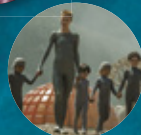
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