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The Worship Project ¹⁴

Tongan PM gives thanks to
Adventist Church ⁶



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EDITOR'S NOTE:

Why PNG Pentecost?

Glenn Townend
South Pacific Division president

“

In reality the PNG church did not need us—they could have reaped the harvest on their own—but they wanted to share the joy of the harvest with us and the world.

As the stories of what happened in PNG for Christ keep circulating around our church, both those who participated and those who listen wonder—why did God choose to bless PNG? We may never know the answer, but as I observed my time in Bougainville and listen to others who were in other parts of this diverse country at least three themes emerge about the PNG Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The church people were committed—really committed. All over the country people took their holidays to lead out in PNG for Christ. One businesswoman paid for hotel accommodation for 11 people for nearly three weeks. Another businessman made fuel free to the Mission and workers for the whole time. In another place a family bought a public address system and data projector so they could share the messages of Jesus with their wantoks. Adventist businesspeople all over the country sacrificed financially in similar ways to make PNG for Christ the best it could be. In many places Adventists brought their families and wantoks and camped near the site of the public meetings. They treated the Revelation of Hope series as a camp meeting. Because most sites were in the outdoors a stage was built and public address systems and data projectors were needed. Many men spent the night taking turns sleeping and taking watch of the equipment at the 2300 sites all over the country.

The commitment was not just in Kina and voluntary involvement—it came from a deep spiritual passion for the Adventist message. In most places people woke at 4am for a prayer meeting—interceding for the people in the area, the singing groups, the pastors, and lay leaders and presenters. Some did prayer walks through the towns and around the venues. Before I went up to speak, at least a dozen elders/pastors—both male and female—surrounded me and prayed for me. Sometimes designated people prayed, other times there was conversational prayer, and for added variety sometimes everyone prayed out loud quietly together. I felt so affirmed and so did many of my colleagues who reported the same prayer experience. Each international guest was assigned minders to protect and care for the presenter. They all took their roles seriously. One was an Adventist policeman leading a special force unit. He said to the preacher, “I have protected many politicians and VIPs, but you are the most important because you are presenting the Word of God—our people need to hear this message.”

The passion for mission was also shown by the 10,000 Toes volunteers and other health professionals who did health checks and talks. Some places had spent years developing ministries in support of the disabled; others for women and children affected by violence; others in feeding and schooling orphans. There was so much going on to show the love of Jesus in a real way. At one remote site a Union president was welcomed with a drama that showed the soil preparation, the sowing of the seed, the cultivation and the expectation that he as the visiting evangelist would help them harvest, and then they would multiply the disciples. Such focus and knowledge of the biblical model for becoming a disciple-making movement at the grassroots was country-wide. The commitment was deeply spiritual and focused on the message of the Bible and uplifting Jesus.

The speakers from all around the SPD were amazed at the generosity of the people—providing us with fruit, vegetables and more. It was overwhelming from people who had so little but they gave with hearts filled with so much. The greatest gift the PNG people gave us was that they invited us international speakers to witness what God was doing. In reality the PNG church did not need us—they could have reaped the harvest on their own—but they wanted to share the joy of the harvest with us and the world. What a generous blessing.

“You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.” 2 Corinthians 9:11 NIV. This is my prayer for the church in PNG as their example spreads throughout the SPD.



INSIGHT:

My journey with PNG for Christ

Maveni Kaufononga
Trans Pacific Union Mission president

Participating in the PNG for Christ evangelism program has been a life-changing experience, highlighting the strong faith and dedication of the people of Papua New Guinea. Their commitment to the work of God is truly inspiring.

One of the most remarkable aspects of this journey has been seeing the resilience of the people. Rain or shine they came to the evangelistic meetings. It was common to see individuals and families braving heavy rain, showing their deep hunger for the Word of God. Many travelled long distances to be part of the program. In a region with challenging transportation, some walk for miles, undeterred by the journey. Their willingness to go to such lengths shows how important it is for them to hear the Word of God.

Prayer has been the cornerstone of the PNG for Christ program. The local churches have spent countless hours praying for the success of the evangelistic efforts. Their fervent prayers have created a strong spiritual foundation, inviting God's presence and blessing on every part of the program. This collective prayer effort has not only strengthened the program but also deepened the spiritual lives of everyone involved.

The PNG for Christ evangelism program is more than just a series of events: it is a living testament to the power of faith and the strength of our Adventist community. The commitment of the people, their willingness to face challenges and their relentless prayer support have been key in advancing God's work in this country.

Reflecting on my involvement, I am profoundly moved and inspired by their example. Their dedication reminds me of the power of faith in action and the incredible things that can be achieved when God's people are united in the mission of God.

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The Mildura Mums At The Table group organised a special photography session with a professional photographer.



West Gippsland group held a breakfast at Warragul Adventist Church to celebrate mums.



At the groundbreaking ceremony on May 13. (Credit: Bruno Kokina)

Community connections made on Mother's Day

📍 Invercargill, NZ | Claire Taylor/Melody Tan

Local Mums At The Table groups celebrated community mums in a series of events in the lead-up to Mother's Day.

Almost 100 community mums and their families attended the Mother's Day events organised by Mums At The Table groups in Queensland, Victoria, New South Wales and New Zealand.

The Invercargill (NZ), West Gippsland (Vic) and Ryde (NSW) groups all organised free community Mother's Day breakfasts at their local churches.

"The breakfast was a chance for mums and mother figures to have a well-deserved break, to relax and enjoy delicious food and also to connect with other mums on similar journeys of motherhood," said Claire Taylor, volunteer moderator of the Invercargill Mums At The Table group (and Invercargill church member).

The Mother's Day events were a collaboration between local volunteer Mums At The Table moderators and their churches or schools. Church members and moderators donated time and money for food, decorations and gifts for mums. Local businesses also sponsored food and prizes for the West Gippsland group's event at the Warragul church.

"Our goal at Mums At The Table is to reach people where they are at and meet the needs of the community," said

Elise Machalek, volunteer moderator of the West Gippsland group as well as Mums At The Table's community and church engagement coordinator (and Warragul church member).

"Events like our Mother's Day breakfast also create opportunities for new connections to be made with the community."

The Ipswich (Qld), West Gippsland (Vic) and Mildura (Vic) groups also held special photography sessions in the lead-up to Mother's Day. West Gippsland provided a floral backdrop for mums to take family photos, while Ipswich and Mildura organised for a professional photographer to turn up.

Mums At The Table, a ministry of Adventist Media, supports mums in the community through online content as well as local events, organised by volunteer moderators from local churches.

There are currently 21 local groups in Australia and New Zealand, moderated by 67 church members, representing 28 Seventh-day Adventist churches. Depending on the moderators' availability, local events—or meet-ups—range from weekly playgroups to playground and café catch-ups or even dessert nights.

To find out more on how to be part of the ministry, visit mumsatthetable.com/partner-with-us/.

PAU to add 12 new staff houses

📍 Port Moresby, PNG | Robert Raia/Daniel Kuma/Kym Piez

Pacific Adventist University (PAU) has held a groundbreaking ceremony for the construction of 12 new staff houses at Kinakon—a part of the university campus.

The event, held on May 13, was witnessed by guests including South Pacific Division president and PAU chancellor, Pastor Glenn Townend, former vice-chancellor Dr Harold Peters, current vice-chancellor Professor Lohi Matainaho, and deputy vice-chancellors Mere Vaihola and Professor Lalen Simeon. Faculty, staff and members of Kinakon community also joined in celebrating the development.

While the immediate focus is the

construction of the new staff houses, PAU has more plans for the future, including a new 120-room dormitory complex, a multipurpose 2000-seat auditorium and a lifestyle medicine centre.

The groundbreaking ceremony and the expansion plans were made possible through the dedication of key individuals. The university has extended its gratitude to support services director Gabriel Smerewai, programs manager Grace Paulson and projects manager Gibson Na'au, and Nemuel Elumba who continues developing the university's asset master plan.

PAU is celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2024.



The Tongan Prime Minister with Pastor Wilson, his wife Nancy and other church leaders. (Credit: PM Press)

Tongan PM gives thanks to Adventist Church

📍 Nuku'alofa, Tonga | Tracey Bridcutt

Tongan Prime Minister Hu'akava-meiliku Siaosi Sovaleni expressed his gratitude to the Seventh-day Adventist Church during a meeting with General Conference (GC) president Pastor Ted Wilson on May 15.

The Prime Minister gave thanks on behalf of the people of Tonga and the government for the ongoing humanitarian aid and reconstruction assistance provided in the wake of natural disasters, including the Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai volcanic eruption in 2022.

He also highlighted the strong commitment and shared values, especially in the education and health sectors.

The Prime Minister commended Pastor Wilson's visit, emphasising the significant role that religious institutions and the government play in

strengthening relationships and fostering mutual cooperation. In response, Pastor Wilson expressed his appreciation to the Prime Minister for the opportunity to meet and discuss areas for further collaboration. Pastor Wilson's visit reiterated the Church's commitment to fostering understanding and building lasting relationships worldwide.

The GC president's meeting with the Prime Minister was among a busy schedule of engagements and activities for Pastor Wilson during his visit to Tonga from May 13-16. He also had an audience with King Tupou VI and Queen Nanasipau'u, dedicated the new Tonga Mission office, attended a prayer breakfast and took part in the Tonga for Christ harvest event at Beulah Adventist College where 122 people were baptised.



Pastor Ted Wilson arriving at Churchill Park in Lautoka, Fiji. (Credit: Fiji Mission Facebook page)

Pastor Wilson does "groundbreaking work" in Fiji

📍 Lautoka, Fiji | Kiera Bridcutt

Adventists took to the streets of Lautoka in preparation for a Fiji-wide combined worship service at Lautoka's Churchill Park on May 17-18.

They marched in the streets holding banners welcoming General Conference (GC) president Pastor Ted Wilson to Fiji and encouraging other people to attend the programs.

The combined worship service was just one of the activities Pastor Wilson engaged in while in Fiji last month.

He also attended a groundbreaking ceremony at Fulton Adventist University College, signalling the start of construction of their new chapel, expected to accommodate up to 550 people.

Later that day, Pastor Wilson visited Lautoka Adventist Primary School to pray over a new high school project set to start in the coming months. Currently, there is no Adventist high school in the area. Fulton provides tertiary education. A high school in Lautoka would allow students to continue their education after primary school and ease their transition into university.

After the formal cutting of the ribbon, Pastor Wilson promised financial support from the GC for the project.

"A Seventh-day Adventist high school will be located right here by God's grace," Pastor Wilson said. "May God bless this construction project."

"We are lost for words. We are so blessed to hear that commitment from the GC," Fiji Mission (FM) education director Anasa Vateitei said.

Pastor Wilson preached at both a Friday night and Sabbath program, inspiring viewers at the stadium and online to focus on the second coming.

South Pacific Division secretary Pastor Mike Sikuri, who attended alongside Pastor Wilson, said the stadium was full, the best he's seen at any combined service. A further 85,000 people have viewed the Sabbath school and worship service online on FM's Facebook page.

"I must commend Fiji for a well-organised and attended combined service. Our people left inspired and encouraged to serve," Pastor Sikuri said.

Gifts were presented to Pastor Wilson and his wife Nancy by FM president Pastor Nasoni Lutunaliwa as they concluded their part in the service. Attendees formed a guard of honour as the Wilsons left Churchill Park.



10,000 Toes leaders Pam Townend and George Kwong.

ELIA Wellness Summit inspires and equips

📍 Gold Coast, Qld | Tracey Bridcutt

This year's ELIA Wellness Summit, held May 24-26 on the Gold Coast, Queensland, shone a spotlight on the future of health, featuring the latest insights into lifestyle medicine and compelling community impact stories.

The summit brought together 175 health leaders and enthusiasts from Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and Fiji and featured a top line-up of presenters who delved into topics such as the gut microbiome, cancer and nutrition, pain management, the integration of artificial intelligence in health, and the power of lifestyle changes for tackling type 2 diabetes and autoimmune diseases. There were plenty of opportunities for networking and inspirational stories were shared from wellness hubs at Papakura (New Zealand) and Wahroonga (Sydney, Australia), and the Manna Haven eatery in Byron Bay (North New South Wales, Australia).

"It warmed my heart to hear the powerful stories from the ELIA Partners who are using the ELIA toolkit to meet the needs of the community and build relationships with them so they can live their best life now and for eternity," said Dr Geraldine Przybylko, executive director of ELIA Wellness and South Pacific Division Adventist Health strategy leader.

The Gold Coast was chosen for this year's summit due to ELIA's strategic partnership with the South Queensland Conference, which is working towards setting up 50 ELIA Wellness hubs by 2025. The need for such initiatives is evident: "Nine out of 10 people in Australia and New Zealand are dying from chronic disease such as heart disease, diabetes and cancer, and one in five Australians have a mental health disorder," said Dr Przybylko.

"This drives our dream to see every church and school become an ELIA Wellness hub, and every clinic to become a wellness clinic so we can bring health, healing and hope to the community like never before. Imagine becoming known as the place to go in your community for improving wellness."

Participants left the summit feeling inspired and motivated. Pacific Adventist University (PAU) vice-chancellor Professor Lohi Matainaho shared: "Thanks for the great summit! Enjoyed the presentations and was inspired by the amazing stories, and meeting with wonderful people. Plenty of motivation to establish a lifestyle medicine centre at PAU and support wellness hubs in PNG."

For more information on becoming an ELIA Partner email <partner@eliawellness.com>.

making headlines

Comprehensive care

For eight years the SER Project has fed those in need in the Vila Isabel community in Brazil. Every Thursday, 200 people in socially vulnerable situations receive nutritious meals of rice, pasta, meat and vegetables. In the afternoon, baths and personal care are available, with hygiene kits containing towels, soap, toothbrushes and toothpaste. Volunteer professionals also offer haircut services, promoting comprehensive care for those living on the streets.—ANN



Aquarium innovators

Walla Walla University (US) computer science, biology, mathematics and engineering departments worked together to create an aquarium tank controller which makes studying the effects of ocean acidification on marine life more affordable.—Northwest Adventists

Bonaire's first pastor

Pastor Jurvensley Koots was ordained as the first Adventist minister on Bonaire, an island municipality of the Netherlands, marking a historic moment for the island's faith community as more than 200 people gathered to witness this milestone.—IAD

Jerusalem discovery

An archaeological find in ancient Jerusalem confirms a biblical account, as experts reveal that a portion of the city's wall, long associated with Hezekiah, was constructed by King Uzziah, echoing the narrative of Scripture. Through carbon dating, this discovery suggests that Jerusalem's growth occurred earlier than traditionally believed, offering profound insights into the rich history of the Holy City, as described in the Bible.—news.com.au



Gathered to pray

Student leaders from Adventist schools were among the hundreds of attendees at the annual Sydney Prayer Breakfast on May 9. Hills Adventist College, Mountain View Adventist College and Wahroonga Adventist School were among the schools represented at the breakfast, along with education and church leaders from the Greater Sydney Conference. The Sydney Prayer Breakfast is an annual prayer gathering of Christians from all denominations. Held at the International Convention Centre in Darling Harbour, hundreds of Christian believers gathered to pray. This year's guest speaker was obstetrician and gynaecologist Dr Andrew Browning who has worked extensively in east Africa, particularly with Hamlin Fistula Ethiopia. "It was so good to see all the Adventist schools come together and have the opportunity to pray," one of the Mountain View students said.—**Kiera Bridcutt**



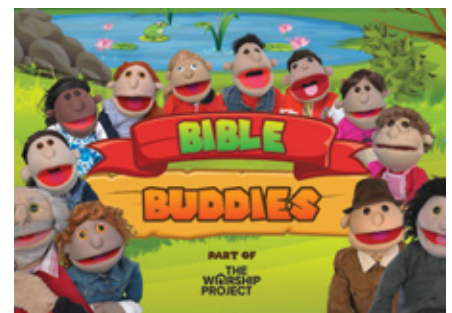
Partners in Ministry

Elimbari District (Eastern Highlands Simbu Mission), Papua New Guinea, held its two-week PNG For Christ evangelism campaign recently. Speakers included two ministers from the South Pacific Division—Pastors Fabiano Niyonkuru and David Yeo—as well as Idaho Conference vice president of administration Pastor David Salazar, Sepik Mission director of personal ministries and family life, Pastor Lawrence Aitapo, and local evangelist from the Elimbari Mission, David Takus. They presented at five sites: Pila, Yandime, Giriya, Gogo and Yorori. "During the campaign, the Partners in Ministry within the district took responsibility in providing hospitality to the guest speakers. At the end we had a successful meeting. To God be the glory always," said spokesperson Armil Waine.—**Kiera Bridcutt**



Pancakes for mum

Central Coast Adventist School (NSW) hosted a Mother's Day breakfast and an Australia's Biggest Morning Tea bake sale on May 10. Staff and parents ran the event which catered to the primary school students and parents. Pancakes were given freely as a Mother's Day celebration, however there were also baked goods and hot drinks for sale which raised money for the NSW Cancer Council. All up the school raised \$A1309. Organiser Katie Tipple said of the day, "I'm so proud of the school community that we have here at CCAS and in their ability to pull together in the name of a good cause."—**Record staff**



100 episodes

The children's devotional series *Bible Buddies* recently celebrated its 100th episode milestone. Designed to guide little ones in prioritising God in their lives, *Bible Buddies* is part of The Worship Project. *Bible Buddies* addresses relevant Bible-based topics for children and families in short episodes. Access episodes in video format or as a podcast on Spotify. For more information visit theworshipproject.org.au.—**Kimberly Houlston**



“Powerful tool”

Hope Virtual Assistant (VA) was put to the test during PNG for Christ, with more than 83,000 messages received from contacts and replied to on any given day of the 16-day program.

Promoting Hope VA at the various evangelism sites led to 8500 individuals engaging in free Bible studies and health lessons through WhatsApp.

Pastor Russ Willcocks, senior ministry systems specialist for the South Pacific Division, said the PNG for Christ program demonstrated the potential of Hope VA as a powerful discipleship tool, seamlessly integrating technology with real-world evangelism.

“The success of this initiative has set the stage for the anticipated expansion of Hope VA to other parts of the South Pacific and beyond, with plans to offer it on the Facebook Messenger platform in time,” Pastor Willcocks said.

Recently added additional features and integrations with Adventist Technology’s new THRIVE application enabled Hope VA to share sermon notes during the PNG for Christ campaign. For each of the 10,000-plus downloads made during the meetings, Hope VA invited users to register for more information from the Church on a range of interest topics.—**Tracey Bridcutt**

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Supermarket staff prayers

For the first time, members of Portoroki church in Vanuatu invited local supermarket staff to pray with them. The Vanuatu Mission office compound, which includes Portoroki church, is located near Vanuatu’s biggest supermarket, Au bon Marche, in Port Vila city. On May 4, supermarket staff and church members prayed in the church office car park before Sabbath school and commencement of staff shifts. This year Adventists in the Trans Pacific Union Mission are being encouraged to take up the challenge of “I Will Go to My Workplace” and be a light for Jesus.—**Vanuatu Mission Facebook page**



Community support

A community pantry has opened on the grounds of Bishopdale church in Christchurch, New Zealand. “Times are tough and we wanted to help our community with no strings attached, demonstrating God’s love to a world in need of Him,” said the church’s welfare coordinator Sharyn Parrett. “Despite only operating for a week, we are already recognising the significant need in our area.” Ms Parrett said the project is receiving support from church members who are donating food and funds. Local shops are contributing fruits and vegetables, bread and buns. Sanitarium has also donated cereals and will continue supporting the initiative. “We are deeply thankful for all the support received,” said Ms Parrett, adding that the Bishopdale community has embraced the new pantry with enthusiasm: “While topping up the pantry, which we do most days, I’ve had the opportunity to engage with people who express happiness about having this resource in their area.” —**Sharyn Parrett/Record Staff**

Facts, lessons and perspectives from



300,000
BAPTISMS



2300
SITES



300–13,000
ATTENDANCE RANGE
AT EACH SITE

At the time of writing there have been 300,000 people baptised because of the PNG for Christ evangelistic program, held April to May at more than 2300 sites. Yes, you heard it right! These are Day of Pentecost numbers. Such numbers in a country with a population of 10–12 million have never been seen in the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church anywhere in the world.

As a participant in PNG for Christ, it was amazing to see people streaming forward, many times in the rain, to respond to the call to follow Jesus and to accept biblical truth. The Holy Spirit was really uplifting the love of Jesus and a life of truth in Him. I know the church there expected to grow but not to this extent. The numbers make me speechless; an inner spiritual emotional gratitude wells up within me. I honour an amazing God and marvel at what He has done. I also admire the incredible faithful dedication of the local church leaders and members all over Papua New Guinea.

There were thousands who attended the meetings nightly. Site attendance varied from 300 to 13,000. Each site had baptisms—some had a handful,

others had more—only a few sites had baptisms in the thousands. We baptised in pools, tanks, rivers (some crocodile-infested), extremely cold fast-flowing streams and the ocean. The baptisms were well organised—local churches had given approval for those being baptised. Most people baptised had been prepared by the church over months before the actual baptism.

PNG for Christ was truly a harvest event in the disciple-making process. Some of those baptised had grown up in Adventist homes and now as young adults were making a choice to change their life's direction (I had parents in tears seeing their children finally decide to respond to the God they cherished). Some were students at Adventist schools; others were former Adventists. Few from other backgrounds and who responded at the program were baptised. As the new people responded they were told they would be part of Bible study groups and they would be baptised at a later date. There were as many of these people as those who were baptised. Potentially there is another 300,000-plus baptisms in the next year as the church works to disciple these people for Jesus. Please pray

for the original 450,000 members who now have over 600,000 people to care for. This is a mammoth task.

The Church in PNG had prepared well for the PNG for Christ program with the support of the South Pacific Division (SPD). The idea of having multiple sites of public preaching of the last-day gospel was proposed in response to the General Conference's Total Member Involvement (TMI) focus in 2016. At that time PNG wanted to be involved and began preparing for April/May 2020.

The Church was very conscious that it did not want to have the programs with just one evangelist in a huge stadium. Historically these events had baptisms in the thousands, but the local church people did not know the newly baptised and many of them drifted and became what PNG people call "backsliders". They wanted to have multiple sites and have people prepared for baptism before the harvest programs—people who they knew.

With the support of the SPD Discipleship Ministry Team, the local union and conference/mission departmental people, the leaders began teaching the harvest model of disciple-making—where to receive a multiplying harvest



of disciple-making disciples, you must follow a gardening sequence: prepare the soil or heart of the people, sow the seed of the Word of God in their heart, cultivate and nurture what God is doing by watering (prayer and Bible reading) and pulling weeds (dealing with temptation). The public programs would be the harvest and then the new disciples would be trained and challenged in mission.

The departmental teams taught church planting by using the Discovery Bible Reading (DBR) method. This is a method anyone can do: pray, read the Bible, discuss what is heard and answer basic questions that a facilitator asks that enables a person to grow. This method relies on the power of the Word and the Holy Spirit and the work of the Spirit in people's lives. Adventist World Radio (AWR) also did training in personal evangelism.

The COVID pandemic put an end to the PNG for Christ harvest TMI event in 2020—but that is when the explosion of growth started. Churches and other public gatherings were closed to stop infection, but the local people began to put into practice the Discovery Bible Reading groups. People in PNG were allowed to meet in small groups in their

homes. Six thousand new groups were formed in 2020. The SPD was the only Division in the world to grow that year because of the growth in these groups. I saw many of these groups in many parts of PNG in visits from 2021 onwards.

Eventually the Papua New Guinea Union Mission (PNGUM) estimated from Mission reports that there were over 10,000 new churches started through the DBR method. Growth was incremental until now. But we see the results of that personal disciple-making work in the numbers from PNG for Christ in 2024.

The SPD and the GC funded roofing iron for the new churches at PNGUM's request. The SPD funded Tok Pidgin and World Changer Bibles, picture rolls with ASI (Adventist-laymen's Services and Industries), and godpods with AWR. Within the PNGUM there was training for nurture and retention as well as disciple-making throughout 2022 and 2023 with the SPD Ministry and Strategy team. In fact, the entire group of 2000-plus pastors and volunteer pastors at a Pastors' Summit at Kabiufa in July 2023 focused on the garden model and Discovery Bible Reading and other simple disciple-making methods. The SPD Institute of Public Evangelism

taught on preparation, presentation and follow-up to public programs too.

At the PNGUM's request, the SPD ordered more Bibles and resources for doctrinal and discipleship Bible study, godpods and picture rolls. We thought we ordered enough. Oh, we of little faith! God blew us away!

I am still rejoicing and marvelling at what God has done. The fact that some of us from the SPD and the world Church were invited to participate and see the deep, methodical and passionate spiritual commitment of the Church in PNG was awe-inspiring. God did more than they and we could ever have imagined. And we all have a personal story to tell—find someone who participated and listen to them.

The apostle Paul's prayer in Ephesians 3:20,21 (ESV) has been answered before my very eyes: "Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work in us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations forever and ever. Amen."

Pastor Glenn Townend
South Pacific Division president.



Journey of faith for Wind Valley church

Hidden in a valley on the outskirts of Honiara City, in the Solomon Islands, is a small church called Wind Valley Seventh-day Adventist church.

Wind Valley is a church plant of the White River Adventist church, which began in late 2008.

What started as a small meeting place for church members living in the neighbourhood became a semi-permanent church which meets every Sabbath, providing a variety of programs.

Denver Newter, one of the current church elders, recalls the humble beginnings of the church as a journey of faith.

"It's a miracle when one day, a

neighbour approaches our church leaders and informs them about selling part of his land to the church, an offer the leaders took into action and now, today, we have secured a new area for the church," said Mr Newter.

The church has overcome issues with land ownership and financial difficulties, and the land is now registered and owned by the church.

Almost 16 years after the church began, with much prayer and support from within the church and outside, Wind Valley members are looking towards constructing a permanent church structure.

Kenneth Pata, one of the founders of the church plant and

a member of the church building project, explains that their biggest challenge is in terms of financial support to kick-start construction.

"We are looking for support to help us build a permanent structure where our members and young people can enjoy fellowship and worship each Sabbath as well as to share God's commission to people within the community," Mr Pata said.

Despite the challenges, church members are looking forward with optimism and hope that their church can become a centre of influence in their neighbourhood.

Denver Newter and Kiera Bridcutt





An unseen hand saved my life

Manuel Papake should not be alive right now. Mr Papake was hanging a PNG for Christ banner at the main gate to the Kerevat Correctional Institute in Rabaul when he was electrocuted.

Prison chaplain Pastor Garry Laukei reports that as Mr Papake was lifting the banner using bamboo poles, the bamboo touched the 22,000-voltage power line overhead and he suffered an instant electric shock.

"A bystander saw him and thought he was dead," Pastor Laukei said. "However, with his last strength, he miraculously shouted and an unseen hand removed his hands from the bamboo connected to the power line. He fell to the ground, unconscious for a minute, and then he was back to normal.

"People asked him if he was well. He said, 'It's not time for me to die, I have my program coming up.'"

Mr Papake supported the PNG for Christ program by welcoming people to the meetings each night at Kerevat. The only reminder of his ordeal: a scar on his finger.

"We praise God for the intervention for those who love Him—and Manuel is one of those who love Him," Pastor Laukei said.

Mr Papake is serving a 13-year sentence at Kerevat Correctional Institute. Now a baptised Adventist, he witnesses to other inmates who have come to know and love Jesus through his influence.

Record Staff



The radiant invitation

As I stepped onto the Oksapmin airstrip, I was greeted by a vibrant crowd eagerly awaiting the start of the PNG for Christ program. Amidst the excitement, I was drawn to a remarkable tale shared by both the program's security team and the villagers themselves—a tale of an otherworldly illumination that had graced the advertising board just days before my arrival.

According to the testimonies, a brilliant light had bathed the advertising board in an ethereal glow for two consecutive nights prior to my landing. This phenomenon, witnessed by security personnel and villagers alike, was more than just a logistical marvel; it was a profound sign of Divine invitation.

The radiant beacon, shining brightly against the backdrop of Oksapmin's rugged terrain—a place devoid of electricity and phone network connectivity—served as a compelling call to the predominantly Baptist community. It beckoned them to the upcoming program with an irresistible allure, stirring hearts and igniting a fervent anticipation for what lay ahead.

The lesson I learned? God goes ahead of us on the ground.

In the midst of the challenges and uncertainties of Oksapmin, where modern conveniences are scarce, this luminous display was a powerful reminder of God's presence leading the way. An average attendance of 1300, as reported by ushers and organisers, underscored the community's overwhelming response to the invitation.

As I return from this journey in this remote corner of Papua New Guinea, I am reminded that indeed, God is ahead on the ground, guiding us and illuminating the path to transformation and renewal.

Toma Naivalu
pastor, Fiji Mission.
Shared from his Facebook page
with permission.

THE Worship Project

The Australian Union Conference (AUC) recently released The Worship Project. The Record Live team, editor Jarrod Stackelroth (JS) and *Signs of the Times* assistant editor Zanita Fletcher (ZF) had a chat with Sylvia Mendez, AUC director of Women and Family Ministries, to find out more.



JS: Where did [the AUC's] emphasis on worship come from?

Our conferences around Australia and the General Conference have also said we have a problem with family worship. Numbers are in decline—on average 25 per cent of Adventists say they don't do family worship at all. So, the conferences came to the AUC and asked us to try and encourage more families into having worship time. We've got three years of funding to create awareness.

ZF: I love how they've seen a need and acted on it. Can you tell us about what The Worship Project is, what it does and what people can expect?

The "why" of the worship project is simply responding to God's invitation to come. Scripture talks about God inviting us to come and spend time with Him.

The "what" is developing a daily rhythm of time with God. That's what the project is about. We want people to have a daily rhythm of connecting with God.

And the "how" is three words—curate, create and educate.

We're going to curate the good stuff because there's already a bunch of amazing resources that can encourage and facilitate worship. When we identify gaps, we can build some resources, so we'll create. And educate is two-

pronged—we want to have conversations about why we worship but also how we worship. Why do we do it? How often should we do it? How long?

This is something I'm passionate about because I didn't grow up as a Christian. So, when I became an Adventist as an adult with little children and people would ask, Are you doing family worship? I would be like, "I don't know what family worship is."

This project will equip and empower parents who have never done worship to just make a start.

JS: Let's define the word worship: what is worship?

If I was to define worship, I would go to Romans 12:1,2—I'm not the biggest advocate of the Message version but in this instance, it really captures, I believe, one of the best pictures of worship.

It says—and now I'm about to paraphrase it into a Sylvia Mendez version—"Take your ordinary everyday life. You're getting up, going to work, sitting at the table, going to bed", that just everyday moment, right? "And place it before God as an offering." So when I think about worship, it's from the minute I get up to the minute I go to bed; I'm in this connection with God. So that's my simple answer. If I was to put on my theological hat, I'd have a much bigger

answer with a lot of biblical examples of worship and ultimately what we would take from that is worship is a response.

Worship is: We, the redeemed, responding to the Redeemer and that response looks different for each of us because of what we might be going through. It can be a response of joy and celebration. It can be tears and lament because we're in a season of grief but both can be actual worship.

When I think about family worship, it's about intentionality—bringing the family together to have a discussion about God. There can be some very traditional thoughts around a specific time or length or pattern. But if we go back to "worship is a response", it can look different in different seasons, depending on the age of our children. At its core, it is an intentionality to have conversations with our family about God and to invite Him into our space, and teaching our children to make God a part of their everyday, ordinary life.

ZF: I think some parents have this expectation they need to put on a mini church service every day. There's a lot of pressure around it. How can we find a balance between expectations of worship and family worship?

Historically, when you look at a lot of the resources that were produced

for family worship, there was often this assumption that one of the parents is at home full-time. So they've got plenty of time to get craft materials and all the things that are needed to produce this production.

But family worship can be as simple as: Let's read a couple of Bible verses together and talk about what they mean. And whenever you're reading and talking about the Bible the question is: so what does this mean today? There must be a so what? What is the practical application?

Family worship can happen as you're driving in the car to school with the kids. Whether it be through singing a worship song, having a prayer before the kids get out. One of the things we need to remember is, if we're going to take the view that worship is part of our everyday, ordinary, sleeping, eating, going to work, walking around life, worship can happen anywhere.

If I'm walking home from school with my kids, what's to stop me from saying, "Look at this beautiful flower. Isn't God amazing?" And having a conversation . . . isn't that a moment of worship? When you are directing your children's thoughts to God and what He's done.

It's about utilising the moments we have throughout the day to point to God. And when we sit together at the table it doesn't have to be a production. It can simply be, "How did you see God working today?"

JS: I really like that idea of pointing our thoughts to God. Is there a benefit to more structured worship, like every evening or opening and closing Sabbath, as opposed to the unstructured concept of acknowledging God when you see a flower and saying, "Hey, isn't it great that God created this for us?" in the everyday conversation? Is one more important?

I think there is a place for both. There's the organic worship, a one-minute conversation, which might end up blowing out.

The structure is where I tap into the idea of rhythm because rhythm is regular right? If our heartbeat isn't a regular rhythm, we're in trouble. So there is a place for that rhythm.

What there isn't a place for is shame when parents can't quite get the rhythm right. We have to work with families where they're at. We invite them into small steps. If all you can manage as a family is a prayer after dinner or before dinner or before bedtime, start there. Start there but make it regular—do it every night. And then as you do it every night—maybe you've only started by devoting three or four minutes—see if you can push it out. Maybe you can read a Bible verse or two together and pray. So I think there is a need for having a rhythm, something that is regular—finding what works for your family rather than you must do it at this time and in this style. If you all sit down at the dinner table together, then use that time to, have devoted, intentional God talk, not just the incidental "we thank God for the food". But finish dinner and then read a couple of Bible verses or put on a worship song and actually talk about what that song is communicating about God.

You know your family rhythms. If mum and dad are racing off to work in the morning and there's stress and chaos then maybe all you can manage is that prayer in the car, but if you're all sitting down for dinner then that's the perfect time to actually have a deeper conversation about how God is present and real and teaching our children the deeper truths of who God is.

Family worship looks different in every home.

This is the age and the stage we're at and so we choose the appropriate method that will connect with our kids, but what it comes down to is that intentionality. It's regularity and routine and rhythm.

When I started coming to church my kids were five and three and so it was all about stories. Every night we would just read a story before bed and then I would go in their rooms, and I would pray with one and pray with the other and I would ask them to think about "what are you thankful for today that God might have done?" They knew we would read a story together and then pray together and it was something they looked forward to.

As they got older, they didn't nec-

essarily want the stories anymore. They wanted to ask questions—so we had a season of asking questions. Let's be honest, when they're teenagers sometimes the questions you don't know how to answer. You're just like "whoa, let's research together, let's find an answer because I don't know" and even that in itself is a time of worship because you're going on a discovery journey together.

We just need to remember not to shame parents because one family's worship doesn't look like another family's worship. We all must meet God where we're at and encourage one another to be intentional about making time, whatever it looks like.

JS: Can you give us some quick tips to turning around our worship experience?

The first quick tip is, if you're doing absolutely nothing, why not make a commitment to just two minutes, every day, even if it's just before you go to bed?

If you don't have children at home, that doesn't mean you can't have household worship. I still think two minutes is better than zero minutes. And just pray, talk to God and say to God, "Help me be more regular in spending time with You."

If you're just struggling and feeling like you don't know what to do, some of that comes from this pressure that it's supposed to look a certain way, and I would say remove some of that pressure and focus on what you can do. Choose to do something simple and buy a devotional book if need be. There are some amazing resources. Start simple is what I would suggest.

The simple tagline is anywhere, anytime, anyone. It is for everyone. We didn't call it the family worship project. We called it The Worship Project because we recognise that every one of us needs to have a daily rhythm with God.

To watch or listen to the full interview, visit *Adventist Record's* YouTube channel or search for the Record Live Podcast. For more about The Worship Project, visit <theworshipproject.org.au>.

Jarrod Stackelroth
editor, *Adventist Record*.

BEHIND *closed doors*

Late in 2022, I completed a legal placement at a non-profit family law centre, hoping to get my foot in the door in the legal world. But the door opened to me was far more confronting than I ever could have expected. The affidavits I trawled through, the stories shared in quiet moments and the urgent communications received from desperate women broke my heart. Email after email, case after case, this small law firm saw helpless women seeking refuge from abusive relationships. Yet, as was often the case, these women were trapped—threats of violence against their children if they left, financial control and manipulation, and threats of murder left these women caught in a hell of their own.

But perhaps the most confronting part of this family law placement was the sheer volume of cases which came through the small four-person firm. They were juggling more than 20 cases, almost all of which involved instances of abuse. And this was just a small firm . . . I could only imagine the number of cases larger firms were dealing with!

In Australia, one in three women experience physical violence in their lifetimes;¹ 39 per cent of women have experienced violence since the age of 15; with 4620 women over the age of 15 hospitalised due to family and domestic violence in 2022—that's 13 women per day.² Violence against women has spiked significantly this year, increasing by 30 per cent compared to 2023.

And these statistics are just the beginning. In New Zealand, the number of women who have experienced domestic violence is at 55 per cent;³ in Fiji it is two out of three women;⁴ and in Papua New Guinea, it reaches 80 per

cent of women affected—a rate that may be the highest in the world.⁵

Unfortunately, these statistics are not isolated to broader society—abuse is just as prevalent within churches as it is outside churches.⁶ According to three surveys and one analysis, abuse seems to occur to the same degree inside the church as outside, and there is little to suggest any protective effect of church attendance on perpetration of domestic violence.⁷

Just let that fact sink in.

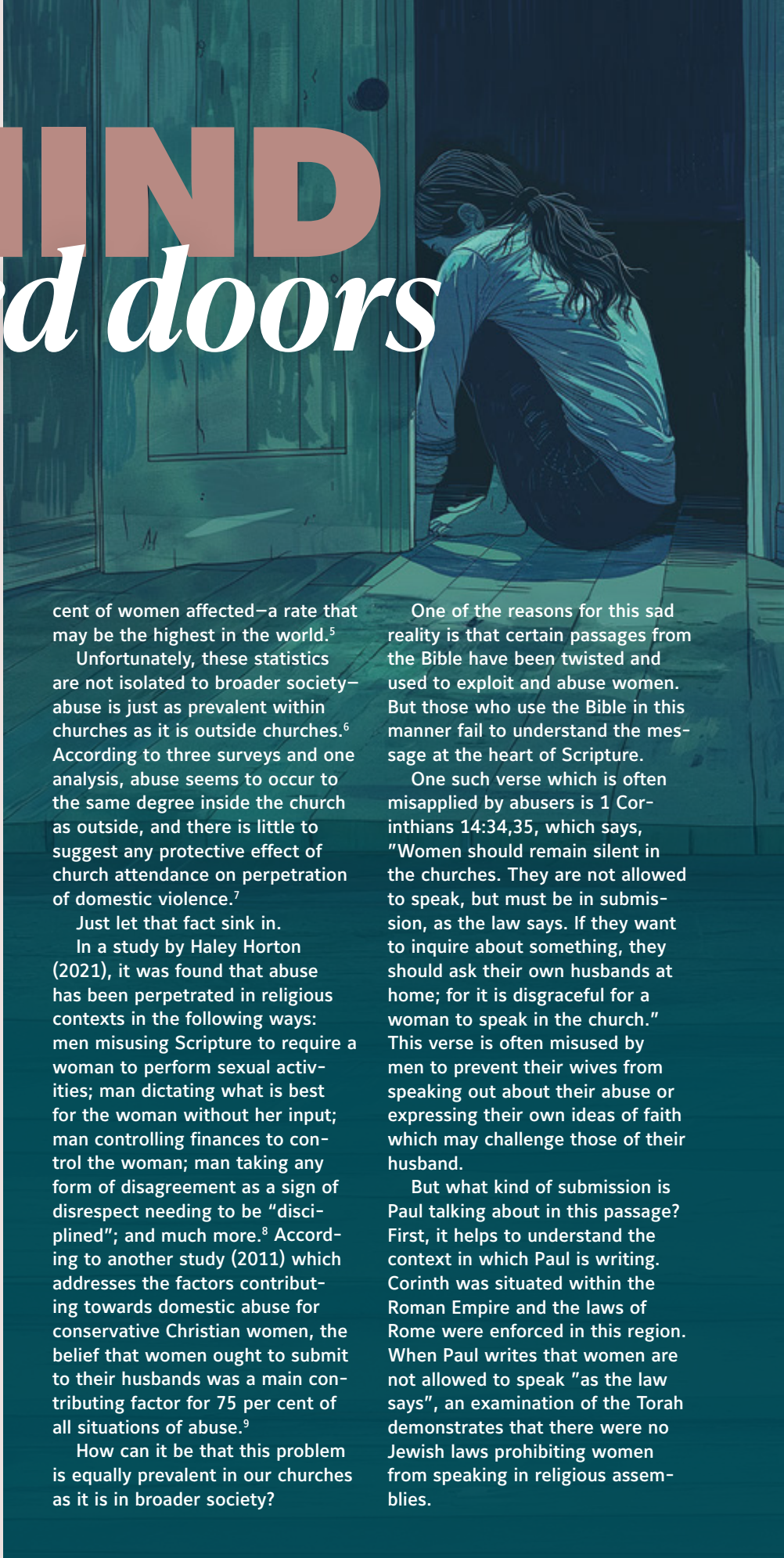
In a study by Haley Horton (2021), it was found that abuse has been perpetrated in religious contexts in the following ways: men misusing Scripture to require a woman to perform sexual activities; man dictating what is best for the woman without her input; man controlling finances to control the woman; man taking any form of disagreement as a sign of disrespect needing to be “disciplined”; and much more.⁸ According to another study (2011) which addresses the factors contributing towards domestic abuse for conservative Christian women, the belief that women ought to submit to their husbands was a main contributing factor for 75 per cent of all situations of abuse.⁹

How can it be that this problem is equally prevalent in our churches as it is in broader society?

One of the reasons for this sad reality is that certain passages from the Bible have been twisted and used to exploit and abuse women. But those who use the Bible in this manner fail to understand the message at the heart of Scripture.

One such verse which is often misapplied by abusers is 1 Corinthians 14:34,35, which says, “Women should remain silent in the churches. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the law says. If they want to inquire about something, they should ask their own husbands at home; for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church.” This verse is often misused by men to prevent their wives from speaking out about their abuse or expressing their own ideas of faith which may challenge those of their husband.

But what kind of submission is Paul talking about in this passage? First, it helps to understand the context in which Paul is writing. Corinth was situated within the Roman Empire and the laws of Rome were enforced in this region. When Paul writes that women are not allowed to speak “as the law says”, an examination of the Torah demonstrates that there were no Jewish laws prohibiting women from speaking in religious assemblies.



However, there was Roman legislation covering this issue, stating that “a woman should attempt nothing, either in public or private, that belongs to man as his peculiar function”.¹⁰ Another Roman law stated, “In our laws the condition of women is, in many respects, lesser than that of men. Women are precluded from all public offices; therefore, they cannot be judges, nor execute the function of magistrates; they cannot sue, plead, nor act, in any case, as proxies.”¹¹ It was therefore illegal under Roman law for women to speak in public assemblies, ask questions, or interrupt a speaker in public—however men were legally entitled to do so.

Paul’s writings here are thus addressing the political position of the church in the Roman empire, encouraging Christians to follow the laws of the land to not arouse persecution. Note, however, that Paul tells the women in this passage that if they do have questions, they should ask their questions! He encourages women to learn as much as they can in spheres where they are safely able to pursue knowledge. They are not to be submissive in a manner which inhibits independent thought but are to ask questions and learn from their husbands as independent agents.

As Ellen White wrote, “Eve was created from a rib taken from the side of Adam, signifying that she was not to control him as the head, nor to be trampled under his feet as an inferior, but to stand by his side as an equal, to be loved and protected by him.” Never was there an intent in Scripture to oppress women as forced dependants, but to recognise men and women as equals.

Another passage which is often used by abusers is that of Ephesians 5:22,23, which reads, “Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Saviour.”

Male perpetrators of domestic abuse in churches have long used this passage to defend their actions, claiming their right to “discipline” their wives if they do not act in ways deemed submissive to the husband. These abusers, however, completely disregard the verse immediately preceding it, which reads, “Submit to one another out of reverence for

Christ” as well as the verses immediately following it.

What abusers fail to recognise is that just as Christ came to serve sacrificially, so men are instructed here to love and serve their wives. And wives are instructed to love and respect their husbands as the church loves and respects Christ. Language of leadership is never used in the New Testament to imply dominance, but rather to lead through service and self-sacrifice.¹² Instead, language of love and respect for one another, and submitting to one another in unity is used. This is clear in the following verses in Ephesians 5:25-29:

“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no-one ever hates his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church.”

Husbands are to treasure, protect and nurture their wives as Jesus Christ does for the church. And Jesus is the fulfilment and focus of Scripture—a Man whose life was dedicated to selfless sacrifice through unending love. The very concept of marriage was designed after God’s love for humanity, reflecting the intimacy and giving-away of self to one another in vulnerability and mutual submission. These principles of love and respect underpin a true understanding of Scripture, leaving no door open to entertain justifications of abuse.

So why does this problem exist within our churches? To ask that question is to ask why sin remains in the lives of Christians—and that is a big question! But essentially, this problem arises out of a sinful heart, a heart unconverted and untouched by the tender mercy of Jesus.

The solution? There is no easy answer. . . On the one hand, perpetrators must ask God to create within them a new heart and place a new spirit within them (Ezekiel 36:26,27). But when my placement at the family law centre ended, it broke my heart to realise the harsh truth that sometimes the

only viable solution for many of these domestic violence situations was separation, divorce or even AVOs (Apprehended Violence Orders) being put in place for the safety of those abused.

As a Church, our communities should strive to be a model of respectful relationships to the rest of the world, reflecting the self-sacrificing love of Jesus by treating one another with respect, dignity and love. May we not be responsible for contributing to these statistics of domestic violence and abuse, but instead may we be the first to call out domestic abuse and provide meaningful healing to those it impacts.

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Olivia Fairfax

editorial assistant, *Adventist Record*.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church has zero tolerance for abuse. If you or someone you know is suffering from abuse, we would urge you to report it to the police. If you need assistance in doing so, staff at Adsafe are ready and willing to help. Adsafe is an independent agency of the Church providing support for victims and their families. For more details: <adsafe.org.au>.



Cashew cheese board

👤 Serves 20 🕒 Prep 30 🍳 Cook 0

How good is a butter board . . . minus the dairy? This is a healthier version with more-ish cashew “cheese” everyone can enjoy at your next gathering.

Ingredients

- 2 cups raw cashews
- ¾ cup So Good Almond Milk Unsweetened, plus more if needed
- 3 tbsp lemon juice
- 2 tbsp nutritional yeast
- ½ tsp garlic powder
- ½ tsp sea salt
- ¼ tsp pepper

Optional toppings:

- Cherry tomatoes
- Fresh herbs, eg chives or dill
- Pistachios
- Freshly cracked black pepper
- Drizzle of olive oil
- Crackers to dip with

Method

1. Soak the cashews in room temperature water overnight or in boiling water for 15 minutes to soften. Once ready to use, drain the liquid and add into a blender.
2. Add in the remaining cashew cheese ingredients and blend until smooth. If the mixture is too thick, add in more almond milk as needed.
3. Use a knife to spread 1-2 tablespoons onto the board each time until the board is filled. Add on your toppings of choice and enjoy with crackers! Any remaining cheese can be stored in a clean jar in the fridge for 1 week.

Nutritional Information (per serving)

ENERGY	CALORIES	PROTEIN	FAT	SATURATES	CARBOHYDRATE
332kJ	79	2.6g	6.1g	1g	2.9g
SUGARS	FIBRE	CALCIUM	SODIUM	IRON	POTASSIUM
0.9g	1g	17mg	33mg	0.7mg	72mg



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Conversations

God's true Sabbath

I would like to thank the author for an excellent article on Sabbath— "Not a minute less—not a second more" (May 18). The problem with the Sabbath day is you have to wait six days for another one!

Sadly there are many Adventists who are beguiled into false theology and a misunderstanding of Colossians 2:16, mixing the ceremonial Sabbaths and God's day together. May I humbly point out that God's Sabbath day was instituted in Eden and kept by people a long time before Sinai (Genesis 26:5; Exodus 5:4,5; 16:22–30). The other Sabbaths were instituted at Sinai and are just a part of the temporal sanctuary's yearly administration that finished at the cross, when the veil was torn. These temporal Sabbaths that have served their purpose have nothing to do with God's eternal Sabbath day that will be kept throughout eternity (Isaiah 66:22,23).

God's law is eternal, including the fourth precept (Psalm 111:4–7). Jesus died for the whole world, to save it from sin or disobedience, the fourth precept included (John 3:16).

Don't be led astray by "savag

wolves" attacking EG White and the Church's fundamentals. GC 605 has come true today: "The Sabbath will be the test of loyalty; it is the point of truth, especially controverted" and this is happening today by people who should know better. Having said all this, we are not saved by obedience, Jesus saves us from disobedience (Matthew 1:21). We have nothing to boast about, we are nearly home!

Eric Hort, WA

The true gospel

I earnestly hope and pray that *the* New Testament/Protestant gospel is being proclaimed in Papua New Guinea (*Record eNews*, May 3) not *a* gospel. The Andrews [University] research shows that many Adventists, and leaders, do not know *the* gospel.

What an incredible tragedy, if we were false witnesses to the greatest "good news" that the world needs.

John Denne, NSW

In Jesus' name

There is an increasing disregard of Jesus' clear instructions about how we are to pray. In John 14 and 16 Jesus makes it clear that we are to pray to the Father "in His (Jesus') name and

He will do it". The implication is that if we don't ask in Jesus' name, He won't respond!

So many end their prayer with "in Your name" (having addressed the Father or "God"), or increasingly with just "Amen". It is sobering to observe the creative efforts some go to—having been alerted to John 14 and 16—to avoid praying "in Jesus' name". Why the reluctance to pray in Jesus' name? The implications are significant. Consider the following:

Acts 17:30 says that God overlooks our ignorance, but James 4:17 says that if we don't do what we know to do, then we sin and Psalm 66:18 tells us that if we regard iniquity in our heart, He will not hear us. Hebrews 10:26 says that if we wilfully sin after we know the truth, then there is no more sacrifice for our sin.

So the stakes are high. Is it pride? What price? Consider Matthew 7:21–23. In that day many will say, "Lord, in your name we . . ." (but I declined to pray in your name) and "Jesus said to them . . . !"

"Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord' and not do the things which I say?"— Luke 6:46.

Rod Cooke, Qld

Hello Kids!

We worship God as Lord of our lives.

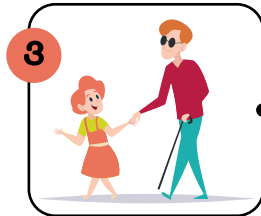
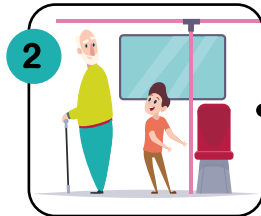


WIRED FOR ONE ANOTHER

God created us in His image for companionship and communication with Himself and others. He declared that people should not be alone, but should live, work, play, serve, and worship in community. He created us to think, reason, and create.

God is constantly working to restore in humankind the glorious potential with which He created us. This potential is realised only through communication with Him and interaction with others.

Service Match Activity



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Help someone cross the road

Assist to carry the shopping

Offering someone your seat

Share your food

Kindly opening the door

Help someone pick up papers

MEMORY VERSE

"I praise you because I am **1** _____ and wonderfully **2** _____; your **3** _____ are wonderful, I **4** _____ that **5** _____ well" (Psalm **6** _____:14).

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Obituaries



CONNOLLY, Carolyn Janice (nee Bowman), born 18.3.1949 in Tauranga, NZ; died 29.4.24 in John Hunter Hospital, Newcastle, NSW. In 1969 she married Phillip Connolly on Norfolk Island. She is survived by her husband; daughter, Simone and John George (Cessnock); sons, Darren and Karen (Cessnock), and Michael (Buttaba); grandchildren, Cassandra, Ethan, Alexander and Martin; and great-grandchild, Julian. For much of her working life she was employed by the Sanitarium Health Food Company and valued as a faithful worker. Carolyn was always positive, friendly, kind and strong of faith.

Roger Nixon

GIRDLER, David Milton, born 5.12.1948 in Perth, WA; died 6.5.24 in Perth after a 13-year battle with cancer. David is survived by his wife, Amy (Perth); children, Scott (Perth), Shelley (Perth), and Felicity Ohana (Mandurah); sister, Kerry Yaeger (Texas, USA); and seven grandchildren. The director of a water and mineral drilling company and a lover of animals, David will be remembered by all as a kind and loving man.

Robert Kingdon



GRAY, Gerald David, born 25.10.1946 in Hobart, Tas; died 29.4.24 at home in Tarleton. In 1968 Gerald married Margaret Turner. He is survived by his wife; children Melinda, Ivan and Alarna; grandchildren, Jesse, Darcy, Kallym, Giselle; and siblings, Elizabeth, Robert, Ellen, Neville, Fiona and Debbie. A builder, musician and gardener who loved hiking, camping and nature, Gerald was devoted to his faith and loved playing piano for worship at Devonport church. He passed away suddenly while working outdoors on his property, doing what he loved. Gerald went to his rest anticipating Jesus' call to immortal life and reunion with his family.

Mike Browning



GROOTEMAAT, Valmai Coralie (nee Stacey), born 28.8.1942 in Auckland, NZ; died 30.4.24 in Dapto, NSW. Eldest child of Desmond and Dorothy Stacey, she married Andre in 1971. He predeceased her in 2012. Valmai is survived by her children, Mark and Kyli-Ann, Graham and Pam, and Belinda and Craig; grandchildren, Brooke, Breanna, Lachlan, Georgia and Chelsea; and siblings, Judy Butler, Graham Stacey, Alison Richards, Gayle Walker, Tony Stacey and Jim Jays. Valmai's dedication to Wollongong Adventist Church spanned 53 years, serving as treasurer, deaconess, Sabbath school leader (42 continuous years), Pathfinder leader and more. She prioritised family, church and the community before herself.

Graham Stacey, David Lu



KNOPPER, Eddy Jonathan, born 2.2.1957 in Dordrecht, The Netherlands; died 29.4.24 in Waratah, NSW. On 9.1.1979 Eddy married Corinne Robinson in Auckland (NZ). Eddy was predeceased by his brother Peter in 1988. He is survived by his spouse (Cooranbong, NSW); daughters, Natasha and Tim White (Mulbring), and Alysha and Anthony Marsden (Willoughby); and brothers, Reyer (WA) and Willem (Tahmoor, NSW) and their families. Eddy battled brain cancer, which later progressed to bone marrow cancer, without pain for 4 years and 9 months, exceeding his initial prognosis of 10 to 12 months. We are grateful to the Lord for sparing him from suffering.

Lionel Smith

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SAVE THE DATE — OCTOBER 26, 2024

Join us at Avondale University Church to celebrate ADRA's 40th anniversary. All past and current employees and board members who served with ADRA in Australia or overseas are welcome. RSVP at <adra.org.au/40thevent>.

GLEN INNES CHURCH (NZ) 60TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Past and present members, pastors and friends are warmly invited to join us on July 5–7, 2024, for a special weekend of praise, reflection and looking to the future. RSVP to Pam at gisdabulletin@gmail.com or 021316758 (for catering). Stay updated at <facebook.com/GISDACHurchNZ>.

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CONSTITUENCY MEETING NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the 93rd Constituency Meetings of the North New Zealand Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church for the period 2020 to 2024 will be held at Papatoetoe Church, 16 Puhinui Road, Papatoetoe, Auckland, on September 14 and 15, 2024. Registration for appointed delegates will open on Saturday afternoon, September 14, and the meetings will conclude on Sunday, September 15.



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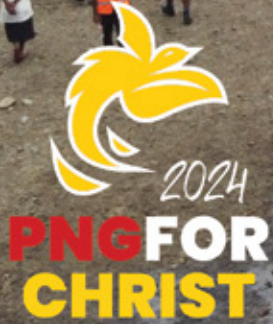


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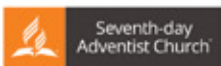


PNG'S CHURCH GROWTH CRISIS!

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Papua New Guinea is facing a crisis—a very exciting crisis! God's Holy Spirit worked mightily in the heart preparation work, and also during the PNG 4 Christ 2024 reaping program, and more than **300,000 precious souls have been baptised, in just one month!** This level of church growth is unprecedented in the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, worldwide, and we praise God for it.

However, the amazing scale of this beautiful kingdom growth has created a severe shortage of trained pastors, leaders and resources for retaining new members. **As individuals, families and congregations, please prayerfully consider how you can support your brothers and sisters in PNG.**

Please give generously to the 2024 Camp Mission Offering on eGiving, in a marked envelope at church, or at your Conference Big Camp. **Thank you!**



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