




Welcome back, Sister Betsy

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response to God's
goodness ¹⁴

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Adventist Record
reader survey ¹¹



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EDITOR'S NOTE:

He tangata, he tangata, he tangata

Jesse Herford
Associate editor, *Signs of the Times*.

“

Numbers too easily impress us, whereas the quiet, humble Christian life is more often overlooked.

When I graduated from Avondale University and became a pastor, I thought it was inevitable that I would be called to the Australian countryside. However, I was sent somewhere far worse: New Zealand!

To be frank, NZ was not on my radar. My wife and I were newlyweds, and the thought of moving countries was scary. We were fortunate enough to land in sunny Tauranga—famed for Mt Maunganui, trendy cafes and a retiree-friendly atmosphere. A pastor friend ended up in Palmerston North, a few hours south. If you've never visited Palmy, just know that in 2021, the city received only 152 days of sunlight; more than half of the year is spent under clouds. My wife and I often visited Palmy and while we were there, often jokingly compared the two cities, boasting about the sunshine and beaches of Tauranga while deriding cold, grey Palmy.

I soon changed my tune when just two years later we moved—not to beautiful Hawke's Bay, hipster Wellington or scenic Taupō—but to cold, grey Palmy. However, something happened to my wife and I that we didn't expect. We fell in love—and it had nothing to do with the weather. It was in this forgotten corner of NZ that we unexpectedly found beautiful church community and incredible friendships. It was also here that I gained a deeper appreciation for the beauty of simple Christian living. Let me explain.

Let's face it: we all face pressure from many different sides. We are all tempted at times to “conform to the pattern of this world”, by taking a shortcut, going against our ethics or indulging our baser instincts. It shouldn't surprise us that this tension has existed for as long as there has been a Christian church. The early Christians living in Thessalonica in the first century faced similar pressures. The apostle Paul's advice to them seems almost too simple: “Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life” (4:11). The beauty of the quiet life is often lost on us. I admit that as a young pastor, I secretly dreamed of leading a big church, writing bestselling books and appearing on influential podcasts. Numbers too easily impress us, whereas the quiet, humble Christian life is more often overlooked. Cold, grey Palmy taught me the value of the Christian life lived quietly with dignity and beauty. It taught me that true joy in the Christian walk is found in deep, transformational relationship with God and others—not superficial achievement. The mark of a follower of Jesus can only be found in consistent witness. The people who impacted me most were not high-flying executives but parents, teachers and tradesmen who didn't just put on a good show at church, but in their day-to-day lives fully embraced being a follower of Jesus in a complicated world.

My suspicion is that this story is being repeated every day in every town and city (large or small) across the South Pacific. Not everyone feels called to become a missionary or evangelist, but we all can live a quiet life rooted in faith, hope and love—whether you live in a large city or a small country town. We might be impressed by the visiting evangelist for a moment, but it's the consistent presence of dedicated Christians living sacrificially that make all the difference in the long run.

If I could encourage you in one thing it would be this: give some recognition to the person in your local church who embodies that quiet Christian life. Thank them for their consistent witness and let them know their example is noticed and appreciated. Embrace it for yourself and encourage those around you to live it, too. Above all, allow your small life to amplify the big God who wants, more than anything else, to allow His power to shine through us to people who desperately need it. As the Māori proverb I referenced in the title declares: “What is the most important thing in the world? *He tangata, he tangata, he tangata* (It is people, it is people, it is people).”



INSIGHT:

I am sorry

Terry Johnson
Australian Union Conference president

Humans have an aversion to saying "I AM SORRY!" We can say it inadvertently easily enough—like when we're walking down a street and bump into someone. It's a quick way of letting them know that you meant no harm by crashing into them because you were reading your emails on your smart phone instead of paying attention! It makes all the difference if there is eye contact when saying "I'm sorry". Most people are instantly assuaged, and we continue to navigate the crowded streets. Research has shown this instant human interaction is the reason why there is very little walking sidewalk rage, compared to more than half of people who admit to having car road rage. In a car, people cannot see the eyes of a driver who has offended and the instant irritability can turn into rage. There's something about being able to apologise, sincerely, that immediately lowers the temperature of interaction.

When I was in Lae, PNG, for the recent PNG for Christ program, I noted something very special amongst our brothers and sisters in Christ. Four churches and eight church plants make up the APPOTO Zone district in Lae's north-eastern suburbs. It's fair to say that some dissension about the plans for evangelism had occurred. Their practice was to meet and ask for forgiveness prior to the meetings, because the focus on sharing the gospel was more important than any disagreement they had. They came together to say "I'm sorry" as they could not in good conscience begin sharing the good news if they were not united in mission together. It was the embodiment of Matthew 5:23,24 (ERV): "So, what if you are offering your gift at the altar and remember that someone has something against you? Leave your gift there and go make peace with that person. Then come and offer your gift."

There is much we can learn from our brothers and sisters in PNG. Their love of sharing the gospel, their openness and hospitality to name a few. But for me, it's their ability to say "I'm sorry" that impressed me the most. It made all the difference in the tone and Spirit-led outcome and impact of our evangelism. Christ said (John 13) "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." Love is not easy but it's considerably easier when we say "I am sorry." Forgiveness, when sincere, is powerful in sharing the good news.

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More than 200 attended the event which featured a line-up of experts in the use of media for mission.

Conference inspires innovation in online ministry

📍 Auckland, NZ | Juliana Muniz/Victor Kulakov

More than 200 people gathered in Auckland, New Zealand, to explore innovative ways to use technology for spreading the gospel and building community at a Digital Discipleship (DD) Conference, held June 21-23.

Organised by the New Zealand Pacific Union Conference (NZPUC) with the support of the South Pacific Division and local conferences, the event was themed “What’s in Your Hand?”—based on God’s question to Moses about the staff he held—and encouraged participants to use the tools they have for digital evangelism and discipleship.

World Church associate communication director Pastor Samuel Neves, who spoke at the event, said the conference was an antidote to the “procrastination of waiting for the perfect tools or circumstances” to start God’s mission.

“The mission is God’s, not ours,” said Pastor Neves. “We need the best methodology we can muster, but our methods are to mission what our works are to salvation—filthy rags. So God uses whatever methods we have available, and we need to use the best there is, but salvation is a supernatural process.”

Workshops and presentations covered topics such as leveraging technology for digital discipleship, enhancing church communication and online presence, video production, using artificial intelligence, Instagram growth strategies, podcasting and more.

The event also featured experts in the use of media for mission. “Speakers challenged the attendees, sharing their expertise and setting the bar high for what is possible in digital media today,” said Kirsten Øster-Lundqvist, a pastor from Wellington.

To provide ongoing support in online ministry, the conference organisers launched the DD Journey. This initiative will provide continuous mentoring and resources for individuals and churches committed to being effective in the digital space.

“The conference equipped attendees with the skills and confidence to take their first steps or enhance their existing efforts in digital discipleship; now the DD Journey will sustain the momentum generated by the conference and further empower digital disciples,” said conference organiser Pastor Victor Kulakov.



SPD ministry and strategy director Dr Sven Östring was the guest speaker for the training.

Ready for new Sabbath school curriculum

📍 Suva, Fiji | John Tausere/Juliana Muniz

Eleven children’s and youth ministry leaders met at the Trans Pacific Union Mission (TPUM) office in Fiji from May 27 to 30 to be trained on the new Sabbath school curriculum Alive in Jesus.

Attendees came from all TPUM missions, including the Solomon Islands, Fiji, Tonga, Samoa, American Samoa, Kiribati and Vanuatu.

The new curriculum is designed to nurture faith and impart a clear biblical worldview over an 18-year educational scope.

The training was organised by TPUM children’s and family ministries director Pastor Loleth Worwor with South Pacific Division ministry and strategy director Dr Sven Östring as the guest speaker.

Dr Östring emphasised the importance of making time for children and the power of storytelling in ministry.

“We must remember to prioritise our children, just as Jesus did. Storytelling is a powerful tool in ministry, enabling us to convey complex spiritual truths in a relatable and engaging manner,” he said.

During the event, TPUM education director Talonga Pita also shared copies of the Abide Bible with each participant as a resource and tool for Bible study accompanying the new Sabbath school curriculum.

TPUM president Pastor Maveni Kaufononga expressed his support for the new curriculum. “We are delighted to introduce this new Sabbath school curriculum to our Union. The training conducted this week for our leaders is crucial, and we hope it will be faithfully implemented throughout the various missions in the TPUM. Thank you for participating in this significant event.”



Printed copies of *Calvary to Pentecost* in Urdu.

Calvary to Pentecost published in Urdu

📍 Warburton, Vic | Nathan Brown

An Urdu edition of *Calvary to Pentecost* by Dr Peter Roennfeldt has been translated and published in Pakistan. A young believer and skilled translator, based in Pakistan, took this on as a personal project after he was given a copy of the original English edition at an international conference on evangelism.

"As a Pakistani Christian, I can't tell people that I am translating Christian material to print that might be helpful for other people to know about Christ," said the translator, highlighting the risks involved with this project.

"However, *Calvary to Pentecost* is a fact of history: Jesus came into this world to die for our sins and, before His ascension, He promised to send the

Holy Spirit, which was fulfilled at the day of Pentecost. This informative book elaborates on all the facts of these days briefly and in a manner that anyone can understand and take advantage of."

The print run of 1000 copies was completed in early June, with initial distribution to local churches and church leaders. "So well translated into Urdu, *Calvary to Pentecost* will be a great blessing to many people," said Pastor Younis Bhatti, an Adventist pastor from Pakistan, now based in the United States. "I highly recommend this book—in whatever language you read it."

Calvary to Pentecost is available in English from Adventist bookshops in Australia and New Zealand, or online.



New Caledonia continues to face political unrest.

Faith unshaken in New Caledonia

📍 Noumea, New Caledonia | Kiera Bridcutt

New Caledonia is experiencing the hardest time in its history, according to New Caledonia Mission president Pastor Felix Wadrobot.

His comments follow recent political unrest in the country that has resulted in loss of life, serious injuries, looting and vandalism.

In a report to the New Zealand Pacific Union Conference, Pastor Wadrobot explained that around 200 houses have been burnt, 600 companies destroyed, 600 vehicles burnt and 7000 jobs lost.

"I don't know yet how many church members have been hit by these terrible events," Pastor Wadrobot said.

"Wages for the first three months are guaranteed but I can't be certain about the rest of the year. The future looks bleak for most people."

Church members have continued meeting online through Zoom, with their spirituality remaining unshaken, according to Pastor Wadrobot. He said while things are improving, distrust and fear are still apparent within the community.

"Things are getting in place slowly. The main road from Nouméa to Tontouta Airport has been completely cleared," he said. "However, the curfew is still in force. In some areas, we still have some difficulties to move about and around.

When security and defence personnel come to clean the place, about half-an-hour later roadblocks are quickly set up again."

Five-hundred students have been affected by the conflict, however, schools are set to re-open once the premises have been cleaned up and cleared.

Obstacles on the road have prevented patients and health staff from getting to the hospital. Some health employees have been forced to sleep at the hospital, unsure whether their colleagues would relieve them after their shift.

Supermarkets are reportedly struggling to have their supplies replenished as employers fear that their deliveries will be attacked.

Pastor Wadrobot said the Mission will hold a special offering this month to help families who are having a tough time.

"That will be a small drop of water in the ocean, but it's better to do something instead of doing nothing. The French Polynesia Mission is ready to help, according to their financial means, in the humanitarian project."

Adventists within the South Pacific are encouraged to continue praying for the situation.



New Avondale vice-chancellor Dr Malcolm Coulson.

Avondale appoints new vice-chancellor

📍 Cooranbong, NSW | Brenton Stacey

Avondale’s Council has appointed a new vice-chancellor and president for the university.

Dr Malcolm Coulson, the interim vice-chancellor, brings to Avondale years of experience in the Seventh-day Adventist education sector, in which he has served as a teacher, principal, lecturer and administrator, the latter in the role of vice-president (learning and teaching) at Avondale. A former president of Fulton Adventist University College in Fiji and director of education for the Church in the South Pacific, “his knowledge of education across sectors, including Australian higher education, and in different countries, makes him the best person to lead Avondale to its desired future”, said chancellor Pastor Glenn Townend.

As a member of Avondale Council, Dr Coulson helped prepare the university’s re-registration submission and develop a renewal plan for sustainability and growth. “He knows the goals and now can lead toward their fulfilment,” said Pastor Townend. “His questions on council are challenging, and his insights are reasoned and wise.”

Pastor Townend described Dr Coulson as a “spiritual man who confidently articulates the mission of Avondale”—to transform lives through Christ-centred higher education. “Our whole-of-life philosophy is unique and just as relevant today as when our pioneers first articulated it,” said Dr Coulson. “It needs to inform our identity and decision-making.”

Avondale, as Dr Coulson sees it, supports the aspirations of students and their families, supports ministries of the Church and serves the community, locally and “with a sense of the needs of the wider world”. He is impressed by the promise of Proverbs 3:6: “In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths” (NKJV).

Dr Coulson replaces Professor Kerri-Lee Krause, who has called time on her tenure as the first woman to lead Avondale since its founding in 1897. Appointing him now—with Professor Krause finishing towards the end of July—“gives Avondale continuity of leadership”, said Pastor Townend.

“Anyone accepting a leadership role at Avondale appreciates its 127-year history and its impact on people,” said Dr Coulson. “I certainly do. Avondale at its best is a cohesive and positive environment and my hope is to ensure staff members and students feel valued.”

Dr Coulson is married to Marcia, the professional experience placement officer in the School of Education and Science.

making headlines

Pathfinder to the rescue

On June 7, 12-year-old Adrian Gonçalves from Brazil heroically saved a choking classmate at school by performing the Heimlich manoeuvre he had learned three months earlier at the Buriti Pathfinder Club. “When I saw my friend in that situation, I didn’t think twice about helping him, using the techniques I learned when we were doing the First Aid honour,” reported the young Pathfinder.—ANN



From stroke to salvation

After her husband’s stroke led Anita Salibio to seek medical help at Bacolod Adventist Medical Center (Philippines), a series of Bible studies conducted by hospital staff and volunteers inspired her and her community in Hacienda Paz. This resulted in the baptism of 24 individuals and plans to build a local church.—SSD

Mission united

A mission trip organised by Southern Adventist University and Montemorelos University led 24 students from the US and Mexico to collaborate on producing a unique television series documenting their gospel-preaching experience in southeast Mexico, resulting in 62 baptisms and a cross-cultural learning opportunity.—ANN

The \$A180,000 Bible

Elvis Presley’s personal Bible, which was on his nightstand the night he died in 1977, sold at auction for \$A180,000, featuring his name embossed on the cover, underlined verses that spoke to him, and a letter from his cousin detailing its history, including how it was one of three Bibles he kept by his bed, and was later given to her by Elvis’s father for safekeeping.—Vision Media



Multicultural magic

More than 1000 people attended Macarthur Adventist College's (Sydney, NSW) recent multicultural night, which raised more than \$A20,000 for the school's year 11 service trip to Beulah Adventist College, Tonga. The project will involve renovating classrooms, running a STORMCo program and providing essential items to the community. Twenty-seven students will be embarking on the mission trip—Macarthur's first mission trip to Tonga. This will also be their first mission trip post-COVID. "We are looking forward to serving the people of Tonga and sharing the love and support we have received from our multicultural night," said Tonga trip coordinator and teacher Annalise Vaovasa.—**Kiera Bridcutt**



Dare to connect

The Australian Union Conference (AUC) personal ministries department launched a new book as part of the *Dare to Connect* series. *Dare to Connect with Others* is the second book in the series compiled by personal ministries director Pastor Nicu Dumbrava. This book can be used as a personal study journal, small group resource or discussion guide. The book is a series of articles about connecting with others from different backgrounds and faith traditions written by various people from across Australia. Each article ends with a series of questions that encourage the reader to reflect on how they can connect with those around them. "We need to be able to connect or reconnect with people the way Jesus did," said Pastor Dumbrava. *Dare to Connect with Others* can be purchased from your local Adventist Book Centre.—**Kymerley McMurray**



Disaster ready

ADRA recently led disaster preparedness training in Malaita Province, Solomon Islands, in partnership with the Church Agencies Network—Disaster Operations. The workshops, held in Foau and Talakali village, aimed to train local Community Disaster Risks Committees on ways to effectively lead disaster response through risk reduction activities and managing their evacuation centres. The theme of the training was building resilience for people with disabilities. Around 44 people attended the workshops.—**Denver Newter/Kiera Bridcutt**



Ladies' retreat

Encouraging a deeper relationship with God was one of the aims of a women's ministries retreat, held recently in Akaroa, NZ. Around 30 women from Christchurch Multicultural Filipino church attended the retreat, which also aimed to foster fellowship and provide spiritual enrichment. The event addressed the spiritual, emotional, physical and social needs of attendees through activities such as prayer sessions, inspirational talks and nature walks.—**Record staff**



Mission to serve

The Greater Sydney Conference (GSC) youth department recently held a community outreach in Bathurst and Kelso, in western New South Wales, to inspire and train more people in running STORMCO projects.

With more than 30 participants from Sydney and the local team led by Pastor Sharee Greenfield, they ran morning children's clubs and organised afternoon games.

Additionally, the volunteers engaged in cleaning community backyards, painting the community centre and getting to know the local youth from Bathurst Adventist church.

A local elder, who brought young people every day to the activities, remarked that this was the best thing to happen to their community in the past year.

"We thank God for the opportunity to make a small but tangible difference," said Conference youth director Pastor Dejan Stojkovic.

"One crucial step in faith development, particularly for our youth, is stepping outside our comfort zones to serve the community."

According to Pastor Stojkovic, enhancing community engagement is an aim that is part of the Greater Sydney Conference strategic plan. "This effort not only benefits the communities we serve but also creates a profound impact on everyone involved," he said.—**Record staff**

have news to share?

Send info and photos to <news@record.net.au>



Footballers at church

For the first time, the Vanuatu National Football team worshipped together in a Seventh-day Adventist church. The team attended Portoroki Seventh-day Adventist church before playing their Oceania Champions grand final match against New Zealand on June 30. While only two of the squad members are Adventist, the team and their coach came together in prayer and praise. The church leaders called the players to the front and offered a special prayer for them and their officials. They also received a copy of *The Great Controversy Ended* by Ellen White.—**Kiera Bridcutt**



Commissioned to ministry

Friends, community and church members from across Australia gathered at Hillview Church, in Morisset NSW, to celebrate Pastor Danuta Stockwell's commissioning to ministry on May 25. Pastor Stockwell has served in many churches across the North New South Wales Conference (NNSW), including Bourke, Brewarrina and Nelson Bay. She currently serves as Hillview associate pastor, NNSW associate ministerial secretary and ATSIM associate director. The commissioning service was led by NNSW evangelism director Pastor Lyle Southwell, South Pacific Division ministerial secretary Dr Darius Jankiewicz and associate ministerial secretary Dr Edyta Jankiewicz, and head of Avondale Seminary Dr Wendy Jackson. Speaking about the ceremony, Pastor Stockwell said, "This is not about me, but a testimony about what God has done in my life through the years since I began in ministry. All glory to God." She is married to Pastor Keith Stockwell, NNSW ATSIM director and Hunter Aboriginal church plant pastor.—**Henrique Felix**

Celebrating *Growth and Transformation* at Edinburgh College



As Edinburgh College marks its 60th anniversary, it celebrates a legacy that stretches back to its days as Lilydale Adventist Academy. This milestone isn't just about looking back at a rich history but also embracing a future bright with promise and ongoing transformation.

Founded six decades ago on the principles of faith and education, Edinburgh College has evolved significantly, especially in the last 10 years—a period marked by profound growth and spiritual deepening. “O taste and see that the Lord [our God] is good; how blessed [fortunate, prosperous and favoured by God] is the one who takes refuge in Him” (Psalm 34:8). This scripture has underpinned the school's ethos and guided its expansion and success.

The pivotal year of 2016 saw the renaming of the institution from Lilydale Adventist Academy to Edinburgh College and the unification of the early learning centre, primary and secondary schools under a single governance structure. This strategic shift has more than doubled enrolment, underscoring the community's trust and the school's commitment to a comprehensive educational approach.

The campus itself has undergone significant upgrades, with the addition of nine new classrooms and learning areas, including enhancements to the secondary school's front office and its food technology and science facilities. These improvements reflect the school's dedication to maintaining high academic standards.

The growth of Edinburgh College is not just in numbers but in the quality of education and character development it offers. With enrolments projected to reach over 700 by 2028, the school is poised for a future where it continues to nurture resilience, character and faith.

The 60th anniversary celebrations took place over the weekend of April 19–21, beginning with an alumni reunion that rekindled old friendships and shared memories. The event was a vibrant showcase of community spirit, starting with a Sabbath opening led by the After Hours worship team. Over 400 attendees came together on Sabbath to reflect and celebrate, with musical performances and interviews with alumni, culminating in a gala dinner that highlighted the school's enduring legacy and bright future.

The Alumni Gala Dinner was a highlight, featuring speeches by notable alumni, including Aaron Violi, MP, and Reynold Gilson, OAM. The current school captains also spoke, acknowledging the legacy that continues to enrich their educational experience.

The weekend concluded with an open day on Sunday that attracted over a thousand visitors, offering a glimpse into the dynamic and nurturing learning environment that Edinburgh College provides. The celebrations ended with a spectacular fireworks display, symbolising the school's bright future.

As Edinburgh College continues to grow and transform lives through God's love and grace, it remains a beacon of faith, learning and excellence. The school invites the community to join in this journey of continuous growth and spiritual enrichment.

Tracey Reid

marketing manager, Edinburgh College, Vic.

Adventist Record Readers survey



We are incredibly blessed in the South Pacific Division to have a wonderful, warm church community and that our church leaders see the importance of communication in keeping us all informed and nurtured.

As many of you know, last year we celebrated 125 years of *Adventist Record*. As part of our commitment to continue to provide this service to you, the members of the South Pacific Division, we are conducting a reader survey. It has been some years since we undertook a survey like this and this survey will help us to continue to serve the Church in the South Pacific, as we plan for the future.

This survey is crucial for us to ensure that *Adventist Record* continues to serve you effectively, providing the content that inspires, informs and nurtures your faith.

By filling out this survey, you will help us understand how you engage with *Record*; gauge the relevance and impact of the articles and features we publish; identify areas for improvement and new topics of interest; and validate the ongoing need for *Adventist Record* in our community.

You, the reader, make *Record* what it is. Your submissions, your letters, your devotional content and your engagement is invaluable and without you, *Record* would not exist. We thank you for your engagement over the years and we appreciate you taking the time to share some of your thoughts with us.

Please fill out the survey and help shape the future of *Adventist Record*.

Jarrod Stackelroth
Editor, *Adventist Record*

To complete this survey, either fill it out below and scan and email to <editor@record.net.au> or post it to 150 Fox Valley Road, Wahroonga NSW 2076 OR scan the QR code (right) and fill it out online.



1. Conference/Mission:

2. Church:

3. Age:

4. Gender:

5. What is your preferred source for general news and information? (select your top two)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Printed materials | <input type="checkbox"/> Online/Web browsers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social media channels | <input type="checkbox"/> Podcasts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Emails | <input type="checkbox"/> Videos |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Apps | <input type="checkbox"/> Television |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Radio | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |

6. How do you primarily access *Adventist Record* magazine?

- Printed copy
- Online through the Record website
- Online through the weekly email
- I don't read it

7. How often do you read *Adventist Record* magazine?

- Every issue
- Most issues
- Occasionally
- Rarely
- Never

Please turn the page
to complete survey



8. Which section(s) of the magazine do you enjoy the most?

(select up to three)

- News
- Features
- Editorial
- Health and lifestyle
- Noticeboard
- Conversations
- Children's section
- Other (please specify)

- None of the above

9. What do you think about the publication frequency of Adventist Record magazine?

- Too frequent
- Just right
- Not frequent enough

10. How would you rate the design and layout of Adventist Record magazine?

- Poor
- Fair
- Good
- Excellent
- N/A

11. How satisfied are you with the variety of content in Adventist Record magazine?

- Very dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Neutral
- Satisfied
- Very satisfied

12. How relevant do you find the content of Adventist Record?

- Never relevant
- Not that relevant
- Sometimes relevant
- Often relevant
- Always relevant

13. How do you engage with Adventist Record content? (tick all that apply)

- Print
- Website
- Social media
- Podcast
- Email newsletter
- Video
- None of the above

14. How often do you engage with Record content?

- Multiple times a week
- At least once a week
- Just the print issues
- A few times a month
- Rarely
- Never

15. How often do you visit the Adventist Record website?

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Rarely
- Never

16. Which of the following social media platforms do you follow Adventist Record on? (Select all that apply)

- Facebook
- Instagram
- X (formerly Twitter)
- TikTok
- I don't follow on social media

17. How useful do you find the Adventist Record social media channels?

- Very useful
- Often useful
- Neutral
- Not very useful
- Never useful
- Why/Why not?

18. How effective do you find the Adventist Record email newsletter in keeping you informed?

- Very effective
- Somewhat effective
- Ineffective
- I'm not a subscriber

19. What do you think is most important to include in an Adventist Record weekly email newsletter?

- Digital copy of the magazine
- Breaking news
- Features
- Editorial/devotional content
- Verse of the week
- Other (please specify)

20. Which of the following Record video content have you watched?

- Record Live
- Instagram reels
- Facebook reels
- Record offering video
- Other (please specify)



21. If you have seen any *Record* offering videos, where did you see it? (i.e. at church, on social media)

22. Would you like to see more video content from *Adventist Record*?

- Yes, I primarily engage with video these days
- Yes, they could do a bit more in that space
- They have it about right
- No, I'd rather read my information

23. Have you listened to an *Adventist Record* podcast? (ie *Record Live*, *Record Wrap*)

- Yes, regularly
- Occasionally
- I have listened to it once or twice
- Never
- Didn't know *Record* had any podcasts

24. How would you feel if *Record* was an online only publication?

- Yeah, save the trees man!
- No, having a physical magazine is an important part of church culture
- I wouldn't be able to access it online
- I don't really mind

25. What topics would you like to see addressed more in *Adventist Record*?

26. What improvements or changes would you suggest for *Adventist Record*?

27. In just a few words, how would you describe the role *Record* plays in the Adventist Church in the South Pacific?

28. Any additional comments or feedback?

Survey closes August 2, 2024

We value your feedback and want to ensure that the *Adventist Record* magazine and its various platforms are meeting your needs and interests. Thank you for completing this survey. Your responses will help us improve our content and delivery. If you have any questions about the survey, please email us: <news@record.net.au>.



Thank you for your time and participation!

Welcome back, Sister Betsy!



Visit our website to find out more



Hi folks, I'm Sister Betsy, the adrenalin-loving granny who thrives on extreme sports and living life to the full—just like Jesus said we should in John 10:10! I also have a deep passion for supporting frontline mission work at home and around the world, so I want to help you put God First through the practice of systematic benevolence. What is systematic benevolence? I'm glad you asked!

Systematic benevolence, or “Sister Betsy”, as the Adventist pioneers affectionately called it, is a method of returning tithe and offerings that focuses on intentionally and systematically dedicating a percentage of our income to God's essential mission work around the world.

Sister Betsy is a love-fuelled, faith-based response to God's goodness. By appealing to our minds and hearts, Sister Betsy changes the lives of people who take God at His word and welcome her into their personal giving plans.

The biblical Sister Betsy model of proportional tithe and offerings has its origins throughout the Bible and was promoted by early Adventist pioneers to help support frontline gospel workers. It was a system of pre-planned, intentional and proportional giving by members that allowed God's church family to grow rapidly.

Ellen White wrote, “This matter of giving should not be left to impulse. God has given us definite instructions in regards to this. He has specified tithes and offerings as the measure of our obligation, and he desires us to give regularly and systematically. After the

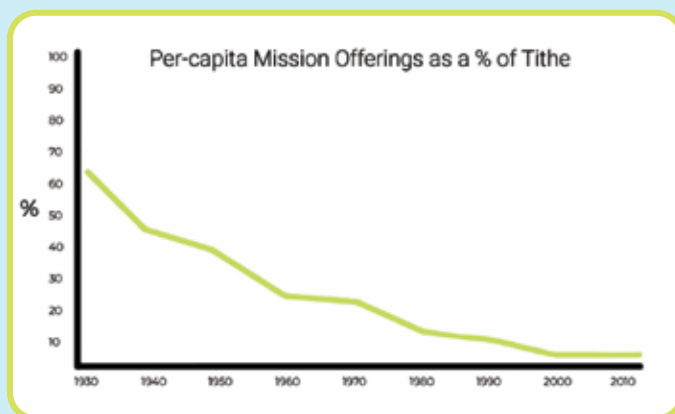
tithe is set apart, gifts and offerings should be apportioned, 'as God hath prospered you'" (*The Review & Herald*, May 9, 1893).

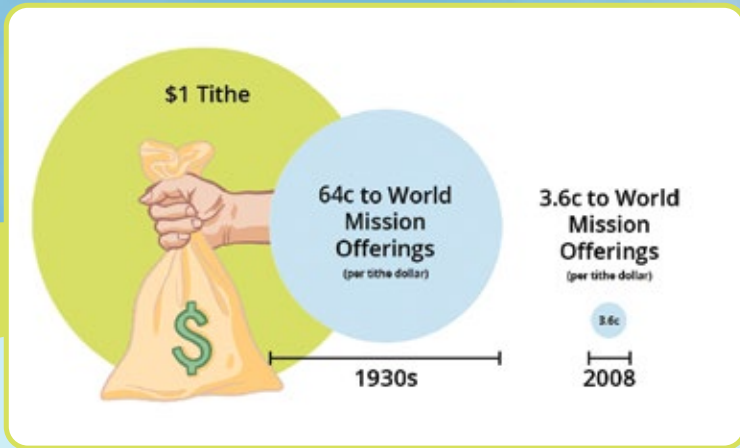
Is it still relevant today?

Yes, more than ever, and here's why. All mission activities, from local church outreach to massive, nationwide evangelism initiatives, are made possible through your mission offerings. However, while local church offerings have been growing, mission offerings have been declining.

As the graph shows, in 1930, for every \$10 that North American Adventists returned in tithe, they gave an additional \$6.45 (64.5% of tithe) to mission offerings. By 2008, that number had dropped to just 36 cents (3.6% of tithe), which is almost 18 times less than in the 1930s.

The data for places like Australia and New Zealand is only slightly better with mission offerings in 2021 equating to 4.8 per cent of tithe², which is still less than half-a-percent of our personal incomes being given to God's mission. As you can imagine, this severely limits





the resources available for fulfilling the great commission of Matthew 28:19,20, both at home and around the world.

Giving systematically and sacrificially, out of our comfort zones, requires a leap of faith. How can we show God that we love Him more than earthly comforts? How can we exercise a greater faith in our Provider God and take that leap? One key way is by taking God at His word when He says, "Test me in this" (Malachi 3:10 NIV). God wants us to test Him, to try His promises and watch Him bless our lives as we faithfully return a full tithe and offerings to His storehouse.

After returning God's 10 per cent tithe to Him, systematic givers set aside a specific percentage of their income for God's offerings. For some people this might three, five, even 10 per cent or more. The key biblical principle for calculating offerings for God is that we are to give 'as God has prospered' us. (1 Corinthians 16:2; 2 Corinthians 8:1-15)

Let's welcome back Sister Betsy into our mission offerings planning. By carefully setting aside a prayerfully decided percentage of our income for church mission offerings, together we can provide all the resources needed for God's frontline mission work at home and around the world.

Ready to take your leap of faith?

Here's three simple steps to help you set up your Personal Giving Plan.

Step One: Prayerfully consider your current finances and ask God to guide you to give a percentage of your income/increase to the Sabbath school, church and other mission offerings each week.

Step Two: To avoid sporadic or simply emotional giving, set up a system so that your offerings to God— by cash, eGiving or other means—are planned and systematic across the whole year, "as God has prospered you".

Step Three: If you want to simplify your Sister Betsy giving, just download the eGiving app or visit the eGiving website and set up a "Scheduled Gift"

Ready to climb higher?

If you're ready to climb higher in your faith-centred, stewardship journey with God, please visit Sister Betsy's web page at stewardship.adventistchurch.com/sister-betsy/

"Thank you for prayerfully considering your involvement in this critical mission-supporting adventure!"—Sister Betsy



Julian Archer
stewardship director, South Pacific Division.

Encounter with God in a car park



APARTHEID! Born in South Africa in the shadow of Table Mountain, Andrew experienced segregation based on the colour of his skin. Black or coloured people did not have the rights, freedoms or opportunities that the white community enjoyed. Up until the age of 12, he lived in an area of high crime, gangs, violence and political riots. It was here that Andrew caught his first glimpse of God.

This is his story:

My mother's family came from St Helena Island, off the west coast of Africa. Dad was of Anglo/Dutch descent. I wasn't classed as native African, but coloured, and therefore not accepted fully by either black or white.

My family were Catholic, and I attended primary school and my first year of high school in Cape Town, before migrating to Australia. As a Catholic we went to Mass, but never opened our Bibles. Therefore, I didn't know much of the Bible but read children's Bible storybooks instead. I learned of God's Divine Son who healed the sick and forgave sinners. I also learned of God's Ten Commandments and was warned of a devil that tempted men to break them.

My grandmother taught me and my sister to pray. Each morning, we asked God to protect us through the day and at night thanked Him for seeing us safely home.

One time my friends and I were surrounded by an older youth gang. I was 11 at the time and remember thinking that this would not end well. It just so happened that I recognised the gang leader as being from my neighbourhood. He recognised me also, though we did not know each other personally. It prompted him to let us go, which was a surprise to all!

As I prayed that night, I wondered if our escape was a coincidence or if God had answered my prayers.

Another time my friend and I were robbed, and a knife was held to my friend's throat. It was a frightening situation. I began to look around for help when at that very moment my mother, who was usually at work, happened to be walking along the street. She saw me and rushed toward us, shouting so that the thieves took off.

Once again, the thought crossed my mind, *Had God directly*

intervened? I sensed that it was no coincidence.

A third incident was when I was driving home with my family from a fishing trip. Our vehicle ground to a halt as hordes of protesting Africans stormed the streets in a surprise attack. Rocks came smashing through our car window and one of them struck me on my back as I ducked for cover. The army arrived just in time to scatter the rioters away.

That night I prayed confidently, thanking God for our rescue.

I also realised that if men followed Jesus and obeyed God's commandments then things like apartheid, violence and crime would be no more. It seemed foolish to do otherwise. I decided to place my faith in God.

In 1985 we moved to Australia to escape apartheid. I was 12. We settled in and continued to go to church. But by the age of 16 things began to change. I started drinking alcohol with friends and family.

Before long, I entered a lifestyle of under-age drinking, parties and clubbing. I was introduced to other drugs like marijuana, LSD, cocaine and speed. Over the next 10 years I naively fostered a dependency on marijuana that I did well to hide from family and friends. The effects of my abuses were far reaching. I left behind a string of broken relationships and career prospects. Efforts to change were short-lived and I often suffered deep bouts of depression.

Finally, in my helpless state I began to remember God. *But who was God really?* I thought to myself. *Was He real?* I needed to know. Observing the complexities of nature convinced me of a Creator God. I then compared various teachings like Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism. I visited many Christian churches. I prayed to God to lead me to the truth.

My prayer was answered at 28 years of age. I was studying acting and landed some "extras" work on a big Hollywood production called *The Matrix –Revolutions*. It was there that I met four friends who were Christians. I remember being drawn to them. They seemed to have an inner joy and peace that I could only hope for. They spoke of God and church as if it was the most natural thing in the world to do. They had no interest in harmful indulgences.

I remember thinking, *I need whatever they have*. I felt inspired to stay off drugs for the rest of our time together. It was easier said than done. By the third day, I succumbed to my addiction. I couldn't bear the thought of facing them in a drugged-out state. I banged my head against the wall and cried, "Why? Why? Why, God?" Sadly, I abandoned all hope of change. Little did I know that God heard my cry. What happened next was extraordinary. My head immediately cleared. I couldn't understand how, but was overjoyed at the thought of returning to work. I would later realise it was God's doing.

For the rest of the week, I talked and laughed with my new friends. I also shared my desire for a changed life with one of them, named Fiona. On the night that filming ended I walked Fiona out to the car park. Before she left, she said, "Andrew, I'm a bit embarrassed to ask, but would you mind if I said a prayer for you?" She was unaware that I had already given up hope. After contemplating the offer, I finally replied, "Fiona, whatever's going to help." She prayed in the name of Jesus and left soon after.

What happened next can only be described as a miracle. The temperature in the car park seemed to rise. I began to sweat. As I stood there alone, an indescribable surge of love came upon me. Again and again, it came, intensifying with every wave until it flooded my entire being. I was spellbound!

As I grasped for reason, I suddenly found myself confronted with the knowledge of the presence of God. I couldn't see Him but there was no mistaking who it was! His love was overpowering.

With trembling I uttered, "God, I never knew you were real like that."

"I've always been there," came the response.

My mind quickly filled with thoughts of all that God had seen. I was mortified! I shamefully confessed, "You've seen everything I've done, God."

Without hesitation, He replied, "I forgive you."

I was stunned! "How could You forgive me?" I muttered.

Again, without hesitation He replied, "Because I love you."

Those words broke me, and I fell on the concrete car park floor and cried uncontrollably. First, I cried in repentance. Then I cried with joy for I was in the presence of the One who loved me and forgave me. When I finally stood up, I was what the Bible calls, "born again". I had a new lease on life. I felt like God had touched my life and made me whole. I was filled with peace and felt in need of nothing.

I returned home to tell my partner, Kim, what had happened. I knew I had to tell others too. Kim and I would later marry and go on to have three beautiful children.

Just two weeks later I visited a local charity stall. A volunteer worker asked me if I believed in God. With surprise I replied, "I'm just starting to look that way." She gave me a free book called *The Desire of Ages* by author Ellen White. I read and re-read that book for the next two years. The author seemed gifted as she chronicled the life of Jesus Christ with incredible detail and plausibility. She pointed to Bible prophecies that foretold of Jesus' death, life and resurrection. She explained how it worked to free men from the curse of sin and death.

Two years later, Kim and I attended a public Bible series after receiving an invitation in our letterbox. The speaker presented amazing topics including "Who Changed God's Sabbath?" and "Why So Many Different Churches?" That is when we learned about the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

What a joy it was to be baptised in 2005 and join God's remnant church. In 2009, I answered God's call to pastoral ministry.

King David wrote, "I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears" (Psalm 34:4). That was certainly true in my case . . . and I know it's true for you too.

Andrew Russell is currently head pastor of the Hoxton Park Seventh-day Adventist church in Sydney, NSW. See more of Kim and Andrew's story on the *Adventist Record* website under the heading "Thank you Australia, Thank you God".

Sandra Lehn

communications, Hoxton Park church, NSW.

Top tips for a good *nights sleep*

In our busy lives with long working hours, travel time, family commitments and social events, it's easy for our sleep to suffer. But getting regular, restful sleep is crucial for good health.

It gives your body much-needed time to repair and restore itself, keeps your immunity strong and makes you more resistant to illness. So, what can you do for better sleep?

1. Like clockwork

One of the most important things you can do to help you maintain good sleep is to keep it regular.

- Try going to sleep and waking again at the same time each day, even on weekends if you can.
- Aim for around 7-8 hours of sleep each night—some people may need a little more, others a little less.
- Be smart about napping. If you like to nap during the day, make sure you keep it to no more than 30 minutes or you may have trouble sleeping at night.

2. Preparation is key

There are things you can do during the day to help make the most of your snooze time at night.

- Avoid "sleep stealers" like caffeine, alcohol and nicotine.
- Regular exercise will boost your energy during the day and prepare your body for a better sleep at night.
- Hydrate well in the morning and during the day but slow down your water intake in the evening so that you don't need to make frequent trips to the bathroom.
- Try not to eat too late. Have dinner at least 2-3 hours before your bedtime and avoid heavy, rich foods.
- As your bedtime approaches choose quiet activities that help you "wind down". Avoid "screen-time" if you can.



3. Make it cosy

If you can, try to make your place of sleep as quiet and cosy as possible.

- Use soft lighting, and keep your bedroom or sleeping area at a comfortable temperature.
- If you can, invest in a comfortable and supportive mattress and pillows.
- Remove unnecessary distractions like your television, radio, laptop and mobile phone.

Did you know?

Depriving your body of sleep will increase your body's insulin resistance, making it easier for you to gain weight!

Getting a good night's sleep is fundamental to being able to live a happy, healthy life. If you've tried these tips and you're still having trouble sleeping, talk to your doctor or a qualified sleep professional.

For more information on sleep and its health benefits, go to the Sleep Health Foundation and the Australasian Sleep Association.



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Conversations

Kiwis welcome?

Please accept this short letter, a plea really, in the name of Jesus, our precious Saviour, if I may.

I read the *Record*, as many of my fellow parishioners do, and including the obituaries, but never see any of our loved ones, good church-going folk, who've fallen asleep in death—just the Australians.

Wouldn't it be nice—I'm thinking—if us New Zealanders who also read the *Record*, could also get a mention, or is this too much to ask for our deceased?

John M Burkett, NZ

Editor's note: The Noticeboard section is not and has never been restricted to Australians (as far as I'm aware). New Zealanders are welcomed and definitely do appear. It is often the officiating pastor's role to submit obituaries to us, so please, if you have a loved one die, remind the pastor to submit. Families can also submit by filling out the form on our website.

Started in Eden

Re: "The True Gospel" (Conversations, June 15). With respect there is no such thing as "the New Testament/ Protestant" gospel. It is the everlasting gospel (Revelation 14:6) that started in Eden (OT) when sin entered. Jesus is the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world (Genesis 4:4) to give Adam (and us) a second chance to get back our right to the Tree of Life that was lost through disobedience (Revelation 22:11-14).

The gospel is not the good news

that saves us from obedience to the law, including the Sabbath command. We are saved from disobedience TO the law (Matthew 1:21) and its consequences—eternal death (John 3:16). Christ's blood saves us from both the guilt and the grip of sin. We become new creatures in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17; Romans 12:1,2).

This is the everlasting gospel that started in Eden until sin will be no more (Nahum 1:9). The Patriarchs knew as much as we do today about this Gospel that saves us from sin and death (Job 19:25-27).

The "bad" news of the gospel involves which resurrection we will come up in. We all have to choose and can't blame anyone else for our eternal destiny—life or death. No one HAS to die eternally, but sadly people virtually commit suicide by choosing darkness rather than light (John 3:17-21; Isaiah 8:20 ;Genesis 2:16,17; Revelation 22:11-14).

The Blood of Christ, where justice and mercy met, proves the immutability of His law. If Jesus knew we didn't have to or couldn't keep His commands, why did He question our love to Him by our obedience as a condition (John 14:15,23,24). Being hearers of the word and not doers—James 1:22-25 calls it self-deception.

Eric Hort, WA

Chariots of fire

The item "Century old story" (Making headlines, May 18) incorrectly listed British athlete Eric Liddell as a "Sabbath keeper".

Eric Liddell was a Scottish

Christian who referred to Sunday as the Sabbath. At the 1924 Paris Olympics he refused to compete in his scheduled 100 metre track event because it was to be held on a Sunday.

The Jewish athlete Harold Abrahams competed in and won the 100 metre track event. Later that same week Liddell competed in and won the 400 metre track event.

Liddell went to China in 1925 and served as a missionary teacher. Aside from two furloughs in Scotland, he remained in China until his death in a Japanese civilian internment camp in 1945 at the age of 43.

Harold Abrahams' athletic career ended in 1925 when he broke his leg, while competing in a long jump.

He returned to his legal career as a barrister. However, he remained connected to athletics as a commentator and a sports writer.

Later in his life, he also became president of the Jewish Athletic Association, and served as chairman for the Amateur Athletic Association (AAA).

Abrahams died on January 14, 1978, aged 78, just three years before the release of the film *Chariots of Fire*, which portrayed the athletic achievements of Liddell and Abrahams at the 1924 Paris Olympic.

Brian Abrahams, NSW

Editor's note: True, the item that claims Eric withdrew from events on THE Sabbath, could have been phrased "his Sabbath" acknowledging that his keeping of Sabbath was not on the seventh day but nonetheless, a strongly held conviction.

 Hello Kids!

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in God's grace.



KIDS **Spot**

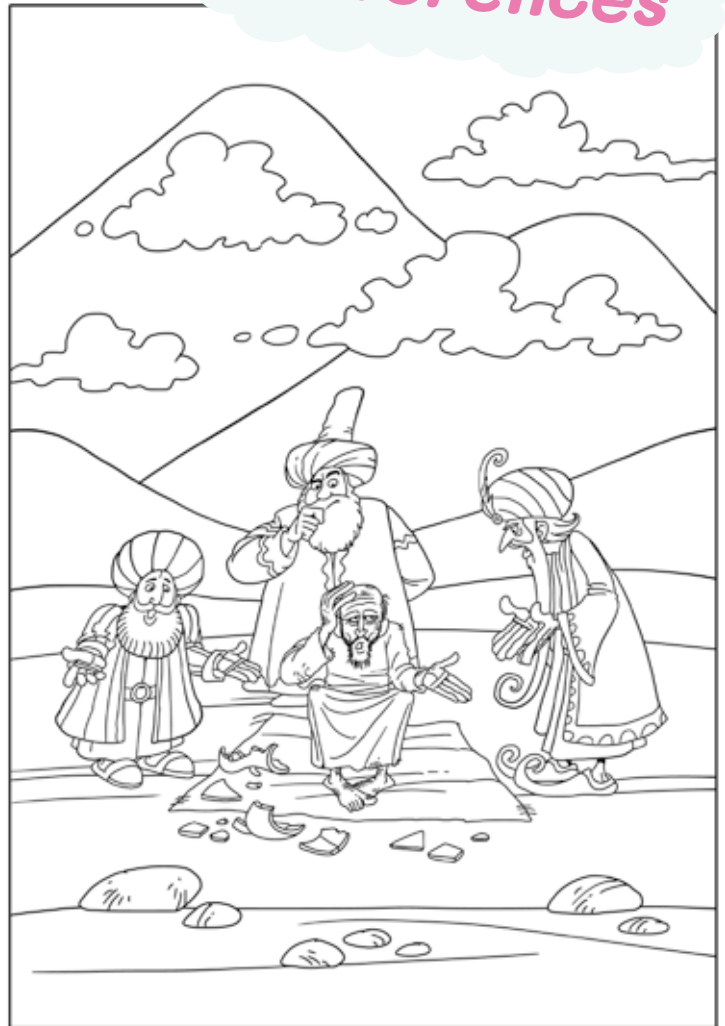
NOBODY Understands

Job and his four friends discuss their understanding of who God is and how He relates to His children on earth. It becomes clear that Job and each of his friends know only a little about God; they are not correct in their theology. But God is patient and waits for the best time to clear up the misunderstandings. We learn from this experience that it is OK to explore our relationship with God and to continue to learn about Him. God's love for us does not change even when we don't understand Him or what He is doing in our lives.

MEMORY VERSE

"For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known"
(1 Corinthians 13:12).

 **SPOT** *the* **20**
Differences



Obituaries



AUNGER, Norman William, born 12.1.1917 in Loxton, SA; died 9.3.23 in Adelaide. He was married to Valerie, who predeceased him in 2001. Norm is survived by daughters, Lynette and Keith Sandy, and Dianne Hass (all of Adelaide); grandchildren, Anthony, Keryn, Leona, Daryl, Tanya, Amy; nine great-grandchildren; and seven great-great-grandchildren. Norm was a faithful member of the Church. He was a member of the Para Vista church for 46 years. He was a euphonium player in the Adventist Silver band and enjoyed good music. He worked at the Sanitarium Health Food Company in Adelaide for a number of years. Norm was blessed with a long and healthy life of 106 years. He was a faithful servant of his Lord.

William Moala



PAGE, Myra, born 5.3.1938 in Kalgoorlie, WA; died 13.4.24 in Sherwin Lodge, Rossmoyne. In 1957 she married Tony. She is survived by her husband (Rossmoyne); children, Barbara Chelman, (Mackay, Qld), Michael (Kingsley, WA) and Robert (Gingin); many grandchildren and great-grandchildren; and brother, Ken (Dunsborough). Myra followed Tony in attending church, firstly in Midland and later at Merredin, where they were baptised. Myra was a warm, friendly and easy-going person who kept a steady hand on the home and family. She faithfully served her Lord in various capacities in many local churches. We look forward to the resurrection morning.

Don Fehlberg, Terry Lambert, Gervais Cangy, Nicola Warchol

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Editor
Jarrod Stackelroth

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Assistant editors
Danelle Stothers
Olivia Fairfax

Copyeditor
Tracey Bridcutt

Graphic designer
Theodora Pau'u

Noticeboard
Julie Laws

Letters
editor@record.net.au

News & photos
news@record.net.au

Noticeboard
ads@record.net.au

Subscriptions
subscriptions@record.net.au
+ 61 (03) 5965 6300
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Website
record.adventistchurch.com

Mailing address
Adventist Media
Locked Bag 1115
Wahroonga NSW 2076
Australia
+ 61 (02) 9847 2222

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