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Mamarapha: a place of healing ¹⁴

PAU celebrates 40 years ⁷



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EDITOR'S NOTE:

Familiarity breeds contempt

Jarrod Stackelroth
Editor

“

We also share stories of lives changed by God and how faithful followers of Jesus have changed the world.

“Familiarity breeds contempt.” So claimed Geoffrey Chaucer in the *Canterbury Tales*, dated from the late 1300s. Chaucer may have borrowed the phrase from Augustine, who wrote it in Latin a millennium before, but either way, the proverb contains a timeless truth.

We've all experienced the boredom or apathy that comes with too much familiarity. We must be reminded to invest in our most important relationships, as the more familiar we are with someone, the more tools we have to inflict damage (contempt being a very powerful and dangerous one).

A study undertaken by Adventist Media a few years ago discovered that while almost every Adventist Church member had heard of *Signs of the Times*, most had not read a copy in years.

One of the challenges we face with *Signs* is re-engaging our members with the value and importance of it. So today I'm going to try to remind you of why it still works.

One common argument I hear is that “the medium of print is outdated”. Yet, the book and magazine industries continue to flourish—maybe not at the heights they once did, but they're finding new life and continuing to be printed. Some still prefer the tactile experience. There is also an argument to be made that physical artifacts are the only way to get into some people's homes.

A woman recently contacted us saying, “I write to you since I picked up your June issue at a plant-based cooking class. Found most of the articles resounding in my being. And wonder if I may receive your issues regularly.” If your church has any program or outreach plan, consider using *Signs* and having it available to visitors who might benefit from reading it. They may even want to sign up.

Digital presence is a great way to reach a broad and diverse audience but, even as we expand into those areas to make *Signs* a truly multi-platform ministry, there is still value in having something physical to give someone. It can sit on a kitchen bench, a coffee table or somewhere else in the house and be read by multiple people. A post or email is scrolled past or deleted and never seen again.

A digital post may reach those who are already connected with someone sharing the post online, but digital algorithms are tricky to predict and hard to master. For sowing widely on any ground, the spread of digital seeds is fine but to share a magazine with someone in the context of relationship is a more targeted approach.

I've also heard “The content is outdated”. In the past three years (but the journey started before that) our team have put their heart and soul into making the content relevant, hope-filled and invitational. Let me explain. The perception that *Signs* is only about prophecy is false. We do cover current events with a Christian perspective, yet always through the lens of Jesus and His life-changing power.

For years, *Signs* has had fabulous health and lifestyle content and we're tackling the current big issues like gambling, vaping, energy drinks and pornography. As Adventists, we've got a great track record standing against destructive and harmful societal issues and through *Signs*, we can share those messages with a wider audience. We also share stories of lives changed by God and how faithful followers of Jesus have changed the world.

Every time we tackle faith and belief topics we explain Christian words and jargon and invite the reader to consider God. We don't assume any knowledge. In fact, many people in our society have no biblical grounding. So, we present the good news of Jesus by introducing people to Him.

August has always been *Signs* month and this August, I invite you to re-engage with *Signs*. Find a copy, have a read and start thinking about who you could share this accessible and invitational material with. Support community projects or schools with sponsorship. After all, *Signs* is for sharing.

For more information, visit our newly refurbished website <signsmag.com>, or email us at <info@signsofthetimes.org.au>.



INSIGHT:

Future people needs

Glenn Townend
South Pacific Division president

Every couple of weeks I will have someone I have met on my travels around the South Pacific reach out to me asking to support a project or a person's education. Facebook, Messenger, Instagram or email—it comes in many and varied ways. The project could be a new church, a medical/health ministry, support for a women's refuge or . . . (endless). In regard to people, it is always about supporting a volunteer or sponsoring a person's school or university fees. There are many worthy projects and people who I hear about and I wish I could help them all.

Projects within the church have a process that is based on building ownership at the local level—the local church, conference/mission and union are the entities that should be approached, and in that order. Those who are closest to what is going to happen in the project are the best to support with resources and referrals or requests for greater support.

When it comes to people seeking sponsorship for education, the formal church structure also has a plan. Sponsorship for basic degrees are the responsibility of the missions/conferences, masters level is for the union, and doctorates for the SPD. We thank God for these entities that invest part of their budget in future leaders.

However, the church entities around the SPD need more teachers, pastors, accountants and professionals than it can meet at this stage. We need to work together to find ways to sponsor more students in these vital areas.

Once when I was a theology student at Avondale I received an anonymous gift in the mail for \$500. I still do not know who sent it but was very grateful that the Lord provided it. At the PAU 40th celebrations I heard numerous alumni share how they received sponsorship and support from various people as answers to prayer so they could keep studying. They are now education directors, mission presidents, school bursars, nurse educators, business people who are investing in others . . . It was inspiring to hear how people in the past personally invested in certain people and what God has done with that investment.

If you would like to invest in sponsorship of needy students throughout the SPD, please email <TorikaLaweloa@adventist.org.au> and we can put you in touch with needy students who could be our future church leaders.

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Some of the SPD representatives at the ATS and GAIIN conference.

Mission focus of digital strategy conference

📍 Chiang Mai, Thailand | Jarrod Stackelroth

Mission was the focus of the worldwide Digital Strategy in Mission convention held in Chiang Mai, Thailand from July 8–14.

The South Pacific Division (SPD) had a strong presence at the Adventist Technology Summit (ATS) at the start of the week, with a number of presenters sharing the work they have been doing in technology to support the diverse and remote needs in the territory.

SPD director of technology, operations and strategy Ben Thomas presented a keynote that focused on prioritising mission in the technology space, working as one church and seeking divine guidance.

Adventist church member and deputy secretary of the Papua New Guinea government's department of technology and communication, Russell Woruba, provided a keynote that detailed PNG's digital transformation vision as a case study in how to find efficiencies of scale.

ATS was followed by the Global Adventist Internet Network, known as GAIIN, which celebrated 20 years of operation. GAIIN is primarily for media and communications people who work for the Adventist Church.

Continuing the theme of mission, the GAIIN conference featured video reports from the 13 world divisions, the Middle East North Africa Union (MENA)—an attached field of the GC—and the China Union on how communication and media is being used in their regions.

In the evenings, participants were treated to viewings of documentaries and movies, including *The Hopeful*, directed by Australian Adventist Kyle Portbury. Mr Portbury held one of the keynotes, tied to the theme of the event, which looked at the importance of telling stories through cinema, one of the last distraction-free zones in the modern world. *The Hopeful* will be released in Australian cinemas in October.

For attendees like North NSW communication coordinator Henrique Felix, these conferences help break down the isolation that can be felt by small teams. "We see it's not just us, but the worldwide Church moving to the same goal. It's very inspirational," he said.

The Digital Strategy in Mission conference was followed by Hope Channel International meetings, an economical way for people to attend all of the events.



Wahroonga Adventist School chaplains Pastor Nick Kross Jr, Renee Vaovasa and Justin Boyd with Vatuvonu College chaplain Michael Qiotaka.

School partnership strengthened during WOW

📍 Wahroonga, NSW | Juliana Muniz

A recent Week of Worship (WOW) at Wahroonga Adventist School (NSW) contributed to the spiritual lives of primary students while strengthening the growing partnership between Wahroonga and Vatuvonu Adventist College, Fiji.

Vatuvonu chaplain Michael Qiotaka was the main speaker at the event, held from June 24 to 28. Year Six students actively participated in various aspects of the event, from media and stage setup to drama, providing a new experience for Mr Qiotaka.

"It's so amazing to see the kids participating in every aspect. Coming from Fiji, we don't usually allow kids to play with equipment. So it's a new learning environment for me and I've enjoyed working with these beautiful young people," said Mr Qiotaka.

The partnership between the two schools began with Wahroonga students visiting Vatuvonu for mission trips. In September 2023, Year 11 students from Wahroonga fundraised and travelled to Vatuvonu, where they participated in a WOW led by Mr Qiotaka, renovated the boys' and girls' dormitories and carried out other improvement projects.

In September, another group of Year 11 students from Wahroonga will visit Vatuvonu, continuing the tradition of mutual support and cultural exchange.

Wahroonga chaplain Justin Boyd said the partnership is very beneficial for both schools. "Students learn that Jesus is present in both Australia and Fiji. This cross-cultural exchange is a powerful way to disciple young people."



Pastor Pita Tokalau.

Fiji Mission evangelist laid to rest

📍 Suva, Fiji | Joni Vatuvatu/Juliana Muniz

Fiji Mission (FM) senior minister and evangelist Pastor Pita Nakamica Tokalau, 56, was laid to rest on July 3. He passed away suddenly on the morning of June 25 at his Suva residence.

His funeral took place at the FM burial grounds, based at the Mission headquarters compound. Trans Pacific Union Mission president Pastor Maveni Kaufononga, who shared a close bond with Pastor Tokalau, officiated at the funeral service, which was attended by hundreds from across Fiji.

FM president Pastor Nasoni Lutunaliwa said Pastor Tokalau's passing leaves a significant gap in ministry and pastoral leadership in the Fiji Mission.

"He was a powerful evangelist, speaker both in public and on TV, leader, and a colleague and friend to all," said Pastor Lutunaliwa. "He will be sorely missed; however, he has lived exemplary and left behind a legacy for the rest of us ministers to emulate."

Pastor Tokalau also participated in the PNG For Christ campaign in Papua New Guinea and was to have started a three-week evangelism in the town of Rakiraki and other venues in Suva on July 7.

Graduating with a diploma in theology in 1996, Pastor Tokalau started his ministry as a volunteer in 1997 and served at Laselase, Naitasiri, in the interior of Viti Levu for two years. He also served as chaplain at Nabulini in Wainibuka, Navesau Adventist High School, Tamavua English Church, and as district ministerial leader in Serua-Navua, Tebara, Suva South, Cakaudrove East and Suva North districts.

From 2019 until his passing, Pastor Tokalau served as district ministerial leader in the biggest district in Fiji—Suva North. He was ordained in 2004 and also attained his bachelor's in theology degree in 2009 from Fulton College. Pastor Tokalau is survived by his wife Elina Tinai Murivudi and two daughters.



The Affordable Wardrobe project in action at Mildura Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Supporting mums in the cost-of-living crisis

📍 Mildura, Vic | Melody Tan

Mums At The Table is helping to address the cost-of-living crisis through a new initiative that tackles environmental waste at the same time. Local Mums At The Table (MATT) groups have organised clothing swap events for the community in towns including Mildura (Vic), Wairoonga (NSW) and Ipswich (Qld).

"People are stretching their last dollars and we see it among our mums especially," said Larissa Forbes-Wilson, volunteer moderator for the Mildura MATT group. "From clothing their kids to feeding their kids, it's everywhere."

MATT, a ministry of Adventist Media, partners with local Adventist churches to serve mums in the local community. Working with volunteer moderators from local churches, MATT organises in-person events to connect with community mums. The ministry also shares parenting information on digital media.

The Mildura group runs the Affordable Wardrobe, where mums can find good quality children's clothing for free or a voluntary donation. All the clothes in the

Affordable Wardrobe are donated, and Ms Forbes-Wilson washes, sorts and stores the clothes in her garage until the next event.

In Wairoonga, the initiative is called "Give Gain Swap". It was started by former Upper North Shore group volunteer moderator Bréane Chapman in 2023 and continued by Brooke Sutton.

"There's also an environmental aspect to it: How can we help to reduce waste in landfill and increase the amount of wear for clothes?" said Ms Sutton.

There are currently 21 local MATT groups in Australia and New Zealand, moderated by 67 church members, representing 28 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.

Churches or individuals interested in being part of the ministry can find out more at <mumsatthetable.com/partner-with-us/> or email <hello@MumsAt-TheTable.com>.



Vice-chancellor Professor Lohi Matainaho expressed his gratitude for the university's journey.

PAU celebrates 40 years

📍 Port Moresby, PNG | Kym Piez/Juliana Muniz

Pacific Adventist University (PAU) celebrated its 40th anniversary with a homecoming celebration from July 1 to 7 at its Koiari Park campus. More than 1100 attendees, including alumni from across the South Pacific region, gathered on the campus to reflect on the university's impact.

The celebration began with various activities, including speed friending, class reunions and community outreach. Highlights of the week included a South Pacific Islands concert and a parade showcasing the diversity of PAU.

The opening ceremony featured an address by Papua New Guinea Prime Minister James Marape. In his speech, Mr Marape commended the institution for producing graduates over four decades in a wholistic education approach. He also acknowledged PAU's focus on service and community building as being vital for creating responsible citizens and leaders who contribute positively to society.

"It's inspiring to see institutions like PAU playing a role in nurturing such values in their students and this government stands ready to support you as you continue to grow," said the Prime Minister.

Throughout the week, attendees enjoyed live music performances, a night market and reflections on PAU's four decades of service. A special citation night honoured dedicated employees for their commitment to the university, while alumni chapters announced fundraising initiatives exceeding K100,000. Five alumni were recognised with Values Awards.

The final days of the celebration featured an open day with children's activities and groundbreaking ceremonies for two significant projects: an additional women's dormitory, and a prayer garden and memorial honouring former missionaries who served in the South Pacific. The university also unveiled a new book about former missionary Ken Boehm.

At the closing ceremony, PNG minister for higher education and PAU alumnus Kinoka Feo announced a K2 million scholarship program. The event also introduced new online application software and a refreshed university logo.

Vice-chancellor Professor Lohi Matainaho expressed his gratitude for the university's journey. "We are immensely grateful to God for guiding PAU for the past 40 years. His hand has been evident in our growth and achievements. As we look to the future, we are filled with optimism and excitement. PAU is committed to equipping our students to become world changers, serving communities, countries and our God."

making headlines

Night at the Camporee

For the first time in its history, the International Pathfinder Camporee, to be held from August 5-11 in Wyoming (US), will offer local residents a special "Night at the Camporee" on August 4, allowing them to preview the "Believe the Promise" program, featuring an inspiring story of Moses, praise music and a ventriloquist act, as gratitude for the community's support.—ANN



A sensory oasis

An Adventist Church in Rio, Brazil, has opened a multisensory room for autistic individuals, featuring special lighting, activity panels and aromatherapy to enhance comfort and self-regulation, in an effort to make worship more accessible and inclusive for all.—SAD

F-CAMP baptises 420

Following a successful Southern Asia-Pacific Division Congress, the Southeastern Philippines Youth Ministries launched their largest Friendship Camporee to date with F-CAMP 2024, bringing together Adventist and non-Adventist youth for a week of spiritual growth and community activities spread across 80 camp locations. The event concluded with the baptism of 420 campers.—SSD

Priceless papyrus

The *Crosby-Schoyen Codex*, believed to be the oldest surviving Christian book dating back to the fourth century, was recently sold by London auction house Christie's for \$A6 million to an anonymous phone bidder. Discovered in Egypt among a collection of texts in the 1950s, the codex's 104 pages, written in Coptic script on papyrus, include early Christian writings and biblical excerpts.—Vision Media



Youth rally

More than 400 young people attended a youth rally in Sydney (NSW) on June 22. Themed “Be Full of Good Works”, the event featured guest speakers and music. It was followed by a sports competition in the evening which brought together 15 teams to compete in basketball and volleyball. Proceeds from the food sold during the night will support a mission trip to Zambia in 2025. The rally also introduced a new structure for youth ministry in Sydney, which will now be organised into four regional teams: Central, South, North and West. “This approach aims to develop new leaders in youth ministry and allows for more effective ministry by addressing the specific needs,” said Greater Sydney Conference youth director Pastor Dejan Stojkovic.—Tracey Bridcutt



Leading in stressful times

A convention attended by local church leaders in New Zealand focused on how to stay connected to Jesus and continue serving in a busy, stressful and distracted world. Held at Pascoe Park in Christchurch, the three-day Anchored Leadership Convention was run by the South New Zealand Conference and pastoral team and attended by more than 100 local church leaders, with one-third of participants aged between 16 and 29. The weekend featured 20 workshops that covered a variety of topics including dealing with burnout, conflict resolution, successful member engagement, practical discipleship and accurate Bible interpretation. There was an under 30s option in each session, providing a stream of workshops designed specifically for young leaders. “I feel refreshed, encouraged and have taken away a number of practical tools that will help me in my ministry moving forward,” an attendee said.—Kiera Bridcutt



Stemming success

Twenty-nine students from Tweed Valley Adventist College (Murwillumbah, NSW) achieved success at the recent Gold Coast Science and Engineering Challenge. The two-day competition, hosted by Griffith University and Rotary, provides students with the opportunity to experience a side of science and engineering they may not have encountered. Sixteen schools attended the event, with Tweed Valley finishing third overall. “We don’t have a dedicated STEM subject or club which many of the other schools have in place,” science teacher Simon Pleskovic said, “so it is awesome that we did so well.”

—Kiera Bridcutt



Student ministry

Adventist students from various universities across Fiji recently gathered at the Cakau Adventist church hall to celebrate the 10th anniversary of Public Campus Ministry (PCM). An initiative of the worldwide Church, PCM is a ministry focused on reaching out to students, faculty and staff on university and college campuses. Attendees were encouraged to reflect on God’s calling to share the gospel.—Juliana Muniz



Dental relief

Reconstruction of the dental clinic at Atoifi Adventist Hospital, Solomon Islands, is set to resume.

Work on the dental clinic began in 2016 but was halted due to local issues. A staff house, funded under the project, has already been completed. The current phase of the project will focus on finishing the dental clinic.

The project is being funded by Australians Dr Genna Levitch, a dentist, and his son-in-law Tim Edwards. The funds have been channelled through ADRA Australia and will be administered by ADRA Solomon Islands.

Dr Levitch and builder Wilber Clarke visited Atoifi Hospital recently and will organise a shipping container to be sent from Australia. The container will contain building materials and equipment such as dental chairs, compressors and suction motors.

Principal of Atoifi School of Nursing, Alwin Muse, who was on the ground to assist them during their visit, is grateful and excited about the project. "Having this dental clinic opened here will be a huge relief for us and for our student nurse who would like to become a dentist," Mr Muse said.

The dental clinic will feature two dental chairs, a reception area, a staff room, a lab and a sterilising room. It will be operated by Atoifi Hospital and will serve residents of the surrounding regions.—**Denver Newter/Record Staff**

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First anniversary

Sydney Adventist Hospital held a spiritual blessing to mark the first anniversary of the Medical Assessment Unit (MAU). The MAU is designed to fast-track definitive diagnosis and treatment plans for patients from emergency care. More than 1700 patients have been cared for by the staff in the MAU since it opened last year with 10 beds in Gee Ward. Earlier this month the number of beds was doubled to 20. Clinical director of the unit, Dr Auriel Jameson, reflected on the past 12 months, expressing her deep gratitude for the efforts of nursing unit manager of Gee Ward, Emily Stephenson, the nursing team, the doctors, nurses, pharmacists and all staff who have made the unit a success.—**Alexandra Ristway**



Yarning and sharing

A NAIDOC Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ministries (ATSIM) regional created a safe space for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to fellowship, worship and celebrate First Nations peoples in Cairns (Qld) on July 6. The regional was led by Daniel Gela and a team of ATSIM representatives from the area. Australian Union Conference ATSIM director Pastor Darren Garlett preached on the theme "God is the source that keeps the fire burning". "With a Sabbath of intergenerational worship, special items, yarning and sharing, it was a special spiritual experience for all who attended," said Pastor Garlett. Participants came from Torres Strait Islands, Townsville, Atherton Tablelands, Mareeba, Kuranda and Cairns. According to Pastor Garlett, special moments included "uplifting our elders in prayer, hearing from our young people through testimony and song, and not forgetting a huge potluck lunch with the guitar and singing in the background."—**Juliana Muniz**



The Manji Pantry: a vital community lifeline

The Manji Pantry is a vital lifeline for the Manjimup community in Western Australia.

Run by the Manjimup Seventh-day Adventist church, the pantry has been providing the local community with quality food at affordable prices as well as food hampers since November 2019. On weeks the pantry doesn't open, volunteers personally deliver food hampers to the most vulnerable. They are also on call for emergencies such as domestic violence situations.

For pantry organiser and church pastor Ross Craig this is a deeply personal mission, having experienced the harsh reality of homelessness himself while living in inner city Brisbane.

"Upon arriving in Manjimup, it did not take long to recognise that there were people in food distress," he said.

"After being a homeless drug addict who quite literally ate food from bins, I knew what I was seeing and that there was something that could be done.

"I would sometimes go to a local food charity. I spoke with some local church members about the possibility of the church doing something similar as I had benefited from the food charity."

Operating every second and fourth Thursdays of the month, the pantry has more than 400 registered clients. However, over the five years the pantry has been operating, it is estimated more than 500 people have received their aid.

"On more than one occasion I've been stopped in the street or supermarket and thanked for what our church has done for the community," Pastor Craig said.

"Being told by people around the town that 'it's good to see practical Christianity in action' nearly brings tears to my eyes. To have an elderly, homeless man step into your path while walking down the main street and have him announce at

full voice 'you're the guy from that church that cares' makes it all worthwhile.

"Some of our volunteers were once clients and, praise the Lord, some of our church members were once volunteers who were once clients."

The pantry provides food to another church for a soup kitchen, as well as bread and other items for a men's breakfast, and food hampers for local school chaplains and principals for families in need. Food is also donated to the church's annual "Pancakes in the Park" breakfast on Christmas morning. This is a free breakfast in the main tourist park in Manjimup for those without anyone to celebrate Christmas with. Volunteers now see more than 100 people attending, with many being international workers from local orchards.

In conjunction with the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), the pantry also assists in the running of an op-shop, providing clothing, bedding, tents and backpack beds for the homeless.

Earlier this month, the Manji Pantry received a state government grant of \$A67,000 from the Community Small Grants Fund to go towards a new van.

"Up until the arrival of the van we would have up to six volunteers on the road at dawn to drive in three private vehicles the 250km round trip to Bunbury twice a month," Pastor Craig said.

The new van will reduce wear on personal vehicles and will help bring more attention to the pantry. With Manjimup being an area prone to bushfires, the van will also be used in times of disaster, delivering aid to evacuation centres. Further, it will assist in transporting donated produce from local farmers and orchards.

The pantry's work in Manjimup has been honoured, being



nominated for a Citizen of the Year Award in 2021 by the Australia Day Council of Western Australia.

According to Pastor Craig, the support from the community has been overwhelming. The local Rotary club donates \$1000 every season to help cover the cost of the food hampers given away and the Warren District Women's Hockey club recently donated about \$500 worth of food plus \$800 cash. Other supporters include the local Uniting Church which donated \$6000 cash, the local Community Resource Centre which donated two cash registers and the Manjimup LJ Hooker office which donated a massive freezer.

The pantry was also approached by the Manjimup Cherry Harmony Festival committee to host a breakfast event to launch the week-long festival. This led to the start of the Very Cherry Brekkie which is now in its third year of running.

Pastor Craig said running the pantry has been a wonderful affirmation of God's call on his life.

"While I was tied up in the drug, motorcycle, criminal world I didn't stop believing in God, I just didn't like Him very much because He was 'standing by and watching my life go down the 'toilet'," he said. "But now I get it; I could not be more amazed with Him and thankful that, although it was dark and numerous times death was staring me in the face either by my own hand or someone else's, Jesus was right there with me.

"Everything I'd been through has now been 'handy' as I'm able to not just recognise but really get where some of our clients are. The expressions on their faces when they realise I'm not offering some platitude but actually understand and empathise, make it all worthwhile."

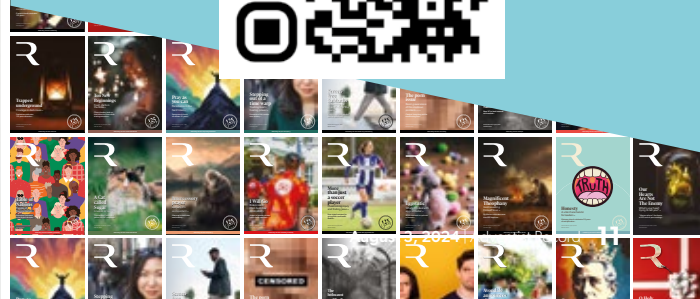
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From drug dealers to disciples

In the remote village of Gumine, we observed a transformative journey unfolding under the guidance of their pastors and ministers. They were actively engaged in mentoring a group of troubled men known in the community as drug dealers. Alongside Pastor Bob Larsen, I had the opportunity to connect with these individuals, conducting a counselling session to address their struggles.

Drawing from my own past experiences of battling drug addiction, I shared the profound impact that a relationship with Jesus had on my life. My testimony resonated with these men, igniting a spark of hope within them. Encouraged by our discussions, they began attending the nightly PNG for Christ sessions led by Pastor Bob and me.

In a remarkable turn of events the following week, these men approached us with a heartfelt desire for transformation. They expressed a collective wish to symbolically break free from their past by burning all their marijuana plants in front of the entire village. This act signified a profound commitment to leave behind their former lives of darkness and embrace a new path guided by faith.

Moreover, their new-found conviction led them to express a willingness to be baptised, publicly declaring their allegiance to Jesus Christ. This decision marked a significant milestone in their spiritual journey. Through the dedicated efforts of their pastors, the power of shared testimonies and the stirring of divine grace, these once-troubled men found the courage to confront their past and step into a future filled with hope and purpose. Their story is a testament to the transformative power of faith and community support, demonstrating that no-one is beyond redemption when guided by love and compassion.

As the community gathered for the worship service, a sacred aura enveloped the atmosphere. Amidst hymns and prayers, a profound declaration resonated: "Enough is Enough!" In a bold gesture of repentance, the drug dealers chose to confront their past. They ignited a bonfire, engulfing their marijuana plants in flames—a symbolic act of casting away the chains of addiction and darkness.

In the glow of the fire, a powerful transformation unfolded. These men, once bound by the shackles of vice, now stood liberated, their hearts ablaze with new-found faith. The following day, all were baptised, publicly proclaiming their devotion to and love for Jesus Christ.

In Luke 19:10 it says, "The Son of man came to seek and to save the lost." Through their remarkable journey, these individuals embody the essence of this divine mission. They are a testament to God's boundless grace and transformative power—a reminder that no soul is beyond redemption, no darkness too deep to be penetrated by the light of love.

Experiencing the profound transformation of the troubled men in Gumine was an unparalleled blessing, filling me with immeasurable joy. Witnessing their journey from darkness to light, bondage to liberation, deeply touched my heart. It affirmed the incredible power of grace, faith, redemption and resilience. Being able to share my struggles and witness firsthand the transformative work of God's love was a privilege beyond measure. In those moments, I felt profoundly blessed to be a part of something greater than myself and to witness the beauty of God's restoration and boundless grace.

Pastor Mosa Mafileo

serves in the North New Zealand Conference. He and Pastor Bob Larsen, North NZ Conference president, presented in the Eastern Highlands Simbu Mission during the PNG for Christ program.

No Strings attached: *Kata Ragoso*



Kata Ragoso was one of the first Adventists to ever be baptised and ordained as a pastor in the Solomon Islands. His name bears testimony to the transformation experienced in the Solomon Islands during his lifetime in turning to God.

The Marovo Lagoon tribesmen of the Solomon Islands were once considered the most warlike and cannibalistic of tribes in their region. They worshipped the spirits of their ancestors whose skulls were kept after death, and there was a great deal of “devil-fear” which the tribe obsessively lived with. Their tribe constantly engaged in inter-tribal warfare and headhunting raids, where warriors brought back the severed heads of their vanquished enemies to display as signs of power and victory.

At the turn of the 19th century, Kata Ragoso was born. Prior to the birth, his father, Chief Tatagu, had gone on a fishing expedition where he intentionally did not attach a vine to the boat—this was supposed to placate the devil and ensure a good catch. The fishing expedition was a great success and as a result, Chief Tatagu named his newborn son Kata Ragoso, which means “no devil strings”. Kata Ragoso’s life would go on to reveal the power of God to transform his community and remove the strings and ties which the devil had over his people.

Kata Ragoso grew up in a time when unprincipled European traders enticed Solomon Islanders into their ships with trinkets and foreign goods to kidnap them as slave labourers. But in June 1914, when Kata Ragoso was about 12 years old, a small white boat arrived at Marovo Lagoon. It was called the *Advent Herald*. The men from this ship did not try to entice the people or take them away as slaves, but instead Captain

Jones asked Chief Tatagu for a piece of land on which to build a school. In 1915, a school was built at Sasaghana, and Kata Ragoso was one of 23 students to first attend. As a result of attending this school, Kata Ragoso accepted Christianity and was among the first 10 Solomon Islanders to be baptised on January 1, 1918.¹

Ragoso became a very earnest and efficient young man, learning to speak and understand English, as well as type and operate a printing press. He furthered his education at Batuna, and after completing his studies, he stayed on as a teacher and translator, helping to print school lessons, as well as portions of the Bible and song books in the local language. In 1935, Ragoso was ordained as an Adventist minister.

During World War II, between 1942 and 1945, Pastor Kata Ragoso was chosen to be the Mission superintendent to care for the Seventh-day Adventist work in the Solomon Islands. When the Imperial Japanese Army invaded, Ragoso was ordered by them to kill anyone who had white skin or was from the Allied forces. Ragoso, however, was not willing to kill anyone and was determined to obey God rather than man. For this refusal, Ragoso was severely punished, being imprisoned, interrogated and flogged for his faith.

The interrogating officer had a strong disdain for the church and ordered that Ragoso be killed by a firing squad. The officer instructed the firing squad to shoot when he counted to “three”. He counted “one”, “two” . . . but was unable to speak the word “three”. He tried mul-

tiplle times before giving up and walking away, with the firing squad refusing to shoot without the direct order. Ragoso knew God had prevented the officer from giving the order to shoot. After 10 days’ imprisonment, Ragoso escaped.²

During the remainder of the war, Ragoso organised for watchmen to be positioned every five miles along the coast from Gatokae to Vella Lavella, watching for planes and warships which were shot down. Boats would be sent out to rescue the soldiers who were shot down, taking them to villages and mission stations to look after them until they could be moved to safety. Ragoso never expected anything in return from the soldiers he rescued, and only sought to serve with mercy, humility and kindness—no strings attached. Altogether, Ragoso rescued 27 American pilots and 187 Australian and New Zealand soldiers during the war.

Pastor Kata Ragoso saw his community transformed during his lifetime through God’s power from a warring, violent community into a merciful and God-fearing people active in service.

1. Wilson Gia Liligeto, ‘Ragoso, Kata’ Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists (ESDA) (January 29, 2020).

2. The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, General Conference Report, No 4, 123(26) General Church Paper of the Seventh-Day Adventists (June 10, 1946) <<https://documents.adventistarchives.org/Periodicals/RH/RH19460610-V123-26.pdf>>.

Olivia Fairfax

Assistant editor, *Adventist Record*



Mamarapha:

A place of healing

TRIGGER WARNING: This story contains details of traumatic experiences.

Justin White's story is one of immense suffering, abuse, anger and grief, but it's also a story of healing and God's continual pursuit.

Growing up in Darwin, Justin described his mother as very abusive. She would whip him with a jug cord until his entire body was covered with welts and bruises; one time, fracturing his skull with a tyre lever. When he was five years old, his mother stabbed him, cutting his wrist to the bone, leaving him for hours after screaming at him to die. Hours later, she took him to the doctor's office. "I heard him roaring at her," Justin recalls.

Although he asked to be taken to his grandmother, Justin believes his mum wanted to hide him from her, so instead he and his three-year-old sister were taken to a place where they were left with a woman who brutally tortured and raped him repeatedly. "She wouldn't even allow us to eat. They would cook food for themselves, but I had to feed myself and my three-year-old sister from a bin." Justin explains that they survived on mango skins and the marrow they sucked from broken chicken bones. "I had the good sense to feed my sister first and whatever was left, I ate." Eventually Justin's mother and boyfriend returned to get them and took them to their grandmother. It was she who taught them about God.

Justin's childhood was peppered with memories of bouncing between homes and feelings of extreme fear and resentment—although there were some good times. He explained

that he loved his mum, but "when she beat us, she beat us! Especially me, she said I looked a lot like my father, and I've heard that he didn't treat her too good."

kicking life in the teeth

One day Justin's young cousin took him to meet a Tibetan warrior monk who had a temple in Darwin. "He took me in. When I was about 17, he said to me, 'I'm going to get you away from your family mate, they're not good for you.'" Some months later, Justin headed to Sydney where he stayed at Kirinari—a secondary education hostel. His house parents were the uncle and auntie of Indigenous rugby league star Ricky Walford. Justin described them as "nice people". Ricky would regularly give him tickets to attend games. Justin explains that by this time, "I had a lot of abandonment issues and a lot of anger."

When he was 18, Justin walked into a sports store where he met his future kickboxing teacher. Under his tutelage, Justin went heavyweight. One day he was put on a punching machine to test his poundage per square inch. "If you haven't got enough strength, they won't let you go up to that weight, because you've got to have a certain amount of power. It was actually a kicking machine I punched, because someone had broken the punching machine. I broke both sides, one with each punch." This test showed that Justin had over 25 tonne of power in each hand. He was accused of being on steroids.

They told him, "You're only 18 and you're punching over five times the power of [boxer Mike] Tyson! We can't let you fight." Justin ended up agreeing to two drug tests to prove he was clean, and told them, "You'll owe me an apology!" When the tests came back negative, he was awarded his World Boxing Association heavyweight ranking and was told he needed to be careful not to kill anyone.

One day when he was training in a gym, he punched a 385kg punching bag. With just two punches, he tore it from the ceiling. He would train and train until he'd have to be carried out of the gym. One day he was asked what drove him. He responded, "Every time I see that bag, I see my mother's face." Justin explains that his issues continued into his mid-30s.

other plans

During this time, he tried to take his own life six times. Four times he tried to shoot himself in the head. Each time, although there were bullets in the barrel, the gun would not fire. Justin tells how he tested it by firing it at the wall. When that worked, he tried again, but again the gun would not fire. This happened four times. Sometime later he decided he would hang himself. He threw a rope over a tree branch, put it around his neck and jumped. The rope snapped. He stood there and shook his fist toward heaven, screaming, "What do you want from me?!" Deciding not to be bested, he tried again. This time the branch broke and hit him on the head. Again, he looked toward heaven and demanded that God tell him why He wouldn't just let him die.

At 35, even though he'd vowed never to return, he found himself back at the place where his mother had left him to be abused. He was given work there as a sports and recreation officer. "I did very well, they were proud of me. That's where I met my beautiful wife, the most beautiful woman I've ever met in my life! She was very slow to wrath but very quick to forgive. She had Father's [God's] way in her without even knowing the Bible, before I brought her to Father. She believed in Jesus, that He died, and He rose from the dead. She told me she believed and accepted Him into her life . . . I loved her more than anyone in my life."

Justin described his wife's community spirit and her desire to help children and families who had little. Every person she encountered in need, she would feed and provide other necessities for them and each Christmas every child in town would be given a Christmas hamper. Horrifically, just over a year ago, Justin's wife died in his arms after being king punched underneath the jaw by her niece. "It stopped my beautiful wife's heart—she killed her. She died in my arms. She died looking into my eyes. I saw, felt and heard her very last breath. I still can't believe it!"

from horror to hope

About a week after the death of his wife, Justin was crying and begging God for a sign that he would see her again. "Something made me turn around. There was a big tree with yellow flowers on it and when I showed everyone they looked and saw it too; it was in plain sight for everyone in the community to see. The tree was literally glowing, it was emanating yellow. And then two men walked in the front gate

of the community; it just happened to be Pastor John Beck and Andrew Johnson."

They asked him what his name was, and when he told them, they said they were looking for him. "I think they had come to console me, but it was more than that. When I was speaking to them about my wife, I told them that not only had we wanted to get married, but we had also talked about me getting into ministry. Pastor Beck said, 'Mate, you're talking to the right people, there's a Bible college called Mamarapha, where we train you for that.'" Justin subsequently started attending Mamarapha College in 2023.

Owned and operated by the Australian Seventh-day Adventist Church, Mamarapha is nestled in lush bushland in the hills of Perth. It commenced operation in 1997 as a Bible college. Today it offers courses in Indigenous Ministry and Lifestyle Health Promotion and Indigenous Pastoral Ministry and continues to live up to its name—Mamarapha—"God heals and makes whole".

Sharing a moment of transformation Justin explained, "I hated that young lady [his niece], and I wanted to destroy her of course, but in class one day through Pastor Dave, Father broke it down for me—all about forgiveness. I broke down and Pastor Dave stopped the class and prayed for me." Justin and David left the classroom "and it happened right there. I think Pastor Dave knew what was going on inside of me. When we went outside, I realised what I had to do. I felt it. I rang up the prosecutor, even though the case is still ongoing, and I told him I forgive her. I said, 'Let her know her uncle loves her'. I still hurt. But I don't think I ask why anymore. Father has a plan. I've learned that Father will never put something upon you, you can't handle. So, He must know I can take a lot. Sometimes it frightens me when I think, *Oh my goodness, what's going to happen next?*

"The way the teachers here break things down is absolutely brilliant. We get nothing but A1 treatment here. When we come to Mamarapha, Father supports us. I've come to all sorts of realisations. All the teachers are wonderful. I'm a hard nut to crack, but they still love me. Every teacher that comes makes it better and better. They speak about things I'm dealing with in my life and how to handle them. So, if Father wills it, the only way is up from here. Hopefully, if there's enough time in the world, I will get to be a minister . . . that will be a good day!"

Justin admits he still has immense grief but being at the college really helps him. "I've come a long way . . . Father showed me something, the glowing tree, the two pastors walking through the gate, I knew what His message was to me: 'Serve Me My son, and you'll see her again.' That's exactly the way I took it. He answered me and I look forward to that day . . . now I'm focusing on how to serve Father better."

Maree Worker/Mamarapha College

To learn more about Mamarapha, head to <mamarapha.adventist.edu.au>. Mamarapha will be collecting an offering on Sabbath, August 17.

This story appeared in the July issue of *Signs of the Times*.

If this story caused you distress, help is available. Visit Beyond Blue at <beyondblue.org.au>. For crisis support or suicide prevention, call Lifeline on 13 11 14 (AU) or 0800 543 354 (NZ).



Country, Community *and Connection*

Pastor Darren Garlett is a Whadjuk Noongar man—Whadjuk on his father’s side, Mineng on his mother’s. Whadjuk is the city of Perth region and Mineng is in the deep south-west corner of WA on the coastline between Albany and Esperance. Darren now resides in Melbourne where he is the director of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ministries—otherwise known as ATSIM—for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Australia.

As a child and young man in the wheatbelt region of Western Australia, Darren was surrounded by farm workers and thought he’d end up shearing sheep. “I can remember very early in my life being in a shearing shed with my dad with the smell and touch of wool.”

After having children, Darren started reflecting on what their future would be like and what sort of value system he wanted them to grow up with. It was then he remembered his grandmother and the family’s history of Christianity. “For my family growing up, the Christian influence was [from] my grandmother. I remember her walking around singing hymns and doing all kinds of good works. She lived her faith out in the little things, going from door to door, taking people’s washing and helping them [with] any little jobs.” His grandmother’s influence set Darren on the path to accepting Jesus and eventually, through a set of amazing circumstances, he became a Seventh-day Adventist Christian.

“So that’s the journey—faith and how it sort of went right around and led us into the church.

“It’s always been something on our hearts from the day we went to church [and] decided to serve God. For us, there’s no separation . . . I don’t understand the concept of going to church and not doing anything for God. What influenced me was this little old lady who was a Christian. She didn’t preach, she just did stuff. That’s what influences us today in what we do.”

Darren attended Mamarapha College, an Adventist training school for Indigenous workers, and before he knew it, he was working in a ministry internship role in Sydney. “I had no intentions to share anything with anybody. I went to Mamarapha College and all the way through, I was there for my own personal development. I just really wanted to understand, ‘What does it mean to be a Christian? What does it mean to understand God’s Word?’ That’s what I was there for.

“And then I learned that it’s about serving and sharing and preaching and teaching.”

the calling

Darren didn’t recognise that God was calling him into a ministry of sharing his faith with his people until he was already three months into that first job.

"I didn't see that happening to me because it just wasn't on my radar. It was happening and I wasn't even aware of it. Which was a good thing because there was no resistance to any of it. But then to have the realisation that yes, it is God that's called me to do what I'm doing—it started the journey of then understanding and accepting that, yes, God is in control of this and wherever He's leading, that's where we'll serve. That's been good. Challenging—but good."

Ministry has taken Darren all over the country, yet, as he explains, "place" still holds central importance for him as an Indigenous man. In his role, Darren has helped the Seventh-day Adventist Church include acknowledgement of country in events. "It's important to acknowledge country when we go to a particular place—it's vital." Darren explains how, in the West, "we meet and greet" at the door before we go into a house and so for Aboriginal people, the welcome to country has always been an integral part of greeting guests, introducing ourselves and introducing them to new places.

"It is something that's been suppressed in many places and because of the displacement of Aboriginal people through the stolen generation. It's not just about searching for the location of a particular place they're emotionally connected to. People are searching for their country—where they belong.

"It's searching for where their family roots are. Many of those connections have been lost. That's why it's important for us to have acknowledgement of country and welcome to country."

common ground

Darren rejects the idea that Christianity and Indigenous spirituality are at odds with each other. "There's a foundation among Indigenous people that there's a Creator. As soon as we identify that, we can draw links to the Bible and our own understanding of God as the Creator. So that's a good starting point that tells us there are things in common [between a biblical and Indigenous worldview]. And then you go through different aspects of an Indigenous person's way of life and their values—the things they hold dear—to respect and honour, relationships and so on, obedience to lore and what place lore has in society."

That doesn't mean that everything fits. "There are aspects, like in all cultures, where there are elements that don't align with Christianity or the Bible." However, he says "we have more in common than what divides us".

Darren says acknowledgment of God and a Creator has been part of Indigenous culture since before the First Fleet and before the Bible. "It shows that God was aligned with people all around the world, Indigenous people of every country."

Even the presence of evil in the world, Darren says, aligns the biblical and Indigenous worldview.

"There's also an element of fear and evil that is present in our stories. So, it's no different to when we look at the Scriptures where we see people's actions who go against God's will. We see things that take place in our own communities that go against God's will so there are many things that align."

rest and country

Another concept that Darren finds resonates with Indigenous Christians is the Sabbath.

"The Sabbath is a key thing for Adventists; rest and balance plays a big part in what we [Indigenous Australians] do. Like families that are on country today that still hunt and live off animals and plants and things like that. They understand the concept of balance, know when to [harvest] and when to refrain. So, keeping things in balance is a big part of life as we know it. Sabbath was given to us for that purpose; to keep us in balance so we're not overworked, we're not run down or worn out. But certainly, resting and knowing that there's a higher power and that God will provide. Waiting on God—and when it's His time—is something that fits easily with our mob."

That expectation that God will work in the human experience, Darren sees as a strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

"There's a tendency to simply rely on God. I see that in a lot of our Indigenous cultures, where [it is] easy to do. And yet in our Western lives, we struggle with that. Even as an Aboriginal person living in the city—when we face some sort of hardship or something is going on around us—no matter how simple it could be, whether it's lost keys or can't find something in the house—sometimes prayer is the last thing that we'll come to. But for our folks out there, that's the first thing they do.

"It's something that is just built-in—that you can go to God, the Creator, God who knows everything, God who is always present—no matter the circumstances."

According to Darren, one of the biggest issues Indigenous people face is acceptance of their culture in the wider community. He says most Australians could tell you how to say hello in Japanese: *konnichiwa*—a greeting from a country that is half the world away. Yet most couldn't tell you the name of the Indigenous tribe from the area they live in, let alone how to use a greeting in their language.

"I think one of the things we need to do is simply have more awareness and understand that we've got a shared history—so that we can have a shared future.

"Even if you're reading this and don't have Christian values, everyone has a desire to have a healthy and happy community. And that is really all about coming together and sharing and talking and looking at ways on how we can have that for the future.

"Our [Indigenous] community values are to work together, to hold relationships in high regard. And that means having community, having a sense of togetherness and unity.

"It's about connecting people—people to stories and then ultimately stories that lead to God and our faith and things that make us better people."

To connect with Pastor Darren and ATSIM, head to <atsim.org.au>. August 17 is the Mamarapha offering. Mamarapha has trained many Indigenous church leaders and is an Australian Union Conference institution. This story first appeared in the July issue of *Signs of the Times*.

Jarrold Stackelroth

Editor, *Signs of the Times* and *Adventist Record*.



Self-saucing sticky date pudding

Serves 8

Prep 10

Cook 30

How good is a pudding that creates its own special spiced caramel source as it bakes? This delicious self-saucing sticky date pudding with So Good Unsweetened Almond Milk is perfect when served warm and fresh out of the oven.

Ingredients

¾ cup So Good Unsweetened Almond Milk
 1 ½ cups self-raising wholemeal flour
 1/3 cup brown sugar
 100g pitted dates, chopped
 1 tsp cinnamon
 ½ tsp salt

For the topping:

1 cup boiling water
 ¼ cup brown sugar
 1 tbsp non-dairy butter or margarine
 ½ cup So Good Unsweetened Almond Milk

Tips:

- Serve with a dollop of low fat dairy-free Greek yoghurt and an extra sprinkling of cinnamon, if you wish.

Method

1. Preheat oven to 180°C, lightly coat a 20 x 20 cm square pan with cooking oil spray.
2. Combine flour, brown sugar, dates, cinnamon and salt in a medium bowl. Add milk and stir to combine. Spread batter into the prepared pan.
3. For the topping combine water, brown sugar and margarine in a large heat-proof jug. Stir until margarine is melted, then add milk. Pour liquid carefully over the surface of the batter—do not stir!
4. Bake for 25-30 minutes, until centre is firm and edges are bubbling. Stand for 10 minutes before serving warm.

Nutritional Information (per serving)

| ENERGY | CALORIES | PROTEIN | FAT | SATURATES | CARBOHYDRATE |
|--------|----------|---------|--------|-----------|--------------|
| 805kJ | 192 | 3g | 3g | 1g | 37g |
| SUGARS | FIBRE | CALCIUM | SODIUM | IRON | POTASSIUM |
| 18g | 5g | 90mg | 360mg | 1mg | 207mg |



Recipe of the Week

Subscribe to receive delicious plant-based recipes straight to your inbox.

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Conversations

Emphasis on grace

Thank you for the emphasis on the Sabbath as a gift of God's grace ("Sabbath and Grace", July 6). [The author] points out that a change came about in our Church from the 1888 Conference. The teaching was: (1) justification by faith is only for past sins, (2) obedience is necessary to attain eternal life, and, (3) a sinless last generation before translation to heaven.

In contrast, Waggoner and Jones taught it's impossible for us to obey God's law perfectly. We needed to receive, by faith, the righteousness of Christ to meet the claims of God's law. The law, rather than saving us, shows our sinfulness and points to our need of Jesus and His righteousness. This teaching delighted Ellen White, who gave them a ringing endorsement, with qualifications.

She differed with them on the following. They taught: (1) Christ had a beginning, therefore was not God eternal (1889), (2) Christ took sinful flesh, with sinful tendencies (1887), (3) justification was for past sins (1886, 1887, 1888), (4) sin resides in actions, not nature (1889), (5) righteousness by faith was Christ living in us keeping the law of God in us (1886, 1887, 1888, 1889, 1890). (This led them into perfectionism, pantheism and apostasy), (6) Jones

said "those who live to the end are made sinless before he [Jesus] comes." (1889). (George Knight states this is the root of perfectionism in Adventism).

It's to Ellen White we owe the emphasis on grace. She wrote her most Christ and grace-centred books from that time on.

Errol Webster, NSW

Take another look

So often, I hear people in the church talking about end-time scenarios and how it will all play out. They keep trying to fit world events into their checklists, whether they belong there or not. Much of it is not to be found in Scripture.

I'm tired of hearing about the Jesuits under every bed and how the Pope is orchestrating everything that happens in the world. Now, Donald Trump is the next thing. The Bible tells us there will be certain events that will happen at the end before Christ comes, but should this be our focus?

I'm constantly hearing from the General Conference about spreading the three angels' messages, but in the world I live in, [people] don't want to know. But they will respond to love, compassion and help when they need it. Instead, I'd like to hear about the gospel commission to go and make disciples (Matthew 28:16-20) or

the command in James 1:27 to look after the widows and orphans in their distress. Or "Love one another as I have loved you" or Isaiah 58:6-11 . . . "to loose the chains of injustice, to feed the hungry, clothe the naked" etc. After all, this is what Jesus did!

So, I urge those in the "corridors of power" to take another look at the gospel, and proclaim that Jesus is the centre of it all. Let's spread Jesus and not our theories and imagined scenarios. Let's show them Jesus through our lives, and then maybe they will listen to His story.

Margaret Owens, NZ

Delighted to hear from us

As much as some insist on public pray-ers adhering to so-called scriptural protocol ("In Jesus' name" Conversations, June 15), I'm positive that when we talk to God either in church or at home, when in dire straits or during a morning chat on the way to work, He is delighted to hear from us. He knows the heart and the words that are spoken or unspoken. He hears our humble stuttering, and our pontificating pronouncements. Whether we begin with "Our" or "Dear" and end with "Amen" or "in Jesus' name", our God will never turn away from those who earnestly share with Him.

Name supplied

Hello Kids!

We find comfort
in God's grace.



GOD'S GRACE IS ENOUGH

God doubles Job's blessings, even though Job had questioned the fairness of God and the accuracy of His judgement. Job admits that he was talking about things he really hadn't understood and promises to continue learning about God. We can be assured that God doesn't disown His children, even when we are wrong in our understanding of Him. God's grace persists in helping us gain knowledge of His love.

Job's Blessings

Discover Job's blessings!

WORK OUT THE MATHS PROBLEMS TO SEE JOB'S BLESSINGS.

$$\begin{array}{r} 3682 \\ \div \quad ? \\ \hline 526 \end{array}$$

SONS

$$\begin{array}{r} \text{SHEEP} \\ 700 \\ \times 2 \\ \hline \end{array}$$



$$\begin{array}{r} 1626 \\ \div \quad ? \\ \hline 542 \end{array}$$

DAUGHTERS



$$\begin{array}{r} 500 \\ \times 12 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

CAMELS

$$\begin{array}{r} 23 \\ + 977 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

OXEN

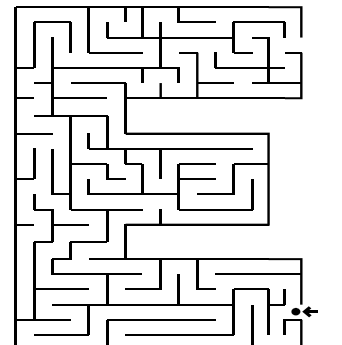
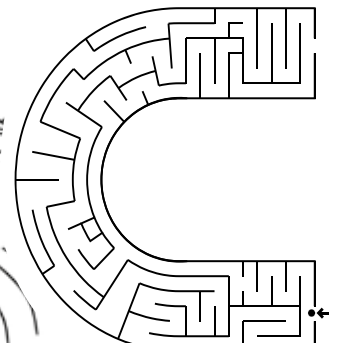
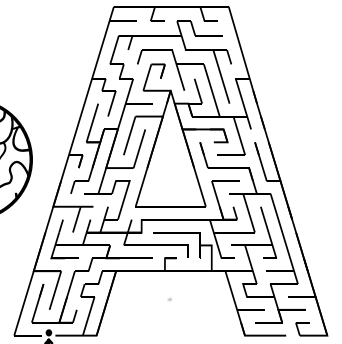
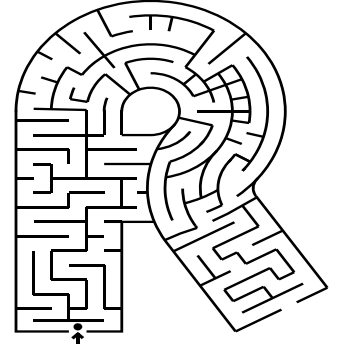
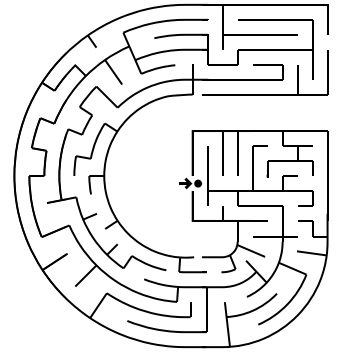


$$\begin{array}{r} 417 \\ + 583 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

FEMALE DONKEYS



"My ears had heard of you but now my eyes have seen you" (Job 42:5).



Obituaries



BROUGHTON, Donna Ma'rie, born 1.9.1961 in Christchurch, NZ; died 18.5.24 in

Wyong Public Hospital, NSW. She is survived by her cousins, Liz Vincent and Lee McClintock. Donna was employed as a heavy truck driver and succeeded well in this work. She was known to be loyal, kind, giving and friendly. Donna was strong of faith and now rests, awaiting the coming of Jesus.

Roger Nixon



BULLAS, Audrey Anne (nee Chaplin), born 6.9.1933 in Adelaide, SA; died 15.5.24 in Aberfoyle

Park, aged 90 years. On 5.9.1955 she married Gordon, who predeceased her on 25.10.20. Audrey is survived by her sons and their partners, Jeff and Carrie (Bronte Beach, NSW), Rodney and Mitsy (Aberfoyle Park, SA), Darryl and Bev (Cooks Hill, NSW); daughter, Jo-anne and Leigh Sheldrick (Wakerley, Qld); 12 grandchildren; and 11 great-grandchildren. Audrey was a warm, caring and patient person, who provided quiet strength and support to her husband through church ministry for more than 50 years. She was always hospitable and invited many people to their family home for meals. She loved her God and believed she would be made whole again when Jesus returns.

Maciej Kuberek



CRACKNELL, Frederick William, born 12.5.1943 in Perth, WA; died 8.6.24 in Wyong

Hospital, NSW. On 16.5.1965 he married Janelle Pearsall in Dubbo. He was predeceased by his brother, Glen in 2010. Fred is survived by his wife (Morisset Park); daughters, Simone (Morisset Park) and Luisa (Brisbane, Qld) with husband Peter Dunn; grandchildren, Blake and Olivia; sibling, Desiree and

Don McNicol (Northern Tasmania) and their family. Fred was the principal of Navesau (Fiji) junior high school, Castle Hill and Avondale primary schools before developing the Avondale High School music program and wind band. In retirement, he conducted the Avondale Brass Band and played in many other groups. Fred's dedication to family, mentoring students and investing in a musical legacy is greatly missed.

Graeme Perry



ELLIS (WEBER), Glenys, born 6.8.1944; died 17.1.24. She was

predeceased by her first husband, Max Weber on 10.3.01. She later married Griff Ellis, who predeceased her in 2005. Glenys is survived by her son, Wayne and Debbie (Palmerston North, NZ); daughters, Julianne and Simon (Brisbane, Qld), Shelley and Jim (Hahei, NZ), Kerry and Mark (Palmerston North) and Janice and Grant (Rotorua); 10 grandchildren; and 14 great-grandchildren. She was a much-loved mother, fondly remembered by her grandchildren. Glenys was a loyal, hardworking and soulful person who endeared herself to all she met. As a church, she constantly reminded us of the blessed hope we have in Jesus. We look forward to the reunion day.

Anton van Wyk



WALTERS, Karen Anne (nee McArthur), born 28.6.1950 in Catterick, UK; died 11.3.24 in Alkira

Aged Care, Toogoolawah, Qld. On 24.7.1998 she married Maurice in Swansea, NSW. She is survived by her husband (Blackbutt, Qld); daughter, Laurie Lynch (Medowie, NSW); son, Matthew Grayson (Newcastle); and stepdaughters, Janine and Daniel Woodforde (Kelso, Qld) and Karen and Mark Ryland (Dayboro). Karen suffered from multiple sclerosis early in her married life but through following the eight laws of health in

Ministry of Healing, her health was markedly improved. She spent many years involved in health ministry to others. Karen is remembered as a loving wife, mother and fellow church-member, who committed her life to the Lord and lived to serve others. Her cheerful, loving demeanour was an encouragement to all.

Phil Downing

Advertisements

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Join us in fellowship on August 24 to celebrate 70 years of ministry and 30 years since dedicating the new sanctuary. Email <margbernoth@gmail.com>. Phone 0420 921 954.

TURNER LEGAL

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Hi! 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 front-line mission work at home and around the world, so I want to help you put 'God First' through the practice of systematic benevolence.

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