

July 23  
2011

# IntraVic



How can anyone put his faith in Christ if he's never even heard about Him? How can he hear about Him if no one tells?

Romans 10:14 (Clear Word)

It's the  
Sabbath...



I can't...  
I don't do...  
I can I...?

# White Balloon Day 7th September 2011

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To be able to continue your work with children in your church, your card must be valid.

## From the Editor

The Sabbath. We know it as part of our fundamentals beliefs. We know it as a sign of allegiance God repeatedly used in the Old Testament and will again use in end times. We know it has been at the centre of controversy, and people have died for it.

But personally... what does it really mean to you... as an individual?

Have you ever pondered how God intended we 'keep it holy'? Have you caught yourself begrudging the 'I can't - it's Sabbath's'? When your children asked you "What's wrong with...", what did you say?

Do you look forward to the Sabbath rest, welcoming it with joy? With relief? Does Sabbath bring to you the feeling of coming home!? Is it a time of hope and excitement - a time of promise and celebration?

In this issue we would like to encourage you to think about the Sabbath, and what it represents to you. To look at its origins and picture what God intended the seventh day to be. To open your ears and hear His lovesong calling to you...  
...and to respond.

So to begin viewing Sabbath with a new perspective, why not look at how a non-Adventist views it. Heather Zempel leads the discipleship efforts at National Community Church in Washington. Here is an excerpt from her article posted on [threadsmedia.com](http://threadsmedia.com) earlier this year.

*"In Genesis God implemented the first spiritual discipline - Sabbath. He rested. He stopped creating, stepped back and enjoyed it... For some reason, this particular spiritual discipline is one that God practiced Himself and encouraged His people to practice... When He gave the Law, the Sabbath commandment, which contains more words than any of the others, directed people to observe Sabbath as a way of imitating God and enjoying His creation. In Deuteronomy the Sabbath commandment is given new meaning - to celebrate freedom from slavery. Then Jesus entered history, reminding people that Sabbath is not ultimately about rules and regulations, but about celebrating the life and salvation that we find in relationship with Him... You have to make it happen, because your work and the demands on your life will never stop... guard it as though your life depended on it. On the day before, you may have to work a little extra hard to ensure that you can celebrate Sabbath freely. Sabbath will look different for different people. Play with it. Discover what fills you with God's presence. Instead of stressing over what activities are permissible and not permissible on Sabbath, I focus on three questions. What stirs my affections for Christ? What brings God glory? What do I enjoy? My Sabbath intersects these three..."*

*Sabbath is an opportunity to give thanks - for God's creation, for His provision, for His freedom, and for the life and salvation we find in relationship with Him. Whatever you do or don't do - be intentional about giving God thanks."*

*As you read on, may God give you a refreshing perspective on the seventh day.*

Happy Sabbath!

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# Devotional ... to keep it Holy

Are your childhood memories of the Sabbath a mixture of the hard work that went before them to get ready, and of the good family and church times? Do the memories also include a list of things you couldn't do... and perhaps sitting around, waiting for Sabbath to end so you could go and...

In this devotional, Pr Stenio Gungadoo challenges you to reconsider exactly what keeping Sabbath holy means to you, as he looks at how Christ kept the seventh day.

We Adventists place much emphasis on the observance of the Sabbath day as one of the pillars of the Bible, yet the Bible is

not as explicit as we might like on how to keep it. Even during the time of Jesus there was no consensus even among the Jews, who were supposed to be the depository of the Law, regarding the proper Sabbath practice.

Scripture set out general principles, which well-meaning Pharisees took and added minute detail, and in the process, changed a blessed institution into a burdensome one. Jesus, our model par excellence, redressed the distorted thinking and practices of His day, basing Himself on Isaiah 58:13-14.

Christ had the authority to define what *is* and what is *not* appropriate Sabbath observance.

During His ministry on earth, Jesus practiced what He recognized as good and approved by God. He attended public worship at the Synagogue and accomplished good deeds

The Lord says "if you will stop trampling on the Sabbath - pursuing your own interests and doing what you please on my holy day - and start honouring the Sabbath instead, making it a delight, not doing your own work or talking about your own business on that day, but consider others, then you will find the joy that comes from serving the Lord. Isaiah 58:13-14

to restore the joy of the day. He could make the statement found in Matthew 12:12 "It is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days."

Among all the miracles He performed there were seven recorded where it happened during the Sabbath hours, to the great consternation of the Pharisees. It wasn't that He wanted to embarrass them, just to redress the situation.

It is interesting to go through some of those miracles and draw the lessons that He wanted to drive home during His time back then and, by extension, to us today.

The healing of the paralytic man at Bethesda came as a shock to the leaders. They were outraged when they heard Jesus ordering him to take his mat and walk. According to them this was prohibited on the Sabbath day. Jesus explained that the healing was redemptive work and therefore in harmony with the spirit of the Sabbath.

He was also accused when he healed a crippled woman on the Sabbath. He defended Himself in using their current practice of untying their animals on the Sabbath. He was only setting free someone who was bound.

The case of the blind man is an eye opener. The Pharisees interpreted his impairment as a result of sin. In allowing that man to recover his sight Jesus, playing on their turf, showed that He had come to save human kind from the bondage of sin. Moreover, when the healed man was kicked out of the Temple, Jesus met him. As a result of this encounter another miracle took place, a miracle of spiritual healing which resulted the man worshipping Christ.

The performance of these miracles on the Sabbath, far from undermining its observance by turning it into a working day, reaffirmed its validity, as expressed by Jesus in Matthew 5:17-18. He upheld it as a day of celebration, day to acknowledge God as the Creator, Redeemer and Deliverer, and thus restored the holy purpose of the day.

You see, man was not created to serve the Sabbath; the Sabbath was made to serve man. I am the Lord of the Sabbath. I know what's right to do on the Sabbath and what isn't. Mark 2:27-28

In analyzing these miracles, we come to conclude that the Sabbath is made for man, and Jesus points out that the Law is under His authority and therefore He alone can define the proper use of the Sabbath.

Don't think that I'm doing away with the law or the prophets. I am the embodiment of the law. I have not come to change it but to carry it out. Not the smallest letter nor the least stroke of a pen will ever change... Matt 5:17-18

As we practice the observance of the Sabbath on a weekly basis, let us not fall in the same trap of the Pharisees and become legalist. Nor should we, by counter reaction, fall into the other extreme of laxity. To keep a well-balanced observance of that day we need to understand and assimilate the Master's teaching and His own practice of the fourth Commandment. Then the seventh day will be a time of rest from the stress of the working days, a refreshing renewal and deepening of our relationship with Him. A day of joy, of worship and fellowship; a foretaste of heaven on earth. Only then, will this day be a day we all look forward to.

Pastor Stenio Gungadoo  
Pastor at Large and  
Acting General Secretary



Our vision is to... know experience and share  
our hope in Jesus Christ!

# The Seventh Day... ...God's Lovesong to You

"The seventh day is an experience and not only history or theology," says Sigve Tonstad in the preface of his book *The Lost Meaning of the Seventh Day*. We experience many losses in this life, which we were not created to endure; death, emotional isolation, relational break down, just to mention a few. Tonstad believes the meaning of the seventh day has the power to touch a most basic need within each of us, a need brought to the surface by these persistent separations. But as his title suggests, he also believes this meaning may have been lost.

## THE SEVENTH DAY – A STATEMENT TO THE WORLD

The biblical account begins with creation, but for centuries Christian theology has had other priorities, putting the first chapters of Genesis into the category of prologue to the main story of salvation. But now, leading Old Testament scholars have begun to see creation in a different light; as the "premise upon which everything else rests."<sup>i</sup>

The Sabbath is misrepresented if it is seen as a national or religious marker of identity - it is to do with God and who He is... not who or what we are

Tonstad says that according to the first verses of Genesis 2, the seventh day was the high point of Creation... it enshrined God's place in the centre of human existence. He warns that the character of the seventh day is misrepresented if it is seen as a national or religious marker of identity, rather than a statement of belief. But a belief in what?

## THE SEVENTH DAY – A SYMBOL OF SOMETHING LOST

Symbols play an important role in human experience. Paul Tillich, in his book *Dynamics of Faith*, discusses the power of symbols; how they open up dimensions of reality that would otherwise remain unexplored, while unlocking corresponding emotional responses. "There are within us," he says, "dimensions of which we cannot become aware, except through symbols."<sup>ii</sup> A symbol can reach out to our 'heart' in ways very little else does, allowing us to "participate in the reality for which it stands."<sup>iii</sup>

Gregory Nelson explains this further in *A Touch of Heaven*. He asks why he, as an American, would feel anger well up when he sees a symbol of his country's government (Uncle Sam) being burnt

and stomped on. It is just a mannequin, and besides, Uncle Sam is not anyone's real uncle. What is it about destroying an effigy that leads to emotional outburst? "By experiencing the symbol, one can experience what the symbol stands for."<sup>iv</sup> The meaning and the experience of the symbol and of reality become inseparable.

Symbols, whether they be a flag, an effigy or otherwise, are not intrinsically self-sustaining but may unravel and lose that close association within the right side of the brain. Thus they may fail to trigger the experience. Have we lost that close association with what the Sabbath represents? Has the seventh day become that 'jar buried deep in the sands of time, preserving a treasure long lost and forgotten' that Tonstad talks of, no longer eliciting the experience of the reality God originally designed it to?

## SYMBOLS FROM THE BEGINNING

From the Genesis account, the primary subject of the seventh day is God, thus the meaning of the seventh day must also be to do with God and who He is, not who or what we are. And we see this from the very beginning where the climax of creation serves as a symbol of the reality of redemption - our Creator is also our Redeemer.<sup>v</sup> On a weekly basis then, the seventh day can - if we let it - remind us of how far above us God is, but also how much He cares for us, so much that He came down to be one of us. But it is even more symbolic than that.

The seventh day was given to mankind, before sin had even entered the world. By the time Adam and Eve were created, everything necessary for their existence had been put into place. All that was left for them to do at that point was accept God's gifts and spend their first full day in fellowship with Him, resting and enjoying what He had prepared for them. Can you see the symbolism here? Our great God set His plan in place before we were even born; all we need to do is willingly accept His gift of salvation - He has done all the work.<sup>vi</sup>

- a symbol of God's redemptive love story

Additionally, being man's first full day, the seventh day sets God's view of life's priorities for men in the clearest possible way: the primary meaning for life is a mutually meaningful relationship with our Creator.

- a symbol of God's view of life's priorities for mankind

In Ephesians 4:24 Paul says to "put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness." This is an act of creation, a gift from God that we must be willing to put on, to accept. The seventh day symbolizes our recreation in God, as we willingly enter His rest, showing our desire to be more like Him and accept the righteousness and holiness that He offers us through fellowship with Him.<sup>vii</sup>

- a symbol of our recreation in Him

Sabbath was instigated as a day of celebrating that God had finished His work. Philippians 1:6 tells us that God is faithful and will complete what He has started. If God has promised to do something for us, like make us holy, He won't stop until it is done. Thus the seventh day can be a symbol of God's work within us - that He is the Completer, the Finisher.<sup>viii</sup>

Nelson says that God's last creative act was to make the seventh day holy, filling it with His presence. Tonstad suggests that this finishing of God's creative work occurred because there was no further need - He had 'arrived' so to speak. The Creator had achieved His purpose, He had created the object of His love - mankind. And thus, the seventh day brings God's love into focus - In 1 John, we are told that God is love, and from the very beginning, mankind was the centre of that love. The seventh day symbolizes the value of

- a symbol that God will finish what He started

humankind to its Creator. The God of the seventh day is a near and present God, a God who is committed and who is involved... up close and personal.<sup>ix</sup>

- a symbol that God's involvement with us is personal

## THE LOST MEANING OF THE SABBATH

Nelson raises the possibility that without the gift of Sabbath rest, where we put aside our 'work', spiritual renewal would struggle to take place, because in this life we are simply too busy. He says it is no wonder God didn't request it, but rather, commanded it. However Heschel, a Jewish philosopher and theologian, takes this further, saying that while the Sabbath is a day of rest, "it is not for the purpose of recovering one's lost strength and becoming fit for the forthcoming labour. It is a day for the sake of life."<sup>x</sup> And Tonstad concludes his book with the comment that "the seventh day was consecrated for the exquisite blessing and benefit of human beings... we will have to set out for the sound of God's singing, if we wish to know the spirit of the seventh day, and the reality to which it points."<sup>xi</sup>

Where the seventh day is perceived as a human obligation, it can show how important God is for our very existence. He created us. Gave us purpose and meaning. He told us to keep the seventh day holy, therefore we will.

*On the other hand if we let the seventh day speak from the scaffold of its origins, it tells of our great importance to God. Its primary message is not one of human duty, but one of divine commitment, love and joy. It is God's Lovesong for us.*

Sherrie Courtney  
IntraVic Assistant Editor

<sup>i</sup> THE LOST MEANING OF THE SEVENTH DAY, SIGVE TONSTAD, ANDREWS UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2009, PG 7

<sup>ii</sup> DYNAMICS OF FAITH, PAUL TILlich, NEW YORK, HARPER & BRO 1957, PG 42,43

<sup>iii</sup> *IBID*, PG 42

<sup>iv</sup> A TOUCH OF HEAVEN - FINDING NEW MEANING IN SABBATH REST, PACIFIC PRESS PUBLISHING ASSOC, 1999, PG 43

<sup>v</sup> *IBID*, CHAPTER 1

<sup>vi</sup> A TOUCH OF HEAVEN, PG 47; <sup>vii</sup> *IBID*; <sup>viii</sup> *IBID*

<sup>ix</sup> THE LOST MEANING OF THE SEVENTH DAY, PG 515

<sup>x</sup> HESCHEL, THE SABBATH, PG 14

<sup>xi</sup> THE LOST MEANING OF THE SEVENTH DAY, PG 34,36

# Thoughts on Sabbath...



## Discovering the Value - Kelly

As a child, coming to church was just a normal part of my weekly routine. I enjoyed learning things about God in Sabbath school and involving myself in fun activities, however the concept of a day of rest seemed pointless to my child oriented mind and high energy levels.

It wasn't until I reached my higher years of schooling that the value of Sabbath impacted me. The Sabbaths that I once made routine became Sabbaths I loved, Sabbaths that had meaning. Looking back specifically to the past weeks of exams and stress, to having 24hrs of complete dissociation to study is such a great feeling. It's a day when none of the weekly tasks or work matter and God can become the centre of focus.

Mark 2:27 says 'Then Jesus said to them, "The Sabbath was made to meet the needs of people, and not people to meet the requirements of the Sabbath."

## SABBATH IN JERUSALEM - JUSTIN



When I spent Sabbath in Israel, it wasn't quite what I expected... it was better!

The first thing I noticed was that during Sabbath, the elevators automatically stopped on every floor in the hotel. That was so no one would have to "light a fire" as our guide explained. Fascinated, I was to discover this was just a one of many injunctions the Jewish people followed as a part of their Sabbath worship. I saw Orthodox Jews walking the streets of Jerusalem, so very serious about their Sabbath keeping, but it was what I saw at the Wailing Wall of the temple site that astonished me.

We set off for the temple around sunset and when we arrived, followed the crowd up toward the plaza. What we saw was spectacular. Thousands of people were milling around, simply enjoying the atmosphere. Rather than the serious quietness you might find in a great cathedral, here was a joyous expectancy, a

lightness of heart in the very air we were breathing.

There are upper and lower levels to the plaza and the upper one was full of youth. The young men were dressed in black pants and suit jackets, neat and clean with fresh white shirts. The young women, in colourful blouses and black skirts, were dancing! Circling, holding hands together, laughing and swirling around and around, singing God's praise.

The lower plaza, closer to the Wall and thus considered closer to Holiness, was partitioned, with men on one side and women on the other. Desks were scattered around, with books for the public to read. The men were nearly all in black with their heads covered in different hats, from feather hats to large fedoras, depending on which part of the world they had returned to Israel from. Then I noticed dancing breaking out among the men too! Groups of them, shouting and singing to God, hands on each other's shoulders, circling around with joy. Their happiness was infectious and I felt a ridiculous grin grow on my face, for no reason other than it



was the Sabbath at last! Because that's what they were feeling - the Sabbath wasn't a burden, wasn't a hindrance, or something to be endured. It was a feeling of "At last!"

The Sabbath had arrived and they could praise God for getting them through another week, for all that it had brought, and that they can stand in His presence together, as His people and say 'Yes, God we love you!'

If this isn't a foretaste of heaven, I don't know what is. I want that joy in my Sabbath keeping. I want to take it seriously and obey God so I can give Him honour - but I want to do it with a joyful heart that shouts praise to God.

**WHY I MADE IT - THE CREATOR**

Remember to observe the Sabbath because I have set it apart as holy. There are six days in the week for you to earn a living. But the seventh day of the week belongs to the Lord your God. On that day you are to do no work... Because in six days, I the Lord your God, created the earth, the sky, the seas and everything in them, and made it all. That's why I blessed the Sabbath day and set it apart as holy, so you can rest and rejoice with me. Ex 2:8-11

Then on the seventh day of creation week, God stopped to enjoy what He had made and to rest in the beauty of it all. So He blessed the seventh day and set it apart as a day of spiritual refreshment and joy, a memorial of creation. Gen 2:2-3



Sabbath can be lonely and painful sometimes - a reminder of things that have been lost, rather than what God intended. It takes real effort to get it back into perspective. But in getting there...

You know, Sabbath is one of the busiest days of my week. But it is busy in a good way... a refreshing way - I am happy to put my feet up when I get home - but only because I have been on them for ages, not because I am exhausted.

Do ministers miss out on their Sabbath rest?

"Fixed boundaries and consistent enforcement are a necessary condition for the preservation of the special nature of a national park, and it is the same with the Sabbath. The only way for us to enjoy its blessings is for us to embrace the firm boundaries set in Scripture. If God had merely suggested the Sabbath as a good idea, who would have the time for it? If God merely gave us permission to take time off, most of us would say thanks, but realise we are just too over committed to take time off right now..."

From "A Park in Time" by J McLarty.  
www.lordsday.org

**SABBATH MIRACLES - KERRY N**

Recently one of our Warburton Church family had major surgery and suffered a stroke while on the table. The next Sabbath, the whole church family prayed for a Sabbath blessing of healing. He was unable to speak, walk or even feed himself. But the next day his family found him eating, talking and walking. He was discharged several days later.

Jesus performed miracles on the Sabbath while on earth, and we saw another Sabbath miracle that day, and praise God for it.

I, John, both your brother and companion... was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. Revelation 1:9

I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet... Revelation 1:10

Lord's Day... Matt 12:8  
Mark 2:27-8

**SABBATH PERSPECTIVE - A NON-ADVENTIST**

I have tried to practice Sabbath - to carve out a day to rest from work, to remind myself that I am not in control, to enjoy God's presence and provision, and to celebrate the fact I'm not enslaved anymore... it has saved my sanity and ministry

## JESUS OUR SABBATH REST - PR JAMES

As Seventh-day Adventists we have a unique opportunity to share a picture of Jesus through our observance of the Sabbath. The Sabbath is a symbol and expression of who Jesus is and what he has done for us.

he is our Creator and this special day can remind us of this. In Genesis 2, the Sabbath is revealed as both a celebration and a memorial to God's creative work accomplished through the Word. When God rested, blessed it and made it holy, he set it apart as an eternal symbol of our rest in him (Isaiah 66:22-23).

he is our redeemer. In Exodus the Sabbath is again mentioned where it was given to the mixed multitude at Sinai as a covenant - a sign or symbol of the deliverance from Egypt's oppression that God had provided through the blood of the Passover lamb. In him they could have rest from slavery.

When you turn to Hebrews, this pattern culminates in the substance of Christ, whom this symbol of salvation points to - it is through Christ that we enter God's rest (Hebrew 4:1-11) Jesus has done all the work of saving! he has done everything to make it possible for us to have true rest, clothed in his righteousness (2 Cor 5:21).

So we have a message of hope! and we have a call to mission - to proclaim the message that Jesus is not only our Creator, but also our redeemer in whom we truly discover rest.

Worthy, worthy is the Lamb - Jesus, our Sabbath rest!



## THE SABBATH COMES FOR US - PR ROD

**"And the tide and the time that thou borest were, shall be remembered."**

The earliest known record of this quote "Tide and time waits for no man" is from 1225, and predates modern English. We can demand, we can threaten, plead, wish, but to no avail because no person can stop time; time is relentless and marches on by command of the Creator. But this very fact works for our benefit.

God knows what is best. Aren't you glad our Father did not command us to worship Him in a sanctified location that He had set aside at the creation of this world? That God does not ask us to leave our family and places familiar to us, in order to embark on a tiresome pilgrimage just to gain His favour by bowing before Him upon some distant shore?

But God does invite us to partake in that period of time set aside at creation, the seventh day. This appointment with Divinity arrives weekly; we don't come to it... it comes to us. No matter what part of the world we find ourselves in, no matter where we live, no matter what our state of mind, the Sabbath comes to us.

My thoughts go back to the desert wanderings of the Israelites fifteen hundred years before the time of Christ. In those remote places the Sabbath came to them, they did not have to wait until they entered the promised land to keep the Sabbath, even before crossing the Jordan they could honour God's holy day, and what a time of sweet release from the toil of their pilgrimage it must have been.

In the very last book of the Bible we find that the Apostle John was imprisoned on an island. Quite possibly many of John's contemporaries had never heard of this tiny dot of an island off the coast of Turkey. But the aged John had been imprisoned there by Emperor Domitian for strongly opposing the pagan practices of the imperial cult characterized by the population being forced to burn incense and confess "Caesar is Lord". Many Christians reacted against this, suffering imprisonment and death. Domitian wanted to silence John and, failing to do so by lowering him into boiling oil as tradition says, he banished him to one of the most remote, unknown places within his empire.

John went on to say that on the Lord's Day, the person and presence of the Holy Spirit was palpable for him, as he became oblivious to the things of earth, increasingly aware only of the impressions God was conveying to him. Verses elsewhere tell us the Lord's Day was the Sabbath.

Here is good news, friends. Great news! No matter where we find ourselves on this earth, no matter if we may be isolated on our own tiny barren rock no one is even aware of, God comes to us. He wants to meet with us right where we are, in a special personal way each Sabbath.

William Butler Yeats in his stage play 'The Countess Cathleen' said, "The years like great black oxen tread the world, and God, the herdsman, goads them on behind."

Even though time moves on relentlessly, our God gave it to be a blessing for you, and in so doing brings His special Day to your abode every week.



# health... mind & body



## Energise your life!

The modern world is more fast-paced and frantic than any time in history. With such modern-day demands on the individual, it is not surprising that fatigue is a prominent health concern among Australians today.

### BEAT THE BURN OUT!

Whether it presents as sickness, sleepiness or moodiness, "burn out" is a common occurrence in our chronically fast-paced lifestyle. By pre-planning your time, you can help prevent extreme bouts of exhaustion. Assign time for 'recoup and recover' activity - whether it be going for a walk, eating lunch outside in the fresh air or taking a soothing bath.

### EAT FOR ENERGY

Most people are aware of caffeine's effect on energy levels and alertness. However, a wholegrain breakfast can provide the same energy boost. In addition, wholegrains provide fibre and important nutrients such as iron. A depletion of certain vitamins and minerals contributes significantly to fatigue and poor concentration. Consuming a diet with a variety of vegetables and wholegrains may mean you can skip the morning cuppa altogether!

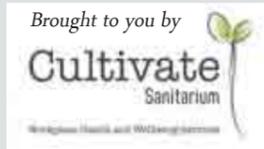
### FITNESS FIGHTS FATIGUE

A healthy body contributes to a healthy mind. Weariness and exhaustion are common symptoms of underlying stress. Australians are recommended to partake in 25 minutes of exercise 6 times a week to reap the multitude of associated benefits. Combat fatigue by setting aside time to go for a walk or join an exercise group.

### SCHEDULE IN SLEEP

Sleep is important for optimal brain function and energy levels, so try to maintain a regular sleep/wake cycle. Aim for lights out by 11pm if your alarm rings at 7am. Keep noise and light to a minimum and avoid caffeine and large meals up to three hours prior to bedtime.

Fatigue is an unfortunate by-product of our busy lives; but being proactive helps you keep exhaustion at bay. Whether a stress-relieving massage or simply an early night, the smallest changes to daily habits can prevent exhaustion and refresh your body and mind.



## The Second Step - puts us back on track...

I didn't start out believing... in fact, at first, I didn't believe in anything - not even myself. Feeling dead inside, I didn't trust anyone, had no idea how to let people in and no ability to see myself outside of my addictions and behaviour junk. High, or in a relationship where I knew what was expected of me - I was fine.

Now I laugh as I think back on that early recovery time; I just had no sense of who I was or how to 'be' in this world... I truly felt crazy.

I did all the right things... even went to a psychiatrist - I just walked in and started ranting and raving... crying... "Maybe I am crazy... Maybe I'm bipolar or schizophrenic... I

just can't do this... I don't know how to act... I'm afraid..." I stormed around that office, stopping only briefly as I realised how insane I must have looked, then after about 20 minutes, exhausted, I finally sat down and looked desperately at the doctor. Calmly he said "It looks as if you are having a bad day."

"Are you kidding me?" I shouted. "A bad day? THIS is my LIFE!" I wanted to grab him by the throat... I couldn't believe he'd said that... "A bad day"... Gently he raised his hand and said something that changed my life forever. "You are making some huge changes in your life... walking away from your

continued on page22

## Brothers in Christ

### WANTIRNA CHURCH

"Recently our family at Wantirna grew a little larger with two brothers making the decision for baptism and to commit their lives to Christ.

Joshua and Ayden Cook took up weekly Bible studies with a passion and interest that surprised many, and always had a thoughtful answer



to the questions put to them. It was a joy to study with them week by week and to see their understanding deepen. It was even more of a joy to see that their parents, Brad and Trudy, had faithfully instructed them, so much of what we were learning was instilled in their hearts and minds already.

Finally they were ready and they made the decision to be baptised at home together.

The home was opened and there were "Happy Birthday" posters stuck up everywhere. It was neither of the boys birthday, but a rebirth through water we were celebrating! Over a hundred people attended, many school and church friends lined the pool, being careful not to fall in, and



although the water was chilly we were all warmed by the boys commitment to Christ, as they were baptised. Praise God for their decision! They were officially voted into church membership and Wantirna welcomes them to their deeper decision for Christ. Amen!"

Justin Bone

## Joy in Baptism

### GREENVALE CHURCH



It was a great pleasure for the members of Greenvale Church to witness the baptism of Joseph Maria Hoesmans on 16/04/2011 and to accept him into our church family. We pray that our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ bless him and encourage him to walk firmly in the path that He has chosen for him. May God lift His countenance upon Joseph and give him peace and joy in his life.

## From One Generation to Another

### BURWOOD CHURCH

In early July, Pr Tony Campbell, who serves as chaplain at AdventCare, Whitehorse, had the privilege of baptising his granddaughter, Monique Courtney, while she was here on holiday from the US.

Extended family and friends gathered to share this special time, as Monique declared her decision to follow Christ.



"It is the best decision I have made," Monique later said.

The baptism took place on the veranda of the church with the sun shining down a lovely winter blessing for her, then everyone returned inside to welcome her into church membership and continue the celebration into the afternoon with a church lunch.

Sherrie Courtney



## Sharing What God Has Blessed Us With

### NUNAWADING CHURCH

In recent years, church member, Judy Howard-Bath, has encouraged the church family's awareness of the Keep Girls Safe program and during this time over \$3,000 has been raised and sent to support this worthy cause.

Much of these funds have been contributed at the annual Women's Prayer Breakfast, held to coincide with Mothers' Day.

Recently Judy became aware of a young lady named Alice (pictured), who attends school in Nairobi, Kenya, when she received an email actually intended for another Judy

in western Victoria. This other Judy had been encouraging her small country church to assist Alice. Joy Butler (former SPD Prayer Ministries Director who now lives in Africa) wrote, "Alice wants to be a nurse and this is her last year in high school. I see no hope for her if someone doesn't help."

Judy presented Alice's needs to those present at the prayer breakfast and \$1,492.50 was raised for her continued education, in addition to the funds donated to the Keep Girls Safe program.



Bronwyn Rowe

## Dedication of little Isabella Hope

### DANDENONG POLISH CHURCH



We all remember the tragedy of the Bush fires in Victoria two and a half years ago – "Black Saturday."

A number of people from the Polish church in Dandenong rushed to help the victims as soon as it was possible. In particular, they were able to assist several families, whom they continue to maintain contact with.

On Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> of June 2011, during the Sabbath worship, Pastor Karin and Mariusz Wiczorek led a dedication prayer for little Isabella Hope Danzinger. Isabella is a new family member to one of the families that suffered from the events of Black Saturday.

Wojtek Klauza

## Christ in the Old Testament

### EAST PRAHRAN

Pr Morrie Krieg gave an inspiring talk at East Prahran on the 2<sup>nd</sup> July, about the dilemma of the four lepers in the time of Elisha, having to decide if they would return to the besieged city or go take a chance at the tents of the enemy. We also have a choice: certain death in the 'city' or take 'a chance' on Jesus Christ. John Waters conducted a very professional Sabbath School discussion and Romney King,

Tonya Field and Kate Hollingsworth provided excellent music. Gabi Bujor ran the children's programmes and the fellowship lunch was enjoyed by all.

The speaker for August 6 is recently 'retired' Pr Peter Roennfeldt. His 40 years service has included church planting, missionary and pastor to the pastors, and he is still serving, cultivating church plants.

His topic is from Daniel's prophecy, and entitled *The Anointed One : cut off - but not for Himself!*

The program will commence at 10am with Ken Killoway taking a Bible discussion before Peter's presentation at 11am.

There will be a children's class in the hall and, of course, a fellowship lunch for everyone. All visitors will be most welcome.

Mary Drost

## Adopting a Clinic

### PLENTY VALLEY ADVENTIST CHURCH

September last year, the church in Mill Park decided to become a supporter of the Adopt-A-Clinic program run by the South Pacific Division (SPD). The clinic adopted was Heraniau, a nurse aid post in the Makira Province of the Solomon Islands.

The clinic, currently supporting six villages, sees up to 100 patients per month.

Initially Lawrence Staub met with the SPD team in Sydney to find out what the requirements of the clinic were. The recommendation was made to audit the existing facility as it had no adequate transportation or sanitation and was very small, unable to cope with the life threatening issues that often face the villagers there.

Dr Staub, a chiropractor, travelled with an associate, Dr Tammie Barrett,



and the Director of the Solomon Islands Mission, Dr Silent Tovosia, who is an orthopaedic surgeon. What was to follow was unprecedented.

Expecting around 300 people to attend Heraniau to take advantage of the medical services they would offer while there (many had not seen

a doctor for over ten years), the travellers were staggered to find 1300 people, some of whom had walked six hours per day for five days just to get there.

Earlier in the project, Plenty Valley Church had donated a boat and outboard motor and this proved its worth even in the time that the team attended, by transporting a dehydrated baby and an acute asthmatic to the local hospital in the capital and thereby saving their lives. The medical missionary work was well received by the local people who, with humility, simplicity and overwhelming gratitude, verbalized through an interpreter that they were honoured to be touched by white people.

Plenty Valley Church will be returning in August this year with a medical team and a building team. The medical team will be there to administer medication and medical procedures as well as chiropractic care. The building team will install the much needed ablutions block and perform a facelift on the existing building.

The vision of the locals is for the clinic to be upgraded to a Rural Health Clinic. This is no small project, requiring a mini hospital to



be installed, that can incorporate a delivery unit, a ward to admit patients and much needed maternal child health and immunization programs. Land has already been provided and local materials pledged.

The aim is to commence this project in February of 2012.

One-on-one care, administered in this fashion, has established lasting relationships between the church and local people, even to the level of village elders and chiefs as well as local politicians. Programs such as this have given the people there hope and health and a lively interest in the Gospel of Jesus Christ that the church has administered in the spirit of self sacrifice.

As this is one of the most desperate regions of the Solomon Islands in terms of medical need, the government has given the church and its affiliates its unequivocal support. People will be reached this August that have not even so much as seen a white person let alone a doctor in over 20 years.

The prognosis for the future of the Adopt - A- Clinic program is solid and proves exhilarating and fruitful for all involved.

Lawrence Staub

## 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday

### GREENVALE CHURCH

It was a day of joyous celebration on May 21, when members of Greenvale Church surprised Elsie Ireland with a special birthday lunch.

Elsie was baptised 33 years ago, and since then has faithfully driven from her home in Bundoora, to Greenvale church each week. She is still living

independently, and still making that hour long drive each way, every Sabbath.

Stuart Woods



## Pandemonium at Pandamania

### BURWOOD ADVENTIST COMMUNITY CHURCH

For five weeks, Burwood was been involved in a VBS program for children, Pandamania. It was run through Sabbath School and church each week, and the children were encouraged to bring their friends. The teens and youth were involved as group leaders, mentors and in the music. It truly was an awesome experience and will have long lasting effects, as bridges have been built across all ages.

In this article, Mariah Reed, one of the youth involved, tells of her experience.

“Every day was a blast! I believe being one of the singers was the best role, as you were able to see the huge smiles planted on each child’s face as they danced and sang with all their might. Everyone indubitably got involved, and it was a joy to watch

and participate.

It was great to see the children come, and then the next week bring their friends, and so on and so forth, as the numbers literally grew before our eyes. They learnt in a fun way that God listens to them, He loves

them no matter what, He gives good gifts, He watches over them and He made them. THANK YOU GOD! Some of the most touching moments of Pandamania occurred when the kids participated in their ‘jobs’. All the children were divided into groups, and each child in the group was allocated a task. These tasks included being the ‘thankyou’er and the prayer person. It was truly inspirational to see some of the children in my group complete their jobs without being reminded to, with pride and BIG smiles. Their prayers were heartfelt and creative, while they talked to their Father.

Matthew 18:3 states, “And he said: “Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.” Pandamania was a true testament to this verse, and I am honoured to have been a part of it.

The whole program was incredible, and if asked, I would do it again in a heartbeat.”



## Happy Hands Art

### NUNAWADING CHURCH

From a simple idea conceived just one year ago and with classes which only began after Easter, Happy Hands Art Time is enjoying an attendance of up to 23 children per session. Carolin Schmitz excitedly reports that a second session is now required to cater for growing numbers.

“It is a true blessing to see mums and dads actively involved and enjoying adult social interaction” she says.

The Seminar Room is transformed into a fun, colourful and vibrant environment for children to feel inspired and happy, and the program includes a range of creative crafts, fun games, a gourmet morning tea and a new exciting theme each week. The response has been extremely positive with mums recommending it to friends and expressing thanks for such a terrific place for their children.



## High Tea and Testimony

### WARBURTON CHURCH

Back in May, 50 women gathered in the Redwood Centre at Warburton after church, to celebrate Mother’s Day with a High Tea lunch.

From quite young people, to visitors, to ladies from the nearby nursing home, everyone enjoyed the nicely decorated tables with three-tiered cake stands gracing their centres and received an intricate handmade bookmark.

While the ladies deepened their friendships, shared experiences and chatted happily during this time together, the men were well taken care of with their own luncheon in the nearby church hall.

Women’s Ministries also features a monthly Friday night testimony meeting, where the women share their stories and encourage each other, with praise to God for His goodness to them.

At a recent one they discussed creating a “Book of Abundance” to help remind them of their many



blessings.

The plan was that each night they write down the wonderful things that happened to them that day - to look, not for the bright splashes of brilliance so much as the gifts inherent in all the so-called ordinary events in their lives.

“As we look at them mindfully and deeply, we begin to realise that these ordinary moments are often extraordinary!” said Sue Marshall. “Looking for blessings helps us to focus on the good. It soon becomes a habit.”

The list is endless - a magpie warbling

before the rain, early morning sunshine, phone calls from friends, home made bread...

They discussed increasing their children’s and grandchildren’s awareness of everyday blessings so they too can see an abundance of love and be thankful every day.

“God gives us so many blessings which we take for granted every day. By creating an awareness of them in our Book of Abundance we can be filled with joy and peace and love, and begin each day with a thankful heart.”

Sue Marshall

## Stepping Out in Faith

### RINGWOOD CHURCH

Church members, Esther and Ron Daniels did just that, when they rallied friends and family members to put on a vibrant event raising money to support Geelong church’s associate pastor, Quinten Liebrandt.

Quinten, whose heart is set on doing the Lord’s work, was visiting family in South Africa in November 2010, when struck down with an acute illness. He has been in and out of hospital since, undergoing many operations, and the medical bills have mounted to over \$50,000.

The Lord blessed Esther and Ron’s efforts as people came from many churches and even the community. The Victorian Conference and Nunawading Christian College were

supportive, and the college’s hall was filled to capacity - standing room only. Donated food products were sold at intermission and there was a silent auction of other items donated by a variety of sponsors.

The event showcased wonderful gifts of music and song, and even though a video of Quinten thanking and encouraging all to continue praying for his recovery brought home the reality of his situation and moved many to tears, it was a truly blessed and joyous occasion.

We praise God for the \$5,500 raised that night. Geelong Church held a fundraising breakfast the following week, and a trust fund has been set up for ongoing donations.

BANK: ANZ BRANCH: MITCHAM  
ACCOUNT NAME: DANIELS ESTHER AMELIA  
DANIELS RONALD OWEN  
ITF LIEBRANDT QUINTEN (IN TRUST FOR)  
BSB: 013-384 ACCOUNT No: 2612-21936  
CONTACT ESTHER OR RON ON FIGFORMS@BIGPOND.NET.AU  
FOR MORE INFORMATION



## Expedition 2011

Sunny winter days, camp fires, Richie Reid, pancakes, Marg Eale's cooking, hiking, rogaïne; these were just some of the special memories of Expedition 2011.

The Central Victorian goldfield's township of Fryerstown was the destination for our Pathfinder Expedition on the June long weekend. As clubs from across Victoria rolled in on Friday evening, base camp soon became a mini village with tents popping up all around. Camp fires were soon lit, cook tents erected and hot drinks on the boil. Everyone quickly settled in, taking time to catch up with old friends, make new ones and get acquainted with their natural surroundings of Fryers Range State Forest, beside which they were camped.

Eleven clubs participated this year, with over two hundred and seventy Pathfinders, leaders and support staff attending.

The theme was "Unstoppable". Our guest speaker, Richard Reid, who is currently serving as chaplain at Sydney Adventist College, kept the Pathfinders captivated during his



worships, with exploits and tales from his experiences, as well as stories of people, such as Gideon and Samson, who were unstoppable for God once they fully committed themselves to Him.

When daily we partner with Jesus, we too will be unstoppable.

The rogaïne activities are always eagerly contested and this year was no different. Following the briefing for each level on Saturday evening, base camp was abuzz, as each group, maps in hand, set about planning their route and choosing which check points to visit to gain maximum points in the allotted time. Then it was off into the night in search of



each check point; a test of teamwork, endurance, navigation and map reading.

As the Level 2 Pathfinders hiked into the overnight campsite on Sunday evening they were greeted with the aroma of hot pancakes topped off with - maple syrup, lemon juice and sugar, raspberry syrup... and more. Wow! Pathfinders has never been so good!

Richie wrapped up the evening with worship inviting the Pathfinders to experience more of "God's big lounge room" - the great outdoors.

And who could forget Baz and Simba, the two resident dogs who made themselves right at home among the



Pathfinder clubs while their owners took the opportunity to holiday away for the long weekend. Baz and Simba moved from club to club lapping up all the attention and any food scraps that came their way - and there were plenty.

One girls' tent had an unforgettable experience with the dogs, when they accidentally left their tent partly unzipped during the night. This mistake gave the opportunists the chance to enjoy some extra night-time company. It was not long lived however, as the screams from the girls soon resulted in quick eviction!

Finally a special mention for our dedicated team of Pathfinder District Directors - DDs for short. Without the commitment and continued support of the DD's, along with an extended group of volunteers, Pathfinders as we know it would not exist. Thank you for your willingness to serve and for making our 2011 Pathfinder Expedition such a positive experience.

*Phil Hyland*  
Assistant Youth Director



## From Teacher to Chaplain...

When working in schools there are some things that remain the same no matter who you are. Routines are governed by bells, the holidays can't come quick enough and the Canteen Lady is definitely your friend! Whether you are a teacher, student, principal, cleaner, librarian or in my case chaplain, the structure of school in both a physical and organisational sense is our daily world!

After being married to a teacher for five years I soon developed a healthy respect for what teachers actually do. I used to naively poked fun at my teacher friends about how slack they were in having so many holidays! Truth is, holidays provide much needed therapy for teachers during the first week, and then the second week is spent planning. I remember dropping my wife at work for what seemed like all day every Sunday during terms and repeatedly waiting for the dreaded marking to be finished after 11pm. Teachers work hard and carry the burden of educating society's future workforce on their shoulders. After seeing this I perhaps should have known better than to become a teacher myself!

Why do teachers teach? It's not for the money. In fact teachers make something more valuable than money. Teachers make a difference. School is a place where students go to learn about the world around them, they also learn how to interact

with each other. In Adventist schools we are blessed to be able to provide the most valuable learning of all, an education about our Saviour and His will for our lives. Teachers make a difference in the lives of students by opening their eyes to the world around them. They also make a difference eternally, when they open the eyes of their students to the knowledge of salvation and introduce them to their loving Saviour.

When I was given the opportunity to take on the position of Chaplain, I jumped at the chance. I was already blessed to be able to teach students about Jesus and have worship with them every day in the classroom. However, by taking on the role of chaplain it would mean I could commit 100% of my time to leading students to Christ. My previous training as a therapist and youth worker would also be utilised in this position.

I have been in the job for nearly 6 months now and am absolutely loving



it! The biggest highlight so far has been seeing a student who has had no background in Christianity decide they want to follow Jesus. I can only credit this decision to the system as a whole. This particular student has been at the school for several years and has progressively come to know Christ through bible lessons, chapels and the character and behaviours of those around them - in particular teachers! I am privileged to be able to help guide in the steps towards baptism, however I know without doubt that the Holy Spirit has been active in this student's life for a long time before I arrived on the scene!

*God is using all members of our school communities whether they be teachers, administrators, parent helpers, students, chaplains or canteen ladies for the all important work of taking the good news of the Gospel to this world.*

*Hayden Petersen*

## Congratulations to the Eddy Family

Since coming to the Victorian Conference, Jody has worked with Mont Albert and Burwood churches and with Nunawading College.

We would like to praise God for the safe arrival of Seth William on Thursday, June 23.

Congratulations, Jody and Tim. May the Lord bless you and keep you as you care for your precious son.



### Bytes of VicNews

#### LONG SERVICE LEAVE

General Secretary, Pr Darren Croft, will be on long service leave until August 22, 2011.

The Executive Committee has appointed Pr Stenio Gungadoo as acting General Secretary during this time.

#### HIGH SABBATH WITH PR TED WILSON

Keep NOVEMBER 12 free! A special day of celebration is planned and we would like to encourage as many of you as possible to plan to join us at the Dallas Brooks Centre for a day of worship and praise.

More information will be coming soon. Mark it on your calendar.

#### CAMP 2012

Plans are underway! 2011 saw more young families camping and also an increased number of past Adventists.

We would like to emphasise that Camp is open to all, and if you know someone who may enjoy the experience of 'coming home', of catching up with friends they have

not associated with for some time, or of 'reliving' past memories of when church family was more important to them, please invite them to join you at Camp 2012.

#### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Ministerial and chaplaincy staff recently met for a PD session at the

Conference Office, where Pr Rob Steed and Mrs Sue Mercer took them through the elements of basic counselling.

#### THANK YOU CHURCH CLERKS

Sixteen church clerks recently gave up a Sunday of their time to receive training in the new online church

membership data base.

#### YOUTH @ VICYOUTH

These midyear holidays have been a busy time for some of our youth with StormCo projects and Uprising. Keep the youth and the people they touched in your prayers, that their experiences will have long lasting effects.

Twenty Eight Stories

With  
Pastor Dave



# A Glorious Sabbath



The men, led by Jesus, sang as they walked along a narrow path through a grain field ready for harvest. Jesus was enjoying the song and the fresh morning air so much that it took a while to notice His friends falling behind.

"Come on guys!" He shouted. "We'll be late to the synagogue at this rate!"

Andrew got to Jesus first, his hand full of harvested grain. He let a few grains drop into Jesus' outstretched palm. As the others caught up with them, Jesus studied the grains, no longer concerned about the time.

"Unless a kernel of wheat is planted in the soil and dies, it remains alone," He said, at last. "But its death will produce many new kernels..." He swung his empty hand in the direction of the distant field, reinforcing His point. "... a plentiful harvest of new lives." The men nodded, waiting for the punch-line. Jesus loved these teaching moments. He continued "Those who love their life in this world will lose it. Those who care nothing for their life in this world will keep it for eternity."

"That is exactly what we've done!" exclaimed Peter proudly. "We left our normal everyday lives to follow you." The others nodded in agreement.

Jesus patted Peter on the shoulder. "Anyone who wants to be my disciple must follow me, because my servants must be where I am. And the Father will honour anyone who serves me." Again, the disciples nodded and smiled. They liked these stories that gave them hope for the future.

The group began walking again, collecting handfuls of grain, rubbing them in their palms and blowing away the loose bits.

Ahead of them, they soon saw their way was blocked by several religious leaders, huddled, whispering urgently to each other. As the disciples approached, one of the leaders stepped forward, pointing at Peter as he stuffed a handful of grain into his mouth.

"Look," the leader bellowed at Jesus. "Your men are breaking the law, harvesting on the Sabbath."

Peter spun Jesus around by the shoulder, in his excitement blowing a mouthful of grain onto Jesus tunic. "Tell them the dying wheat story!"

Jesus laughed, wiped the half chewed wheat off His clothes and turned to face the Pharisees. Turning His empty palms face up, he asked "Haven't you read in the Scriptures..." and He proceeded to set them straight on a few things, using the very writings they claimed to know so well. When He said "The Son of Man is Lord even over the Sabbath," they could not handle it and rushed off in a huff.

But as Jesus and the disciples finally approached the steps of the Synagogue, an even bigger group of Pharisees were waiting for Him, greeting Him with a clever question about a deformed man they had with them.

"It's a trap, Jesus," Matthew murmured over his shoulder. "There is some trick."

"Of course there is," Jesus whispered back, "they would never allow a deformed person in their precious temple. I am so tired of them using people." He wasted no time, turning their own actions back on them as he answered the question, then saying to the poor man "Stretch your hand toward me."

The man reached out to Jesus and watched in amazement as his fingers unfurled for the first time in his life.

He was whole! He was healed! Oh glorious Sabbath day!

WRITTEN BY DAVID EDGREN - PASTOR, AUTHOR AND DIRECTOR OF SABBATH SCHOOLS AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES. 28 STORIES IS DESIGNED TO STRENGTHEN ADVENTIST FAITH AS THEY EXPLORE THE 28 FUNDAMENTALS OF OUR BELIEFS. FOR A STUDY GUIDE FOR ALL AGES, TAKING YOU DEEPER, VISIT VIC.ADVENTIST.ORG.AU AND CLICK ON THE 28 STORIES TAB.



## The Power of Small Groups

Over a number of years, Ministerial Secretary, Pr Rob Steed, has been supporting Pr Eddie Erika and his Samoan congregations in their endeavours to establish small group life within their church community. Small groups have become an important part of the way they do church. In this article, Rob and Eddie explore this.

SO EDDIE, TELL US A LITTLE OF WHAT IS HAPPENING REGARDING GROUP LIFE WITHIN OUR SAMOAN CONGREGATIONS.

It has taken about three or four years, but we now have four congregations meeting regularly, and everyone is a member of a small group. Initially there were not many and they mainly existed as fundraising groups. But they have grown and developed and the emphasis has shifted to the spiritual. It was not an easy process, but being part of a group has become our church's culture.

WHAT ACTUALLY GOES ON WITHIN THESE GROUPS?

Socially coming together is very important to Samoan culture. Put this together with the biblical sense of a group, where they ate and fellowshiped and experienced life together, and you may get an idea. For example, last Sunday a group met at one of our homes. There was a welcome and a bit of a talk. Then we had a short vegetarian cooking demonstration, after which we divided into smaller groups to discuss a Bible passage, before coming together again for a meal.

And across Melbourne, something like

this is happening every night, sometimes in two or three different locations.

YOU SAID ESTABLISHING THESE GROUPS WAS NOT ALWAYS EASY.

Yes. Tradition was an obstacle - it was comfortable to be where we were. Two things made a big difference. A prayer group that meets each week, before the members leave for work, praying for the church and local community. And who leads the small group. Initially, I was intent on just finding someone... anyone to lead a group. But at one of our discussions you suggested we have an elder head each group. I was sceptical - our culture is very hierarchical and I was not sure how it would go. But the elders took it on board. It has taken a while, but it is working.

I meet regularly with them, and we discuss group life as they report back. And there has been a wonderful shift. From participating because it was asked of them, there is now joy as we discuss what is happening - it is very encouraging.

WHEN WE FIRST STARTED WORKING ON THIS TOGETHER, YOU ADOPTED A SYSTEM WHERE EACH WEEK, A DIFFERENT GROUP WOULD HOST SABBATH



SCHOOL AND CHURCH. HAS THIS CONTINUED?

We are still doing it, and not just on Sabbath! Each fortnight we meet for a prayer meeting, and it too, is led by one of the groups.

From the elders to the young kids, they are all involved. We even have women on the pulpit... perhaps this is more common elsewhere, but in our culture this, or even having our young people involved in the service, is almost unheard of, but now everyone is enjoying it.

HAVE SMALL GROUPS MADE ANY IMPACT ON CHURCH GROWTH?

Yes. As mentioned, we now have four congregations. God is changing our minds and hearts, helping us to shift our focus from being a Samoan group, to something far bigger and impacting on our local communities. We are again about to outgrow our North Melbourne premises, and are looking at starting a new group in Craigieburn in the near future.

Eddie Erika and Rob Steed

## Our Young People - Rising Up

One of the most exciting things for anyone working with youth is seeing them rise up to the challenge of leadership. This year we are very excited with the response from our young leaders who have been nominated by their school and church to come along to Uprising 2011.

Our hope and prayer is that we are able to resource, challenge, encourage, inspire these young leaders to step up to the

plate and impact their world. As the name itself suggests, we want to have young people that are on the 'uprise' for God and not just become spectators on the sideline!

We are thankful for the presenters and mentors who have given up their holidays to spend time with these amazing young people. And like all who are part of their journey, we look forward to seeing their lives unfold as they travel together with God. We are also excited for the communities they are a part of because they're going



to have some God fearing Kingdom builders amongst them. Blessed are they indeed!

We continue to challenge our local church and school communities to support, and encourage these young people through prayer, but also empower them now. Then watch them soar!

"Then, after doing all those things, I will pour out my Spirit upon all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Your old men will dream dreams, and your young men will see visions." Joel 2:28 (NLT)

Pr Moe Ioane Stiles  
Youth Director



## The Victorian Conference is taking health & wellbeing seriously!

The pastors and office administration of the Victorian Conference have partnered with Cultivate Sanitarium to kick start their workplace health & wellbeing program.



Employers across the country are now recognising the value of looking after the health of their employees and are making a commitment to ensuring workplaces are engaging and rewarding place to be. May 18 saw the administration office staff challenged by a launch session on 'Taking Charge of Your Life' and the pastoral staff took the challenge on the 28<sup>th</sup> of June. Over the next 12 months, all staff

will have the opportunity to have a health check, interact in workshops, be rejuvenated by an onsite massage, learn more about a range of personal health & wellbeing issues and even participate in the *Global Corporate Challenge*. Check in on how your pastor is going and watch this space for progress on the Victorian Conference health & wellbeing journey. *Joanna Hawkins*

## Beatrix Potter visits the Library

The theme in the library at Heritage College last term was Beatrix Potter and her wonderfully illustrated stories of animals.

There was a competition based on this theme, and everyone from prep to Yr 12 to staff could enter!

"The response was fantastic", said Mrs. Winzenried. "We had lots of entries and everyone - primary and secondary students alike - enjoyed the event.

The competition culminated in a ceremony in chapel and the enthusiasm everyone displayed when the prize winners were announced said it all. Entries included watercolours, drawings, and even a beautiful box of 'scrapbooked' gift cards from one of the staff, and the students now have even more great ideas for next time!



## You're the Voice...

Keeping children safe is one of the most important things that we do as parents, educators or caring adults. A voice is all that is required to help 'break the silence' on child sexual assault. The iconic Martin Luther King Jr. echoes through time to remind us that **Our lives begin to end the day we are silent about things that matter.**



Make Australia the safest place in the world to raise a child. This year marks the 15th annual **Bravehearts White Balloon Day**, a national awareness and fundraising campaign staged on September 7 during National Child Protection Week. The humble white balloon has become synonymous with raising awareness of the critical importance of educating, empowering and protecting children against sexual assault.

As Seventh-day Adventist Christians we all have the opportunity to join **Bravehearts** in carrying out this privileged mission through one of many supportive activities such as taking a white balloon to church, donating old mobile phones, sending

a virtual white balloon or organising a white balloon event. There are many ideas to choose from on the website. [www.bravehearts.org.au](http://www.bravehearts.org.au). We are not immune to child abuse within our families. However we can choose to act without fear, favour or compromise to ensure the safety of our children. Let us bravely Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves (Proverbs 31:8) and make our voices LOUD AND CLEAR.

**Alone we can do so little;  
together we can do so much  
- Helen Keller**

*Sue Mercer  
Safe Place Services*

## General Secretary's Report

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**New Church Projects - Melbourne City**  
The City Church Project team headed by Pr Rod Anderson is now laying the groundwork for establishing a new church in the city of Melbourne.  
**Northern Corridor** - Another project underway is in the northern corridor of Melbourne with Tini Rimoni and Preston Church. This church plant, targeting the Epping/Thomastown area, has been in formation for several years now. The group, formed with the cooperation and blessing of Preston Church, continues to work closely as part of Preston

Church's plans for mission. Meeting fortnightly on Sabbath evenings since late 2010, members are planning to change to Sabbath morning meetings this month.

Please pray for both these projects.

**Seymour Church Company Closure** - we pay tribute to those members that have contributed to Seymour Church in recent years. Due to a number of factors the Company's recent vote to disband was accepted by the Executive Committee.

**Infrastructure Needs** - The area of infrastructure has long been a source

of need in the Conference.

With significant infrastructure needs across the Church, Aged Care and Education, the Executive Committee's strategic direction of improving infrastructure across the Conference took a step forward with the six month appointment of Mr Galen Gan, who brings a background of Engineering and property development and will lend some much needed expertise to the Victorian Conference.



### FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Ordination/Commissioning** - We note with much joy the recognition by the AUC, of Cristian Copaceanu, Tini Rimoni, and Danijela Trajkov's calls to ministry, though the approval of their ordination/commissioning.

**District Pastors** - the Conference is divided into six regions, with each having a district pastor appointed to coordinate regional ministers meetings and various other responsibilities. **Central Metro** - Andrew Kapusi, **Eastern Metro** - Pr David Erickson, **Gippsland** - Pr David Riley, **Riverland** - Pr Russell

**Bryan, Western Country** - Pr Nikola Trajkov, **Western Metro** - Pr Loren Pratt. **Pastoral Staffing Document** - the current pastoral staffing process was adopted at a conference session many years ago. This document was last updated in 2004 but since that time incorporation has occurred along with a number of other changes. While maintaining the spirit of the original, this document has now been updated to accommodate the changes and provide some opportunity for clarification.

Accepted by the BOD, the document is currently being reviewed by a number of people before circulation to churches in preparation for the 2012 pastoral staffing process.

On other matters - Pr Anthony MacPherson is the latest addition to the Conference Executive Committee and BOD as a replacement for Pr Darren Slade and Pr David Riley has recently joined the Pastoral Staffing Committee, replacing Pr David Butcher.

*Darren Croft*

## Treasurer's Report

I am happy to be able to report that tithe figures for the year have been excellent, with better than expected results, and it is with gratitude I would like to express thanks to the church members for their faithfulness in this area.

	2010	Budget 2011	2011	Variance
Jan	849,010	1,023,585	993,658	-29,927
Feb	797,847	818,868	949,243	130,375
March	835,125	818,868	893,343	74,475
April	802,529	1,023,585	930,542	-93,043
May	979,378	818,868	856,261	37,393
TOTAL	4,263,890	4,503,774	4,623,047	119,273

Field expense was \$2,513,680, with \$178,505 going to evangelism, an increase of 8.4% over 2010 and a budget variance of 2.6%. Again, for your information, the Conference has an objective of returning at least 60% of tithe back to the field. The normal benchmark to compare tithe to field expense, is to use the previous years tithe. So far for 2011, the Conference has achieved 63% of tithe back to the field. Please also remember, the conference returns a tithe to the Union (10%) and also a further tithe to the SPD. May I encourage you to read the promise in Malachi 3:10 and to take the test.

"Bring your full tithe to my Temple so that there will be plenty of food in my house. Try me and see if I will not open the gates of heaven and pour out so many blessings on you, spiritual and material, that you will not be able to count them all."

*Peter Lynch*



## Youth Pastoral Workers' Retreat

Driving up the long tree lined driveway, to then be faced with a beautiful lodge overlooking a picturesque valley. This was the beginning of one of many amazing moments that we faced that weekend. The YPW retreat started with a dinner on the Friday night. It was not only a chance to come in fellowship with fellow YPW's but also to share a meal the way Jesus did with His Disciples.

Then we dove into sessions of learning, growth, and understanding. Listening to the 'pro's' and how they do what they do so well gave an opportunity for us to refine and develop skills to do the Lord's work. No matter if we had been a YPW for a couple of months or a couple of years, each of us was able to learn something, not only from the speakers, but from each other as well. There was a certain family feel in the atmosphere. I would sit there, a beautiful view of the valley beside me as I talked endlessly with

YPW's from other areas and other churches. We shared this unspoken bond as we discussed our individual settings and what we each had been actively involved in. It was as if we had been reunited at a family reunion - essentially we were. We were surrounded by fellow brothers and sisters in Christ, fellow workers for

the lord, all striving for the same goal; to lead people to Christ. Looking back, there's this certain nostalgic feeling. Never before in such a short time has so much bonding and learning happened, giving us skills that will empower us through the rest of our lives.

*Julia Sherar*



## Heritage Pathfinder Club successfully attends first Expedition...

Heritage's very own Pathfinder Club took 22 Pathfinders and nine leaders to Fryerstown State Forest near Castlemaine, to attend our very first Expedition over the Queen's Birthday

long weekend. "It was great to see how our group looked after and encouraged each other," said club leader, Bruce Wells. "Well done guys on a real team spirit!"



## The Second Step continued from page10

addictions (drugs, relationship/sexual addictions, AND the character defects, lying and manipulation that go with them) and learning new coping skills... You are discovering who you are outside of all the lies. If you don't expect some 'bad days' or tough times... you are just setting yourself up to fail. What you need to know is you WILL get through this. You WILL be okay." That is where Step Two comes in... "We came to believe that a power greater than ours could restore us to sanity." This step was difficult. It was hard to believe that God cared for me and wanted - even delighted in - my recovery. But after a while, I began to feel His presence... to hear the

Holy Spirit's suggestions... to feel hope for the first time in my life. Stanley, an architect whose life had been controlled by an addicted son for 16 years, has this to say: "I learned how to let go by watching others who were dealing with the same type of problems and noticing that they looked okay. They were doing something to deal with it better. I drew strength from their strength." I remember waking up early one day feeling amazing. I laughed out loud and wondered why I felt so good. Was it my birthday? A holiday? What? Then I heard God say "This is Health!" "No Way! Are You kidding me?" I had never felt good for no other reason than

just being alive. Health, huh? Cool... so it really is worth the fight... getting through the 'bad days'. Whatever you are holding on to... whatever lies or addictions continue to keep you in bondage, feeling crazy... turn it over to God. He will restore you to sanity. More than that, He will show you who you are; awaken in you talents and passions that will make your life worth living. God will give you the desires of your heart... right now you may not know what they are... so take a chance - let go and let God.

*Cheri Peters  
TrueStepAustralia.org  
Contact us - share your journey*

## An LE Helps Reconnect

Eric Hoare tells of a visit recently made to a referral in Westall. The lady he had been asked to see was sadly unavailable as she had been admitted to hospital and things were not going well. Her daughter, Dorothy, who'd answered the door, was troubled so Eric spent some time talking with her. The conversation turned to God, and Dorothy said that she used to go

to church. "I asked a question I often ask people who have drifted slowly from God. Are you happy?" She replied that she wasn't, and then poured out her story. She mentioned past contact with Seventh-day Adventists, and Pastor Tuakana's name cropped up. "I told her I was an Adventist and that I knew Pr Tuakana. I went out to the car and came back with

my phone. "Here, talk to him, he is on the phone," I told her." Dorothy talked on the phone for some time, and was so grateful for being given the opportunity. "I thank God for making this happen. He had His hand on the whole visit, leading the way to help Dorothy and Pr Tuakana reconnect. I am looking forward to our next visit."

## Elders Retreat

Earlier this year, church elders from Warnambool, Colac, Camperdown, Portland and Hamilton gathered together in Port Fairy for a Elders Retreat. It was an opportunity for getting to know each other better as they explored ways the churches could work together. It was also

spiritually refreshing, with guest speaker, Pr Rob Steed speaking on the role of the elder and how they can help lead others to God. "The elders found it inspiring and have agreed to meet together again in six months," said Pr Nikola Trajkov.



## Hospital Chaplains

Last year the Victorian Conference appointed two hospital Chaplains to care for our rural members when they are needing to spend time in city hospital, and for inpatients who



request a visit from an Adventist chaplain. Dr Harold Waldrip can be contacted on 03 5697 1272 or 0422 114 920 Pr Errol DeSilva can be contacted on 03 9799 3156 or 0402 350 080

## ADS AND NOTICES

**BIBLE LANDS TOUR - 1-31 September 2011.**  
8 places remaining. Fly to Petra, then visit Jerusalem, Nazareth, Bethlehem. Then fly to Istanbul and visit the seven churches. Another flight takes you to the Adriatic Coast. Trip also includes a visit to Venice, Torino and the Waldensian Valley, and Rome. Only \$8,800!!! Call Pr Posavac on 0432 593 299 or visit the website [www.simplesite.com/TheBibleTour2011](http://www.simplesite.com/TheBibleTour2011).

**VICTORIAN FIJIAN ADVENTISTS - August 27** will see the first combined afternoon service for Fijian Adventists. To be held at Ascot Vale Adventist Church, 43 The Parade, Ascot Vale, Adventists from across Victoria, connected to Fiji in any way - visitors from Fiji, Fijian ancestry, ex Fiji residents - are welcome. You do not even need to be able to speak the Fijian Lingo! So please come. If you are travelling some distance and plan to spend the whole Sabbath at Ascot Vale, consider joining the Fijian members from the western suburbs for a shared lunch. There will be an evening after-service supper and hot chocolate so bring a plate of supper food to share.

For more information, contact Jotame Ratabua on 0424810698 or 03 83618358  
**VINAKA VAKALEVU**

**ACCOMODATION AVAILABLE** - A large house - three bedroom plus study - in Narre Warren in a new quiet estate -to share with semi-retired easy going male. Male or female tenant would have own bedroom, bathroom, toilet and study. Close to shops, bus, train and freeway. Rent \$150 per week plus half utilities costs. Phone Hank on 03 9705 2226, 0408 4888 63.

**CONGRATULATIONS** - Eraliya Grace Luchow was born 9:20 pm on Saturday night, June 25, to Jeremy and Shiami Luchow and big brother, Elijah. Eraliya's name (pronounced Erraleah), is derived from the Sri Lankan name for the frangipani flower. Ringwood Church welcomes this newest addition to their church family.

Sunset times  
Bairnsdale time is 10 minutes EARLIER & at Hamilton the time is 12 minutes LATER

Sabbath	Opening	Closing
July 29,30	5:32	5:33
Aug 5,6	5:38	5:39
Aug 12,13	5:44	5:45
Aug 19,20	5:50	5:50
Aug 26,27	5:55	5:56

## OFFERING SCHEDULE - AUGUST

- July 30 - Local Church Budget
- Aug 6 - Education/camping ministry
- Aug 13 - Local Church
- Aug 20 - Media Evangelism
- Aug 27 - Local Church

Budget



# LET KIDS REJOICE

## FUNDRAISING CONCERT

Featuring

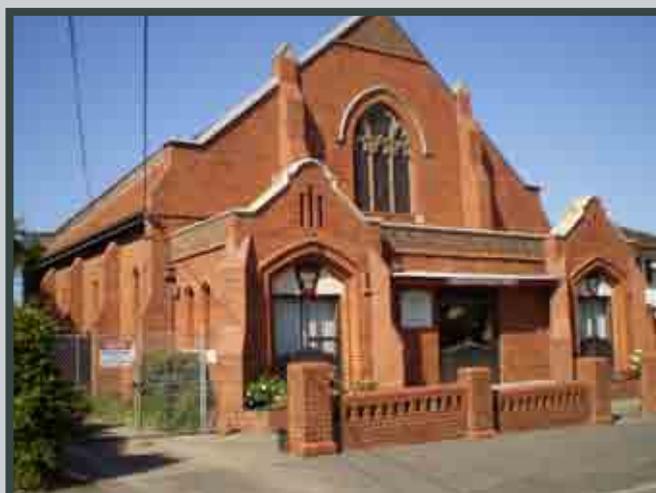
- The Joyful Singers Childrens Choir
- Instrumentals by Local Artists
- Rejoice Children Musical Ensemble Video
- Various Vocal Performances



Oakleigh Polish SDA Church  
Willgilson Court, Oakleigh  
Saturday July 30th 6pm

All funds raised will go towards  
Jacob's Well Rejoice School Project India

[www.jacobswell.org.au](http://www.jacobswell.org.au)

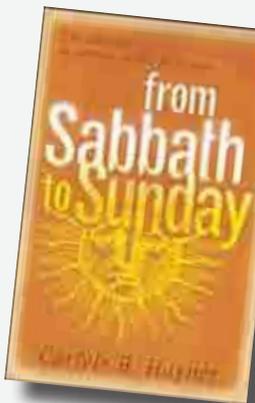
**CHURCH HALL DEDICATION**  
 Ascot Vale Church Members invite all to join them in celebrating the dedication of their new hall.

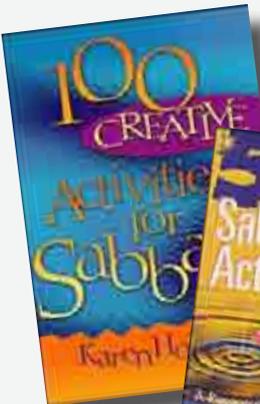
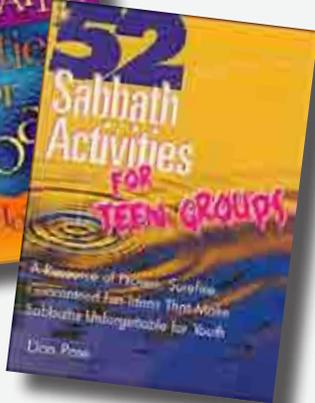
**JULY 30, 2011**  
 A special church service will begin at 11am, followed by potluck lunch and then the dedication program.

43 The Parade  
 Ascot Vale.



Come and visit the ABC for all your needs! With an array of gifts, music and reading materials, the ABC also stocks the Sanitarium range of products. Looking for something in particular - ask Tina or Joe - they are happy to help.  
 Open 9-5 Mon to Thurs and 9-12 Friday.  
 Central Road, Nunawading.






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