

I have come that they may have life,  
and have it to the full. John 10:10 NIV



*IntraVic*

IntraVic / Victorian Conference News / December 2009

# MOVING ON IN VICTORIA

*with a*

# NEW ADMINISTRATION TEAM



**Peter Lynch - CFO**

**Wayne Stanley - President**

**Darren Croft - General Secretary**

### FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PEN



**Thank you for the support, trust and respect you have shown me in inviting me to serve as your President for the next four years. I**

**thank Denis Hankinson and other Presidents before me, for the work they have done for the church in Victoria over many years.**

As I think ahead over the next four years, I am conscious of the many challenges we face.

**We represent Jesus at a time when there is little interest in organised Christianity and churches.** Many Australians are sceptical about our relevance - especially to a society with so many perceived needs. Others remind us of the strength of other non-Christian religions and their growing influence in our community. Spreading the Hope of Jesus is not an easy task in a world that believes the church has little to offer.

**Sometimes we are challenged because we are not united in our focus.** We live in a society where we are used to robust debate, which is a good thing. But occasionally we get so caught up in that debate that we become more focused on winning the

argument rather than looking for a workable solution.

It is time for us to build bridges, mend relationships and listen to each other. As we listen, we begin to understand and as we understand, we begin to find solutions.

Yes, as church members at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we do face considerable challenges, however we are carrying on the work of the many who went before us, those who had the courage to have hope and vision.

The Adventist message first came to Australia when the North Fitzroy church was established here in Victoria. Those who established that church probably never dreamed that as a result of their efforts, people all over Australia and the Pacific would hear the message of Jesus. But they understood that when we work together the result is bigger than the sum of all our individual efforts. Inspired by that vision, they committed their lives to God's mission.

**Today we have many of the same issues that have faced the church throughout history, but we also have new ways of achieving our vision.** Never before has there been the opportunity to use the media - whether online, television or radio - that we have today. Additionally, we live in a

prosperous nation: God has given us enormous resources to achieve our mission.

Those who have gone before us have planted many seeds and Jesus has promised to add His blessings to a harvest which is ready and waiting.

We have been given a personal invitation to become the reapers and the workers in God's field. He says...

*'One sows and another reaps' is true. I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labour.* JOHN 4:37, 38

His message is very clear...

*The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.* MATTHEW 9:37, 38

This is God's harvest and it will be plentiful. What is more, He has invited us, as part of his Church, to have a part in His harvest - we can stand secure in the knowledge that He will equip us and bless every effort.

**We need to come together. We need to work together. There are many in our community who are searching and waiting for the hope and love that only Jesus can provide.**

*Wayne Stanley*

VICTORIAN CONFERENCE PRESIDENT

### WAYNE STANLEY - CONFERENCE PRESIDENT



Wayne first entered full-time Ministry in 1981 where he served as a local pastor in South Queensland and Tasmania. During his early ministry he also worked as a theology lecturer in PNG for 7 years.

In 1996 Wayne was called to work as a Ministerial Secretary - first in North New Zealand and then in Western Australia for a total of 8 years.

He joined the Victorian Conference in late 2003 in the role of General Secretary, and has got to know the constituency through his travels from church to church over the past six years.

Wayne and his wife Martina are proud parents of Monique (27) and Tristan (24) who both have degrees in Economics and are now working in Melbourne and Canberra. They recently welcomed Gus as their son-in-law and enjoy being companions of adult children. Wayne and Martina both have close family in Europe and love travelling to catch up with them when possible. They both enjoy working and living with different cultures and people.

### DARREN CROFT - GENERAL SECRETARY

Darren has been in the Ministry for fifteen years. He is in his 30's and he and his wife, Rosie, have four children: Jayden(11), Rylan (8), Lacey (5) and Tiarey (3).

Prior to attending Avondale College, Darren gained experience in Banking. During his studies in Theology, he received the Clifford Anderson Award in recognition of outstanding performance as a student and for the exhibition of ministerial potential. In his last year of study, he was a volunteer Youth Pastor at Avondale Memorial Church.

After graduating, Darren worked in the South Australian and North New Zealand Conferences before coming here to

Victoria in 2002, where he has become well known through his service, initially at Bairnsdale and Sale Churches and since 2004, at Lilydale Church.



### PETER LYNCH - CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER



Peter comes to Victoria from New Zealand and has many years of experience in the banking industry, as well as having managed his own business for a short time, and worked as a business consultant.

In 2001, Peter was called from Brisbane, to the position of Financial Controller at Avondale College, then in 2005 he took up the position of Secretary Treasurer in the New Zealand Pacific Union Conference.

Peter became an Adventist in 1984. He married Joanne in 1985 and they have an 11-year-old daughter, Alexandra. His hobbies include sailing and he is looking forward to the opportunity of getting his own boat again. He also enjoys travel and skiing, and loves to fiddle with computers and other gadgets.



### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS' REPORT

#### EASTER CONVENTION 2010

Plans for Easter Convention 2010 are forging ahead. The Victorian Conference's booking of the Elmore facility has been confirmed, with an indication that there will be ongoing availability over the Easter weekend in subsequent years. With positive feedback regarding the facilities, and in anticipation of more predictable weather than at Lardner Park, the Facilities Committee and the Program Committee are meeting, making plans for a wonderful bush camp. Reserve next Easter and plan to be there for worship, fellowship and developing a broader sense of community.

#### CURRENT FINANCIAL SITUATION

Considering the financial climate in recent months, God has blessed the Victorian Conference. While expenditure has been contained, tithing figures are considerably better than anticipated and Administration would like to thank you for your commitment to the Lord's work through tithing.

#### ASSESSMENT OF FUNDING APPLICATIONS

With increasing numbers of churches requesting financial assistance for building works and refurbishment, the outgoing Board of Directors has undertaken to recommend to the new Executive Committee appointed at the Constituency Meeting in November, that criteria be established for assessing funding applications, thus providing a strategic process for fund dispersal.

#### CONFERENCE EVANGELIST

Administration also recommended to the BOD that the Victorian Conference establish a policy for Conference Evangelists, to enhance the role of outreach and public evangelism within the Conference. The proposal was accepted, with approval given for the appointment as Conference Evangelist, of Mr Peter Watts (who has shown exceptional interest and skill in the area of public evangelism) and of Mr Duane Haora (who has also undertaken successful public outreach and feels a strong calling to evangelism).

**We would like to take this opportunity to wish you a safe and happy time during your activities over the year end. Office closure will be from Wednesday December 23 at 5:15pm until January 4, 2010.**

**May you receive God's richest blessings throughout this holiday season.**

## CONSTITUENCY MEETING REPORT - NOVEMBER 2009

The Constituency Meeting of the Victorian Conference was held on Sunday, November 8, providing an excellent opportunity to get together and plan for the future.

I found the constituency meeting very well organized and conducted in a fine Christian atmosphere even when a few spirited items were contested. -DP

**Delegates have commented that the meeting reflected an attitude of hope and cooperation.**

The opening comments by Union President, Pastor

Chester Stanley, reminded those present of the many positive developments throughout the world church which now has a membership of over 16-million. A season of prayer and a rousing hymn followed, setting the tone for the day.

**The main items of business during the morning session related to the various reports from the Nominating Committee.** Under the new Constitution, this committee - appointed by a Selection Committee and with representation from all Victorian churches - had begun its work four months prior to the Constituency Meeting.

The nominations for the Officers were presented and voted on, while Delegates also voted on nominations for the Executive and Appointments Committees. **The Report of the Nunawading Estate Business Development Committee (NEBDC) was the**

The delegates seemed more content and satisfied with most of reports and issues and thus were more accepting of the recommendations given. -IR

Rod Brady did an excellent job filling in as chairman and his willingness to take on the role when asked was appreciated. -CB

The Session was conducted in a good atmosphere - everything was done fairly and reasonable opportunity was given for people to have their say and express their opinions. The spirit of the meeting was very good. -LH

**main item of business for the afternoon session.** The NEBDC provided a report on their key findings and the limitations for use of the land due to governmental restrictions, reiterating that their objective was to find ways to use the land to generate income for the work of the church, without the need for investment and an outlay of funds. **The delegates consented to the Executive Committee entering into a 99-year lease agreement with AdventCare, which will build eco-friendly independent living units on the estate, thus generating an income that can be used to support the work and mission of the church.**

A vote of thanks was taken for the members of the NEBDC for their significant contribution to the Victorian Conference.

I appreciated the simple, transparent way in which the voting was done; the food was really good! -LC

The session was chaired in a very professional manner and kept moving through the business. There were no obvious lobbying groups and I feel that the business of the church was accomplished to set the scene for the next four years. -VK

### THE FOLLOWING NUNAWADING ESTATE MOTIONS WERE CARRIED :-

- That the Victorian Conference of SDA Executive Committee be authorised to enter into an arrangement with AdventCare to provide for a 99-year lease and development rights to the Nunawading Estate (Camp Ground) for the purpose of erecting a minimum of 76 eco-friendly independent living apartments for retirement village purposes, subject to planning approvals through the civic authorities, and that the lease makes provision for AdventCare to return a projected annual rental of \$800,000 indexed to CPI to the Victorian Conference for the use of the land.
- In the event that the land required for the proposed 76 independent living apartments is less than the total available land for development, consideration be given, but not limited to, the development of a church on the balance of the land.
- The implementation of this proposal be referred to the Executive Committee of the Victorian Conference with approval being given to continue negotiations with AdventCare to allow them to engage with government authorities and such consultants as are necessary to allow the project to proceed to completion. Further that the NEBDC continue in their monitoring role to assist the Executive Committee in overseeing a complex project.

### APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

Elfrieda Ajdnik	Rowville-Lysterfield Church	Brian Lawty	Church Pastor at Ballarat
Evelyn Charles	Teacher at Heritage College	Heather Pitt	Teacher at NCC
Chris Cowled	Teacher at Gilson College	Iutini Rimoni	Pastor at Spotswood/Preston Churches
Joan Gibbs	Lilydale Church	John St Mart	Casey Church
May Hale	Greensborough Church	Nikola Trajkov	Pastor for Warrnambool Church
Carol Hanna	Bairnsdale Church	Brett Terry	Seddon Church

### DEPARTMENTAL APPOINTMENTS

The Appointments Committee met on November 22 and thus far the following appointments have been made...

ADRA DIRECTOR	Mrs Rebecca Auriant	PUBLIC RELATIONS DIRECTOR	General Secretary
EDUCATION DIRECTOR	Mr Brian Mercer	RELIGIOUS LIBERTY DIRECTOR	President
HEALTH MINISTRIES DIRECTOR	Mrs Sibilla Johnson	COMMUNICATION DIRECTOR	President
YOUTH MINISTRIES DIRECTOR	Pr Moe Ioane Stiles	PERSONAL MINISTRIES DIRECTOR	Pr Loren Pratt
MINISTERIAL ASSOCIATION SECRETARY	Pr Rob Steed	CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES DIRECTOR	Pr David Edgren

## INCOMING EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



### ANGELA BRADLEY - BURWOOD CHURCH

Angela is in her 40's, working as a prep teacher at Edinburgh Adventist Primary School. Her interests include travel, crafts and painting. While previously a member of the Asian church, Angela and her family now attend Burwood Adventist Community Church.

### DAVID BUTCHER - CHURCH PASTOR

David is in his 30's and enjoys spending time with his wife and two young children and being in the outdoors - whether it be kayaking, gardening or camping.

Prior to commencing Theology at Avondale in 2001, David worked as a warehouse and distribution manager for a clothing company, as a buyer and as a fleet controller.

He has been in the Victorian Conference for five years, working with Bendigo Church, Castlemaine Company and Maryborough Church and is now with Bayles and Berwick Churches. David has a passion for helping people as they decide for Christ, and for local Church evangelism.



### JUDY CHENG - GATEWAY

With a passion for soul winning, particularly in University Campus outreach, Judy is a founding member of Gateway Adventist Centre. As a Board member, treasurer and counsellor at the Centre, she had been involved in breaking new ground at Swinburne and Monash Universities.

Judy has been a church member for about 18 years, is mother to two active youth leaders and a tax specialist working within the Big Four global accounting firms for 17 years.

### MR RODERICK FERRIS - BENALLA CHURCH

Rod is a retired teacher and administrator, now working part time - still in education, while also running a small business. He actively contributes to Benalla Church, holding the positions of Leading Elder, Treasurer and Communications Co-ordinator.

Other interests of Rod's, when he has time, include music, travel and Information & Communication Technology.



### STEPHAN HERZOG - LIVING WATERS

Raised in Switzerland, with Methodist background, Stephan is in his late 40's. He moved to Australia in 1983 and became an Adventist 16 years later. Married, with two adult children, Stephan is CEO of Fernwood Women's Health Clubs, Council Chair of Gilson College and a Director of ASV in his spare time. He is a founding member of Living Waters and is still the greeter and janitor.

### LINDY JUDD - GEELONG CHURCH

Lindy is not new to the role of an Executive Committee member, having served on the outgoing committee. She is an active leader in her church in Geelong, contributing to a wide range of church committees and service areas such as Senior Sabbath School (over the years she has worked in all divisions), worship, music, teaching and organising church camps.

Her career has seen her working in various state primary schools, and over the last ten years she has been Principal of an innovative government school on the Bellarine Peninsular. She is currently acting as an educational consultant.

In her 50's, Lindy enjoys research, has a special interest in autistic children and photography and likes to travel.



### DARREN SLADE

Darren has been a church Pastor for twelve years. He has been in Victoria for four, initially at Wantirna and now at Mildura Church. His interests include 4-wheel driving, relaxing reading and travel and, as he has to do these for his work anyway, says you could call his work one of his hobbies too.

Darren has already served one term on the outgoing Executive Committee and is looking forward to continuing to do so.

### ROB STEED

Employed by the Victorian Conference, Rob is the Ministerial Association Secretary. He has a heart for growing ministry through relationship and has a wide range of ministry experience and skills to assist the pastors in leadership of healthy churches. One of his interests includes research and he is currently the president of Australia's leading inter-denominational Christian research organisation.



### MATTHEW TISCIA - ROWVILLE-LYSTERFIELD CHURCH

Working in computing as a Network Administrator, Matt's interests include anything Tech, Bible study, art, music and cycling.

His contributions to church life have included being a Youth Leader, while currently he fills the roles of Sabbath School teacher and deacon and provides AV support.

Filling the final position on the new Executive Committee is still in progress.

# ADRA UPDATE

## GRANT A WISH

On October 3, 2009, ADRA held a Grant-a-Wish night in Melbourne. Over \$3,700 was raised and allocated among ADRA's women's refugees, counselling centres and at-risk youth programs in Australia and to some of its overseas development projects in Africa, Asia and the South Pacific, as well as to relief work for the recent Pacific and Asia disasters. A heartfelt 'thank you' goes to all who contributed their time, energy and talents, thus making this night possible.



Gratefully acknowledging the members of the Grant-a-Wish Team who worked hard organising the successful event.

## ADRA AUSTRALIA LAUNCHES NATIONAL SURVEY

For the first time, the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Australia has launched a national survey to gather the opinions and feedback from Adventists across Australia, and needs their responses by 31 December. The survey will be available in churches on December 12 in the RECORD, or can be accessed online at [www.adra.org.au](http://www.adra.org.au), or by calling 1800 242 372.

For more information contact: Alexandra Marek p- 02 9489 5488 e - [news@adra.org.au](mailto:news@adra.org.au)

## A DAY TO REMEMBER

Sabbath, October 17, dawned like any other Sabbath for Bairnsdale Church members, but it did not remain so. After the usual song service and Sabbath School Class discussions, their long-time friend and pastor for several years, Pastor Darren Croft, conducted the service, as only he could, conveying a message to all his listeners. After the service, everyone shared a wonderful luncheon in the church cafeteria, and then the day's program continued with the dedication of the newest member of Robert and Rachel Turnley's family, their little girl, Naomi. As Pastor John O'Malley (bandaged arm and all) conducted the service, one could not help be reminded of the time when Joseph and Mary took baby Jesus to Simeon for dedication, setting the pattern for the future. This was followed by the baptism of two of our church members, Mark and Pearl Leyshan, bringing to a close, what was certainly "a day to remember".

- Joffre Gilchrist



At 94, Mr Gilchrist has decided to lay down his Communication Secretary's pen, after 22 years. He has contributed many articles to Intraviv as well as promoting Bairnsdale Church's activities in the local newspaper, and we would just like to take this opportunity to thank him for his contributions over the years.

-Editorial Staff

## DON'T LOOK FOR ANOTHER ANSWER



THE YOUTH CHOIR

The special African Day of Fellowship held at Ascot Vale Church on October 31 brought together more than 150 worshippers for the morning and afternoon services.

Sabbath School consisted of a panel discussion and was followed by the preacher, Kojo Akomeah exhorting the congregation to look for answers, not in science or money, but in the Bible: "It is God's Word, and God's Word is still the truth." He discussed current world events, and Christ's apparent delay, urging his listeners to - rather than asking "Is Christ coming or shall we look for another?" - consider what they might be found doing when the end comes and get excited about Christ's Second Coming.

The afternoon program, conducted by youth from different churches in Melbourne, included praise and worship, duets and several small group performances. The youth choir presented special items of music and a skit, taking the opportunity to acknowledge the wonderful contribution their director, Aleta Annable, had made, as they farewelled her and her husband Graeme, who were returning to Brisbane.

Ascot Vale Church's pastor, Ainsley Wagner, closed the program, which had been a blessing to all who attended, encouraging everyone to keep faithful to the end.

- Jennifer Ongalo

## ADRA EMERGENCY RESPONSE MEETING

In October, Management from ADRA Australia met with Victorian Conference staff and church members to discuss an emergency management plan for Victoria. ADRA does not have a formal response program in Victoria (unlike other states) and is therefore not involved in the established disaster response plan. Given these restrictions, the best way to involve our local churches will be to define areas where a disaster is most likely to occur, then liaise with local councils to identify gaps. ADRA will help facilitate and roll out a process for the Victorian Conference, to engage our churches and establish an Emergency Response Committee. If you would like to be involved in the Emergency Management Response in Victoria, please contact Rebecca by phone on 0411 865 790.

## ADRA APPEAL 2009

For the first time ever, the ADRA Appeal 2009 received permission to hold 300 highway collections rather than the usual 20. Churches from all over Victoria rose to the challenge, going the extra mile to take part in this initiative.

Many thanks to all involved, including the tireless people who collect door-door, for both collecting AND raising awareness of ADRA's work both in Australia and overseas - work which is one way Christ's compassion and care is expressed to a hurting world.



## TAKING THE PROPHETIC CODE TO LOGAN RESERVE



DUANE HAORA

In October, Duane Haora, Bi-Vocational minister for Warragul, conducted a Prophetic Code seminar for Logan Reserve Church in Queensland. The Lord blessed the groundwork laid down by the church members, with over 186 people attending the first night. The average attendance for the remainder of the program was 120, with nearly half of these being non-Adventist.

As Duane delivered each presentation night after night, it was clearly evident the Holy Spirit was touching the hearts and minds of those listening. In conclusion, on the Friday evening, Duane invited everyone to come and spend their first Sabbath at the Logan Reserve Church.

Seventeen people turned up for Sabbath School, with a further eleven arriving for the Divine Service, where an appeal for recommitment and baptism was made. Nineteen people responded, however when the first study was conducted for this group, there were another fifteen people in attendance, wanting more Bible study.

**Upon reflection, Duane believes the success of this program was in part, due to a dedicated, godly prayer team, active from the beginning, and he plans on placing even more emphasis on this part of the ministry in future programs.**

May God continue to bless His workers in Logan Reserve Church as they pray for and follow up their new friends.

## THE FIGHTING SPIRIT LIVES ON

Tiny Jemma was born thirteen weeks premature and even as she was coaxed into taking her first breath, with all the assistance that medical technology can offer to such a prem baby, her mother Alison Stuart was in a desperate fight for her own life.

At nearly 26 weeks pregnant, with a lifelong heart condition, Alison began having trouble breathing. Admitted to hospital, she was diagnosed as having contracted swine flu. But Alison was a fighter. "Though her heart capacity was only ever 70 -80%," said her mother Sue, "she lived life at 110%". While her weakened heart compounded her illness, defeating the team of experts trying to save her, that spirit stayed with Alison to the end, as she fought to hang on as long as possible, giving her baby a better chance. Alison spent her life in service to others, and passed away shortly after her daughter, Jemma, was delivered by emergency caesarean.

Jemma is doing remarkably well considering the precarious circumstances of her birth. While only tiny (weighing just 972g at birth), she too shows a strong fighting spirit. Discharged from hospital in her fourteenth week and not even requiring home oxygen, Jemma is continuing to thrive, and to date has experienced none of the possible complications of prematurity.

She is surrounded by the love of her family, who are so grateful to have her. **Please remember this precious baby and her dad Conway, the Beament and Stuart grandparents, Alison's sisters and Jemma's siblings in your prayers as they continue to mourn the loss of one dearly loved one, while moving forward with the beautiful promises given by a new life.**



BABY JEMMA IS THRIVING



**We at VicYouth do not want our young people to come to our programs, hear the words, then go home and sleep - we want to move them to think and reflect on their lives and the lives they come in contact with on a daily basis.**

### PEOPLE OF JUSTICE - YOUTH RALLY

Nathan Brown tackled the issue of justice when he spoke to the youth in October, challenging his listeners to join God in His fight for justice - after all, is not sticking up for the under privileged one of the ways to live for God - evangelism at its core?

Our prayer at VicYouth is that our young people will see and hear of justice issues, not thinking "Someone will do something for them, it isn't my responsibility," but rather praying "God, show me how to be one of your "People of Justice".

### UPRISING ~ BEGINS TODAY - TEEN RALLY

Chaplain to Heritage College, Faye Stothers, spoke with the teens on their role as an uninhibited generation, a generation not content to just sit back, but a generation energised to see God's plans come to fruition in their lives.



VicYouth is excited about these precious teens, who may not do things the same way everyone else does, but are genuinely enthusiastic about giving their talents to serving God and encouraging others to serve Him.

### PATHFINDER RALLY

Once again, we are in awe of the leaders that give endless hours to serving God through Pathfinders. We wish to say "Thank you for your commitment and dedication to

the young people around you. Your love and passion is obvious and your tireless efforts only God can reward! He knows the work you have put in to making Pathfinders not only a fun and safe place, but also an environment where our children are learning about God and connecting with Him personally."

**We continue to give God praise for the way that He is leading us now and into the future.**

- Moe Ioane Stiles



## BE CONFIDENT OF THIS... HE WHO BEGAN A GOOD WORK IN YOU, WILL CARRY IT ON TO COMPLETION

- the story of Kerri and Dutch



PASTOR ANDREW WILSON WITH KERRI, DUTCH AND SIX OF THEIR CHILDREN

People drift in and out of our lives, sometimes for a brief encounter, sometimes for an extended period. We do not always see how the Holy Spirit has used our relationships with them for good and it may take years to bear fruit, but we should not be discouraged.

Following is the story of Kerri and Dutch Vanderhorst who were baptised on Sabbath, October 10, 2009, along with three of their children, while a commitment ceremony was held for the younger ones, at Horsham Church. Many church members have touched their lives over the years and visitors from Nhill, Maryborough, Bendigo and Lilydale churches, as well as friends from Brim and Warracknabeal, gathered to celebrate with them as they publically committed their lives to God.

Andrew Wilson, Horsham Church's Bi-Vocational minister, believes that without the personal involvement of church members, there would have been no baptism. In recent years, John and Janet Arbuckle befriended Kerri and Dutch, offering friendship and support, sharing meals and studying the Bible together.

"I see this baptism as a great encouragement to people like John and Janet, who intentionally involve themselves in helping families to grow in their understanding and love of God," explained Andrew. "...And also to the Lilydale church family who helped and supported them before they moved up here."

So keep trying, reaching out, praying for the people you know who do not seem to care. Above all, do not give up - God doesn't.

**"I was none too happy about the new 'hippy church' my parents joined when they were baptised in 1989," Kerri told the congregation gathered to celebrate her baptism. "If someone had told me then, that I would make the same choice in years to come, I would have laughed so hard."**

As for Dutch, he began his testimony with "When I was introduced to God, I didn't like Him all that much!"

Bought up in a Christian environment, Kerri turned away from God completely in her teen years, immersing herself instead, in Satanism, from which she could not escape. Many times she tried, but the devil told her that if she ever left him, he would take something from her, something precious and irreplaceable.

"There was so much confusion in my life and the guilt I experienced is something I will never forget," Kerri said. "My brother died tragically in 1990. Believing it was my fault, I was terrified of what else would happen - if Satan could take away my brother, he could just as easily take away my helpless little baby." Kerri was getting help from the pastor and having studies; however she told him there was no point, as she was a lost cause. "I thought I was saving everyone further trouble by stopping my lessons... I can see now, that was what Satan wanted me to think."

The life and peace of mind Kerri so needed was worlds away as, tormented by guilt and mourning, she sought to find relief through drugs and alcohol. It took her father's death after a short

illness, to bring her back to church again, but only to hold her mother's hand until she felt strong enough to attend alone. Fortunately, God is willing to use the worst of circumstances to bring back His lost ones, and one Sabbath the words of a particular hymn really touched Kerri's heart, bringing warmth to her heart and tears to her eyes. In the ensuing weeks, fearing the devil's threats, she fought the



PR. DARREN CROFT BAPTISING DUTCH

feelings 'tooth and nail', but God did not give up.

**"I am happy to say I lost that battle with the realisation that although Satan had so much power over me, Jesus is supposed to be stronger, so why not pray?"**

Prayer did not come easily and at times Kerri felt she had deliberately moved too far away and was on her own - that God could not still love and forgive her. She resumed Bible studies, but struggled

with the whole concept of forgiveness. After years of self-doubt, self-abuse and rejecting the values of her family, Kerri finally began to realise that yes, her mother *did* still love her - not because she came to church again, nor because she had given her a grandchild, but just 'because'. Following that realisation came another - loving her as she did, her mother *was* able to forgive her the pain she had caused. Kerri's mind then opened little by little, to the possibility, then belief, that God *did* love her the same way - just because - and He *did* forgive her. In 1999 Kerri surrendered, and was baptised, however she continued to struggle with the powers of darkness.

Dutch told the congregation that as a child he attended a very strict Catholic school where punishment and belittlement were a way of life, and that while present at church with his family, if he so much as made a sound, punishment was swift and to the point. It was no wonder he had little regard for God.

**Dutch started smoking at eight, drinking at thirteen and dabbled with stealing and drugs. In spite of this start to life, he landed a responsible job and it was here God planted the first seed.** A fellow worker carried a Bible around and when Dutch asked him why, he said that reading it helped him get close to God.

"This got me thinking about my life," said Dutch. "I had a baby die when she was only six months old and I wanted to know if she was in Heaven."

Dutch and Kerri were neighbours and from time to time she had shared her interest in God, so he asked her questions about where someone went when they died.



KERRI AND DUTCH

The seeds God planted were germinating, as Dutch's interest in Christianity grew. He sent his eldest daughter to a Christian Kids Club, but this became another wedge between him and his wife in their already strained relationship. Finally, the troubled relationship became irreconcilable and Dutch and his wife agreed to end their marriage. Dutch and Kerri's occasional discussions about God continued, further fuelling his interest, and when Kerri invited Dutch to watch the Dimensions of Prophecy series by Kenneth Cox, he accepted.

Over time, Dutch and Kerri grew closer and eventually became a couple. They loved each other dearly, but finding out Kerri was pregnant was a severe shock and the pressure of pregnancy, among other stresses, was too much for them.



**Brendan - 10** - Growing up I was a naughty little boy, then I started to grow older and to believe in God. I read more books and learnt more about Jesus and how much He loves us. Matthew and I are studying the Bible with Andrew now and I really love learning more and more. Mum and Dutch help me a lot and they have even brought a thing for my room so I can watch 3ABN and Hope channel in bed. I love Jesus now and today is going to be the best day of my life, the only day that will be better than today is when Jesus comes to take us all home to live with Him.

**Matthew - 12** - I love to learn about God. I enjoy telling people about the Sabbath, I sometimes get into arguments with my friends too, but am determined they will see the truth about the true Lord's Day one day. It is hard to keep the Sabbath at my Dad's because not only does he not believe in God, he hates Christians. He tries to force us to break the Sabbath each time we are there but God gives me more and more strength to be the best Christian I could possibly be. I really want God to get to everyone and help them, especially my friends and family too.



**Jess - 14** - I wasn't really brought up Christian. Now I am learning more and more from Dad and Kerri. It is really hard to open up about God at home though because my Mum doesn't believe. I am sad that Mum can't be here today, but I hope and pray that just as Jesus reached my Dad, He'll reach my Mum too. Finally giving my life fully to God, it feels good.



For a while, they split up but got back together after the birth and began having Bible studies.

Things went well for a time, but Satan was not finished with them and stepped up his attack in so many ways.

During their studies, the topic of their lifestyle became an issue. "I couldn't understand how a church wouldn't accept sinners who are learning," said Dutch. "I didn't want to be part of such a church."

Fortunately, God again persevered, sending a new friend, Darren, to help through this difficult time.

"I think I was Darren's burden," said Dutch during his testimony. "I annoyed him with question after question! Now I do that with John and Janet and if they can't answer, I go back to Darren!"

In 2005, now married, Kerri, Dutch and their family moved to Brim, near Horsham, and on the surface everything seemed fine, however it was all a facade.

Kerri was still struggling with issues over her involvement with Satan. **Pr Mike Browning and his wife Anne tried to encourage her to focus on God rather than the devil. "I thought they were nuts!" she said. "I was sure I had to get Satan out first before I could build a relationship with God."**

However the more she tried to develop a relationship with God, the worse her nightmares became, to the point where she could feel something frightening and evil beside her bed, watching her.

Dutch was not finding his walk with God any easier. They were both struggling with alcohol and cigarettes, reaching the point where they were drinking nearly every night. They stopped going to church and watched 3ABN or Hope Channel instead. **Sometimes the satellite programming would include testimonials from people with addiction problems who, after just one prayer, were miraculously healed. These only bought Kerri pain - were she and Dutch so wicked God wouldn't do that for them?** Many times, they prayed. Many times, they tried. Many times, they failed.

The drinking was destroying the family and finally Dutch and Kerri stopped trying, telling God they didn't know how to do it, and that they needed His help.

*continued overleaf*

Pr Darren Croft, who preached at the service, said it was a very special weekend. "I am one of many who have played a small part in their journey as God has led them to a deeper experience with Him." Darren based his message on Acts 16, where the jailer and his family were ready to give up in despair - a sentiment Kerri and Dutch were familiar with - and how God used others to bring them to the point where the whole family accepted Christ as their Saviour. "It is encouraging to see how God continued to work using different people along the way," He said. Moreover, this is just the beginning of the story, as Kerri and Dutch make themselves available to God, to be used by Him, touching the lives of others.



DR RICHARD DAVIDSON

### CITY REGIONAL MEETINGS

November saw Melbourne's church members blessed with two City regional meetings, one held at Seddon Church for the Western suburbs and the other in Rooks Rd, Nunawading, in the East.

Both venues were filled to capacity as Dr Richard Davidson, Chair of the Old Testament Department at Andrews University, USA, spoke fluently on several difficult topics ranging from the 'Cursing Psalms' to dealing with 'Hard Passages' of the Old Testament.

**With his unique blend of storytelling and humour he kept his listeners engaged while giving them something to think about, inspiring a 'new' way of looking at the Old Testament.**

Many people were involved with the wonderful music and special items, the various presentations and organisational details such as helping find more chairs, all contributing to making these events the success they were, and Administration would like to express its appreciation.

(CDs of some of Dr Davidson's presentations are available at the Adventist Book Centre.)



THE GOODWIN FAMILY

### LOCAL FM RADIO AND 3ABN TV BRING NEW MEMBERS TO MACEDON RANGES CHURCH

The church family in Gisborne were recently encouraged by the effects of low powered FM radio broadcasting (which reaches a large portion of Western Melbourne) as they welcomed Jan Marie Tomasini, who's interest in finding a local SDA church was sparked after just a few months of listening to broadcasts from our Sunbury radio station.

The 3ABN satellite program is also reaching into homes, and it has made a significant impact on the Goodwin family from Romsey, who have joined the Macedon Ranges Church after having found the truth they sought, in the SDA doctrines on the Sabbath, speaking in tongues and life after death.

- Damir Posavac

### MAKING POVERTY HISTORY

Nita Chinganya emigrated to Australia in 2002, bringing her two young children to join her husband Bright, who was already here, studying at Charles Sturt University in NSW.

"My first impressions were that Australians were nice people. Especially the church family - they made us feel so at home," she said. Job prospects were very limited in Wagga Wagga, where they lived, however Nita was excited about moving to Melbourne when Bright graduated, thinking she would be able to find work here. However she soon found her Zambian qualifications (Bachelor of Arts Degree in Developmental Studies UNZA) were not sufficient.

"In my field, Australian qualifications were expected as well as Third World experience." Nita enrolled at Deakin University in a Masters degree on International and Community Development, from which she recently graduated.

**"I plan to use my qualifications as a development practitioner. I want to be part of the team working to 'make poverty history.'"**



NITA CHINGANYA GRADUATING

### THE STORY OF KERRI & DUTCH - cont

"I had been smoking since thirteen and drinking since fourteen," said Kerri. "They were my crutches and I was like a cripple refusing to get up after being healed by Jesus because I didn't believe it had happened - because I didn't trust. But this time it was different."

"The next day," said Dutch, "we let the kids tip every drop in the house down the sink and we have not looked back

since." He told those gathered for the baptism that he is now much closer to God. "I look back on the way it was and I feel so much better." He knows it is not through anything he has done, only through God's grace. Now he is free from his past and ready to begin a new life with Jesus in control.

Kerri's fears and nightmares are gone too. "A huge weight has lifted from my soul," she told the church. She now has

a life full of joy, love and inner peace, recognising that God never gave up on her, that she was the one who created the distance, choosing to cling to her fears rather than trust in the promises of the Bible and fully surrendering to Jesus.

"For the first time in my life," she told church members at her re-baptism in Horsham, "I feel free. I am really and truly free."

### DOUBLE CELEBRATION AT WANTIRNA

**Sabbath September 12 saw two reasons for the members of Wantirna Church to rejoice. That day marked the first day that Jacob Kai, the ten day old son of Renate and Jamie Krogdahl and brother to Alina, attended Wantirna Church and he was warmly welcomed.**



THELMA AND JACOB

**The second cause for celebration was the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of Thelma Smith.**

Thelma was one of two surviving foundation members of Nunawading Church and a member of Wantirna Church

and Friendship Group for many years. She attended Wantirna Church on the 12th to take part in the communion service, which she really enjoyed. As the service closed, two young girls presented her with a card and a long stemmed red rose to acknowledge the incredible milestone she had reached. And just like Jesus in days of old, baby Jacob was placed in the arms of Thelma in a beautiful picture of blessing passed down through the generations. It was said of Thelma by those who visited her later that day, that **she was "one of the most 'full of life and vibrant' 100-year olds you could ever meet!"**

The next day, Thelma was the star of a big birthday celebration at Wantirna Village where she lived and there she received messages from Her Majesty the Queen, the Prime Minister - Kevin Rudd, the Governor General - Quentin Bryce and other dignitaries. All in all it was a wonderful celebration of a life well lived.

It is therefore with sadness we report that soon after this, Thelma Smith fell and passed away, several days after her birthday. What a blessing that we celebrated with her while life remained and we look forward to the day when we won't have to rely just on the happy memories held by those who knew her.

### BRINGING GLORY TO GOD

Through God's grace, Berenice Cheng, member of Gateway Church, successfully completed her International Baccalaureate Diploma exams last year, achieving a maximum possible score of 45.

**"Berenice is the first to admit that she could not have done it without God," says her mother, Judy Cheng.** During the crucial exam period, church members offered supportive encouragement. "Their continual prayers and affirmations also helped her appreciate what true Christian friendship and support means."

Berenice is now putting her past experiences to good use, studying for a Bachelor of Dental Surgery at Melbourne University, where she offers Christian friendship and support to others in her capacity as President of the Adventist Student on Campus Club - Her goal being to serve God through campus outreach.

**"I hope her testimony will be an encouragement for other students to put their trust in God for everything in their lives,"** concludes Judy.



BERENICE ACHIEVED HIGH SCORES

### GOD'S THREE 'R'S

The East Gippsland church of Bairnsdale held their Women's Ministries Spiritual Retreat at Lakewood Park on the Banksia Peninsula, where the peace and tranquillity of the surrounds matched the peace generated in our hearts.

Our speaker was local elder, Rose Hamulczyk, who has a theology degree from North Luzon Adventist College, Philippines, and a passion for bringing people to Jesus.

Her theme for the weekend was "The 3 R's from the Master Teacher Jesus - Revival of Relationship with Rejoicing", linking our relationship with Jesus to that with our spouse and others.



ROSE HAMULCZYK WITH THE PRINCESSES CAKE

There were 25 attendees which included day visitors and five non SDA Christians, one of whom was inspired to attend Bairnsdale church the following Sabbath.

We were blessed with wonderful music from several musicians, including a young girl, Rachel Raymond, a gifted singer and violinist.

Saturday evening saw us relaxing and enjoying a variety of games. We were also surprised with a beautiful cake for "God's Princesses". - Judy Walker, Women's Ministries Leader

### MILDURA GIRLS NIGHT IN

Mildura SDA Church Hall, awash with pink, was the venue for the 'Girls Night In' held in October, raising money for Pink Ribbon Breast Cancer Awareness.

Lily Stojkovic, event coordinator, said the church's Social Team were impressed with the number of people who supported the event, as over 50 women from both the church and the local community attended the night of pamper sessions and fellowship. Many local businesses donated time or gift vouchers for the auction, raising over \$650 for the Pink Ribbon Charity.

Not only did the event increase awareness of the issue of breast cancer, it also created an opportunity for our church to hold an outwardly focused social.

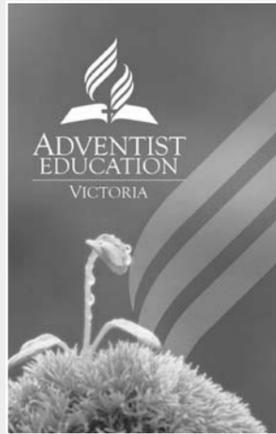
**"It is important that as a church," said Lily, "we participate in these**

**community focused events, taking the opportunity to give something back to the community."**

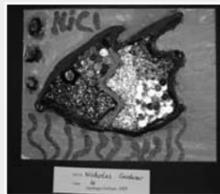
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THINK PINK AT MILDURA



## GROWING FAITH THE ESSENCE OF ADVENTIST EDUCATION



### REFLECTIONS ON 2009 - SANDRA ENGLAND

The last few weeks have seen students sitting exams, teachers writing reports and school communities preparing for end-of-year events: all signifying the Year End is upon us. What better time to reflect on the many fine initiatives that have occurred throughout 2009 in learning and teaching in Adventist Schools Victoria (ASV).



*Henderson*

### SPIRITUAL GROWTH

**The most important focus for our leaders and staff has always been to work with God as they educate the students, helping them develop their Christian characters and connect with Jesus Christ.**

2009 was no exception as significant emphasis was placed on Bible classes, worship programs and chapels, as well as special spiritual emphasis events where staff and students work together in presentation of praise and worship. Often the Bible themes from these events subsequently found expression in other teaching domains such as IT and literacy, with staff being encouraged to seek out further ways of integrating spiritual and character development within the format of their regular disciplines. Additionally, the school's chaplains, through becoming increasingly involved in the classroom and connecting with students and their families, have made a vital contribution to the spiritual dimension of education.

An exciting development in 2009 has been the emerging "Encounter" Spiritual Development program. A number of Bible teachers from our schools across Australia and New Zealand met together in what became a deeply spiritual time, as they worked on a new syllabus to be resourced and rolled out into our school system over the next few years.



*Edinburgh & LAA*



*Ironbark*



### TEAMING UP FOR ADOPTION

During October, a team of church members from Warrnambool and Wantirna churches travelled to the Solomon Islands to renovate their adopted health clinic.

Balolava Medical Clinic is in an isolated area and is the main provider of health services to a population of over 4,500 people. It provides outpatient services as well as maternal, child health and immunisation programs. The most commonly treated conditions are pneumonia, malaria, yaws and diarrhoea.

The two churches combined forces to raise money not only to send the team and provide the materials for refurbishing the clinic, but also to upgrade the small canoe, which was the clinic's only means of transporting patients.

As the team returned to Australia, they left behind many newfound friends. Warrnambool and Wantirna churches will continue to work, in co-ordination with ADRA and the SDA Solomon Islands Mission, to support their 'adopted' family - the people of the Weather Coast Villages - through their adopted clinic - Balolava.

- Maleessa Pascoe



South Pacific Division's Adopt-a-Clinic initiative, contact Jenny Robson on [www.healthinfo@Adventist.org.au](mailto:www.healthinfo@Adventist.org.au) for more information.

If your church is interested in becoming involved in the

### EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

As well as caring for our students' spiritual development and eternal welfare, preparing them for further education and life as useful and resourceful citizens is also a priority and in 2009 several undertakings were initiated to enhance this work. Several of our schools participated in Government projects and all received specifically targeted funding, both aimed at increasing student achievement.

**Results from yearly nation-wide assessment indicate improved outcomes for 2009, however school leadership teams are in the process of using these results, along with other relevant data, to identify specific strengths and weaknesses and then implement changes for even better outcomes in 2010.**

*NCC*



### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**ASV has a strong emphasis on Professional Learning (PL). Throughout this last year, many of our schools have worked with consultants to implement focused, whole-school PL and these initiatives will be reflected in projects for 2010.** ASV has had, for a number of years now, a Learning and Teaching Council involved in bringing teachers together in workshops for mutual support and learning. Successful workshops were convened in 2009, across two levels for primary teachers and in Mathematics and Health/Physical Education for secondary teachers.



*Gilson*



visit [vic.adventist.org.au](http://vic.adventist.org.au) for full report

### HIGHLY COMMENDED

Pastor Ken Mead received a "Highly Commended" award for his entry into the Mont de Lancy Art Show, effectively placing him second in this prestigious show. This annual Art Show covers leading artists in the Yarra Ranges Shire Council and beyond and had about 200 entries. Pr Mead has received this award twice in recent years. His canvas this year was entitled "Nature's Frame", an unusual array of butterflies set in Australian flora.



Ken Mead first came to Victoria in 1955 as Youth Director, later being called to South Australia, Sydney and the Union Conference. In retirement, or should we say retirement (sic), Ken now maintains a busy schedule of visitation at hospitals and AdventCare facilities across Melbourne, and with the help of some wonderful church members and Advent Brass he has raised funds for a variety of charities including ADRA and the Men's Shed at Yarra Junction. His responsibilities have recently expanded with his appointment as Chaplain to Warburton RSL, where his first duties included participation in their Remembrance Day service in November.

Throughout his ministry, Ken has enjoyed teaching young and aged the joy of swiping a brush across canvas and many of his students have created some amazing works.

- Susie Potts

Log onto [vic.adventist.org.au](http://vic.adventist.org.au) to see Pr Mead's painting in full colour.



### THANK YOU

New initiatives often require changes in school culture and teacher practice. Excellent teachers, by nature and nurture, can become lifelong learners. ASV thanks its teachers for their commitment in 2009 and commend them to God as they move into a new school year, where they will continue to rise to the challenges presented before them.



*Heritage*

### INTO 2010...

And as we do move ahead may we all continue to remember that we have a Leader who is always with us, and while He tells us we 'can do nothing without Him', He also exclaims '[we] CAN do ALL things through [Jesus Christ] who strengthens...[us]'. (Philippians 4:13).

Claim this promise!

*Sandra England - SCHOOLS DEVELOPMENT OFFICER - LEARNING AND TEACHING, ASV*



# ROAD to BETHLEHEM

14th - 17th December, 2009

The Road To Bethlehem Committee would very much like to thank you for your generous support and assistance in so many ways. Your contribution uplifts and inspires the ministry that Road to Bethlehem is!

Once again we invite you to bring your family, friends and colleagues to experience the outdoor theatrical presentation that brings to life the true story and meaning of Christmas.

## BABIES are still NEEDED

We are still in need of new born babies to be a part of the manger scene. If you can help or know someone else who can, please contact Shelley Fairall: 0407 543 815

## CALL FOR SETUP HELP

Anyone willing to help set up the scenes and props for RTB, come on down to the campground on Sunday December 13 from 9am onwards.

## PURPOSEFUL, PASSIONATE, POWERFUL - AYC'10

Adventist Youth Conference 2010 is a youth-led initiative to inspire and equip young people on a mission to be soul-winners and proclaim the everlasting gospel to this generation. AYC'10 has a theme of "Go - with Purpose, Passion and Power" - which encourages young people to mobilise and get into action for God. You can choose to attend a workshop best suited to your ministry run by some of the best local and international trainers. Topics range from Effective Biblical Preaching and How to Run an Evangelistic Meeting, to How to Study the Bible, Serving God as a Couple and Reviving my Youth Group.

From February 4 to 7, in Melbourne and hosted by Gateway Adventist Centre, you will be equipped to "Go Forth" - so come and re-ignite your passion for God, then leave, purposeful, passionate and powerful, ready to reach the world.

Register EARLY at [www.adventistyouthconference.org](http://www.adventistyouthconference.org) to avoid disappointment and to take advantage of the early bird offer.

**2010 regional vespers**  
Starts @ 7.30

- March 12 wantirna church
- April 16 lilydale church
- April 17 sat social nunawading team
- April 30 burwood church
- May 14 nunawading church
- May 15 wantirna church
- May 17 sat social lilydale team and many more....

presented by  
lilydale • nunawading • burwood • wantirna youth  
<http://fridaynightvespers.blogspot.com>



## WANTED: CURRENT AND HISTORICAL ADVENTIST MATERIALS

The Adventist Heritage Centre is seeking artefacts, books, brochures, bulletins, documents, photo's, and AV items relating to the activities of Aust, NZ and South Pacific Adventist churches, schools, factories, hospitals, ARV's, and so on. This also includes SDA employee collections/files. The Centre aims to save the history of the Adventist church and its entities for future generations. For more details: email: [heritage@avondale.edu](mailto:heritage@avondale.edu) or phone 02 4980 2313

**Women's Ministries**  
Sabbath 6 March (Local Church WM)  
WM International Day of Prayer  
Sabbath & Sunday 13 & 14 March  
WM Leadership Training Program—Lvl 1

## COMMUNITY HEALTH EDUCATION PRESENTERS TRAINING COURSE

Are you interested in joining the Conference Health Ministry Team? This training course is accredited 21744VIC Certificate IV in 'Community Health Education' and comprises of eight monthly Sunday classes with home study in between.

Visit the Conference website at [vic.adventist.org.au](http://vic.adventist.org.au) for more details or contact Sibilla Johnson on 03 9264 7777.



## CALLING ALL SINGLES - SINGLES CONVENTION '10

December 30, 2009 - January 4, 2010

The National Singles Convention happens once every two years. This year we are heading to Brisbane for this very special and unique opportunity for fellowship, praise and worship, and one of the best chances to make new friends from right across Australia and New Zealand. Our guest speakers are Dr John Hammond and Ms Sue Redman. Don't have an application form? Contact the Youth Department at the Conference Office on 03 9264 7777 or call Jan Bolst at the South Pacific Division on 02 9847 3306 or email at

[jbolst@adventist.org.au](mailto:jbolst@adventist.org.au)

Application date extended for Intraviv readers to December 18

## Season Greetings and thank you from management, staff and residents at AdventCare

We wish all members of the church family a blessed and safe festive season. We would also like to thank those who have supported our residents through prayers, visitations, opening and closing Sabbath worships, pastoral care, singing, music, volunteering and donations.

We thank the members for their confidence in AdventCare in the development of the Nunawading Estate.

We invite you to log on to our website for information, news, events, updates or if you have any queries about how we provide quality care and services to each resident living in our facility or about the Nunawading Estate development.

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

We will be sending our 2008 - 2009 annual report to all churches by mid-February 2010.

## MONEY FOR CHILDREN...

The editorial staff would like to clarify a mistake in October's issue, article entitled Money for Children, where we reported that the full amount of \$4000 raised by Lilydale Church was sent to one orphanage in Kenya. In fact, it was split between that orphanage and the 'garbage dump' children in Cambodia. We apologise for the mistake.

## Melbourne Sunset Times

DECEMBER	Friday	Saturday
12		20:35
18,19	20:40	20:40
25,26	20:43	20:44
JANUARY		
1,2	20:45	20:46
8,9	20:46	20:46
15,16	20:44	20:44
22,23	20:41	20:40
29,30	20:36	20:35
FEBRUARY		
5,6	20:30	20:29
12	20:23	

Sunset at Bairnsdale is 10 minutes earlier and at Hamilton, 12 minutes later.

## BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENTS

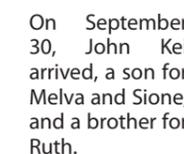
Kasey Nyein born to Mr Kay Ne and Mrs Mu Mu earlier this year, on 2.4.09



Mildura Church has been blessed with several new arrivals...



Eli Jay Savage was born on August 26, to proud parents Chenoa and Jay.



On September 30, John Kei arrived, a son for Melva and Sione, and a brother for Ruth.



Mildura's Bush Camp was interrupted for the Obst family with the arrival of Levi Jonathon on Sabbath, October 31.



For gifts, music and reading needs, visit the **NEW LOOK Adventist Book Centre.**





# Ministers' Retreat

Earlier this year, many of our ministers from around Victoria took time out of their busy lives of service, to spend it with their families and with each other, enjoying the beautiful surrounds in which Camp Howqua nestles. We asked Carmen Mohanu to share with us her thoughts on this special time...



In 2008, my husband, a recent graduate from Avondale College and newly appointed assistant pastor to Berwick Church, our young family and I left NSW and headed for Victoria. Our first contact with the Victorian Conference was to be at the pastoral retreat at Camp Howqua, where we were stopping on our way to Melbourne. Knowing little of the Victorian Conference, nor what to expect at the retreat, to our delight we discovered the desire of the Conference to invest in its pastors, to create a team atmosphere and develop supportive relationships.

The retreat provided a wonderful way to meet our new colleagues and their families, and it was an excellent opportunity to get to know our leaders. Consequently, this year's retreat was a very welcome addition to our calendar.

Since the beginning of this year, our children have repeatedly asked about the pastoral retreat and finally their anticipation was rewarded in September. What a joy it was for us, to catch up again with colleagues we already knew and meet new ones. The Lord blessed the weekend with beautiful weather and a program that appeared tailored precisely to meet our needs. I have no doubt He inspired our leaders as they were organising it. The Guest speaker, Pastor Trafford Fischer, Family Ministries Director of the South Pacific Division, challenged us to develop stronger relationships within our families, to re-evaluate our priorities and make necessary changes.

While the Sabbath program was uplifting, Sunday's activities thrilled the hearts of our children: horse riding, flying fox, archery, pony rides, to mention just a few.

Having the opportunity to spend time with our families around the fireplace and in nature was appreciated, not only by me but - for sure - by everyone.

Now that the event has passed, we cherish our memories and look forward to the next pastoral retreat that will beautify our pastoral family journey.

- Carmen Mohanu



# Howqua