



May 25 2019

live a **WORTHY** of your
life calling
for you have been
CALLED BY GOD

ALWAYS **BE** Humble, Gentle,
Patient with each
other's faults **LOVE**
Because of your

Keep yourselves **CHRISTIAN** in the
Binding yourselves together with **PEACE**
CHRISTIAN **SPRIT**


CHRIST makes the whole **BODY** Healthy Growing & Full of Love
Ephesians 4

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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

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A note from the Editor's Office



So Glad to Belong

This month I've been reminded why I'm so glad to belong to the family of God.

The big event this month is Revelation Today which is now underway in four locations across the city of Melbourne and in many country areas in Victoria and other states as well.

So many are responded to the advertising – with 1,800 attending the opening session in person and many more watching on line. I'm so glad to belong to a family that cares about sharing the message of Jesus love and soon return.

The presentations are excellent! *It Is Written* speakers John Bradshaw and Eric Flickinger both speak with such power, conviction and personal appeal. The Biblical message of Jesus is second to none – I'm sure you'd agree.

I'm so glad to belong to a family that cares for children and caters to their needs – and that's what's happened at the Revelation Today meetings. The volunteers are presenting the same topics for kids as those being shared by John and Eric to those who are a bit older and I think that's just great!

A series like Revelation Today doesn't just happen. I'm so glad to belong to a praying family – so many of our church family have been praying that God will open the way for this series and we have no doubt that we've seen God at work. Prayers are being answered in so many ways. To have such a positive team of pastors and volunteers who've worked so faithfully and cooperatively over a period, giving willingly of their time, talent and expertise to ensure the details fall into place and people are cared for so well – that can't happen without the Spirit of God working in the hearts and minds of each one.

Graeme Christian

IntraVic May 2019

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Ordinations, new Conference staff, Education, ADRA and more Unfortunately, we are unable to share news about Revelation Today, which had only just started at the print deadline, but we will do so in the next edition.

NOTICES Vic.Adventist.org.au/notices

Visit our website for all our notices, including VAAS, the Open Home in July, the Health Summit in August, Ferntree Gully's 60th anniversary, Halls Gap family weekend in October and more...





At the end of April, when Michael was writing this, he was looking forward, past Revelation Today to where more people were joining us as we worship God, and at what healthy relationships could look like in our churches...

Written by Michael Mohanu
PASTOR FOR CASEY CHURCH

Hospitality to Angels...

Great news! Revelation Today is here! I'm already starting to feel the greatness of the event with people coming from everywhere to listen to the words of life. I feel like there is something special in the air, maybe the excitement, maybe the feeling of fulfilment that this kind of event brings. But whatever it is, it feels good to be part of such a proclamation of the gospel.

My thoughts are already running ahead of me and I can't help it. Soon the meetings will be over. Soon there will be new people coming to visit our churches. How delightful!

New energy brought into the church, new strength added to our services and programs... ah, almost forgot... the Lesson study - it will be full of people again, people coming to study the Word of the infinite God. Oh no! But what about that class where the discussions sometimes get too hot? What if some of our visitors accidentally go there? I can't bear the thought that these people whom we have worked so hard to bring to Christ might get discouraged and maybe even stop coming! This is a painful thought.

Is this hypothetical situation resonating with you somehow? Have you ever left the study class with a heavy heart because you wanted to share your thoughts and experience and the others could not understand you?

This brings me to a very important point. **What is the purpose of our lesson study groups? What is the goal of our divine services and everything else we do in our churches?**

These are crucial questions that we need to stop and reflect upon at this very moment.

What Jesus tells us is that truth is not of human origin, but comes from the Father (Matthew 16:17; 1 Corinthians 2:13,14). This means that we can't take credit for it. Instead, we are only custodians of the truth and the way we administrate it falls heavily on our shoulders.

What a responsibility. It's not because of our human intelligence that we can understand the Word of God, but it is because of God's grace and mercy. That being the case, we need to allow the Spirit of Truth to bring conviction

in the hearts of people that don't understand things the same way we do.

Truth is given to us to bring healing, not wounds; encouragement, not disappointment. Just imagine the great potential of our Bible study groups, be they Sabbath morning or during the week, to create an environment of love and care... a place we look forward to. A space where people feel safe to share the Word of God, where we all grow in knowledge and understanding. Where truth is shared with respect, grace and love - where the one that knows a little is not ignored, and those that dive deep share, with a humble heart, the pearls found in the depth of scripture.

Truth is sacred, and so is the human heart. Every human heart is a sacred place where life's dramas take place, where hurts have ravaged. Life is a battlefield and for many around us it has been unfair, unjust and cruel. And these are the people we are opening our arms wide to welcome in our churches. These are the people who have been searching, some of them for many years, for an oasis of peace and freshness. These are the people that the Holy Spirit has been contending with. And dare I say it, these are the people who have even sat in our pews for many years.

Every step forward must be taken with prayer and consideration. Bringing people to the truth doesn't depend on how good we are in presenting it, but on how the Holy Spirit works in people's hearts. And we all know that sometimes it can take a long time.

Do we need to redefine some of the terms of our faith?

Church? The place God has designed for His people to come together, to support each other, to encourage each other in their life journey towards His Kingdom.

Church? The place of healing and peace from all the storms we encounter in the battles of life. A place where we show the same compassion God has shone to us.

Church? The place where Jesus' character shines - where the King of the Universe comes down to meet His people.

Church? The place where we accept each other as we are, unconditionally,



To be more welcoming and authentic with our visitors, strangers, the angel we are entertaining unaware... do we need to redefine some of the terms of our faith?

regardless of social status, colour, accent, background or education. Where our differences are a strength not a barrier.

Church? The place of celebrating what Jesus has done for each of us. Where we can't stop remembering the wonders and miracles God has done in our lives.

And one more thing ... what a blessing it was for Jesus when Mary, Martha and Lazarus decided to open their home for Him and His disciples! I guess it wasn't easy for them to accommodate so many people, but they decided to make room for Jesus and His company in their home and in their hearts. And they were blessed.

Making room for other people in our lives is paramount. I know there are many blessings waiting for us as well when we follow their example.

Maybe there is one more step we need to take ... Inviting people in. They might be too shy to push the door open. It's our duty and privilege to open it for them and invite them in. The Bible tells us that "some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it." (Hebrews 13:2)

What a thought! I need as many angels as I can get in my church and home. Don't you?



Wellbeing & the Connected Family

Written by Paul and Sonya Goltz
PASTOR & CHAPLAIN; NURSE EDUCATOR

In his book *The Blue Zones*¹, Dan Buettner looks at five of the healthiest population groups in differing corners of the globe and identifies several elements that show the benefit of living in a connected, supportive group of people - in a 'tribe'.

Family structures have changed, whether due to changes in today's family unit, refugee and economic immigration or employment and its increasing demands on time and energy. And family connection suffers. To mitigate the negative consequences there are simple solutions that can be implemented.

Loved Ones First

It was discovered that amongst these groups of people who live long and healthy lives, they put their families first. Aging parents and grandparents were nearby or in the home, partners were lifelong and their children had time with their parents and knew they were loved.

For us as Christians, this could look like making the effort to stay connected

with our parents and siblings; a phone call to touch base with distant families on a regular basis; planned catchups with the extended family.

A sad reality for many Australian families is isolation from their extended family. Sonya and my families are scattered around Australia with our daughter in Perth and son and his family in Toowoomba Queensland. Both our parents are in Queensland and the combined total of eleven siblings are scattered around the eastern states. The mobility of society means the concept of 'family first' takes time, effort, and creative use of resources to engage both our immediate and extended families in a meaningful way.

Electronic media is a huge assistance; using video conferencing apps like Messenger, Facetime and WhatsApp enable us to see and interact with each other, chat with the grand kids, watch them grow between visits. International families benefit even more so. But it still takes time and effort to coordinate time zones and make calls - specially when things are not going so well on the relational front. Persist - it's worth it!

When our children were younger and still in our family home, the development of strong family traditions helped bind our family together. Friday nights became a special night for family if all were home. Special meals were developed, chosen by our children with sparkling apple or grape juice, eaten by candle light. The meals weren't always grand - but we were together - and we did build on our family love maps as we shared, listened and hung out.

We cultivated the tradition of having our family meals sitting at the table each night, talking. No electronics allowed! (I was the worst offender! Did you know, by the way, that a study titled "The iPhone Effect"² found that just the visible presence of a mobile phone caused the quality and fulfilment of a conversation to be rated lower? So put your phone away at the table or in bed or in the presence of people you care about!) Our daughter took it on herself to guide our family in the sharing of both highs and lows for the day (travelling to or from school or work didn't count!).

As a dad, I found that investing in sport with our son helped to connect in a healthy way as did simply shooting

basketball hoops in the park. To connect with our daughter, I would take her out for a special meal. We still value those occasions.

The point is that great family relationships just don't happen! They take time and creative energy as each family member was created different. This means that the strategies used with different family members will also vary. **There is no one size fits all but the common ingredients are prayer for wisdom, time and effort.**

For Life Long...

In these societies Buettner studied, they had lifelong partners. This doesn't just happen by accident or merely through the provision of hard-earned resources. Marriage relationships take time and effort to maintain and thrive. Often in the busyness of providing for family and doing life, partners are taken for granted and drift apart.

Don't settle for this! Invest! One of the best explanations of a great marriage relationship is found in the book *The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work*³. Relationships should be built on trust and commitment. To build a strong relationship couples should be intimately connected to each other's worlds - to build strong love maps. They share fondness and admiration for each other. When disagreements arise, they turn toward each other not away - they seek to think the best of each other rather than expecting the worst and defend rather than destroy! They have a positive perspective of their relationship. They manage conflict when it arises by accepting their partners influence, dialoguing about problems and practicing self-soothing. They seek to make their partner's life dreams come true and create shared meaning.

Invest in your relationships. Pray for your partner. Have the courage to get help if

you come to a blockage that just won't go away. Your best gift to your family is to have great love for each other. Be students of great relationships and put your learning to work.

The Right Tribe!

Who we associate with affects and influences our choices in life. The Framingham Heart Study⁴ indicate that lifestyle choices such as smoking, obesity, how happy or lonely we are - is contagious. So our social networks and circles are important in supporting our own healthy behaviours.

In the second book of Acts, at the start of the fledgling group of Jesus followers, there is a heart-warming picture of how this community worked. These people shared meals together - regularly. They saw God's power together and praised God together. They shared 'stuff' together and looked out for each other. They had fun - together, enjoying each other's company. They were people of influence in each other's lives and the lives of their families.

For around nine years I served as a Queensland Police officer on the Gold Coast. Often we were called to respond to difficult family situations - domestic violence, mental health issues, drug addiction and the accompanying criminality, or young people who lacked direction or had chosen to live outside the family home due to conflict - often in groups. **I would wonder what would have happened if these families had a great church to belong to where their children were valued and had significant safe adults to turn to when relationships broke down.** People who modelled great love and lifestyle and were contagious in their zest for life because of the great God they served. People who oozed the grace of forgiveness because they know that they

aren't perfect and are in need of that same grace. People who could speak strength, hope and values into families because they had won that right around the table or on the soccer ground or at the church social or in the discussions in teen Sabbath School because they had spent time and invested in relationships.

This is what I wish for all communities in Melbourne. The church - not just a church building but people sold out to God, who love each other and their communities for Kingdom purposes. Society desperately needs this sense of belonging and demonstration of love, connection and intergenerational communal life. **The question should be asked at each church board meeting - How are we as a church seeking to be the 'tribe' for the community which God has placed us in?** This should be a matter of urgent prayer as the needs in families in our community call out for a demonstration of the church in Acts 2:42-47 - a place where people can catch great lifestyle.

Belonging

This leads to the final element that can be implemented in family life - Belonging. Having a faith-based community and attending a faith-based service four times a month increases our life expectancy between 4-14 years of life. Belonging gives purpose. In Buettner's research Adventists were one of the groups identified as living longer and healthier.

We all want to be part of a healthy family, but sadly we don't always achieve these elements - it is sometimes out of our control. Praise God for church families - let's work to make our churches places where we can also find that healthy connection...



¹Buettner, D. (2012). *The blue zones: 9 lessons for living longer from the people who've lived the longest*. National Geographic Books.

²Rath, T., (2015). *Are You Fully Charged: the three keys to energizing your work and life*, Silicon Guild, 95-97

³Gottman, J.M., Silver, N, (Rev. Ed. 2018). *The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work*, Seven Dials, London

⁴Hubert, H. B., Feinleib, M., McNamara, P. M., & Castelli, W. P. (1983). Obesity as an independent risk factor for cardiovascular disease: a 26-year follow-up of participants in the Framingham Heart Study. *Circulation*, 67(5), 968-977.

Healthy Single Relationships in the Church...



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Written by Roisin Lamprell
CHURCH MEMBER, BURWOOD

What constitutes a healthy single relationship? Single adults make up a significant percentage of our membership. Yet how healthy is the single relationship within our churches?

It was during a moving song of praise while at church that it happened. I just stood there. Breathless. I placed my hand over my heart, trying to catch my breath, unaware of my surroundings.

But it wasn't panic, or a heart attack I was having. My heart was not draining of life, but was filling - to the point of bursting - with Christ's love. I was calm, serene even, knowing that regardless of whatever happened next, Christ's Spirit of love was flowing through me.

Then I heard a silent voice... "Roisin, you do not need to look for love, as I love you more than you can imagine. With Me you will always be loved." That experience changed my whole perception of who I was and am, as a single woman. It didn't matter if I never found a husband, because Christ would offer me so much more.

For years, I had searched for love. I tried dating sites, joined social clubs and took part in lots of different sports and activities. But as busy as I was searching, I still had that empty, unfulfilled feeling.

Looking back, I had an unhealthy single relationship with myself, constantly trying to fill the void. Friends surrounded me, I was busy socializing, but I was lonely and still trying to find someone to mean something to.

I am not saying singles have the monopoly on loneliness. You can feel alone in the middle of a crowd. Many children and youth feel alone, even though surrounded by parents and family, teachers, school and uni friends. But perhaps as a church, could it be that we are more alert to their loneliness and what can be done about it?

What about the older young adults... the ones whose friends have married, moved away with work or uni, or have started their own family; the ones who bit by bit, so slowly no one notices, become more isolated until they feel totally alone. By now they have probably moved out of home, shared accommodation, are the oldest in the house with differing interests and goals. Maybe surrounded by friends and associates... but still lonely, feeling that

life is passing them by.

Then there are those who get married, start a family, raise their kids, and find themselves feeling very alone - even single - within the married context. And even more alone, and definitely single if the marriage fails and they separate. Yet to face another form of being single and alone, when their children become independent and have their own lives.

Or there are those who married the love of their life and were together for many years, until one passed away. Now they face each lonely day alone.

In 2016, almost one in four households was a lone person household - increased from one in five in 1991.

Our need to connect with others is deeply hardwired and goes right back to creation, when in Genesis 2:18, God says, "it is not good for the man to be alone."

“ Being single is not a life sentence, it is a life skill ”



Roisin Lamprell shares some thoughts on things that help build a healthy single relationship - and it requires intentionality from on both sides of the equation!

Not being connected to others can take a tremendous toll on our health, wellbeing, spirituality and our very survival.

So what is a healthy single relationship? Many single adults experience frustration and loneliness. Overcoming these is a key to having a healthy single relationship. God did not intend for us to be alone and singleness doesn't mean you have to be alone.

It is no coincidence that the solution is communal.

Comfort and contentment can be found in a relationship with God. After all, He is going to love us no matter what we do or say. He is always there for us, no matter the hour or reason why we need Him.

Finding community with like-minded single friends is also good for healthy single relationships - they have a better understanding of what each other is going through.

Finding people within our churches that we can pour ourselves into, and who can pour into us is so important, and single people need to be proactive in this. They need to cultivate healing, joy-giving friendships across the spectrum.

While this applies in many life settings, singles do need to be sure they are not waiting for life to begin, but rather, getting involved in their church community, making friends, serving others. Serving

the Lord and one's community is the most satisfying gift anyone can give others, including oneself.

Single adults have a unique opportunity to serve the Lord in ways a lot of couples, especially those with young children, do not have the capacity to do. As talented, skilled functioning adults, they have many gifts to give.

But as we have said, the solution is communal. How can the non-singles help build healthy single relationships?

Well the most important thing to do is don't leave them on the outer because they are single. When there are "family" events at church, remember that singles are also a family - albeit a family of one. Encourage them to be an active participant in family activities. When planning things with other couples, remember your single friends too. And don't forget, many singles are already skilled parents, aunts, uncles or grandparents and may be only too happy to share their expertise if asked and encouraged.

My nieces and nephews loved being with Auntie Roisin and they felt "special" when I did different things with them and they loved sharing time with me. (And my siblings got a break!)

Singles have so many skills, talents and experiences and what is more they often have the time to share them with the church and community. To have these special singletons in our church is a blessing and a treasure to behold.

Growing Together with Youth

by Rose Andrykanus
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, VICYOUTH



Across Christendom, there seems to be a trend in the inability of the local church to attract and keep youth and young adults. Without addressing the inclusion of younger generations, the local church's own existence comes into question...

In February, a diverse team of youth, pastors and departmental directors from Victoria attended the "Growing Together" Summit held at Springwood Seventh-day Adventist Church in Brisbane.

Over two days, Jake Mulder, co-author of "Growing Young," presented the surprising and hopeful outcomes of an exhaustive study that looked at youth retention and engagement within local churches. The research was sourced from over 250 exemplary churches which ranged in size, ethnic background and age, that are currently doing remarkable work with 15-29 YO's.

Mulder and his team discovered that reaching young people is not primarily done through a specific worship style, great facility, a big budget or designing super-entertaining ministry programs; reaching young people goes much

deeper. Six core factors (see box) that caused young people to engage and thrive in their local churches were identified. **All six revolve around relationship - the 'secret sauce' of all healthy thriving churches!**

Churches that incorporate these commitments into their DNA thrive! And it's not just the young people; the whole church does. Young people need the mentorship, wisdom and guidance of those who have gone before them, and by the same token, those older can be inspired by the enthusiasm and ideas of those younger.*

Let's continue to be more intentional about building warm, Jesus-centred communities where those who are older mentor, support and encourage the development of young leaders who are focused on God and their communities at large.

We recently ran a *HAVE YOUR SAY* on **Instagram**

What do you love about your local church?

- It's like a family
- The food
- The people are on fire for God
- They do community outreach
- It's friendly and accepting
- My friends go there. It's a supportive community
- The variety of people
- It's a place where I can feel a part of community and feel safe, loved and accepted
- The love of the people reveal Jesus

What could your local church do better?

- I wish we could have more say in church decision making
- Listening and trying our ideas
- Outreach - our community does not know we exist
- Be more open-minded to giving young people the creative freedom to disciple
- Simply continue striving for spiritual excellent in all we do
- Allowing more youth involvement in church
- Praying more for the Spirit

*For more information see <https://churchesgrowingyoung.com/> and <https://growingyoungadventists.wordpress.com/>

Church News



Students from Nunawading Christian College participated in the church service at Ferntree Gully Church



Bairnsdale Church hopes their afternoon Concert will become a regular event...



Can you think of one young person who has left the church? I'm sure you can. In fact, I'm sure all of us can identify more than one!

CORE FACTORS FOR HEALTHY YOUTH RELATIONSHIPS

- **KEYCHAIN LEADERSHIP:** Instead of centralising authority, empower others—especially young people.
- **EMPATHY TODAY:** Instead of judging or criticising, step into the shoes of this generation.
- **JESUS' MESSAGE:** Instead of asserting formulaic gospel claims, welcome young people into a Jesus-centred way of life
- **WARM RELATIONSHIPS:** Instead of focusing on cool worship or programs, aim for warm peer and intergenerational friendships.
- **PRIORITISE EVERYWHERE:** Instead of giving lip service to how much young people matter, look for creative ways to tangibly support, resource and involve them in all facets of your congregation.
- **BEST NEIGHBOURS:** Instead of condemning the world outside your walls, enable young people to neighbour well locally and globally

A School Visit

It is always a highlight when students come to our churches to represent their school. Late last year, Ferntree Gully Church was blessed with a visit from Nunawading Christian College. Staff and students shared God's message through music, recitation and ministry to a packed congregation during the worship service.

The children's story of "Moses", narrated by teacher, Simone Austin and acted out by students and members of the congregation, had the audience entranced with the portrayal of the Israelites and Egyptians during the Red Sea crossing with our pastor, Paul Kotanko, sitting on his lofty throne as Pharaoh.

Appreciation is expressed to Mrs. Karen Horsley who arranged, prepared and supervised the worship service.

May God bless the staff and students at NCC as they continue to serve others using their spiritual gifts.

Elayne Stanford

March Music

Sabbath afternoon late in March music drew members of Bairnsdale Church together in worship, evangelism and enjoyment.

The morning service was taken by Pastor Andrew Wilson, and a delicious lunch that was appreciated by members and visitors followed.

Afterwards, what we hope will become a regular event each year, the Bairnsdale Church Concert, began.

Fifteen people aged from five years upwards sang and enthusiastically played worship and classical music on a variety of instruments. In the group was a gentleman with a magnificent opera-trained voice who first connected with us when he and his wife began attending our Monday ADRA Drop-in Food and Friendship centre.

The children and young people who performed were also a highlight; a couple even helped conduct alongside the leader, Dr. Antoinette Mowbray. Antoinette is a gifted musician, a church member and local GP.

The concert drew to a close when the audience joined in with the singing of the hymn "How Great Thou Art."

Judy Walker



Three Birthdays and a Wedding

On Sabbath March 30, some of The Orchard church members ventured to Point Cook for a gastronomical feast.

Held at the home of Claude and Carmen Goddard, this was a special day for church members, where they celebrated the recent wedding of Paul Reech and his wife Amira.

It also marked the birthdays of Donna, Patricia and Imie.

There was the predictable Bible quiz and mind bender challenge, with a lot of happy people enjoying each other's company.

Just another great Sabbath again at The Orchard!

Rod Anderson



Welcoming... To the Victorian Conference

After 26 years, **Paul Goltz** has returned to Victoria joining the Gilson College Taylors Hill Chaplaincy Team for 2019.

Paul commenced formal ministry in Mildura in 1990. He subsequently served in pastoral roles in WA, Tasmania, Qld, Greater Sydney conferences and Newbold College UK as a Youth Pastor/chaplain. He believes that, after serving as a senior pastor, youth pastor, chaplain and a police officer (Queensland Police Service) there is very little in life that surprises him.

Together with his wife Sonya, they have relocated from Perth, where one child, Karlie, remains, studying at University. Their eldest, Daniel and his family, live in Qld.

Paul's passion is helping churches connect in the context of their local community. He believes that churches functioning in the power of the Holy Spirit and feeding on the Word of God will thrive and can't help but impact the world around them with hope. With a broad life experience, Paul seeks to be



Paul Goltz



Adrian Peterson

real about life and about God.

After more than two decades in ministry, Paul will be the first to tell you: "We're only just getting started". He is excited to be part of such a great team of staff at Gilson College.

Jose St Phard, who comes to us from the USA, is not new to Melbourne, having recently been one of our guest speakers at Big Camp.

He was called to ministry at the age of 17 and been on an incredible journey of faith and grace ever since. His ministerial career began in Washington, DC where he served as the University Chaplain at Washington Adventist University and as pastor of the Community of Hope Church.

Before accepting the call to Melbourne, he and his wife Tiffany were serving the Bolingbrook Church in Chicago, a contemporary multi-cultural inter-generational church whose mission was to make disciples out of the people God misses the most.



Jose St Phard



Rose Andrykanus

Jose will be working with Burwood Church. His life goal is to help people re-imagine who they can be by taking a fresh look at God and His purpose for their lives.

Adrian Peterson will also be working with Burwood Church, as the assistant pastor, working primarily with children and teens. His wife, Lyndelle is also a pastor and is a departmental director for the Australian Union Conference.

Adrian is super passionate about working with teens, being a bit of a big kid himself, and loves spending countless hours assembling Star Wars Lego, playing in the cubby with his one year old daughter and watching cartoons!

When she finished school, **Rose Andrykanus** did not have a plan. Liking science, she started a Bachelor of Science, did honours and found a research assistant position with one of her professors. She loved her work, but now sees it was too good for her! God caught her attention with a volunteer role with ADRA in Laos. Isolated from all she knew, she learnt dependence on God. Returning home and still unsure of what she was 'supposed' to be, she completed a grad dip. in Ministry and Theology, and commenced working with Lilydale Church.

Rose has this year joined VicYouth and loves her role as Assistant Youth Director. She loves people and seeing God transform them. She sees His transformation in her life as He guided her steps to the path He had chosen for her. It has been and is a journey by faith, not by sight and she testifies that God is Good.



Manuel Tikulin

Conference News



Hello everybody! My name is **Manuel Tikulin** and I come from Croatia to pastor St. Albans and Westall Churches.

As a young person I did not believe in God because no one had meaningful answers to my questions on death and suffering. Meeting my wife was my first contact with Adventists. I found the answers in the Bible and little by little, God grew in me a passion to study theology just because I wanted to know more about the Bible.

My first year in Theology, I soon became a leader among the young people on the campus and God showed me that all the talents and years of work and effort that I had in the world had not been thrown into the wind, but could also be used in the church.

My internship was in Zagreb and my wife and I especially loved Family Ministries. It is difficult to see so many divorces, broken families, misunderstandings, suffering and children who grow in broken family and unhealthy atmospheres. We have felt God's call for the Church to become a place where people can advise on various psychological, social, and life issues; can show that the Bible is relevant to us today, and show us How to deal with real life problems.

With the support of my churches and Union Conference, we accepted the call to Melbourne. We arrived in March and are still trying to arrange our family schedule!

Jesus is coming soon - stay faithful and respond to His call. Nothing is worthless if you give it to His hands. God can and will change hearts and mind of people... through you.



Pastors Retreat

Victorian Pastors were richly blessed as they met together for three days in March. The retreat provided a time for pastors to fellowship, spend time in the Bible together, engage in wide ranging discussions and pray together.

Jerry and Janet Page, from the General Conference, were the main presenters. Jerry is the Ministerial Association Secretary while Janet oversees Partners in Ministry and Prayer Ministry. Together they led the pastors into rich times of prayer, drawing closer to God and to each other. Many felt it was the best retreat they had experienced yet.

The annual pastors retreat, held in the first quarter of the year, provides an opportunity to get away from the regular rush of life and study and pray together. Various church leaders, pastors and academics have presented at past meetings.

With many heavily involved in preparation for 'Revelation Today', this year's focus was particularly relevant and the meetings were not just a time to talk about prayer but to enter into prayer. Many were encouraged, refreshed and inspired to a deeper experience of prayer.

Darren Croft



2018 – By the Numbers

Finance Department

God has blessed the Victorian Conference yet again in 2018, with increasing membership in our churches, increased tithe and giving, increased enrolment in our schools, and refocused management of our aged care.

Church membership has increased by 166 members from 2017 to 2018, with membership increasing in 49 of our churches and companies.

Offerings and Tithe – Giving has also increased in 2018 for tithe and world missions (including sabbath school) but it is interesting to note that across the Victorian Conference, giving to local church offerings has dropped by approximately 39% in 2018.

A strategic focus for the Conference during 2018 and 2019 has been evangelism, providing resources for local church evangelism and for major *Mission to the Cities* events in Mornington Peninsular, Gateway Lighthouse and Harvest Victoria.

Our tithe this year reached \$15.7 million which has provided funding for 117 employees in local churches as pastors, lay ministers, bible workers and youth pastoral workers, provided the financial support of administrative and departmental ministries, funded our 2018 camp program, supported education and funded compliance requirements such as AdSAFE and OH&S functions within our organisation.

With our membership increasing and the average tithe per member increasing to \$1,601 per year, we sense that more Victorians are returning more tithe and we thank every one of you for



your faithfulness.

While the Conference only budgeted on a very small surplus for 2018 it is my pleasure to report that with an increase in tithe and careful control on expenditure, the Conference ended 2018 with a surplus of \$650,000

Education – Today we see a thriving, growing education system in Victoria.

We have seen growth in enrolments, investment in capital and infrastructure, increased support from our churches through education offerings, increased investment in chaplaincy, focus on growing our schools through early learning centres and a view to continuing to look for strategic opportunities to plant new schools.

2018 – Enrolment increased to 2,417 students, and this year has already increased further to 2572 students.

Five years ago (2013) only two out of eight schools and early learning centres operated in surplus with the rest running deficits – our deficit was \$565,000. Enrolment was 1882 students at the time.

By the end of last year our school system operated with five of our school entities generating a surplus and a total system surplus of \$765,000.



AdventCare – The current financial year for AdventCare 2018/19 is financially challenging. While the independent living unit sector of our aged care company is generating a surplus, the residential care sector has not achieved that same level of success. Occupancy is high in our facilities, however there are some significant factors that have impacted overall operations.

At Warburton the renovation works took much longer than expected and budgeted for and occupancy was delayed. Our facility at Warburton however is one that we can be proud of. The renovation works have been completed to a high standard, modernising the facility, which in turn places it as a retirement residence of choice for many in that community. Plans are now well underway to construct additional independent living units at the Warburton site as well.



Both our facilities rely heavily on government subsidies to residential aged care providers to care for the residents. Funding is provided according to individual care needs, ranging from low to high subsidy. Currently both facilities are being funded below the average ACFI subsidy level (as determined by Stewart Brown accountants) which is having a huge financial impact. Our management teams are working hard to lift our ACFI funding levels, managed through admissions and ongoing resident care monitoring.

There is currently a masterplan in place to undertake capital works to expand the number of beds in our Whitehorse residential care facility. This will help to deliver economies of scale and enhance profitability.

In 2017/2018 AdventCare had an operating surplus of \$360,475. This current financial year, ending June 30 2019, we are budgeting for a surplus of \$190,351 however are struggling to achieve that, with our latest operating report indicating we are approximately \$178,000 behind budget.

Despite the financial difficulties with our Aged Care company we have received many positive reports from residents, staff, families and the agencies we deal with.

The leadership teams for each of our companies regularly pray for God's leading, that He will give wisdom to handle difficult situations, that we will do His will and for help to achieve the mission and vision we have for our churches, schools, and aged care in our Victorian Conference.

*Graeme Moffitt
Chief Financial Officer*

Desire of Ages & the Great Controversy

Literature Evangelists

Gino answered the door and his interest was captured. Having reached the ripe age of 81, he was keen to discuss his past health issues and their management. We moved onto the Family Bible and he told how his family would sit around the radio in the evening until the power ran out, and then his mother would read the Bible by candlelight while they listened intently.

It surprised me that he didn't believe in hell as many Christians do and strongly upheld the commandments, yet he was uncertain if the scriptures were truly reliable. He listened intently as I related the story of Nebuchadnezzar's dream and prophecy fulfilment. Then he remarked that he didn't have the willpower to do what is right to get to heaven. I reassured him that neither did I - Jesus is my source of salvation and strength. I showed him both the *Desire of Ages* and *Great Controversy*, asking him to choose one. He accepted *Desire of Ages* when I said it is one of the most beautiful books on the life of Jesus. Our prayer was one of thanksgiving that God had done everything necessary to save us and a request that He give us both strength to become the people He wanted us to be.

Martin was busily tending to his back garden when I arrived. When I started talking about health, he demanded to know where I was from. Next he wanted to know what Home Health Education Service actually does. I explained the printing and distribution of literature and products pertaining to health and well-being, and without the greatest of confidence I added, "and spiritual well-being."

Immediately, he wanted to know which religious group the service was affiliated with. At this point all I could think was, "Do I tell him right away, or do I just prolong the conversation until I know why he wants to know?" In the end I just stated plainly, Seventh-day Adventist. Without hesitation he demanded, "Do you have the *Great Controversy*?"

"Why *Great Controversy*?" I asked rather curiously. "It's the best book I have ever read on the history of the Christian church," he remarked and purchased two copies!

*Anna Schlegel
Literature Evangelist Victorian Conference.*

Please remember the LE work and their contacts in your prayers. If you would like to see how the LE team can help your church reach your community contact Joe Paola at lejoe@tpg.com.au



GROW Conference

The 2019 GROW Conference for Elders and Church Leaders featured Jerry and Janet Page and made the experience of prayer the focus. The prayer summit occurred over the long weekend in March to help spiritually prepare for the 'Revelation Today' meetings in May. Jerry is the Ministerial Association Secretary for the General Conference while his wife Janet oversee Partners in Ministry and Prayer Ministry for the General Conference. They both shared amazing stories of God's working through prayer. Their humble, Christ centred approach was a great blessing to all who attended, reminding everyone of the critical importance of remaining connected to God through prayer. The preaching and experience of prayer helped spiritually encourage and refresh the participants.

Usually the GROW Conference is held in the middle of the year. This year in order to fit into the busy schedule of Harvest Victoria events and as part of the preparation for the 'Revelation Today' meetings, was held in March at Nunawading Christian College to allow easier access for those in Melbourne. It is anticipated that the GROW Conference will return to its usual June/July time slot and be held at Camp Howqua again in 2020.



Clockwise from top left: Heritage College featured in the Herald Sun for NAPLAN improvement; Edinburgh Elite Basketball Academy; Gilson College food collection for ADRA; Henderson College students in Canberra; NCC Prep students giving out handmade poppies for ANZAC ceremony

Why are Adventist Schools Growing?



It is exciting to know that our schools are growing – each year we add more buildings to meet the growing demand for places in our schools. This year, for example, we are spending in excess of \$5 million on new buildings. We are fortunate that almost 50% of this is from grants from the Commonwealth and State governments. I believe there are a number of reasons our schools are growing.

Quality Education

We provide a quality education to the students in our schools. This is evidenced by our schools “value-adding” to students. Every Adventist school in Victoria aims to add at least one year’s learning growth for one calendar year. All our schools are doing better than this, with Heritage College recently being recognised as one of the best achievers across all schools in improvement in Victoria!

the past few years we have introduced “Positive Behaviour for Learning” into our schools. By using positive reinforcement we have enhanced both the learning climate and student safety in our schools.

Only a few reasons have been outlined – there are so many more reasons why our schools are growing. The question I ask is do you have your children in our schools? If you don’t, contact your closest school – I am sure they will welcome you to be part of our family...

*Mr Brian Mercer,
Education Director, Adventist Schools
Victoria*

Students are Safe

When our parents are asked why they have chosen our schools, invariably they say because they are safe! Student well-being is a priority in our schools. Over

Meeting Our Gospel Commission

Our schools are mission fields – for students, families, teachers and support staff. We ensure that our schools are clearly Seventh-day Adventist in their beliefs and operation. Our Bible program, called “Encounter” is taught to the 3 year olds in our Early Learning Centres, through to our Year 12 students. Further, opportunities are often given for students to make decisions to follow Christ. In the last year two teachers who are at our schools have been baptised.

Career Opportunities

ASV offers a range of careers including: Teaching, Management, Administration, Maintenance, Marketing & Communication and more. If you are passionate and committed to Christian education, contact our HR team on (03) 9264 7730 or email asvhr@adventist.org.au

Support ASV

Make a tangible difference in the lives of future students through a tax-deductible donation towards Adventist Education.

To make a tax-deductible donation to scholarships or building funds, please phone Adventist Schools Victoria (03) 9264 7730.

Schools Snapshot

Outstanding NAPLAN Heritage College

Heritage College was recently recognised in the Herald Sun and The Age for achieving a ‘substantially above average’ gain in latest NAPLAN results. The staff at Heritage College work hard to develop a culture of continuous improvement. It is this culture of analysis, reflection and adaptation that has seen learning outcomes grow.

Basketball Academy Edinburgh College

Edinburgh College recently commenced offering Elite Basketball programs throughout the school term and holidays. The program is open to Edinburgh students and students from the local community and is run by professional coaches from the USA and locally.

Year 5/6 Travel to Canberra Henderson College

Year 5 and 6 students enjoyed a fantastic trip to Canberra. Students visited the

CSIRO, climbed Mount Ainslie and explored the Australian Institute of Sport. They toured Parliament House, the Museum of Australian Democracy, the Royal Australian Mint and the War Memorial.

Poppies from Prep Nunawading Christian College

NCC students and staff from ELC to Year 12 gathered for a special ANZAC Ceremony on Wednesday 24 April. To commemorate the occasion, NCC Prep students gave every student a handmade poppy for the ceremony

ADRA Food Donations Gilson College Mernda

Throughout Term 1, students at Gilson College Mernda collected food for local families. Donations were delivered to Plenty Valley SDA Church for the local emergency food relief program supporting Whittlesea Community Connections.

Read more stories from schools at asv.vic.edu.au

School Directory

| | | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| Adventist Schools Victoria | Head Office | (03) 9264 7730 | asv.vic.edu.au |
| Edinburgh College | Lilydale Campus | Early Learning to Year 12 | (03) 9728 2211 edinburghcollege.vic.edu.au |
| Gilson College | Taylors Hill Campus | Foundation to Year 12 | (03) 9365 9365 gilsconcollege.vic.edu.au |
| Gilson College | Mernda Campus | Foundation to Year 12 | (03) 9717 7300 gilsconcollege.vic.edu.au |
| Henderson College | Mildura Campus | Foundation to Year 10 | (03) 5024 5192 henderson.vic.edu.au |
| Heritage College | Narre Warren South Campus | Foundation to Year 6 | (03) 9796 0100 heritagecollege.vic.edu.au |
| Heritage College | Officer Campus | Early Learning to Year 12 | (03) 5943 2900 heritagecollege.vic.edu.au |
| Nunawading Christian College | Nunawading Campus | Early Learning to Year 12 | (03) 9877 3556 nunawading.vic.edu.au |

2019 Ordinations

It is always a time for celebration when one of our ministers is ordained, and a time of affirmation for them as they work to serve their Lord. 2019 began with three ordinations and we would like to share these ministers' stories with you.

Quinten Liebrandt was ordained in February at Warburton Church. Born into a third generation Adventist family in South Africa, his life revolved around church. He fondly remembers spending the whole Sabbath at church, with church lunch after the service, followed by afternoon meetings and socials in the evening. His father was a professional musician and music was a large part of family life and worship.

He attended church school and from a young age was torn between becoming an architect or a pastor. While remaining active in church leadership and outreach, Quinten chose to be an architect. His love for and faith in God remained unswerving, but as a young adult he became disillusioned with the human side of the church and left, endeavouring to continue to serve the Lord on the outside.

But God was having none of this and audibly spoke to him while he was on an early morning run. "Go back!" Not knowing where this would leave, none the less Quinten obeyed. As he did again when he felt impressed that God wanted him to move to Australia.

Initially he worked in a small practice in Geelong, designing many prominent developments before forming his own practice. He immersed himself again in church life and while serving as head elder, was invited to become a bi-vocational minister. After much prayer and discussion with family and church leadership, he was left with no doubt God had indeed called him to ministry.

Quinten has served Colac, Wangaratta and Benalla churches as well as in Geelong, and now works with Warburton Church. He has appreciated the influence and role different elders and church members have played in supporting and shaping his ministry. He has also found his architectural background useful in ministry in a practical way but also creatively and being able to encourage lateral thinking. He believes it is a privilege to serve God in ministry and enjoys working with people of all ages. His passion is to lead people to an authentic spiritual relationship with Jesus. His greatest joy is to be a part of someone's journey in accepting Christ as their personal Saviour and commit to following Him.



Andrew Wilson's ordination took place at Bairnsdale in early March. Unlike Quinten, Andrew grew up in a non-Christian home and rarely even considered God's existence, although he did wonder what life was about, if there was something more to it and what happened after death.

In his early twenties, he started a business breaking and training horses. In the process, he met a Seventh-day Adventist family with three young girls. As he worked with their horses, they often spoke about Jesus coming back, asking him if he would be ready. Eventually Andrew asked the parents where the girls got these ideas from. They showed him Signs of the Times, Luke 21 and Matthew 24. Slowly his interest grew – the Bible gave him understandable and reasonable



End of March saw **Trent Martin** ordained. Many of you may know him from his years working in the Youth Department. He has also served at Frankston and Dandenong Polish churches and currently is with Mernda Church and Gilson College Mernda.

Trent grew up in Lismore NSW, one of six boys raised by their mother, Julie. Julie occasionally attended church and would take Trent along. The church sponsored him and from grades three to six, he attended church school. But in high school, he got in with the wrong crowd. Without a solid male role model, he turned to his mates for guidance and was vulnerable to peer pressure. He identified himself as a Christian, but it was in name only – Jesus had no relevance in his life.

But God was calling. At sixteen, he found himself randomly recalling the worship songs he used to sing in primary school,

answers to questions that had plagued him. Eventually he made the decision to be baptised.

Passionate about reaching others with the good news of the Gospel, Andrew attended Bible studies with other believers, rejoicing to see several people accept Christ through their service. Fortunately for Andrew, one of those people was his wife, Leisa!

Andrew and Leisa were settled in Wangaratta, with two children and were involved in the local church when Andrew first heard God's call to ministry. He remembers thinking "Surely not – you couldn't be that desperate!" He felt so underqualified but he and Leisa discussed it and prayed about it (he hoping it was just in his imagination!). The conviction deepened. He called the President of



feeling unusually drawn to them. He began pondering the deeper things of life, wondering what God thought of him. And he was aware of an increasing hopelessness about finding happiness in his worldly pursuits.

Although angry and bitter, his friends and family relationships suffering as a result of his pain and addictions, he still wanted to be a better person. But even in this he felt he was failing.

Between a bitter relationship break up and a school fight, Trent found himself in hospital with time to think about how he was not succeeding at fixing his own problems. In desperation he begged God to fix him.

Trent joined a Bible study group with some of his church friends, started attending church again and joined the local Pathfinder Club where he found amazing adult role models who showed

the Conference and discussed it with him. Shortly afterwards, he was invited to become a lay-minister, working with Horsham and Nhill churches.

Reluctantly the family moved to Horsham where they were welcomed and made to feel a valuable part of their church congregations. And there has been no looking back. Andrew has found ministry to be a rewarding, challenging and at times exhausting role, but credits God working through him and to his surprise, finds people blessed by his work. Many times Andrew has reminded God that this was HIS idea, and God has not let him down, constantly upholding, strengthening and guiding him.

Andrew is currently based in Bairnsdale, serving Bairnsdale, Sale and Cann River.

what it meant to be a Christian man. His life was changing and people started noticing the difference.

Determined to live taking God with him wherever he went, Trent became aware God wanted more – He wanted him to be a pastor and this impression strengthened with time. For a time he resisted, eventually giving in, asking God to confirm this with three signs. In the following months, three people approached Trent saying they felt impressed to tell him he should become a pastor. Confirmation! But he still felt too young. While praying one night, he felt God's silent voice telling him to start studying ministry at Avondale the next year. And so he did.

Trent's core passion in ministry is to see local churches become vibrant evangelistic communities where members feel excited to bring their friends.

A Weekend Away

Victorian Adventist Adult Singles

What an awesome God we have.

Thirty six singles have just had the most wonderful weekend in Bright enjoying God's creation with all the vibrant colours, majestic mountains, varied weather conditions, excellent accommodation and food, sitting around the fire pit at night, meeting new people and the most inspiring worships.

It was God-inspired how each presenter's message fitted in with each other on how to share God's love with others.

The Sabbath School lesson "When Alone" was very appropriate and generated much discussion.

We have regular activities, ranging from weekend retreats with a guest speaker, to visiting a church to share worship with, to a trip to the hot springs.

If you would like to join us, find out more at <https://vic.adventist.org.au/victorian-adventist-adult-singles/>



or contact me on cherryl@steps.org.au
Cherryl Martens

The Importance of Water - Timor Leste

We often take the simple amenity of running water for granted.

The battle to stay well in Elvira's family was constant. Their nearest water source was almost half an hour walk away. She and her son Aniceto would make the trip early each morning, carrying as much as they could. But still, the water wasn't clean. If they didn't boil it, they would get sick. Add to that, the family was forced the indignity of using the bush around their house as a toilet for years. "I didn't feel comfortable because people could see," says Evira. "And dogs and pigs would bring the waste back to the house." Elvira's inability to meet the family's basic sanitation needs affected all aspects of their life. Aniceto was often late to school, as he was collecting water. "Because the water was far

away from our house, my children got punished by the teacher for being late." Life carried on this way for years until ADRA came to the area. With help from ADRA, Elvira and her husband now have a toilet and a water pump just twenty metres from Elvira's house, saving the family time, restoring their health and ensuring they have a source of income.

"I am happy because the water is near our house," says Elvira. "And we don't get sick when we drink it because it is clean." For Aniceto, this means more time in school. The family garden is now plentiful too. "Before we couldn't plant vegetables, but now, we have water close by so we can plant vegetables for our food," says Elvira. "And we can sell some too." Although life for her family has improved, Elvira is concerned for the wellbeing of the many others in the community who have not yet drilled for water.



You too, could help transform a family's life in Timor Leste by partnering with ADRA. Donate by June 30 and bring water and sanitation facilities close to families so they can escape the trap of poverty.

Visit adra.org.au/donate or call 1800 242 372 to give.

ADRA COMMUNITY

Collaborating with Community Resources



Federal Member, Michael Sukkar, with ADRA Volunteer, Jason Wireski



Taskforce, Afri-Aus Care, the Victorian Police and ADRA to support crime prevention initiatives. Featured here with Black Rhinos Basketball Club.

ADRA Vic Secures Federal Funding

Praise God!
ADRA Victoria has been approved \$159,826 of Federal DSS funding to support fourteen ADRA projects across the state! \$4,300 of this is to fund three Tasmanian projects. The funding will support volunteers and staff who work across our program areas: Emergency relief, refugee settlement, community gardens, community meals, community centres, op shops and housing. This funding wouldn't be possible without the dedication of our volunteers every week to support people in need. So thank you for all your support

A Collaborative Effort

Through a collaboration with the Nuer Community, Taskforce, Afri-Aus Care and the Victorian Police a further \$50,000 will support the community development activities at the ADRA Community Centre at Springvale and the South-East Community Links with the following:

1. Counselling
2. Family Support Groups (AOD)
3. Job ready and transition training with Chisholm Skills and Job Centre facilitators
4. Emergency relief/op shop with clothing and furniture
5. Community garden social enterprise to support African women with employment
6. Social Inclusion and Training programs (cooking, basketball, music, sewing, art)

Welding Initiative

A pilot welding initiative (Chisholm Skills and Jobs Centre, Job Prospects, Department of Justice) will provide intensive job-ready training for former offenders, making outdoor chairs for the garden at the Springvale South ADRA Community Centre. Participants will spend a week volunteering in the local community, using their new skills (welding) and any existing skills to make a difference. They will also receive a resume from the Skills and Job Centre.



Angela Makiru outside Soul Food Kitchen in Cardinia



Angela (R) with her mum Paula and brother Bruce, who help out at the Kitchen



Soul Food Kitchen 18 Golden Green Street Pakenham

Soul Food Kitchen

After a year of meetings with Cardinia Shire Council, Angela Makiru from Cranbourne Adventist Church has secured council premises to operate her Café - Soul Food Kitchen. The submission to council was a joint proposal between ADRA and Soul Food to operate a facility which would not only deliver wholesome nutritious food but also be a hub for community engagement, social inclusion and pay it forward/welfare support. "We look forward to a bright and exciting future for Soul Food Kitchen supporting ADRA in community projects and initiatives," says Angela. "Please come and introduce yourself to us we'd love to meet you."

Keep Up to Date

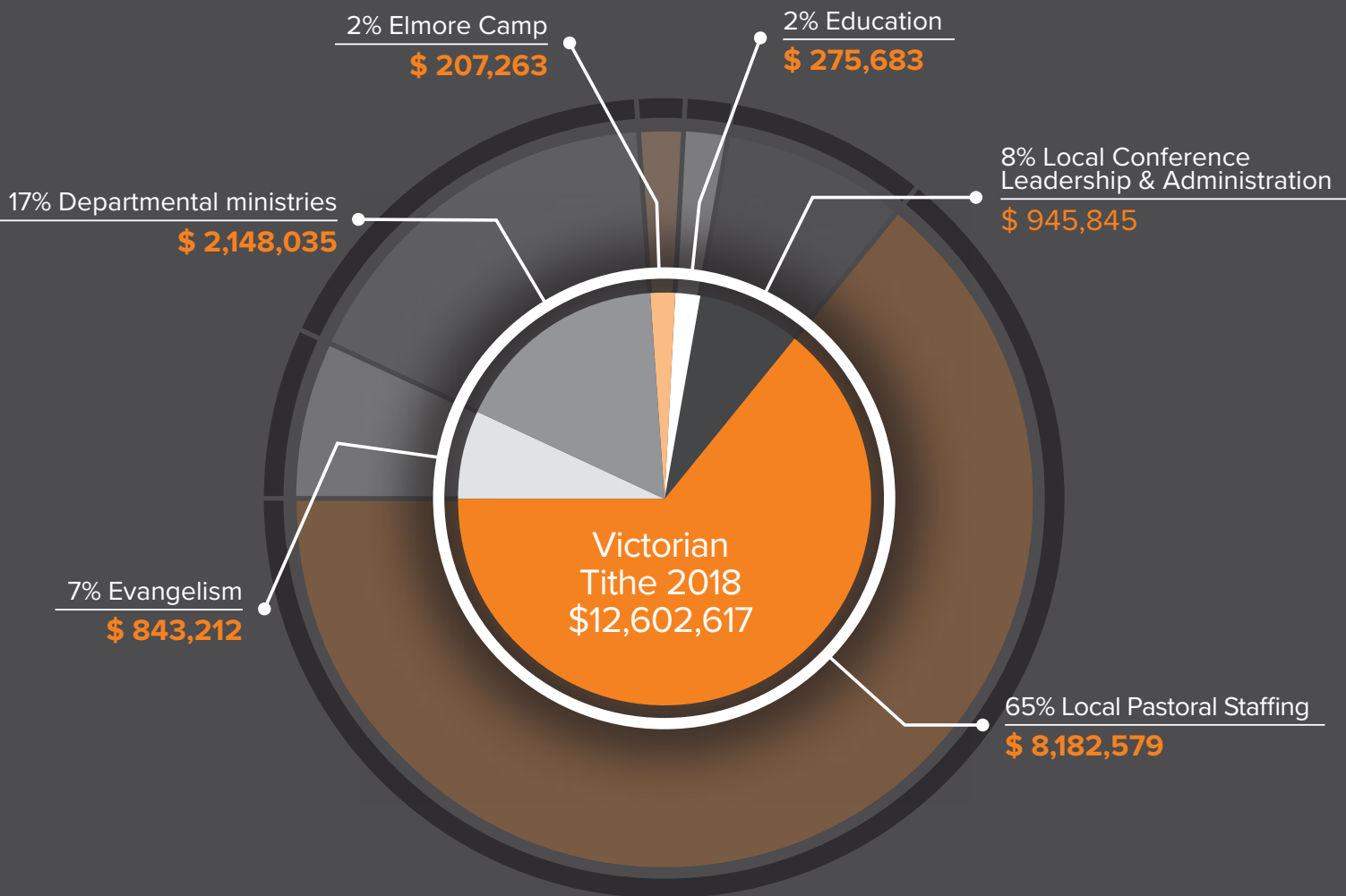
If you are interested in keeping up to date with daily ADRA news, information sharing and opportunities to start a local project - please go the WhatsApp ADRA leaders group: <https://bit.ly/2GXzshE>



More Victorians are Returning More Tithe



- ✓ 64% of our 111 churches returned an increased tithe, 5.2% more than last year
- ✓ New church plants at Bendigo Karen, Berwick, Bundoora, Crossroads, South East Oromo and The Rock Community.
- ✓ Additional pastoral staff employed
- ✓ Increased funding for chaplaincy staff
- ✓ More resources for Adsafe services



Thank you for your faithfulness

Tithe amounts represented here is the tithe retained in Victoria for Victorian use. 20% of all tithe is transferred to the AUC, the SPD and the GC to fund global mission and evangelism projects.

The Editor reserves the right to edit and include or exclude all articles submitted. Those not included or heavily edited due to lack of space may be posted on Facebook and the Conference news website. The Editor also reserves the right to restrict advertising – generally commercial advertising is not accepted and accommodation notices must be accompanied by a reference from the local Pastor. If accepted, notices will appear on Facebook and the Conference website. Neither the Editor nor the Seventh-day Adventist Church is responsible for the quality of the services advertised and posting of them does not indicate endorsement. Photographs of minors must be accompanied by parental/guardian permission to use the photos in print and on the web. Bible verses are from various versions which may include NIV, NKJV and Clear Word.