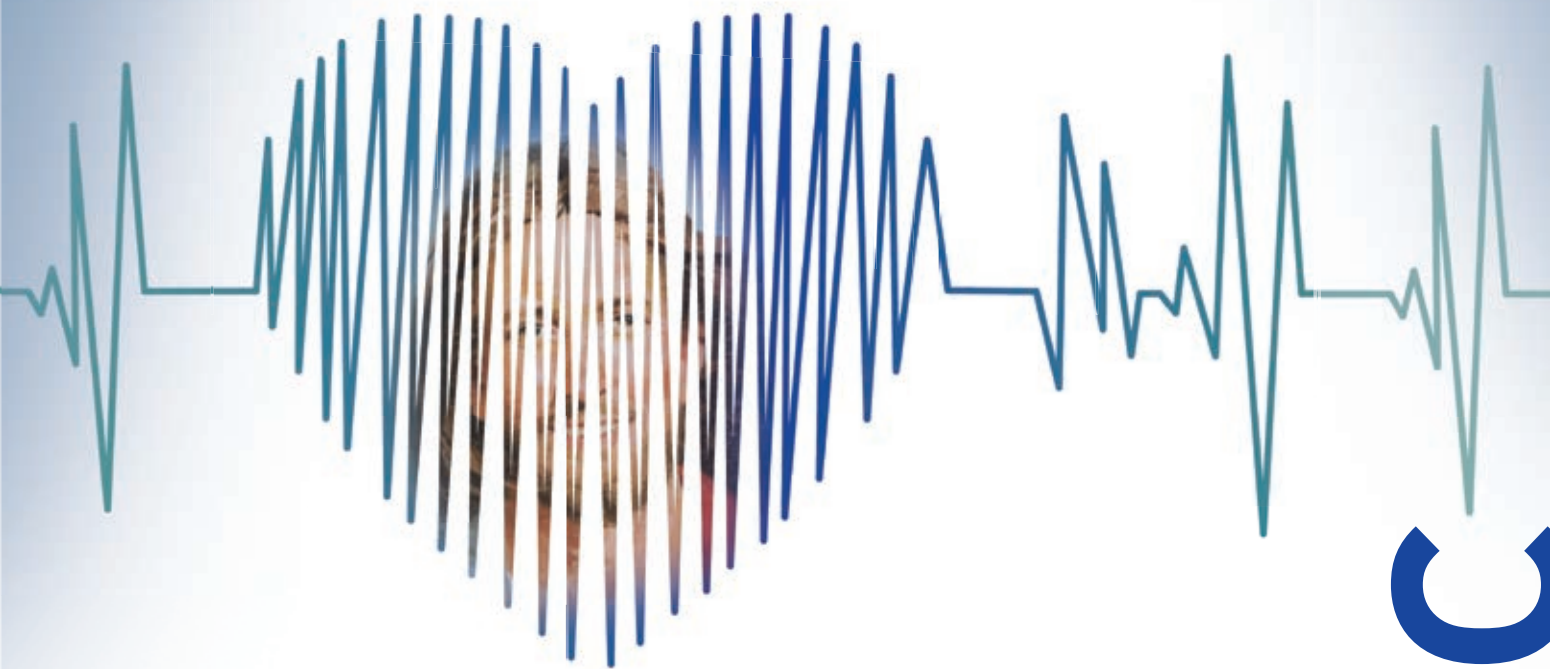




November
23 2019



Taking Stock Pt2

Is Christ at the
centre of all we do?

IntraVic



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

Romans 10:14

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A note from the Editor's Office



Too Early to Tell?

"Don't count your chickens before they hatch!" Heard that before? Makes sense, doesn't it?

As a Conference, we've never really been into chickens much anyway. Disciple-making yes, chickens no. I think you'd agree that sharing the good old Adventist message is definitely not for chickens anyway.

Well the year hasn't ended yet – so it's obviously too early to tell what the final results will be for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Victoria.

Those who lead out in Revelation Today, the city wide evangelistic meetings with *It Is Written* speakers John Bradshaw and Eric Flickinger, spent countless hours planning, organizing, managing, negotiating, leading – they worked long and hard. Now the analysis is happening. What worked? What didn't? Was there anything that could have been done better?

Some things have emerged really clearly. Remember there were 'lead-up events', like Dinner with a Doctor, Ancient Mysteries Reveal the Future, the King Tut Roadshow and The Mystery Man of Prophecy? Having Dr Neil Nedley, Pr Gary Webster, Pr Wayne French and Pr Gary Kent all contributing to the lead up to the Revelation Today meetings was truly a blessing.

What is now clear is that inviting people to 'lead up events' is effective. The stats reveal that the more lead up events people attended, the more likely they were to make a decision for Christ's truth at Revelation Today.

Now Jesus said to make disciples, to teach them and to baptise them. So we don't count chickens, but when it comes to disciple-making, people count! And, from what I've been told by those who've been keeping track of the stats, 2019 is promising to be the best soul-winning year for the Victorian Conference in 25 years.

Could that be true? Praise God!

Thanks to our people – pastors and members alike. So many worked so hard.

Thanks.

Please continue to pray that God will continue to work right here in Victoria!

Graeme Christian

IntraVic November 2019

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Knowing it was His Last Week...

photo credit - Lightstock/Lumo

Book Review by Sherrie Courtney

Knowing He had just one week left with His disciples before the crucifixion, what did Jesus talk about?

How is it relevant today?

In his book, And the Angels Were Silent, Max Lucado looks at that last week of Jesus' life. What did He do and say... what was of utmost importance to Him, and what can we learn from that week, to apply in our lives in these last days of earth's history, as we endeavour to be Christ's disciples?

The first story of Jesus final week was also the last story recorded before entering Jerusalem a marked man; the land owner employing workers at different times of the day (Matt 20). The punchline, says Max, is the anger of the workers over the boss's generosity. But instead Max focuses on the overlooked workers still waiting at 5pm. The unqualified, unskilled, untrained, uneducated... the ones who didn't deserve to be chosen for whatever reason....

Isn't that each of us? Who of us actually deserves God's mercy? But God chooses us too. AND it is not too late to accept Him.

From the countryside, Jesus set out, his sights on Jerusalem. Fully aware, He told His followers quite clearly what was going to go down and how, and intentionally started that journey. "The way Jesus marched to His death leaves no doubt He had come to earth for this moment" (p12). Peter later explained this had been God's plan from the beginning. (Acts 2:23) Jesus set out carrying His father's plan in His

heart.

What better way is there to face today's Jerusalems, than with God's word in our hearts?

In Matthew 20:28, Jesus referred to Himself as the Son of Man coming to serve and to give His life for many. Earlier He had said the Son of Man would be killed, but would rise again. Max says that the Jews knew about the Son of Man. It was a symbol of triumph: of a king, roaring from Heaven on a fiery chariot to avenge God's oppressed people. So when Jesus said the Son of Man would sit at God's right hand, or would come on clouds of Heaven with authority and power, His listeners could picture it. But when He spoke of the Son of Man's suffering and death, no wonder Mark records Jesus' followers not understanding.

Of all the terms Jesus could have used, He chose the Son of Man, because He was the general, taking responsibility for the actions of his soldiers; the master, putting himself in the crossfire to save his servant. Jesus came to serve and give His life for you.

Matthew records an incident on the way to Jerusalem, where His followers tried to hush some grubby beggars vying for the Master's attention. But the Master had His face set toward Jerusalem. No one was to interrupt. To distract. To slow The Son of Man down on His way to His throne. The blind beggars were not discouraged though – it made them cry all the louder and Jesus heard and stopped. He took the time.

And He still does. God always hears those who are searching for Him.

The Sabbath, says Max, is the day that work comes to a screeching halt. A weekly reminder to slow down. So, suggests Max, let's look at what Christ did on this, His last Sabbath with His disciples. Take a look yourself. You will find that none of the gospels even mention this day. Not a word. And all we can imply from that, is that on this last Sabbath before His death, nothing was more important than observing the Sabbath and worshipping God. "For such is the purpose of the Sabbath. And such was the practice of Jesus" (p 28).

On the Sunday, Jesus sent for a donkey and Max focuses on the

donkey's owner. Jesus asked. The owner didn't reply 'What for?' He just gave. No hesitation.

How often do we fail to share our 'donkeys' because we are unsure it is God asking for them, or simply don't want to give them away? The donkey owner's gift is still retold 2000 years later.

Who knows the impact your response to Christ's requests may have?

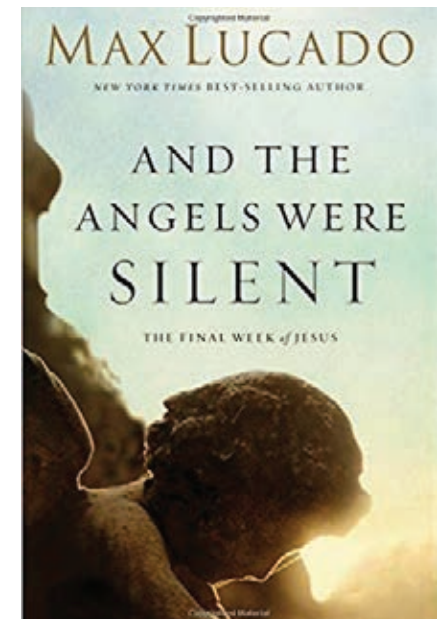
The first place Jesus went, after being escorted along the road like royalty, was to the temple. He returned the next morning, and regarding the subsequent scene in the temple, Max asks "Want to anger God? Get in the way of people who want to see Him." (pg 45).

On the way to Jerusalem that morning, Jesus had cursed the fig tree with all the makings of a tree laden with fruit, but on closer inspection, was barren – just what Jesus had seen the night before and was about to confront at the temple. The next day, the disciples saw the same tree, dead.

Max sees a further warning in the fate of the tree full of promise but with no performance. God has no tolerance for empty religion. And when Jesus was saying that if the disciples have faith in God, they will be able to do even more – perhaps at this point he was looking up the valley toward the temple mount – He was saying that when empty religion cages you in, you can tell it to go jump in the lake...

God's greatest creation is not the flung stars or the gorged canyons; it's His eternal plan to reach His children" (pg 58), and Jesus did not stop trying to reach those who would not hear, even at this late stage.

Matthew 21 and 22 record stories Jesus told that day. Stories with urgent invitations, stories of invitations repeatedly ignored. God issues His invitation repeatedly, but He will never force acceptance. That is up to us. Our choice. The religious leaders knew Jesus was appealing to them but they made their choice, turning their backs to made plans to trap Him. How Jesus' heart must have hurt as He watched them go. As it does when He sees us today, choose the world over Him.



In Matthew 22, Jesus asks the disciples whose son He is. He didn't ask about his teachings or his miracles. After three years of ministry, He asked 'who'. He wanted them to think, not about what He had done, but who He was. Because, knowing what was to come, knowing who was really sacrificing so much for them, would make all the difference – for them then, and for us now.

The religious leaders were trying to make themselves righteous without God, and it made Jesus so furious that His last sermon for them was about phony faith and hollow hearts (Matt 23;13-33).

"How are you going to escape God's judgement?" He demanded. Not through what they could do...what we can do... But what He did.

Matthew 24 describes a cataclysmic future. Max also sees in this discourse a manual of survival for lives under siege.

Following in Christ's footsteps does not guarantee a smooth journey. In fact quite the opposite. But Jesus gave three certainties. Assurance of victory (Matt 24:13). Assurance that His plan would be achieved (Matt 24:14). And assurance that the end would come (Matt 24:14).

During this week, Jesus took time to tell His listeners to prepare for the end.

Continued on Pg 37

Reflect... and Reflect

Justin Bone
INCOMING MINISTERIAL SECRETARY

With Christmas decorations firmly ensconced in the local retail stores its the time of year for some reflection.

It's easy to feel the year has sped by, and wonder what even happened?

What did we do?

Why are we doing it?

We are told that this kind of self reflection builds emotional resilience, and it's important to take the time to look back so we can more ably look forward. To get a sense of perspective not only of the year but it's place in history and in our own lives.

It's also a time of reflection when it comes to our church, especially after our major evangelistic thrust this year.

God encourages reflection on the past; in fact He insists on it many times. In 1 Samuel 7 the people of Israel have gone through a time of reflection and under the guidance of Samuel desire to turn to the Lord again. Samuel instructs them to gather at Mizpah so he could plead with the Lord on their behalf.

The Philistines hear about their gathering and take the opportunity to attack the assembled Israelites. The people of Israel were understandably afraid, but Samuel cried out to the Lord on their behalf, offering a sacrifice, and the Lord answered.

The Lord thundered against them and in a panic the Philistines fled and were routed by the Israelites. A memorable victory! Samuel takes a stone and sets it up between Mizpah and Shen, naming the stone Ebenezer (perhaps you've sung about it, it's mentioned in 'Come

“ Do you take a moment to create your own mental Ebenezer Stone when God has come through for you? ”

Thou Font of Every Blessing'). The point of the Ebenezer - meaning 'Thus far the Lord has helped us' - was to remind of when God moved among His people and helped them.

God knows that it is easy for us to forget when He moves and helps us, even when that help is very miraculous. So it makes sense for us to raise our Ebenezer and look back at where God has moved and helped us this year.

So I wanted to take a bit of space to share some of when I have seen God move and help from the perspective of a local Conference church pastor, not only for my own reflective purposes but to be sure I remember.

God has equipped His people through training - Joining Christ in the Harvest happened at Nunawading School hall on a long and hot weekend. It was Conference-led training in conjunction with *It Is Written*.

While the air-conditioners struggled, over a hundred people were given new skills and confidence and before long we were in buses heading all over Melbourne... then knocking on doors to share the Gospel.

Nervous folk went out on the bus, but returned singing God's praises for the homes that had opened to the Gospel message that afternoon.

God has helped a worship community make the transition from company to church and I have seen the hope and excitement of each member, the witness of God's working in their lives writ large on their faces as they were consecrated to move forward with the Gospel message. We praised his name together and rejoiced in our Lord.

God has called youth from my churches to come together from across the state and travel overseas on mission trips. He helped them gather the funds and equipment needed as they put study and work on hold for the chance to make a difference in strangers' lives.

I've seen the change in their own eyes when they return, altered by service and humbled by seeing God move among them as they served.

God has brought people together in marriage and I've seen couples joined not only in love but in faith.

There have been smiles and joyful

tears, food and feasting, and the new thrill of a life started with a loved one. There were sunny days and outdoor weddings pouring with rain.

But I've also seen families in pain and in trouble, with children struggling and parents at wits end. In those times God moved to comfort and encourage, and show His endless love.

God was with Revelation Today in a mighty way in our state, and because of the outreach I've seen church members join together and unite in a way I haven't seen before.

He is still bringing people into our sphere of influence who are seeking Him.

I've seen extraordinary commitment from the Victorian Conference team, and full engagement from many members as they work to reach out to a troubled city.

And I've seen the response to that reaching. I've seen people freed from fear. I've seen God work in people's lives of all ages, and seen a rededication in many hearts.

God has drawn many people to make a commitment to Him through baptism, and joined to a local church community.

Continued on Pg 38

Brian Mercer Education Director

We have much to praise God for in Adventist Education – a dedicated Christian staff, significantly increased enrolments, improved academic results and quality buildings and infrastructure. In a time when there is much uncertainty in the world, our schools are providing an intentional Christian bastion where our children can flourish in an Adventist Christian environment.

Spiritual

Our schools have Adventist identity as the cornerstone of why we offer education. Each day our teachers present this identity to the more than 2500 students who come to our schools. This influence also extends beyond our attending students to their families.

Harvest Victoria was seen by our schools as an opportunity to support both church ministry and our evangelistic goals. All of our school principals offered the use of our school facilities for Revelation Today, with a number of school venues chosen by the Conference for this activity. Further, three of our schools host church services on a weekly basis – a number we hope to grow! Having on-campus churches encourages our clientele to take the next step towards Church membership. Two of our schools witness to the wider Victorian community by hosting and being engaged in the, “Road to Bethlehem” program. Edinburgh College sees more than 16 000 pass through its campus, while more than 3000 attend the program at Henderson College, Mildura. What a wonderful Christian influence to our communities!

Our chaplains and teachers do a wonderful job in bringing our message to the students in our schools. Last year more than 550 students participated in Bible study classes, most with the school chaplains. Of these, more than 50 went on to

baptismal classes. Twelve students were baptised as a direct result of the school, remembering that a significant number of students choose to be baptised at their home churches and are not included in this figure. It is wonderful to note that two teachers were also baptised. Here are just two of many exciting experiences about what is happening in schools:

• We have a couple in their 30s with a boy who attends our school. Through their friendship with their son’s teacher, they were invited to our campus church, and have been attending regularly for almost a year, and are growing in their faith.

• ReVibe - Friday Night Program: The student body continues to lead a weekly Friday night youth Bible study meeting where approximately 30 to 40 students would regularly attend to socialise and study the word. The format of the meetings means that students are spending over an hour reading and discussing the Bible on a range of topics. Such topics have also included recent studies on Desmond Doss and his distinctive Adventist beliefs. This program is an effective witnessing tool as it is a completely student initiated event. The school is supportive and our teachers are generous with their time to help supervise the event. We are so grateful for the parents who have instilled a strong outreach and Jesus focused mindset in their children. It is inspiring to see a younger generation take ownership for their

faith at such a young age, while still at school.

In 2020, we are commencing a spiritual well-being program for the staff in our schools. The program, created by Nina Atcheson, the Adventist Schools Australia Identity Officer, is called ABIDE (Abundant Discipling, Bold Godliness, Intentional Connecting & Deliberate Learning, and Extravagant Outreach). This is an exciting development which we believe will impact the lives of all our employees.

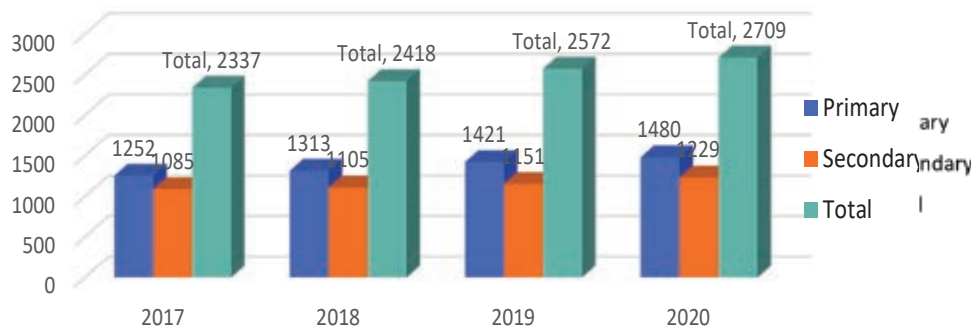
Quality Education

It is gratifying to see that our schools are moving towards improved outcomes for our students. Heritage College has been identified by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority as a school which is one of the State’s most improved, with this school adding value at a higher rate than all other schools in the State! It is also exciting to see both The Age and the Herald Sun writing articles reporting Heritage College’s success.

This improvement is emulated across all our schools with improvements at NAPLAN across all levels and very good outcomes at VCE level. In particular, Nunawading Christian College and Edinburgh College have achieved some excellent results. Further to this, Heritage College has made exceptional improvements in its VCE results.

Adventist Schools Victoria has been

Adventist School Victoria - Enrolments from 2017 - 2020



recognised as one of the leaders in Victoria for the implementation of the Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L) Framework, in partnership with Melbourne University. All schools have been tested for fidelity in establishing this program and have been found not only to be compliant but exceeding the expectations, with a number of schools achieving 100% success.

Student Growth, Finance & Infrastructure

Our schools growth is expected to continue as both church members and the public see our schools as modelling Christian values and providing excellent educational outcomes for our children. We started 2017 with 2337 students and by 2019 this had grown to 2572 or 10.1%. It is exciting to see that in 2020, we

should increase this number to 2709. What an opportunity this provides our schools to witness about our beliefs and God’s love for each of us.

Our schools continue to enhance their campuses by providing excellent facilities, including new buildings and infrastructure to cater for both the needs and growth of our system. Over the past three years, more than \$17 775 000 has been spent on new buildings on our school campuses. The highlights over 2017/18 include a new double storied library and high school block at Gilson College, Mernda; and a new multipurpose centre at Heritage College, Officer. Now, a Year 7/8 learning precinct and an Early Learning complex are being built at Gilson Taylors Hill and a new Design and Technology block at Henderson College. In early 2020, we are thrilled to be able to commence a new five-classroom block at Heritage, Officer to double the capacity for primary students and a lower-primary block at Edinburgh College to meet this schools’ growth.

Building projects 2017 - 2019

School	Project	year completed	Cost
Gilson College (Taylors Hill)	Year 3&4 Building Extension	2017	\$1,572,000
	Year 7&8 Building Extension	Construction in progress	\$1,400,000
	Early Learning Centre	Construction in progress	\$2,770,000
Gilson College (Mernda)	Senior School & Library	2017	\$ 3,100,000
Nunawading Christian College	Science Labs & Library refurbishment, New Lift	2018	\$ 1,772,000
Heritage College (Officer)	Multipurpose building	2019	\$ 2,860,000
Henderson College	Senior Learning Hub Technology and Yr5-8 building	2018 Construction in progress	\$867,000 \$3,084,000
Edinburgh College	Early Learning Centre extension	Construction in progress	\$ 350,000
		Total spent/committed	\$17,775,000

The report clearly demonstrates that our schools are growing, vibrant, educationally advanced, well-resourced evangelistic centres within the Adventist Church in Victoria. We have a wonderful team of leaders, teachers

and non-teaching staff who each makes a marvellous contribution.

We can clearly praise God for the way He has led us in the past and the way He is opening the path for an exciting future.

Youth & Young Adults Ministries

**Phil Hyland ~ Director,
VicYouth**

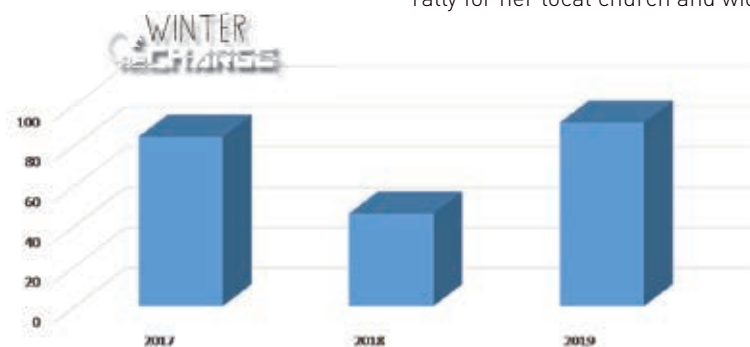
"Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ." - Ephesians 5:2 NLT

Christ-centred living is the heart of who we are and what we do. VicYouth has emphasized the importance of life group communities through exposure at youth rallies, giving people a platform to share what a life group means to them and the benefits they have received by being part of a life group community.

Local church life groups are continuing to grow, and groups are multiplying across the state. Additionally, youth gatherings (Winter Recharge, Converge, Youth Rally) provide opportunities for people to connect with life groups in their local areas.

Our young adults camp, Winter Recharge, held at Camp Howqua, is continuing to grow in Victoria as you can see in the graph below. We attribute this growth to our intentional social media campaigns prior to the event. This year, we had numerous youth groups attend for the first time having found out about the camp via these platforms.

Camps are beneficial for youth in Victoria; at a time in their lives when social groups are in flux, old friendships are strengthened and new ones made.



The Share Him group conducted a full evangelistic series

"Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit and teaching to obey everything I have commanded you." Matthew 28:19, 20
"Go into all the world and preach the good news to everyone." Mark 16:15

Youth across our state are taking ownership of their faith. Earlier this year, Caitlyn Edwards, youth leader for our church in Ararat, organised a youth rally for her local church and wider

community. Around 60 people attended – and they weren't all youth! The speakers, other Youth Pastoral Workers (YPWs) and youth leaders from around the state shared their personal stories of why they chose to follow Jesus. Community members attending and who had never been to church before, were touched to see young people standing up for their faith. Although Caitlyn had moments of doubt during the preparation stages of the rally, she said the experience reinforced her faith – God can make miracles happen! We are thankful that our young people are discipling other young (and old!) people and are taking ownership of their faith.

"Share Him" evangelistic mission trips began in 2015 and VicYouth has been involved in three (Mexico, South Africa and the Philippines). On these mission trips, youth, many of whom have never preached before, are required to conduct a full evangelistic series, presenting between 11 – 16 sermons which are prepared for them by the team at Share Him.

Young people are attracted to these trips because, as they are heavily subsidised, they can go overseas and experience a different culture, and because they are forced to take a step out in faith and out of their comfort zones. Edna, one of our young preachers, said Share Him was more than she expected. Although sometimes stressed by the preaching schedule, she learnt to rely on the Spirit to guide her preaching throughout the series. Edna connected well with the

local church she preached at, feeling like the congregation became her family.

Others who have attended these trips have experienced personal and spiritual growth. Another Share Him attendee reflected that the trip enabled her head knowledge of God to translate to heart knowledge, and this transformed her.

Over the years we have noticed that Share Him trips develop leaders. Four years later, all six of the Victorian participants of the 2015 trip are now actively involved in ministry. Three are pastors, and one is studying Ministry/Theology. The other two are very active in their local church ministry.

We believe that Share Him trips grow the faith of our young people, develop leaders and give them "God-moments" which they will remember for the rest of their lives.

"Here is a call for the endurance of the saints, those who keep the



Big Camp is an important faith building time for young people

commandments of God and their faith in Jesus." Revelation 14:12

Big Camp is a faith-building time for youth and young adults in Victoria and helps establish their Adventist identity. The youth tent has continued to reach capacity during Big Camp, and overflows on Sabbath!

We endeavour to bring a range of dynamic speakers that address the needs of the youth and young adults in our Conference. In 2017, Pauline attended Big Camp for the first time. She reflects, "My best experience of Big Camp was with my friends. Having a whole weekend away with them allowed us to really feel a shared revival in our hearts and uplift us from what we're feeling discouraged about...I'd listen for hours, feeling restless and at peace all at the same...that's what happens when you feel God moving you."

Big Camp provides an opportunity to invite friends. Mark came along to camp with his Adventist friends for the first time in 2017. He enjoyed the uplifting experience he received through fellowship and the worship program. He described our speaker, Pr Anthony Fuller, as "one of the best inspirational speakers I have ever heard!" Over the course of Big Camp, we hope to challenge and equip our youth to live up to their God-given potential and make disciples in their spheres of influence.

The "World Changers Bible" resource encouraged young people to disciple others since 2013. This year, the new edition has come out with associated study guides. VicYouth ordered over 600 bibles which will be distributed to those in need. We anticipate that those using the Bibles and guides will be blessed through their Bible study and as they share Jesus with their friends.



VICYOUTH
MINISTRIES





"Learn to do good, seek justice, help the oppressed, defend the cause of orphans, fight for the rights of widows." Isaiah 1:17

Global Youth Day awareness continues to increase across our local churches. This year, we had a number of youth groups get involved. Dandenong-Filipino, Cranbourne and Pakenham Churches combined to have a celebratory agape feast to open



Service to Others Really Matters



STORMCo develops leaders through service



Sabbath before serving the community of Dandenong by handing out water bottles at public thoroughfares during a hot Sabbath's day. They then visited a local nursing home, where they sang songs and had conversations with the elderly. In the West, a number of youth groups got together to hand out "blessing bags" though their homeless connect ministry. VicYouth continues to create a culture of service among our young people.

STORMCo has been an effective ministry at developing leaders through service. Rebecca Brown attended Nunawading Christian College and became involved in STORMCo's as a junior leader. She now oversees the Camperdown Kid's club program which is led by her and a team from Nunawading Church.

Rebecca reflects on her journey with STORMCo. "I have been attending STORMCo for nine years now and leading for five of those years. We visit Camperdown in Western Victoria to run a Kids Club holiday program and perform community services.

"I started attending STORMCo as a non-Christian and that first year I



realised there was something I didn't have compared to everyone else. They laughed like me, looked like me but their happiness came from somewhere much deeper. After a year I started to pursue God for myself which was hard for my family at the time. My family has grown more supportive and understand of my decision and last year they attended my baptism at the 2018 STORMCo in Camperdown.

"We are never sure where God is leading our group but all He asks is for us to be willing to serve and the rest is up to Him."

"But the hour is coming and is now here when the true worshippers will worship the Father in Spirit and in truth for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks." John 4:23 NIV

The involvement of youth in worship services varies from church to church. In most churches, youth are involved in some aspect of the church service. Worship is more than leading music; the worship experience should be an overflow of one's connection with God, and leading others to share that experience. We have had preliminary discussions about developing our young people in this area, by better resourcing them (through workshops) and intentional mentoring. We also hope that the Growing Together



2018 Youth Pastoral Workers retreat

summits (next one in 2020) will help churches catch a vision for including young people so we can have vibrant, intergenerational, warm, Jesus-centred communities that serve the communities around them.

"Your love for one-another will prove to the world that you are My disciples." John 13:35

Some youth groups are viewed by onlookers as "cliquey" and newcomers find it difficult to make friends. Initiatives such as "Open House" (a laid-back, fortnightly, Sabbath opening program) run locally at Burwood church hopes to be a place where people from all walks of life feel welcome.

The YPW program has developed leaders in several local churches. YPW have a wide variety of roles, and they play a key role in the mentorship of teens. VicYouth participates in the YPW retreat each year and regularly works

with YPWs, being primarily young adults.

"God loves a cheerful giver." 2 Corinthians 9:7

The youth of Victoria are generally willing to return their tithe, yet some don't always carry cash with them to church. The eGiving app has recently been given an overhaul and we it will be interesting to monitor its uptake amongst youth and young adults.

When we asked why youth and young adults tithe, we received the following answers:

"It systemises my finances, and I am blessed in return. I tithe to the Victorian Conference because I see value in what the church does and I want to support it."

"As my relationship with Christ grew, I wanted to give back to God what was already His... I know that churches get tithe reversions so I know what I'm giving is helping my local church, which is what I'm excited about!"

Youth value transparency and would like to know where their money is going. We strive to be faithful stewards of our resources at a department level, and be accountable to those who make our ministry possible.



Looking Ahead

In 2018, the AUC hosted their first Youth Engagement Summit, bringing together church leaders and young adults from across Australia and NZ with the purpose of exploring ways to stem the exodus of young people from the church.

Key recommendations made included • Develop, foster and support Growing Young pilot programs within conferences churches and schools.

- Youth engagement will be a standing item for the AUC board and we encourage the same commitment from the Division, Conferences, schools and local churches.
- Actively model and promote the inclusion of young people in shaping the direction of the church including youth advisories and inclusion/ engagement in the decision-making processes.

Following this, a Growing Together summit was held in the SQLD Conference. A number of attendees came from Victoria, catching a fresh vision for the potential in our churches and the crucial role of our youth in its mission.

Ellen White stated the benefit of prioritising young people; "Let us in our educational work embrace far more of the children and youth, and there will be a whole army of missionaries raised up to work for God." RH August 22, 1912

Since the summit, plans have been laid to make available the Growing Together cohort right across Australia commencing in 2020, starting us on a journey where the end goal is church communities that young people love to attend.

The final word, I believe, is best left to Freddy Rodrigues, Assoc. Youth Director in the Florida Conference.

"Brothers and Sisters, I believe Growing Young is not a program, it is a call for revival. I pray that this movement will help our world-wide church wake up. I believe the second Pentecost can happen in our time! Let's pray for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Without Him we are empty vessels. I want to go home! Jesus is coming soon!"

PersonalMinistries

Andrew Jasper, Director

What is a disciple?
Or a disciple-maker?
And what is a thriving
disciple-making
movement?

These are not human inventions, but divine miracles, reflective of God’s heart. For the past two years we’ve seen Him doing just that... working miracles.

As I commenced this term as Personal Ministries Director, leading into what became known as Harvest Victoria, the focus was on personal renewal and spiritual growth and we utilised a number of resources to encourage seeking and praying for the Holy Spirit.

He, in turn encouraged the team to view evangelism differently. It was not simply a matter of praying for God’s help and then heading out for the day, to do what we could. It was a case of coming to Him, so that we could then go out into the world, WITH Him.

With a heightened longing to be used by Him in His vineyard, following His leading not our own, we chose the name for our first training sessions “Joining Christ in the Harvest.” He was already there and working, we were going to follow.

Over 250 participants were quipped to push beyond the walls of their



The Tut Roadshow was an opportunity to engage with the community

homes into the living rooms of their neighbours to engage spiritual interests. Through a simple survey, scores of people responded and we began dropping lessons off or personally studying the Bible with them.

Other volunteers letter boxed Bible Study Request cards. Nine Bible Workers were later employed and many ventured into high-growth suburbs in the West, North and Southeast. Some of them further trained church members on how to meet their friends and neighbours. As people in our communities responded new friendships were formed and others deepened, Bibles were studied and light from Jesus brightened minds. Some of these connections morphed into entire groups!

In the process, God provided opportunity to invite our friends to a variety of dinners with Neil Nedley, Gary Webster and Gary Kent. It was natural to sit and eat, listen to an engaging talk and share with each other afterward. God worked through churches conducting Health Expos, Depression & Anxiety Recovery

Programs, CHIP and other health ventures where He inspired people with new life and possibilities.

The Tut Roadshow was another opportunity He arranged for our schools and communities. Church members were delighted to see a creative approach to engage with their friends and asked for the Roadshow to return.

A Prayer Summit encouraged pastors and members alike to advance on our knees.

As Revelation Today approached, Over 1.5 million flyers were letterboxed and over 1000 TV ads saturated the Nine Network for over a month. God miraculously intervened here too, as we were the first client globally to utilize both TV and Broadcast Video on Demand at the same time across networks. Targeted Google searches directed seekers to revelationtoday.com.au and Facebook ads were deployed.

And more personally, Adventists across Victoria invited family, friends and neighbours.

God used these efforts and touched hearts – over 1000 people from the community attended one or more of the programs at Revelation Today. John Bradshaw and Eric Flickinger from *It is Written* uplifted Christ and His message for our day.

It was from the Bible, distinctly Adventist and powerful!

In addition to the *It is Written* Revelation Today presentations, several churches from regional and rural Victoria conducted their own Revelation Today series.

Hundreds made decisions, with over



The Prayer Summit inspired perseverance in the lead up to Revelation Today

150 of those wanting to be baptised or profess a new faith. Pastors, Bible workers and church members faithfully and prayerfully followed up by holding ongoing seminars, in-home Bible studies and small group baptismal classes. This month, Eric Flickinger returned to cap off the series with a final appeal to venture with God and place our lives completely in His hands.

To date, 52 have been baptised or joined by profession of faith for which heaven rejoices.

Adventist members responded that the series gave them greater confidence in our Prophetic message, identity and movement.

As well as its involvement with Revelation Today, the Personal Ministries Department partnered with:

- Conference Departments in several Ministry Tours bringing training and resources to rural and regional churches
- Conference Evangelist, Vadim and Helen Butov to provide additional evangelism training to metro churches
- The Ministerial Association to offer Natural Church Development coaching and implementation
- The Australia Union Conference with resources from disciple.org.au and the introduction of the newly designed “Seventh-day Adventist’s in Australia” book
- South Pacific Division’s rollout of the World Changer Bibles
- Adventist Media Centre’s newly launched literature ministry that enables us to resource literature evangelists and church members with material to share.

I would especially like to thank Glenda Locop who has managed the office

while I’ve literally flown around our territory. She has faithfully assisted with your orders for materials and resources, returning Bible study response cards to relevant churches, managing stock and many other tasks behind the scenes. Even though the evangelistic meetings have finished, we still have loads of items you can use now including Bible study request cards, sharing cards, Bible study lessons, Bibles, etc. Call her to discuss your needs.

So... What is a disciple? The person God changes, leading them to be baptised into His body.

What’s a disciple-maker? The person God renews and challenges to follow Him into fields ripe for harvest.

What’s a thriving disciple-making movement? When all of the above unite to finish the work.

What’s the result? Well, last I checked, our best Friend is coming on a white horse (Rev. 19:11). Maranatha!



Stewardship

Just want to shout out a big thanks to everyone faithfully returning tithes.

Many of you are aware that last year our Conference had over a \$1,000,000 increase in returned tithes.

This year we are on trend to retain those gains and are just over \$45,000 more than last year at the same time (August). Could it be that our focus on discipleship and evangelism has rallied members in this tangible way?



Ministerial Association

Darren Croft, Ministerial Association Secretary

I remind myself every year that the title Ministerial Association Secretary may be obscure and opaque for most, but the role of the 'Pastors Pastor' is a valued and valuable role, one that helps to support and equip our pastors to be the pastors that God intends them to be.

Let's take a look at my 2019 Diary.

January

I was positively surprised to see how many turned up for the Harvest Victoria Training in January. There were even churches represented that I don't ever remember seeing at a Conference run event. Those who came were fired up to share the gospel and willing to volunteer their time and influence – fantastic! Eric Flickinger, Yves Monier and the rest of the team presented well.

February

Along with others from Victoria, I attended two mission focused events at Avondale College in February: the Mission to the Cities symposium and the Church Planting Conference.

Here's two takeaways after listening to outstanding presenters. First, in some major world cities the Adventist Church has been successful in reaching immigrant communities but has utterly failed to reach and retain locally born people; we need to be conscious of doing both in Melbourne. Second, North America is aiming to have one church for every 25,000 people. If we did the same we'd be aiming to have 255 churches in Victoria – more than double what we currently have!



Pastors district meetings recommenced in February. We have seven districts with a number of new leaders this year. Districts can be a great opportunity for prayer, support, discussion and training.

March

Jerry and Janet Page from the General Conference were the keynote speakers for the GROW Conference in March and the Pastors Retreat the following week. While I wished more could have heard their inspiring stories and been part of the prayer experience, those that needed to be there were. The Pastors Retreat was awesome – a genuine time of retreat in the beauty of East Gippsland at Wattle Point.

The Interns disappeared to Jindabyne for a week in March. Interns appreciate the opportunity to catch up with other interns from around Australia to exchange stories and learn more about ministry.

April – July

Revelation Today was finally underway in May after all the preparation. I was able to attend each of the four venues. It was interesting seeing

Eric and John present the same topic in slightly different ways; both were excellent. Public Evangelism has been the theme of the year. At each site the support from so many volunteers and pastors was extraordinary. If only we could bottle that enthusiasm and commitment! Behind the scenes the Harvest Victoria team worked hard.



Welcoming people to Revelation Today

August

Pastors and their churches were busy following up Revelation Today so it wasn't until late in August that other events could happen. Trafford Fischer and Bryan Craig ran our fifth pastors Marriage Enrichment weekend. It's a fantastic thing for Pastors to invest in their marriages. Honestly, I wish more would grab the opportunity, but those that have participated have benefited.

The following weekend it was the Youth Pastoral Workers (YPW) retreat. Both events utilise Jumbunna – a



Pastors Family Camp



Pastors Retreat

great spot for retreats. We'd met with the YPW's on a Sabbath afternoon in April and the retreat in August was a valuable networking and training weekend. I have to remind people that Youth Pastoral/Bible Work has been a pathway into ministry for numerous pastors in Victoria and is an excellent



This year's YPWs

way for young people to have a taste of ministry as a part time job!

September

September school holidays brought the Ministers Family Camp. It's the one event we do each year that includes Pastors, Spouses and pastors kids. Those who got there enjoyed a weekend at Camp Howqua away from the usual business of Sabbath, and a rare opportunity to spend time together.

After a couple of hiccups with Ministry Tours the Conference Ministry team all descended on Warrnambool Church in the middle of the year, adding to the variety of country churches that have now experienced a 'Ministry Tour'.

October – December

The year ends with a training flavour. An optional day in October gives pastors a chance to hear Eike Muller, Associate Professor of New Testament

Studies at Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies, speak on Biblical Eschatology. Two days of Ministers meetings in November reviewed and celebrated Revelation Today while also looking forward to how to reach other segments of our society with the Gospel.

October

I spent an October Sunday completing recommendations for Interns and Ordinations. It's always satisfying to tick another box, but even more to see pastors growing in their ministry and experience and progressing. Rose Andrykanus, Chris Guo, and Connie Toga successfully completed their internships in 2018 and are now 'licensed' as ministers. Emanuel Millen and Duane Suffolk successfully completed their first year of internship in 2018. We also welcomed four new interns to the Victorian Conference in 2019: Marius Jigau, Sylvia Mendez, Tau Poasa, and Wendy Saluni. Marius is an Avondale graduate, while Sylvia, Tau and Wendy were already working for the Church in Victoria in different capacities and are also Avondale graduates.

October included a Ministry Promotion event attended by about 20 interested people. Three local pastors shared their call to Ministry and Kayle De Waal provided information about Avondale.

This month is also when some school chaplains attend the National Chaplains Convention. Melbourne Chaplains meet each term to share ideas, pray, and plan. This is the last year that school chaplaincy will be facilitated by the Ministerial Association as school chaplaincy is being transferred to Adventist Schools Victoria from 2020.

November

New ordination recommendations were reviewed in November by the Church's National Executive.

This year, we had three ordinations.

We almost didn't make it to Andrew Wilson's ordination service at Bairnsdale earlier this year as fires cut off the highway to Bairnsdale on a very hot day! Fortunately we got there for a great day together.

Quinten Liebrandt was ordained at Warburton Church and Trent Martin was ordained at Mernda Church in 2019.



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In addition to everything else I've visited a bunch of churches this year and the year will soon be done with a flurry of year end events.

Challenges and the Future

A New Pastors Reporting System has been developed by our National Office and will begin to be implemented in 2020. It seeks to be more wholistic in how pastors and churches report but it is change so will face some challenges.

I've written to Elders each year in this role, encouraging a Pastor's Appreciation day. It's given me a buzz that this has happened but I don't know that the idea has gained significant traction. It is difficult to be appreciative in a culture that is often too busy.

In any given year most pastors thrive. However there will always be some with relationship pressures, physical or mental health challenges, or burnout. We need to support one another because it will help us be better churches.

Staff in the Conference will miss working closely with Darren. His cheerfulness and willingness to sit down and chat have been appreciated by us all.

He is being replaced by Justin Bone, who, having served in Victoria at a number of churches, and cared for the Upper Primary Division at Big Camp for many years, in addition to frequent contributions to IntraVic, is well known and a familiar face to our readers. Congratulations Justin. We look forward to working with you in the new year.



Final Words

Finally, thank-you to the Church in Victoria.

It's been a privilege to be the 'Ministerial Guy' for the last six years. It has been an honour to serve our pastors and churches.

I was surprised by the invitation to return to the local church and pastor Lilydale Church. However, after ten years working and driving across Victoria I felt I had to prayerfully consider the request. It took some time to arrive at a decision but after much soul searching I have accepted the opportunity to return to the grassroots, where church and community happen, for the next chapter of my ministry.

I relish the opportunity to work more closely with my family and local community, but will miss the close association with pastors and church leaders around Victoria.

We have a fantastic bunch of people and pastors in Victoria. Our pastors are not perfect but they are people called by God to serve and share the gospel.

Please remember them in your prayers.

Health

Andrew Jasper, Director

This year has seen our Depression and Anxiety Recovery Programs (DARP) really take off with five programs being run across the Conference.

In July, we held our annual DARP training in Geelong because most registrations were from the Western part of the state. Three programs have run since.

I recently attended Geelong's opening night where the members had the hall beautifully set up. Pastor Gavin Rowe, the programs Associate Director, scrambled with a last-minute order for materials as over 25 people signed up!

Casey Church just finished their second program of the year, and I was able to meet the graduates and celebrate with those whose journeys now have a brighter future.

Earlier this year, Gateway East held a program in their newly opened Centre of Influence called We Explore. One couple was so impacted that they later shared their experience at the centre's Health Day and are attending care group.

Don't let the stigma of depression or anxiety keep you from regaining your grip in life. There is hope!

Let God dismantle the constellation of causes to these disabling conditions and bring you through to the light of day.

If a few of you are keen to be Jesus' hands in the journey of others, let us know and we'll keep you informed regarding future trainings. Call Glenda or Andrew at 03 9264 7700.



Geelong Church hosted the DARP training this year as well as a community program



FamilyMinistries

Graeme Christian Director

Family Ministries is all about healthy relationships – in our homes and church family. We need to be known for genuine loving relationships.

The pressures of life are not decreasing. Technological challenges are not making it easier to develop healthy relationships. According to David Gillespie, researcher and author, many apps are designed to be addictive, to effectively rewire the brain in the formative years, with far reaching implications for a value system, belief system and life in general.

His book, Teen Brain, outlines many current challenges for family members and individuals.

So we've taken a Biblical perspective on relationships. As Family Ministries Director, I've worked with a number of churches and shared the 'Elijah message' – to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to the fathers.

We're actively promoting happy, healthy, Seventh-day Adventist homes in the Victorian Conference, recognising that not everyone lives in a family with Mum, Dad and two children. Everyone is important. Healthy relationships are vital.

We're working towards having churches that care appropriately for children. We need adults who know them and talk with them personally. And we need healthy Adventist homes.

The attack on Christian families and homes has not diminished in the last couple of years. In response, the

Conference team has provided resources to pastors and churches to help our churches to be even more effective in relational ministries. Training programs and events have been provided and many have made the most of the opportunities.

We've sponsored pastors to the National Christian Family Conference, run by the South Pacific Division.

We're growing awareness and relational skills of our pastors. Marriage Enrichment weekends for pastors, run by the Ministerial Association, are another way to grow our leaders in their relational skills.

We're thankful to have achieved what has been done.

Is there more to be done? Absolutely! We appreciate our pastors and church members who've worked to foster healthy relationships in our churches and families. Let's remember, loving relationships really do matter.



Chris & Marlene Foote presented a marriage enrichment seminar in 2018



RUOK ?

Mid September, our Edinburgh School Community put the spotlight on the importance of asking the question, RUOK?

Leon Jackman, who suffered depression, attended the College, and his sister Kelly Kinghorn wanted to increase awareness through The Blue Tree Project. Beginning in WA, this project encourages people to paint a tree in memory of a loved one who lost their life to depression, or has battled the illness. It aims to start the difficult conversations and encourage suffers to speak up when battling mental health concerns.

Thanks to Kelly's concern for others, the community came together to paint a tree on the school campus.

"We want this to be a visual reminder for our school family to check in on their loved ones and people in our communities, especially the young people, to know that we care about them and their mental health." – Kelly Kinghorn

Dont be afraid to ask... RUOK?



Kelly wants people to ask the question

Church News

Melbourne City Church Rejoices

Mid September, new members were welcomed into the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Andy, Adam, Cameron, and Karina were baptised and Maxine joined by profession of faith. The baptism was held at North Fitzroy Church and it was wonderful to see the church packed with so many friends and family members. For many it was their first time in a church and their first time witnessing a baptism and hearing the testimonies of these five individuals.

Adam: "Throughout my life, God has done so much for me, brought me through so much... it's time to give back, to submit my life to Him. Distracted from God and His will while living in Adelaide, I was unable to have communion with Him and wasn't anchored enough to remember helpful scripture. But I was guided by the verse, "He leads me beside still waters." So now I wish to lift up the name of Jesus Christ more than ever, to follow in the footsteps of Jesus for the rest of my days. I am therefore making a commitment to Jesus, to show Satan that he is a defeated foe. I wish to die to self so that I can live for Christ and give God all the glory."

Adam is determined to represent Jesus to the world, a light that cannot go out.

Andy: "The first time I truly felt God's presence in my life was about five years ago. Michal [my wife, then girlfriend] was suffering a relentless and debilitating skin condition. I felt so helpless, and all I could do was to be there by her side, re-assuring her of my unconditional love, watching her become more depressed and isolated. I remember so clearly needing help and guidance while showering one day. So in that moment I started praying, asking God to be with me as I supported Michal, for Him to be

with her, so she can get through this difficult time. As I prayed my guard dropped and I began asking, "Why? Why? Why?" Tears followed. Then the yelling out for help - louder and louder. I begged to be given her suffering, I love her so much. All the hurt, love and frustration were flowing out of me when suddenly I felt a presence within me reassuring me that I was able to do this and that I wasn't alone anymore.

"My raw honest emotion opened a way to truly start building a relationship with God and I'm so grateful for this experience and thankful God enabled me to continue to help Michal. We have grown so much because of it, and since that day I have not felt alone. I have faith that God will guide me through this life and will make up for my deficiencies."

What Andy once thought was blind faith, he now knows is quiet confidence that Someone is with him even through the worst life throws at him.

Cameron: "Three years ago I was travelling and found myself at a B&B in Scotland, with a newlywed couple named Jen and Joseph. We were all there for a number of days and on the Friday, I was chatting with Jen about my life, saying I wasn't sure where I was going next, and she just mentioned she was going to church the next day. "On a

Saturday?" I exclaimed. She invited me to attend and by the end of the service I wanted to be baptised, but the pastor said I needed to understand what I was getting myself into first. He prayed for me, saying he would contact a pastor in Melbourne. So God led me to Melbourne City Adventist Church where I've learnt so much about Him.

"My new mantra is Ephesians 4:1-6 "As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle, be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called. One lord, one faith, one baptism. One God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all."

Karina moved to Melbourne from Perth for Uni. She is from an Adventist home but had never fully committed to God and the church. However she decided it is time, and answered an appeal for baptism. Karina has faithfully attended the baptismal classes, joining the others in baptism on that spring Sabbath.

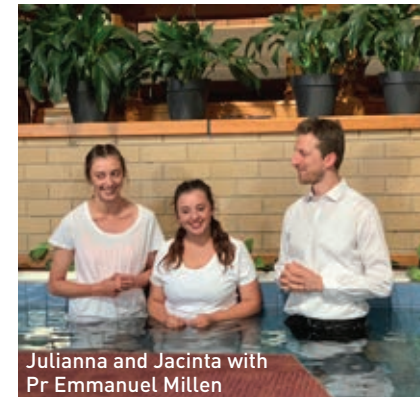
Maxine came to church with her boyfriend Shaun. She comes from a Christian home and had been baptised at Hillsong Church just a few months before but enjoyed coming to our church and the Bible study, soaking up the new truths eagerly. Maxine joined the church through a profession of faith and has invited several friends to our church, including Nyarai, who is preparing for baptism in November.

"Even when I've turned my back on God, He never, not once, turned His back on me. He has guided my life so well, being here is not a coincidence. He is such an amazing Father."

Jinha Kim



Maxine, Karina, Cameron, Andy and Adam, with Pastors Roy and Jinha Kim at either end



Julianna and Jacinta with Pr Emmanuel Millen



Elizabeth's smile says it all...

Celebrating in Berwick

The history of this Church Company is short, but it does testify that with God everything is possible.

A few members worshipping at Heritage College realised there was a need to start a new group in Narre Warren/ Berwick area. The group met at a Church member's house while prayerfully looking for a suitable location to rent.

A place was found and with the approval of the Victorian Conference, the group progressed to company status in October 22, 2018.

The company is now known as the Berwick Seventh day Adventist Church Company and now meets every Sabbath at 25 Gwendoline Drive, Berwick.

The company engages in weekly prayer meetings, prayer walks, letter boxing/ door knocking, adult Bible studies, youth Friday small-group, music ministry and social nights. There is also a fellowship lunch every first Sabbath of the month. Some members have also participated in the Victorian

Conference training programs to be better equipped for evangelism and to serve the different ministries.

Since May 2017, we have had the blessed privilege of witnessing seven baptisms: Jacinta and Julianna Smith in December 2018, Zack Gillis in May 2019, Elizabeth Meuwly in July 2019, Marina Seeboruth, Jireh & Ezreh Wright in Oct 2019. We also added a new member to the group by profession of faith: Betty Bryant.

The initial group was composed of fifteen members and two visitors. With God's assistance and the help of our overseer Pastor Craig Gillis, we now have a membership of 40 and an average of ten visitors attending the service every Saturday. The Lord has greatly blessed us and all our praise and gratitude goes to Him. This month we welcome Pastor Adrian and Family. They will help us to continue to grow and glorify God.

The Berwick Seventh day Adventist Company Mission Statement is: Know God, share His love, serve the community."

Irene Chee



Jireh, Ezreh and Marina, with Pr Craig Gillis and Irene Chee



Zack Gillis, baptised by his father Pr Craig Gillis



Betty joined church through profession of faith

Blessings in Wantirna

Wantirna Church has been blessed with a number of young people committing to Jesus in baptism this year.

Emma was the first; she and younger brother Chas studied with their Auntie Helena and then with Pr. Yong Shin Chee (Yoshi).

"I was baptised early June 2019," says Emma, "but before then I felt as if I was really struggling to connect with God.

" I would put so much effort into finding little pathways to connect and became exhausted because it was as if nothing would work. What I didn't realise is that I was trying to do it on my own. It wasn't until I truly sat back and let Him take control of my life that I understood I couldn't do it by myself.

"That led me to make the commitment of being baptised and it has been the best decisions of my life."

Young **Aaron** was next, having seen his two older brothers baptised in previous years. Always energetic and always curious, Aaron studied with Pr. Sylvia and had been wanting to commit to Jesus publicly for awhile.

He's shown maturity well beyond his years with his baptismal testimony, and he sums it up with these two lines – "Looking forward to going home with Jesus. In my life I know that if I fall God will be there to catch me."

Chas was baptised the following week in an entirely different setting. While his sister Emma opted (like everyone else) to be baptised at church, Chas chose the Yarra River in Warburton, in June no less!

He wanted his commitment to

reflect who he was – outgoing and adventurous, and Pr. Yoshi gladly obliged (albeit with a dry suit).

Most importantly, Chas clearly felt the Spirit leading, and he wanted to make a public commitment to tell the world of his allegiance to Jesus.

A fourth baptism happened in October. **Liv** had been studying with Pr. Sylvia and shared a powerful testimony when she made her public declaration to Jesus.

"Deciding to be baptised was rather a long decision to make, but I knew it was right. Pathfinder camporee 2019 was a major turning point. For those who went, you know what I'm talking about, others that don't, camporee was basically a five day weekend, worshipping God with various activities and events. It was what really shaped my decision for baptism.

"On the last night of camporee, we were saying goodbye to each other, when fireworks randomly burst from the right of us. The band started playing Christian music, while the pastor was praying over us. Then the pathfinder coordinators handed out commitment forms, asking what we wanted to do after we left camporee: Bible studies; be more involved in church; or get baptised.

"Throughout the whole camp, I had felt God's connection with me and with the form in hand, I felt that God was wanting me to tick all the boxes, so I did. Coming home, from somewhere



like this, the vibe usually fades away and I go back to my day to day life. But this time it was different. The connection and enjoyment remained. And so I started Bible studies, which has been an awesome time, and I highly recommend it.

"Proverbs 31:25 says, "She is clothed with dignity and she laughs without fear of the future." This verse connects with me because as one to experience anxiety, it just helps me to know that I don't need to be in fear or scared, because I'm in God's hands.

"This journey is for the rest of my life."

Yong Shin (Yoshi) Chee



Emma has learnt to sit back and let God take control



Expect the Unexpected!

When we read the book of Acts and witness the powerful miracles and testimonies that took place we wonder if Jesus is going to do it again today.

While planting a church in Bundoora and for La Trobe University we should expect the same power! And when we see God intervene it amazes and thrills our hearts.

Boa Pouv was the first fruits of our campus ministry in La Trobe Uni. Our club - Advent Health - was just freshly registered as a student club at La Trobe Bundoora campus in 2018. Boa was the first person I met at the Orientation Week student table. I remember we just opened with prayer and he came straight to the table and enquired of us. Thanks to the *Mission to the Cities* fund, we had purchased some sharing material and he took one of the magazines at our club table and in his own reading discovered about Sabbath and other truths of the Bible.

Boa was baptised in July 2019, and is an active member of our congregation and president of our student club, leading people to Jesus at La Trobe University.

A lady who came to church sat next to Vikram. After the sermon, she looked at him and said, "I left the church many years ago, I want to come back to God and would like to have Bible study. Do you know who I can ask?" We tried to calm ourselves and with an excited heart smiled and said, "You have just asked the right person." Leonora was baptised in March 2019. She is now helping lead the prayer ministry in our church and actively involved with personal Bible studies leading people

to Jesus.

We spoke to our church treasurer about using some funds to purchase more Bible study guides. We went by faith and ordered 30 sets. It was a big parcel when it arrived. We wondered if it was too many.

I still remember my husband and I opening the parcel. We knelt down and prayed "Lord, please use all the materials for Your glory and help us to use them wisely."

The following Sabbath, Vikram was preaching about Biblical values and what lessons we can learn from the New Testament that makes a church a centre of influence in the community. It was a sermon more geared for members but at the end of the sermon God spoke to him to make an appeal for people who want to start personal Bible studies. Not quite sure about how it related to the sermon but following the Holy Spirit's promoting, Vikram made an appeal and five people who are not Adventist stood up for personal Bible study and three members stood for discipleship Bible studies.

While we stood with these eight people around us after the sermon, I looked at Vikram and thought "What is going on here? Has the God of the New Testament done it again to impress people's hearts to follow Him? Yes He has!" Some church members were willing to follow up with Bible studies with those who responded. I realized that for the 30 sets of Bible lesson guides not many are now left.

In God's work greater faith is needed to depend on the God of the impossible. Let's trust that God is in control and will faithfully reap a harvest when we put our hands in His.

Leah Panchal



Leonora came back to God and was baptised a few months ago



Boa is the first to respond to God's call as a result of campus ministry at La Trobe Uni

Joy in Werribee

Five people from Werribee Karen Seventh-day Adventist church led by 92 year-old Kee KU Pu, were baptised at Bendigo Seventh-day Adventist Church on October 5, 2019.

Four people were also received by profession of faith. The most outstanding person was Kee Ku Pu, the 92 year-old grandpa.

He was a Church of England member since he was a young man.

Nan Myat Kyaw, pastor of Werribee Karen Seventh-day Adventist Church visited and prayed with him often.

When she visited him last month, in September, he told her that he wanted to be baptised by her.

Nan Explained to him that her church was holding an evangelistic meeting on September 22-28, inviting four senior pastors from Myanmar. One of them could baptise him. She asked him whether he could do that. He said, "It was alright."

"By the way," Nan asked, "why do you want to get baptised with me?"

Straight away he said," I want to be baptised to the TRUE CHURCH by immersion because the Bible says so."

Mervin Myat Kyaw



92 yo Kee KU Pu wanteede to be baptised because the Bible said so



Revelation Today also influenced our Karen community.

Pa Lai is a lady of age 51 who came from Buddhist background. She arrived in Australia nearly a year ago. She is a quiet lady, but when I shared with her about "Death" and "The Sabbath" from Pr John Bradshaw, she was so impressed. These messages were totally new for her and she keep on asking questions. Even though she couldn't understand English, she attended the meetings twice with me.

When Pr John Bradshaw presented about the Baptism and made an appeal, she was touched and accepted Jesus as her personal Saviour. Then, she happily got baptised on the 26th of May 2019, with five others. Praise the Lord!

Tarhsogaymoo, aged 25 comes from a Baptist Background. His whole family accepted the true Sabbath back in 2015 and Pr Saw Keh from Myanmar

conducted profession of faith for them, at our church evangelistic meeting. But this young man wanted to know more about the truth and he attended our Revelation Today program at Gilson College with me. When Pastor John Bradshaw gave Bible study class, he also attended the class and requested to be rebaptised with Pr Bradshaw.

He was really happy when he was permitted and was rebaptised with the second group of candidates on the 1st of June, 2019.

The messages of Pr John Bradshaw is still burning in their hearts and they continued sharing with their faith to their families and friends.

Their lives were totally changed. We thank God for the Revelation Today program presented by Pr John Bradshaw.

Nan Myat Kyaw

Ferntree Gully Tastes Eternity!

On July 20th, Sharon Wellesly was baptised by church pastor Paul Kotanko after studies that originally began with Pastor Trevor Rowe.

Sharon had a long association with The Church of God over many years. However, at her baptism she stated, "I feel that I was led to the Ferntree Gully Church. When I came to my first Worship Service, I felt as if it was my spiritual home. It is such an honour for me to be baptised today among my church family. It feels like a taste of eternity."

After her baptism, Sharon was welcomed into church membership by Dianne Wegener Church Clerk and Sam Assenso Head Elder.

Elayne Stanford



Bee Prayerful

What answers to prayer have you had in your life today? This week? This month?

We often like to point back to what God has done for us many years back or what he is going to do for us in the future, but often forget to store up the precious answers He gives us both, big and small, in our present.

My wife and I have recently moved to Ballarat where God has called us to begin our ministry. As an intern eager to learn, I have been examining the practices of other prominent ministers. Pastor Pavel Goia's emphasis on prayer has deeply inspired me, and I have committed to setting aside a significant amount of time daily for prayer.

And I have seen a number of incredible answers to prayer.

A few years back, my grandfather, who was a professional apiarist, gave me a couple of bee hives and I have since taken up bee keeping as a hobby. When we moved to Ballarat in December we were hoping the bees would collect a bit more honey during the summer months, but they did not do well here. In fact, between late December to the end of February I lost the honey I had in the hives when I moved them, as well as almost half of the bee population in each hive. I realised my bees were really struggling.



One of my favourite aspects of ministry is visitations, and I like to take a jar of our honey to each family I visit. As, within a few months, I began to run out of honey, I decided to bring my honey situation to God and ask Him to give me more honey to use for ministry.

Two days after my prayer I got a call from one of the members at Ballarat who suggested that I move my bees to a property about 45 minutes away from where I live.

"Ok," I thought, "it can't hurt... my bees can't goo much worse than they have done so far."

I remember thinking to myself "maybe God is answering my prayer for more honey." But it was now March and Autumn had begun, which in Ballarat is like Winter. Bees collect most of their honey in Spring when there are many flowers. Honey also gets gathered during the Summer, but production usually goes way down in Autumn especially in Victoria.

So far I had lost honey and bees in Summer, and I am ashamed to say my faith relating to this prayer was small.

I moved my two hives and prayed for the best. When I went to check on them, about a month later, I was truly amazed. Both hives were completely packed full of honey! I had never seen them so full before. In fact, I collected around 125kg of honey in less than a month, which is more than they would normally produce in an entire year.

Truly God is faithful and cares about even the trivial things in our lives.

In 1 Jn 5:14 it tells us that if we ask anything according to His will He hears us... Let's never forget to ask, and always remember His amazing answers.

Marius Jigau



60th Anniversary

October saw the little Sanctuary, nestled on the side of a hill overlooking the Upper Ferntree Gully township, celebrated the 60th anniversary of it's inception.

Some 75 present and former members gathered together to give praise and thanks to our Heavenly Father who has led us down through the years.

The lesson was conducted by former member Pr. Ian Howie, church Pastor Paul Kotanko preached the sermon and at the close of the Divine Service, everyone adjourned to the Hall for a delicious lunch provided by Dianne Wegener and her helpers.

In the afternoon, a time of reminiscing, followed by a magical digital presentation created by Lorraine Wegener showing photos relating to members and events brought smiles to many faces.

We thank the Lord for the prayerful vision, unstinting monetary donations, physical labour and dedication of members and friends who have been associated with this church since its beginning..

We pay homage to the dedicated pioneers whose foresight has given us this sanctuary where we can meet to praise and worship with our Unseen Guest each Sabbath.

May it ever continue to be a 'light on the hill'!

Elayne Stanford

IntraVic | 25

How Effective is my Sabbath School?

Start by asking yourself a few questions...

- Do I feel comfortable inviting a friend to my Sabbath School class? When was the last time?
 - Am I eager to share insights I gained through my study of God's word during the lesson discussion.
 - Do I strongly identify with the worldwide church, and therefore help my brothers and sisters with generous mission offerings?
 - Does my class have energetic engagement with the community, including my friends?
 - Do I ever connect with others in my class outside class time?
- Reflecting on your answers, perhaps

God is touching an area He wants to improve. Here's some suggestions...

Take a few minutes at the beginning of class time and ask if anyone has a friend with a need for prayer, practical help or even a material need. Then be part of the answer. Make your Sabbath School one of Total Member Involvement.

Start connecting outside class time with each other by holding a quarterly potluck at one of your homes.

Watch mission videos at Mission 360 (<https://m360.tv>) and listen with your heart, or children! It's a highlight of our kid's week and it opens our hearts to see others as precious as Jesus does.

Get children to share the mission news. Teach them how to do it well with props and enthusiasm.

If you are teaching, study ahead of time, so you can think through the eyes of your class. Ring them up during the week and suggest they share an aspect of the lesson they connect with. Baby steps for some lead to freer participation.

Andrew and Keryn Jasper



To view the Sabbath School Strategic Plan or for other resources, go to Vic.adventist.org.au/Sabbath-School

Adventist Book Centre News

The ABC has some great new gifts in time for Christmas. So why not call in and see what is available.

Have you started following us on Facebook @vicabc7?

You can also order online at our new look webstore - go to vic.adventist.org.au and you will find us in the Services tab.

This new range of Bibles are specifically designed for certain demographics.

The Youth Bible has tools for studying the Bible relevant to young people. It contains memory challenges and more than 350 articles which address relevant issues to young people.

The Pathfinder Bible is jam packed with age specific biblical tools, resources and curiosities as well as useful Pathfinder resources. And the Adventurer Bible is similarly laid out, targeting the younger demographic.

Beautifully presented, they come in a range of colours.



The Collegiate Lesson has undergone a transformation and now has a new look. The Sabbath School department also has a weekly discussion of the Collegiate and you can see that on VictorianAdventists Facebook on wednesday evenings.

ADRA COMMUNITY



Rebecca with Australian Women's Business Association and Afri-Aus Care reps and the High Commissioner for Nigeria



New ADRA Community Cafe at Soul Food Kitchen in Pakenham



Network meeting with Selba Luka (Afri-Aus Care), MP Bruce Atkinson and Rebecca Auriant (ADRA)



Mauricio Gonzales (Vic Police, Baccus Marsh) and John Smilek (ADRA Liason)



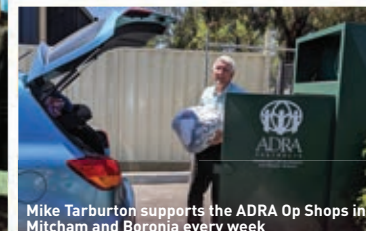
South-East Community Leaders Youth Engagement at Fountain Gate was featured on A Current Affair <https://bit.ly/2BPQ45D>



Victorian Police, Westfield Centre Management, with ADRA



City outreaches to support people in need.



Mike Tarburton supports the ADRA Op Shops in Mitcham and Boronia every week



ADRA Bus at Fountain Gate with Community Leaders



The new Happy Hands program at the ADRA Community Centre - Redwood/Warbuton



Wangaratta engaged ADRA to help with a community soup kitchen. The church hosts a Bible study before the meal and some attendees chose to participate in both and have continued to do so.



Employment and Training for students with disabilities



ADRA Community Pantry at Rowville - Lysterfield



ADRA Appeal with Carrum Downs Samoan SDA Church



Thank You

for supporting the 2019 ADRA Appeal.

Internationally you have helped:

- Thousands of people in Asia, Africa & the South Pacific, with basic human rights - clean water, adequate food & education.
- Communities overcome avoidable, non-communicable diseases such as diabetes.
- Vulnerable/marginalised societal groups.
- Social issues in development, such as domestic violence, rehabilitation for inmates, reproductive health and education.

In Victoria you have helped:

- Provide employment and training in horticulture and warehousing for 17 students with intellectual disabilities
- Support hundreds of people every week with food relief.
- The police and other agencies to support youth at risk through prison visitation, court support, counselling & case management.

JUSTICE
COMPASSION
LOVE

Micah 6:8 is at the heart of what we do. Based on our biblical understanding of development, we have been called to act justly and to love compassion. Our work is a direct manifestation of this command and your support enables this to happen.

"Injustice is not overwhelming and it is not immovable..."

Nathan Brown

WORDSEARCH

L A W T N I B Y M E R C Y S
E T E R N A L U B D A E K T
H N E I G H B O R U M X H R
N J E R U S A L E M L P E E
M L K P R I E S T P S E A N
S R I R B E A T E R O R R G
T S I F Q D V R E I B T T T
R A W J E E R B I O I L L H
I M T E S T B J E R I C C O
P A W S B O V U E Q V I I E
P R M U R V G H I T G F F T
E I I S S M N D G B S T T Y
D T N Z N I O E C Q O V V V
Q A D A R Y B A P L E I I G
Y N B S O U L D C L P L L V

JESUS
EXPERT
LEVITE
LAW
MERCY
JERUSALEM
STRIPPED
LIFE
INHERIT
JERICHO
PRIEST
HEART
ROBBERS
SOUL
LOVE
BEAT
PITY
SAMARITAN
MIND
STRENGTH

CLOTHES
ETERNAL
TEST
DEAD

Parable of the Good Samaritan

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind"; and, "Love your neighbor as yourself." Luke 10:27

Each number represents a letter of the alphabet. Substitute the correct letter for the numbers to reveal the coded words.



"Love your neighbor as yourself."
Luke 10:27

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
J	T	M	Q	D	X	I	Y	K	Z	A	L	U	N	P	W	O	H	V	C	E	R	F	S	G	B

- 24-11-3-11-22-7-2-11-14 _____
- 26-21-11-2 _____
- 22-17-26-26-21-22-24 _____
- 12-21-19-7-2-21 _____
- 24-2-22-7-15-15-21-5 _____
- 15-22-7-21-24-2 _____
- 14-21-7-25-18-26-17-22 _____
- 1-21-22-7-20-18-17 _____

LEVITE SAMARITAN	PRIEST JERICHO	STRIPPED BEAT	ROBBERS NEIGHBOR
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LOVE YOUR
NEIGHBOR
AS YOURSELF
LUKE 10:27

If you haven't met your neighbours already, try to spend some time talking to them and getting to know them. You could even take them a treat you made! Then, as you get to know your neighbours you can pray for them specifically in your family worship.

LITTLE MICHAEL

In March 1992, Jeff and Kristi Leeland of Seattle, Washington found out that their baby boy Michael had cancer and needed a bone marrow transplant. Little Michael's older sister Amy was a perfect match, but the cost of the operation was \$200,000 and Michael needed to have the transplant done within 90 days to live. To make things worse, Jeff's insurance at the junior high where he taught, did not cover the procedure.

Fellow teacher Joe Kennedy told his class about Mr Leeland's situation. Dameon, a seventh grade boy who walked with a limp and struggled in special education classes, heard about little Michael and visited the Leeland home. "Mr Leeland, don't make a big deal out of this. if your baby's in trouble, I want to help out." Dameon, the kid that other kids teased, reached out his hand and stuffed twelve five-dollar bills into Jeff's hand. It was Dameon's life savings.

Word got out about "Dameon's gift." Some kids organized a walk-a-thon. Others contacted a local newspaper. Others held a car wash. Soon, the kids' wave of compassion poured out across Seattle. By late May, area TV stations picked up the story. The response from the news stories was overwhelming. Only four weeks after Dameon's gift of \$60, the Michael Leeland Fund totaled over \$220,000.

Michael got the marrow transplant. He lived. Dameon, the boy who gave sacrificially so another could live, accepted Jesus Christ as his Savior after becoming close with Michael's family. What can you do today that will show love to your neighbour?

For family worship read the story in Luke 10:26-37 and discuss as a family.

Brainstorm on sticky notes different ways that your family can love their neighbours. You can add to it at different times when you think of more ways. See how many of these things you can do before the end of the year.

YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

Julie Catton
Director of Children's Ministries



03 9264 7777

ADVENTURER FAMILY RALLY DAY

GLOW



On Sabbath, the 26th of October, Adventurers from around Victoria along with their families learnt what it meant to 'Glow with God.' We had a fantastic turnout with over 400 people in attendance!

We started the morning with many excited Adventurers singing awesome songs led by an amazing group of teenagers from Lilydale. We then were blessed by an inspiring message from Gerrard Price teaching us that God is our light, God gives us light and God calls us to be the light. He challenged us all to Glow for Jesus and let our lights shine so that everyone could see it!

We then broke into groups and enjoyed lots of different activities!! We heard stories, acted out stories, completed crafts, ran around playing games and put our hands in boxes to guess what foods were inside. This was a definite favourite – although somewhat gross with the banana peels!

We are so grateful to all the volunteers who went above and beyond to make the day a success!! It was a definite highlight for the Adventurers and we look forward to doing it again next year!



CROSS CULTURE

2019 Youth Rally

In the dimly lit room, something buzzed in the air. If one was asked to do so, there was a high chance that it couldn't be described in a single word. It was familiar, yet strange – a mix of anticipation, satisfaction, determination, and desperation. The words from the stage reverberated around the room, bouncing against the walls until they landed into the hearts and minds of the people that filled it. When they did so, one couldn't help but smile at the transformation of expression. Confusion became understanding, understanding became realisation, and realisation became awe. When the final words were spoken and the music began, such feelings only amplified the worship, creating an energy strong enough to remove any trace of negativity. In the dimly lit room, the presence of God shone bright... END SCENE! That, ladies and gentlemen, was how I perceived the 2019 Youth Rally held at Nu nawading Christian College. Needless to say, it left me wanting more. Each speaker took the theme of Cross Culture and moulded it in their own unique way, creating presentations that were engaging and empowering, but also candid and confronting. All were challenged to rethink our approach to church and what we deem as Christian behaviour – a timely message even if it is a hard pill to swallow. Like its predecessors, this rally was full of love, enthusiasm, and a burning desire to dare to be different. It has given me something to strive for, and I hope that by the next time it rolls around, we all have taken a step out of our comfort zones in the name of Jesus Christ."

- Naomi Janmaat

"The cross-culture youth rally was an experience unlike any other. I went in excited as usual because youth rallies for me are like a gas station, I get to refill and reignite the fire and try my best to keep that fire burning despite whatever is happening in my life. This year was no different, the topic of cross-culture really opened my eyes to the things that I am not always necessarily aware of, and reminded me that the goal for us as individuals and as the church is to adopt the cross culture. Not only did the speakers convey this in a powerful way they also provided examples of how to practically do this which I really enjoyed. I feel like many times as a church we discuss and discuss but we don't know how to practice what we preach so I appreciated the workshops where they gave step by step examples of what I could do to adopt the cross culture in my own life."

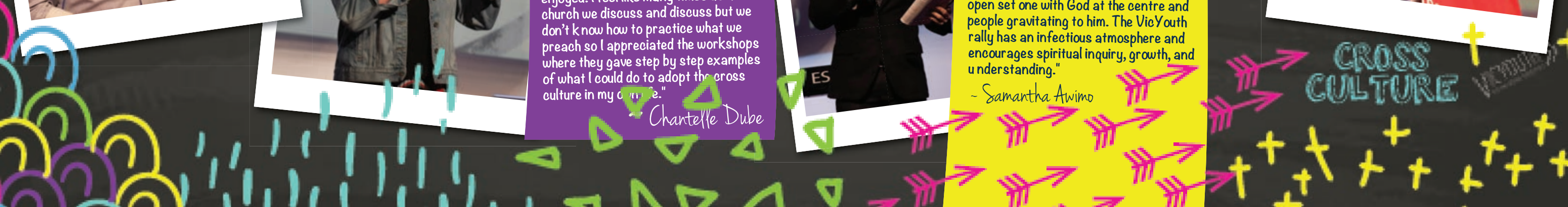
- Chantelle Dube

"Dim cocoa tinted lights, warm friendly chatter and an horderves table that was plated to perfection. That was my first impression, a chilled laid backspace and for a first-timer, youth rallies weren't looking so bad. After we all fun nelled into the chapel the conversations started. Both speakers talked about church conduct, traditions and social norms that wouldn't be discussed in other settings. The topic of compulsory church membership and how to be inclusive of all demographics within our church community was opened and we all get to express our opinions. After trying out the youth rally for the Friday night I came to the Saturday church the next day. There were more people, amazing singers and a passionate preacher that spoke to how we can live out cross culture within our communities. He displayed an open set one with God at the centre and people gravitating to him. The VicYouth rally has an infectious atmosphere and encourages spiritual inquiry, growth, and understanding."

- Samantha Awimo

"The youth rally challenged me to think of what Cross culture looks like with my church members. Specifically, the elderly at my church. There's an elderly guy at my church whose wife died years ago. He is often one of the ushers at the door, with a huge smile, and is always the first person to greet me. After Joel's talk I wondered if Tom is lonely sometimes and I realised that other than saying "hi", I've never made an effort to have a conversation with Tom. I've been at my church for 15 years. I decided I'm going to look for Tom on Sabbath, and sit with him during lunch, rather than my usual crew. I want to get to know him and learn about his life because people want to know that they matter. It doesn't have to be every Sabbath, but I will make an effort to reach out more to the elderly at my church, and Tom is the one I want to begin with."

- Lorraine Ngwenya



Called to be... A TEACHER?

It's more than learning to read or draw or count.
Teaching is a call to instil confidence,
foster creativity and shape the future.
Where could your degree take you?

86.2% OF AVONDALE TEACHER EDUCATION GRADUATES
WERE EMPLOYED WITHIN FOUR MONTHS OF
COMPLETING THEIR DEGREE*

You can make a difference in the world,
one classroom at a time.

UNDERGRADUATE DEGREES

- I Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Teaching (Birth – 12 Years)
- I Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Teaching (Primary)
- I Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Teaching (Secondary)
- I Bachelor of Science/Bachelor of Teaching

POSTGRADUATE DEGREES

- I Master of Teaching (Primary)
- I Master of Teaching (Secondary)

We also offer the following postgraduate degrees for
current teachers:

- I Master of Education
- I Master of Philosophy
- I Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

*Based on the 2017-2018 Graduate Outcomes Survey (GOS) *

Called to be... AT AVONDALE

IF YOU COULD PICK AN AGE

By Peter Beamish Avondale University College

If you could pick an age to return to in life, what age would you pick? I sit here realising that my 60th birthday is not that far away. While I appreciate the experiences, knowledge and wisdom that comes with age, my back hurts when I get out of bed in the morning and my muscles take a long time to recover after strenuous exercise. Life was so much easier when I was younger, so if I could return to any age, which one would I pick?

family breakdown to name just a few. So perhaps it's no surprise children are anxious." (NAB Survey of Independent Schools 2017, p.1)

It is strange that in the age of the internet, where people can interact easily through social media, loneliness is a problem.

Different ages have various advantages but I don't think that I would pick returning to being a teenager or in my early twenties. I think I would pick late twenties or early thirties. By then, your brain is fully developed, you have gained some professional competence, you are hopefully emotionally secure with strong relationships and your body has not started the steep decline.

'But why not a teenager?' I hear you ask? Sure, my life was great when I was a teenager back in the 70s but would I really want to be a teenager today? Dr Adrian Tomin, in a report funded by the Australian Government, found that the wellbeing of young people declined from the age of 12 to 16 before bouncing back a little by the time they are 19. For many young people these teenage years can be tough and there are many factors that contribute to this decline in wellbeing. The NAB 2017 Survey of Independent Schools found that anxiety was a major issue for many students and detracted from their wellbeing:

"Almost daily, there are reports in the media highlighting the growing challenges facing our children arising from globalisation, the future of work, housing affordability and cost of living pressures, terrorism, climate change, global economic uncertainty, declining levels of literacy and numeracy relative to some countries, cyberbullying and

The 2019 Young Australian Loneliness Survey found that a significant proportion of young people reported problematic levels of loneliness. Jean Twenge, in her 2018 book iGen has proposed that social media is contributing to the problem. Her data shows that since smart phones were first introduced there has been an increase in interactions but a reduction in quality human connections. This reduction in quality of connection has led to increased levels of loneliness in young people. Surely, we can do something to help. As Christians, we are charged with the responsibility to look after "the least of these". Many of our ideas of service are wrapped up in overseas trips or StormCo trips within Australia. While these are good activities they tend to be one-off events. How do we help out in our home town or city on an ongoing basis? We all need to do our bit and be intentional about it. For example, at Avondale we prepare future teachers to go into schools, minister to students and make a difference in their lives. The philosophy that underpins our teaching courses is that we aim to facilitate high levels of wellbeing in Avondale students and set them up so that they can then impact the wellbeing of others.

We know that community and connecting to others contribute to our wellbeing. At Avondale, students join a campus community and participate in

a number of activities that help them feel like they belong. You can feel the energy and friendship at the weekly Pulse meeting where students and staff have lunch together. This feeling is also very present during outdoor camping activities. A few weeks ago, I organised a canyoning camp where 20 Avondale students journeyed down Tiger Snake Canyon in the Blue Mountains.

Spending time in the outdoors feels like you are walking through God's back garden.

We camped in a remote area with no mobile phone coverage. Phones were put aside as our group shared stories around the camp fire. The journey through the canyon was an adventure and people had to face their fears as they abseiled into the narrow confines of the canyon. There was cheering as group members overcame personal challenges and moved ahead with the group. Even a wade through waist deep freezing water could not dampen the spirits of the group that supported each other throughout the day. What a great feeling to sit around the camp fire that night and feel the community closeness that comes from shared adventure. I came home never feeling better.

Life for many people today can be hard, but there is help at hand. Teachers can make a difference in the lives of students. People have the opportunity to increase their personal wellbeing while at Avondale and then go into schools as teachers with the knowledge and ability to impact the wellbeing of their students. This is intentional and is ministry in action. With the right sort of help teenagers can increase their levels of wellbeing and be set on a course to flourish in life.



Pavilions Project Update

Construction of the Pavilions Retirement Village continues to progress rapidly with all three buildings of Stage 1 significantly underway.

Over 1000 truckloads of excavated spoil were removed as part of the basement car parking construction. Piling, footing pours and in-ground plumbing and services have all been completed.

Construction has also commenced on the vertical elements of the buildings superstructure. Formwork and reinforcement for Level 2 of Building 3 is already underway with Building 2 & 1 following closely behind.

“We currently have 100 construction workers on site and we are looking to increase that to 160 as we approach December,” says Marcel Van Vliet, Construction Project Manager. “It is important to maintain a good project momentum as we aim to finish on time and on budget. We are also committed to delivering the best project outcome for the Church and the future residents of Pavilions.”

Construction on site has attracted much interest from the neighbouring community and positive reactions from future residents. It is common to have excited future residents coming to view the construction site on a weekly basis.

It is important to remember the significant journey the Church has been on for Pavilions” says Conference Infrastructure Coordinator Galen Gan. “If we look back, the approval for Pavilions stretches back to the 2009 Constituency Meeting, but even before that, to deliberations held in the mid 90’s on what to do with the Campground site. It is such a blessing to see this special site developed and used for such a significant purpose.”

Despite all the ups and downs, the Lord has provided for the project in amazing ways. Please continue to pray for the



smooth delivery and success of this very complex, landmark project.

There are still well priced apartments for sale starting from \$685,000. For further information, please call Mary on 0455 616 337.



Executive Update

There’s a lot happening in the Victorian Conference. So let me share a couple of highlights.

Let’s talk church planting for a minute. In Victoria we have ten current Church Plants. Now you’re probably aware that Church Plants grow to become Church Companies, and then Organised Churches. Since mid 2018, we’ve seen eight church plants become companies, and an additional three have been organised as fully fledged churches. We praise God for His blessings.

At our recent Conference Committee, Pr Gillis, Conference Secretary, reported on 3rd quarter membership growth. The chart tells it’s own story – and it’s a good one!

It’s exam time for year 11 and year 12 students. Here’s a good news story! Last year at Nunawading Christian College 50% of VCE students scored in the top 15% of the state,

and 19% of ATARS were above 90 and 48% were above 85. Isn’t it excellent to know our schools provide excellent education as well as values and a belief system that really matters. Well done to our educators and students!

Please continue to pray for God’s leading in our churches, schools and aged care facilities.

Thanks so much!

Graeme Christian
Conference President



From Max Lucado’s And the Angels were Silent - Cont from Pg 5



It was on His heart.

He had shown His compassion for the forgotten, His contempt for the fake. Now He revealed His concern for our readiness, through the parables of the virgins, the talents and the sheep and goats.

His message, repeated again in His last sermon, is unmistakable and so relevant for today. He will return. No one knows when. Be ready.

Then Jesus discussed how. Love. Love for the least. The forgotten. The hurting. The hungry. The unattractive.

Well known as part of Jesus final hours, is the Passover feast we call the Lord’s Super. Max points out that Jesus was very much the one behind the planning. He selected the place. He acted as the host. “He took... He blessed... He gave...” He served - even to performing the menial tasks of a servant. And He told future generations to do the same.

Speaking of this, Max says “And you thought it was a ritual... an observance... a memorial to something done back then... It is so much more. It is a meal He has with you”(p128). Jesus fulfilled His role



Knowing it was His Last Week continued

as rabbi as he guided the disciples through the dinner. And His role as servant, by washing their feet. He fulfilled his role as Saviour, by granting forgiveness. He was in control then. And He still is in control now. And when He prayed for His disciples that night, He was praying for us today, too. Think of that, next time you ‘sit’ at the Lord’s table.

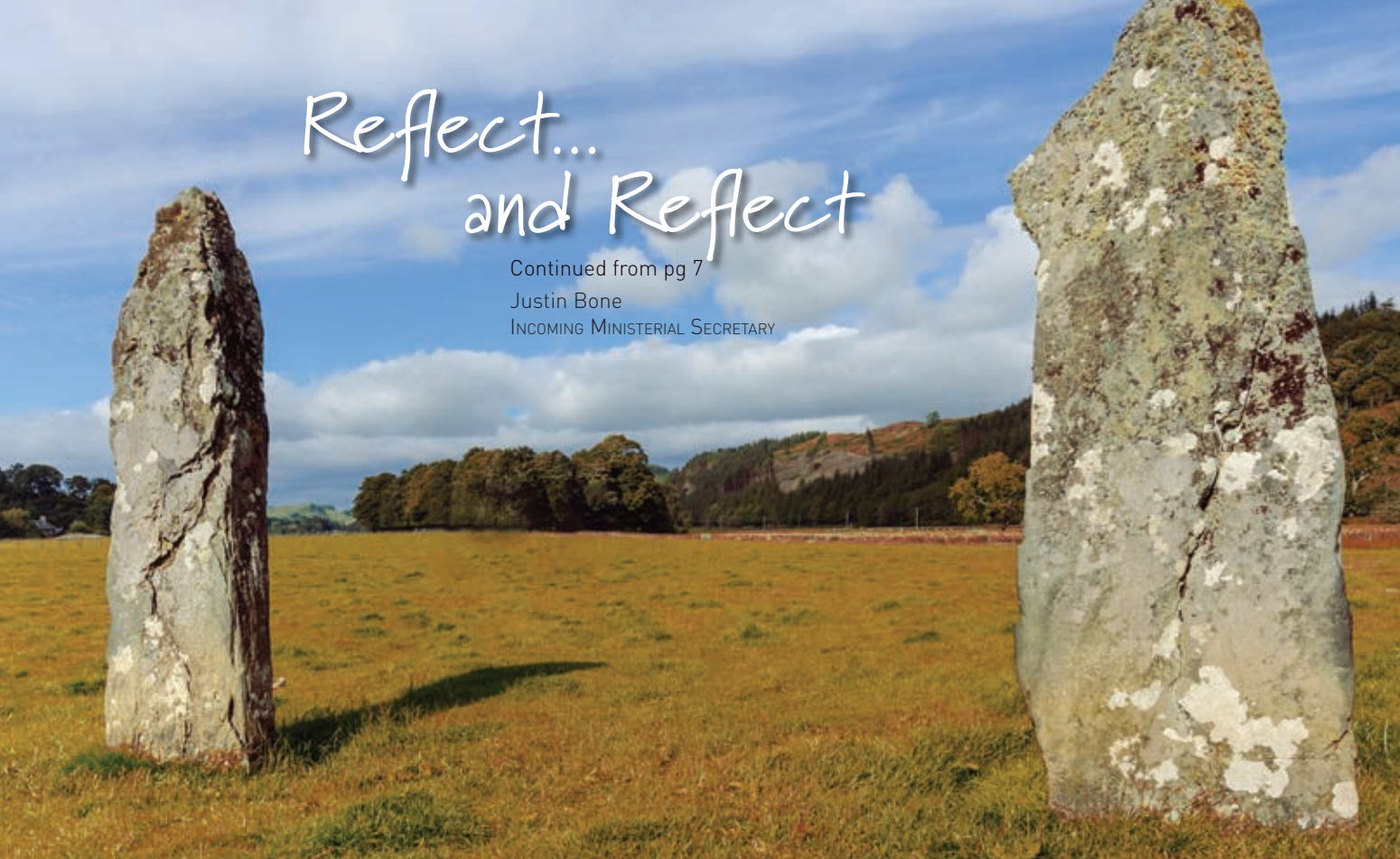
As Jesus and His followers left the upper room, Jesus was well aware the battle between God and Satan was intensifying. He knew that apparent defeat would come before victory. He knew He was about to be betrayed, not just by Judas, but by all His disciples.

What did He do? He chose prayer. He prayed for His followers, and He prayed for us. For you.

“His humanity begged to be delivered from what His divinity could see... Jesus, the man, peers into the dark pit and begs, “Cant there be another way?”” (pg 135). But God said “No.” And Jesus submitted. The battle was won. He would (and did) go to the cross. For you.

What will you do for Him, in these last days?





Reflect... and Reflect

Continued from pg 7
Justin Bone
INCOMING MINISTERIAL SECRETARY

I've seen young people excited for the water of baptism and ready to choose Jesus. I've seen older people who have had their lives changed by a new relationship with God who has come into their lives and brought a peace they hadn't expected. I've seen families new to Australia and Christianity unexpectedly find the joy of the grace that God offers and seen God speak to them through miraculous means to draw them into a loving community.

God has been with sick people and I've been asked to anoint some of them. I've seen the power of the Spirit work in people's lives to bring healing, or perhaps comfort. I've seen grieving families mourn over a loved one now sleeping, while still holding that promise that one day we will be together again.

God has been with our church ministers while they were deep in prayer for their people, some at the limits of what they can do for their churches. I've seen Conference personnel put in extraordinary hours without a word of complaint at God's call. I've seen new ministers come into

the Conference full of fire.

But I've also seen some leave ministry altogether, some after a long life of service and some far too soon, after being hurt by the spiritual battle. And again God moves to comfort.

“God is still moving
in our midst,
calling, equipping,
encouraging,
saving, edifying,
and loving. Long
may He do so!”

God has called Youth Pastoral Workers to serve the young people in our church. They have come together to be mentored and trained, young people filled with a passion for God.

Future leaders that God is moving in and raising up to lead the next

generation.

When I reflect on all that I have seen God do this year, there is a common thread - I have seen His movement through the movement of His people. He moves in their lives, using their hands and words, bringing grace and love.

So if you want to see God working in our church, look for His reflection in it's people.

I pray it is as clear to you as it is to me, that God is still moving in this church.

It's the reason we are here, because where God moves, we are compelled to follow. It's why our church began, and it's why I have hope for our future.

Because our God is a God of help. All we need to do is remember that.

But we forget too easily, so let me encourage you today to raise your own Ebenezer.

Reflect on where you have seen God move this year. Talk about it with your friends, Sabbath School class or in your small group, write it down, remember it - raise an Ebenezer.



ROAD to BETHLEHEM

December 9 – 12 2019

Bookings can be made by phone on 9264 7770 or
online at melbourne.roadtobethlehem.org

Mon-Fri 9am-5pm from Nov 25 – Dec 6

Men, women, and strong young people with a spirit of service, we need your help once again in both preparation and pack-up for our 24th presentation of Road to Bethlehem.

SET UP DATES: **All week from Sunday December 1** - Set Construction - Contact Nathan Hall 0488 793 207; **Friday Dec 6** - 9am – 5pm Contact Dan Carey 0416 308 791; **Sabbath Dec 7** - Gift Bag Packing 3pm at Edinburgh College ; **Sunday Dec 8** - 9am – 4pm Main Set-up (lunch provided)

BABIES NEEDED: If you have a baby newborn – 2 months old, or know of someone else who may be willing to have their baby involved, please call Carlie Williamson on 0403 846 823

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Thursday night Dec 12
Night Pack-up after RtB until finished

Friday Dec 13
Main Pack-up 9am – 4pm (lunch provided)

Sunday Dec 15
Final Pack-up 9am until finished (lunch provided)

For further information or to offer help please contact
Karen Horsley on 0427 426 582



NOTICES

Your Help Needed...
Does your church livestream or have a vimeo or youtube channel? Please email VictorianAdventistCommunications@Adventist.org.au for more information. We would like to share your stream or channel with others through our website.

CONFERENCE OFFICE CLOSURE

Please note that the Victorian Conference office and ABC will close for year end at 12.30pm on Tuesday 24 December 2019, and reopen on Thursday 2 January 2020.

We wish you a safe and happy time over the year end break. May you be aware of our Lord's many blessings.



“Ability alone, the choicest talents alone, cannot take the place of love”
Ellen White

Jesus in the

BigCamp

2020

April 9 - 13

@Elmore

Register at Vic.Adventist.org.au from late November 2019

Please note
family tents will
no longer be available due
to the closure of AUC Tent Services

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.