

INTRAVIC

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Welcome to all of our new pastors, interns and departmental leaders! We look forward to getting to know you throughout this year.





Editor's Note

Healthy New Year

I know, I know -- 2022 started weeks ago. We're so used to wishing people a happy new year – and rightly so. So why a Healthy New Year? I guess that's COVID obvious.

Right now I want to take a moment to reflect on those who've suffered this year already as a result of the dreaded disease.

- Summer Campers and staff
- GAP Camp was shut down mid-stream
- Junior and Teen Camps were cancelled – because of COVID
- So many have missed out on the blessing Summer Camps bring – but the decision was made to safeguard the health and well-being of everyone involved.
- So much work was done by our team – just to have the camps cancelled.
- Families who couldn't be together – because of COVID. Having to isolate at Christmas time isn't what we usually do in Australia! Do you know what I mean? Yes, it affected us. We had family members with COVID through the festive season.
- Then there are those who've been very sick – across the age groups. We had a 3 year old grandson and our daughter in hospital (thankfully, they're OK now) and I know there've been many more.
- And the individuals who've wasted hours queuing for a COVID test, or trying to find somewhere to buy a rapid test – I'm sure many will join me in saying, "Been there, done that."
- And there are so many with changed working arrangements – or no work at all.

Last year I heard people asking others if they knew anyone who'd had COVID 19. Now the word seems to be that it'll affect everyone sooner or later. I hear stories of people running COVID parties – where they specifically invite someone with COVID along so they can pass on the virus. Can you believe it? Others are staying home so they won't be exposed.

So our world has changed. We don't know the fine detail of what this year will bring, but one thing is sure. We have evidence that God has led us in the past. We believe He's with us now, even though we so often see through a glass darkly. So, if we can be sure God's been with us in our yesterdays whether they were pleasant or really tough (and we can), and that He's with us now, we can be sure that as we put our hand in His and ask for His guidance, the wonderful God and Saviour we serve will lead us each step of the way – no matter what comes our way this year.

We're praying that God will protect His people, whatever their circumstances, through these difficult times. We're praying that He will give the wisdom to make wise decisions, the courage to face whatever the challenges may be, the strength to carry on and a sense of His presence and guiding hand. Whatever your circumstances, won't you join me in that prayer.

Graeme Hunter

SUMMER CAMP

More Than Survivors

When you think of the word ‘survivor’ what kind of person comes to mind? Typically, we imagine someone like Bear Grylls, Aron Ralston, or Hugh Glass. These people are portrayed as rough, and tough, using sheer determination and grit to get through their situation. We’ve all seen the TV show, we know what being a survivor is about. It’s about being stronger and smarter than the next person. Using strength and brains to overcome, to survive.

Today, I want to introduce to you a survivor – this person is underrated, unheard of and unlikely. This person doesn’t fit the typical characteristics of a survivor, in fact they are more than just a survivor but maybe they can’t see it yet.

Are you ready to meet one of this year’s survivor contestants? Congratulations! It’s you.

You may not have survived a bear attack or had to cut your arm off to live, but you are a survivor of your own circumstances. Contrary to popular opinion, survival is not just for the fittest. Survival is for the weak, survival is for the heartbroken, survival is for those who have nothing left. Survival is for everyday people, like you and me.

There’s one thing that we have in common, and it’s not just the fact that we have survived the COVID-19 pandemic over the last couple of years – we all have access to this little thing called hope, and without hope, there’s no way we could even survive. Psalm 62:5 tells us that our hope “comes from Him.” In other words, we don’t just survive in this world, because we know Jesus, we can put our hope in Him. This gives us a reason to do so much more. Here’s the thing about living with Jesus, Romans 8:37 say’s that we are “more than conquerors through Him who loved us” In this world, you may be a survivor but in Jesus, you are a conqueror.

This changes the nature of the game, with Jesus, you’ll never get voted out. People may betray you, and you may not pass the physical or mental tests, but you’ll always find a way to stay in the game. In fact, your chances of winning just increased, and the votes haven’t even been counted yet.

In Christ, we can conquer anything and everything that comes our way. We no longer have to struggle just to survive, in a world that is only temporary. This doesn’t mean that we won’t have financial, spiritual, relational, physical, or emotional battles to face. This world is full of sin and suffering, but with Jesus, the burden becomes easier to carry.



As we enter 2022, I know there are so many of us who are barely hanging on. This pandemic not only made us sick, but it took away our stability, our friends, our family and for some of us, our faith. Many of us have given up, we're too scared to venture outside for fear of the unknown, we've forgotten how to be with each other, churches are divided, and government regulations are constantly changing. Yes, we're surviving. Yes, we're alive. We've made it this far, but we were called to be more, to do more.

The theme for this year's GAP Camp was a challenge to us, as we enter into the uncertainty of another year. To out give, out serve, out love. To look at the people around us with different set of lenses. Are you satisfied to just survive this game of life? We're all contestants here and we all have access to the same love and the same hope. I don't know about you, but survival is not enough for me.

The secret to winning this game of survivor is not in the competition, it's not about being better, faster, or stronger than anyone else. It's about laying down your burdens at the foot of the cross, allowing Jesus to set you free. What would this world be like if we surrendered all of our troubles to God? This is what it truly means to be a conqueror in Christ, and to thrive in a world full of survivors.

As Christians, we underestimate the impact that we can have on other people's lives. We are called to make a difference in this world, and we can't do that alone. What would it look like if we came together and showed the world the love of Christ? What would it look like if we stopped surviving and started thriving? This is a time where people need love, support and encouragement. If we're going to win this game, we need allies. Each of us have experienced a pandemic, we have formed an alliance because we are living through this time of the world's history.

How powerful would we become if we were able to stand together, as conquerors in Christ? To recognise the grief of others and walk with them on their journey. To make others feel safe, and to speak encouragement into their lives.

Our God is our protector and friend, He is just and merciful. God sees you and He has a plan for you. Let's work together to out give, out serve, and out love the people around us. It's time to do more than just survive.



*Kimberley McMurray
Communications
Coordinator for the
Victorian Conference.*



2022 Summer Camps, well, 2022 Summer Camp – almost! It was with an air of anticipation and apprehension that the staff met the night before GAP camp (16–18-year-olds). As we got to know each other and discuss our roles and responsibilities, I realised that the fact we were all standing there, at Camp Howqua, less than 24 hours before the youth arrived was a miracle in and of itself.

While we had COVID check ins and masks to be worn inside, as the kids started to trickle in, and the noise in the Camp Howqua lodge started to rise so did our sense of excitement. Things almost felt normal, maybe we would get through the camps, maybe we would be able to disconnect from the world for a few weeks and just get to focus on our relationships with the kids and youth that rolled through the doors. For those that know Camp Howqua and have ever visited it during the summertime, you will know that it has a reputation for being HOT! The waterslide and the river are your best friend. Well, this Summer Camp was different, with rain and thunderstorms that affected us from our first afternoon. As the kids arrived so did the clouds.

We started our Thursday afternoon with get-to-know-you games inside because of the threat of rain. (With masks on arghhh) Normally after games, everyone heads to the waterslide/river to cool down, but with looming thunderstorms this was curtailed. (This became a common theme throughout our short stay at Howqua). Instead of jumping

in the water, it was free time and very quickly the beloved ping pong tables were in use, the beach volleyball court, which is usually a 2v2 game, had about 10 people playing per side. Along with footy, soccer and Kubb, the thought of the water seemed to wash away, along with the initial awkwardness of meeting new people or seeing your ‘summer camp’ friends for the first time in a year. As the afternoon turned into evening, everyone settled into their cabins and had dinner before making their way into the lodge for the much-anticipated night meetings.

The theme for 2022 summer camps was Survivor, Out give – Out serve – Out love, and we had the wonderful Pr. Moe Stiles as our speaker. She challenged us throughout our time together, telling us about some of the refugees in our country and their stories of survival. Then she opened the Bible and blew the campers and staff away. She explored the stories of Abraham and Sarah but from the perspective of Hagar, David’s brave men and the story of Judah and Tamar. All stories and people that are often overlooked when we open our Bible’s, but all great examples of true survivors. If you want to be challenged and have your perspective changed, get in contact with Pr. Moe and ask her about the stories above, I had one camper tell me he had never heard such on-theme, challenging messages before. It was a true spiritual blessing.

Day 2 started with the biggest clap of thunder during staff worship, which meant that watersports were cancelled for the morning. However, that did not

dampen the spirits of the campers even in the slightest. There was a positive attitude the whole camp by both campers and staff and activities were quickly created. We had ‘Raya’s Kitchen Rules’ hosted by Raya Rantall, which saw the campers create the most indulgent, chocolate stuffed and covered cookies! Then there were indoor games, board games and a movie set up. Oh and of course, the beloved ping pong tables were in use. After an early lunch the weather had cleared, and everyone bundled into the buses and headed to the lake for an afternoon of water sports. The joy on the faces of the campers as they came back in from the water, especially for those who had a joy ride on the Jet Ski was enough to make the whole camp worth it. Then back on the buses, avoided the kangaroos jumping across the road, dinner, evening worship and just like that 2 day was done.

Day 3 we woke up to beautiful sunshine, it was one of those Sabbath mornings that just made you grateful to be alive. After breakfast we loaded everyone back into the buses to go to Mount Timbertop for what I was told was going to be a ‘walk.’ In short, it was not, it felt like we were climbing a vertical cliff wall. I’m sure it wasn’t that bad, but it made me, and many others have the uncomfortable realisation of just how unfit we were. However, everyone pushed through it and made it to the top, and it was a spectacular view. There is something about getting to sit and gaze out into a spectacular panorama of God’s creation. A much easier trip down the mountain,



lunch at the bottom and back to Camp Howqua for a far more relaxing afternoon that ended with a swim in the river and a BBQ. A quick reshuffle of staff after the men's staff cabin went into isolation as the first COVID case reared its ugly head at camp. However, we thought it was contained and had an incredible worship. Just like that day 3 was finished and the campers were filled with great anticipation for the following day of activities (especially paint ball!).

I woke up quite early on day 4, I decided rather than lying in my bed I should get up and have a shower before everyone else woke up. I had been in the shower no longer than 30 seconds before there was a loud knock. I thought it was one of the boys in my cabin trying to be annoying so I told them to leave me in peace and I would be out in a moment. 10 seconds later there was a knock on my shower window, it was one of the staff, He tells me that he has my wife, the beautiful Hayley on the phone and that she's tested positive to COVID. "Here we go," I thought. Within a few hours, almost every cabin had a positive case, which meant all, but 1 or 2 cabins were in isolation. After a negative RAT test, I walked round with the other staff that were unaffected making sure that cabins had enough food, toilet paper and water. Just like that, instead of paintball, that was the end of camp. We had a final message from Pr. Moe given over the intercom and by the end of the day all the campers had made their way back home to begin isolation.

While we only got 2 full days of summer camps this year, the fact we got any was a miracle. I believe that even for the short time that it was, the campers got to have a small dose of normalcy and a large dose of Jesus. Between the relationships that were built with the staff, the incredible praise and worship and the challenging talks from Pr. Moe, I pray that every camper got to either meet Jesus or grow their relationship with Him. Between COVID and the weather, it was a very different summer camp than what was expected. But I know from the conversations I have had with campers, they all had so much fun. It is a testament to the youth that came to summer camp, that no matter the circumstances they found themselves in they held a positive attitude and decided to have the best time no matter what. It made me realise that it's not the activities that make or break a good summer camp, no, it's the people. Coming from all over Victoria, leaders and campers alike, to connect with each other and most importantly Jesus.

As we look forward to summer camps in 2023 and what incredible experiences they will bring, pray for this vital ministry. Pray for those campers who had their camp cut short, pray for the Juniors and Teens who missed out completely and are so bitterly disappointed. Pray for the planning as our youth leaders in Victoria navigate how to provide a space where our young people from throughout the state can come together for a few days, forget about everything that is happening in the world, make new friends and most importantly meet Jesus.

If you want to see more about summer camps 2022, I encourage you to head to the VicYouth Facebook page and you will find some highlight videos from our time together.

SURVIVOR



*Jayden Croft
Pastoral Intern & Mentor at Camp*



AdventCare

2021 has been a challenging year for the aged care industry and AdventCare has managed to maintain its services and high occupancy due to great work from all our staff and with the support of the community. Like other businesses we have seen some staff shortages as COVID touches the lives of many at the moment. Our staff have worked hard under difficult circumstances and their support for AdventCare and caring for our residents is highly appreciated and we thank them for their diligence, compassion and empathy.

Vaccination Program

AdventCare is contracted to the Commonwealth, in conjunction with eight other aged care providers, to deliver COVID-19 vaccinations to our residents, staff, contractors, volunteers and others. This has been a successful program and we are about to finalise our booster vaccination program which will enable us to meet the State Government mandate for all aged care staff to receive a booster. Across the group we have a pool of nurse vaccinators who have delivered the vaccines through our clinics and this has worked well.

We have also been able to reach out to other Church entities and offer the clinics to the staff at the Conference and our schools.

We are pleased to be able to run our own clinics and will continue to ensure that everyone at AdventCare is kept safe.

AdventCare Whitehorse

The builders SJ Higgins are making great progress with the major redevelopment of AdventCare Whitehorse as you can see from these photos. All the inground services are complete and the first of the concrete panels have been installed for the new resident wings which will have sixty new beds, increasing the overall capacity by 48 beds. The lower level shows the outline of the new services wing which will house the new kitchen,

laundry, staff and training area and private dining room. The concrete slab for this will be poured in early February.

New Retirement Units at Warburton

Our new retirement units at Warburton have been delayed a bit due to the building industry restrictions and availability of trades and supplies. However, things are now moving along well and they should be available later in March 2022. They are two bedroom units with a garage and the most magnificent views of the surrounding hills and town. The workmanship by our builder Australian Building Enterprise is first rate and they will be a wonderful home for people retiring to Warburton.

There are a few still available but they will go quickly, so if you are interested, please contact our Units Manager Keith King on 9259 2106 or email at keith.king@adventcare.org.au

*David Reece
CEO of AdventCare*



ADRA UPDATE

A Life of Service

On the 16th of December 2021, our volunteer managers received a box of cookies to thank them for their year of service. The cookies (including an ADRA one) were made with love from the Support 4 Employment NDIS students. Leon is our Volunteer Housing Officer and has housed of 30 people in need during the last year, he was overjoyed to receive his cookies and have a break over the Christmas period! At the age of 85, Leon has lived a life of service and volunteering. Previously working for ADRA Blacktown in Sydney - he was awarded the Citizen of the Year in 2014 and he also speaks Samoan. "Thanks again Leon, yours and ADRA's help for *Luke has been wonderful and has most likely saved him from becoming completely homeless. I asked him yesterday if he'd eaten, he said he had a piece of cheese that another person at the crisis center had given him. So off we went to the supermarket of course. His centerlink payment cut off because he was unable to forward them job search details as he had no data on his phone and was in a suburb, he was unfamiliar with, so couldn't find library to access data. With no money, no food and no home, my heart broke for this young man. Sending prayers today that this home will be a success for him. Thank you once again. If no one else sees your kind heart for people, I know God does."

ADRA Australia

New Found Confidence

"A lady in her 60's emailed me requesting food support. When we contacted her she said she sent food request emails to 5 other charities and we were the only team that responded. When she arrived we learnt that she just had a hip replacement and lost her house too. She came sad, depressed and very timid. She started crying while we were talking. COVID-19 and the lockdown turned her into to a person that forgot how to communicate with people. She was embarrassed to ask for food, as all her life she was the one offering help to others. We offered her to come and volunteer and without hesitation she said "yes". She has been volunteering Monday through Friday. It has been only two weeks, but she has completely changed... she is happy, open to talk and nothing is too hard for her to do. She is a blessing to the team and proof that engaging people in volunteering changes people's lives."

Beata (BB) – ADRA Casey.

A Gift

"One of our team, had to leave suddenly to take their spouse to an unplanned doctor's appointment. When they went to the doctors (he in his ADRA t-shirt) the doctor asked about his top. He explained about our project etc. The doctor then left the room and came back and put a wad of notes in his hand. (\$2000) The doctor mentioned that he was a Christian, and that during morning devotions, was impressed to organise a large sum of money to give away today. Our hearts were truly humbled that God had planned this before they even knew they'd be going to doctors. We shared this news with all our team, and it was an amazing witness to our non-SDA volunteers. Praising God for His amazing ways."

ADRA Ferntree- Gully

ADRA Appeal Update

Thank you to the Western Spanish team – led by Ana and Tony Recinos for raising over \$11,000 for the 2022 ADRA Appeal! The highest amount yet in 2 years – well done! Not only does Ana and husband Tony fundraise every year, but they also support 50 families every week with food and essential items. Throughout the COVID pandemic, the ADRA West team have been a blessing to international students, casual workers, asylum seekers and refugees who have been the most affected by the pandemic. Thank you Ana and Tony for being the hands and feet of Jesus.

Rebecca Aurient - ADRA Director



Knox Community Christmas Support Program

Wantirna Seventh-day Adventist Church has partnered with other churches and community services in conjunction with Knox Council to provide Christmas food hampers and new toys for children from disadvantages families in the local community for the last 11 years.

Members from the church help to fundraise all year in the lead up to Christmas, and then the church is used as one of four hubs that people can visit to collect their Christmas gifts and toys. Our church family also donates gift cards, money for fresh produce, groceries, and toiletries.

Over the past two years, it has been difficult to fundraise as more people have been struggling due to COVID-19. Our church family has stepped up and provided more funds so that our clients don't miss out. This year our client

appointments doubled with two clients coming in every 10 minutes for support and we had 18 families who live outside the Knox area. One of our clients from the weekly food pantry that we also run couldn't make it to the program to pick up her Christmas hamper, as she had to look after her elderly mother who had just come home from hospital. She really wanted to give us a gift for helping her, so early in the morning before she left, she dropped two gifts off at our church for myself and another lady that she speaks to each week.

I managed to arrange a Christmas hamper to be dropped off to her on the last day of the program. She was so excited to see me and expressed how much she appreciated our work, asking us to do more because we introduced the love of God into her life. It's such a privilege to work in our local community to make people's lives better.



There are no strings attached but people notice how we care and then are curious as to why we do what we do. My answer always is because Jesus first loved me, and I now get to show others this love in return. We are blessed to have several clients who have now joined our church family and attend church regularly.

Liz Heath



"Do not think in your heart, after the Lord your God has cast them out before you, saying, 'Because of my righteousness the Lord has brought me in to possess this land'; but it is because of the wickedness of these nations that the Lord is driving them out from before you." Deuteronomy 9:4

At the start of 2021, my wife, Leah, and I prayed that God would set the tone for our home and our young church plant in Bundoora. We were inspired by the slogan: "We depend only on God; and expect great things from God!"

This year, in facing the uncertainties that Covid brought with it, in navigating repeated lockdowns, not having a firm location to worship in, and being a young church plant, we realized our dependency on God... but we also leaned more heavily on God's goodness, believing in His might

Expecting the Unexpected

to build and grow His church despite challenges!

I'm thankful to the Victorian Conference's leadership, prayers and investment into our church plant and am happy to report the addition of six new souls into the kingdom of God! Here is the amazing journey of each of these individuals who are now helping to build our church:

1. Todd De Vries – we met Todd through the Revelation Today program with IIV in the Northern site in May 2019. Todd had been bringing a group of his friends from the Pentecostal church, his home church, almost every night to hear the meetings. I sat beside him on the night where he realized it was time to give his life to Jesus once again. Early this year, Todd was baptized, and now leads multiple prayer meetings per week for our church of his own initiative! We praise God for Todd...

2. Nick and Avalon Teboneras – we met Nick and Avalon when we first started work in Preston church. Nick and Av, father and daughter, walked into church after watching a series of Adventist programs online not knowing which church these programs were coming from. What followed were weekly Bible studies at Av's mum's home with almost 6-7 people each time and amazing

dinners! We are so thankful for Nick and Av. After her baptism, Av organized her first 10,000 steps challenge for our church plant where over \$600 was raised for Adra.

3. Sol Luque – Coming from Colombia, Sol is a ray of sunshine in our church plant! She hugs literally everyone... even with Covid restrictions! Sol experienced God in a very real way through her visa application process to stay in Australia as she and our church prayed. Sol was baptized on Dec 18, 2021 in the Goulburn river, Seymour.

4. Lawrence and Mycah Padilla – Lawrence and Mycah have been on an amazing journey together with their two small kids. Moving from NSW to Vic, they Google searched the church closest to them and walked into our church one Sabbath pre-Covid. They are now part of our family and have used their talents to sing for church worships and uplift others with their encouraging testimonies. They were baptized as husband and wife also on Dec 18, 2021 in the Goulburn river, Seymour.

Please pray for our church plant in Bundoora and for those who've been baptized this year.

Vikram Panchel

ROAD to BETHLEHEM

A Month on the Road



What a story it must have made for generations to come. I imagine as time went on, the family would talk about when great grandad was a boy, he shared his five loaves and two fishes with Jesus and 5,000 people where fed! A seemingly ordinary kid (albeit exceptionally well prepared to avoid missing a meal) just gave Jesus what he had and the miracle of multiplication nourished and satisfied a multitude. He brought what he had; God did the rest.

In 2020 due to lockdowns across Melbourne, "Road to Bethlehem: Like You've Never Seen It Before" went online as an innovative alternative to the much loved walk-through Nativity experience. When it became clear that 2021 would also be affected by pandemic restrictions, this year's "Road to Bethlehem: A Month on the Road" went online for the second time in its 27-year history.

At the heart of this ministry is a committed army of volunteers that brings the story of Jesus birth to life. The Holy Spirit led as groups met and an idea was created to provide a daily video for the 31 days of December - each day themed to be enjoyed along with the books "Advent" (by Nathan Brown) and the recently published "Advent for Kids" (by Karen Collum and Nathan Brown). Teams of volunteers wrote interesting daily emails, beautiful social media posts, recorded engaging videos and sent free gifts into Victorian homes. All efforts focused on sharing why Jesus

came as a humble baby and to extend the hospitality and invitation that the first coming of Jesus offered our world.

Some statistics from "A Month on the Road":

- Over 730 gifts sent directly to Victorian homes for free, including copies of the books Advent, Advent for Kids and bible verse magnets.
- Around 60,000 emails sent to guests with daily messages through the month of December.
- 4,732 unique visitors from over 50 countries. 85% from Aus but hundreds from the USA and scores from NZ, South Korea, UK, Ireland, Canada, Singapore and more. (A visitor is a 'device' so for example my family watched together, all five of us but we count as one visitor to the website)
- Every day we had between 400-1000 page views on our site, that's hundreds of visitors per day, enjoying the days message and browsing the kid's area and other resources.

For me, it's so encouraging to see the many talents and skills required to make Road to Bethlehem come together under the leading of the Holy Spirit each year. This year was no different. Each one bringing our five loaves and two fishes, God doing the rest.

If you haven't experienced this years Road to Bethlehem, all videos are still available to view now at <https://roadtobethlehem.org/>

Nathan Hall

2021 Acknowledgements

Website/Graphic Design/CRM: Shane Winfield, Cameron Gilroy // Content: Moe Stiles, Mirek Stekla, Tony Knight, Stacey Panozzo (Committee Secretary), Nathan Hall (Interim Committee Chair) // Host: Kym Piez // Communications: Nathan Brown, Rebecca Gallagher, Allannah Howard-Bath, Sarah Courtney, Haylee Fairall // Gifting: Carlie Williamson, Joanne Challinor-Rogers, Elisa Fox, Lesley Clark, Haylee Fairall, Shelley Fairall, Carolyn Hunger, Jane Smith, Jo Shorney, Trish Shorney, Victorian Conference Office Staff // Post Production & Editing: David Fleming, Kaelan Woodward // Web Hosting: Cameron Gilroy (Celestia Designs) // Video Contributors: Andrew and Lorraine Wegener, Jamie Stanley, Brendan Pratt, Ryan and Emma Vidot, David Egren, Velda Mason, Liz Borgas, Joshua Stadnik, Karen Horsley, Tiani Page, Carolin Schmitz, Simone Austen, Chris Rantall, Fraser Catton, Shari, Eunuch, Andre and Asher Nyatanga, Karen Collum, Nathan Brown, Burwood Church Musicians & Singers, Wantirna Church Musicians and Singers, Dandenong Polish Church ADRA video and all the Vox Pop interview kids!



Casey Church Building Update

Have you ever been on a long journey? A journey that starts out with all good intentions and excitement? Thoughts of the Israelite journey firstly springs to mind, where there is no thought of trouble ahead, with God's leading, who can be against us? Well, this journey, you will soon discover is one of adventure, struggles and trials. But as the bible instructs us, with God on our side, faithfulness, perseverance and trust in God, we will be more than conquerors.

This particular journey started out when the members of the Casey SDA Church (Formally Dandenong SDA church) had outgrown their church premises in Hutton Street Dandenong. It was agreed that they would sell the church facilities and purchase another premise where they could continue to expand. The land that was purchased, became a lawyers dream, council would reject the church applications and one court case after another until eventually, the Casey SDA Church community were forced to stop pursuing the dream.

Many years of moving from one site to another, from school buildings and TAFE colleges to the First Romanian Baptist church facility in Endeavour Hills have passed. The faithful people continued to pray and search for a site to make their church home. Now, many years have gone, since the sale of the Dandenong church site, a new site has been purchased. The Casey church will now be located at 5 Rebound Court Narre Warren.

This site had never attracted the attention of the members, but through prayer a request which was sent out to

other churches for ideas for a location, Pastor Craig Gilles had heard of a building in Narre Warren and passed on the details and this building was purchased. One of the many answers to pray that can be testified to by Casey members.

This building had been a sports and leisure centre and was in derelict condition. In fact, another religious group had purchased it and had tried to convince council to allow them to convert the building into a place of worship. These applications had failed due to public backlash about a "place of worship in their neighbourhood". With is in mind, they sold the building to Casey SDA church members and again, with a prayerful spirit, Casey members took their requests to the Almighty God knowing that He would lead if this was to be the site.

With Galan Gan's help, plans were drawn and building practitioners were engaged to make applications to the City of Casey to have the building approved for "change of use to a place of worship", just as the previous group had tried and failed. This time though, God was leading, and the application was approved!

The members of Casey church family have moved forward with obtaining building permits and now the building works have started. There have been many hurdles from connecting services such as electricity, to burst water mains and fire hydrant supply issues. The building has had its fair share of graffiti artists, drug users and squatters occupying the building, but now with works under way, we are seeing great progress.

Each Sunday morning will find dedicated tradesmen working towards completing a vision, a journey that was started out many years ago. Some church members are no longer here to see the works, but their vision is still becoming a reality. The church still faces many hurdles such as financial constraints and with the current Covid crisis, accessing materials and labour is challenging. However, we have seen God lead when in particular, He supplied pack lots of timber to a church member's business just when we needed it and when timber was not available to purchase. We have seen God working behind the scenes in opening doors and supplying our needs at each and every time. We pray, we ask and God delivers.

The Casey church is designed to be a place of influence within a community that needs Jesus. It is located right next to a train station and shopping village where we will have maximum exposure.

Yes, we still have challenges in store, but by Gods grace, mercy and leading, He will go before us.

If you would like to do something for God too, then contact pastor Michael Mohanu the church senior Pastor and register your interest. A contribution of finances or qualified labour will be made welcome (Not to forget your Prayers. Consider that one day all knees will come to worship before God on that great day, what a joy it will be to know that we all did something to help the outreach of His people.

Peter McMurray





Testimony of Nyawanglel (Mary) Lul Kuoth

Nyawanglel known as (Mary Lul) was baptized together with her mother who is 101 years old and 7 other people on the 11th of December 2021. She had been going to the Presbyterian church since 1962 and held various positions including church planter, Sudan Presbyterian women representative and was ordained as elder in 1994 at the presbyterian church. Nyawanglel got married in 1974 and her husband joined Seventh-day Adventist church in the same year. Her husband had made many attempts to convince her to join him in Adventist church, but she refused. Mary loved Presbyterian church more than the Adventist Church because she had grown up in that denomination. Mary said, she “loves Presbyterian worship because people made a lot of noises during the worship compared to the Adventist church.”

Despite, her commitment to worship on Sunday, she found a lot of things that troubled her. Struggling with the ideas about baptism and the Sabbath that were presented in the Bible. During the lockdown, when people could no longer attend churches, she stumbled across Gatkuoth Chol Springvale South Sudanese Minister preaching live on Facebook. Although she had no idea about what Adventists believed however, she still followed his preaching. Mary found herself looking at the Bible in a different light. She decided to contact Gatkuoth and have Bible studies with him and other church members. After studying, Daniel, Revelation and Job, books that she had never studied before, she decided to get baptized. Before she was baptized, she called

her children, telling them about her decision.

They were overjoyed when they heard the news, as they had been praying for her to become an Adventist for years. After she informed her children, she decided to inform her church leadership, this was met with mixed emotions. Some church members advised her to move to another Sunday church, some told her that she was lost, and some did not believe it was true that she was leaving the church. After the realization set in, some of her former church members were shocked, others felt hatred towards her saying unpleasant words to her and others congratulated her. Mary said, “I always ask God to give me a new heart of forgiveness and show love to those who are against me for my decision, because they haven’t seen what I have seen. Also, I don’t blame them because I used to behave the same way that they did.”

“I really, thank God for my mother’s baptism,” Mary said. “My mother was old and with some health issues, sometimes her breathing becomes low as a signal that her death is near. It was announced on many occasions by a doctor over the years that she would die within a week, two weeks or one month or sometimes we prepared for her funeral. Today we have seen the Mighty Creator God, it’s amazing and a miracle to be alive up to this moment. No one believed or expected that one day she would be baptized, and it as happened. Thank God for His gracious love that He has shown to me and my mother, before both of us has to fall asleep.”

Gatkuoth Chol

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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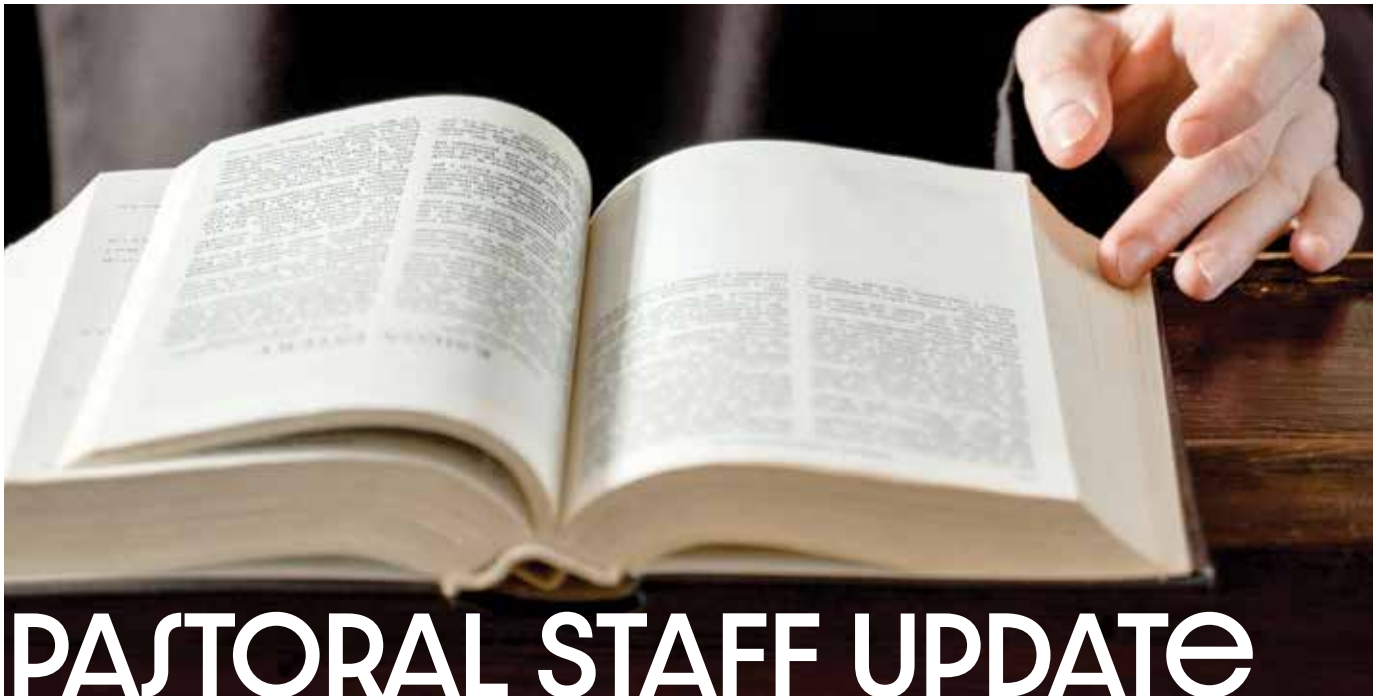
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PASTORAL STAFF UPDATE

Welcome to 2022 ! I'm so grateful for the pastors who have served over the last couple of years. It's been challenging but they have responded and followed Gods call to work in the harvest faithfully! We have even expanded our team a little this year to meet new challenges. A few of our pastoral team have moved to other pastures, but we also have some new team members, I hope you get to meet them soon !

Jayden Croft his wife Haley are joining our team. Jayden has joined the team at Casey church for his internship and we are glad to have him!

Rian Van Deventer joins us by way of ministry in New Zealand. He and his wife Altina have moved their family over to Victoria and is looking after Bairnsdale, Sale and Cann River – it's a big territory but Rian has hit the ground running and is loving his country pastorate and he will be doing his internship here in Victoria. Isaac Foo has joined the team at Gateway Lighthouse and brings a wealth of ministry experience, we are very lucky to have him join us !

Erik Kral and his wife Mirelle have joined us after many years serving in the South Australia Conference. He will be pastoring at Shepparton and Echuca churches and I know he will be a blessing there.

Daniel McLeish and his wife Angela have

joined our team and moved to Victoria – will be caring for Ararat and Hamilton Churches during his internship and we are grateful to have them with us !

Nicu Dumbrava will be joining our team. He comes to us from Western Australia Conference after many years serving there and will be working both in a local church and as the Union Director of Personal Ministries – welcome Nicu ! We are also very happy to have Jorge Munoz join our team to lead the church at Ringwood – with his extensive experience at the Australian Union and in ministry I know Ringwood are very blessed to have him!

Welcome to the team everyone ! If you see these pastors around, say hi !

Departmental Changes

We have also had some changes to the departmental directors team at the conference as various ministries come more into focus.

Russell Bryan has moved from Shepperton down to Melbourne where he will be Director of Sabbath School and contributing to AdventCare Whitehorse Daniel Brunt will be leading in the Family Ministries Department this year to expand it's work in our conference. Josh Wood has been appointed as the

Trust Services Director and is eager to hear from you and your church to meet your needs in that area.

James London has been appointed as the ATSIM director. James is the pastor at Wangaratta and Benalla and is looking forward to the role.

Piroska Vranjakne Feith has been appointed as the Associate Ministerial Secretary to work alongside Justin Bone in that department.

Kymerley McMurray has joined us as the new Communications Coordinator for the Victorian Conference and is excited to hear about your stories.

And while Roy Kim has been working under Harvest in a church planting role he has now been appointed as the Church Planting Director for our conference.

Please keep our departmental directors in your prayers as we support God's church in the field !

Justin Bone

Ministerial Association Secretary



Victorian Pastoral Staffing 2022

ACADEMY Pr Darren Croft (oversight)	SAMOAN ENDEAVOUR HILLS Pr Saifoloi Pale Lafaele	MORNINGTON PENINSULA FELLOWSHIP COMPANY Mr Peter Hughes	SERVICE) COMPANY Pr Denis Hankinson
ALPINE VALLEY SDA GROUP Pr James London (oversight)	FERNTREE GULLY Pr Paul Kotanko	MYNAMAR SDA MELBOURNE COMPANY Pr Nan Myat Kyaw	SPOTSWOOD Pr Brian Lawty
ARARAT Mr Daniel McLeish	FILIPINO AUSTRALIAN Pr Jezreel Locop, Mr Jared French (Assistant)	NHILL COMPANY Mr Marius Jigau	SPRINGVALE Pr Victor Acuna
ASCOT VALE Pr Ainsley Wagner	FRANKSTON Pr Jonathas Newlands	NORTH FITZROY Pr Vadim Butov, Pr Helen Butov	SPRINGVALE SPANISH Pr Jonathas Newlands
MELBOURNE ASIAN (MASDAC) Pr Terrance Sim, Mr Jonathon Gillard (Associate)	GATEWAY CITY Pr Laien Hao	NORTHPOINT Ms Wendy Saluni	SPRINGVALE SUDANESE GROUP Mr Gatkuoth Chol
AUBURN Pr Pawel Ustupski	GATEWAY EAST COMPANY Pr Chris Moses, Mr Chris Guo (Assistant)	NUNAWADING Pr Paul Kleinmeulman, Ms Tarnya Garner (Assistant), Pr Piroška Vranjakne Feith (Associate)	CROATIAN ST ALBANS Mr Manuel Tikulin
BAIRNSDALE Mr Rian Van Deventer	GATEWAY LIGHTHOUSE COMPANY Pr Chris Moses, Mr Chris Guo (Assistant)	OAKLEIGH POLISH Pr Pawel Ustupski, Pr Jan Krysta (Associate)	STAWELL Mr Marius Jigau
BALLARAT Pr Andrew Kapusi, Mr Eric Johnson (Assistant)	GATEWAY WEST COMPANY Mr Steven Liu	OROMO Pr Georges Latchman	SWAN HILL Mr Daniel Maher
BAYLES Ms Sylvia Mendez	GEELONG Mr Jeremy Taituave	PAKENHAM Pr Vadim Butov	THE AVENUE GROUP Pr Adrian Peterson
BENALLA Pr James London	GEELONG HUNGARIAN Mr Jeremy Taituave	PLENTY VALLEY Pr Adrian Peterson	THE OASIS Pr Ryan Vidot
BENDIGO Mr Daniel Maher	GILSON COLLEGE COMMUNITY Pr Mau Tuaoi	POINT COOK SDA COMPANY Pr Danijela Trajkov, Pr Nikola Trajkov	THE ORCHARD Group Pr Malcolm Reid
BENDIGO KAREN SDA Mr Eh Paung	GLENHUNTLY Pr Paul Kotanko	PORTLAND Pr Andy Litchfield	THE ROCK COMMUNITY GROUP Pr Brian Lawty
BENDIGO KAREN REMNANT COMPANY Mr Daniel Maher	GREENVALE Pr Georges Latchman	PRESTON Pr Wayne Stanley, Pr Vikram Panchal (Associate)	TRARALGON Pr Luis Bermudez
BERWICK COMPANY Ms Sylvia Mendez	HAMILTON Mr Daniel McLeish	RINGWOOD Pr Jorge Munoz, Mr Steven Munsuang (Assistant)	MELBOUREN VIETNAMESE GROUP Pr Georges Latchman (oversite)
BUNDOORA COMPANY Pr Vikram Panchal	HEALESVILLE Mr Mark Thang Guite	ROBINVALE Pr Mladen Krklec	WANGARATTA Pr James London
BURWOOD Pr Fraser Catton, Pr Jared Smith (Associate)	SAMOAN HILLSIDE COMPANY Pr Saifoloi Pale Lafaele	ROMANIAN Pr Paul Boeru	VICTORIAN ADVENTIST WANTOK COMPANY Pr Chris Moses
CAMPERDOWN Pr Andy Litchfield	HORSHAM Mr Marius Jigau	ROWVILLE Pr Denis Hankinson	WANTIRNA Pr Yong shin Chee, Mr Daniel Brunt (Associate), Ms Wendy Saluni (Assistant)
CANN RIVER COMPANY Mr Rian Deventer (oversight)	HOSPITAL CHAPLAINS Pr Ainsley Wagner, Pr Malcolm Reid	SALE Mr Rian Van Deventer	WANTIRNA POLISH Pr Pawel Ustupski, Mr Josh Stadnik (Assistant)
CASEY Pr Michael Mohanu, Mr Jayden Croft (Assistant), Pr Trevor Rowe (Associate)	HUGHESDALE Pr Nicu Dumbrava (Pastor at Large)	SAMOAN CARRUM DOWNS Pr Aitui Fanene, Pr Eddie Erika (Associate)	WARBURTON Pr Quinten Liebrandt
CASTLEMAINE COMPANY Mr Graham McNicol	WERRIBEE KAREN Pr Nan Myat Kyaw	SAMOAN CRAIGIEBURN COMPANY Pr Aitui Fanene, Mr Apelu Tanuvasa (Assistant)	WARRAGUL Pr Ben Townson
Clyde Connect Group Mr Jared French	LEONGATHA Mr Luke Letele	THE HARVEST COMPANY Pr Aitui Fanene, Pr Eddie Erika (Associate)	WARRNAMBOOL Pr Andy Litchfield
COBBLEBANK SAMOAN GROUP Pr Saifoloi Pale Lafaele	LILYDALE Pr Darren Croft, Pr Faye Stothers (Associate), Pr Ryan Vidot (Associate)	SAMOAN NTH MELBOURNE Mr Tau Poasa, Mr Apelu Tanuvasa	WERRIBEE Pr Nikola Trajkov, Pr Danijela Trajkov (Associate)
COLAC Mr Jeremy Taituave	LONGWARRY Pr Ben Townson	LYNBROOK SAMOAN SDA Pr Eddie Erika, Pr Aitui Fanene	WESTALL Mr Manuel Tikulin
CARRUM DOWNS COOK ISLANDS COMPANY Pr Russell Puna	MACEDON RANGES COMPANY Mr Graham McNicol	SAMOAN SUNSHINE COMPANY Pr Aitui Fanene, Mr Apelu Tanuvasa	WESTERN SPANISH Pr Victor Acuna
CLAYTON COOK ISLANDS Pr Russell Puna	MACEDONIAN Pr Nikola Trajkov	SAMOAN WERRIBEE GROUP Pr Aitui Fanene, Mr Apelu Tanuvasa	WESTPOINT SDA Pr Brian Lawty
CRAIGIEBURN GROUP Mr Tau Poasa	MARYBOROUGH Mr Eric Johnson	MELTON SAMONA SDA Pr Aitui Fanene, Mr Apelu Tanuvasa	YARRA VALLEY Mr Emanuel Millen
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DARETON Mr Brayden Rath	MILDURA Pr Mladen Krklec, Mr Brayden Rath (Assistant)	SOUTH EAST SDA (OROMO	
EAST PRAHRAN Pr Vadim Butov, Pr Helen Butov (Associate)	MOE Pr Luis Bermudez		
ECHUCA Pr Erik Kral	MONT ALBERT Pr Malcolm Reid		

School Chaplains

GILSON MERENDA Pr Trent Martin	NUNAWADING CC SECONDARY Mr Simon Hutton
GILSON TAYLORS HILL Pr Mau Tuaoi	NUNAWADING CC PRIMARY Mrs Karen Horsley
HENDERSON COLLEGE Mr Gerrard Price	
HERITAGE COLLEGE Mr Josh Stadnik	
EDINBURGH COLLEGE Pr Jaimie Stanley, Mrs Liz Borgas & Ms Sandy Wallis	

Advent Care Chaplains

WHITEHORSE Pr Ainsley Wagner
WHITEHORSE Pr Russell Bryan

University Chaplains

ADVENTIST & MONASH UNIVERSITY Pr Moe Stiles



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