

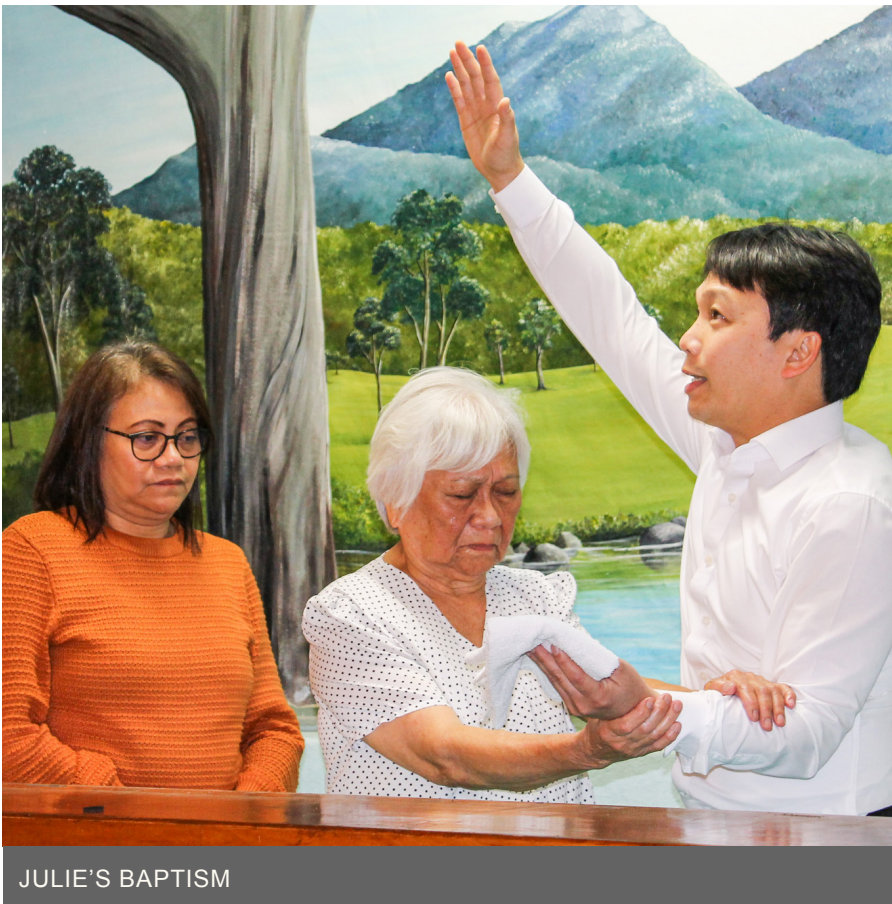


Tasda

Transforming Tasmania with Jesus for Eternity

MAY 2023

THE JOY OF HARVESTING



By Pr Eugene Estil

Near the end of King Solomon's reign around 930 BC, he wrote the book of Ecclesiastes. He mentioned in Chapter 3 that everything has its time. In verses 1 and 2 there are times and seasons to do things on earth. There is a time to plant and a time to harvest.

As Jesus said in the book of John 4:37-38, "For in this the saying is true: 'One sows and another reaps.' I sent you to reap that for which you have not laboured; others have laboured, and you have entered into their labours."

In the Clear Word Bible, Dr. Jack Blanco paraphrased it this way.

***"Some sow and some reap.
I'm sending you to reap
what others have sown.
You've already tasted the
joy of harvesting when you
baptised the people that
John preached to."***

JULIE'S BAPTISM



JULIE'S BAPTISM

When I was still a seminary student, in the year 2001, seven of us were sent to do public evangelism in a mountain village in the Philippines. We made friends, studied the Bible with them and eventually baptised seven souls in just two weeks. We were not satisfied with having sown much but have harvested only a few. We realised that we are not in the business of converting people. We seek out those whom God will convert.

Ellen White described it like this:

"God designs that His precious word, with its messages of warning and encouragement, shall come to those who are in darkness and are ignorant of our faith. It is to be given to all and will be to them a witness, whether they will hear or forbear. Do not feel that the responsibility rests upon you to convict and convert the hearers. The power of God alone can soften the hearts of the people. You are to hold forth the word of life, that all may have an opportunity of receiving the truth if they will." And "arm yourselves with humility; pray that angels of God may come close to your side to impress the mind; for it is not you that work the Holy Spirit, but the Holy Spirit must work you. It is the Holy Spirit that makes the truth impressive."

Right after we left, a lay pastor was sent to do a follow-up visit to the people there and after three months they were converted by the Holy Spirit. A message was sent to us that there was a bus full of people coming down from the mountain to get baptised.

Sometimes our task is just to sow some seeds and others will reap them in due time.



BLESSY'S BAPTISM

Recently at the Hobart Church Plant, we were introduced to Blessy. Blessy, while still in Indonesia, contacted us when making plans to move to Hobart. Eventually, Blessy started to attend the Church Plant in Hobart and has enjoyed the Secrets of Prophecy series that was presented by Pastor Eugene every Sabbath. Prior to this she completed two series of Bible Studies in Indonesia. These studies were already sowing seeds of truth in her heart and we in Hobart have built on their labours. We praise God that earlier this year she was baptised.

Soon after another baptism followed, the baptism of Julie. Julie's parents sowed some seeds in her heart when she was younger, but she never made a decision to accept Jesus as her Saviour.

Then Pastor Glenn Townend, our current South Pacific Division President, when pastoring in Tasmania over 20 years ago had Bible Studies with Julie. Due to circumstances at the time she was not able to get baptised and eventually stopped attending church. Her daughter Amy introduced her to us at the Hobart Church Plant earlier this year and she started to attend church. After some studies she finally made the decision to accept Jesus Christ as her Lord and Saviour. We again praise the Lord for her decision and for the sowing work of others that we have had the privilege of reaping.

Keep on sowing your seed, for you never know which will grow—perhaps it all will. Ecclesiastes 11:6 (TLB)



MARCUS' BAPTISM

BAPTISM AT LAUNCESTON

By Pr David Maxwell

On April 22nd, Marcus Abetz followed his Lord through the waters of baptism at Launceston Church, acknowledging his growth in Christ by taking this rewarding step.

Marcus followed his niece and nephew who were baptised in 2021, and were there to witness their uncle's baptism along with many other members of his family. God bless you for your continuing journey with Christ Marcus.

REAL FELLOWSHIP

By Pr Rick Hergenhan

In the last few months some great leaps have been made in the area of Artificial Intelligence (AI). Up until now this has mostly been the stuff of science fiction but for the first time ever powerful conversational AI has been developed and released to the public. The possibilities of what this technology can do seem limitless. People all over the globe are experimenting with this technology and asking it to do anything from answering exam questions, composing emails and writing speeches. However not everyone is convinced this technology is a good thing. Many professionals in the field believe that there should be a pause to AI development and some even say we need to scrap it entirely as we have no idea what the consequences of using it will ultimately be.

One perhaps unintended consequence is that there has been a sharp rise in people who are developing relationships with robots. This is not people who are holding hands with a cold machine on wheels with a screen for a face, this is an emotional relationship with a bot that can text and speak to you. The text and speech are able to convey emotion to emulate a real human being. In fact, these digital interactions are so convincing that many users have

found themselves deeply emotionally dependent on their digital lovers with some claiming they had no idea they were actually interacting with a digital machine! And this is just the start, the technology will only get better from here.

Research is suggesting that loneliness in our society is now more common than ever. Combine this with increasing rates of social anxiety, depression and isolation and we are likely to see more people turning to relationships with digital machines. How will this work out? Who knows. Will it truly meet the needs of human beings? I highly doubt it.

New Testament writers sight a few good reasons why the church exists. One of them is for fellowship. A church offers fellowship unlike just about anything in our society today. On any given Sabbath there can be up to five generations of people together for the one purpose. To honour, worship and glorify God. And by simply being together there is purposeful fellowship. Even if a person is not a believer they can still enjoy the fellowship. As we are now living in a society that is starved for meaningful fellowship, church presents a real opportunity to invite people, many of whom may be lonely, depressed and

isolated, into fellowship.

1 John 1:5-7 says;

⁵ "This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. ⁶ If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practise the truth. ⁷ But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin."

This verse tells us that when we do fellowship well, we are a witness for the gospel. Fellowship is important. So the question must be asked, how are you fellowshiping with those around you? Do you enjoy telling them all about yourself or do you prefer to listen? Do you loudly proclaim the truth to them whether they want to hear it or not, or are you willing to dialogue? Do first time visitors feel welcome at your church and want to come again or would they prefer to slip away as quickly as possible? And does fellowship with you help people move closer to Jesus or further away?

Society right now has a great need for meaningful fellowship. Are you making full use of the fellowship opportunities Jesus has placed before you? ■



NEWS

By Vicki Knight

LEST WE FORGET

The Scottsdale Seventh-day Adventist Church was invited to participate in the 2023 Anzac Day ceremonies held in Ringarooma. Vicki Knight set the scene of the ANZAC Day service with prayer and remembering three Berwick brothers, Neil, Ray and Leo, who served in World War 1.

Anzac Day is a time for all Australians to recognise more than 1.5 million service men and women who have served our country in all conflicts, wars and peacekeeping operations. It is also a time to remember over 103,000 Australians who sacrificed their lives in our country's name.

The Ringarooma Primary School students read poems that they

had written followed by addresses from ex-service men. The highlight of the service was a digital presentation of service men and women who served in the previous wars.

Representatives from families, service clubs and churches laid wreaths in honour of the fallen and returned service personnel.

By Mary Maxwell

MENS CAMP TASMANIA

Men's camp was enjoyed by 30 plus attendees which included the Adventist men's group from Rosny. It was at the River's Edge wilderness campground in Lonnvale, March 3-5. Attendees were fortunate enough to still enjoy some lovely sunny weather, even enough for a swim (only the courageous). The speaker for the weekend was Pr David Maxwell and the topic discussed was "He's the Man," looking at being a man for Christ in a modern culture.



By Mary Maxwell

NORTHERN COUPLES ENRICHMENT SEMINAR

The Northern couple's enrichment seminar on April 22, was presented by Dr Horatio Selagea. Dr Selagea is a Doctor of Psychology, with Psychiatric training and his expertise is with children and adolescents.

Topics were on 'Thriving Mentally in a Stressful World' and 'How to Parent in the 21st Century.' It was informative and helpful as well as practical, with time for questions at the end. It was well attended with over 45 attendees. The ice was broken with a light meal for all to enjoy.



NEWS

By Sue Mott

DELORAINE EASTER CAMP

Deloraine Church held an Easter Camp at Pine Springs campground in Devonport over the long weekend from Friday to Monday. The purpose of the camp was to encourage new Adventists and seekers and establish them in connecting more with God and the church. The camp proved to be a wonderful time of spiritual renewal, fellowship, friendship, and fun. Some attendees even came from Launceston, speaking highly of the well-organised and enjoyable experience.

Around 20 stayed for the whole weekend, with over 40 joining in on the Sabbath programs. Some delicious food was organised and prepared by Richard and Hanneke Bywater; Richard being a qualified Chef, he was ably assisted by a team of helpers, who were also able to jump in and provide some meals at times. Various service teams had been set up to include all camp attendees, which allowed the load to be lightened, and for all to lend a helpful hand. Pastor Ray, the camp caretaker, provided us with wonderful assistance, in allowing the use of the main buildings and bunkhouses for the event.



PR BLAKE PENLAND

THE BREAKFAST SHOW

The highlight of the camp was our excellent speaker, Pastor Blake Penland, who can be heard on Faith FM radio every weekday morning from 7-9am on the Breakfast Show. Blake began with the story of Joseph, then shared his amazing testimony and spoke on the Waldensians in six sessions over the course of the weekend. His overarching theme was Renewal, namely being renewed in Christ. Both seasoned and new believers found the messages to be inspiring and a great blessing. Blake was assisted by Taylah Heckendorf, who headed up the worship team. Both Taylah and Blake were released from the Northern NSW conference, to be able to assist us in the Easter Camp.

Many events were also held and enjoyed by young and old, such as an Easter parcel hunt, games nights, a silent auction, and a Sabbath afternoon Bible team tournament. The silent auction raised thousands of dollars for the Adventist Frontier Mission; a very worthy cause. Campfires were also planned, but the weather was a little too windy, so these will be saved for next year! Overall, those attending experienced a time of high spiritual fulfillment and the blessing of bonding with each other. The camp forms a major part of Deloraine church's Care Group evangelism cycle and plans are in place to repeat the experience again next year.



NEW WEBSITE LAUNCHED FOR THE TASMANIAN CONFERENCE!!

Seventh-day
Adventist Church

Tasmania

About Us ▾ What We Do ▾ What's Happening ▾ Locations ▾ Resources ▾ Contact 🔍 ☰



Welcome to the Seventh-day Adventist Church of Tasmania.

We are a people who passionately love God and strive to live for Him and others the best way we know how.

Get Involved

QUICK LINKS TO:

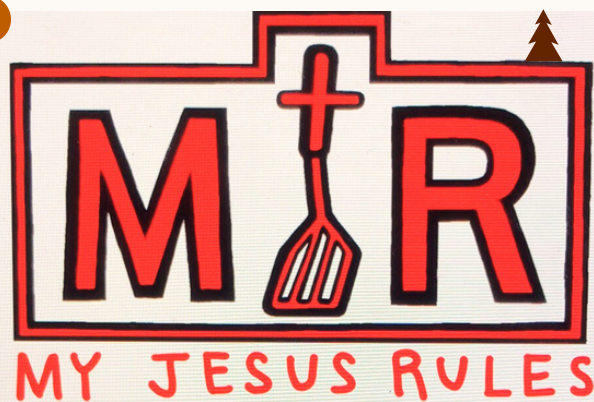
- Faith FM Radio
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- Big Camp Recordings
- TASDA Digital Copies
- Upcoming Events
- Calendars, and much more

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www.tas.adventist.org.au



TWEEN CAMP 2023



3rd-8th October

Keep your eyes peeled on the Tasyouth
Facebook and Instagram pages for Staff
and Campers Applications

NEWS

By Yiannis Dimitriou

MARGATE COMMUNITY MULTICULTURAL NIGHT

For many years an annual event on the Margate church calendar was a multicultural night. During the pandemic the event was postponed for what turned out to be four years. However on Sunday April 16, the multicultural night was on once again and it was a great success.

People were encouraged to wear ethnic attire and to bring along food from cuisines around the world. As well as that, people were encouraged to bring a song from their culture. Many obliged with songs from Italy, Croatia, Bangladesh, Philippines, Greece and Vanuatu, as well as from Australia. We also had instrumental performances.

Entry to the event was free but an offering was collected to support Eyes for India, a charity which works with an Adventist hospital in India to perform cataract surgery free of charge to the poorest of the Indian population. It is truly life changing surgery for the patients.

The aim of the Multicultural Night event is to foster social fellowship between church members but also to invite community members to come along and experience the atmosphere of Christian fellowship and to form friendships. The event was attended by a number of community members who had very positive feedback to give us.

An event such as this requires the help of many of our members and this offers an extra blessing as we are given the opportunity to work together. All for the praise of our loving Lord and Saviour.



By Cheryl Walsh

NORTH-WEST SPORTS NIGHT

Saturday nights are always a great time to get together. How much more so, when the five churches on the North West Coast gather to play sports and welcome members of the community. Three years ago, Wynyard Church reignited the sports evenings and based them at the Somerset Recreation Centre. After two years of church support the target this year is on reaching out and inviting the community. The invitation to all church members who attend is to bring a friend, neighbour, or family member. At our first event this year it was great to see 143 children and adults enjoying basketball, soccer, table tennis, volleyball and a multitude of kid's games. There were people from Lilliah in the west to Wesley Vale in the east, and pretty much every town in between.

As a form of social evangelism, the focus this year has been spread across Wynyard, Burnie and Ulverstone Churches, under the leadership of Pr Afi and Pr Darryl. Ensuring that all branches of our church are present, North West Christian School and Burnie Adventurer and Pathfinder clubs are also in support of the nights. Each group will have their chance to run the kid's games, which are a great draw card for parents.

The game nights run from 6pm to 9pm with kid's games from 6:15-8:00 pm. Our first night for 2023 was April 22 and we will meet five more times this year - May 13, June 24, July 22, August 26 and September 9. If you are around the North West, you are warmly invited to attend.



NEWS

By Vicki Knight

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

The Legerwood Catering Committee recently held a fundraiser for Vicki Knight. The group support many charities and wanted to help Vicki with travelling expenses while she was attending 15 days of radiation treatment at the Holman Clinic in Launceston. More than \$2,000 was raised by the group which was a wonderful effort by the small group and friends who helped. Vicki and Ken are very thankful for the kindness and love that has been shown by the Legerwood and Scottsdale communities.



By Vicki Knight

SCOTTSDALE CUPPA FOR CANCER

Lunches are held on the first Monday of every month at Scottsdale Seventh-day Adventist Church. The lunches provide a home-cooked meal with donations made by the people who attend. Funds are raised for the 13th Sabbath, Turkey earthquake victims, local needs in the community and various charities. In May the lunch raised funds for the annual Cuppa for Cancer. \$720 was raised for the Cancer Council. The staggering statistic that one person in two will be diagnosed with cancer before the age of 85 is concerning. Scottsdale Church is working with the community to support people diagnosed with cancer and to raise funds for important research to find a cure.

By Cheryl Walsh

TO GOD BE THE GLORY

For many quarters Wynyard 13th Sabbath School offering has been in the \$200's, however in 2022 there was a gradual increase each quarter from \$312.95 in March to \$543.00 in December. Over \$100 of this each quarter has been coins. Our Seniors have been saving each week for the 13th Sabbath School offering.

Though a small church, the challenge was taken up in 1st Quarter 2023 to increase our goal. Some were skeptical – others stepped out in faith. Praise God! We reached \$776.95, with over \$150 in coins - 50c, 20c, 10c, 5c.

By Sonya Ashton

SCOTTSDALE STORMCo

2023 Scottsdale STORMCo week is forever etched in the memory of 16 staff members for all the right reasons!

An enthusiastic team led by our own youth director Pastor Dave Leo, and supported by his capable family and enthusiastic volunteers, met at Scottsdale in Tassie's beautiful North East for a week of service.

Our group put on a STORMCo kids club with the theme of "Creation" where songs, craft and some activities were creation focused.

Our afternoons were set aside for community projects which made a difference to all the volunteers' skills set, including hedges, lawn edges and garden beds.

We were able to finish the week with the Scottsdale Seventh-day Adventist Church. Aunty Vicki organised so much for us throughout the week and we were able to thank her and enjoy Sabbath with some community members and church members swelling the church almost to capacity.

Our daily 'Best of all,' apart from the food, was the way our night time panned out. After affirmation time we were led in a personal Bible study on Gideon who became real in each person's life.

The theme 'Mighty warrior' faith potential really touched our lives. There were many opportunities during the week where our team members were able to step out in faith and see God strengthen our willing effort to make the ordinary EXTRA ordinary.

We know from scripture that God equips and strengthens the called. For those on this trip it was a mighty trip, never to be forgotten and each person goes home with a deeper, more real experience of what it means to be part of God's family.



By Raluca Dan Marica

HEALTH AT AGFEST

The Seventh-day Adventist Church's Health Department recently offered a remarkable service by providing free health check-ups to farmers and the general public at Agfest, a three-day festival. The event was well-organised with registered nurses, a doctor and a dietitian on-site, along with a number of volunteers who provided friendly services to the public. The weather was a mix of good and bad with a warm Thursday, a muddy, rainy, and cold Friday and a sunny Saturday.

Along with the health check-up, the Seventh-day Adventist Church's health department also offered free Live More Project pocket edition books and Taste for Food as Medicine books, a fresh organic apple and a water bottle. This added value to the health check-up and provided attendees with useful resources for improving their health.

The event was a true representation of the Church's commitment to promoting good health and wellbeing. The Seventh-day Adventist Church's teachings emphasise a healthy lifestyle, which includes a plant-based diet, regular exercise, and avoidance



of harmful substances. The health check-up at Agfest provided a valuable opportunity for farmers and the general public to receive advice on how to maintain good health.

The event was highly appreciated by the public, who expressed gratitude for the services offered by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The Church's volunteers gave up their time and comfort to serve others and their efforts were greatly appreciated. The success



of the event has also led to an invitation for the health department to be present next year, which is a great opportunity to serve the community even further.

The event was a testament to the Church's commitment to promoting good health and wellbeing and it provided valuable resources to the community. The volunteers are to be commended for their selfless service and dedication. A BIG thank you to all!

NEWS



By Pr David Leo

PATHFINDER EXPEDITION

On Friday March 10 around 40 Tasmanian Pathfinders gathered at Camp Lake Leake to prepare for the hiking expedition at Freycinet National Park. On Sabbath morning we split into three groups. The beginners set up at Freycinet Paint-ball Campgrounds for basecamp. The beginners ventured out on various hikes ranging from 2-4 km in and around Freycinet National Park. The intermediate group did an approximately 21 km hike on the Wineglass Bay track to Bryans Beach and back while setting up camp at Cooks Beach. The last group completed the huge loop of around 38 km on the Freycinet Peninsula track.

Despite the mosquito bites, one of the staff having an allergic reaction,

blisters and a couple of minor injuries, the staff and the kids had a positive attitude which resulted in everyone having a great time and creating lasting memories.

A big thank you to all our leaders from our clubs around Tasmania for organising an amazing expedition. Thank you to our Pathfinder kids for their resilience and effort to inspire others. And praise God for sending rain a few days before the expedition to alleviate our concerns with water supply. We can look forward to more great times in a couple of weeks at the Pathfinder and Adventurer rally, May 26-28 at Pine Springs Campground.



NEWS



By Pr Mark Falconer

MINISTERS RETREAT AT ORFORD

From Sunday to Wednesday May 7-10, the Ministers from around the Conference came together at Spring Beach Youth Camp in Orford. The main speakers were Dr Darius Jankiewicz (Field Secretary for the South Pacific Division) and Dr Gilbert Cangy from Avondale University. As Field Secretary, Darius' main role is to examine and to weigh major theological issues facing our part of the world. It is surprising how many theological issues our church is currently facing. Foundational to weighing up theological issues is applying right hermeneutics. Hermeneutics is the art of rightly dividing the word of truth that seeks to understand the literary context Scripture is written in, so that we can make the right application of the Word to our world. Darius gave thorough presentations in this area as it is essential that we have the right tools. On Tuesday the ministers travelled to Freycinet and hiked to Wineglass Bay – and only one decided to take a dip in the ocean. You only do things once! Finally, we really enjoyed our time at the Spring Beach campground and we were very well looked after and would like to encourage your churches to utilise the Spring Beach for your next Church Camp. It is a beautiful location.



HILLIARD CHRISTIAN SCHOOL (HCS)

By Elizabeth Chaplin - Principal



120

**YEAR
ANNIVERSARY**

*"Oh, give thanks to the
LORD, for He is good!
For His mercy endures
forever."*

1 Chronicles 16:34

HILLIARD STUDENTS MARCH ANZAC DAY PARADE IN HOBART

Students from Hilliard Christian School participated in the Hobart ANZAC March, which is a meaningful way to show respect and gratitude for the sacrifices made by those who have served our country. This year the students marched behind the banner of the Australian Nursing Corps, acknowledging the crucial role that nurses played in the ANZAC campaign and throughout our nation's history. They attended the ANZAC service at the cenotaph and representatives of Primary and Secondary laid a wreath in honour of the fallen.



MOVE PLAY AND GO

This year Hilliard students have been engaged in a program to promote healthy eating and exercise. The Move Well Eat Well programme gifted our students with ball kits. The Kindy students were very excited to help inflate the soccer, footy, netball and volleyballs and tested them out before school. This sports equipment will be available for students during breaks supporting them in their outdoor play and learning activities.



NEW CLASSROOMS AND PLAYGROUND AT HILLIARD

The Secondary students moved into newly refurbished classrooms at the beginning of Term 2. The science labs, music room and art and graphic design rooms have been designed and furnished to align with the requirements of the learning area. The students and teachers are enjoying their new learning environments.

The Primary students can now enjoy the newly installed playground facilities, providing many opportunities to climb, run, slide and jump their way through playtime.

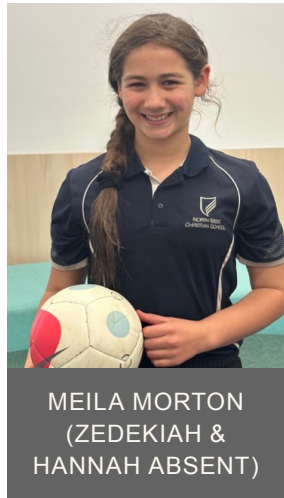


NORTH WEST CHRISTIAN SCHOOL (NWCS)

By Brayden Morton - Principal

FUTSAL STATE REPRESENTATIVES

NWCS went to a regional futsal competition in Devonport recently and the students represented themselves well with good sportsmanship and quality football played by all. Three students were chosen to further represent Tasmania in Brisbane later this year. Congratulation to Zedekiah Robbie, Hannah Beaty and Meila Morton for their selection into the state squad.



MEILA MORTON
(ZEDEKIAH & HANNAH ABSENT)

UTAS MILE TRUCK

The UTAS Mobile Interactive Learning Engagement Truck (MILE Truck) has been on NWCS campus for three days providing an opportunity for students to explore options for their future pathway. Kindy to Year 12 students have been onboard engaging in a range of educational experiences using Digital Technologies, allowing them to see and experience technologies being used in a wide range of fields and spaces. Senior students have been encouraged to pursue their future goals through the tutors and the interactive learning tools that are available onboard the truck.



BIBLE STUDIES AND BAPTISMS

Over the past 6 months we have been blessed with many students choosing to do Bible Studies with Pr Jacob Ellis. At the commencement of the year we had around 6 baptisms with Pr Leo. This year God is continuing to move in our school with around 20-25 students completing Bible studies and around 10 students committed to baptisms in 2023.

BUILDING PROGRAM

The NWCS building program is coming to a close. We are blessed to have some great new learning spaces for the students to enjoy and to increase our music program into the future. The new reception area is now available, and the front of the school is looking amazing. Praise God for the vision of the school and may He continue to build this school into His mission for this community.



TITHING - A TEST

By Pr Cosmin Dan Marica

CFO - TASMANIAN CONFERENCE

Someone has once told me that giving to God is by far the most significant financial factor for life management. This is also a biblical principle because when we put God first, He will give us wisdom and will bless us. Proverbs 3:5-10; Deuteronomy 28:1-14; Malachi 3:6-12; Matthew 6:33

So, Why Do We Give?

Because we want to glorify God as our Creator, to integrate Him into the material side of our lives and to thank Him for His grace and blessings.

But tithing is different!

Tithing isn't a matter of generosity or gratitude. It's a matter of honesty with God.

"All the tithe of the land... is the Lord's. It is holy to the Lord."
Leviticus 27:30

The word for "tithe" and "tenth" are used interchangeably in both the Old and New Testaments. For example, let's look at the case of Abram and Melchizedek.

The first mention of tithe in the Bible is Genesis 14:20. Abram gave Melchizedek, the priest of the most High God, "a tithe of all" the spoils of Sodom which were given to him by the king of Sodom.

The last mention of tithe in the Bible is in Hebrews 7:1-10. This passage recounts the story of Abraham and his encounter with Melchizedek. In this account, we are told, "The patriarch Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils." (vs. 4)

The Significance of Tithing

In Leviticus 27:30 and Numbers 18:21, the Bible outlines in simple and direct terms that the tithe is holy and that God has ordained it to be used by those who work for Him.

In *Counsels on Stewardship* p. 65, Ellen White advises us that to last-day Christians, the tithing system is equivalent to the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil for Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.

In the book *Education* at page 25 we read that

"There was nothing poisonous in the fruit itself, and the sin was not merely in yielding to appetite. (1) It was distrust of God's goodness, (2) disbelief of His Word, and (3) rejection of His authority, that made our first parents transgressors, and that brought into the world a knowledge of evil."

So when we are faithful with our tithe we show God that we

- (1) trust His goodness,
- (2) believe His word and
- (3) accept His authority.

In this way, tithing becomes a worship experience more than a giving practice. ■



THE SEARCH FOR TRANSFORMATIONAL TRUTH

By Pr Mark Falconer

As a new Adventist, I remember proudly proclaiming, “I have found the truth!” Say that today, some will think you have an ‘air of superiority’ or you are arrogant, narrow minded – as all religions are valid! Yet, strangely, if you say... “I am searching for the truth” – you would be warmly affirmed on your journey. Why such a reaction to finding ‘the truth’?

Evolution predicted religion would die out, but that hasn’t happened. In fact, the opposite is true – Christianity has flourished in many parts of the world, and so secularists have resorted to controlling religion by removing it from the public sphere to the private space. Why? Briefly, religion is seen as divisive and in a postmodern world it is all about ‘your truth.’ There is a war against Biblical truth from all fronts – secularists, within the church, but less visibly, from the untruths we tell ourselves. What do I mean? – let me explain.

Winston Churchill famously stated during WWII, “In wartime, truth is so precious that she should always be attended by a bodyguard of lies.” In the theatre of War, truth was protected from the enemy by deception, subterfuge, which was essential during wartime. Churchill was right in that Truth is indeed precious. Naturally, as Adventist we don’t protect truths with a body of lies, but we can internally atomize the impact of transformational truth by our egos, pride, selfishness, and desires by lying to ourselves and saying it is OK, and/or it doesn’t matter. For instance, pride has the unique ability to empower the vertical self through self-glorification, self-devotion and self-justification that is fortified by a body of lies that stands in opposition to the transformational truth of Jesus.

In practice, how does a body of lies obscure truth. Naaman was stricken with the most dreaded of all diseases, leprosy. Naaman visits Elisha (2 Kings 5) who sends a message, ‘go wash in the Jordan 7 times’. Naaman with fury complains, “Behold, I thought that he would surely come out to me and stand and call upon the name of the LORD his God, and wave

his hand over the place and cure the leper” (v10-11). What body of lies was Naaman nurturing? Pride is the obvious one. Through his servants he swallowed his pride and washed himself 7 times and he was miraculously healed.

The story doesn’t stop there. Elisha refuses payment, but Gehazi curiously invokes the name of the Lord and runs after Naaman to “get something from him”(v20). Elisha later quizzes him, “where have you been, Gehazi?” Gehazi with a slippery reply – “Your servant went nowhere”. He was found out and now leprosy clung to Gehazi. What went wrong here? Gehazi – believed in the coming of the Messiah, a Sabbath keeper, a good Adventist and no less a servant of a prophet and yet though he believed all this – he invokes the name of the Lord and acts dishonestly. How did he reconcile the dilemma? He allowed a body of lies to pollute his heart by saying you can still have both – The Truth and an alternate ‘truth’ – and this is OK for whatever reason, and these lies assuage his conscience.

Today, spirituality has been reduced to our desires: ‘What I feel’, ‘what I think’, which forms the basis of choices. Leo Tolstoy once said –

“There are two Gods, there is the god that people generally believe in - a god who has to serve them. This god does not exist. But the God whom people forget - the God whom we all have to serve - exists, and is the prime cause of our existence and of all that we perceive”.

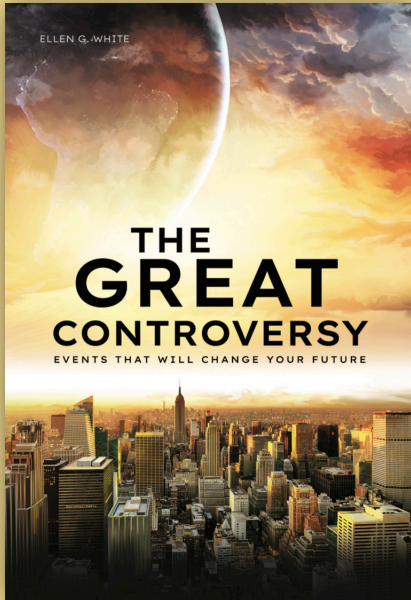
Those who have guarded their heart through the Holy Spirit from a body of lies (self-talk of justification), are people who are prepared and capable of responding to situations in a godly way. Let our prayer be,

“Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life (Psalm 139:23-24)”. ■



Four Ways To Share Hope

Help Your Community Find Hope



The orders have arrived, and you are encouraged to join the project to share The Great Controversy in Tasmania and bring hope to many.

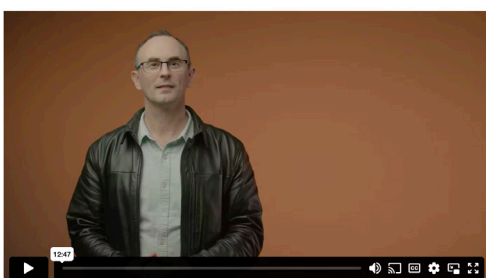
Talk to your pastor to find out more details and to get copies of the literature. We have received three versions that you can prayerfully consider sharing with a family member, friend, work colleague and acquaintances.

- The Great Controversy (Full Book)
- The Great Hope (Condensed Great Controversy)
- A Guy on a Bike (Tract about the impact of the Great Controversy)

10 WAYS TO SHARE

1. Read a sharing book!
2. Pray for an opportunity to share.
3. Preach from the sharing book of the year and offer the book to attendees.
4. Participate in traditional sharing methods such as display racks or door knocking. When sharing a spiritual book, also offer a health or topical book with it.
5. Invite someone over for dinner and a spiritually uplifting movie. Give a relevant sharing book as a gift.
6. Host a church movie night and give a sharing book as a gift to attendees.
7. Include in your Welcome Pack at church.
8. Share your testimony and your favourite quote from the book in person or online.
9. Include a Book Sharing Table at church seminars, expos, and programs.
10. Help youth achieve their Pathfinder literature honour by sharing.

12MIN TRAINING VIDEO



Learn how to effectively share literature by watching the video on the Literature Ministry Website



www.literature.adventistchurch.com/sharing-month/