

# EPPING SDA CHURCH NEWSLETTER



## Welcome

Welcome to our weekly Epping Church Newsletter.

Have you been paying attention this week? What has grabbed your attention? NSW State election? – foregone conclusion. Carbon Tax? – old idea repackaged. Release of iPad2? – even Apple fanboys and girls are non-plussed with the upgrade.

In case you missed it (no excuses really), Epping's Website has been upgraded and revamped thanks to Arthur. New Server, new features, new contents and a much better interface. Why don't you visit and check it out for yourselves: <http://www.eppingsda.org.au>

Thank you to all the contributions for this week. If there is any information you would like to share or a photo

you would like us to view, please email it to the address below: [ajing@eppingsda.org.au](mailto:ajing@eppingsda.org.au).

This newsletter can also be downloaded on our website: <http://www.eppingsda.org.au>

## This Sabbath at Epping

The speaker this week is our own elder Arthur Wong. Henry is the elder in charge and the offering is for Adventist Youth. David Caukill from ICC will also be talking about the new Epping Mission Project in Sri Lanka.

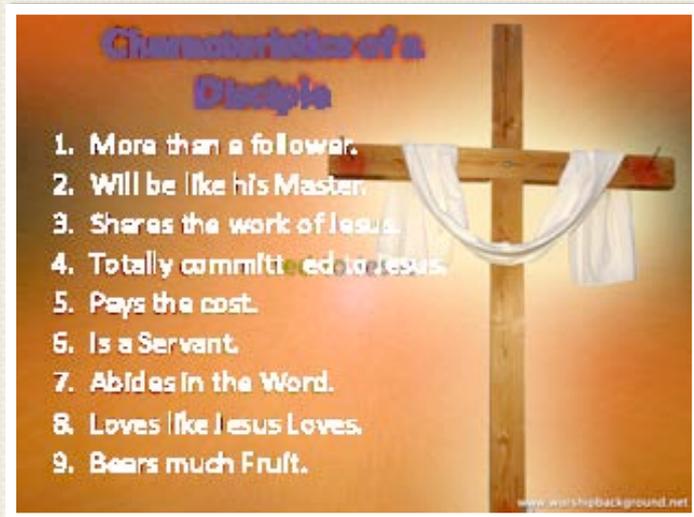
## Sabbath at Epping 12th March 2011

Pastor Michael Worker took the service on the 12<sup>th</sup> March, the sermon being entitled: "More than a follower – being a Disciple"

What is the difference between a follower and a disciple?

A Follower is one who subscribes to the teachings or methods of another; a servant or a subordinate. A follower often imitates or copies another.

A Disciple is one who embraces and assists in spreading the teachings of another.



Some relevant texts are:

Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples". [John 8:31](#)

"By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." [John 13:35](#)

"This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples." [John 15:8](#)

## Last Sabbath at Epping

Our service last Sabbath was taken by Pastor Rams Tupe and was entitled "Are we there yet?"

Rams began by reflecting that we are living in a trying time .. Earthquakes, tsunamis, floods  
What's next?

[Matthew 24:6-8 - Jesus and his disciples](#)

"You will hear of wars and rumours of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of birth pains."

We are not quite there yet.

We are now going through the birth process as Christians. Christ will come at the end of the process. When the end comes, so shall salvation

Genesis 3:16-19

*“I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; with painful labour you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.”*

*To Adam he said, “Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You must not eat from it,’ ‘Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.’”*

God gave us a command and we didn't obey.

Now we need to let the process take place. We reap what we sow.

As the world deteriorates there is hope

Matthew 24:14

*“Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.*



# Church Events and News

*1. Inspire 2011 – This will be held on April 14-17. EPPING CHURCH WILL BE CLOSED ON APRIL 16 Be renewed, recalibrated and refocused. Inspire 2011 will be four days of spiritual refreshment, growing in your giftedness and sharpening your focus.*

*In 2011 our theme is connecting. We will be exploring what it means Keynote Speaker: Ben Maxson We're excited to announce that our keynote speaker is Pr Ben Maxson. Pr Maxson leads the Paradise SDA Church in California. Previously he has served as our General Conference Stewardship director. Pr Maxson has developed some great discipleship resources, is the author of 'Get Normal' which is an excellent book and shaping a biblical worldview and is an engaging speaker who is in demand around the world. Pr Maxson's presentations will challenge and inspire us.*

*Please keep this in your diaries. To register, download this document:*

[http://www.gscadventist.org.au/site\\_data/430/assets/0029/5885/Application\\_Form.pdf](http://www.gscadventist.org.au/site_data/430/assets/0029/5885/Application_Form.pdf)

## *2. Working Bee - Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> March*

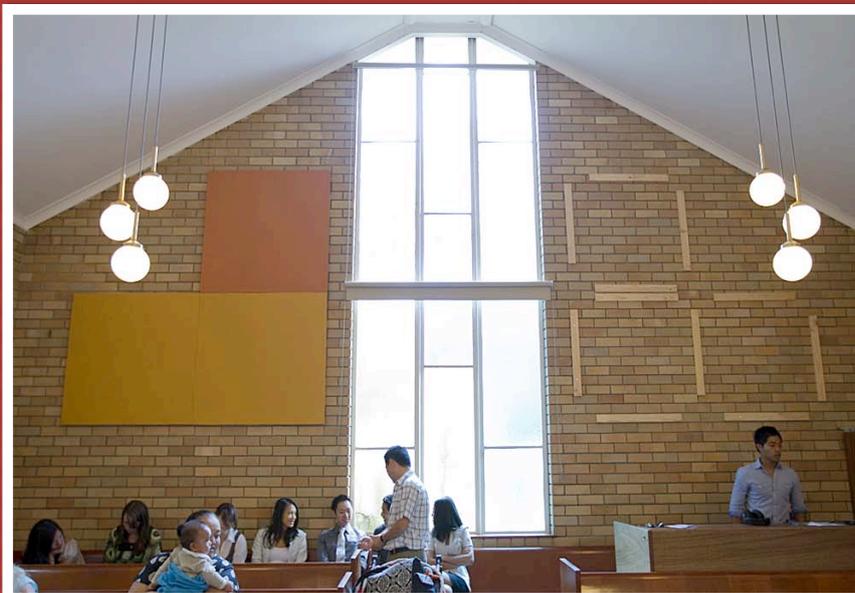
*From Eva:*

*I wanted to write and thank all those who participated in the Epping Church Working Bee yesterday. We had an excellent turn out and a lot was achieved on the day. The church as a result has not looked better in a long time.*

*Some of the things we did:*

- Put up new fly screens in the Church Hall*
- Sand and varnished window sills in the classrooms*
- Water pressured and cleaned the mould off bricks and footpaths*
- Make and put up acoustics panels in the Church*
- Repair work in bathrooms*
- Clean up all Sabbath School classrooms, Pastor's office and Stage in the Hall*
- Drive to the tip, and throw out a whole trailer load of obsolete and old materials cluttering up the church*

*I'm sure I've not listed everything we did, and a BIG thank you to those who helped on the day. And for those who missed out, there will be opportunities in the near future!*



*Acoustic Panels – Work in Progress*

### 3. Cell Groups

Cell groups for Term 1 are concluding this Friday evening..

Week 7: Mar 25th

Venues:

- 1) Baxter's (7pm start)
- 2) Go's
- 3) Tungs
- 4) Youth - see Matthew Ing for timetable

The prophecies within Revelations are being fulfilled in our day and we as a church would benefit from understanding them fully as Christ's second coming draws nearer.

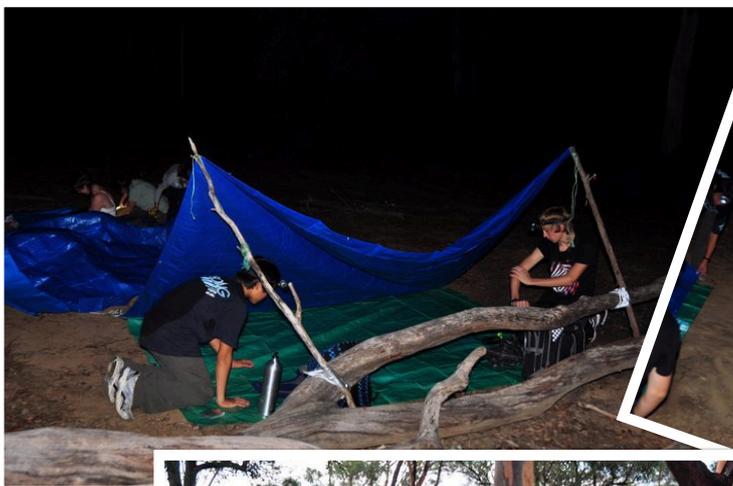
Please pray for the series

Rod

## Pathfinder News

### Survival Camp Report:

The pictures tell the story. No tent, No sleeping bag, No mat. Congratulations to all those who survived!



Pathfinder Meeting this week:

From Henry:

“Remember helping out the Orphanage in the Philippines? We did all the fund raising to help the children and raised over \$60,000. We will be hearing some more from David Caukill this Sabbath”.

This week ICC Australia is sending out their newsletters to their sponsors - people who donate money like we did. They would like our help to count and stuff envelopes to the sponsors of their many orphanages around the world. If you are able to help after lunch, we will set up a couple of tables downstairs and if you can help for an hour or two, that would be excellent. We have about 20,000 envelopes to count and sort. Only.

Thank you very much in advance.

Upcoming Pathfinder Events include:

- 23-24 April – Backpack Camp
- 18th June – Pathfinder Investiture
- 2-3 July - Proposed Snow Trip
- 23-25 September - Pathfinder Expedition
- 28-30 October - Social Night with Church/Adventurer Camporee

## Youth News

On the 19th of March, 14 youth members braved the rain and went to Cliftonville lodge to camp the night. After a night with non-stop rain, we decided to postpone the waterski weekend and do it another week where it wasn't so wet. Even though weather wasn't great, we had a great time cooking our own dinner, playing cards and dictionary in the tent and enjoying the time we had with one another. We are all looking forward to the 8th of May where we will be able to get out on the water and waterski. Photographs below show our pathfinder skills coming in handy!



## Future Personal Ministry News

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*May 1 (Sunday) - Health Assessment at Eastwood Shopping Centre.*

*May-June - Stress Management Course. 6 week course (May 7/14/21/28 and June 4/18)*

*August -Vegetarian Cooking series (August 6, 13, 20 and 27)*

*October - Body Balance Course*

## Sew and Tell

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*From Carlene:*

*Our next meeting will be at Sue's home at 7.30 pm on April 4. All ladies are very welcome to share in a devotional reading, craft and fellowship. There will be photographs to see for those who attended Coralea's birthday dinner.*

*And you might want to wish Coralea a happy 70th birthday for March 31 - we were a bit early with our celebration but here is photographic evidence that we did indeed celebrate, and Coralea has been enjoying using her present ever since.*



## Church Offerings

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*I continue to encourage all members to support our Local Budget offerings each week. On Sabbaths where the offering is not formally assigned to our Local Church Budget, you can still support Epping Church by utilising the envelopes marked "Local Budget".*

*These are located in the Church Foyer and on the Church Pews. Please ask the deacons or deaconesses for an envelope if these are not readily available.*

# Stewardship

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This is Part 4 in our series on Stewardship:

## 4 – Stewarding Your Gifts

One of the purposes God created us for is service. We often miss this purpose by becoming wrapped up in our own needs. We take our 'my needs' approach into relationships, families and churches and wonder why we are often left dissatisfied. Service is about looking outside of our own needs to others, not for what they can give us or how they contribute to our success, but because like us they are also infinitely valuable. Like us, they are God's children.

A church community is also about living beyond yourself. Rather than looking at the church and asking if your needs are being met, what about spending some time thinking of ways you can meet the needs of others – and then doing them. In this way you find your own life being fulfilled. It sounds backwards but it works. What would it take for you to re-orient your life around an attitude of service? Jesus tells us that it's when we experience a life of serving others, meeting others' needs, that we will start to feel we are fulfilling God's purpose.

Service is often thought of only as a task, but true service flows out of a servant heart and a worldview where life is seen in terms of serving God and others. Serving God and others becomes the fulfilment of life rather than an obligation or duty. We are only fully alive when we're helping others. Jesus said, 'If you insist on saving your life, you will lose it. Only those who throw away their lives for my sake and for the sake of the Good News will ever know what it means to really live.' (Mark 8:35, Matthew 10:39, 16:25; Luke 9:24, 17:33) You are going to give your life to something. What will it be - a career, sport, hobby, fame, wealth? Service is the only way to real significance. 'As we serve together in God's family our lives take on eternal importance.' God wants to use you to make a difference in the world. He wants to work through you.

We must keep in mind that we are not saved by service but rather, saved for service (2 Timothy 1:9). We don't serve God out of guilt, fear, or even duty, but out of joy and gratitude for what He's done for us. Paul says in Romans 12:1, 'In view of what God has done for you, offer yourselves as a 'living sacrifice.' This is about dying to self and serving God.

God wired you up to make a unique contribution in our church family - His body. You were uniquely shaped to serve God. He gives you talents and gifts and then asks you to Steward them (see the parable of the talents Matt 25:14-30). The Bible says, 'We are God's workmanship, created in Christ to do good works.' (Ephesians 2:10) You are not an assembly-line product made for the Warehouse. You are a custom-designed, one-of-a kind masterpiece. God deliberately shaped and formed you to serve Him in a way that makes your ministry unique.

### Your Passion

The Bible uses the term 'heart' to describe the bundle of desires, hopes, interests, ambitions, dreams and affections you have. Your heart represents the source of your motivations – what you love to do and what you care about most. God has given each of us a unique 'emotional heartbeat' that races when we think about the subjects, activities or circumstances that interest us. We instinctively care about some things and not others. These things provide the clues that indicate where you should serve.

### Gifts

Once you have thought through the area God wired you up to serve in, think through what you might do in that area. This is where it is useful to consider spiritual gifts. God gives every believer spiritual gifts to be used in service. (Romans 12:4-8, 1 Corinthians 12, 1 Corinthians 7:7, Ephesians 4:8-15) Spiritual Gifts are the unique abilities God places in each of us (believers) that enable us to build up the church and glorify Him. We need to take these abilities seriously. 'God has given each of us the ability to do certain things well.' (Romans 12:6, TLB)

You can't earn spiritual gifts or deserve them – that's why they are called gifts! They are an expression of God's grace to you – Ephesians 4:7. God has carefully selected each believer's Spiritual Gift and place of service within the body. Scripture emphasises that this is a life purpose that we can't afford to neglect (1 Corinthians 12:1). Sadly, we can get so caught up with life that we never get around to opening the gifts God has given us. 'Uncalled for and unused, the spiritual gifts bestowed on them have dwindled in feebleness.' – (Ellen White, Selected Messages Book 1, p.127.)

In choosing men and women for His service, God does not ask whether they possess learning or eloquence or worldly wealth. He asks: "Do they walk in such humility that I can teach them My way? Can I put My words into their lips? Will they represent Me?"  
(Ellen White, Testimonies 7, 144)

Do you know your spiritual gifts? Are you using them as acts of worship to God? If not, now is the time to begin. Pray about your service, examine your feelings, explore different gifts and examine your effectiveness.

2 Timothy 1:6 reminds us to fan into flame the gift of God which is in us. What steps will you take to heat up the area of your unique passion, gifts, and style? God provides the gifts that make ministry possible – we provide bodies for the ministry.

Reflection:

What do you think are the main reasons people do not serve in the church and what would it take to change this?

What factors might be limiting your ability to serve? What steps will you take to change this?

What would your friends say you are passionate about? What keeps you talking late into the night?

If you would like to investigate further how God has wired you up for service visit [www.gscadventist.org.au/stewardship](http://www.gscadventist.org.au/stewardship) and click on the serving sidebar or contact the Stewardship department to find out where a 'Connections' course is being run next.

## Prayer Ministry

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- Please remember the victims and families of all those affected by the Earthquakes in Japan and Christchurch.
- Please continue to pray for Ron's safety.
- Please pray for Luna's health and recovery.
- Please continue to pray for Ivan as he continues his recovery.
- Please continue to pray for Sue's health and also her family.
- Please pray for Bob as he continues to battle against his illness.
- Please continue to pray for Lorraine's health.

## Dates to keep in your Diary

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<b>April 9</b>	Deacon and Deaconess Ordination
<b>April 14-17</b>	Inspire 2011

## Photo of the Week

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*Photo by Rod Kuo*

## Thought of the Week

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*“Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him.”*

*James 1:12*