If you have anything to share with the church, please don't hesitate to contact us on the below emails.
Mande :mande.lees@gmail.com ; **Stephanie**: stephcyee@yahoo.com ; **Alvin**: ajing@eppingsda.org.au

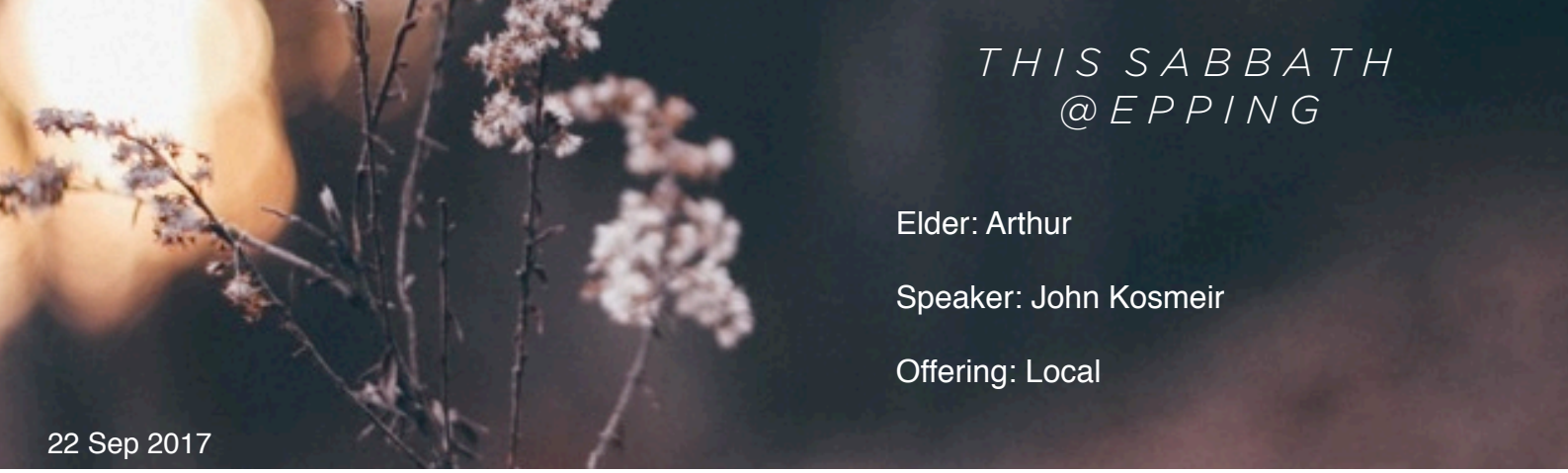
Happy Sabbath Everyone. Hope we're all enjoying the lovely weather.

EVENTS

September 22 - 24	Pathfinder Expedition @ Thirlmere Lakes.
Oct 8	Sunday Working Bee 130pm-4pm
Oct 13 -15	Men's Conference 2017 @Crosslands
Nov 4	Farewell lunch for the Worker Family
Nov 18	ADRA Vanuatu Youth Mission Trip Auction Fundraiser
Nov 25	Church Board Meeting
March 9-11, 2018.	Epping Church Camp @ Crosslands (50% Deposit required by end of September)

PRAYER REQUEST

- Please Pray for our Year 12 students sitting the HSC this year.
- Please pray for the Worker family as they prepare for their move down to Melbourne
- Please remember the Young family as they mourn the passing of Esther Young



THIS SABBATH @EPPING

Elder: Arthur

Speaker: John Kosmeir

Offering: Local

22 Sep 2017

LAST WEEK

The church wished all the year 12's that are about to sit their HSC exams. Please remember them in your prayers.

Last week Pr. Nigel preached about Joseph.

Because of his journey from pit to palace, Joseph became an agent of consequences, forgiveness, and assurance, to his family.

Jesus is our Joseph in the courts of heaven and also dispenses consequences, forgiveness, and assurance.
Pr. Nigel also used the story of Joseph to point out that the choices we make in our youth will bear fruit in later life.

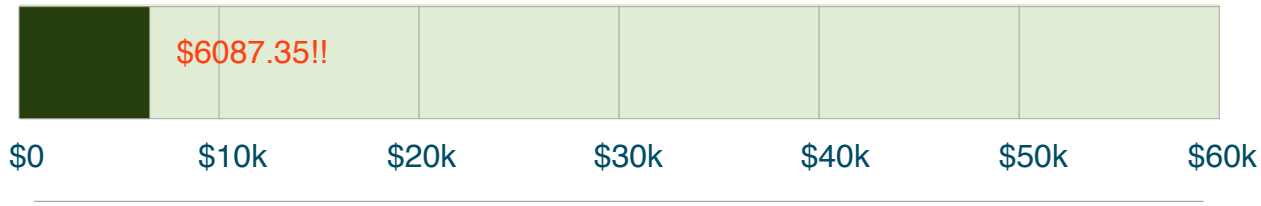
Also the first of many Vegetarian cooking club was a hit!
We had a terrific time sharing recipes and enjoyed watching the demonstration at our inaugural recipe club.

Epping Church:
Roof Repair Fundraising

The Epping Church roof is leaking and in need of repair. It will cost $60,000 to fix it. The Board has approved a "Repair the Roof Fund Raiser" with monthly Special Offerings on the first Sabbath of every month commencing August 5th (then Sept 2 / Oct 7 etc)

Roof Repair Fund trip is now on the e giving website. Feel free to donate here,

https://egiving.org.au/Epping%20SDA%20Church



Bibles wanted!

Bibles and any Christian books in Malaysian, Cantonese, Mandarin Chinese, Thai or Italian to bring good news to the inmates at Long Bay Prison.
Please give them to Pastor Nigel.

2018 ADRA Youth Mission Vanuatu

Available to donate on our site down below.
https://egiving.org.au/Epping%20SDA%20Church

NOTICE BOARD

22 Sep 2017

Men's Conference!
October 13 to 15, 2017

The Family Ministries department are wanting to establish a Men's Ministry Movement in our Conference. Part of this strategy is an annual Men's Conference. For the first time in the Greater Sydney Conference, we are holding a Men's gathering from October 13 to 15, 2017 at Crosslands Youth and Convention Centre. The theme for the Men's Conference is 'Stronger Together'.

Our presenters include Trafford Fischer, Eddie Hypolite, Bryan Craig, Ian Howie and Billy Opetaia.

Topics covered include Living in a Man's World, dealing with anger and conflict, the iGeneration, Everyone communicates – few connect, fool-proofing your marriage and Men, Myths and Masculinity just to mention a few topics.

The cost for the weekend will be $120 if you bring your own tent and $160 if you want a bed in a room. This cost includes all meals, accommodation and resources.

Please promote this to all men from upper high school to grandpa's.

For more information and to register, please go to https://sydney.adventist.org.au/mens-conference/

If you have any questions, please call or send an email to cheonnethstrickland@adventist.org.au

"Same Sex Marriage Postal Plebiscite" - resources from the Australian Union Conference

In order to contribute to the conversation on the issue of same sex marriage, the Australian Union Conference has compiled some excellent resources on its website https://adventist.org.au/marriage.

There you will find the text of the little booklet that was distributed with the Record earlier this year under various headings on the left hand side of the page. Can I remind you of two relevant sections in light of the upcoming plebiscite, "Redefining Marriage – the Consequences for Families" and "Redefining Marriage – the Consequences for Religious Freedom and Free Speech"

It is important to be informed and we encourage you to be involved in this plebiscite and vote your conscience and pray for God's leading in our nation.

Keep up with the latest developments at https://www.coalitionformarriage.com.au.

The push for changing the definition of marriage has been an ongoing debate in Australia for a number of years, and it's certainly an issue that is very polarising. Earlier this year the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Australia created a booklet and resources to help members understand the Church's position on the debate, which are available online at adventist.org.au/marriage.

Last week the Australian Government announced a postal plebiscite would be held on the issue. This is a voluntary vote, therefore it is important that you ensure that you are eligible to vote and that your details are up-to-date. You can check your electoral details at www.aec.gov.au/enrol. We want to encourage you to make an intentional decision to vote and to be informed about the consequences of changing the definition of marriage.

As we interact with others on this issue, we must do so with love and respect. Many people have called for this to be a respectful debate. As Christians we need to be at the forefront of modelling Christ's character to everyone, even though we may disagree with the other person's point of view. In addition to demonstrating love and respect, let's pray for those engaging in the public debate, and for those who may feel marginalised or upset by the nature and process of this debate. There is no doubt that some people will feel very vulnerable at this time, and we need to find opportunities to minister to them.

We believe a change to the definition of marriage will dramatically re-shape our nation and have consequences for children and freedom of religion. Despite what some may say, and despite the current traditional definition of marriage, there has already been a significant shift, driven by various forces, to restrict freedom of speech for those who disagree with the push to change the definition of marriage. This push to restrict freedom of speech and freedom of religion has been recently demonstrated by the actions of the Anti-Discrimination Tribunal in Tasmania summoning two Christian pastors for sharing their views on marriage in a public place and, amongst other things, quoting Bible verses. This follows a series of events earlier this year where there were campaigns to remove Christians from their corporate and public positions for holding a traditional view of marriage.

As we have seen recently in the Queensland public education system, there have been moves to restrict freedom of religion in the playground, to the point that even the exchange of Christmas cards was to be forbidden. Due to public pressure, Education Department leaders softened their stance. It is unlikely that their views have changed; rather they recognised that they overstepped on this issue.

The cross-party Senate Select Committee on the Exposure Draft of the Marriage Amendment (Same-Sex Marriage) Bill, which reported earlier this year, considered the Government's initial amending legislation. It indicated in its conclusion that, "There was broad agreement that any future legislation to amend the Marriage Act should ensure religious freedoms are appropriately protected when considering changes that extend access to marriage to all adult couples."

To this point, there have been no policies developed by the Government to provide such positive protections. If the Government were to proceed on a proposed private member's bill, the *Marriage Amendment (Definition and Religious Freedoms) Bill 2017*, circulated only last week, there would be clear concerns as, despite its name, the protections for religious freedom are very narrow.

Mark Spencer of Christian Schools Australia expressed it well when he stated, "It is however clear that should legislation be enacted to change the definition of marriage, careful attention is required to understand and deliver a balanced outcome that respects the human rights of all Australians if the

nation is to continue to be a tolerant and plural society where a diversity of views is not only legal but valued."

Spencer is concerned that unless such legislation is put in place, then there is no protection or guarantee for schools that staff can be expected to model an approach to marriage consistent with the doctrines, tenets or beliefs taught within that Christian school (or even a church). At this stage the longer term consequences of changing the definition of marriage are unknown, but as we look overseas, there is reason for concern.

Seventh-day Adventists believe, as stated in fundamental belief 23, that marriage is between a man and a woman, and that this belief has its origins in the Garden of Eden. In addition to producing our own series of resources, the Coalition for Marriage, has released some excellent materials on its website www.coalitionformarriage.com.au. The Coalition for Marriage is a coalition of likeminded people that exists solely on donations. Should you wish to donate, you can do so via their website.

In summary, we feel it is important, as Australians and as Christians, that we pray for this process. Further, we need to be enrolled to vote and make an intentional decision to cast our vote. In order to have an educated vote, we need to be informed about the consequences of changing the definition of marriage, including significant risks to freedom of speech and freedom of religion in Australia. We seek God's guidance and leading for all Australians, no matter their views on the marriage debate, and should we engage in any discussion, to do so with love and respect.

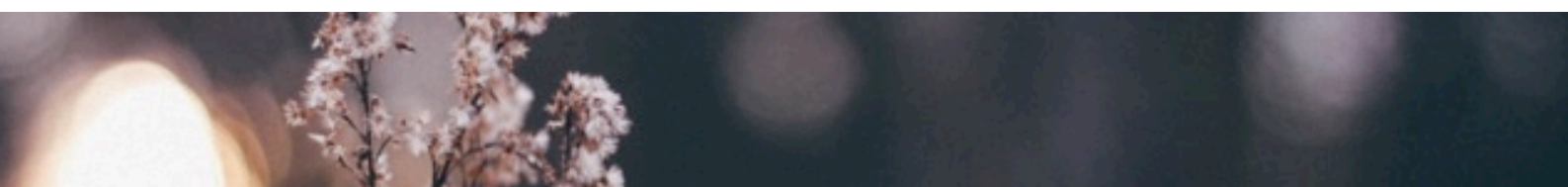
THOUGHT OF THE WEEK

LOVE

22 Sep 2017

"From a worldly point of view, money is power. From a Christian standpoint, love is power" 4T 138. A statement like this should not surprise us. We have all felt the struggle between God's Spirit and our selfish nature. Thankfully, we also know that in the battle between good and evil, between love and selfishness, love will win out. We just have to make sure we are on the side of love – God's side.

But even that word "love" can cause some confusion. The ancient Greeks recognised many types of love and had names for them all. They recognised everything from lust and obsession to the love a parent has for their children. Those in favour of marriage equality argue that love is love and so it must be a good thing, it must be right. But can there be bad love? In a word, yes. If one's love does more harm than good, especially to our salvation, then it is an unhealthy love and not worth preserving. An alcoholic loves his alcohol. A gambler loves the casino. A paedophile loves children. The Bible tells us that the "love of money is the root of all evil" (1 Tim. 6:10). Simply saying that you love something does not make it "good."

God asks us to love with an "agape" love. This is the love He has for us. It is an unselfish love. It has nothing to do with how we respond or if the love is reciprocated. It asks for nothing in return. It is a pure unselfish love that can even let us love our enemies. God's love is the type of love worth emulating. It is pure, it is unselfish, it is unconditional, and it can save.

"Love… and your reward shall be great" Luke 6:35.