



CONCH SHELL

24 Edition | JANUARY

RETHINKING WHAT TO DO IN 2022

Welcome to 2022 - The year of **'I WILL GO TO MY FAMILY'**.

Unfortunately, it also comes with challenges. Some of these challenges will go away, while others like Covid 19 may evolve and remain. It may be safe to say that new ones will come. Regardless of how each one perceives and interpret these challenges, one thing is clear - we expect hard and difficult times as we are coming to the close of our earth's history.

EG White in her writing said: "The calamities by land and sea, the unsettled state of society, the alarms of war, are portentous. They forecast approaching events of the greatest magnitude. The agencies of evil are combining their forces and consolidating. They are strengthening for the last great crisis. Great changes are soon to take place in our world, and the final movements will be rapid ones." LDE pg 11.2. While such message may create more fear, our Lord Jesus admonished His disciples with these words: "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Luke 21:28. What a comforting thought in these unprecedented times!

On the positive side of things, challenges that touch the very life of a person often opens the door of the heart to be more receptive to the present TRUTH. And so, if there is any opportune time in our history to do ministry to our schools and family - it is today - 2022. **I WILL GO TO MY FAMILY and MY SCHOOL CHILDREN'S FAMILY.**

Finally, before I reach out to my family and my school children's family, it is important to self-reflect on such questions as these:

- Do I know this man called Jesus? This is a personal but very important question. Only a saved sinner can feel the burden of a lost family member and the school children and their family.
- Do my family and students see Jesus in me at all times? Family members and students can tell whether Jesus is my best friend in all my undertakings.
- Do my personal preparations and actions show that I am preparing for my Savior's soon return? Or am I living my life as if *'my Lord delayeth his coming'*?
- Do my students share the glorious hope that I have in Jesus' soon return in their families?
- With all the signs of Christ's return happening around the world, am I going to run my school program as usual? Or am I going to focus more on the essentials that will prepare both my students and my family to meet my Savior?

Finally, while the world is thinking about how to survive the different calamities. Our mandate is to reach our family and our school family.

All the best for another school year.

Joseph Pitakia
Associate Education Director



YEAR 12 & 13 DEDICATION SABBATH



*Sanaila Kai (Left) with the school chaplain
Pr Leone*

On the 29th of January, Navesau Adventist High School in Fiji, held a Dedication Service for its Year 12 & 13. Year 13 will begin their External Exams on February 1st while Year 12 will begin theirs on February 7th. The speaker for the Dedication Service was the Fiji Mission Education Director, Mr Anasa Vateitei, who delivered a powerful message on the theme, OUR EYES ARE UPON YOU LORD. Parents, Friends of the school and Old Scholars were also present in numbers to witness the dedication of the representatives of God's school to these External Examinations.

The climax of the Dedication service, was the baptism of Sanaila Kai, a Year 12 male student, who had approached the school chaplain earlier in the week, requesting to follow Jesus into the waters of baptism. Sanaila has always been a part of Bible study classes, but never gave his name to be

baptized. Sanaila comes from a Non Adventist family. His parents separated early in his life and he was left to fend for himself most of the time growing up. This led him to a life on the streets where he got involved heavily with drug usage, so much so, he almost ended up mentally deranged. Sanaila praise the Lord for Pr Mosese Taria and his family for rescuing him from the streets and enrolling him at Suva Adventist College. When Pr Taria was posted to Levuka, they enrolled Sanaila at Navesau Adventist high School to be a boarder. Sanaila praise the Lord for the choice to come to Navesau. Even though, he would hide and smoke in his first year at Navesau, through constant prayers and teachers' support, he managed to quit smoking. Sanaila have been testifying to churches even before being baptized about how the Holy Spirit have transformed his life and about how much he is enjoying his relationship with the Lord.

The principal Mr Josua Qalobula would like to solicit your prayers for our Years 12 and 13 and also a special prayer for Sanaila. Please continue to uphold Navesau in your prayers.

GET TOGETHER, GET CONNECTED

"Get Together, Get Connected" was the theme for Epauto Adventist Senior Secondary School staff retreat that took place at **Gideon's Landing, North-West** of Efate from the 28th to the 30th of January 2022. The school administration decided to organize the retreat in order to get to know the new teachers and their families, redirect the focus of the teachers and empower the teachers to meet the challenges of 2022 with God.



Epauto Staff and their families

Two of the main challenges that affected the **teachers' attendance** was the heavy rain on Friday and their lack of tents. One of the Non- Adventist teachers reflected that she knew the program would be exciting and even though she had no tent she prayed that God would provide one for her. Though her sick husband pleaded with her to stay with him during that particular week-end she decided nothing was going to stop her. When she arrived on the camp-site she approached one of the camp organizing committee members and told her of the tent problem. She was told that there was an extra tent that she and her two teenaged daughters could use for the weekend. Her husband was upheld in prayer and she was told by him that the doctors checked him over the weekend and were surprised that all his vitals were in the clear. She said she felt empowered by the messages from the three guest speakers and included that when we place God first in our priorities all else falls into place.

Overall, the staff families were blessed with the messages and connected well with each other. The staff look forward to impacting the students in and out of classroom in 2022 preparing them for the life now and for eternity. – *Caroline W Tauyavu*

MISSIONARIES SURVIVED VOLCANO ERUPTION



Gwenda took this photo while escape to the Mission head Office

It was around Thursday mid-day on the 13th of January that we received a tsunami warning. We were also packing at that time for we were told that we will be moving to Beulah Adventist College compound. Hence, our stuff were everywhere. However, the next day, around 10pm we received the cancellation news of the tsunami. So we went to bed that night thinking all is well. The next morning we had plans to visit a church member. We were both looking forward to that visitation in the afternoon.

15th of January the day of the Hunga-Tonga, Hunga-Haapai Volcano eruption, the president Pr Fanueli Mataele invited us to accompany them to their home at Lomalinda located inland. However, due to our plans, we wanted to stay and get ready for the visitation. Around 5 pm we decided to have an early dinner before the visit. During our dinner preparation, we heard the first explosion. And since the volcano had already erupted once before, we thought it was just another eruption. However, this time it was louder and was continuously erupting. Due to our location that we were a few steps away from the water front, we could clearly see

the eruption taking place. The smoke that rose from the eruption travelled within seconds across the sky reaching our home

We ran out of the house for we felt the vibration everywhere around us. When we were outside, the volcano erupted again. It exploded three times, the ground was shaking. We could see lightning flashing as the smoke continues to be released from the volcano. We quickly walked home due to fear. Upon reaching our veranda, the third eruption occurred. This time it was so loud that it hurt our ears and blocked it. We were shouting but we **couldn't hear each other**, even though we were yelling. We just ran inside the house as quickly as we could, grabbed our backpack and ran out to the second floor of the mission office building. From the balcony of the president's office we witnessed the rise of sea level. It rose high above the sea wall coming inland entering the mission compound. The strong huge waves started coming in. The waves so strong that the gates and fence could not

withstand it. Its walls broke and fell. At the back of us was a creek and we were surrounded by fence, the only way out was through the gate that was already broken from the waves, where the sea was coming in. Knowing what will happen after a volcano eruptions that larva will be flowing, (which did not occur) but the falling of volcanic rocks and heavy ashes. We decided to try to escape from where we were but thought to wait



Kalesi (left) and Grenda (right) at their house after the volcano eruption

for 15 minutes. Within those 15 minutes, the president Pr Fanueli Mataele was calling non-stop, he was at his country home Lomalinda, his village and left immediately taking all possible shortcuts to reach us as there were all traffic jam in the country. Scared, panic we prayed and waited patiently.

But after 15 minutes of witnessing the destruction, we decided to go. We locked arms and we waded sideways in the waters against the strong current until we reached the fence. The water level was up to our chest. When a strong wave came in, it nearly carried us but we stood firm on the grounds with arms locked, waited for it to pass and then continued. When we reach the fence where we got hurt, we climbed and ran out of the compound. We continue to quickly wade in the water until we reached a place where the water stopped.

This was happening until the last ray of light. As soon as we stepped out of the water, total darkness covered Tonga. We were running in darkness till we reached the junction at the local telecommunication center. There the cars were running, people escaping, volcanic rocks falling hitting us but we continued to run inland. We ran and met the water again that came up from another side of the road but we continued running not knowing where we were running to. It was the longest run I ever experienced since I arrived in Tonga, 2018 says Gwenda Vovo. We ran until we reached one of the main road. We saw this new double storey building that was owned by the A3Z broadcasting corporation. As soon as we reached the building the heavy ashes started to fall. We just thank God for His protection. I think it was the owner of the building that called us in and said let everyone take shelter in the building. There were other people there too taking shelter in the building and then the internet connection went off just in time for Pr Fanueli, arrived and took us to his home.

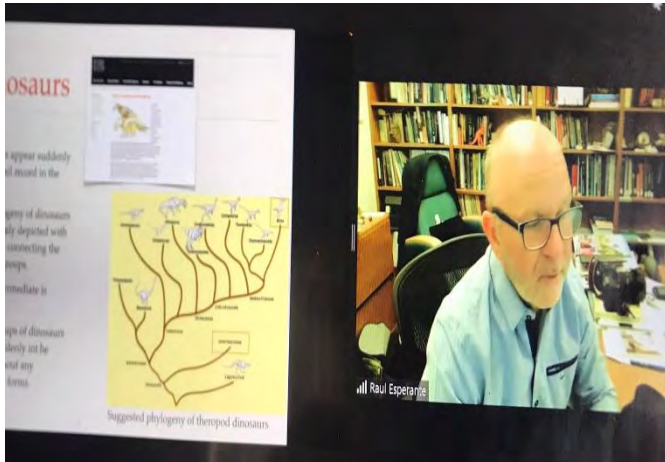
There we were fed and spent the night. Sabbath morning came, we had our devotion and Pr Fanueli suggested if we wanted to go see the mission office compound where our house was located. We agreed and we headed back to the mission compound. When we left the compound the previous night, our house was still standing and the mission office was still intact. Along the way, we saw the destructions. Houses and everything was covered with thick ashes. Everything that day was only one color, the color of the volcanic ashes. The waterfront were badly destroyed. The footpath that we once took our walk on to and from work were broken and thrown everywhere. The big coral rocks that were used as a seawall were tossed everywhere in land. Everything was completely destroyed. Upon our arrival to the mission compound, we were dumbfounded and shocked by what we saw. No words exchanged only silence was felt. Our house was completely destroyed. Our belongings were all gone and destroyed. The mission office and equipment, books and all other things were destroyed. We have never felt so homesick and discouraged. God has called us to come and serve Him here in Tonga, and this is what we get?



The front side of the house

After the eruption we have been having sleepless nights, all we could think of is going back home. But, we thank God for the love, prayers and support from our families abroad and in Tonga that we are safe. Please remember Kalesi Ravouvou from Fiji and Gwenda Vovo from the Solomon Islands who are both serving in our Adventist schools in Tonga. Keep them in your prayers and so as the rest of Tonga as they try and recover from the volcano eruption experience. – **Gwenda Vovo**

CREATION CLASSROOM SEMINAR



Dr Raul Esperante one of the presenters

On the 25th of January the first Faith – Science Conference with our TPUM teachers and the two Geo-Science Institute presenters, and then Dr Ron Stone and Mareta as the local Union presenters. There were over 45 sites that logged in, with some of those having a number in the staff room watching. We had over a hundred registered, but the broken underwater cable for Tonga took out any possibility of connection for all our Tongan teachers, and with COVID now a reality in Samoa, American Samoa, Kiribati and the Solomon Islands, many of the school sites could not operate as planned due to isolation requirements. Arrangement has been made for some of the teachers to join the last Faith Science Conference on Feb 23 which is great.

The comments in the chat line were extremely positive about the practical nature of the presentations. Both of the presenters were former high school teachers and their understanding of the school setting and the value of the practical nature of their presentations reflected that. There were some excellent resources show-cased which are on their website and Alex has now got links to all those. Many of the teachers were delighted at the way they could use some of these resources in their classrooms. The second speaker presented a broad over-view of Evolution highlighting some of the clear gaps in the theory and the recognition that some of the theory is quite flawed – but still held to as the evolution enthusiasts see no other options. Then Ron Stone and Mareta shared again some helpful material on man as the image of God and some practical ideas from Mareta for the high school Science teachers. A very valuable four hour presentation. - **David McClintock**

BUILDING RESILIENCE IN CHILDREN

How can we build resilience to our children during these difficult time?

Resilience is the psychological quality that helps you to cope with and get through hard times

Resilience can also be described as:

- Bouncing back after difficulty
- Being strong on the inside
- Being able to cope with what life throws at you and grow from it
- Resilience is *NOT* about staying silent and pushing through a difficult situation
- Dealing with change or loss is an inevitable part of life. At some point, everyone experiences varying degrees of setbacks
- Resilience is a key factor in protecting and promoting good mental health
- **All of us can learn to be more resilient...especially children!**

Daily Psychosocial Support you can do:

- Helping children feel supported on a daily basis builds their capacity to cope with, recover, and grow from any stress or crisis they may encounter (builds their *resilience*)
- This is best done through:
 - Establishing secure, caring, and trusting relationships with children
 - Important for learning and development (and helping them feel psychosocially supported!)
 - Creating a supportive, positive environment
 - There is also a clear link with the academic achievement of students
- A positive climate feels safe, respectful, welcoming, and supportive of *all* children



Children in Tonga, Nomuka Island are still able to put a smile despite all their homes were destroyed by the Volcano eruption

**YEAR 12 & 13
APPLY NOW!
INVEST IN
ADVENTIST
EDUCATION**



TPUM Adventist Education Day - April 8

We are inviting all Adventist Schools to prepare for Adventist Education Day on the 8th of April, 2022. A time where teachers will visit students homes to pray, share resources and fellowship.

For more information please contact Mrs Mere Vaihola [TPUM Education Director] MereVaihola@adventist.org.fj

PRAYER REQUESTS

- Navesau and Vatuvonu Challenges
- Tenakonga Adventist High School Rebuilding
- Bekabeka Adventist Community School Aftershock earthquake
- Tonga schools as they recover from the Volcano eruption
- Kiribati, Solomon, Samoa and Tonga Covid19 challenges
 - Year 12 & 13 Public Examinations in Fiji
 - Fulton Adventist University College enrolment



FINALLY

*"Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong."
1 Corinthians 16:13*

We would love to hear from you, your stories and challenges could be means of blessings and encouragement to others. So, please share!

For your stories please forward it to:

*Mere Vaihola
Education Director*

*OR Joseph Pitakia
Associate Education Director*