

Hope Channel Executive Officers - Visit Royal Oak Church

Matthew Bloomfield



Above - Pastor Brad and Mrs Kandus Thorp, President and Vice-President respectively, of Hope Channel, interviewed by Pastor Daniel.

On Sabbath the 16th of April Royal Oak was blessed and enthused through the messages shared by Brad and Kandus Thorp of Hope Channel. In 2003 Hope Channel was officially launched as a 24-hour television network, and in short time has grown to include eleven full time satellite channels available to over a billion viewers and four internet channels all reaching almost two dozen of the world's major language groups. Hope teaches the world about Jesus through programs on the Bible, healthy living,

and spiritual issues.

Brad led us through an impassioned study of Matthew 25, where he implored us to be prepared like the five wise virgins (Matt 25:1-13), by keeping in constant prayer our need for the intercession of God through the Holy Spirit in our lives, and our need for the power of the Holy Spirit so that we may continue and finish the calling assigned to us (Matt 28:19-20). He also warned us that like the parable of the ten virgins, so too today there are those who are not prepared.

Using Matt 25:14-30, we were encouraged to use our God-given gifts, so that they will grow and we can do our part, whatever that may be, in serving God and his kingdom. Looking at verses 31-46 we saw that it is imperative that we are a compassionate people. Sharing and teaching are rendered powerless unless we reflect the compassion that Jesus has.

Brad exhorted us to expect the return of Jesus, get along with one another,

live a Bible-based Christian lifestyle, use our spiritual gifts and be compassionate. At the prompting of Pastor Daniel, Brad and Kandus stayed for a further time of sharing testimonies on Sabbath afternoon. They told us of the miraculous ways in which God is leading Hope Channel, especially in India, a country of over a billion people, which is soon to receive its own satellite broadcast. Similarly Hope is reaching out all across the world; Russia, the Philippines, Myanmar, the list goes on. We also heard of how God is shepherding this ministry by empowering workers to produce hundreds of programs with limited resources, and guiding the logistics in such a way that his divine providence can be clearly seen.

I believe that God is leading this powerful ministry in New Zealand as well. I would like Royal Oak to spearhead prayer for this ministry. If you would like to be involved in this please email me (matthewjbloomfield@gmail.com) so that we may focus our prayers and ask God to lead the way.

Sabbath 30th April - National Day of Prayer



Pastor Eddie Tupa'i

At a recent meeting of National Church Leaders it was agreed that Churches of all denominations around New Zealand would be encouraged to be open on Saturday April 30th so that throughout this great land members of our church communities and the community at large could take the opportunity to pray for the peoples of the Pacific Rim following the recent disasters in Haiti, Japan, Greymouth and Christchurch. The date has been deliberately chosen as it immediately follows

Easter when we celebrate God who shows ultimate love and empathy by sharing the pain of the cross, who is also a God who gives ultimate hope with the gift of resurrection and new beginnings arising out of despair. This date also coincides with the special South New Zealand Conference Earthquake Aid Offering which allows us to provide much needed support to our sister churches in Christchurch who were affected by the February quake. Let us acknowledge the uncertainty of life for so many people and offer them the opportunity to be blessed by using our buildings as places that may enable them to pray. Let us

encourage our people to intercede for those who have lost so much and to acknowledge the pain that could be ahead for so many who have lost homes, loved ones and familiar communities.

Let us open up the doors of our Prayer Houses, invite the community in and make the most of this opportunity to stand united with our Christian brothers and sisters across New Zealand to share a glimpse of God's unending and unconditional love that brings hope to all mankind.

Pr. Eddie Tupa'i, Lead Pastor, NNZC

Church Family Updates

Staying Connected & Celebrating our Fellowship

A High Sabbath Indeed

It was a high Sabbath indeed, the 16th of April, when we got to meet the Thorps, Brad and Kandus, and to enjoy their ministry and learn a little more about them. Brad and Kandus are originally from Canada and have been married for 29 years. They have three children; Jonathan (26), Christopher (23) and Stephen (21). They are President and Vice-President of Hope Channel (respectively), the Adventist television and internet broadcast organisation presently with eleven channels around. Hope broadcasts in numerous languages including Portuguese, German, Spanish and Russian as well as English. They're implementing ambitious plans for an Arabic channel (launched 1st Feb), an Indian channel (1st May) and a Chinese channel (1st July), with the Biblical goal



of preaching the gospel to everyone, the final 'sign' before the Second Coming. Please continue to pray for Hope Channel's ministry, and for Pastor Brad and sister Kandus Thorp.



Above - Our congregational singing was led out by Lucky, Pastor Evans and Amosa.

Left - Sister Kandus Thorp held the children's attention as she told the story of Tommy and his bad words, and how words are like toothpaste. Once they're out, it's impossible to put back, so be careful what words you say.

Photo Essay - ROCSDA Service Highlights



Above Left - Pastor Daniel is almost overwhelmed by children as he tells the children's story.



Above Right - Matthew Bloomfield paces freely as he preaches, holding everyone's attention and eye contact.



Above - A cross flower arrangement for Easter



Right - Sisters Jessica (foreground), & Emily play an interlude while the offering is collected.

PRAYER CORNER

A call to all our church family members and prayer warriors, to please pray for...

... **all the countries of the Pacific Rim**, as part of the call for a National Day of Prayer. Please remember in prayer those who have suffered in recent disasters including earthquakes, tsunamis and nuclear fallout; and those who continue to suffer as they, their communities and their countries recover and rebuild.

Please pray for God's grace and peace to be upon them all, and on us, as we in our own way contribute in whatever capacity we are called to.

... **our offering to be collected today (30th of April), for the South New Zealand Conference Earthquake Aid Fund**, that whatever funds are collected be blessed and miraculously expanded to allow for the greatest benefit to those that need help.

...**for all our new church members** who have joined recently, either as new baptised members or regular attendees considering baptism. Please remind them that they are part of our family, our extended church family, and we love and care for them. Pray for God's unity to be our unity—one in spirit and purpose.

... **for our CAREGroups**, and our leaders; that God's Holy Spirit will lead and teach, and bless each and everyone that attends.

... **for our church leaders**, both in our church, Conference, Union, Division and our global church, particularly that they might receive divine wisdom and discernment, to guide and direct our church, the body of Jesus, in the straight and narrow way until Jesus comes again.

Several church members have asked for intercessory prayers for their friends and families. Their names and situations are too numerous to mention here, and some also wish to remain anonymous for personal reasons, but our Lord knows their needs and we invite your prayers for God's will to be done in their lives, and for their best.



Above - Rebecca, Hannah & Arun present "His Strength is Perfect", as our special item on Sabbath 23rd of April.



Above - Mario with his daughters Maryann and Elizabeth present a special item during our Divine Service.



Above - Fallon is supported by Glen and Jo in leading out in our congregational singing.

DON'T LEAVE IT ON THE DESK

Submitted by Kaye McKean

FROM OUR EMAILS FILE

Professor of Religion, Dr. Christianson, taught at a small college in the western United States. He taught the required survey course in Christianity. Every student was required to take this course in their freshman year, regardless of their major. Although Dr. Christianson tried hard to communicate the essence of the gospel in his class, he found that most of his students looked upon the course as nothing but required drudgery. Despite his best efforts, most students refused to take Christianity seriously.

One year, Dr. Christianson had a special student named Steve. Steve was only a freshman, but was studying with the intent of going onto seminary for the ministry. Steve was popular, he was well liked, and he was an imposing physical specimen. He was the starting centre on the school football team, and was the best student in the professor's class. One day, Dr. Christianson asked Steve to stay after class so he could talk with him.

"How many push-ups can you do?"

Steve said, "I do about 200 every night."

"200? That's pretty good, Steve," Dr.

Christianson said. "Do you think you could do 300?"

Steve replied, "I don't know... I've never done 300 at a time."

"Do you think you could?" again asked Dr. Christianson.

"Well, I can try," said Steve.

"Can you do 300 in sets of 10? I have a class project in mind and I need you to do about 300 push-ups in sets of ten for this to work. Can you do it? I need you to tell me you can do it,"

Steve said, "Well... I think I can...yeah, I can do it."

Dr. Christianson said, "Good. I need you to do this on Friday. Let me explain what I have in mind."

On Friday, Steve got to class early and sat in the front row. When class started, the professor pulled out a big box of donuts. These weren't the normal kinds of donuts, but were the extra fancy BIG kind, with cream centres and frosting swirls. Everyone was pretty excited. It was Friday, the last class of the day, and they were going to get an early start on the weekend with a party in Dr. Christianson's class.

Dr. Christianson went to the first girl in the first row and asked, "Cynthia, do you want to have one of these donuts?"

Cynthia said, "Yes."

Dr. Christianson turned to Steve and asked, "Steve, would you do ten push-ups so Cynthia can have a donut?"

"Sure." Steve jumped down from his desk and did a quick ten. Then Steve again sat in his desk. Dr. Christianson put a donut on Cynthia's desk.

Dr. Christianson then went to Joe, the next

person, and asked, "Joe, do you want a donut?" Joe said, "Yes." Dr. Christianson asked, "Steve would you do ten push-ups so Joe can have a donut?"

Steve did ten push-ups, Joe got a donut. And so it went, down the first aisle, Steve did ten push ups for every person before they got their donut. Walking down the second aisle, Dr. Christianson came to Scott. Scott was on the basketball team, and in as good condition as Steve. He was very popular.

The professor asked, "Scott do you want a donut?"

Scott asked, "Can I do my own push ups?"

Dr. Christianson said, "No, Steve has to do them."

Then Scott said, "Then, I don't want one."

Dr. Christianson shrugged and then turned to Steve and asked, "Steve, would you do ten push ups so Scott can have a donut he doesn't want?" With perfect obedience Steve started to do ten push ups.

Scott said, "Hey, I said I didn't want one" Dr.

Christianson said, "Look, this is my classroom, my class, my desks, and these are my donuts. Just leave it on the desk if you don't want it." And he put a donut on Scott's desk.

By this time, Steve had begun to slow down a little. He stayed on the floor between sets as it took too much effort to get up and down. A little perspiration appeared on his brow.

Dr. Christianson started down the third row. The students were beginning to get angry. Dr. Christianson asked Jenny, "Jenny, do you want a donut?"

Sternly, Jenny said, "No."

Then Dr. Christianson asked Steve, "Steve, would you do ten more push-ups so Jenny can have a donut that she doesn't want?" Steve did ten....Jenny got a donut.

By now, a growing sense of unease filled the room. The students were beginning to say "No" and there were uneaten donuts on the desks. Steve also had to really put in extra effort to get these push ups done. There began to be a small pool of sweat on the floor under his face, his arms and brow began to get red from the physical exertion.

Dr. Christianson asked Robert, the most vocal unbeliever in the class, to watch Steve do each push up to make sure he did the full ten push-ups. Dr. Christianson started down the fourth row.

Some students from other classes had wandered in and sat down on the steps along the radiators that ran down the sides of the room. When the professor realized this, he did a quick count and saw that now there were 34 students in the room. He started to worry Steve would not be able to make it.

Dr. Christianson went on to the next person and the next and the next. Near the end of that row, (Continued on page 5)

You Took My Place

A Modern Parable

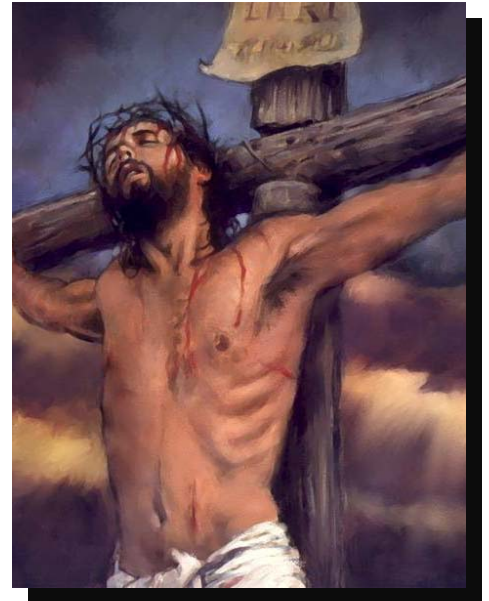
One day, a man decided to go to church. He got there early, parked his car and got out. Another car pulled up nearby and the driver got out. He said, "I always park there! You took my place!"

The visitor went inside for Sabbath School, found an empty seat and sat down. A young lady from the church approached him and said, "That's my seat! You took my place!" The visitor was somewhat distressed by this rude welcome, but said nothing. After Sabbath School, he went into the sanctuary and sat down. Another member walked up to him and said, "That's where I always sit! You took my place!" The visitor was even more troubled by this treatment, but still He said nothing.

Later as the congregation was praying for Christ to dwell among them, the visitor stood up, and his appearance began to change. Horrible scars became visible on his hands and on his sandaled feet. Someone from the congregation noticed him and called out, "What happened to you?" The visitor replied, as his hat became a crown of thorns, and a tear fell from his eye, "I took your place."

A timely reminder for all of us church members to welcome our guests and visitors as we would Jesus.

- Ed.



(Continued from page 4)

Steve was really having a rough time. He was taking a lot more time to complete each set.

A few moments later, Jason, a recent transfer student, came to the room and was about to come in when all the students yelled in one voice, "NO, don't come in Stay out!"

Jason didn't know what was going on. Steve picked up his head and said, "No, let him come."

Professor Christianson said, "You realize that if Jason comes in you will have to do ten push-ups for him?" Steve said, "Yes, let him come in. Give him a donut."

Dr. Christianson said, "Okay, Steve, I'll let you get Jason's out of the way right now. Jason, do you want a donut?"

Jason, new to the room, didn't know what was going on. "Yes," he said, "give me a donut."

"Steve, will you do ten push-ups so that Jason can have a donut?" Steve did ten push-ups very slowly and with great effort. Jason, bewildered, was handed a donut and sat down.

Dr. Christianson finished the fourth row, and then started on those visitors seated by the heaters.

Steve's arms were now shaking with each push-up in a struggle to lift himself against the force of gravity. By this time sweat was dripping off of his face. There was no sound except his heavy breathing; there was not a dry eye in the room.

The very last two students in the room were two young women, both cheerleaders, and very popular.

Dr. Christianson went to Linda, the second to last, and asked, "Linda, do you want a doughnut?" Linda said, very sadly, "No, thank you."

Professor Christianson quietly asked, "Steve, would you do ten push-ups so that Linda can have a donut she doesn't want?" Grunting from the effort, Steve did ten very slow push-ups for Linda.

Then Dr. Christianson turned to the last girl, Susan. "Susan, do you want a donut?"

Susan, with tears flowing down her face, began to cry. "Dr. Christianson, why can't I help him?" Dr. Christianson, with tears of his own, said, "No, Steve has to do it alone, I have given him this task and he is in charge of seeing that everyone has an opportunity for a donut whether they want it or not.

When I decided to have a party this last day of class, I looked at my grades book. Steve here is the only student with a perfect grade. Everyone else has failed a test, skipped class, or offered me inferior work. Steve told me that in football practice, when a player messes up he must do push-ups. I told Steve that none of you could come to my party unless he paid the price by doing your push ups. He and I made a deal for your sakes."

"Steve, would you do ten push-ups so Susan can have a donut?" As Steve very slowly finished his last push-up, with the understanding that he had accomplished all that was required of him, having done 350 push-ups, his arms buckled beneath him and he fell to the floor. Dr. Christianson turned to the room and said. "And so it was, that our Saviour, Jesus Christ, on the cross, pled to the Father, 'into Thy hands I commend my spirit.' With the understanding that He had done everything that was required of Him, He yielded up His life. And like some of those in this room, many of us leave the gift on the desk, uneaten." Two students helped Steve up off the floor and to a seat, physically exhausted, but wearing a thin smile. "Well done, good and faithful servant," said the professor, adding, "Not all sermons are preached in words."

Turning to his class, the professor said, "My wish is that you might understand and fully comprehend all the riches of grace and mercy that have been given to you through the sacrifice of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He spared not only His Begotten Son, but gave Him up for us all, for the whole Church, now and forever. Whether or not we choose to accept His gift to us, the price has been paid."

The Room

Attributed to Brian Moore a 17 year old boy, who died following a car accident

In that place between wakefulness and dreams, I found myself in the room. There were no distinguishing features except for the one wall covered with small index card files. They were like the ones in libraries that list titles by author or subject in alphabetical order. But these files, which stretched from floor to ceiling and seemingly endless in either direction, had very different headings. As I drew near the wall of files, the first to catch my attention was one that read "Girls I have liked." I opened it and began flipping through the cards. I quickly shut it, shocked to realize that I recognised the names written on each one. And then without being told, I knew exactly where I was. This lifeless room with its small files was a crude catalogue system for my life. Here were written the actions of my every moment, big and small, in a detail my memory couldn't match. A sense of wonder and curiosity, coupled with horror, stirred within me as I began randomly opening files and exploring their contents. Some brought joy and sweet memories; others a sense of shame and regret so intense that I would look over my shoulder to see if anyone was watching. A file named "Friends" was next to one marked "Friends I have betrayed." The titles ranged from the mundane to the outright weird. "Books I Have Read", "Lies I Have Told", "Comfort I have Given", "Jokes I Have Laughed at." Some were almost hilarious in their exactness: "Things I've yelled at my brothers." Others I couldn't laugh at: "Things I Have Done in My Anger", "Things I Have Muttered Under My Breath at My Parents." I never ceased to be surprised by the contents. Often there were many more cards than expected. Sometimes fewer than I hoped. I was overwhelmed by the sheer volume of the life I had lived. Could it be possible that I had the time in my years to fill each of these thousands or even millions of cards? But each card confirmed this truth. Each was written in my own handwriting. Each signed with my signature. When I pulled out the file marked "TV

Shows I have watched," I realised the files grew to contain their contents. The cards were packed tightly, and yet after two or three yards, I hadn't found the end of the file. I shut it, ashamed, not so much by the quality of shows but more by the vast time I knew that file represented. When I came to a file marked "Lustful Thoughts", I felt a chill run through my body. I pulled the file out only an inch, not willing to test its size, and drew out a card. I shuddered at its detailed content. I felt sick to think that such a moment had been recorded. An almost animal rage broke on me. One thought dominated my mind: No one must ever see these cards! No one must ever see this room! I have to destroy them!" In insane frenzy I yanked the file out. Its size didn't matter now. I had to empty it and burn the cards. But as I took it at one end and began pounding it on the floor, I could not dislodge a single card. I became desperate and pulled out a card, only to find it as strong as steel when I tried to tear it. Defeated and utterly helpless, I returned the file to its slot. Leaning my forehead against the wall, I let out a long, self-pitying sigh. And then I saw it. The title was "People I Have Shared the Gospel With." The handle was brighter than those around it, newer, almost unused. I pulled on its handle and a small box not more than three inches long fell into my hands. I could count the cards it contained on one hand. And then the tears came. I began to weep. Sobs so deep that they hurt. They started in my stomach and shook through me. I fell on my knees and cried. I cried out of shame, from the overwhelming shame of it all. The rows of file shelves swirled in my tear-filled eyes. No one must ever, ever know of this room. I must lock it up and hide the key. But then as I pushed away the tears, I saw Him. No, please not Him. Not here. Oh, anyone but Jesus. I watched helplessly as He began to open the files and read the cards. I couldn't

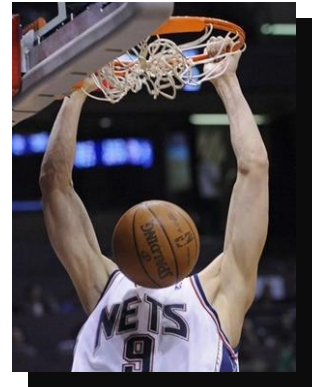
bear to watch His response. And in the moments I could bring myself to look at His face, I saw a sorrow deeper than my own. He seemed to intuitively go to the worst boxes. Why did He have to read every one? Finally He turned and looked at me from across the room. He looked at me with pity in His eyes. But this was a pity that didn't anger me. I dropped my head, covered my face with my hands and began to cry again. He walked over and put His arm around me. He could have said so many things. But He didn't say a word. He just cried with me. Then He got up and walked back to the wall of files. Starting at one end of the room, He took out a file and, one by one, began to sign His name over mine on each card. "No!" I shouted rushing to Him. All I could find to say was "No, no," as I pulled the card from Him. His name shouldn't be on these cards. But there it was, written in red so rich, so dark, and so alive. The name of Jesus covered mine. It was written with His blood. He gently took the card back He smiled a sad smile and began to sign the cards. I don't think I'll ever understand how He did it so quickly, but the next instant it seemed I heard Him close the last file and walk back to my side. He placed His hand on my shoulder and said, "It is finished." I stood up, and He led me out of the room. There was no lock on its door. There were still cards to be written.

This essay, attributed to a 17 year old boy named Brian Moore, who in 1997 survived a car accident only to be killed when he stepped on live downed power lines, was actually written by speaker and author Joshua Harris, and is in his book titled "I Kissed Dating Goodbye." Harris appreciates people getting the facts straight about the origins of "The Room", but is more concerned that people hear the message of the story than knowing who actually wrote it. For more information, check out <http://www.truthorfiction.com/rumors/t/theroom.htm>.

- Ed.

Perfectly Timed Photos

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POINT OF VIEW

Mark Ryan

Time is a fascinating thing. We all have the same amount of it, yet some achieve more in the same time than others.

We live in it, and by it, and we measure our lives with it.

Our birthdays and anniversaries are remembered as precious time. Our memories of good times, of our children and ancestors and loved ones who have passed away, are milestones in time. Man alone in all of God's creation heeds the passing of time. The rest of creation instinctively respond to the seasons.

We measure the speed of our travel in time; kilometres-per-hour. The energy we use is in Mega-Joules, but we recognise it on our power bill as kilowatt-hours, a unit of power multiplied by time.

When we die our bodies continue to decay over time and return to the ground whence they came, but our consciousness is bound in the time in which we are alive.

We use expressions like, "borrowed time", yet time can neither be borrowed nor loaned; not for all the money or gold in the world.

Time both decays and appreciates; devalues and inflates. Our money loses value over time and we need more of it to buy the same goods over time. We call this inflation.

Our houses devalue over time, yet the land on which they stand increases in value over the same time. Mortgages and loans need time to benefit both the mortgagor and the mortgagee.

Time is fixed in both duration and direction, yet science toys with the idea that it can be slowed or sped up; bent, or twisted; even turned back on

itself and reversed.

These concepts have become so commonplace and popularised in modern media such as movies, television and novels, it has become accepted as a future probability and not mere fantasy - in time.

Our lives are bookended and earmarked by time. Our birth, graduation, marriage, parenthood, careers, retirement and death. Creation took time. Creation took six days. But I've come to think that God also created on the seventh day. He created the Sabbath.

To be clear, the following is my own opinion, not necessarily Adventist teaching, but is nevertheless Biblical. Here's my thinking. On the first day, God created the fundamental elements needed for everything else to exist. We see these elements in Physics - Time, Matter and Energy. Physics teaches that each of these (time, matter and energy), cannot exist without the other. That's logical and makes perfect sense.

For purposes of this article, I'm going to refer only to time.

In creating time on day one, God laid the foundation for everything else. The days of creation could not exist if there was no time.

Through the next five days of creation, God created material things and then living things from energy, through the mere power of His Word. We can't comprehend it but it's a God-prerogative only He can exercise and which we accept by faith.

On the seventh day, He rested from creating matter and life, but He still

created something. He created time - again. He set aside the seventh day and declared it holy. In this way, I conclude that God bookended His created with time - first by creating time as foundation for His creation, then ending His creative act with a 'time' to be spent sharing Himself with His creation.

Here's something else. God created time on day one to mark His creation, and that (creation), was for His glory. But He created time on day seven for the crowning glory of His creation - for man!

God is not bound by time, at least He wasn't until man sinned and Jesus entered our world, our time-space. Then God was subject to the effects of time. He (Jesus), grew old, he thought and lived as a man, he died as a sinful man and rose again as the first fruits of His ministry. For the rest of unbounded time, through the rest of eternity, He, God, will retain the form of humanity tying Him forever to His creation, and us, His children, to His inheritance. There's one more thing about time I haven't mentioned. It does run out eventually. We are running out of time. God's not making any more of it, so whatever time we have left, let's use it wisely and profitably for His kingdom and to His Glory.

Have a good time y'all.

All I ask is the chance to prove that money can't make me happy.

- Spike Milligan

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I REALLY LIKE YOUR BIBLE, DAD ... HOW DO YOU TURN IT ON?