

Fast Facts, Mission Posts, and More South Pacific Division – third quarter 2019

Australia

1. Australia has 429 churches and 107 companies. With a membership of 61,338 and a population of 24,487,000, there is one Adventist for every 399 people.
2. The Australian Union Conference is comprised of the whole of Australia, as well as Tasmania.
3. Australia has 27 Adventist high schools.
4. Seventh-day Adventist teachings were first preached in Australia by Alexander Dickson, of Melbourne, Australia. While serving as a missionary in Africa, he encountered another missionary, Hannah More, who told him about what she had learned of Adventists when visiting New England in 1861.
5. The name Australia comes from the Latin “Terra Australia Incognito,” which means Unknown Southern Land.
6. Australia is home to a variety of unique animals, including the koala, kangaroo, emu, kookaburra, and platypus.
7. Although they usually keep to themselves, there are a range of dangerous snakes in Australia, such as the Brown Snake, Tiger Snake, and Taipan.
8. Australia has more than 750 reptile species, more than any other country in the world.
9. Despite being a massive continent, 90 percent of Australia's population live on the coast. The country's interior, which covers two thirds of the country, consists of mostly desert, which is referred to as “the outback.”
10. The Great Barrier Reef in eastern Australia is the biggest coral reef in the world and is regarded as the world's largest living organism. The reef consists of more than 3,000 individual reefs in which live more than 350 species of corals and more than 1,500 species of fish. It is often listed as one of the Seven Wonders of the Natural World.
11. Aborigines are Australia's first, or indigenous, people. They make up 2 percent of Australia's population today. Some aboriginal people still live in the area around Ayres Rock, a huge rock formation in the center of the continent. They are highly skilled in arts and crafts and share with visitors their vast knowledge about the land and the environment.
12. The longest fence in the world is in Australia, and it is 3,436 miles (5,530 kilometers) in length. It is called the “dingo fence.”

Fiji

1. Fiji has 166 churches, 101 companies, and 26,487 members. In a population of 878,000, there is one Adventist for each 33 people.
2. The Fiji Mission is part of the Trans Pacific Union Mission, along with American Samoa, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.
3. There are two schools in Fiji: Navesau Adventist High School and Suva Adventist College.
4. The first Adventist missionary to arrive in Fiji was John I. Tay, in 1891, on the mission vessel Pitcairn. After a few months he became ill and died. The work was taken up again in 1895, when J.M. Cole from the United States began work in Levuka, then the capital of the islands. The same year, the islands were organized as a mission.
5. The capital and largest city in Fiji is Suva on the island of Viti Levu.
6. There are 322 islands in Fiji and more than 500 small islets. About 110 of these islands are inhabited, although 87 percent of the population lives on the two biggest islands, Viti Levu and Vanua Levu. The islands are spread over 75,000 square miles (194,000 square kilometers) of which just 10 percent is land.
7. Fijian food is diverse and greatly influenced by Indian cuisine and spices, along with traditional local tropical fruits, vegetables, fish, and wild pigs.
8. The first word in the native Fijian language you'll need to learn is "Bula," which means "hello," because you will hear it everywhere, although most people in Fiji speak English as well.
9. Fijian girls learn how to craft pottery as well as weave baskets and mats, while boys learn to carve kava bowls, war clubs, spears, and the always popular wooden forks that are sold to tourists as relics of Fiji's cannibal past.
10. Village groups own more than 80 percent of Fiji's land, which is called Native Land, and use it for their village site and as a nature reserve. They have a chief as their leader, and each has a community center. Tourists may visit but must bring a gift of kava (the national drink) with them and present it to the chief for the welcoming ceremony, known as the "sevu sevu."
11. Visitors are welcomed with white talc powder on their faces and leis of flowers and leaves from the villagers. Ladies should wear modest clothing, like a traditional Fijian sarong (a "sulu") to show respect for the residents and chief.
12. Fijian women play a game on New Year's Eve called "veicaqemoli" (kick the orange). Played by two teams, the winning team must give gifts of new garments to the members of the losing team, so there's really more incentive to lose than to win.
13. The Meke is a celebration of culture through traditional storytelling and dancing using songs that is performed at Fijian festivals.
14. Traditional Fiji meals include relishes, starches and a beverage. The starches include yams, taro, sweet potatoes, and manioc. The relishes include meat, fish, seafood, and leafy veggies. Water is the typical beverage of choice, although hot tea with lemon leaves is also served.
15. The traditional cooking method in Fiji is called "lovo." Food is wrapped in palm fronds and banana leaves and roasted in an earthen pit lined with extremely hot stones. Meats like pork, chicken, or fish are placed in first on the bottom. Root crops like cassava, wild yams, and taro cover the meat, then the pit is filled with dirt and left to cook for three hours.
16. Many islanders raise their eyebrows as a nonverbal way of saying "yes."

17. One Fijian superstition says that coconuts have eyes, and they watch for certain people on which they want to fall from the tree. So, if a coconut falls on you, you can expect bad luck for several days, because it picked you specifically to fall upon.
18. Fiji has three official languages, Fiji, English, and Fiji Hindi.

New Caledonia – 24

1. New Caledonia has six churches and four companies, with a membership of 1,029. In a population of 283,000, that is 275 people per church member.
2. New Caledonia is part of the New Zealand Pacific Union Conference, along with the Cook Islands, French Polynesia, New Zealand, Pitcairn Island, and Wallis and Futuna Islands.
3. The New Caledonia Mission comprises Isle of Pines, Loyalty Island, New Caledonia, and Wallis and Futuna Islands.
4. The first Seventh-day Adventist missionaries to work in the island group were Captain G.F. Jones and his wife, who sailed from Sydney for Noumea, New Caledonia, on Oct. 23, 1925. The islands were some of the most difficult areas in the South Pacific.
5. Kanaks are all officially Catholic or Protestant but maintain a belief in an ancestral presence in certain totems (animals, plants, minerals, and atmospheric phenomena).
6. The first European to sight New Caledonia was British explorer Captain James Cook, on Sept. 4, 1774, during his second voyage. He named it “New Caledonia” because the northeast of the island reminded him of Scotland.
7. Situated 700 miles (1,125 kilometers) east of Australia, New Caledonia is an archipelago, or cluster of islands in the South Pacific Ocean. The main island is 250 miles (400 kilometers) long and 30 miles (50 kilometers) wide.
8. The population is about 45 percent Melanesian (Kanak) and 35 percent European (mostly French), with Polynesians in the outlying islands.
9. French is the official language, although several Melanesian and Polynesian dialects are also spoken.
10. Kanaks traditionally eat yams, taros, bananas, and sweet potatoes, although recently rice has tended to replace yams and taro, and frozen food, beef, and mutton substitute for wild pork, deer, fish, and bats.
11. Sea cow, turtle, and fish remain ceremonial dishes, along with “bougna,” a dish of steamed yams and meat cooked under hot stones.
12. New Caledonia has a sub-tropical climate year-round, with maximum temperatures averaging 77 to 86 degrees Fahrenheit (25 to 30 degrees Celsius) in the warm season from September to March, and 68 to 73 F (20 to 23 C) in the cooler months from April to August.
13. The Festival of the Yam, in March, marks the beginning of the yam harvest, and is the most important event in the Kanak calendar. When the yams are declared ready by the elders, they are pulled up and presented to the older clansmen and the chief, signaling the beginning of the harvest. The yams are blessed the following day by the priest, then distributed among the villagers.
14. Bastille Day, held on July 14 each year, is a national holiday in France and New Caledonia, marked with a military parade, fireworks, music, and dancing.
15. Although there are almost 25,000 species of orchid in the world, only around a hundred of them are “vanillas.” And of these, only three are cultivated for their aromatic pods: *Vanilla pompona*, *Vanilla tahitensis*, and *Vanilla planifolia*, which is found in New Caledonia.
16. Apart from some aspects of the tribal way of life, including “customary tradition,” local customs are very similar to those found in France and any French overseas territory.
17. The New Caledonian crow (*Corvus moneduloides*) sometimes captures grubs in nooks or crevices by poking a twig at the grub to agitate it into biting the twig, which the crow then withdraws with the grub still attached.

18. The name “kanak” comes from the Hawaiian word “kanaka,” which means “man.”
19. The main export of New Caledonia is nickel. The country has 25 percent of nickel reserves in the world.
20. New Caledonia's marine waters contain the second-longest double barrier reef in the world, which reaches a length of 932 miles (1,500 kilometers).
21. The official name of New Caledonia is Nouvelle-Caledonie.
22. Noumea, the capital created by early French colonists, is the only large city.
23. Valued traits among children include the ability to defend oneself and face challenges, as well as traditional knowledge such as clan history, medicinal plants, and political relationships between groups.

New Zealand – 12

1. New Zealand Pacific Union Conference has 83 churches, 26 companies, and 13,167 members. In a population of 4,792,000, there is one church member for every 364 people.
2. The New Zealand Pacific Union Conference comprises New Zealand, along with the Cook Islands, French Polynesia, New Caledonia, Pitcairn Island, and Wallis and Futuna Islands.
3. As early as 1874, an interest in Seventh-day Adventist teachings was kindled in New Zealand by publications sent from friends or relatives in the U.S.
4. In October 1885, U.S. Adventist minister S.N. Haskell came to Auckland from Australia and lodged in the boardinghouse of Edward Hare who, with his wife, became the first converts in New Zealand. Within four weeks a small group began to observe the seventh-day Sabbath in Auckland.
5. Fifteen percent of New Zealand's population are Māori.
6. Although it is about the size of Japan, New Zealand's population is just over 4 million, making it one of the world's least populated countries.
7. In 1893, New Zealand became the first country to give women the right to vote.
8. Sir Edmund Hillary, the first person to climb Mount Everest in 1953, was a New Zealander.
9. The Māori name for New Zealand is "Aotearoa." It means "the land of the long white cloud."
10. The kea, a bird native to New Zealand, is known for pulling windscreen wipers off cars and eating the strips of rubber from windows.
11. According to the Guinness Book of Records, the longest place name in the world is Taumatawhakatangihangakoauauotamateapokaiwhenuakitanatahu, a hill in Hawkes Bay, New Zealand.
12. New Zealand is home to the giant weta, the heaviest insect in the world. It is heavier than a sparrow and looks like a giant cockroach.

Papua New Guinea – 12

1. Papua New Guinea has 1,045 churches, 3,182 companies, and a membership of 315,759. In a population of 8,317,000, that's one church member for every 26 people.
2. The Papua New Guinea Union Mission is made up of the Central Papua Conference; and the Bougainville, Eastern Highlands Simbu, Madang Manus, Morobe, New Britain New Ireland, Northern and Milne Bay, Sepik, South West Papua, and Western Highlands Missions.
3. Papua New Guinea has 29 clinics and health centers.
4. Early Adventist work in Papua New Guinea was difficult because the government had divided the Papuan territory between three mission bodies — the Methodists, the Anglicans, and the London Missionary Society — and it was hard for any other missionaries to purchase land or work in these territories.
5. Papua New Guinea occupies the eastern part of the world's second-largest island and is prone to volcanic activity, earthquakes, and tidal waves.
6. With more than 600 islands and 800 indigenous languages, Papua New Guinea is made up of four regions with 20 provinces.
7. About 80 percent of Papua New Guinea's people live in rural areas with almost no modern conveniences.
8. The world's only known poisonous bird, the Hooded Pitohui (*Pitohui dichrous*) is native to Papua New Guinea.
9. There are very few roads, so air travel is very common.
10. Common foods include starchy vegetables (wild sago, breadfruit, yams, taro, sweet potatoes, and rice) complemented by wild greens, several varieties of bananas, and coconuts, mango, and other fruits.
11. Papua New Guinea has three official languages: English, Hiri Motu, and Tok Pisin.
12. The New Guinea Highlands runs the length of New Guinea, and the highest areas receive snowfall — almost unheard of in the tropics.

Solomon Islands – 18

1. The Solomon Islands have 197 churches, 408 companies, and 52,975 members. With a population of 671,000, there is one church member for every 13 people.
2. The Solomon Islands Mission is part of the Trans Pacific Union Mission, along with American Samoa, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Samoa, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.
3. Pioneer Adventist missionaries to the islands were G.F. Jones and his wife, sent by the mission board of Australasia. Landing on the island of Gizo on May 29, 1914, Jones obtained a local crew for his auxiliary ketch, the Advent Herald, and sailed for Viru on the west coast of New Georgia, where he established headquarters for the mission work and opened a school.
4. Christianity, introduced by missionaries in the 19th and early 20th centuries, is the principal organized religion. The primary denominations are Anglican, Roman Catholic, Methodist, and Seventh-day Adventist.
5. There are six major islands, Choisuel, Guadalcanal, Malaita, Makira, New Georgia and Santa Isabel and about 992 small islands, atolls, and reefs. The archipelago covers an area of 249,000 square nautical miles while the land area is 10,938 square miles (28,466 square kilometers).
6. In some areas, family homes are made on artificial islands built over shallow shoals in a lagoon by gathering rocks and piling them together to make a “home over the sea.”
7. Traditionally, yams, panas, and taros are the main staples in the Solomon Islands. These are usually eaten with fish and shellfish (by those on the coast) or greens, snails, eels, and opossums (by those inland and in the mountains).
8. It is thought that people have lived in the Solomon Islands since at least 2,000 B.C.
9. Although English is the official language, only 1 percent to 2 percent of the population speaks English. Solomon Islands pijin is the most commonly spoken, and there are more than 80 different local languages plus dialects.
10. A Spanish explorer, Álvaro de Mendaña de Neira, first sighted the islands in 1568. Finding signs of alluvial gold on Guadalcanal, Mendaña believed he had found the source of King Solomon’s wealth, and consequently named the islands “The Islands of Solomon.”
11. The native mammals are small and include opossums, bats, and mice. There are crocodiles in the mangrove swamps, and sea turtles nest on the shores from November to February. There are more than 150 species of birds, including many species of parrot and incubator birds.
12. Melanesians account for about 94.5 percent of the total population. Polynesians make up about 3 percent, and Micronesians account for about 1.2 percent. Europeans and Chinese each account for less than 1 percent.
13. At least 75 percent of the population is tied to subsistence agriculture. The capital sector is dependent on the production of copra, timber, and fish for export.
14. Poor standards of hygiene and inadequate sanitation continue to make malaria and tuberculosis endemic. Adequate sanitation is available to only 60 percent of the entire Solomon Islands population.
15. The concept of money is relatively recent in Solomon Island culture; barter and alternative forms of currency such as shell money are still practiced.
16. Typical food eaten in the Solomons includes fish, chicken, pork, coconut, sweet potatoes, and taro.

17. The conch shell is an instrument used widely across the Pacific, including the Solomons. It is used as a traditional form of trumpet, summoning people to gather and signaling the start of important events. The blowing hole is created by removing the end of the shell or making a hole in the side.
18. Canoe prow ornaments (nguzunguzu) were a standard feature on war canoes, representing mythological spirits who would ward off danger. The figures were painted black and had shell inlay designs based on face-painting designs used by warriors.

Game

Australia

Weme

The Walbiri people of central Australia played a stone-bowling game. One player threw a stone, which then was used as a target by the second player. Players alternated turns with each aiming at the other's stone. The game is named "weme" after a word from the Eastern Arrernte language of central Australia that refers to "throwing something at something else and hitting it."

The game can be played alone, one player against another player, or one pair of players against another pair.

One player starts the game by rolling their ball toward the line marked on the ground 5-10 yards (meters) away, depending on age. If the ball is rolled beyond this line, then the other player scores a point.

If the first player's ball stops before the line, the second player rolls their ball to try to hit the first ball. If the ball is hit, the second player scores a point.

Both players then collect their balls and the game is restarted from the other end.

Players alternate turns. The second player now has the first turn.

If the game is played in pairs one player from each pair stays at each end. Teams alternate turns.

One point is scored for each hit. The first player or team to reach 11 points is the winner. Play continues until the game is decided.

Recipe

Fijian Honey Cake

READY IN: 1hr 10mins SERVES: 10

YIELD: 1 loaf

INGREDIENTS

1 1/4 cups (140 g) all-purpose flour
1/2 cup (113 g) sugar
1/2 cup (113 g) sour cream
1/2 cup (113 g) honey
1 egg
1 tablespoon (15 ml) oil
1/2 teaspoon (3 g) baking soda
1/8 teaspoon (1 g) ground nutmeg
1/8 teaspoon (1 g) ground allspice (or ground cloves)
1/4 teaspoon (1.5 g) ground ginger
1/2 teaspoon (3 g) ground cinnamon
2 tablespoons (15 g) sliced almonds

DIRECTIONS

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit (177 degrees Celsius).

Coat a 9" x 5" x 3" (23 x 13 x 6 cm) loaf pan with butter or nonstick cooking spray.

In a large bowl, combine all the ingredients except the almonds and beat until well blended.

Pour the batter into the loaf pan and sprinkle with the almonds.

Bake for 45 to 55 minutes or until a wooden toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.

Allow to cool for 10 minutes then remove from the pan to a wire rack to cool completely.

Song

New Zealand

Tena Koe

Tena koe – hello to one.

Tena korua – hello to two.

Tena koutou – hello to all.

Haere mai everyone.

Welcome everyone!

Repeat

A downloadable lyric sheet is available at <http://bit.ly/TenaKoe>, and a video with the tune and lyrics can be found at <http://bit.ly/YTTenaKoe>.