



Nurturing Disciples

In a Healthy Growing Church

Reaching Out and Connecting

FOCUS

Newsletter of the South Queensland Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church

CAFE Q—Does Church Still Matter?

by Pastor Joseph Khabbaz, Associate Director of Youth Ministries

Does Church still matter? Is Church still as relevant to us as it has been in the past? On Friday, March 14, we shared the first Café Q discussion for 2014, talking about the topic of “Relevance and Church.”

Christians are often seeking to make their faith grow, but how do they achieve this?

After several surveys were conducted asking for a response to this question, a list was compiled. It included: prayer, family and friends, children, relationship with Jesus, own beliefs and understanding, marriage or significant other, God provided during hard times.

Interestingly enough, church was not listed. Just to clarify—people are saying that church is not included among the list of things that help to make their faith grow. But why is this? Church is the place where we go to be fed for the week. Shouldn't it play a major role in the growth of our faith?

This could have something to do with the fact that we are just looking to have our needs met. People are dissatisfied with how churches attempt to meet their needs and choose their place of worship based on the entertainment value.

All that being said, do we still need church? The purpose of church is to question the status quo. If we are choosing our churches based on their entertainment value, are we really questioning the status quo? Entertainment might be well and good, but entertainment does not change lives—God does!

I met up with a friend the other day for lunch and he gave me a card from his Christian church,

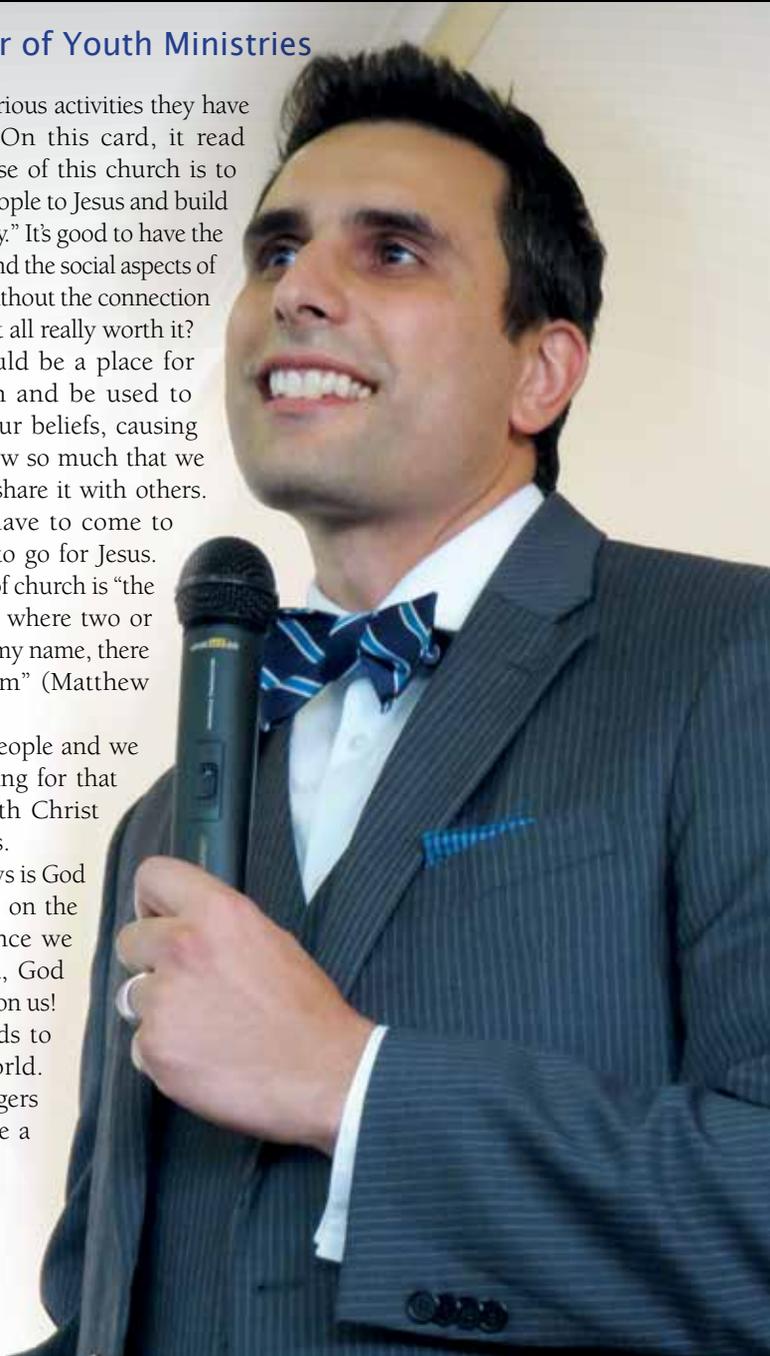
covering the various activities they have running, etc. On this card, it read that the purpose of this church is to “CONNECT people to Jesus and build them for eternity.” It's good to have the entertainment and the social aspects of a church, but without the connection with Christ, is it all really worth it?

Church should be a place for transformation and be used to bolster us in our beliefs, causing our faith to grow so much that we can't help but share it with others. After all, we have to come to Jesus in order to go for Jesus. The definition of church is “the people.”—“For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them” (Matthew 18:20).

We are the people and we should be aiming for that connection with Christ in our churches.

The good news is God hasn't given up on the church and since we are the church, God hasn't given up on us!

Church stands to change the world. Be world-changers and go to make a difference!



THE MODERN MACEDONIAN CALL

by Pastor David Edgar



By the time you read this, the event described below will be history but it is still worth relating.

I know we have a new lesson pamphlet, but think back in time a few weeks (or so) with me; it is 0615 on Wednesday morning (March 19) and I have just finished that Monday's Adult Sabbath School lesson (#12). The last couple of quarter's lessons have had so much in them, I find an hour's study each morning just isn't enough so I generally fall behind. The good thing is that by Sabbath morning I have usually caught up.

Through that lesson on March 19, I was again reminded of the greatest need of the Adventist Aviation Association here in South Queensland Conference: the indispensable leading, and subsequent following of, the Holy Spirit. God's leading is one thing, following Him is quite another: both are necessary for success in mission. To this end, before 2013 ended, your Directorate prayed for God's guidance, made plans and allocated budgets for our 2014 evangelistic and outback church-strengthening activities. By faith, we believe these plans are God's plans.

Although the spreading of the gospel in the context of the Three Angels Message of Revelation 14 is God's work, we collectively (AAA and you) are His hands—some supply the resources and some do the work here, both are necessary for success.

Because of the vast area covered by our Conference and the high cost, both in terms of human resources and finances, to reach our outback towns, your AAA Directorate and our outback missionaries desperately need your prayers for God's continued guidance and protection during 2014. Please include us in your daily prayers. We must have these prayers to know where to go, when to go, and what to do when we get there.

AAA's evangelistic activities during 2014 will stretch from Dirranbandi in the south to Longreach in the north. Church strengthening will continue in areas such as Chinchilla and Roma, but there are isolated families we need to visit in remote areas too—Tambo, Charleville (there is one Adventist family 150 kilometres west of Charleville), St George, Ilfracombe, to name a few. Sometimes the list seems so long and our resources so meagre, I often wonder how we get half of what we planned to do completed. Then I remember this is God's work and we are simply His hands. Everything's OK then.

During 2014, your AAA will also expand its operations to include weekday trips (Sunday to Thursday). We are hoping this will give those who want to engage in outback evangelism the opportunity to participate in remote missionary work during the week as many are committed to their local church on Sabbath.

So what do we need from our faithful supporters, those who cannot go on a mission trip? First, in two words: continuing prayer.

Next, toward the end of 2013, weather played havoc with our flying program and four flights were cancelled. We usually don't fly between December and March because of the unsettled weather in the outback and cyclones on the coast. Finding qualified instrument-rated Christian pilots is a perennial problem, as is the cost of keeping them up to strict aviation standards. We now have three aircraft at our disposal, but we can crew only one at this time because of this limitation.

Next, recruiting volunteers to join our teams is an immense joy. To see our wonderful young (and not so young) people stepping up and conquering the challenges of outback missionary work is always amazing. Go to <www.aviationsq.adventist.org.au> to find out how you can participate in outback mission work. We always thank our God for His faithful missionaries. It touches me to see them waiting patiently at the airport for the sun to come up and then praying before boarding their aircraft for the latest mission trip. At this point, I hand them over to God and His angels for a successful trip.

Moneywise, our budget this year will exceed \$50,000. We spent about \$35,000 last year, and I am absolutely amazed at the commitment of God's faithful ones here in South Queensland Conference who give sacrificially to God's missionary work in the outback (please read Numbers 6:24–26).

We have a motto in AAA: we do the work and God supplies the resources. To date, this has worked 100 per cent and He has never, disappointed us because this is His ministry. So please give to AAA sacrificially, either through your local church or via our website noted above, to mission work this year, which includes our outback church-support program. All donations go to AAA operations. Not one cent is spent on the personal comfort of any member of our team.

The north-west of our conference (Longreach—our local Macedonia) is on our hearts as you read this. Please pray for our local itinerant minister (Pastor Peter) and your AAA missionaries as they support the South Queensland Conference's vision of establishing a presence in this iconic Australian town. AAA has planned nine trips to Longreach during 2014, not to mention the numerous trips to other parts of our conference.

In the long term, we desperately need the use of a 4x4 diesel vehicle (suitable for six persons) for ongoing mission work in this area. The vehicle will be safely garaged at Ilfracombe, 30 kilometres south of Longreach.

To close, please remember your prayers are of more value than all the gold and silver on this planet. Maranatha!

INSPIRING AND MOTIVATING YOUTH MINISTRY COACHES WEEKEND

by Pastor Stephen Kane, Director of Youth Ministries

Over the weekend of March 21–23, the youth ministry coaches had the privilege of spending time away together with the conference youth directors at a retreat. Dwane Hedges, the Inner Southern Metro Youth Ministry Coach says, “Throughout my life I have had the wonderful opportunity to work with young people and direct them to Jesus. The Youth Coach program is such a positive, proactive approach to assisting and supporting local church teen, youth and young adult leaders in their very important ministry to our precious young people. Over the weekend we explored together strategies and methodologies to better support local church leaders in a Christ-focused, discipling ministry to young people. Our prayer is that we can, through God’s leading and direction, facilitate all young people discovering Jesus; and that He will become the centre of their lives.”

If you are a teen, youth or young adult leader and are not sure who your youth ministry coach is, email <margaretear-

nest@adventist.org.au> with the name of your church so she can email you the contact details of your own personal support person!



Shine Jesus Shine

by Phoebe Hunter

The weekend, March 28–30, I was proud to attend the Shine Girls Conference with 19 of our lovely ladies. We had our young girls worshipping alongside our elders and all were inspired as we gathered around other women from churches across the city. In the past there has been mention that the indigenous community has not been represented at this event. This year our indigenous sisters took over five

tables at this small intimate event!! There were some tears and times of healing as God moved through the room. It was divine timing as we gained strength for the year ahead. Those present had opportunity to network with many ladies and the young girls have even booked a photo shoot for a magazine. To God be the glory as He provided the finance and health enabling us to have a wonderful weekend.

GOOD NEWS REACHES AMBUNTI



by Pastor Orm Speck

Back around 1948, a government officer was lecturing a group of new patrol officers, instructing them in the various procedures and duties expected of them in representing the Australian government to the people in some of the newly opened areas of Papua-New Guinea: “If any of you steps out of line, you can expect to be sent to Ambunti.”

One of the bolder recruits was game enough to ask “Why—and where’s Ambunti?”

The answer came quickly and forcefully. “Ambunti is the most isolated and remote of our patrol posts. It’s on the Sepik River, 258 miles [415 kilometres] up from the mouth of the river, on the edge of the uncontrolled area where government influence has not yet penetrated. You would find it very lonely if you were sent there—so be careful.”

Ambunti was the exact location chosen to be our first Seventh-day Adventist mission station in the Sepik!

Prior to World War II, the Adventist mission had no bases on the northern coast of New Guinea. However, within a couple of post-war years, we had established the Coral Sea Union Mission headquarters in Lae and also a base in the Madang harbour. It was from Madang that Pastor Stan Gander was given the responsibility to make a survey of the whole Sepik area and recommend sites for our first mission stations in the Sepik.

Stan travelled around the islands near the mouth of the Sepik and then journeyed up-river. He soon found that there were few village sites that were not flooded for several months during the wet season each year—the villagers had to use canoes to even visit their neighbours. There were only a few desirable strategic locations immune from this wet-season flooding problem, but in every case they were occupied by the Catholic mission that had been there since the pre-war German days, 50 years earlier. Pastor Stan felt his mission was going to be a failure until he came to Ambunti, the last possible base before the inaccessible, uncontrolled area.

The lonely government officer at Ambunti had previously seen the Adventist mission work in the country’s highlands and was most supportive when Pastor Gander spoke of establishing a mission post at Ambunti. He called in some of

the folk from the nearest villages and asked if they would be prepared to give land for a new mission station in their area. The response was most affirmative. Within a couple of days, an area of land not far from the government outpost had been marked out for the first Adventist mission station in the Sepik.

Not long after this opening, the Coral Sea Union Mission appointed my wife and me to Ambunti—but with a proviso, “We want Orm to go and see the location before accepting the call to Ambunti.” I flew in to Ambunti and met with the same government officer who, along with the local people, gave such an enthusiastic welcome that there were no doubts that the Lord was leading. We accepted the challenge, moved to the area a few weeks later and started clearing some jungle to build the first mission home in the Sepik. The house was built of native materials but with the addition of Sisalkraft lining and it had a ceiling with wire gauze to keep out the multitude of mosquitoes prevalent everywhere in the Sepik area. It was on this location that the first school was established and from here the Gospel message reached out in every direction and found acceptance in many areas.

The only village opening Pastor Gander had found on his initial survey was at Mindimbit village about 100 miles (160 kilometres) before reaching Ambunti, but this was located in an area whose entire land was completely submerged during the wet season. A Manus missionary, Palaso and his wife, had been left there for some time and they asked me to visit them from time to time. Having no boat to do so seemed problematic. The schoolboys and their canoe solved the problem! It was quite a journey. Two days downstream was easier than three days coming back up against the current but this gave us contact with many more villages and contributed to further openings for the Advent message.

Later workers built the *Pathfinder*, a medical houseboat, and with qualified nurses on board it brought much-needed medical care that enhanced the advance of our Adventist mission work in the area. Our work was bringing healing to the body as well as the soul and adding to its current Sepik membership of more than 15,000 precious souls.

BLOGGING KEEPS YOU FIT



by Luke Farrugia

Have you ever wanted to write an article and have it printed in a widely read publication for the world to see? Well, since the advent of blogging (the posting of articles on the internet) this has become a possibility for almost anyone.

I jumped into blogging more than seven years ago, sharing my discoveries from the Bible and life in general. I never expected to make a real difference by writing. Nevertheless I was contacted by a reader on the other side of the world who had lost her faith, and to my amazement God used my posts to reignite her belief in Him. I will never forget this line from her email:

“I have yet to thank you for changing my life. You made such an impact on my life and you are the reason Jesus is now back in my heart. GOD BLESS YOU!!!”

This proves that God can use anyone, anywhere, to do His work. It has far more to do with your willingness to work for Him than your skills and qualifications. If you would like to get involved as one of God’s writers, read on.

The Tools

All you need to get started is to have access to the internet and a good grasp of your language of choice. I mention this because although you don’t have to be a genius copywriter, it is important to be able to communicate well. This avoids putting up a roadblock to people reading your articles.

Tip:

If you feel the need, get a friend to proofread for you, not only is it good for

your writing, but it is a good way to get your first reader!

Your Action list

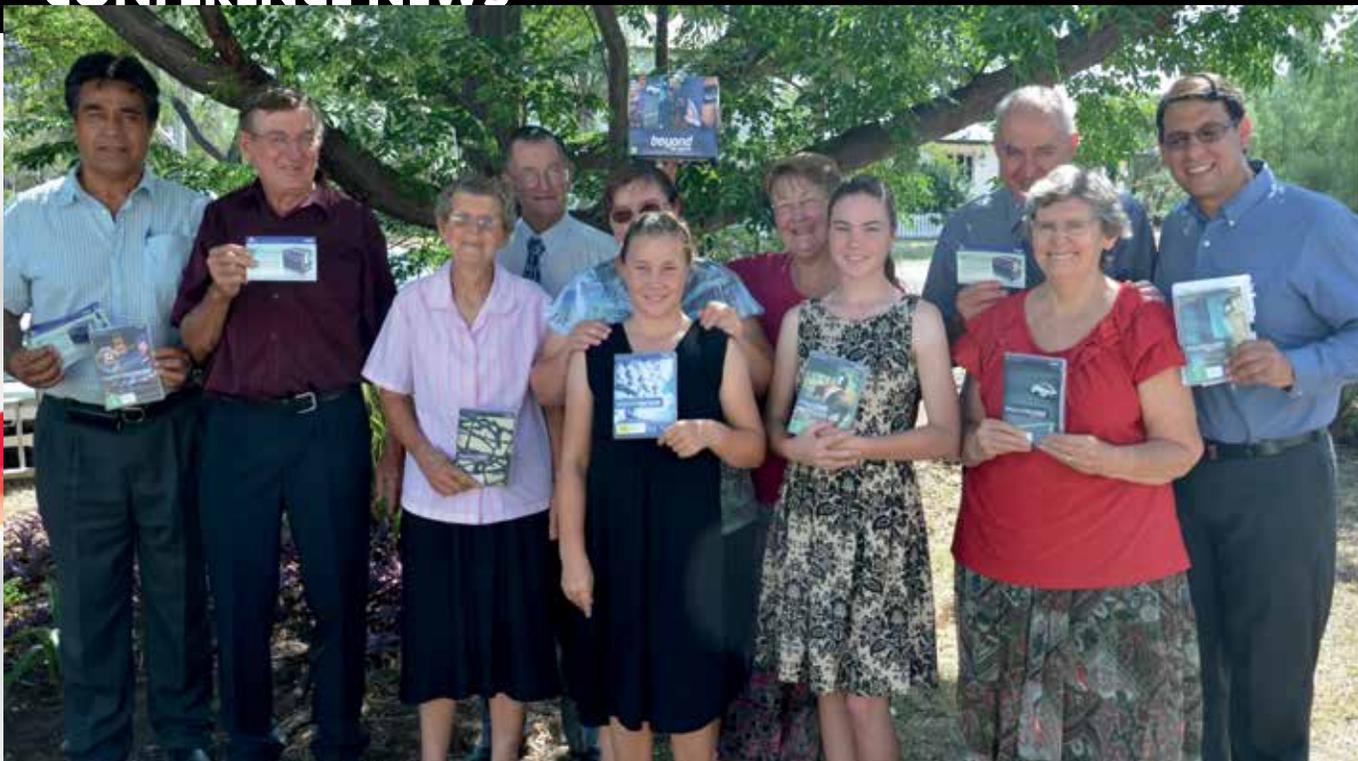
1. Plan your topic: While you can blog about anything and everything, it is far more effective to have a particular topic in mind and write about things relating to that. This could be spiritual things, health and fitness, music, church planting, cooking or any one of a hundred other topics. Prayerfully consider the direction you will take and the purpose of your blog.
2. Set your frequency: Decide how often you are going to post and when. Weekly is good, but whatever you choose, make sure it is sustainable. It is better to post every two weeks rather than posting weekly for a month and burning yourself out.
3. Set up your blog: There are many options out there, some free and some at a cost, but if you are looking for something free and simple, I recommend heading over to <www.wordpress.com> to sign up for your very own blog.
4. Set your editorial calendar: Sometimes ideas flow freely, other times you can suffer writer’s block and take hours to figure out what to write. To avoid this, keep a list of all the topics you would like to post about. That way, when you have time to write, you can get straight into it.
5. Write your first three posts: Often it takes a while to get yourself into the habit of writing, so it is good to start with a buffer, so if something comes

up and you cannot write for a while, you still have content to share with your readers.

6. Find subscribers: The first place to start is with your friends. Tell them about your blog, give them the link, then share it on social media and comment on similar blogs, as this will get you in touch with others who will be interested in what you have to say.
7. Monitor statistics: The final step is watching your statistics and learning from them. You will soon see a pattern of the posts that are the most interesting to your audience and what will get the readers interacting so you can keep altering your approach to reach more people.

Will you take up the challenge? Is this an area of digital ministry you are interested in? Would you like more information? Have you tried it yourself? Let us know! <focus@farbox.com.au>





Dalby Church + Literature Evangelist = What?

by Pastor Sone Mariner

What a time was had in early February: praying, fasting, sharing testimonies and eating together during the week. It was reminiscent of Acts 2 in the time of the Apostles before and after the Holy Spirit was poured out: “They committed themselves to the teaching of the apostles, the life together, the common meal, and the prayers” (Acts 2:42, *The Message*).

The group fellowshiped on Wednesday and Friday evening and of course worshipped again on Sabbath, then did the training for the follow-up team after lunch. All felt the presence of the Holy Spirit.

During the week, the team called on the community: distributing literature, praying with them; inviting them to participate in some of the church’s community services, inviting them to watch the *Beyond* series and inviting them to worship.

The results of the week speak for themselves:

- Literature distributed= 580
- Prayers in the homes = 30
- Bible studies = 30
- Truth-filled books ordered = 180 + health books
- Requested to watch “Beyond the Search” DVD = 38
- Requested to attend seminars = 13

Requested for book parties = 4
Requested to attend book party = 7
Attend church = 1

Judging from this week, I firmly believe the Holy Spirit is being poured out mightily as we unite in active service, saving souls. I would like to especially make mention and thank the efforts of the Dalby local church pastor, Ricardo Scheffer, and his magnificent team of elders.

If you wish to learn more about Literature Evangelism please contact <sonemariner@gmail.com>.



DREAMTRACK ALL AT SEA!



by LaVonne Bobongie Wall

On the fourth Sunday in March, 40 DreamTrack kids, staff and friends headed to the Gold Coast for the day. The morning was spent swimming, body surfing and playing games on the beach. After having lunch under the trees, we spent the afternoon snorkelling and exploring the amazing underwater world that we are blessed to have so close to us. The kids at first were hesitant entering the water, but with the support and guidance from Devocean Dive and their

diving associates, who have volunteered their time and talents for the last couple of years, our DreamTrack kids were soon confidently exploring on their own. It is amazing to watch them grow in confidence and conquer their fears and inhibitions. If you want to support DreamTrack with your time or business, we would love to hear from you. You can contact us on our website <www.dreamtrack.org.au> or look us up on Facebook.



See You In Hospital

In the South Queensland Conference, we are blessed to have a great team of hospital chaplains. These men and women, ably led by Pastor Bob Possingham, keep themselves very busy bringing comfort to the sick and needy. How busy? Here's a snippet from their last quarterly report:

- Visits to patients: 1260
- Visits with family: 110
- Visits with staff members: 10
- Chapel services: 20
- Visitation hours: 331

That's just one quarter! That's how busy!

Please pray that Pastor Possingham and his amazing team of hospital chaplains can continue to serve the Lord in this important area of ministry.



Got a Minute?

A Sound Mind

We have a serious health condition on the rise in Australia. It was the third leading cause of death in 2010, and the Department of Health and Aging estimates that in 2050 those living with this condition "is projected to triple." "It often starts subtly, and isn't discovered until it has taken a firm hold. What is it?

According to the Dep't Health, in "Australians aged 65 and over almost 1 in 10 (9%) had dementia in 2011. And among those aged 85 and over, 3 in 10 (30%) had dementia."

Dementia is actually a term used for about 100 different variations of cognitive impairment that affects "language, memory, perception, personality and cognitive skills". While there is no set cure for all types, prevention (or the delaying) of dementia can occur with early recognition of symptoms. The best thing is:

- Find out more about dementia to get a clearer understanding of what the changes may be or may mean;

- Keep a note of the signs you are seeing – frequency, duration and effect;

- Discuss the changes with a trusted individual and/or medical professional.

- Develop strategies to support the person in managing these changes.

Reference: <https://www.health.gov.au/dementia>



Adventist Aged Care
headoffice@sdaac.com.au
07 3451 5900

Options at Adventist Aged Care

Victoria Point facility offers 124 suites catering for all levels of care needs

Adventist Aged Care is a ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Queensland and has been operating in Victoria Point for more than 30 years.

Offering retirement living options to people of different faiths and backgrounds, the current facility has 124 suites and caters for all levels of care needs.

Adventist Aged Care also operates in Nerang, Yeppoon and Caloundra, employing over 300 people who care for more than 800 residents.

Facilities include affordable independent living units, 24-hour hostel and nursing home care and community-based care.

The philosophy of Adventist Aged Care involves providing for the physical, spiritual and emotional needs of residents. This vision is enhanced at Victoria Point Adventist Retirement Village by the gardens in the park-like estate and the beautiful lake with numerous bird species.



For further information contact:

Adventist Aged Care Head Office
 1/3974 Pacific Highway
 Loganholme, Qld 4129
 Phone: 07 3451 5900 Fax: 07 3209 9721
 Email: headoffice@sdaac.com.au

Caloundra Adventist Retirement Village
 64 Sunset Drive,
 Little Mountain, Qld 4551
 Phone: 07 5491 3544 Fax: 07 5491 3958
 Email: caremanager.cal@sdaac.com.au

Capricorn Adventist Retirement Village
 150 Rockhampton Road
 Yeppoon Qld 4703
 Phone: 07 4939 2801 Fax: 07 4939 280
 Email: acolless@sdaac.com.au

Melody Park Retirement Resort
 261 Gilston Road
 Nerang, Qld 4211
 Phone: 07 5557 1777
 Fax: 07 5557-1700
 Email: caremanager.mp@sdaac.com.au

Victoria Point Adventist Retirement Village
 571 Cleveland-Redland Bay Road
 Victoria Point Qld 4165
 Phone: 07 3820 5777
 Fax: 07 3820 5799
 Email: reception.vp@sdaac.com

■ The painting *My Son, My Saviour* by Marion Coltman was commissioned by Adventist Aged Care.

It reflects the calling that the organisation has to care for the elderly.

Marion's goal has always been to show people the character of Christ in her paintings.

My Son, My Saviour is a reminder that Jesus ensured his mother was cared for by his disciples before he was executed.

Adventist Aged Care believes it has a responsibility to follow this example.



Village men connect down in their shed

The Men's Shed located in the Victoria Point Adventist Retirement Village provides an opportunity for residents to support the local Redlands community and for men to connect with one another.

With the opening of the All Things Nice cafe in the Village, the Men's Shed members have made decorative and functional wooden products.

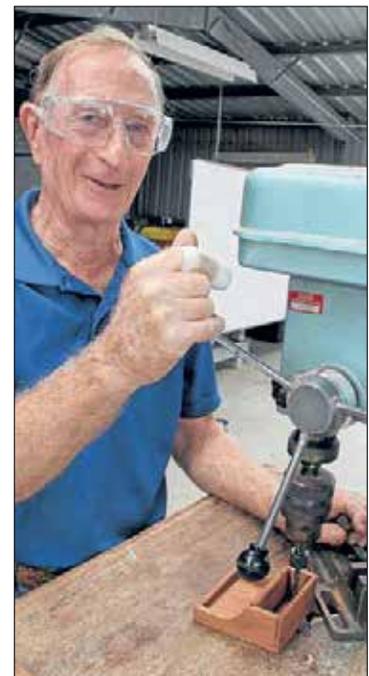
In addition, they have made some items for the local Scout group, fixed an old trailer and done some repairs on the Men's Shed building.

On the list of things to do - for some of the members at least - is to build model boats to sail on the lake that stretches in front of the building.

Graham Watt says that some of the members have not used tools before, while others have worked in trades or are experienced in using tools and are able to share their knowledge.

In addition to the wood and metal work, the men also play darts and table tennis, and enjoy chatting over a cuppa.

"The main benefit of the Men's Shed for the members is companionship," says Graham.



In addition to wood and metal work, the men play darts, table tennis and enjoy chatting over a cuppa

ABOVE: Adventist Aged Care Mens Shed from left - Graham Watt, Roger Duffy, Erin Edwards, Elwyn Sippel, Les Merrin, Howard Jones and Ray O' Hara .

RIGHT: Graham Watt works away on the press drill in the Adventist Men's Shed.

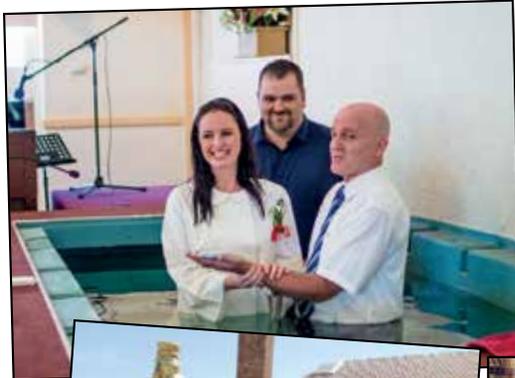
LEFT: Adventist Aged Care Mens Shed participants from left Howard Jones, Graham Watt, Les Merrin, Ray O' Hara, Erin Edwards, Geoff Hillier, Elwyn Sippel and Roger Duffy.

Photos by Chris McCormack



FONTS and BUCKETS

at South Brisbane



Article and pictures by Crystal Gibson

- Over the past six weeks, South Brisbane Church has had the privilege of hosting a series of workshops on health presented by Ben and Jana Meldt. Ranging from healthy make-it-yourself body care products, effective (but harmless) natural cleaning products, and even natural remedies that can be found in your backyard, these presentations were enthusiastically received. Attendance ranged from 20 to 30 people, approximately half of whom were from the community. These programs were a great lead-in to the upcoming Last Empire campaign, which those attending were invited to. Delightedly, many community members snapped up the spiritual and health literature available.
- It was boys against girls as church members teamed up for Eden's Kitchen Rules at South Brisbane Church! Teams attempted to create many culinary feats while using foods that originated with our Creator God. Nearly 60 people attended the event and those who did not participate in the game still enjoyed not only the appetizing results, but also listened to presentations on choosing a healthy vegetarian lifestyle. Many community attendees also took large amounts of literature about vegetarianism, health and spiritual matters.
- South Brisbane Church has been blessed to witness the baptism of three young people who have decided to dedicate their lives and talents to God. Damian Da Silva, Dari Bee and Andria Meyer all made the commitment to follow Jesus wherever He may lead them. Seven others also responded to the call made at the end of baptisms. We are delighted to see both our young and old alike wishing to renew their faith.
- South Brisbane church attracted a lot of roadside interest one Sunday when a mysterious large statue appeared in their parking lot. As part of an awareness campaign for the upcoming Last Empire seminar, church members banded together to offer the public a free car wash. While cars were being cleaned, people were invited to rest and relax while watching Geoff Youlden's new *Beyond* series and avail themselves of free literature provided.

COOROY MUSIC AS A MISSION



Emotion is often the key to a powerful sermon, it softens hearts and lets the gospel in. Music too, can stir one's emotions.

On Sabbath, February 22, at Cooroy church, the Maroochydore Ensemble touched hearts and emotions as they presented a sermon in music and narration entitled, "I Walked Today Where Jesus Walked."

The mission of the ensemble, started in 2007, is to praise our heavenly Father through music, to enhance the Maroochydore worship service, to help the development of local musicians and encourage our young people to participate in church mission.

The group has performed at various other regional churches, retirement villages and special camp events.

"Performances continue to touch hearts everywhere. All praise goes to our heavenly Father for the gift of music, the talent to play it, and hearts that find connection with Him through the emotion it evokes! What a Saviour!" says Mr Ken Dove.

—Article and pictures by Ken Dove

EIGHT MILE PLAINS FEELING FOREVER LOVED



Kyle and Janette present their \$1500 cheque to Bronwen

Our Eight Mile Plains Church's "Forever Loved Op Shop" partners with the "Hope Foundation" to assist Brisbane girls trapped in drug addiction and the sex industry.

As part of the partnership with Hope Foundation, "Forever Loved Op Shop" donated their February profits of \$1500 towards, Hope Foundation as one of the

local community-supported projects.

Bronwen Healy, founder of Hope Foundation who herself was set free by Jesus, comes alongside women wanting a life change from drug addictions and its related sex industry.

Recently Brownen had eight ladies who accepted Jesus and wanted to be baptised. They needed a church with a baptismal font and Wynnum Adventist church helped them by making their church available.

The "Forever Loved Op Shop" is helping connect with the community and supporting people in Brisbane. The Forever Loved Op Shop wishes to thank those who donate clothes and items to sell in the shop; it enables it to continue connecting with the community.

Volunteer Helper Positions:

You can help "Forever Loved Op Shop" by volunteering to be part of the team. CentreLink has also recognised the "Forever Loved Op Shop" as a place where community work as a volunteer will be approved to people needing to do community work in order to receive the "New Start" allowance.

Volunteer Manager Position:

Do you have the love and passion to help the community? "The Forever Loved Op Shop" management team are looking for a key leader to assist them in the running of the shop. Interested? Contact Kylie <mktagg@gmail.com> / 0433 773 633

—Article and pictures by Pastor Andre van Rensburg

LANDSBOROUGH THE REAL REASON FOR THE SEASON

Those who attended the Christmas service at Landsborough church were treated to a special drama, poetry and song presentation put on by some of the juniors together

with some praise leaders. The praise leaders led out in a rousing session of Christmas carols that brought the church to a "heavenly place." Head Elder, Laurie Evans, gave a special Christmas sermon that left everyone full of Christmas spirit.

On Christmas Day, the church held a Christmas brunch as an outreach to the community. It was spearheaded by Brenda Smart and her creative hospitality team. An invitation was sent out to those folk in the Landsborough area who were lonely and less fortunate. More than 40 people



attended with 16 adults and two children being from the community. Everyone enjoyed a sumptuous meal and a gift was given to the special guests who were most appreciative of the love and support from our Landsborough church.

—Article by Tracy Bianco, pictures by Nathan Howard-Osborne

NAMBOUR FINALLY GOES UNDER



Nambour church was recently inundated . . . not with water but with blessings from a generous and loving God!

A number of young people from the Nambour church recently decided to formally and publicly give their hearts to Jesus. Elsie Scott the church's Communications Secretary reports, "Out of the baptisms we have recently enjoyed here in Nambour, six of them have been Pathfinder young people and five of them have the privilege of attending Noosa Christian College." Elsie reports that the positive influences of Pathfinders and our Adventist school in Noosa encouraged the young people to choose Jesus.

Elsie also shared, "It was wonderful seeing one of our members, Greg Davis, re-baptised; things are looking good for our Nambour church this year."

Elsie adds that the church is blessed to have Dion Kerr looking after the Nambour Pathfinder club. "He is a blessing to our young people—amazing!"

—Pictures by Elsie Scott



NORTH BRISBANE BILINGUAL SPANISH

CAN YOU REMEMBER WHERE YOU WERE IN 1912!

Our North Brisbane Bilingual Spanish Group had the pleasure of celebrating Josefina Cabrera's (Chepita) 102nd birthday on Sabbath, March 22. Chepita



was born in El Salvador on March 19, 1912. She inspires our Seventh-day Adventist members to persevere in our daily study of the Word of God. This lovely old lady has been an active worker in the Lord's business of winning souls for the kingdom of God.

Josefina Cabrera has been engaged in evangelism even in her old age as an active member in our new North Brisbane Bilingual Spanish church plant since 2010. The group began its meetings in a house garage in Bracken Ridge, then moved to Albany Creek City Hall, followed by Lawnton Community Hall and now the group meets in the Petrie School of Arts Hall. Even in her old age, Chepita continues to rehearse her Bible memory verses. Chepita attributes the source of her longevity to the love and power of God through a daily study of the Bible.

—Article and pictures by Marcos Escobar



PINE RIVERS

emBARKing ON A UNIQUE OUTREACH PROGRAM



One of the Pine Rivers Sabbath School members put on a birthday party for their fox terrier dog who recently turned 10.

Instead of bringing gifts, the guests from one of the Sabbath school groups were asked to bring food and other donations for the RSPCA animal refuge across the road from the church. The Sabbath school members were glad to help support the work of the RSPCA in providing shelter for all creatures great and small.

—Article and pictures by Charles Russell

VIRAL EVANGELISM EXPOSED



Pastor André Hamilton recently led out in a series of worship services and afternoon programs focusing on evangelism training. Under the title of "Be Contagious," those present learnt from all the best Bible evangelists, discovering their individual evangelistic style and how best to tell their story in relation to God's salvation plan. Pastor André also held two afternoon workshops, tackling the stereotypes of evangelism and providing easy and practical strategies of sharing Christ with family and friends that are relevant for today's society!

—Article and pictures by Charles Russell & Pastor Andre Hamilton



Dr. Joe Webb taking the final worship program in the series

REEDY CREEK

GOES BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY



Last month, Reedy Creek church ran a Health Expo in their Performing Arts Centre as part of their lead up strategy to the "Last Empire" campaign beginning May 2. The church had more than 60

volunteers, including health professionals, assisting on the day. The team was kept busy giving blood-pressure checks, health-age checks, massages and cooking demonstrations. The younger people in attendance enjoyed a Kids Corner.

Pastor Greg Pratt, after spending some time in thought and prayer, decided to set up a "Beyond the Search" stand, offering the free gift of *Beyond*.

"Why not give it a try, we have nothing to lose and all to gain," he mused.

While not knowing how it would go at a Health Expo, eight very good contacts were made who are now being followed up by church members with *Beyond the Search* DVD's. The intent is to invite them to the "Dinner with Geoff" on the Gold Coast in April.

Pastor Greg relates, "It is just so exciting to use this resource in meeting the needs of the community and then to witness what happens when we link all the various methods of evangelism we have together with the focus of preparing for the harvest that will be the Last Empire."

—Article by Pastor Greg Pratt

ROCKHAMPTON

CHURCH BURNS!



From February 6–15 the Rockhampton Church participated in the 10 Days of Prayer. The local program was labelled "Operation Global Rain; Keeping The Fire In Rockhampton." Operation Global Rain was a worldwide initiative designed to instigate spiritual revival and reformation in the church.

Run under God's direction and for His service, the Rockhampton elders, well-supported by all the local church leaders, met for 10 consecutive nights. Each night there was time to fellowship over a lovely soup and buns dinner before committing to a "season" of prayer. All those present enjoyed the reading of Scripture and Spirit of Prophecy. The program concluded on Friday evening with an agape feast, and an incense prayer ceremony, followed by a special service and powerful presentation on The Lord's Prayer on Sabbath morning.

—Article and pictures by Dan Banos

SOUTH BRISBANE JESUS LOVES THE LITTLE CHILDREN



Maureen Ellson and Claire Tihi report that things are really happening in the Children's Ministries South Brisbane of the church. Special programs are held on the second Sabbath afternoon of each month from 2pm to 4pm and it is during this time the church's small children are kept amused learning all about Jesus.

The church has chosen to split its children into age divisions in order to ensure presentations remain relevant and interesting to all levels:

Little Lambs: 3½–5 years old

Little Fish: 5–6 years old

Adventurer's: 6–10 years old

Christ for Life Club: 10–15 years old

The church aims to teach all about God's love for His children using a creative environment where all children can contribute and be encouraged to have fun! The Christ for Life Club, at their last meeting, had a great discussion on the temptations Jesus endured and how we can also overcome the temptations that come our way. The young people were given time to do some worksheets to reinforce the message and then they made bookmarks in order to remind them of how much Jesus loves us and promises to always help us. Any mums and dads who would like to see their children involved in the great activities happening at South Brisbane church are invited to do so! South Brisbane Church's street address is; 34 O'Keefe Street, Buranda.

—Article by Shirley Glover, pictures by Claire and Leticia



TOOWOOMBA NEW PASTOR—A HEADLINE ACT

In only his third week as the new senior pastor at Toowoomba Central Church, Pastor Andrew Feaveai has already made himself right at home.

"My wife, two daughters and I are feeling really settled and enjoying Toowoomba," said Pastor Andrew.

While at his first Christian Leaders Network prayer meeting last month, the New Zealand-born Samoan, raised in Australia, was an instant hit with his sense of humour and relaxed nature.

"They call us mixed Aussies—Mozzies," said Pastor Andrew.

Previously at Deception Bay, north of Brisbane, Pastor Andrew said he was "blown away" by the number of pastors and Christian leaders who gather for weekly prayer and fellowship every Thursday morning.

"Where I was before we tried to get together with other pastors, but it was a lot smaller than this, and it was hard to get people to come along," he said.

"I've never seen anything like this. God has been doing something special here for a long time and I'm looking forward to getting to know the pastors here."

Pastor Andrew said it was evident that the pastors of Toowoomba really enjoy getting together every week for prayer and that this kind of unity means a lot to him.

"God made us all different," he said. "And we are to celebrate that. But we all fit into His plan somewhere, so it's important that we can come alongside each other."

He said he was passionate about young people and seeing churches grow.

"I want to see people getting involved in the community and living out God's purpose for their lives," said Pastor Andrew.

—Article and pictures by Ian Anderson



THEY ARE AT IT AGAIN

A team of people led by Melinda Archer, Health Facilitator at Glenvale Church, commenced their first CHIP (Complete Health Improvement Program) on March 2.

This world renowned health seminar, backed by the Sanitarium Health Food Company, ran for 18 sessions spread over six weeks.



The CHIP team of eight facilitators includes a graduate—Pat Quinn—of an earlier CHIP program held three years ago at Toowoomba Central Church. Her remarkable story was featured recently in *The Toowoomba Chronicle*. She says that CHIP saved her life.

"I was in so much pain," said Pat. "I had had a hip replacement and put on a lot of weight, and I have carried a lot of weight all my life."

"I figured I can try anything for a month—so I gave it a go. Now I'm in no pain and I feel like I'm 50 again!" said 70-year-old Pat.

But now CHIP is back—bigger and better. It has more Australian content, the latest research, a fantastic recipe book, and plenty of support material and programming.

Thirty-five men and women from many walks of life across the Toowoomba community signed up for a challenging, enlightening, and life-changing experience, empowering participants with new confidence that they truly are in charge of their own health.

CHIP is purposely intensive through its first month (doesn't it take 28 days to change a habit!) but typically very rewarding results show up after 30 days from one blood draw to the next.

"I'm really excited to be involved in a program like this", said team leader Melinda Archer from Glenvale Church. "I've seen how it can make a huge difference for anyone who wants to feel better, look better and last better!"

—Article and pictures by One Church Newspaper Toowoomba

WARWICK SON IN THE SUN



The last weekend of March saw the Warwick church members head off for a time of reflection and fellowship on its annual church camp. This year's camp was held at Goomburra Valley camp grounds. Despite the blessing of heavy rainfall and the apprehension of less seasoned campers, we went ahead in faith and knew a blessing would result, rain or no rain.

God really does deliver! Sabbath morning clouds gave way to a spectacular sunny day. With the wonder of nature surrounding the group, the whole day

AROUND THE CHURCHES

was very relaxing with the main worship service held at 2pm.

Earlier in the morning, Steve Kane, Director of Youth Ministries, spoke to Warwick's youth about developing a plan for the next five years in youth groups. Later in the afternoon, Steve outlined the plan to the older greying youth of the church and a similar plan will be developed for the whole church.

The afternoon service was especially significant for Stephen Girard as he showed his allegiance to God's family by being baptised in the nearby creek. He was baptised by Steve Kane on behalf of intern pastor Trevor Mawer. As one member remarked, "I have never seen a baptism outside of the church building and this reminded me of John baptising Jesus in the Bible account. Really makes that story live."

A blessing was had by all who experienced God in His outdoor church and we can't wait to do it again!

—Pastor Trevor Mawer



BY THEIR FRUITS YOU WILL KNOW THEM



March is always a busy time in the Granite Belt with the rich abundance of fresh fruit and vegetables in full harvest, the community of Stanthorpe preparing for the Apple and Grape Festival, and the Stanthorpe Church preparing for the South Queensland Conference regional day. The first Sabbath of March saw the churches of Warwick, Stanthorpe, The Summit, Goondiwindi and Esk gather to hear reports from Conference administration. Sabbath School was masterfully taken by Pastor Jorge Munoz while Pastor Colin Renfrew challenged the congregation with, "Do you know love?" in his

sermon. During the service Pastor Darrin Parker thrilled the kids with his story and Sam Walker and the Warwick youth blessed with their music talent during song service.

A feast of the best produce and cooking skills were on display to be enjoyed over lunch as old friendships were refreshed and new bonds formed. The children were kept busy with John Thompson supplying many balloon constructs after Sabbath School and during lunch; swords seemed to be the order of the day.

After lunch, the feasting continued in a musical program to rival the Domain Carols. From whistlers to piano accordions, the afternoon was a delight. During the program reports by Scott Hopkins (Chief Financial Officer) and Helen Threlfo (Director of Women's Ministries) informed those present the direction our church is headed in each area.

Prayers for safe travel and ministry success were offered up, goodbyes were said and each returned to their corner of the region . . . until next year.

—Pastor Trevor Mawer

THE COMMON DENOMINATOR-S

Article by Pastor Gideon Okesene and pictures by Nathan Howard-Osborne

Sherrie Crawford and Lois McDougall are both women with a passion to serve God and to fulfil His purpose for their lives. What they didn't realise was that they also shared something else in common. They both had a Jehovah's Witness (JW) background. Sherrie received studies from JW's and was later baptised into that denomination. Lois on the other hand, had a father who was a JW (a former Adventist) and a mother who was an Adventist. The good news is that eventually the light of His Word dawned on Lois, her father and Sherrie.

Sherrie approached me on December 7, 2013 at the last baptism we had in Kingaroy and asked if she could receive Bible studies in preparation for baptism. What I did not realise was her hunger for the Word. I was able to conduct two Bible studies with her before I went on leave and left her with Myrtle Paulas (Elder) and Leon Everett (Personal Ministries leader) to continue studies. When I returned from leave, she had gone through a miraculous transformation at a rate of around three Bible studies per week, and she was happy to tell me how God had allowed her to make so many changes in her life. She even looked different and she told me that she felt a weight of baggage fall off her shoulders when she understood the truth about the simple gospel. Kathy Rosenberger also spent time helping her to understand scripture and supported her during many of the Bible studies. Today Sherrie can't stop smiling, and she will be a wonderful witness wherever she goes with the powerful testimony God has given her.

Lois made a decision to be baptised some time ago. She knew the time was right and wanted to recommit her life completely to God again through baptism. She has endured some very painful experiences, one being a marriage breakdown, during which she asked herself "Why was I ever born?" and "Can God really love me?" But over time God's love kept washing over her like the relentless waves of the ocean, and He sent messengers to show her that God is love. God also sent Lois another husband who loves her dearly. Today she is loving God and loving life. She has recently been diagnosed with breast cancer, but she believes that God can and will heal her. We believe God has a plan for her to share her amazing testimony with many others well into the future, and we would like to ask you to join her, the Kingaroy church and her family in praying that she will be healed as a witness of God's power!

Talk about common denominator-s: they are women on fire for God, they both had a similar JW past and were divorced, the light of Truth and the love of Jesus has touched and transformed their lives, and they were baptised together on March 1 at the Kingaroy church. To God be all the praise and the glory!



Watermelon—The Slice Of Life

Article and pictures by Elissa Dowling

WALLY the Watermelon was one of the “big fruits” who encouraged Darling Downs Christian School students in Toowoomba during their recent Week of Worship.

An annual event for the school, this year’s Week of Worship featured Endless Praise, a gospel music group that travels around Australia sharing their love for God through music and story in schools, churches and in concert.

Talking about “The Big Fruit of the Spirit” in the primary school, Endless Praise also challenged secondary students with “The Big Dream” asking them to consider what God’s dream was for their life.

DDCS chaplain, Kate Wolverton, said the Week of Worship allowed students to completely focus on their relationship with God and was an important part of the school year. “We see God do amazing things in the lives of our kids during this time,” she said. Chaplain Kate went on to say, “Across the school, we had more than 150 kids commit or dedicate their lives to Christ—some for the first time. We now have 25 children in regular Bible studies at school.”



“Wally the Watermelon” helped teach Darling Down Christian School primary students about the Fruit of the Spirit.



MIGHTY 2MITES!

The South Queensland 2Mites Student Leadership Summit is a leadership training program that has been running for the past six years. This year’s program, entitled “Leadership Comes From Followship” was a blessing to those students who had the opportunity to attend.

Pastor Gary caught up with a number of Northpine Christian College’s Junior-aged students, they had this to say;

“I really enjoyed the 2mite Leadership weekend, especially listening to the motivational talks each day. Other highlights included playing with friends, sleeping in cabins and the free time activities of swimming and watching a movie.”

“We sang songs and I liked the pack that we got, which had a book in it.”

“I learnt from the weekend about how to be a leader. It is not just about going to a great camp, but to find a way to serve your school.”

“Now I help to run Kids4Christ at school. At K4C we think up ideas for WOW (Week Of Worship) and chapels, as well as play Bible learning games.”

—Colin Willcocks

“I really liked the beach games, worships and food at the 2Mite Leadership Weekend Camp.”

“I learnt how to be a good follower of Christ and it means being a good example.”

“Now I help run Kids4Christ with Colin and Cam at school on Fridays at lunchtime.”

—Jaxon Tams

“At the 2Mite Camp, I really enjoyed the beach games, the worships every night, and having good food and being with friends.”

“I learnt about training others to be followers of Christ. It wasn’t a leadership camp but rather a followship camp. Now I help run Kids4Christ at school.”

—Cameron Bryer



Children's Ministry Expo

Northside
10th May 2014

3:30-5:30pm at
Pine Rivers Church
Old Gympie Road, Dakabin



Southside
24th May 2014

3:30-5:30pm at
Mt Gravatt Church
341 Broadwater Road, Mansfield

Guest Speakers include:

Judy Wharton

More Creative Prayer Ideas

Angeline Bryer

Think Orange Update: latest thinking from the USA about how the home and the church can combine to shape the faith of our children

Pastor Neil Marks

Five Keys for Ministry to Children and Families



All who are interested in Children's Ministries from Brisbane's Northside churches are encouraged to attend this event on 10th May 2014.

Please note this program will be repeated on 24th May 2014 at Mt Gravatt church for anyone who is interested in Children's Ministries from Brisbane's Southside.

Enquiries: 3218 7777 or email to <hayleylambe@adventist.org.au>

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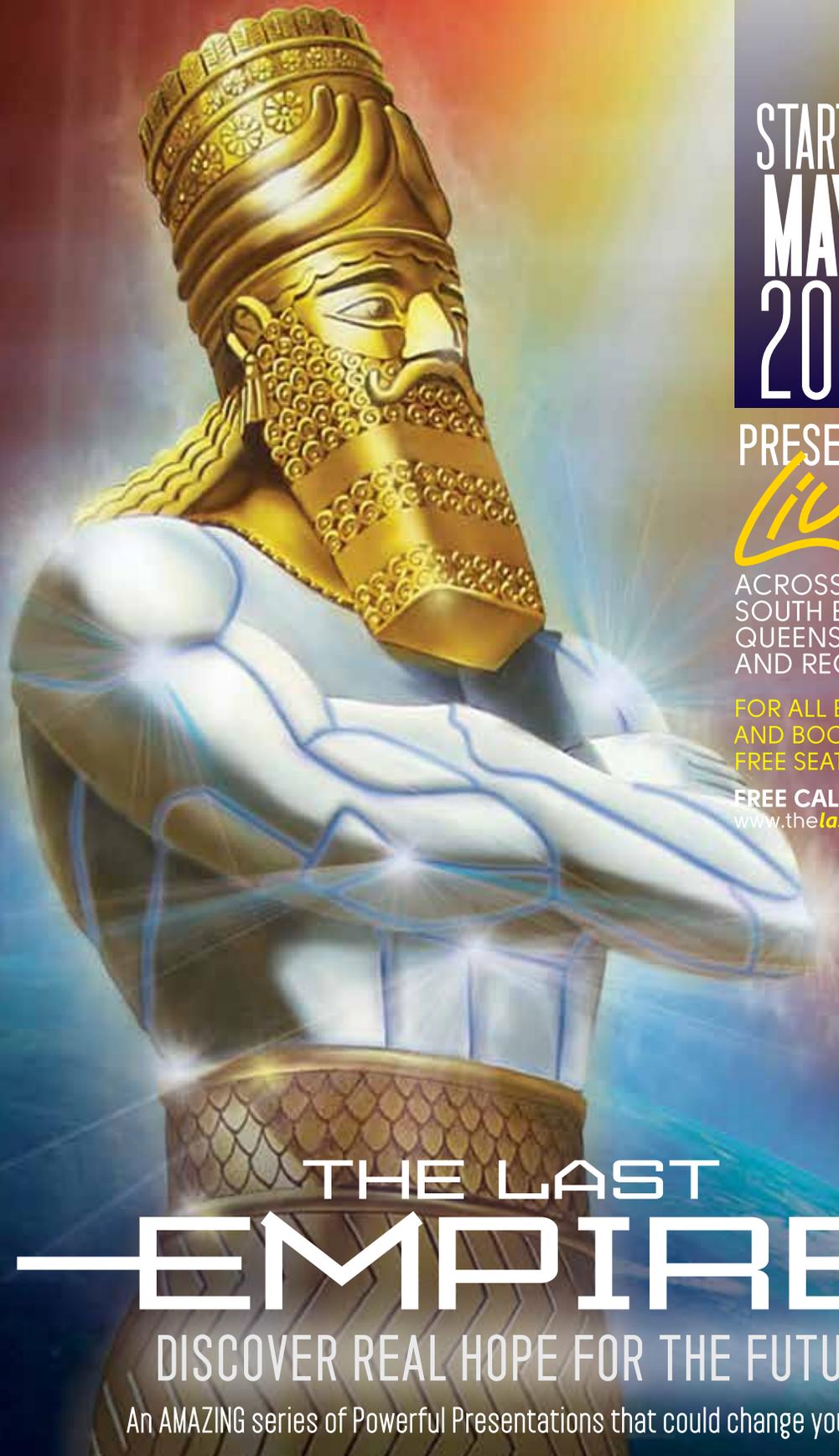
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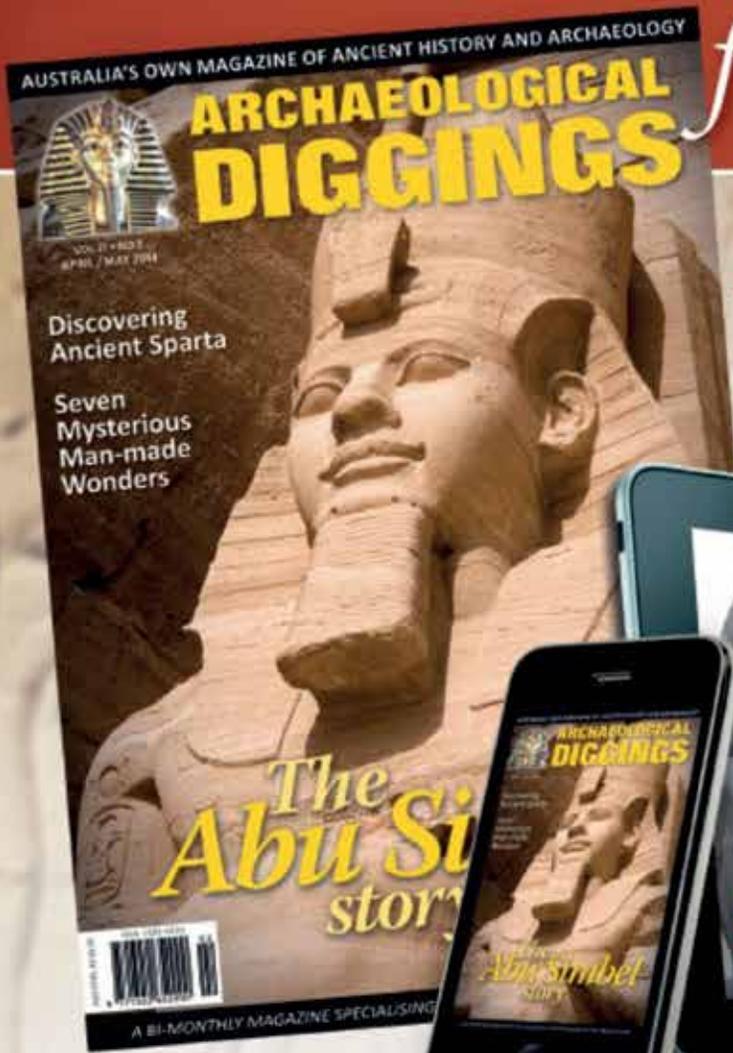
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Association of Adventist Counsellors

Saturday, June 21 9:30am – 3:30pm

getting
off

the

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ROLLER-COASTER

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we couldn't experience the **HIGHS** and *lows* of life
. . . and be able to love - or *be* loved (God's purpose for us).



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Jennifer Skues

Health Psychologist
Guest Presenter

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- Neuroplasticity – Yes, emotional brains can change & grow
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AAC members (incl "Friend of AAC"): **\$50** **Non AAC Members: \$60**
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**** for Bookings or Information**

contact Susan at SQ Conf – 07 3218 7777

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VENUE:

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A PICTURE STILL TELLS A THOUSAND WORDS!

They were there long before the icloud, the internet, Facebook, emails and all of the other methods of communication we take for granted as part of everyday life. In fact, how did we exist without them?

But many people still do, and that is exactly why Picture Rolls are still a medium that reaches people. This is particularly true in parts of our island territories where literacy is still at low levels in some places. As the old proverb says, "One picture is worth a thousand words."

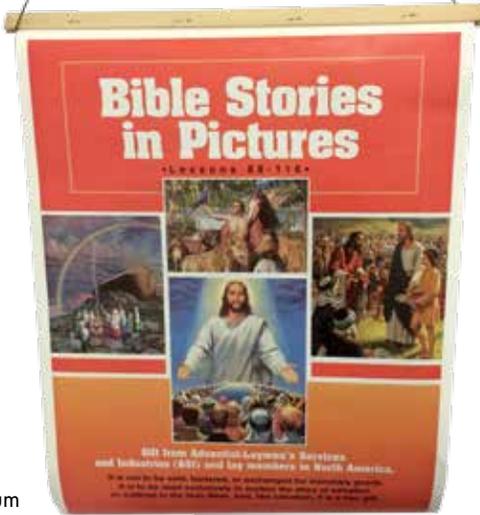
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One focus will be Bible stories that can be used in Children's Ministries and Sabbath school. These can also be used by others in telling the gospel message through these stories to those who have never heard them.

The second focus will be to produce evangelistic resources that deal with our Bible prophecies and great Bible truths. These can be used for evangelism in areas where it is impossible to rely on the electronic media.

These will become a saleable item once they are produced but there are considerable costs in setting up the artwork and text to get them ready for printing.

If you would like to partner with us in this outreach project or you have questions, please contact: Kevin Geelan (Sales Manager, Signs Publishing Company) on the following; <kevin.geelan@signspublishing.com.au> Phone (03) 5965 6300 Mobile 0409 955 517



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More details can be found at <www.itiswrittenoceania.co/competitions>.

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<http://sq.adventist.org.au/e-giving>

where, once you have registered, you can arrange your Tithes and Offerings with a few easy steps.

If you have any problems using the site or just have some questions please don't hesitate to contact our team at;

SQegiving@adventist.org.au

who will be happy to assist you.



Attention FOCUS Contributors

FOCUS is produced by the South Queensland Conference Communication Department, 19 Eagle Terrace, Brisbane, QLD 4000. Phone: (07) 3218 7777; Fax: (07) 3236 1305; Email: sqfocus@adventist.org.au

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