



Nurturing Disciples

In a Healthy Growing Church

Reaching Out and Connecting

FOCUS

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

Why Not LIVE More?

The 10-Day “LIVE MORE” Spirituality & Health Initiative: Q&A

by Pastor Neil Marks, Director of Health Ministries

Q Why is this 10-day period scheduled so early in the year?

A The aim of this whole initiative is to set aside a period of time at the beginning of the year to worship and dedicate ourselves to God that He might bless our lives, homes, churches and conference in 2015. The festive season and New Year are past, so before the year really gets underway, the 10 days from January 7 to 17 have been chosen.

This date also happens to coincide with the General Conference’s *Ten Days of Prayer* as part of a global attempt to foster revival and reformation in the Adventist church.

Q Why fast during this time?

A There are two main reasons for this: first, as a “spirituality and health” initiative to bless both body and soul (as outlined in last month’s FOCUS article) but also as a spiritual practice in seeking God’s blessing on the future.

With regard to this second reason, in scripture a period of fasting and prayer has often preceded many of the great events in salvation history. In the Old Testament, Moses fasted and prayed before receiving the Law on Mt Sinai, Ezra fasted and prayed before returning to Jerusalem with the Jewish exiles, Nehemiah did the same before attempting to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, Esther likewise before entering the presence of the Persian king to plead for her people and Daniel in order to understand God’s plan for the future.

In the New Testament, Jesus fasted and prayed for 40 days before commencing His public ministry and Saul of Tarsus for three days just after his conversion on the road to Damascus. Peter was fasting and praying just prior to his experience with Cornelius the Roman Centurion and the church at Antioch fasted and prayed before the commissioning of Barnabus and Paul to take the gospel to the Gentiles.

If our church is serious about seeking re-

newal of faith and spiritual experience or the blessing of God for the year ahead, then a call to some type of fasting is appropriate.

Q Why a 10-day period?

A Biblically, the 10-day period has been a significant one in scripture. In Old Testament times it was associated with the Feast of Trumpets where on the first day of the seventh Jewish month, trumpets were blown calling the people to prepare to stand before the judgment of God. This day was known as Rosh Hashanah and was the second most solemn day of the Jewish religious calendar behind that of Yom Kippur, which occurred only 10-days later

“The blowing of the trumpets was understood to be a call to repent and prepare oneself to stand trial before God who would execute His judgment 10-days later on the Day of Atonement” (S Bacchiochi, *God’s Festivals in Scripture and History, volume II: The Fall Festivals*).

This 10-day period of judgment and testing may well have been in the prophet Daniel’s mind when he suggested to King Nebuchadnezzar a 10-day dietary trial to test the efficacy of a plant-based diet against that of the Babylonian royal court (see Daniel 1:11–16)

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For the Christian church, the outstanding 10-day period occurred immediately prior to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. During these 10-days, the followers of Jesus came together in fellowship and prayer in an upper room in Jerusalem, preparing and waiting for the promised outpouring of the Holy Spirit as Jesus had promised (see Acts 1:3–5, 12, 14).

Q Why the “LIVE MORE” branding?

A This is a communication initiative by the South Pacific Division to promote our church under the catchwords of *Learn More—Live More—Love More*.

Learn More is about knowing God through His Word, His Son, His Creation and His followers and *Live More* has to do with taking that knowledge and putting it into practice in our lives, homes, church and community.

Love More is a call to share what we have experienced by connecting with others in fellowship, witnessing, teaching and making new disciples.

NB. The South Queensland Conference Health Department will be using the “LIVE MORE” catchword for most of its



programs this quadrennium. For example these 10 days of fasting and prayer in January next year, have been branded as, the *10-Day LIVE MORE Spirituality @ Health Initiative*.

Summary:

The timing and the nature of this 10-day period in early 2015 is built on a

biblical foundation. We invite the whole Conference to journey together spiritually over this period.



ADVENTIST STUDENT ASSOCIATION: WE WERE MADE FOR SO MUCH MORE

by Joseph Khabbaz

During this upcoming February, tertiary students from around the country will gather together to learn more about what it means to follow Jesus throughout their university and TAFE years. If you are attending university or TAFE, you won't want to miss out on this wonderful opportunity to learn how to make the best of this season of your life, and engage with students of all ages from your region and campus. Join students from around Australia for four days where you will experience Bible teaching, practical training, and plenty of fun. Whether you have been a disciple of Jesus for many years or are just getting to know Him, ASA Summer Institute is the place for you! For more information visit us online at: <www.sqyouth.org.au>.

From Victim to Victor:

How GIGI Magazine is Disarming Bullies

by Raewyn Jones

Often we will receive letters that inspire us—5 Sister’s Ministry—to continue working on GIGI. Here’s the story of Rochelle and how GIGI Magazine was and continues to be a blessing to her.

Rochelle, a Year 8 student in Western Australia, began to experience bullying by her peers. She said her life was “all good” until one of her peers decided to make fun of her by calling her a hurtful name.

Every time they were in class, her bully would pick on her by hurling abu-

sive comments that brought her down. Unfortunately, the other students eventually joined in, tormenting Rochelle with hurtful words.

One day while in a sport class, Rochelle became particularly distressed as her bully’s harsh words were relentless. While playing cricket on the school oval, she noticed her bully playing T-ball nearby. Upon realising she was within earshot, he started to bellow out hurtful names, causing Rochelle to feel embarrassed and frustrated.



Pictures Submitted by Gigi Magazine

Sadly, this persistent name-calling eventually led Rochelle to feel ashamed and she began to wonder if his hurtful words had any truth to them.

One day while at home, Rochelle’s neighbour dropped off the spring edition of GIGI magazine.

While reading it, she discovered an article on bullying, which gave her the courage to go back to school and face her peers. As a skilled carpenter knows how

to use their box of tools, Rochelle felt equipped with the advice given in the arti-

cle she read. She took the written “tools” and used them to help her overcome the bullying she faced. Her self-esteem was strengthened by the words she read, “Ignore them, and never let them get the better of you.” Receiving that issue of GIGI magazine was a great blessing to Rochelle and her sisters, proving that God’s timing is perfect.

Rochelle’s story doesn’t end there. Rochelle encountered bullying once again by the same student and his friends during class one day. Feeling helpless, she succumbed to crying after letting the bullying get the better of her. Recalling the advice of the article she read, she reported the incident to her House Leader, who supported her and made her feel more empowered.

Rochelle shared that the student occasionally calls her names, but she said that one of her New Year’s resolutions was to ask God to help when these specific situations arose, she also made a resolution to continue reading GIGI and apply the advice given.

“Thank you GIGI for the article on bullying that helped me through some tough times,” said Rochelle.

If you would like to make a difference in the life of a girl you love, you can subscribe to GIGI magazine at <www.gigimagazine.com.au>.



CREATIVE ARTS FESTIVAL
manifest

ENJOY A
 MANNA FEAST
 AT MANIFEST

by Manifest Team

In March 2015, *Manifest Creative Arts Festival* will celebrate its fifth year, with a weekend program featuring a variety of creative workshops, keynotes, an agape feast, master classes and a short-film screening. International guests—musician and songwriter Nicholas Zork and spoken-word artist Micah Bourne—will feature in the dynamic program. And, with the festival planning well underway, organisers are now seeking like-minded artists and creatives to attend.

Manifest is coordinated by the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the South Pacific through *Adventist Media Network* and *Avondale College of Higher Education*. While the event is hosted by Avondale at its Cooranbong campus, registrations are open to Adventist creatives from across Australia, New Zealand and beyond. And it is this “gathering” of creatives which is what *Manifest* is all about. The philosophy of “exploring, encouraging and celebrating faithful creativity” is experienced in a variety of activities over the festival enabling a strong sense of community to develop between attendees.

With so much to be gained from coming together, a few Queenslanders who have attended *Manifest* reflect on their personal experience and the value of *Manifest*:

“In 2012 when I first heard about *Manifest* I felt quite inspired to attend the writing workshops. However I also doubted my suitability for the event—was I ‘talented enough’ to attend? After talking it over with a friend and an unexpected gift to assist with travel costs, I tentatively booked my tickets, figuring I had to give it a try. Fast forward a few years—and I have now been three times and have volunteered to assist the convenors of the festival—all because of the blessing I gained through attending the first time. It’s not about who is most talented or successful. Participating in *Manifest* that year deepened my passion and understanding of the nature of creativ-

ity and its role in our spiritual journey and personal calling. A central part of that was meeting together and the collective enthusiasm we shared for better content, better exposure and the courage to bring that about. To me, *Manifest* has helped ignite a spirit in each person, who continues to share the message of Jesus through faith and creativity in their wider circle of influence.”—*Georgina Hobson, Author and Creative, Cooroy SDA Church.*

“To me, *Manifest* is a great opportunity to connect with other creative people from around Australia and the Pacific, who inspire you to continue using your God-given talents to encourage others. We have SO much creative talent in our church which isn’t always shared. I wish our whole church could attend—even those who don’t see the talent they possess!”—*Ben Beaden, Professional Photographer, Landsborough SDA Church.*

“I attended for the first time this year and enjoyed the workshops with Eddie Hypolite (pastor of Avondale College Church) and Becky de Oliveira (author). I felt like *Manifest* re-sculpted my thinking about creativity. And it was also catalytic for me; I have been flat-out writing, pondering, painting and wearing out my new perspective since attending. The best part was doing the weekend with like-minded people. I highly recommend *Manifest* and plan to bring others with me next year.”—*Rochelle Melville, Artist and Creative Ministries, South Pine SDA Church.*

If you feel inspired to use your creative gifts to further the gospel please connect with the *Manifest* community. Visit the webpage (www.artsmanifest.info) and view the program guide for March 20–22, 2015. Invite a friend and plan to attend this dynamic weekend of spiritual emphasis. Or join “faithful creativity” conversation on Facebook (facebook.com/faithfulcreativity) or Twitter (@manifest).

Multiple Hats, One Mission: Growing the Kingdom

Talking With Greg Pratt

by Christina Khabbaz

The FOCUS editors recently caught up with one of the Conference's newest departmental directors, Greg Pratt. It didn't take long to realise he is a man on a mission—growing God's kingdom. During a recent Question & Answer session, this is what Greg had to say:

Tell us a little about yourself. Prior to coming to the SQLD Conference Office, how were you involved in ministry?

GP: Before working at the Conference Office I was pastor at Reedy Creek Church on the Gold Coast. We had been blessed to lead a fantastic church community and serve alongside a wonderful team in sharing a challenging yet exciting time together following the Lord's will.

How long have you been part of the SQLD Conference Office, and what are some of the departments/ministries you oversee?

GP: I have been in the Conference Office for a few months now and I am loving it! I oversee the Personal Ministries, Discipleship and Spiritual Development, Sabbath School, Stewardship and Prayer departments and I look forward to witnessing what God has planned as we follow His leading for these various ministries.

What is your vision for the Personal Ministries and Discipleship and Spiritual Development departments, and what are some ways you hope to fulfill that vision?

GP: My Vision for these departments is to assist both church members and non-church members to know Jesus personally as their Lord, Saviour and Friend, and to live every moment of every day "with" Him. We intend to resource our churches in South Queensland by creating and providing simple resources that every member can read and apply to their everyday lives. The point is to intentionally live our faith each day, realising that every moment of every day is a God-given gift and opportunity to invest in the Kingdom, whether it be at home, school, university, work or any activity.

What do you think the biggest challenge churches have in "reviving their congregations" today?

GP: The current Natural Church Development results for our Conference and for the Australian Union Conference indicate that the area we need to direct our attention to is "Loving Relationships." We are generally weak in this area. It is a sobering thought to think that loving one another is our biggest challenge and this is what is holding our churches back from becoming all they could be.

We need to realise that we are the church and if we are to see revival in our congregations today, the church must leave the building and intentionally love one another, spend time



with one another, care for one another and fellowship together.

When was the last time we invited someone else to share opening or closing, or even Sabbath with us?

When was the last time we shared a meal together with friends or people at our house or invited them to come to our small group or Sabbath school class/group?

When was the last time we called someone from our church community to let them know we were praying for them and ask if we could help them in any way?

When was the last time we cared for or supported an attendee or member who was down, busy or needed help with something?

Sometimes it's these simple things that we forget and even neglect in our own lives, yet they are significant to the life and health of the church. Actually, that is the church!

As we intentionally seek to unite together as believers did in the book of Acts—"they met together daily and had everything in common"—we will then begin to unlock the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives and our church communities and experience the revival we all seek. It is my opinion that if we stopped merely just going through the weekly motions of playing and doing church, and intentionally start being the church we have been called to be, both to one another and to the surrounding community, then we will see an awesome change.

What have you found most successful in your own ministry and pastoral career when it comes to leading a person to Christ?

GP: Praying for, creating and intentionally making the most of the opportunities to share Jesus every day and then sharing my own testimony about what Christ has done and is doing for me never fails!

What would be your greatest hope for churches in the SQLD Conference?

GP: To once again experience the amazing power of Pentecost, where the Lord adds to our number daily those who are being saved! I encourage everyone to prayerfully read through the book of Acts again and be inspired to "live more" today.

ASSOCIATION OF ADVENTIST COUNSELLORS LOOKS FORWARD

by Deanna Pitchford, President AAC

With the close of one year and the beginning of another, new possibilities unfold. There are two “date claimers” the AAC team would like to bring to your attention for 2015. The first is Saturday, August 29, 2015, when Dr Arlene Taylor will be in Brisbane to present another of her fascinating seminars on the functioning of the brain. The venue for this seminar is still to be announced. Then you are also invited to a weekend presentation by Dr Tim Jennings. Attendees at Dr Jennings’ previous

seminar in August, 2013, will remember him as a speaker rich in content and fast of pace with many worthwhile points to share. Dr Jennings will be at Springwood Church on May 1, 2015, and the good news about this event is that it will be free of charge! Watch this space for further details in the New Year.

On behalf of AAC, I would like to wish you a very blessed holiday season and strength of mind, body and spirit for the New Year.



WELL, WELL, WELL . . .

by Tim Hutton, Watson Park Assistant Manager

As we look out over Watson Park Campground reflecting on all that has happened this year our eyes are met with, a sea of brown grass, for the most part. This year to date, we have had the least amount of rain we have had in eight years, the closest driest year being 2009 when only 1040mm of rain fell by the end of November. Compare that to the 566mm we have had to date thus far and we can testify that this year has been a scorcher. No wonder the place looks so brown!

Rain is truly a gift not to be taken for granted and so much life depends on its nourishing, rejuvenating touch. Much in the same way we should never take for granted another

gift which came down from the heavens around 2000 years ago, One possessing a living water, whose touch can nourish, rejuvenate and restore a dried thirsty soul. Sometimes when the ground is bare and parched we can pray for rain and for whatever reason it doesn't eventuate. However, if we pray for that Living Water to flood into our lives, hold on to your gum boots because the monsoons are on their way!

Watson Park administration would like to wish everyone in the South Queensland Conference a very Merry Christmas, a safe and festive time with your family and friends over the entire holiday season and—of course—a very happy new year.

GET UP AND WALK A DREAMTRACK WITH JESUS

by Emma Parnell

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church has run an exciting program for youth in Brisbane for the past four years.

DreamTrack provide mentoring to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth in and around South-East Queensland. We bring together local youth aged 8–16 on a monthly basis to engage in social, cultural and spiritual activities in a fun, safe and friendly setting.

DreamTrack offer a world of opportunity and fun to young people and we're ready to expand. To deliver our programs, we need to bring on more leaders, from varied backgrounds, who can sup-

port and make a difference to young people's lives.

Well-trained and informed staff from every walk of life can develop meaningful mentoring relationships to make children feel significant and secure. I'd like to invite you to consider joining DreamTrack to help our young people get on the right track to achieving their dreams.

If you're interested in making a difference please visit <www.dreamtrack.org.au> or <email emma@dreamtrack.org.au> for more information.



MOVING FORWARD IN MINISTRY TO CHILDREN YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS HERE IN SOUTH QUEENSLAND

by Jorge Munoz and Colin Renfrew

Growth is a wonderful phenomenon and we give praise to God as we see it taking place across the South Queensland Conference. In an intentional and targeted effort to be ahead of the future growth that will occur among us, much prayer and thoughtfully researched effort has been given to the delivery of ministry to children, youth and young adults in South Queensland. As a result, the Youth Department has undergone some strategic reshaping to meet the current and future needs of ministry to children, youth and young adults.

Working to the Conference's ministry theme "Know More, Live More, Love More," the unique and specialised ministry areas across the development stages of young people have been individually identified and each will receive a full-time director to care for their distinctive and dedicated needs. Part of the rationale behind the measures is to see an increase in the number of children, youth and young adults committing to a life of discipleship to Jesus and His church. It is hoped that the new ministry structure will reduce the number of individuals who walk away, choosing rather to offer themselves as disciples who are seeking to "Know More, Live More, Love More." In essence, nothing will be lost or removed from the current ministry functions, but there is a deep desire that no young person, regardless of age misses the chance to find Jesus as their Saviour and we are seeking to maximise this commitment at each stage of developmental transition.

Pastor Willie Strickland will be the Director for Children's

Ministry (Pathfinders/Adventurers). All Children's Ministry needs and enquiries will be cared for by Pastor Willie's office. He will be responsible for assisting with Children's Sabbath schools, ministry in general to children, and all Pathfinder and Adventure ministry.

Pastor Steve Kane will be the Director for Youth Ministry and will cater for things like Envision, STORM Co, summer camps, youth rallies and youth coaches, as well as general ministry to young people.

In the area of Tertiary Students and Young Adults, Pastor Joseph Khabbaz will be the Director of this ministry department. Pastor Joseph will care for the growing numbers of tertiary students who attend the many university campuses across South Queensland, as well as the young adults who have completed studies and are now in the workforce. Specific areas will be young adult missions, Recharge, Café Q, and young adult rallies.

The new departments will continue to collaborate with each other on a number of fronts. However, they will operate as stand-alone departments offering specialised services to each area of age-related ministry. If you have a specific request or: enquiry surrounding your area of Children's, Youth or Young Adults Ministry, then please contact the appropriate department to assist. We invite you to pray for our young people as they choose a life of discipleship to Jesus and seek to "Know More, Live More, Love More."



IT CONTINUES TO BE A TEAM EFFORT!

by Joe Webb, Ministerial Secretary

Our team of ministers and teachers continues to grow here in our conference in order for us to successfully cater for the growing demands of ministry. The following individuals need to be recognised and congratulated on their achievements thus far:

Lachlan Campbell is the associate pastor at Ipswich, Harrisville and Roseville churches, and also Associate Chaplain at Ipswich school. Lachlan has successfully progressed to the second stage of internship. **David Gillespie** is the associate pastor at Eight Mile Plains church and he has also progressed to second stage of internship as has **Trevor Mawer** who is currently ministering in our Stanthorpe, Warwick and Summit churches.

David Gibson, associate pastor at South Brisbane church and chaplain at our Victoria Point Adventist Retirement Village, together with **Wayne Humphries**, associate pastor at Gold Coast Central church, minister at Surfers Paradise Church and chaplain of our Melody Park Adventist Retirement Village completed their internships and have now been granted a Ministerial Licence.

Great news for **Gary Minns** who is currently the associate pastor at Pine Rivers church and part-time associate chaplain at Northpine Christian College, Gary has been approved for ordination as a fully credentialed pastor of the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist church.

BRISBANE AFRICAN COMPANY

JEHOVAH JIREH JOINS THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH



Joseph Bukuru used to be the pastor of the International Jehovah Jireh Church. They were Sunday-keeping Pentecostals who were from Burundi in Africa, who loved Jesus. They are still from Burundi, and they still love Jesus—but they are no longer Sunday-keeping Pentecostals.

Joseph's study on the Sabbath began in January, 2013. By August, he was convinced the biblical Sabbath was Saturday, the seventh day of the week. Then came his dilemma, how was he to share this knowledge with the members of the church he was leading?

The Lord answered his prayers on February 19 this year when one of his members said to him, "Pastor, we are worshipping on the wrong day!" This led to a chain of events that resulted in two meetings being called to examine the evidence and decide what to do—one on April 2, the other on April 12. In their worship service on Sunday, April 13, it was announced, "Goodbye Sunday, and welcome Sabbath day!" April 19 was the first Sabbath they kept—only the associate pastor did not accept the Sabbath truth.

May 2 saw "The Last Empire" evangelism program begin across South Queensland and Joseph and his group faithfully attended the series hosted by the Brisbane African Company with Pastor Mark Pearce as the speaker. Here they soaked up biblical messages and truth outlined in the book of Daniel.

Excitement grew in each of their hearts as they heard and began to understand the prophetic message of scripture. The Burundians were seekers after Truth who developed a simple approach to what they were hearing, "If it's in the Bible, YES! We will do it!"

When the topic of baptism was presented there was an immediate indication that many wished to be baptised. What joy was felt at Big Camp this year on the last Sabbath when 18 of the Burundian group claimed September 27 as their special 24th Sabbath! Each were baptised into the Seventh-day Adventist church and publicly stated their faith in Jesus and

their commitment to their new-found faith. The Big Tent was filled to capacity and joy abounded as these children of God were submerged in the waters of baptism, many for the first time.

Since their baptism, the Burundians have had the opportunity to share their story at a Welcome Celebration hosted by the Brisbane Africans, an event attended by approximately 200 people, including six pastors of other church faiths and some of their church members. Joseph jumped for joy at the opportunity to share the message of his journey over the past 12 months. It was a challenge to many of those in attendance, and Joseph prays that many more will eventually be led to the Truth and experience the blessings being part of the family of God brings.

—Article by Pastor Mark Pearce and picture by South Queensland Conference

CABOOLTURE MOVES TO BRIBIE . . . FOR THE DAY!



November 1 was a high Sabbath for Caboolture church. Instead of the church running its usual two services for the morning, the members packed their chairs, rugs and picnic baskets jumped in their cars and met at Bribie Island for a special combined church day at the beach where they celebrated the spiritual journey of eight people. Those present had the awesome privilege of hearing the testimonies from the eight and witnessing seven baptisms Hutchinson-Gill, Tia Hutchinson-Gill, Taya Hutchinson-Gill, Taliyah Hutchinson-Gill, along with Micarla Nicholas, Rebecca Mitchell and Daniel Born, and one profession of faith from Bryan Gill.

Caboolture church is dedicated to reaching out and connecting with its local community and has enjoyed seeing many people come to love Jesus and publically testify of their allegiance to Him.

—Article and pictures by Pastor Kelly Fry



COASTLIFE

KRISTA JUMPS AT THE CHANCE TO FOLLOW JESUS



October and November have certainly been exciting months for Coastlife Church. There have been quite a good number of people being baptised into the church both, young and old. Recently the members were treated to a commitment ceremony with a difference. The baptism of Krista Going took place at the Gold Coast Christian College principal's property in Worongary. In keeping with her positive and outgoing personality, Krista wanted to jump into the pool for her baptism, and so, that is precisely what she and Pastor Wes did after a time of reflection, singing, special items, homily and testimonials!

—Article and pictures by Pastor Wes Tolhurst

DARLING DOWNS/ GRANITE BELT REGION

"MAWER" GREAT WORK DONE ON THE TABLELANDS

From the call to minister in South Queensland at the end of 2013 after graduating from Avondale College, to the end of my first year in full-time ministry, what a year it has been! When I was asked to pastor Stanthorpe, Warwick and The Summit churches in the Darling Downs/Granite Belt region some of my college friends jokingly asked what I had done to be sent "out there"! Irrespective of what they may have seen, I saw an opportunity to serve God and His people.

To say it has been a steep learning curve or being dropped in the deep end would be an understatement but what it has reinforced is my total dependence and reliance on God and the need to seek Him first and seek His righteousness in all I do.

As the sole pastor—and an intern at that—ministering to three country churches carries many challenges and burdens, but I would not swap the experience for all the haystack meals on any given Sabbath.

I have stood beside coffins and have seen the grace of God flow through



AROUND THE CHURCHES

a body of mourners. I have witnessed what the love of God can do in the lives of those previously devoid of hope or peace. I have had the pleasure of being ministered to by His people in each of the churches I care for. Country people have a way of expressing God's love like no other, from simple acts of kindness to huge out-pourings of generosity to each other and their communities.

My family and I have been truly blessed here. Could I have done things differently? Absolutely! Have I made mistakes? Absolutely! Have I learnt and grown? Absolutely! Do I regret answering the call and being here? Most definitely and absolutely NOT!

Our churches here in the Darling Downs/Granite Belt regions are busily making plans for next year, preparing to love, protect and nurture those who walk through our doors.

Please pray that the Lord will continue to minister powerfully through myself and our church members to those people who live in our surrounding communities.

—Article by Trevor Mawer and pictures by South Queensland Conference

GLENALA SAMOAN A DOUBLE PORTION FROM GOD



Glenala Samoan Church attributes all glory to God as it is one year since the dedication of their church in Browns Plains. The church also celebrated their first baptismal service in the church, held on Sabbath, October 25, where eight people publically declared their allegiance Christ!

A combined "Last Empire" evangelistic series was held by both Glenala and Springwood Samoan churches, with endless support from the neighbouring Logan Samoan Church family. During the series, a remarkable story unfolded in the lives of a young couple who, at the time, were devout Assembly of God church members. After hearing a message about the Sabbath during one of the presentations, the couple stood up when the pastor made a call at the end of the presentation. The message they heard resounded within their hearts and they were eager to attend the next presentation.

The following day, as the young mother of two was cooking, a pot of boiling

water splashed on her face and down her right arm, preventing her from attending that night's presentation. Fortunately, her husband was able to attend the remaining presentations and yet again was touched by the truth from each presentation.

On the final night of the series, a call was again put out for those who were ready to give their lives to God. "My feet felt like cement and my body was holding me down. I so desperately wanted to stand but I couldn't move," exclaimed the husband as he later relayed events on the night the call was made.

On the Friday evening prior to the Sabbath baptism, the young family were invited to dinner with the family who had originally invited them to the "Last Empire" series. While the mother and her two children were inside singing praises to God, the husband stood outside and looked up to the heavens reflecting on the events that had transpired over the previous few weeks. He pled for direction as he felt compelled by the leading of the Holy Spirit to follow the Lord and obey His commandments, including the Sabbath. As he walked back into the house and entered the living room he was surprised to find his wife crying. His wife looked at him and simply stated, "I have made up my mind. Even though my face is in this condition, I want to be baptised tomorrow for I know it is the devil that is trying to prevent me from following the Lord's calling." With tears of joy in his eyes, the husband replied, "This is an answer from God as I also have made my decision to give my life to the Lord."

The church praises the Lord for what He has done in the lives of this beautiful family!

—Article and picture by Elei Faraimo

GLENVALE SOUR FOR THE HOUR TURNS SWEET



Toowoomba pastors Casey Wolverton and Andrew Feavai teamed up recently to lead the Sunday worship service for the Millmerran Presbyterian Church, a small congregation 80 kilometres southwest of Toowoomba. The theme and sermon for the day, came from James 1, "Staying

Sweet When Life Turns Sour." The opportunity arose from a relationship Pastor Casey has been nurturing with retired Presbyterian minister Roland Sondergeld.

"I knew this little country church would appreciate Casey's biblical preaching," commented Reverend Sondergeld. "Having Pastor Andrew Feavai (the Millmerran Adventist Church pastor) assist in the service was a bonus."

Session Clerk Gary Schultz (similar to the Senior Elder) expressed similar sentiments, "We would love to see these pastors lead our service again soon. It's tough not having our own minister, but we are so thankful for preachers who periodically make the trip out here to share God's Word with us on a Sunday morning."

The experience was a wonderful highlight for both Adventist pastors. "Sharing the Scriptures with Christians outside our denomination is not only an honour and a joy," said Pastor Casey afterward, "but a great responsibility. We will most definitely be back, and look forward to going deeper into the Word each time we return."

—Article and pictures by Glenvale Seventh-day Adventist Church

SALISBURY TRAINING FOR THE GREAT OUTPOURING



Salisbury Church has embarked on a training program that is already proving very successful. Thirty people have committed to be a part of a 16-week training program providing them with materials and techniques that will allow them to reach out to members of their surrounding community more effectively. Participant ages range from 15 to 79 years with each willing to give up their Friday nights for training and some Sabbath afternoons for community outreach. With the support of the South Queensland Conference administration, the church has embarked on this training program in the hope other churches will also implement this discipleship coaching series.

If you would like to explore how you can make your church a discipleship training node in your area, why not contact the director of Personal Ministries at the Conference office on 3218 7777.

—Article and pictures by Peter Jovinov

SPRINGWOOD

FRESH CHIPS IN SPRINGWOOD



Feeling fitter and healthier, with incredible statistics to prove it! CHIP participants at Springwood church recently celebrated the conclusion of their four-week health rejuvenation program with a delicious CHIP-friendly feast.

The 22 participants—many from the community—radically changed their lifestyle and diet with dramatic benefits, including a reduction in cholesterol, triglycerides, weight, blood pressure and glucose.

With family and friends on hand to cheer, huge congratulations went to one young man in his 20s who lost 5.5 kilograms in four weeks, reduced his total cholesterol by 22 per cent, LDL (bad cholesterol) by 30 per cent and blood pressure by 31 points!

Another participant almost halved their triglycerides (the fat that gets transported through the blood) by a massive 46 per cent! All this in just four weeks!

CHIP will continue in the New Year in a supportive roll for participants as they continue to reclaim their health and move towards living life to the full.

—Article and pictures by Pastor Travis Manners

SOUTH BRISBANE

THANKS TO GIVING SEES ACTION AT THE AUCTION



South Brisbane Adventist Church held a service of Thanksgiving on October 25, which focused on giving praise and gratitude to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Margot Peters put together a beautiful

display of flowers, plants and fresh produce, which was on display at the front of the church for all to enjoy. Pastor Mark Pearce led the service with a sermon titled "Pathway of Blessings," which certainly proved a blessing to the entire congregation. That evening a Thanksgiving auction was held to auction off the display. All funds raised went to ADRA to support their humanitarian efforts. A delicious assortment of soup, buns, desserts and drinks were available for a gold coin donation. In total, the event raised approximately \$750 from the contributions of all who attended. The evening program was organised by Lyn Nicolson, who did an excellent job! The church continues to be grateful to the Lord for His continued leading and goodness.

Earlier that Sabbath during church, Pastor Mark Pearce interviewed three new Adventists—Damian da Sliva, Alberto Giovanni and Annica Giovanni—and gave them opportunity to share some of their journeys to God and the huge difference knowing Him has made in their lives. Each related how life had seemed quite aimlessness and meandering prior to accepting Jesus, but after accepting Him as their personal Saviour, life has become purposeful and has direction! The congregation was captivated by their testimonies.

—Article and picture by Claire Tihi

REDCLIFFE

POLITICAL CORRECTNESS



Baby Jayden Otuke, Margaret Otuke —Jayden's maternal grandmother from Kenya—and Luke Howarth, Member for Petrie

While Luke Howarth was campaigning for the seat of Petrie in last year's election, he happened to drop in to Redcliffe Church one Sabbath afternoon to make himself known. Knowing he was a member of Clontarf Baptist Church at Redcliffe, I invited him to worship with us one Sabbath and he promised he would do just that. Luke went on to unseat the incumbent Labor member Yvette D'Ath in the Federal election, so I held him to his promise and he came to church a few weeks ago on November 2.

It was interesting that we had just finished studying James 2:2–4 in the Sabbath School class that morning counselling us not to give preferential seating to the rich. When Luke arrived at church, Alvin Wood officially welcomed him from the front and Dawn Brownhill prayed for his important work, but Luke found his own seat!

It so happened that day that I was dedicating a new baby, Jayden, born to Michelle Otuke and her partner Daniel, so Luke couldn't resist the politician's obligatory kissing the baby photo opportunity over lunch. He even washed his own dishes after the meal, and was the only one who did so, as the rest of us are barred from the kitchen. I was impressed, and invited him to bring his family next time.

—Article and picture by Pastor Michael Brownhill

PASTOR TACKLES BIG STUFF



The Redcliffe Ministers Network recently organised a fundraising breakfast at Mon Komo Hotel in Redcliffe in support of school chaplains throughout the Redcliffe Peninsula. Guest speaker for the event was former professional Rugby League star Petero Civinoceva who grew up in Redcliffe after his family migrated to Australia from Fiji when he was a small child.

Petero first played as a prop forward for Redcliffe Dolphins, then Brisbane Broncos (winning Premierships in 1998, 2000 and 2006), represented Queensland in many State of Origin matches, and played more international games for Australia than any other forward in history. He captained Penrith Panthers as well as the Fijian national team in their 2013 Rugby League World Cup campaign. This year he made a comeback by playing for his former club Redcliffe Dolphins. He now works as a travelling mentor for high school students throughout Queensland.

I spoke to Petero over breakfast about my own short-lived football career in Sydney as a teenager, about his spiritual beliefs, and also about the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Fiji, which he was quite familiar with. In a light-hearted moment he thinks the only reason Queensland allowed the NSW Blues to win the 2014 State of Origin series was so that they wouldn't get totally discouraged and pull out of the comp altogether!

—Article and picture by Pastor Michael Brownhill

Graduates From SQ

GOLD COAST CHRISTIAN COLLEGE YEAR 12s



DARLING DOWNS CHRISTIAN SCHOOL YEAR 12s

Jamie Bruggemann, Coralie Charles, Jonathon Charles, Farida Domomi, John Juma, Dallin Lance, Elyse McKay, Corey Richards, Nathan Weiss, Heath Whitsed, Joshua Willson, Harrison Yarrow



Graduates From SQ

NOOSA CHRISTIAN COLLEGE YEAR 12s

Josephine Moody-Dwyer, Jacob Zidek, Grechelle Richards, Nathan Irvine, Katie Waho, Clay O'Connell, Jessica Gray (C), Matthew Karger (C), Jazinta Wells, Jordan Marinelli, Micaela Harris, Jake Scott



NORTHPINE CHRISTIAN COLLEGE YEAR 12s



Graduates From SQ



DARLING DOWNS CHRISTIAN SCHOOL YEAR 6

Alex Bellette, David Conlan, Adeddata Dillon-Romano, Isaac Hebbard, Mickayla Higgins, Winy Mabur, Emily Neale, Bohdan Sidor, Liam Stewart
(Alex, David and Liam are missing from photo)

DARLING DOWNS CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

TEENS TACKLE SEX TRADE



Hannah Wolverton, Sharna Sonter and Tianna McDonald are ready for their trip to help trafficked women in Nepal.

Armed with their passports, three 15-year-old girls sit nervously in the chaplain's office of Darling Downs Christian School (DDCS), Toowoomba.

Each of them is preparing for an encounter of a lifetime—a journey into a third-world country with some of the most devastating statistics for the trafficking of young women, a place called Nepal.

"There are some villages in Nepal where all the girls between 11–20 are missing," Sharna Sonter said.

"A whole generation has been lost (to the sex trade)."

It was after realising that the girls being trafficked were their age that the class of DDCS Year 10 girls decided they wanted to do something to help.

"It really hit home to us because we are at the age when all of this would be happening if we had been born in another country," Tianna McDonald said.

They began with an initial goal of raising \$3000 to send to a women's refuge run by "3 Angels Nepal," an organisation that rescues girls through rehabilitation, training and community education.

Now 15 months later, the school community has raised \$11,000.

"We started out thinking this will be impossible, but we'll aim for it," Hannah Wolverton said. "It's exciting that so many people have wanted to help."

The three students will spend the first two weeks of their Christmas holidays in Nepal, visiting the Women's Safehaven Project and giving the school's donation in person.

"We will also be running a Week of Worship, with songs, dramas and testimonies," Hannah said.

The girls will also get to visit homes where Nepalese parents are caring for up to 12 orphans.

The school plans to continue supporting the home, which is a project funded by Asian Aid.

Their message to other young women is simple, "Get out and get involved—if that was you, you would want someone to help," Sharna said.

—Article and picture by Elissa Dowling

GRANDPA IN THE GARDEN



Maya Strong, Trae McLean, Grandpa Roy, Noah Haslam and Maeli Feaveal

At this time of year, you would be forgiven for thinking the real Saint Patrick has found a home in the Kitchen Garden at Darling Downs Christian School, Toowoomba.

But for the past three years, 72-year-old "Grandpa" Roy Bennum has lived there all year round—donating his time and skills to create a prize-winning garden and pass along his "green-thumb know-how" to the many students he meets there.

"Gardening is just something you like to do, it gets in your blood," Grandpa Roy said.

Over the past three years, Roy has faithfully served the staff and students at DDCS, hoping his love for gardening rubs off on them. He said hearing children who once couldn't recognise a strawberry now name exotic vegetables, makes all the hard work worthwhile.

AROUND THE SCHOOLS

"It's a way of giving back," Grandpa Roy said.

Sadly next year, due to doctor's orders, Roy will "start taking things slower." However, it's hard to tell if he really will be able to keep away from the plot he has poured so much love and care into. The children will certainly miss him and his practical advice.

"He's always talking and helping us," Maya Strong said.

"He teaches us how to pull out weeds. And how compost is good for the garden," Trae Mclean said.

One thing is certain, they won't forget how to raise those award-winning zuchinins!

—Article and picture by Elissa Dowling

GOLD COAST CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

REFLECTIONS; MAKING HISTORY



"Does it sound like we're patting ourselves on the back, insisting on our credentials, asserting our authority? Well, we're not. Neither do we need letters of endorsement, either to you or from you. You yourselves are all the endorsement we need. Your very lives are a letter that anyone can read by just looking at you. Christ himself wrote it—not with ink, but with God's living Spirit, not chiseled into stone, but carved into human lives—and we publish it" (2 Corinthians 2:1–3).

Our parting text for the inaugural Year 12 Graduating Class of 2014 from Gold Coast Christian College says it all. These students are written on our hearts forever. As they serve in Cambodia over the next week and a half with Year 11 students visiting and working alongside the sponsor children who have been a part of each class from prep through 12, they will leave a meaningful legacy for all who follow in their steps.

Graduating students will be receiving certificates, their Overall Performance Scores (OPS) and other paperwork to show the results of their hard work, yet these pieces of paper will not be the sum of who they are. It's great to be rewarded with some recognition on paper, yet no

one is defined by a letter. Our prayer for the Year 12 students is that they will continue living with Jesus and allowing His Holy Spirit to work through them, having a heart of flesh, and not of stone. We celebrated in style at our first Year 12 formal, where students were able to tour Burleigh Heads together in a large black Hummer. Parents, teachers and friends formed a guard of honour as students and their partners entered the Lakeview Terrace Room at the Palmer Colonial Golf Course for an unforgettable evening of memoirs, delicious food, comedy acts and inspiring speeches.

We would like to thank our principal, Guy Lawson, for having the vision to build a high school to ensure our students could continue their studies through to Year 12. We also would like to thank the South Queensland Adventists Schools administrators who have given their support over the years. Many thanks also must go to the committed teachers and staff of Gold Coast Christian College, who have worked tirelessly for years to write and deliver programs. We are grateful to the students and their loyal parents, and to the local pastors and other community members who have given up their time to support the growth of this College. To the Graduating Class: we are blessed to know you, we say thank you and well done. May God bless you and keep you on life's journey. May you sense His presence wherever you go!

—Article and picture by Julia Kearns

NOOSA CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

NOOSA STUDENTS ON THE LOOSE



There's a world of opportunity out there—but whatever their chosen paths, the staff and school community of Noosa Christian College, Cooroy, wish each individual in their graduating class of 2014 the very best.

Completing their studies and enjoying their school formal at the Sheraton in Noosa on November 20, the combined talents of the group show great promise! A few students have already secured jobs

and apprenticeships locally and interstate. Others are looking to undertake further studies with several graduates planning to attend Avondale College of Higher Education to do Nursing and Education. "This is a pleasing prospect", says College principal David Rogers. "The graduating class have matured a lot in their attitudes and aspirations and we are proud to see them standing up as leaders of the next generation."

—Article and pictures by Noosa Christian College

NORTH PINE CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

BULLYING-FREE NCC



Research indicates that the most effective way to prevent bullying is to develop a "whole school approach" to deal with this issue. This is exactly what the Year 12 students from Northpine Christian College challenged the Middle/Senior students to do. They challenged students to take the responsibility to disarm bullying and become a collective voice. The Year 12s also encouraged students to be kind and thoughtful. Each student was then invited to sign their name on a canvas to signify their pledge of continuing to make the school a fun and educationally safe environment for all in attendance. With this pledge the students were given a bracelet stating "Bullying-Free NCC." It is great to see the students wearing the bracelet and demonstrating their commitment to make a difference.

—Article by Jaco Tams and pictures by Melissa Carseldine



INSTINCT

Improving Nutritional Status of the Indigenous Community Toddlers Indonesia



Sector: Child and Maternal Health
Beneficiaries: 20,000 + mothers and children
Total Project Budget: \$185,000



Project Goal

To improve the nutritional status of children under the age of 5 in Gorontalo District, Indonesia by:

- Increasing the ability of community health services to detect and deal with the early signs of malnutrition
- Increase the skills and knowledge of mothers and care-givers to deal with malnourished children



20,000 children, mothers and care givers will be impacted by ADRA's Instinct project.



15% of children in Gorontalo District, Indonesia are malnourished.



PROJECT FUNDING
■ Donations

Funding for this project comes entirely from private donations.

How you can help

- \$21** Can purchase the needed materials to raise awareness and increase participation in community health services.
- \$22** Can purchase local food to demonstrate the mother's options for healthier family eating.
- \$50** Can provide toy kits for community health clinics to better provide for children's needs.
- \$107** Can provide a kitchen set to community groups running health training programs.
- \$212** Can provide resources for a local health and food expo.
- \$533** Can provide training programs for more than 90 community based trainers.
- \$600** Can provide a community health clinic with vital weighing and health monitoring kits including scales.

ADRA Australia is the official humanitarian arm of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Our mission is to work with people in poverty and distress to create just and positive change through empowering partnerships and responsible action. As a Christian aid and humanitarian agency, we believe our work is a natural expression of our faith, and a continuation of Christ's ministry of compassion.

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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

President—Pastor Jorge Munoz
Editors—Murray Hunter and Christina Khabbaz
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