

Top News Lite

E-NEWSLETTER FROM THE TOP END OF
THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA

ISSUE 9: 29/05/2020



MINITORIAL

I have spent this week attending Zoom meetings at the Australian Union Conference (AUC). In the Board of Directors meetings in May we always hear all the departmental reports, in addition to the other business on the agenda. I was so impressed as I heard each report with how competent and professional our leaders are at that level. They have put in an outstanding effort as they helped guide the Australian church through Covid-19. It has not been an easy journey as each department has had to look at new ways of facilitating ministry.

In mid-March, as the government began to ramp up restrictions, the AUC swung into action in order to inform, prepare and resource Conferences and local churches in doing church differently. Thanks to a huge effort by the Union, we were well supported here in the NAC as successive limitations to our traditional way of doing church were imposed. The key departments that put in enormous efforts include:

- President - provided frequent, calm updates of rapid changes to church life
- Secretariat - tracked, compiled and communicated government directives to Conferences
- CFO - constant discussions held with Conference CFO's in financial preparedness, impact and strategies
- Ministerial - populated an AUC Pastors Trello Board (online database) with ideas, resources, how-to's and FAQ's which acted as a "one stop shop" where anything and everything a pastor could need was to be found. A weekly comprehensive email was sent out to the entire pastoral team across Australia with the most important links and news.
- Youth - developed an online Pathfinder curriculum and guided local Directors with ideas and resources
- Personal Ministries, Sabbath School and Stewardship - assisted in coordinating an Australia-wide online evangelistic program to bring hope to those unsettled by the pandemic. Fast-tracked the learning website to train digital Bible workers and added lots of resources to disciple.org.au for local church use. Worked with the South Pacific Division (SPD) to get the E-giving app and website promoted and user guides prepared.
- Education - had a massive work to do in assisting schools to move to a remote learning platform.

I am also very grateful to SPD IT who worked long hours to quickly provide our pastors with Zoom licenses so they could continue to function online. Our NAC General Secretary/CFO, Natalie Scott was on the front foot with all the Qld and NT Health Department requirements and sent a weekly communique out to churches, and also worked long hours in the school space with all the changes there. I am so impressed with all our NAC employees who took the rapid changes in their stride, led their congregations, schools and campground well, and waded through the large numbers of emails that we sent to them during the time of transition.

One thing I heard this week is that our Seventh-day Adventist church in Australia has been way ahead of many other denominations in its preparedness for Covid-19. We may be a big system with many layers of administration but everyone moved incredibly rapidly in this crisis and the result was that congregational and school life was able to continue in largely an orderly and well-resourced manner online. A huge thank you to everyone. I am so encouraged that in the face of severe restrictions, our church and its mission continues unimpeded. That is an excellent sign for the future!



Darren Slade

President

Northern Australian Conference

1. How is COVID19 impacting you?

2. What do you miss?

We would love to hear from you.
Please email Elizabeth Suavai at
ElizabethSuavai@adventist.org.au your
feedback to be published in the next
Top News Lite.



HEALTHY MOMENTS



As part of the ministry to our school teachers during the Covid-19 pandemic, the chaplains at each of our schools throughout Australia were encouraged to minister in practical ways to the staff. For one of our ministry projects we chose to do a Juice Day each week. Every Tuesday at the Cairns Adventist College, the chaplains provide freshly prepared vegetable and fruit juice, or smoothies, to all the staff on site. This project touched on a few areas of health.

There was the obvious physical benefit of fruits and vegetables being consumed, but it also provided a social health boost as staff had the opportunity to talk, and relationships were deepened. Even some of the kids had the opportunity to taste these healthy beverages and gain health benefits. While this project was started as a response to the pandemic, it will likely continue through the rest of the year as a part of the school life and ministry to the educators in the region.

– Pr. James London, CAC Chaplain

If you would like to share your healthy moments contact:
Omera London: omeradlondon@adventist.org.au



ABC Christian Books



THIS WEEK WE HAVE GREAT OPTIONS:

Jesus and You - WAS \$3.95 NOW \$1.97

Here is a great little book about Jesus and You. Life is all about relationships, and the relationship that is most important is your relationship with Jesus.

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Are you madly in love, or just plain mad?

The Tuckers deal with some of the big issues that are wreaking havoc in American homes today, such as pornography, abuse, infidelity, forgiveness, and negative communication.

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Tuesday's
@
7:15pm

CONNECTING ALL WOMEN OF ALL AGES ONLINE

Connect online each Tuesday via:
<https://adventistchurch.zoom.us/j/92033774918>



NAC Women's Ministry Director

NatheneaMacRae@adventist.org.au

CFO / SECRETARY MINI REPORT

NATALIE SCOTT

Coronavirus COVID-19:

- The Conference is recommending that churches follow the State/Territory Health Department legislation and guidelines on the easing of restrictions. These will impact your congregation differently depending on size of meeting space, size of congregation and location. Your local church leadership teams are meeting to make plans specific to your location/size/worship life. Contact your local church pastor. They are meeting weekly with the President and have a WhatsApp group so are in regular communication.
- While restrictions are lifting, church life as we knew it at the start of the year may not return for some months beyond July, particularly for larger congregations.
- For folk looking for resources and information regarding cleaning <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/> has a lot of resources, which are being updated regularly. Whilst aimed at workplaces they can be applied to community spaces and places of worship. This factsheet is particularly useful <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/doc/how-clean-and-disinfect-your-workplace-covid-19>

Tithe and Offerings:

- Thank you for continuing to faithfully return your tithes and offerings, especially during the pandemic.
- With \$242k received in March with churches open for half of the month, we were concerned that tithe received in April could be substantially lower. Thanks to God and His faithful stewards for returning \$321k in April.
- As you can see in the table below, tithe year to date to the end of April is 9.4% higher than the same time last year, with \$1,172,404.56 received.

	Same Period Last Year	Tithe Remitted	Variance \$	Variance %
January 2020	267,362.38	294,489.28	27,126.90	10.15%
February 2020	281,428.14	313,768.73	32,340.59	11.49%
March 2020	286,209.86	242,802.71	-43,407.15	(15.17%)
April 2020	236,650.53	321,343.84	84,693.31	35.79%
	1,071,650.91	1,172,404.56	100,753.65	9.40%

- Across Australia, tithe year to date to the end of April is 3.21% higher than the previous year.
- As the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic continue we know that these results may vary, but trusting in God, are optimistic.

We continue to trust God, in His leading, His timing and for His safety and protection. For those who are struggling remember "The Lord upholds all who fall and lifts up all who are bowed down." Psalms 145:14



INTERVIEW WITH OUR NAC MINISTERS

How is COVID-19 impacting you?

Firstly from my church work perspective, COVID-19 has put a pause on all of our face to face church services and ministries and programs that we had planned for 2020. Mentally I was not prepared for this curve ball and as a result I have had to quickly readjust my thinking, as to how I could provide pastoral care to my church members and also how to evangelise my community amidst COVID-19. Secondly from a personal perspective COVID-19 has provided me more personal time to spend with God in the Word and with my family and for myself #selfcare.

What are you and your family doing differently?

What I'm doing differently now is, that I am spending more time on my computer learning new skills in the digital space. I have also set up a green screen space in my house for my background pictures for Zoom meetings and for any recordings that I need to do. Finally I have also rekindled my Kindle (pardon the pun) account and I'm enjoying reading books again for my professional development. During the lockdown and when homeschooling was enforced, my wife and I were tag teaming in helping our 8 year old son do his school work that was provided by the school. This was a huge personal learning experience and now I have a bigger appreciation for all school teachers. #teachersarethebest

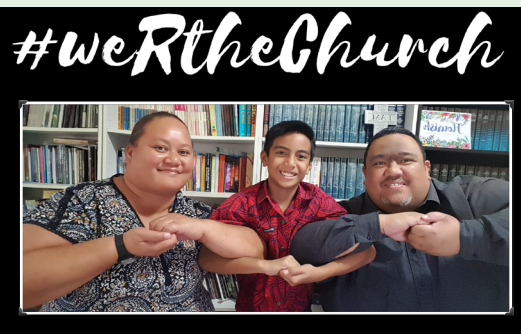
My wife also spent quality time, teaching our son how to make Island delicacies (Panipopo - Coconut Buns, Keke Felefele - Flower Biscuits) which we enjoyed sharing with our church community.

What do you miss?

Hmmm...Honestly I do miss the face to face social gatherings with family, friends and church.

Is there a Bible verse that helps you?

Well I have a lot of bible verses that have encouraged me during this COVID-19 but if I was to boil it down to one it would not be one passage but one story. Mark 4:35-41 Jesus calming the storm. This story has helped me to see that it doesn't matter if Jesus was sleeping on the boat during the storm, what is more important is that He is riding the storm with me. His presence gives me peace of mind that I'm not alone.



Levi Mote
Minister

Northern Australian Conference

Children's Ministry Corner

Noah's Ark



animals
Ararat
ark
covenant
dove

flood
Genesis
gopher
Ham
Japheth

Noah
rain
rainbow
raven
Shem



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PROVISION



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AVONDALE OFFERING

JUNE 6, 2020



COVID-19 STUDENT ASSISTANCE

Make an Avondale education possible for students who lose income because of the coronavirus (COVID-19). Your support will ensure our students can still afford tuition, textbooks and on-campus accommodation.

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ADVENTIST CHURCH *in Northern Australia*