

Top News Lite

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

ISSUE 11: 11/06/2020



MINITORIAL

Over recent weeks I have been rewatching episodes of The Chosen. This is a very moving miniseries on the life of Jesus and I thoroughly enjoy the way the characters are portrayed and the backstories which illustrate the difficulties of Jewish life under Roman rule. What has really struck me this time, in light of the ongoing protests around the world against racism, is the incredible example Jesus left us about how to treat others. With beautiful clarity I saw that:

- # possessed lives matter (in casting demons out of Mary)
- # adulterous lives matter (in reaching out to the woman at the well)
- # different ethnic lives matter (in reaching out to the Samaritan woman at the well)
- # diseased lives matter (in healing the leper)
- # lives of any occupation matter (in calling Matthew the tax collector to be a disciple)

If I were to attempt to translate Jesus' selfless and loving approach to people in our context, I would say:

- # Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lives and those with skin of every shade matter
- # mental health illness lives matter
- # Catholic lives, and those of every faith matter
- # social welfare lives matter
- # homeless lives matter
- # youth lives matter

...and I could go on. Confronting? Yep! But that was Jesus - confronting the bigotry, prejudice and racism of His day. And His followers will do the same today. After all "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matthew 25:40).



Darren Slade
President
Northern Australian Conference

LE CORNER

GOD'S SPIRIT AT WORK DURING COVID19

We need to have far less confidence in what man can do, and far more confidence in what God can do for every believing soul. – CM p.119

Through most wonderful workings of divine providence, mountains of difficulty will be removed and cast into the sea - CM p.119.

The Literature Evangelism Ministry has been impacted by the COVID-19 restrictions with door to door work not being possible at this time.

However God has ordained that His work should go forward regardless of the current obstacles. Here are some examples of His leading during these difficult times.

I was contacted by telephone by a Pacific Islander lady who wished to purchase books to be distributed in her workplace and in her village back home. She purchased a large number of Bibles and Ellen White message books which are now on their way to enlighten her workplace and village with the knowledge of the love of God. The Holy Spirit has clearly placed a burden on this ladies heart to share God's love in her sphere of influence.

A number of former interests were contacted by telephone which has resulted in further books being distributed and in eight new Bible study contacts being made. Three additional persons/families contacted are also commencing watching "The Search" DVD series.

During the early days of the restrictions I visited (by invitation) a couple who wished to see the books we have available. The wife is a newly baptised member but the husband is not a church member. He readily loved the health and spiritual resources and he purchased a number of books for himself and his family. He also donated a large sum of money to be used to purchase Bibles and books for others. God is to be praised for evidently He was really working in this man's heart!

Willa Brough
LE Co-Ordinator
Northern Australian Conference

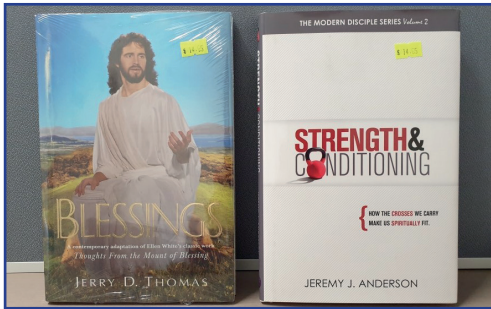


CHANGE TO NAC VISION STATEMENT

Last week the Board of Directors met and voted through a new vision statement for the Northern Australian Conference. Since 2016 our vision was "experiencing and sharing hope in Jesus Christ." Over the last 12 months or so the Board has been working on a Conference strategic plan and as part of that updated the vision which now reads "A Christ-centered thriving disciple-making movement." This is more in line with the Australian Union Conference and South Pacific Division and very much reflects the desire of the NAC administration, departmental directors and pastors with where they would like the Conference to be headed. May God help us to be constantly centered in Him, thriving in our relationship with Him and others, passionate about making disciples and experiencing at least a 10% growth which is required to be classified as a movement.



ABC Christian Books



CHECK OUT THESE STOCKTAKE SPECIALS!

Blessings WAS \$29.95 NOW \$14.95

A contemporary adaption of Ellen White's classic work Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing. Beautifully rewritten into modern english that allows you to hear Jesus speaking directly to you about the blessings He wants to bestow on each one of us.

Strength & Conditioning WAS \$39.95 NOW \$14.95

"Inspiring Heart Felt, Biblical Genuine, Transparent Powerful" Strength & Conditioning challenges you to view your trials differently and find strength in the crosses we carry. This book will open the eyes of the reader to the power of having a tried and true relationship with Christ.

WHILE STOCKS LAST.

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**Streaming on
Facebook at 11:30am
June 13**

**WOMEN'S
MINISTRIES
EMPHASIS
DAY**

Join us online for a special message from the Australian Directors of Adventist Women

<https://www.facebook.com/AdventistsAustralia/>

JUNE 13 2020

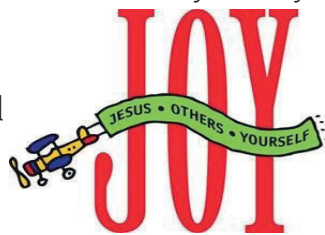
YOUTH DEPARTMENT

The Youth department have been busy during the COVID lockdown in connecting with Youth groups around our conference on Zoom during the week with Life Groups or during Sabbath with Sabbath School Lesson and sermons. As restrictions were lifting, the Youth Department decided to kick off last Friday night with Opening Sabbath on Zoom. Then Saturday night we launched a social gathering for all our Youth Groups on Zoom to play a game of Kahoot. We had 6 Youth Groups that registered from Darwin to Cairns, Innisfail, Townsville and Mackay. Each youth group were able to choose categories of their choice like General Knowledge, True or False, Know Your Music, Know Your Bible or Sports. It was a fun night of community on Zoom to see everyone laughing in spending time together. There could only be one winner on the night and it looked like both Cairns and Cairns Samoan Youth were battling for the prize but lost at the end by Innisfail who fought hard for their win. Congratulations Innisfail Youth for your win and a big thank you to everyone that joined us last Saturday night.

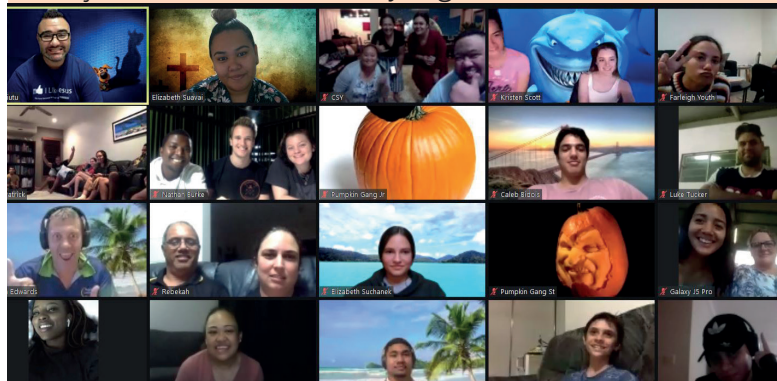
CHILDRENS MINISTRY

Real **JOY** comes from putting **J**esus first, **O**thers next and **Y**ourself last. Here are three ways that you can have **JOY** this week.

1. Read your bible and pray every day; this will help you get to know Jesus as your best friend.
2. Do something kind for someone each day, and this will help you think of others before yourself.
3. Get out in nature with your family and enjoy what God created for you.



This week's Memory text is: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things, there is no law." Galatians 5:22-23.



KATHERINE CHURCH

THE SILVER LINING ON THE COVID19 CLOUDS

Church life has certainly changed in the last two months in the Northern Australian Conference with Church closures, community lockdowns, social distancing, schools working online and many other life changing challenges. But nothing takes God by surprise. He knows the end from the beginning (Isaiah 46:9, 10). Ellen G. White encourages us for times like the present COVID-19 crisis with the following quote: “With Him (Christ) there can be no such thing as failure, loss, impossibility, or defeat; we can do all things through Him who strengthens us. When temptations and trials come, do not wait to adjust all the difficulties, but look to Jesus, your helper.” {DA 490.5}

TENNANT CREEK

STATE EMERGENCY SERVICES (SES) TO THE RESCUE

Katherine Church, under the care of Andrew and Jeanette as their pastoral team, have experienced special miracles and blessings through the Corona Virus Clouds of difficulty. The church has increased dramatically since December this year by sixteen adults and thirty-two children. This sudden increase in church membership is unprecedented. The church have kept up the Bible studies, prayer meetings and Sabbath services through conference calls and Zoom meetings through the last two months of uncertainty. Instead of diminishing the church membership during new Government restrictive measures the church has thrived.

Ron and Leslie Green have been members at Tennant Creek for some time. Ron works for the State Emergency Services. The road from Katherine to the Western Australian border, which is a distance of about 472 kilometers was closed to all, even the Australian Defense Forces or Army personnel were not allowed to drive through these designated COVID-19 Biosecurity areas. But there was need to deliver a washing machine and drier to a remote community 20 kilometers on the Northern Territory side of the border with Western Australia. Ron Green was given directions by the Commander in Chief of the SES in Darwin to make this delivery. Andrew was asked by Ron if he had any deliveries of spiritual books that were needed on his route. Andrew packed some books for Timber Creek and Gilwi Aboriginal Communities, which were to everyone else but the SES in strict lockdown. He rang through and made arrangements to drop off the books at the community store, but when Ron arrived at Timber Creek the store was closed for the Easter Friday. Ron had to drive on without being able to deliver Andrew's precious package.

Doris Roberts, of Timber Creek Community, had experienced a heart breaking tragedy with the loss of her number one grandson, who was to be heir to the family heritage and training, in a recent fatal car crash. Andrew, after some almost impossible challenges in reaching the Timber Creek community that has no mobile coverage, and for part of the day no phone line at all, persevered. The main phone line had been temporarily cut. Andrew finally contacted the night patrol man. He said: “how would you like to do a Good Deed on Good Friday.” The man kindly agreed and delivered the books that were dropped off to him by Ron when he returned after the failure of the first attempt.

Doris was in tears of thankfulness and comfort when Andrew rang her to confirm if she had received the order. The books had been delivered by a miracle of grace against humanly speaking impossible odds. But nothing is impossible for God. The “State Emergency Service” had been converted into a “Spiritual Emergency and Comfort Service” to rescue a grieving heart-broken grandmother. Jesus has special love and care for Doris and her family and nothing could stop the Lord helping her in this time of great need.



ALICE SPRINGS

REVIVAL AND REFORMATION IN REMOTE REGIONS

The Lord's providence has moved in amazing ways in Tennant Creek and the surrounding communities. Marty and Michelle were faced with some health issues and returned to Bundaberg just before the COVID-19 lockdown. Michelle who suffered from sudden heart arrhythmia problems was able to have the necessary hospital checkups, rest, medication rehabilitation and other wonderful blessings that have revived her and brought this valuable pastoral team back to a much better condition. Meanwhile Marty has been very busy preparing a popup caravan for their new role that the NAC have been inspired to open up for them. Instead of working only almost exclusively in Tennant Creek, they will now be intenerating to more of the 300 odd town camps, outstations, and minor and major communities that have opened up for the first time to our message in the last seven years. Between Alice Springs and Tennant Creek there are 12 different language areas and even more skin groups that have intermarried from other aboriginal tribes into the area.

Mungkarta is one minor community that has converted to a Sabbath keeping community in this region 80 kilometers south of Tennant Creek. In this beautiful spot Lindsay Duggy, Joanne Rankin, Simon Moore, Roslyn Duggy, Virgil Downs, Tarra Martin, Calvert Rankin all who have attended our SDA Mamarapha Aboriginal College have had a real revival. Because Marty and Michelle have been away they have risen to the occasion. This community of trained workers have just run an Easter program, which has never happened before. They are conducting regular Sabbath services for the first time. Rianne Riley and Christaline have become active again running the children's programs, which is also unprecedented. They had fallen back because of various issues into worldly ways but now are in full revival and reformation mode with all the community. Marty and Michelle who used to run all their programs are busy giving them Bible studies over the phone and helping them with the Bible College homework. Marty is thrilled to be able to encourage them in their newfound ministry all the way from Bundaberg. This would never had happened without the aid of the COVID-19 lockdown.



RED CENTRE REGIONAL THE CHURCH SPREADS HER WINGS

In the biggest town in the Red Centre of Australia, the Alice Springs Church has risen to the occasion. The lockdown and social distancing forced the members to quickly learn how to run Zoom meetings. Nearly all of the 80 odd attendees have organized and become active in running Sabbath services, Sabbath School lessons for all of the various age divisions, Adventurers, Pathfinders, Vespers, Prayer meetings, board, elders, and committee meetings, Bible studies and various other needed communications. Interestingly enough there have been two decisions for baptism and one rebaptism at this time among the adults.

The young people who have had regular weekly Bible studies and training for preaching, running Church programs and missionary work for the last 5 years have gone to work too. Hannah has brought her friend Merewai to the Zoom Bible studies and now Hannah's new friend wants to join our church. Ralph has prepared Bible studies on the Sabbath topic for his Sunday keeping religious instruction teacher. The teacher was impressed and told Ralph that this was the first time he had heard about the seventh-day Sabbath. Crystal who was invited to the young people's Bible study from Armadale NSW will come and be baptized at Alice Springs because of the young people's Zoom Bible Studies. Others have joined the meetings from South Australia, Queensland, Tasmania, Western Australia, and New South Wales and our church has grown to a larger attendance for some programs than when we physically met together in the church building. The Children are doing the stories for the Sabbath services and have become Zoom technology experts. You might say the church has spread her wings out of the building nest for the first time thanks to the Lord's leading in the COVID-19 crisis.

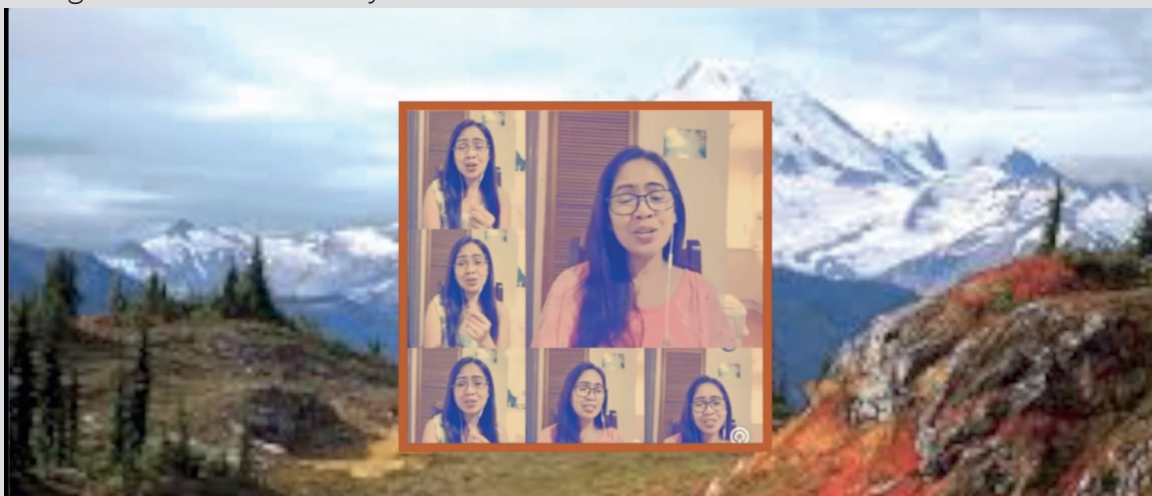


HAASTS BLUFF OUTREACH

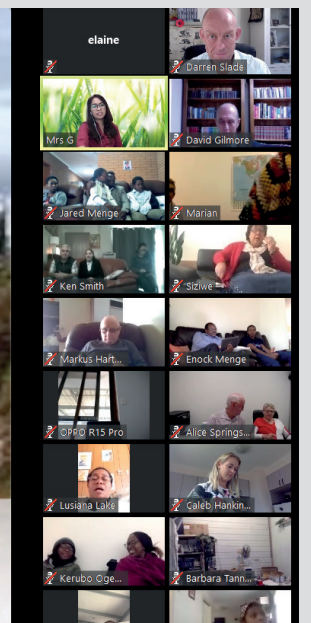
RED CENTRE HISTORY IN THE MAKING

History was made at the Red Centre Regional, which up until now has been run at Tennant Creek Church since 2015. Mt Isa, Cloncurry, Katherine, Tennant Creek, Mungkarta, Alice Springs and various other communities within a 1,000 kilometer radius including a few from Darwin and Borroloola community to the North usually join together once a year. The regional is designed to service and inspire the remote areas. Fellowship, singing concerts, visitation, regional reports, delicious food with invited guest speakers all add to the joy and excitement of the occasion.

This year on Friday night and Saturday of June 5 and 6 three absolutely Christ centered messages of inspiring quality were presented. Something extraordinary transpired at these meetings. Dr. John Hammond was the keynote speaker who enthralled the worshipping listeners with the faith building stories of Jesus. Other encouraging, comforting and inspiring messages especially applicable to the unprecedented Corona Virus Crisis were given by Pastors Glenn Townend, the SPD president, Nick Kross, the Youth Ministry leader in the Discipling Team at SPD, Darren Slade, the NAC president, and Pastor Don Fehlberg from the ATSIM ministry for indigenous and Torres Strait islanders. David Fletcher the ATSIM Director for South Australia also joined and inspired the meetings with reports of how the Lord has blessed in amazing ways through this difficult time in the South. Reports of the blessings that God has graciously bestowed through this crisis were added from Mt Isa, Katherine, Tennant Creek, and Finke from their various pastoral teams. Pastor Pat Tuialii and Ruth Gilmore added special music from Mt Isa and Alice Springs Churches and Caleb Gilmore presented an inspiring children’s story. Many others worked hard behind the scenes with technology and planning to make the weekend a very Christ centered and tremendous success. It was an awesome team effort from the South Pacific Division level right down the local church level of willing and enthusiastic participation. The incredible blessing of the whole occasion that really stood out was that there were more in attendance over the Red Centre Regional zoom meetings than in the previous real to life physical presence Regionals. Usually there are about 100 who come and fellowship together at Tennant Creek. This time over zoom there would have been up to 200 or more join from not only the regular churches but the Finke community as well under Mancel and Jubilee’s wonderful leadership. Western Australia had some precious individuals zoom in from their areas including Lorraine Dood from Broome, Patricia Robinson from Geraldton, Percy Tucker, and Don and Eileen Fehlberg from Perth. South Australia was represented by Audrey Stewart from Gladstone and David Fletcher from Adelaide. Raquel, Craig and Crystal joined us from Armadale, New South Wales, and many more also who are too many to mention enjoyed the program. This was an occasion that encouraged an unprecedented Historical event that will change Red Centre ministry forever.



BLESSED BE THE LORD GOD ALMIGHTY
WHO WAS AND IS AND IS TO COME



PROVIDENCE OPENS THE WAY INTO UNENTERED TERRITORY

Rossie and Immanuel Kingsley are two elderly but energetic and enthusiastic Bible Workers based at Haasts Bluff. This remote aboriginal community is closed to the public at all times unless an invitation or permit is extended to the would-be visitor. But during the COVID-19 restrictions this stunningly, picturesque little settlement of around 100 people became a biosecurity region that was experiencing strict, Government enforced, lockdown constraints. Rossie and Immanuel have been working hard cleaning and helping the old and needy who cannot help themselves through the last two months. This is their regular custom. They also have been giving regular Bible studies and Sabbath services along with house to house visitation.

Immanuel was the first Seventh-day Adventist in this whole Central Desert region that is entirely serviced by the Lutheran Church. Douglas Multa, the most influential leader in this region spanning over 600 kilometers and including quite a few communities, was the first baptismal candidate in the region to join the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Rossie, Immanuel, and Douglas were feeling exceptionally lonely and very isolated under the most trying conditions of COVID-19. But on June 5 the biosecurity regions were all reopened. So on the 7th of June Lucy in her brand new Toyota HiLux loaded up with Sala, Hannah and Merewai headed off from Alice. Lucy has dedicated her vehicle to missionary service. The Pastor's four wheel drive was also full of eager missionaries including Theresa Nuval, Ruth and Caleb Gilmore and the pastor. The two cars headed off on a beautiful, cold, crystal clear, morning along the scenic West MacDonnell Ranges with its remarkable Gorges, impressive Chasms, splendid Gaps, permanent and outstanding water holes and the extraordinary Finke river filled with clear fresh water lakes, which are marvelously studded with picturesque sandy beaches and bold, jagged, rocky outcrops. The refreshing desert water that never runs entirely dry make up the source end of this biggest river in the central desert. It is brimming with about seven varieties of small fish, water hens and abundant bird and animal life.

Immanuel was so excited to have a visit he ignited the fire at 3:00 am on the Sunday morning and sat there waiting until the visiting team arrived after lunch. Excitement spread throughout the community as the missionary team who were some of the first visitors for months dropped in and set up their tents.

Douglas soon showed up and invited the team to come sing and preach at their meeting that night. So the team were serenaded by Douglas the lead guitarist and vocalist, Simon Dixon the Lutheran Minister on the keyboard and also one of the vocalists from Haasts Bluff and Roderick Kantamara the lead singer from Amunturrngu (Mt Liebig) community. Others joined in the singing concert from Haasts Bluff. The pastor preached a short message on God's care for his people in times of trouble and the hope of the Second Coming. The whole team of eight sang "Amazing Grace."



The next day Rossie led the team down to some needy homes that were crying out for a clean-up. The enthusiastic Fijians and Filipinos soon burst into singing. The joy and laughter of the happy missionaries caught the attention of the people of the community. Rossie went to the shop and labelled the team as "the cleaning angels from Nigeria." She somehow became mixed up with "Fijian" and "Nigerian" and we all had a good laugh. Pastor Roderick came by in his four wheel drive as the team were busy doing their work. He said you can come to Mount Liebig and clean up my house yard if you like. This light-hearted invitation we knew was an open opportunity to go and preach at Mount Liebig. We arranged with Douglas to go to this community and other settlements too later that day. The whole region has opened up to the Seventh-day Adventist Church for the first time over the last couple of years. Lucy is going to visit Rossie on her rostered four days off work every fortnight. The Alice Springs choir have been invited to sing at Mount Liebig also after singing at concert to around 400 eager attendees at Haasts Bluff. Visitors from all the region were there at Douglas's invitation last year. Four precious souls in Haasts Bluff are planning to be baptized this year. Families from Alice Springs are planning to do some ministry with their Children in the coming school holidays. The Church is entering this unentered territory for the first time. God's amazing providence is leading willing missionaries from Alice Springs Church into a large new territory full of challenges, excitement and adventure for Jesus.

