



FEBRUARY 2023

# Top News

**NEWS FROM THE TOP END OF THE  
SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH  
IN AUSTRALIA**

## **Editorial**

*Ideal Comfort Zone*

## **Feature**

*Men's Ministry Camp*

## **Good News**

*Three Sibling Baptism*

# IDEAL COMFORT ZONE

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In my leave, I had the opportunity to attend some different Adventist churches and it got me thinking; what would make our churches a more comfortable mission space for those who attend? Padded seats, air-conditioning, improved toilet facilities, a cry room? These are all good, but I'm not thinking so much of the physical improvements, as it is well known that how people are made to feel is far more important as a measure of their comfort.

So what about a great welcome team, or more vibrant music or preaching, or more/better children's programs? These are great too, but what are the foundational qualities that would make any church a desirable place to attend, regardless of the air-conditioning, music, preaching or kids programming? Here is a list of values I believe that, if incorporated into the cultural DNA of a congregation, would transform any church community into a very safe and comfortable place to meet Jesus:

- Each person is precious to God, so I treat them as such
- When I cause or take offence, I make up
- Love is central
- Mission is key
- Unity is everything

At the beginning of every New Year, many people make resolutions of some sort. What if we all resolved to make these values foundational in each of our congregations across the NAC this year? I believe we would so closely reflect Jesus' character as a body that many folk would be drawn to our churches. Now that would be wonderful to see in 2023!

*"How people are made to feel is  
far more important as a measure  
of their comfort."*



Darren Slade  
President  
Northern Australian Conference

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## SECRETARY/CFO UPDATE

2022 was another fantastic year, God has been faithful and good to us. Baptisms and tithe were the highest in the last five years in the Northern Australian Conference. It reminds me of Psalm 115:1 (ESV) “Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your name give glory, for the sake of your steadfast love and your faithfulness!

On a personal level, the year has been a blessing to trust in God truly. As you know, Pastor Darren was on long service leave for four months and I have had to cover the administrative matters. I faced new challenges, problems, and matters around staffing appointments, personal issues around the schools, and project delays. But I learned to depend on God more and spent more time on my knees to seek His wisdom and strength. The story of Elisha in 2 Kings 6:15-23, encouraged me; when an army surrounded Elisha and his servant with horses and chariots, the servant said, “Alas, my master! What shall we do?”. Elisha prayed, and God answered His prayer. “Then the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw, and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha” (verse 17).

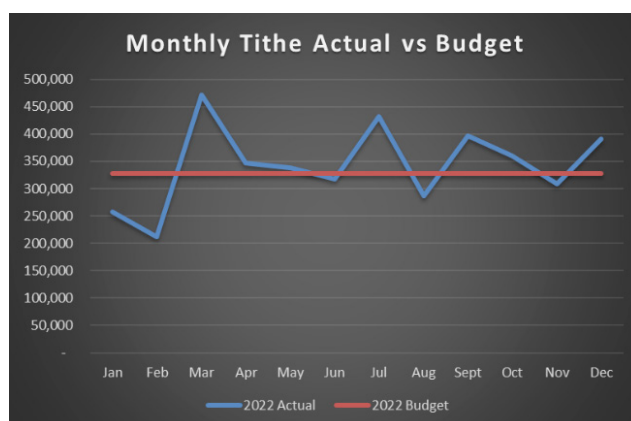
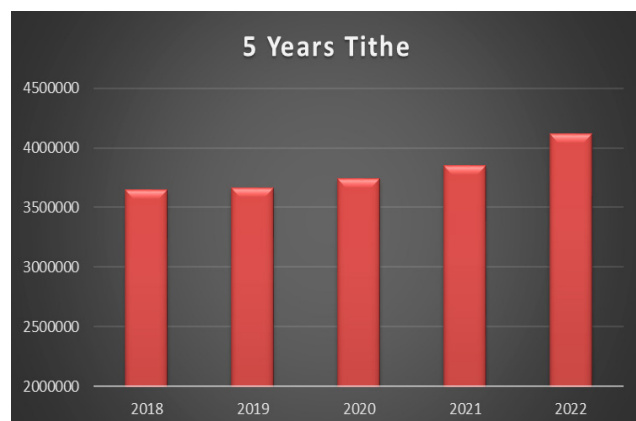
We have a solid foundation in God as we enter 2023, despite the gloomy outlook, uncertainties, and challenges ahead; the Lord is always faithful. He promises us, “Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.” Isaiah 40:10

*“Do not fear, for I am with you;  
do not be dismayed, for I am your God.  
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Isaiah 40:10*

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## TITHE REPORT

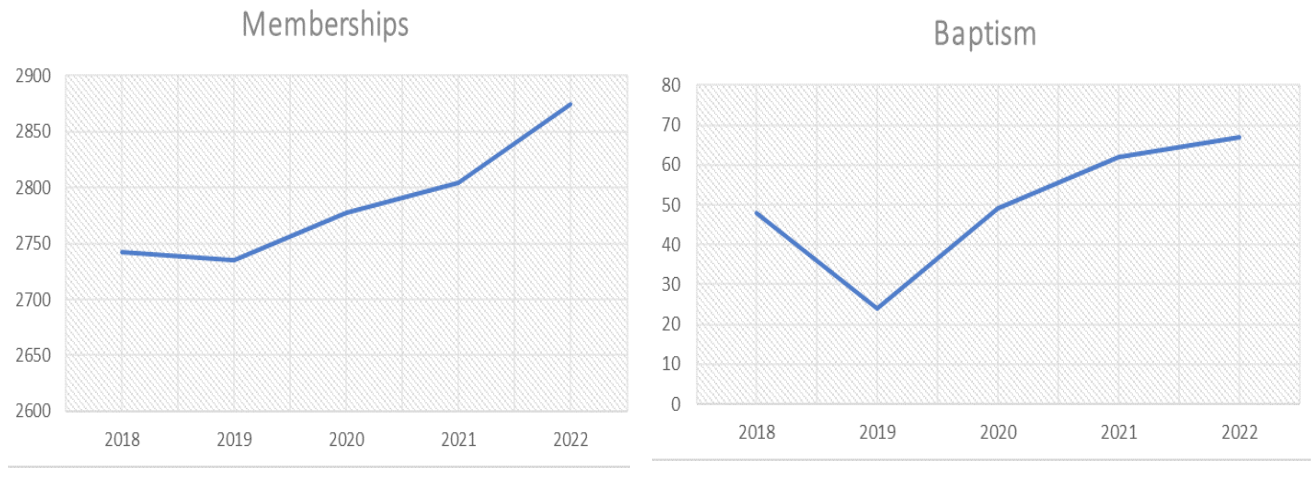
We thank God for His blessings within our conference and the faithful stewardship of church members in returning their tithes. 2022 had the highest tithe received in the last five years. The first chart shows a comparison of tithe received year on year. Tithe received in 2022 was \$4.12 million, an increase of 7% compared to 2021. We budgeted \$3.93 million for tithe received, and the actual was \$4.12 million or 5% increase. The second chart is the monthly actual tithe received against budget.





## MEMBERSHIP AND BAPTISMS AT THE END OF 2022

Membership at the end of 2022 was 2,874, an increase of 70 people or 2.5% from 2021. Praise the Lord for 67 baptism in 2022. Baptisms were the highest in 5 years, as you can see from the baptism year on year chart.



## PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

- As I write this, the new fence separating the campground and the school is being erected, and the contractor is working on completing it. The fence will help to ensure safety around the campsites and the children at school.
- There was a delayed execution of the Building Better Regions project. As you are probably aware, this project is to demolish and replace the ablution block, expand the commercial kitchen (new cold and dry storage space with outside dining), and install a lift to the hall for disability access. We have to re-tender the project due to the failure of the first tender process.





## PASTORAL STAFFING CHANGES

With a new year upon us there have been several pastoral changes in our conference.

Pastor Esava Koro has commenced special leave to become an Australian Defense Force Chaplain full time. As a result, Pastor Ray Hobbs will be moving from Ayr, Bowen and Home Hill Churches to become the senior pastor of Darwin, Malak, Palmerston and Gove Churches.



*Pr Esava Koro*



*Pr Ray Hobbs*



*Pr Laufili Ah-You*

Pastor Raymon Paletua, former ATSIM Director at the South New South Wales Conference, will be the new pastor of Edmonton and Mossman Churches, and Chaplain at Cairns Adventist College.



*Pr Raymon Paletua*



*Pr Aporosa Vurewa*

Pastor Aporosa Vurewa, from Brisbane, will be moving to Cooktown to be the Global Mission Pioneer in Cape York.





## ADRA'S DISASTER MANAGEMENT CYCLE

100 Year 8 students from local Townsville school, Calvary Christian College, visited the ADRA Shed at the Riverside Convention Centre, in early November, to hear about ADRA's Disaster Management Cycle. Pastor Chris Kirkwood, ADRA Director at the Northern Australian Conference, spoke to the groups of students about the five parts of the cycle: Event, Recovery, Response, Mitigation and Preparation. The students also had a chance to see what was in the ADRA shed and essential items needed in response to a natural disaster such as generators, food, clothing, kids toys, mattresses and first aid items. The students were doing an assignment, as part of their Humanities class, to create an Emergency Kit using a box and 10 items that they should have around the house in response to a natural disaster. They could choose between a cyclone, bush fire, flood and earthquake for their assignment. Seeing what is stored at the ADRA shed and what ADRA uses in response to natural disasters was very helpful for them in understanding what they would need. "Any planning for any disaster is crucial," stated Pastor Kirkwood, "being planned and organised ensures the safety of loved ones, pets and property. As we enter into the cyclone season in North Queensland, it is important that everyone, even students, understand how to respond in an emergency and what they can do to help."





## MEN'S MINISTRY

# FELLOWSHIP OF MEN'S WEEKEND RETREAT

Peter Keioskie

The Fellowship of Men (Men's Ministry) launched in our Conference last year as a leading pioneer for all the Australian Conferences to support our Men and as an outreach to Men in the community. The Lord has led, and between May to November 2022 we grew to having groups in Mackay, Townsville, Cairns and Darwin. We also held our 1st Inaugural Men's Weekend Retreat at Magnetic Island from November 11 - 13, with 29 men in attendance. This came together in such a way and timing that you knew it was the Lords doing. The topic we were educated on was *Mental Strength and Resilience* by key note Speaker Nelson Laconi, a Practicing Psychologist, Qualified Teacher, Personal Trainer and Leadership Coach, who as a generous Christian volunteered his time. Friday night was a settle in period with a meet and greet session that unexpectedly turned into a spiritually uplifting evening. Sabbath morning, the group enjoyed two sessions with a third after lunch. There was plenty of content linking Physical, Mental and Spiritual together for balanced well-being. Late Sabbath afternoon we went on a group bushwalk and after tea we played tennis and basketball, before enjoying a communion around the open fire. Sunday morning was fun bonding times with learning archery followed by archery tag. The best fun and object of the game archery tag apparently was to gang up and target the organiser. This resulted in personal injury to the organiser which apparently made it even more fun and enjoyable. Overall, a great time was had by all. The 2023 Men's Retreat will be the weekend of August 25 - 27, so save the date and plan to be there!







## WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Our closed Facebook group is Fellowship of Men, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/507495311302289>

Join us to stream all 5 recordings of the Mental Strength training given at the weekend retreat.

To show your support and help promote the Fellowship of Men we have a very cool fishing/activities/polo shirt that is cool, has UV protection and also a deep pocket for mobile phones. Please order your shirt at <https://events.adventist.org.au/event/info/10741>

Please support your area group and their activities.

If you are interested in joining in with a group in your area, here are the contacts;

Mackay – Peter Keioskie 0438803575/[pjk@ehw.net.au](mailto:pjk@ehw.net.au)

Townsville – Daniel Wakelin 0427856233/[daniel.wakelin@bigpond.com](mailto:daniel.wakelin@bigpond.com)

Cairns – Peter Shuttleworth 0413353592/[gromit70@bigpond.com](mailto:gromit70@bigpond.com)

Darwin – Farai Mbira 0431537183/[mbiraf@yahoo.com](mailto:mbiraf@yahoo.com)

If you are interested in starting a group in your area, please contact Peter Keioskie 0438803575/[pjk@ehw.net.au](mailto:pjk@ehw.net.au)





## AYR CHURCH

### BAPTISM

Gloria Bridge was baptised on December 3, after attending Ayr Church for 12 months and having Bible studies with family back home in the Philippines, via Zoom.

Gloria's husband, Laurie, a non-Adventist, attended Church for the first time to witness her baptism. Gloria recounted that many times during her life she has been aware of God's providence and she believes her journey to Australia was in God's plan for her life. A delightful Sabbath luncheon followed her baptism.



*Gloria with the Ayr Elders - Dennis Anger, Steve Towler, Lina White & Pr Ray Hobbs*

## NORTH MACKAY

### WOMEN'S MINISTRY CHRISTMAS THEMED HIGH TEA

On November 27, the North Mackay Church Women's Ministry rounded off their year's activities and outreach with a High Tea. The event was well supported by ladies from Central and Farleigh Churches, as well as members of the public. The ladies used the event to invite non-Adventists and collect food items for ADRA's Christmas hampers to the needy. A cracker time was had by all and they have already planned their calendar of events for 2023.



### EPRESSIONS OF INTEREST - VOLUNTEER WOMEN'S MINISTRY DIRECTOR

The Northern Australian Conference is seeking expressions of interest for the volunteer Women's Ministry Director position. So if you have a passion for women's ministry and ideas to see this ministry blossom, please email us at [nacinfo@adventist.org.au](mailto:nacinfo@adventist.org.au) or call us at 07 4779 3988.



## SCHOOL DEDICATION AND FUN DAY

*Stephane Millien*

Carlisle Adventist College has commenced the 2023 school year with a school Dedication and PB4L (Positive Behaviour for Learning) Fun Day. In a historical first, parents were invited to the school grounds, on the first day of school, to witness the entire school staff and student leadership be dedicated to God for His service in 2023. Principal Dale Skinner gave a keynote address where he likened the elite teamwork of those in the Tour De France to the culture that Carlisle Adventist College is striving to build in 2023 and beyond.

Earlier that afternoon, students were also treated to another school first with the PB4L Fun Day. The 'Fun Day' was designed with activities that centered around the schools 4 core values. Carlisle's 4 school values are Achievement, Compassion, Growth Mindset and Belonging. A highlight of the day included the students' cooking meals for Mealtime on Milton- ADRA Community Dinner for the local Mackay region. Another memorable moment was when every student within the school placed their painted handprint on a mural to emphasise Belonging. Deputy Principal Isabelle Millien said it was such a positive and beautiful way to begin a school year. "It was great to create an atmosphere on the first day of school where you could see returning and new students mingling with each other and staff in a relaxed and happy environment. It sets a positive tone for the remainder of the year."

Parents were also appreciative of the new initiative with one commenting, "The kids said today was amazing! Thanks to everyone for making the first day so much fun." Carlisle is now planning to commence every school year with a PB4L Fun Day and school Dedication.





# CAMPOREE

Travis Siutu

The beginning of 2023 started off with a bang with AUC Camporee at Tumbarumba, NSW. The theme for the event was *Treasured* - based on the character of Mary Magdalene. I was proud to have nine Pathfinder clubs from our Conference join the other 3000 Pathfinders for the week where we were blessed with the messages from Pastor Raul Moran each night and activities during the day. We were also blessed with special items during the nights from three of our clubs, Mareeba, Darwin & Cairns Central. Sabbath was an extra blessing with two of our Pathfinders from Mareeba Pathfinder Club being baptised and having the closing ceremony with fireworks.

A big thanks goes out to all our Pathfinder Directors from all our clubs, and parents that came as drivers & cooks. All your planning and effort has enabled your Pathfinders to attend this life changing event and will leave them with memories that will last a lifetime.









## INNISFAIL

### SIBLING BAPTISM

After the Far North Queensland Pathfinder Investiture on December 3, 2022, three siblings publicly declared their love for God and were baptised in Innisfail, Qld.

Simeon, Sharni and Stewart Edwards were baptised by our youth director, Pastor Travis Siutu.



## JETS CAMP 2023

# READY UP

[RED-EE UHP]  
TO PREPARE FOR USE, TO GET READY

WHEN: 7-12 APRIL 2023  
WHERE: QUINOLA LAKES (MALANDA)  
COST: \$350 FOR CAMP \$25 FOR SHIRT

REGISTRATIONS CLOSE: 8 MARCH 2023  
TO REGISTER VISIT: [NAYOUTH.ADVENTIST.ORG.AU/EVENTS/](https://nayouth.adventist.org.au/events/)





# Faith & Science CONFERENCE

3 - 6 JULY 2023



School Chaplains | Teachers | Pastors | Scientists | University Students | Church Administrators | Church Members

Mantra on View Surfers Paradise  
Goldcoast

22 View Avenue Surfers Paradise Gold Coast, QLD 4217

## NAC BIG CAMP 2023 RIVERSIDE CONVENTION CENTRE

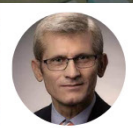
Save the Date  
23 June - 1 July 2023

ONLINE BOOKINGS OPENING SOON!!!!

Keep an eye out for more  
information on Facebook  
and in your local Church bulletin!

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Associate Ministerial Secretary GC



YOUTH SPEAKER  
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Please include photos with your submissions wherever possible.

### Deadline

March 9 for the April edition

**Top News** is the official magazine of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Northern Australia. All articles express the opinions of their authors and not necessarily those of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

OUR VISION IS TO BE  
A “CHRIST-CENTRED  
THRIVING DISCIPLE-MAKING  
MOVEMENT”

Find out more about us at [na.adventist.org.au](http://na.adventist.org.au)

# Northern Australian Conference Calendar 2023

## January

- 3-8 AUC Pathfinder Camporee
- 23 Schools – Term One Commences

## February

- 7-11 AUC Empower Ministers Meetings
- 17-20 AUC Converge
- 18 AUC Biennial Attendance Survey

## March

- 10-12 Growing Together Summit
- 18 Global Youth Day
- 18-25 Youth Week of Prayer
- 25 Youth Rally & Volleyball Comp (Townsville)
- 31 Schools – Term One Finishes

## April

- 7-12 JETS Camp
- 17 Schools – Term Two Commences
- 28-1 May Northern Territory Youth Camp

## June

- 4-8 Business Professional Training
- 13-15 Ministers Meetings
- 18-23 Big Camp Set Up
- 21 Schools – Term Two Finishes
- 23-1 Jul Big Camp

## July

- 1 Youth Touch Football Comp
- 17 Schools – Term Three Commences
- 28-30 Youth and Young Adults Couples Retreat

## August

- 19 Youth Rally & Basketball Comp (Townsville)
- 25-27 Men's Ministry Camp

## September

- 15 Schools – Term Three Finishes
- 18-1 Oct Minister's Bible Lands Tour
- 24- 1 Oct STORMCo Northern Territory

## October

- 3 Schools – Term Four Commences
- 15-25 Personal Ministries Roadshow
- 20-22 Growing Together Summit

## November

- 4 Alice Springs Investiture
- 11 Darwin Investiture
- 18 Mount Isa, Townsville & Ayr Investiture
- 25 Mackay North & Mackay Central Investiture

## December

- 1 Schools – Term Four Finishes
- 2 FNQ & Mareeba Investiture
- 6 Last Day for Teachers
- 9 Edmonton & Cairns Investiture

