

AUGUST 2023

Top News



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

Editorial

It's None of Your Business

Feature

Big Camp

Good News

*High Schoolers Visit
ADRA Food Pantry*

IT'S NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS

I've been a bit bothered lately to be hearing the occasional influential Adventist preacher setting dates for Jesus' return. As a student of Adventist history this is really jarring, as our church has been clear on this point for many decades, though in the early days there was a spate of it. Indeed, you think we would have learnt our lesson as a people whose origins were defined by a date setting failure of epic proportions.

Understanding what Jesus said about not knowing the day or hour, these most recent preachers sidestep those verses by saying they are only narrowing it down to the year! Seriously? I don't believe it is helpful to continually try to determine a timeframe for Jesus to come, even if it is down to a year or other semi-specific references that give the impression of imminence. Eagerly anticipate His coming - yes! Try to know when that might be - no!

I grant that Jesus does say to watch and pray... that is watch, not speculate. I also grant that his coming is nearer now than when we first believed and that "when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door" (Matthew 24:33). But Jesus clearly made the call on a fixation with knowing times when the disciples tried going down this path with him. You can read their question in Acts 1:6 but notice Jesus' response:

He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."
Acts 1:7,8

He basically tells them it is none of their business! And then he goes on to make clear what their business will be - to receive the Holy Spirit so they can witness about Him. The remainder of the book of Acts demonstrated that that is exactly what they did. Jesus is calling you and me to do the same; to forget trying to figure out the when, which is His business, but instead be empowered and evangelistic in the wait. This is such a clear mandate for us, and brings into focus our core mission. Like Jesus modelled, it is our privilege "to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10).

This is my desire for all of us in the NAC. Let's leave God's business to him and get on with the business he has given us to do! Are you with me?



Darren Slade
President
Northern Australian Conference

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STAFF

FAREWELL AND WELCOME

We would like to say farewell to our outgoing President, Pr Darren Slade, who has led our Conference for the past seven and a half years. During this time, he has had a positive influence on our Conference, some examples of this are improving our schools, campground and office building, including the office renovation and completing the Faith FM studio. He led us through COVID, with video updates and support for churches as they went online. He started the Road Shows which allow the team at the Conference office, along with guest speakers to present to you closer to home. Even though he was the President, he still went to Albury in New South Wales and Darwin in the Northern Territory to pick up two ADRA trucks and drove them thousands of KMs back to Townsville. The trucks not only help with the ADRA Food Pantry in Townsville but are used to distribute mattresses, linen and clothing right across our Conference. This is only the tip of what Darren has done for this Conference and we want to thank him for his leadership and pray that God blesses him, Suzanne and Zion in the next chapter of their ministry in the Greater Sydney Conference.

As Darren leaves, we would like to welcome our incoming President, Pr Simon Gigliotti. Simon grew up in North Queensland, more specifically, Ravenshoe in the Atherton Tablelands. Before entering full time ministry, he worked as a plumber. Over the last 5 years he has served as the Youth Director in the Greater Sydney Conference and prior to that he was the Associate Youth Director in the Victorian Conference. He is married to Brittany and together they have a beautiful daughter Vienna. They are expecting another baby in January. Simon likes to spend his spare time with Brittany and Vienna, at the gym, reading, or studying the Bible. He is passionate about seeing local churches become healthy communities that share the Good News of Jesus with those around them. We are looking forward to having Simon, Brittany and Vienna up here in our Conference and can't wait to see God working as Simon leads our Conference.



L-R Simon, Brittany & Vienna



Zion, Suzanne & Darren

STAFF

WOMEN'S MINISTRY

The Northern Australian Conference Appointments Committee has appointed Lynelda Tippo as the Women's Ministry Director.

MOSSMAN CHURCH

BAPTISM

Joy Cornell

Mossman (and all Heaven!) rejoiced on July 15 when our beloved Krissie Thompson and her 13-year-old son, Chase, were baptised in idyllic Miallo Creek. Her pastor from Lord Howe Island, Pr John Wells, was able to take the sermon then the afternoon ceremony. Krissie's dad, Bruce, also from Lord Howe and her dear friend Liz Lambert were also there, adding to their joy.

Krissie's moving testimony outlined her spiritual journey. When an operation found it impossible to remove all her aggressive brain tumour, she returned to God – and now her joy just shines out. Chase made Psalm 139 very personal in his testimony.

To add to His blessings, the rain disappeared and the sun shone all day!



L-R Chase, Pr John Wells & Krissie



Krissie & Chase

ADRA @ BIG CAMP

HIGH SCHOOLERS VISIT ADRA FOOD PANTRY

During Big Camp, 13 high schoolers visited the Townsville ADRA Food Pantry to help those who are in need. With an early start, they left the campgrounds at 6:45am and arrived to about 300 people waiting for food. The kids helped with handing out pantry items, carrying items to cars and even assisted two people by dropping them and their groceries back home as they had no transportation.

“Most of the activities we do during Big Camp are self-focussed and about having fun,” explained Isabelle Millien, deputy principal of Carlisle Adventist College and organiser of the visit, “we wanted to give the kids an opportunity to serve others.”

Although the kids come from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, they came together with the common goal of helping others in need and many of them were left shocked by how lucky they are in their own lives.

“It was amazing to see the children donate their time to help others,” stated Pr Chris Kirkwood, ADRA Director at the Northern Australian Conference, “The more opportunities they have to be involved in these types of projects the more they will learn to appreciate the needs of others and understand that serving others is what God wants us to do.”



FELLOWSHIP OF MEN

GLAMPING - MACKAY

Peter Keioskie

On the weekend of June 2-4, the Fellowship of Men in Mackay went glamping at the Chelman's property in the Mountains at Dalrymple Heights. Fire places inside and out were well used as the men spent most of the weekend with a cloudy sky. The clouds lifted for 4 hours on Sabbath afternoon allowing half the group to take the buggies for a drive through nature to a lookout, while the other half of the group chose to stay and rest. Everyone enjoyed fresh mountain air and fellowshiping activities over the weekend. Pr Pat Tuialii was the key note speaker, giving spiritual and practical guidance. This event is always a favourite weekend on the Men's Regional Calendar and attended by weekend stayers and Sabbath day trippers alike.



WOMEN'S MINISTRY

HIGH TEA - MACKAY

The Mackay Women's Ministry held a high tea on Sunday July 23, with about 20 ladies attending, five of whom were not Adventist. During the high tea they discussed mental health and did a Spiritual devotional. Table games enhanced the fun, with the winners receiving small gifts. A great time was had by all and many friendships were formed.



BIG CAMP

ORDINATIONS

Pastor Chris Kirkwood and Pastor Pat Tuialii were ordained into ministry on July 1 at the Northern Australian Conference (NAC) Big Camp.

Pastor Tuialii followed in his father's footsteps to become a Pastor where he first entered ministry in 2016 as a Bible Mission Worker in South Moreton Bay Islands in the South Queensland Conference, before moving to the NAC conference in 2019 to pastor the Mount Isa and Cloncurry churches. He moved to Mackay in 2021 where he now pastors the North Mackay, Farleigh and Walkerston churches.

Pastor Kirkwood was an accountant and worked at the Western Australian Conference as the Chief Financial Officer before being called by God to go into pastoral ministry. His first appointment as a minister was in the NAC as the pastor of Townsville City and Charters Towers Churches. He was appointed to the NAC ADRA Director in 2022, and continues to pastor at Charters Towers.

The ordination was attended by the Australian Union Conference president, Pastor Terry Johnson and secretary, Pastor Michael Worker, with family and church family joining in prayer to bless them and their families as they enter into this stage of their ministry.



TOWNSVILLE CITY CHURCH

A HIGH DAY FOR CITY CHURCH

Glynnis James

Three beautiful souls made a public statement of their desire to follow Jesus on November 26, 2022. Janet Gibney, Trudy Kennedy and Edward (Eddie) Ah Sam were baptised by church elder Richard Warden. Each participant felt the call of God as He directed their way to finding Him.

Janet hadn't been in a church for over 30 years and everywhere she travelled she kept seeing the Faith FM advertisement. She found the ABC shop as she was seeking literature for a friend. On her first day attending our church she met an old friend, the ABC lady, and asked for Bible studies.

Trudy had a desire to read the Bible from start to finish, and felt God was talking to her. One day, she googled Sabbath keeping churches and finally got the courage to drive into the church car park where she met Richard and asked for Bible studies.

Eddie was searching for God and accepted an offer to attend a prophecy seminar at the church. From the first time he met Richard he was full of questions and had an insatiable desire to study the Bible.

Sadly, Eddie died on 21 June 2023 and now rests in Jesus waiting for the final resurrection.



L-R Trudy, Eddie, Pr Alfredo Campos, Janet & Richard

FELLOWSHIP OF MEN

CAR RALLY

The Fellowship of Men in Mackay held a Car Rally from Paget to a property in Gargett, followed by a BBQ and firepit fellowship on Saturday night July 29. It was a fun car rally that involved taking photos of the car's starting odometer, followed by photos of land marks along the route and the car's finishing odometer reading. The car with the shortest travelled KMs and the most correct photos won. Photo sites were scattered, so they had to work out the shortest route. Even though it was stated 'The Judge's Decision is final' some still light heartedly disputed the Judge's Decision. The men settled into hot off the barbie food and fireside chats. Dan Cole, the host of the night, conducted a spiritual discussion to close off the night.



TOWNSVILLE CITY CHURCH

WHAT'S COOKING?

On March 25, several women and men gathered to watch a cooking demonstration of Indian vegetarian food by Sharita Seric. What started out as a night out just for the women quickly morphed to include some men with an interest in cooking. The demonstration included making a curry paste, pumpkin and pawpaw curries, rooti's, moringa leaves with coconut and mouth-watering raitas. The food tasted as good as it looked and all who attended agreed that it was a night worth remembering.



BIG CAMP 2023

More than 1700 people attended the first Northern Australian Conference (NAC) Big Camp since 2019 at the Riverside Convention Centre in Townsville from June 23 to July 1.

According to conference records, this is the largest number of people to ever attend a NAC Big Camp, with accommodation sites booked out weeks before the camp started.

“It was an excellent Big Camp,” stated NAC president Pastor Darren Slade. “Folks are saying it was the best camp ever and they are probably right. Everything ran very smoothly. We had spent a lot of time in prayer before it began. We upgraded the layout of our campgrounds and had an excellent lineup of speakers.”



L-R Pr Terry Johnson with Pr Darren Slade and Suzanne Slade



Big Tent on First Sabbath



L-R Maria & Pr Pat Tuialii, Pr Darren Slade, Kate & Pr Chris Kirkwood



The main speaker for the adult tent, Pastor Pavel Goia, Ministry Magazine editor and General Conference associate ministerial secretary, spoke to campers about being empowered by the Holy Spirit. He also spent time in the young adult's tent during their morning devotionals, speaking about prayer.

Other speakers included Pastors Murray Hunter, Tim Ah Sam, Sharee Greenfield and Daron Pratt, along with many others who presented morning programs and workshops.

In addition to a packed program featuring a range of speakers, the children's divisions and young adults spent days doing fun activities such as bowling, go-karting, rock climbing and visiting the local tourist attraction Magnetic Island.



L-R Pr Sean Tavai with Rydah Aler, Murphy Morris and Brett Wason-Deshong



Pr Darren Slade and Pr Pavel Goia



On the final day of camp, three young people, Brett Wason-Deshong, Murphy Morris and Rydah Aler, were baptised in the morning, surrounded by 200 supporters.

Pastor Chris Kirkwood and Pastor Pat Tuialii were ordained in the afternoon with Australian Union Conference (AUC) secretary Pastor Michael Worker giving them the ordination charge and AUC president Pastor Terry Johnson leading out in the ordination prayer.

The camp ended with the announcement that after seven and a half years Pastor Slade will be stepping down from his position of Conference president at the end of August to transition into local church ministry within the Greater Sydney Conference.

“There are a lot of things I will miss about the NAC,” explained Pastor Slade, “I will miss the sense of unity around our churches, I will certainly miss the geography, diversity and remoteness of some of our congregations, and I will especially miss being part of the changes and growth of this conference.”

“It was great to finish my term on a high with Big Camp and great that the campers were able to go home revived, encouraged and inspired,” he concluded.

We look forward to having you all back at Big Camp next year from June 21 - 29. Save the Date!

KATHERINE PATHFINDERS & ADVENTURERS FIRST INDUCTION CEREMONY

Semi Francis

The Katherine Seventh-day Adventist Church celebrated a significant milestone on June 3, with the induction of 15 new Pathfinders and 10 Adventurers. The Katherine team's hard work paid off when they organised the unique celebration, which took place on the church's premises.

The ceremony was graced by the Conference Youth Director, Pr. Travis Siutu, who was the Chief Guest of the event. The Katherine Seventh-day Adventist Church has been in existence for 21 years, and this was the first-ever induction ceremony to take place in the church.

Pr. Siutu's message centered around a challenge of not giving up, which he delivered to the newly inducted Pathfinders and Adventurers. The District Director in the Northern Territory, Elder Semi Francis, Greater Darwin Pathfinders and Adventurer Club Director Tomasi Cokanasiga, church family, and friends were also in attendance to witness the induction ceremony.

The ceremony was a significant moment for the Darwin Adventurer's rep, Mrs. Francis, who gave an emotional and heartfelt speech about the occasion. She welcomed the newly inducted Pathfinders and Adventurers into the Pathfinders and Adventurers family and wished them well as they embark on this new chapter of their lives.

The induction ceremony marked the beginning of a new journey for the 25 young people who were inducted. As they join the Pathfinders and Adventurers family, they will have the opportunity to participate in various activities that will help them develop their social, physical, and spiritual skills.

The Katherine Seventh-day Adventist Church is proud to have organised such a successful event and looks forward to seeing the newly inducted Pathfinders and Adventurers thrive in their new roles. The church also hopes to hold more induction ceremonies in the future to continue to support the development and growth of young people in the community.



CAIRNS ADVENTIST COLLEGE

TERM 2 UPDATE

Last Term, students at Cairns Adventist College participated in the National Heart Foundation's - Jump Rope for Heart, raising a massive \$3,421.35. This was well over the school's estimated fundraising amount of \$1200. It was great to see so many smiling faces practicing skipping on the playground and in HPE lessons learning new skipping skills. Students were able to show off their skills on our Jump Off Day on Friday May 19, where they were able to show friends and family all they had learnt.

Cairns Adventist College is dedicating one week a term to serving. The aim is to imbed a 'serving others' culture within the school, the students, and amongst the community. Last term, the service week started on May 8 and at the end of that week the students headed out to their local community of Gordonvale to gift appreciation cards and chocolates to shop owners and workers who bless the community with their service/business and work.



CARLISLE ADVENTIST COLLEGE

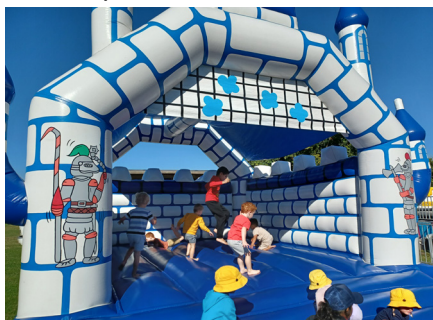
ALPHABET ARK COMMUNITY EVENT

Carlisle Adventist College recently held a FREE community event aimed at pre-school children and families within the Mackay Region. The event was called 'Alphabet Ark' and saw approximately 150 local kids enjoy rides, ponies, jumping castles, face painting and so much more.

"Apart from the huge smiles on the children's faces, the most pleasing aspect of Alphabet Ark was about extending a welcome to families, that may not otherwise be familiar with Carlisle, and highlighting the many great attributes of our campus," says Deputy Principal, Isabelle Millien.

As part of the event, the young children and their families were also able to visit the prep classroom and experience firsthand the atmosphere and culture of the school.

"The feedback from the community has been very positive. Some families which could not afford to attend the Mackay Show were extremely grateful that our school would host such a free event," says Mrs Millien. Carlisle plans to extend it's reach into the community with such future events.



YOUTH

GODLY RELATIONSHIPS

Young adults in the Northern Australian Conference (NAC) had the opportunity learn about who they are in God's image, how to deal with personal trauma, the link between communication and intimacy, and how a relationship should work in a biblical context in the Riverside Adventist School library (Townsville, Queensland), on July 29.

Presented by editor of *Adventist Record* and *Signs of the Times* magazines Jarrod Stackelroth, and his wife, Lyna, *Godly Relationships* was aimed at singles, dating and married couples, and was an interactive day of workshops, small group sessions and keynotes.

"We wanted to run this event because there is a need for our young people to have a conversation about relationships," explained Pastor Travis Siutu, NAC youth director.

"Our young people learn about relationships from movies or social media as opposed to what the Bible says and, unfortunately, it is not a topic being spoken about in our local churches so we wanted to have a safe space where our young people could learn and talk about relationships."

Together for 17 years and married for almost 13, the Stackelroths gave an authentic, story-driven perspective of relationships in light of some of the hurdles that young people face.

"It is important for relationships to have a good foundation and core principals in order for them to be successful," said Mr Stackelroth. "We've had a lot of experiences—ups and downs—in our own relationship and feel like being vulnerable and transparent with the younger generation will allow them to be more willing to ask questions and share any issues they have when it comes to relationships.

"As a church, we need to create these safe spaces, that give our young people permission to share their stories also—to be authentic and vulnerable."

Attendee Elizabeth Suchaneck from Aitkenvale church had this to say: "The program was really good. It was insightful and gave us the opportunity to talk about topics that are difficult to talk about and that are rarely discussed in church.

"It gave me the confidence that I am doing something right and showed me where I can improve in my relationships, especially the session about being my true self, not only in romantic relationships, but all my relationships," she added.

"Our young people are seeking and searching, not just in regards to relationships but other topics too," said Pastor Siutu. "It is our duty to give them a space where they can talk about these issues and give them something to think about as they tackle life."

NAC hopes to hold more of these types of programs in the future.



YOUTH CHOSEN

Four teens from our Conference attended the AUC CHOSEN leadership program from July 3-7. The program was held in Brookfield, QLD and saw teens aged between 14-16, from all over Australia, take part.

Our teens included Allaine and Devina from Darwin, and Taron and Angus from Townsville and they were accompanied by their mentors, Blake English and Rachel Van Duyn. Throughout the week our teens were given the opportunity to lead in different areas including Allaine and Devina giving the Acknowledgement of Country and Taron leading out in an icebreaker.

“It was the best time,” stated Taron, “I liked seeing the connections that everyone had and the opportunities to socialise and have fun. I would 100% recommend going if you are ever given that chance.”

The teens had an amazing experience and are glad they had the opportunity to attend CHOSEN.

The next CHOSEN leadership program will be held in 2025.



TOWNSVILLE PATHFINDERS

CHARTERS TOWERS PATHFINDER OUTREACH DAY

The small Charters Towers Church building was busting at the seams on Sabbath June 3, as Townsville Pathfinders and their families joined the local members for a day of worship and outreach. Pathfinders took the Sabbath School and Church programs before heading out into the streets surrounding the church to hand out food hampers to homes who would accept it. The day was a blessing to all and created an opportunity for the local Charters Towers Church to connect with the families in their neighbourhood.





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SCAN TO REGISTER



Editors

Darren Slade
Lorraine Atchia

Design

Alex Green Design
Lorraine Atchia

Contact

lorraineatchia@adventist.org.au
Ph: 07 4779 3988
Post: PO Box 51,
Aitkenvale QLD 4814

Contributors

If you would like to contribute to *Top News*, please contact us using any of the methods on the left.
Please include photos with your submissions wherever possible.

Deadline

September 20 for the October edition.

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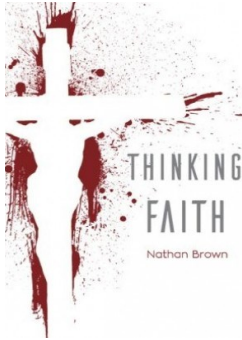
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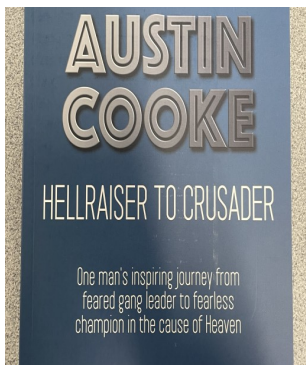
WINNER OF OUR GIVEAWAY

Jeanette Johnson from Katherine, NT was the winner of our Big Camp Giveaway.

We hope you enjoy your diamond art!



NEW



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