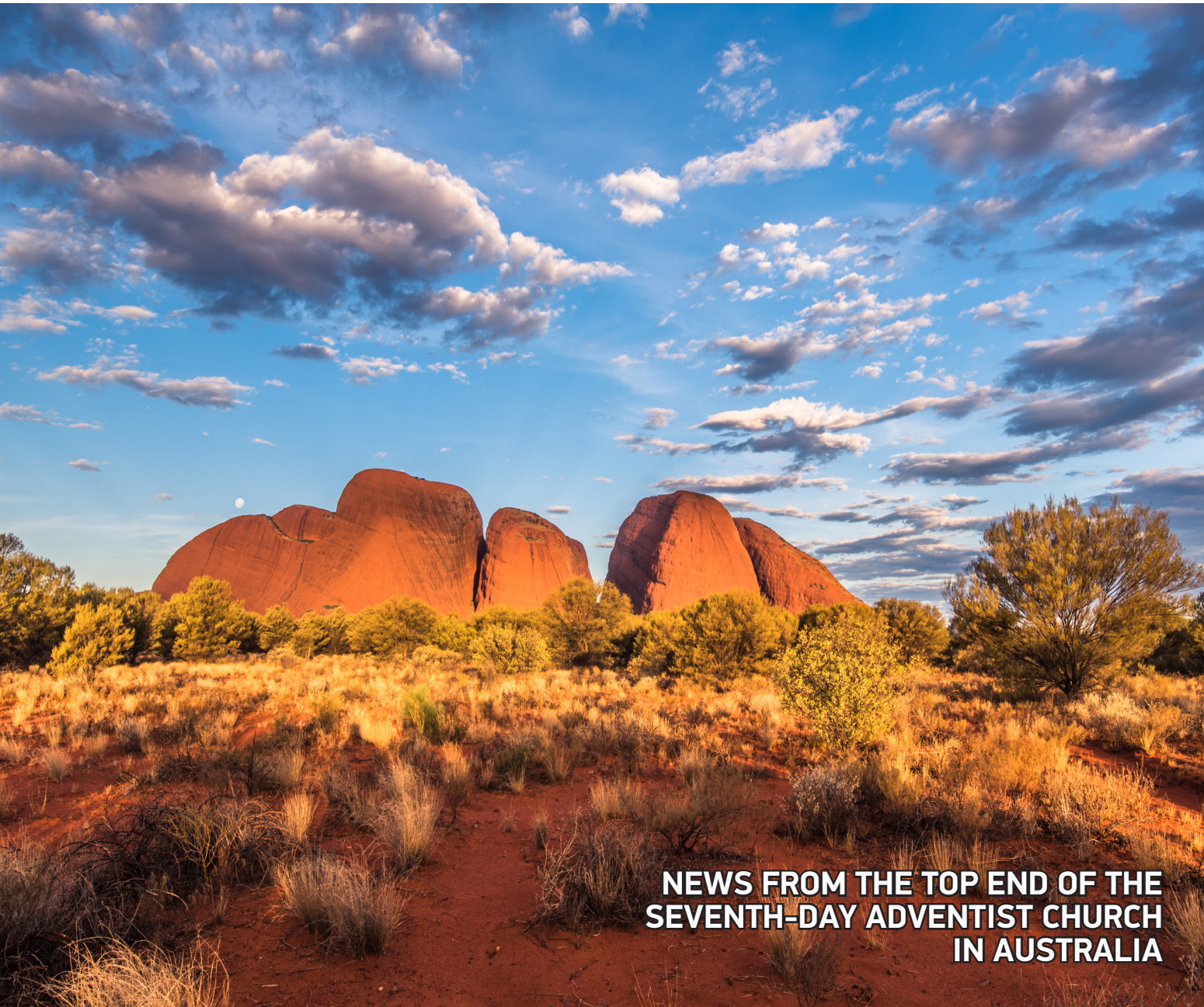


FEBRUARY 2024

Top News



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

Editorial

The Year of Evangelism

Feature

Mackay Church 90 Year Anniversary

Good News

Five Baptisms and a Dedication

THE YEAR OF EVANGELISM

“The church is God’s appointed agency for the salvation of men. It was organised for service, and its mission is to carry the gospel to the world.”

Have you ever heard the term, ‘mission drift’? It denotes the idea that as groups and organisations go about their daily activities - they start to drift from their core mission or purpose.

The big question - could the church suffer from this?

The Church was - “organized for service, and its mission is to carry the gospel to the world.”

Is it possible that we could lose focus? An even greater question - HAVE we lost focus?

As we start 2024 - and the year of Evangelism - I truly pray that the church would have decided focus.

I pray that we won’t become distracted with; the latest hot issue swirling round in society (so many of these divide us), Church Politics, the faults of others, or the things of this world that so easily entangle and snare us (1 John 2:16). I pray that we would have a decided focus on Jesus and what He has called us to.

Why?

Because there are many, many, people out there that need Him. The message of a crucified, risen, and soon coming saviour - the message we share - is hope and light to a world that is suffocating in darkness. And it’s us - we have been called to be the vessels that carry this message (2 Cor 4:6-7).

Can you imagine? A church that woke up day in and day out and said - I want to put Jesus first in all things. I want others to know about His goodness. I want others to know about God’s overarching plan to redeem us - and then, went out to live like that was a genuine priority.

That would be something. I pray that’s us in this new year. May we: “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that” Jesus has commanded us.” And, may we know - He is with us “always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.”

*For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Jesus Christ.
2 Corinthians 4:6*



Simon Gigliotti
President
Northern Australian Conference

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UPCOMING EVENTS

March 9

Cairns Regional

March 23

Darwin Regional

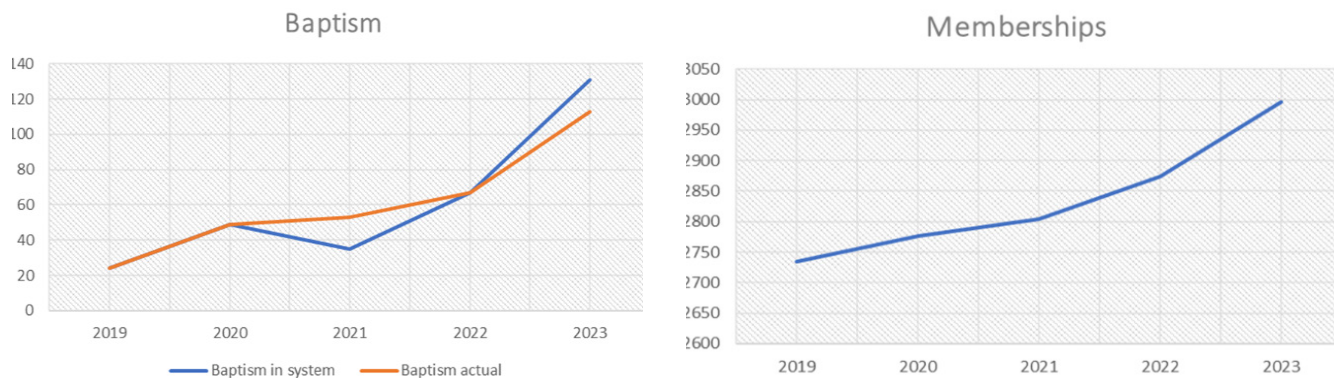
April 7-11

Teen Ex (Hiking)

GENERAL SECRETARY/CFO REPORT

MEMBERSHIP AND BAPTISM AT THE END OF DECEMBER 2023

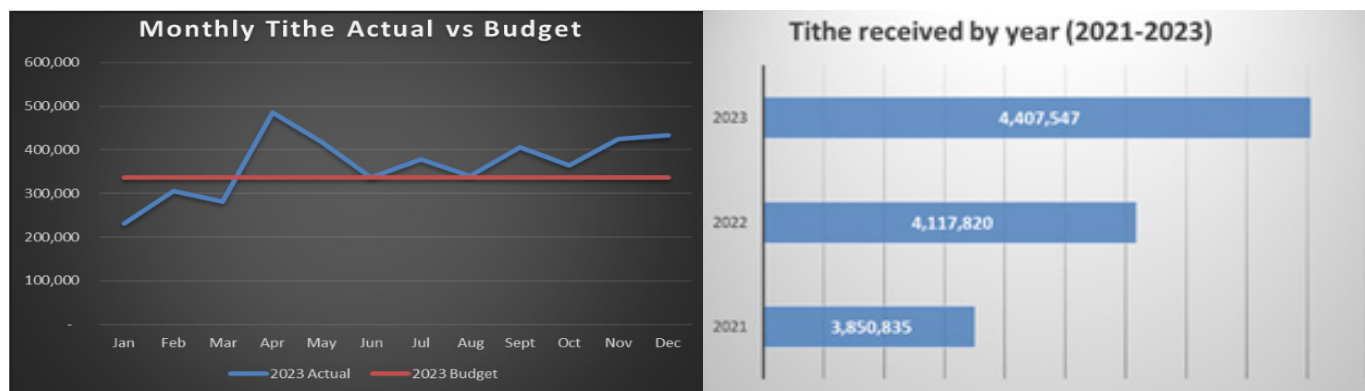
2023 was the record baptism for the Northern Australian Conference with 113 baptisms, almost double from 2022. This is the highest baptism ever in the history of the Northern Australian Conference. The church membership has increased by 122 people this year, from 2,874 to 2,996. Praise the Lord for the souls who accepted Jesus Christ as their Savior this year.



TITHE REPORT - THE END OF DECEMBER 2023

We thank God for His blessings within our Conference and the faithful stewardship of church members in returning their tithes. The cumulative tithe received up to December 2023 is higher than the 2023 budget by \$367,039 and also higher compared to last year by \$289,727.

The first chart shows the monthly tithe received versus budget and the second chart shows the cumulative tithe received up to December 2023 compared against 2022 and 2021.



NORTHERN AUSTRALIAN CONFERENCE CONSTITUENCY MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the 28th Constituency Meeting of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Northern Australian Conference, will be held at Riverside Convention Centre, 55 Leopold Street, Aitkenvale, Townsville, QLD. The meeting will be held on the evening of Saturday 14th September 2024, commencing at 7pm, reconvening at 9am on Sunday the 15th of September 2024.

Delegates will be appointed in harmony with the constitution. The business of the constituency meeting will be as provided in the constitution, including the presentation of reports and financial statements for the quadrennial period 2020–2023 inclusive. The executive officers, executive committee and other committees, as provided in the constitution, will be elected and consideration of constitutional changes, all in accordance with the Conference Constitution. For more information, please contact Pastor Jeffrey Masengi, NAC General Secretary.

2023 REFLECTION

Pr Jeffrey Masengi

In the year 2023, our conference office faced some challenges due to key staffing changes, which included the President, School Business Manager, Personal Assistant to the Secretary, and Personal Assistant to Youth/Receptionist. Despite having great plans for the year, it is not easy to progress without sufficient resources. We also faced obstacles in progressing with the new amenities block and kitchen, as the cost had increased dramatically, and we had to change the scope and obtain government approval.

But God always provides a solution, resources, and strength. We were able to fill the vacant positions with incredible staff and a Spirit-filled leader in time. The government approved the revised scope, and the buildings are now in progress for completion before Big Camp 2024. The Big Camp was attended by a record number of participants, and we received significantly higher tithes than our budget and the previous year. Most importantly, we recorded the highest number of baptisms.

What happened in 2023 reminds me of a verse from 2 Corinthians 9:8, which says, “And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.” God is faithful, He is our Provider and our Sympathized Friend. This motivates me to continue doing mission work with all my heart, knowing that God will bless and multiply. As we embark on another year with a new plan and mission, I am confident that it will be another special year because God is with us.

DARWIN CHURCH NEWS

ROSLYN JONES- OBITUARY

Pr Ray Hobbs & Sigi Paleoso'o

On 31 January 2024, Roslyn (Ros) Jones passed to her rest at the age of 75, following a debilitating motor-neuron illness. Ros was baptised in Batchelor in 1973, and in 1986 she was instrumental in convincing the NAC Administrators to purchase the old ‘Rum Jungle’ Mine Social Hall in Batchelor to be used as the local SDA Church.

For more than 40 years, Ros conducted a Branch Sabbath School from this building, reaching out to the indigenous children of Batchelor, who affectionately called her ‘Auntie Ros’. Roslyn and her late husband Bruce, were also volunteer paramedics with the Batchelor St. John’s Ambulance service, receiving numerous awards for their involvement within the local community. Ros’ funeral service held in the Darwin Church was attended by multitudes, where a marquee was erected to accommodate the overflow seating for many mourners.

Ros was a tremendous woman of faith and prayer, and her influence will be greatly missed in the wider community. Her legacy continues, with volunteers from Darwin still supporting the Branch Sabbath School in Batchelor, and Pr Soani Vosalevu continues to minister in this community. Maranatha.



MACKAY CHURCH NEWS

90 YEAR ANIVERSARY AND CHRISTMAS IN THE CANE

It was a very busy first weekend of December for the Mackay region. The Mackay Central Seventh Day Adventist Church celebrated their 90 Year Anniversary! The church had programs from the Friday evening through to Sabbath afternoon, with guest speaker Gary Kent delivering a special message during the church service on Sabbath morning. Many photographs were on display of the original church and school, along with many of the church members and previous students. It was great to see all the memories of the church, and how it has grown and developed over the past 90 years.

On the Sunday afternoon, Carlisle Adventist College held their second annual Christmas in the Cane, an event open to the school family and community. The students and teachers put on a show with Christmas carols and a skit. Along with this, there were many rides, food trucks, market stalls and fire-works to top-off the evening. A massive thank you to all school staff, students, local pastors and volunteers who assisted in organising this great community event.



DARWIN CHURCH NEWS

'SECOND BITE' MORNING TEA

Pr Ray Hobbs

On Friday December 15, the 'Second Bite' food ministry volunteers at Darwin Seventh Day Adventist Church hosted the Federal Liberal Senator Jacinta Nampijinpa Price, her husband, Colin, and two of her staff members, for a morning tea at the Church hall. The Northern Territory Country Liberal Party (CLP) wanted to make a donation to a charitable organisation that is helping the disadvantaged in our community at Christmas time. At the CLP end-of-year function, non-perishable food items were collected to go into Christmas hampers. Senator Nampijinpa Price's staff contacted 'Second Bite' with the offer to donate these items to our ministry. Pictured is the Senator with volunteers from 'Second Bite' and the food items donated by the CLP.



Senator Jacinta Nampijinpa Price, Colin Lillie, CLP staff and 'Second Bite' food ministry volunteers at Darwin Church

AITKENVALE CHURCH NEWS

BAPTISM

On Saturday 27th of January, the Aitkenvale Church family gathered together outside the Church to witness one of their youth, Hugo Boyd made a public decision to follow Jesus in baptism. Although the usual Sabbath School and Church service were cancelled due to the uncertainty of electricity services available after Cyclone Kirrily, this didn't stop the church family from coming together to support and witness Hugo in such an important decision.

"...Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit," Acts 2:38 NIV.

We want to congratulate Hugo and welcome him to the family.



FIVE BAPTISMS AND A DEDICATION

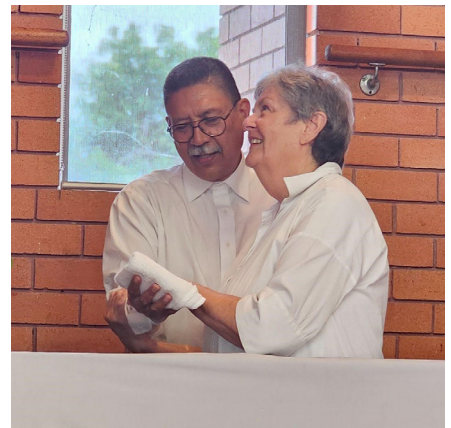
Jane Campbell

On 25 November 2023, four precious souls from Townsville City Church confirmed their decision to follow Jesus in the waters of baptism. The “Afri Voices for Christ” Choir set the tone of the service with their harmonic acapella hymns, while Pastor David Gilmore from Alice Springs came to share the sermon on baptism by water, the Holy Spirit and fire, reminding the congregation that one is baptised into one body of which Christ is the head. Sixteen more souls, of which 13 were 15 years or younger responded to the final altar call to accept Jesus as Saviour and be baptised.

After studying for 4 years with Pastor Jack Lange, 16 year Merveille Uwimbabazi, was overjoyed to finally seal her commitment for Jesus. The Lange Family has spent much time supporting Mervielle’s family all the way through to her baptism.

Linda Bubb has been a Christian for most of her life, since high school. She had been listening to Faith FM in Townsville for a number of years and was requesting the free book offers which were delivered to her by Pastor Alfredo Campos. Pastor Alfredo invited her to attend a four week evangelistic campaign held in July/August 2023 presented by Pr Gilmore, to which she, her husband, and friend accepted. Linda said she has been “touched” by Seventh-day Adventist community her whole life, including spending time at the health retreat at Herveys Range in 2016, and attending the “Health Breakfasts” at the Riverside Convention Centre. During the evangelistic presentations it was the seventh day Sabbath truth that she could not refute and fully embraced leading her to continue bible studies and baptism.

Returning to the church of her youth to recommit her life to God, Rejeli Tokailagi took a great step in faith. Rejeli who grew up in Fiji, sporadically attended the Aitkenvale Church through the invitation of friends and the pastoral time of her uncle Pastor Tom Osbourne. After befriending Rhonda Talepakali through their mutual workplace at Queensland Health, both friends realised they had Adventist roots. Rhonda encouraged her to come back to church too, urging her that Jesus was coming soon. Rejeli attended the recent evangelistic campaign run by Pr David Gilmore and was rebaptised.



The youngest member of the Warden family, Josiah aged just 10 years, made his firm commitment for Jesus. His father Elder Richard Warden, had the privilege of studying with him and baptizing him. His family's prayerful life, their faithful study in the home and community, his attendance at Church and Sabbath School by his parents side, and at the many prophecy seminars run by his father Richard over the past 3 years, had a strong influence in his decision to commit his life to Jesus. He has stood a number of times for baptism when altar calls were made at those seminars, including at his siblings baptism in 2022. His favourite bible verse is Psalm 119:105, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, And a light unto my path," and one of his favourite songs is "Dare to be a Daniel." He is now following his parents in ministry to the Torres Strait in 2024.



The family of Charlotte Mtumbara aged 14 years wanted to express their love for Jesus by committing her in a dedication ceremony the same day. Special prayer was offered to God for her and laying of hands by Elders. Her family had come from Africa and been supported by the Lange Family and other African members of the local church working in the Townsville Community. The church community welcomed the baptisms and Charlottes commitment.



In a special service on 9 December 2023, Pastor Chris Kirkwood baptised 12 year old Caleb Thwaites who had been eagerly studying with Chris over the previous 12 months. Caleb had responded to an altar call at another baptism the year before. Dressed in his full pathfinder uniform, he confidently responded to all of his baptismal vows and made his public commitment to Christ. He was supported by his entire family including his 81year old Pathfinder leader and grandmother Marguerette Phipps, along with many of the local club members in full Pathfinder uniform. His Pathfinder Leader Di Obst, in relating a recent bushwalking story, spoke of him as a peacemaker, with a gentle and kind spirit, who is persistent and tough! She charged the church with loving him even if he makes mistakes after baptism and sang a special item to close.



CYCLONE DISASTER RELIEF

As not just one, but TWO cyclones crossed the coast of North Queensland this cyclone season, Pastor Chris Kirkwood and our team of ADRA volunteers had been very busy, with all hands on deck preparing Disaster Relief Food Hampers to give to those requiring assistance in our local community.

As Cyclone Jasper crossed the far-north tropical coast near Wujal Wujal (120 km northwest of Cairns) on Wednesday 13th December 2023, the category 2 system left a trail of destruction and in-tense rainfall, resulting in widespread flooding and damage to the region.

Just as normality returned to the region, a second tropical low system was forming off the coast. Tropical Cyclone Kirrily intensified to a Category 3 system, crossing the coast north of Townsville late in the evening on Thursday 25th January 2024. In her trail, up to 66,000 homes were left without power or electricity in the peak of the cyclones crossing.

In a dedicated effort, approximately 10000 food hampers were put together and delivered to areas in our conference where the cyclones were predicted to impact. I would like to thank Pastor Chris and all the volunteers who came along to assist in putting together these hampers. What a wonderful effort!



FOOD PANTRY AND MP VISIT

On December 15 2023, MP Philip Thompson visited the ADRA Food Pantry to assist our volunteers with helping many of the Townsville locals doing it tough during the festive season. Throughout the morning, many people who utilise the service met with the MP, including a single mother who was recently involved in a car accident. Brittany shared her story with our volunteers and mentioned how tough this season had been, not being able to afford Christmas presents or food for her 3 young children. Through social media coverage and a newspaper article, many generous members of the public donated toys, gifts, homewares and food to the ADRA office for the young mum, ensuring her and her young children wouldn't miss-out on the joy of Christmas.



Brittany and one of her young kids



Community Pantry line-up



MP Philip Thompson assisting with food hampers

YOUTH

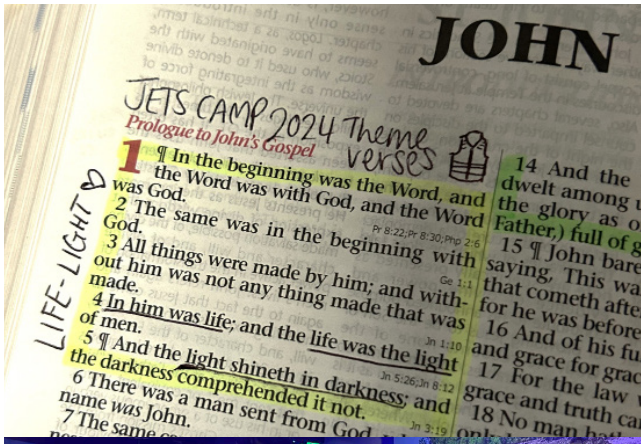
SUMMER CAMP 2024- LIFE LIGHT

From 15-19 January, the Northern Australian Conference Youth Department held their annual JETS Camp at Quinola Lakes, situated on the Atherton Tablelands. Approximately 50 campers from Mackay, Townsville, Innisfail, Mareeba, Cairns and the Northern Territory enjoyed four days filled with activities, such as water sports, glowstick capture-the-flag, slip & slide cricket, water polo, craft, Cairns Aquarium and Defy Gravity. Although the weather was wet and rain was continuous, all campers and staff marched on through the mud determined to enjoy camp with all the activities and events planned.

Each morning, the juniors read their devotions in their cabin groups while guest speakers Pr Wendy Saluni took the teen girls and Pr Tema Pologa took the teen boys for 'Teen Talks', where topics and issues relating to them and their stage in life were discussed.

Each evening, camp worship was help by Pr Tema Pologa where the theme was 'Life-Light', focusing on John 1:1-5 where campers learnt how Jesus is our life-light, our Saviour and rescuer of this world. On the last night of camp, 44 kids made a decision to follow Jesus, 40 made the decision to have bible studies and 29 made the decision to be baptised. We were blessed to be surrounded by many wonderful campers and staff, making camp a success with many cherished memories and stories to remember.





EMBARKING ON A PROMISING YEAR: NEW BEGINNINGS AT CAIRNS ADVENTIST COLLEGE

Kimberley Hunter

As the door swung open on the 23rd of January, a fresh wave of enthusiasm marked the start of the new year at Cairns Adventist College. With a blend of familiar faces and newcomers, 2024 holds the promise of exciting endeavours and academic milestones.

The school year kicked off with the joyous inclusion of seven Preps and six new students from Year 1 to 6, bringing the total student count to a robust 67. The vibrant atmosphere resonated with both excitement and perhaps a few tears, likely shed by proud parents witnessing their children embark on this educational journey. The new additions seamlessly settled into the CAC community forging new friendships and relishing their inaugural day.

Among the noteworthy additions to the CAC faculty is Mr. Peter Shuttleworth, an experienced educator and esteemed leader at Edmonton SDA Church. Mr Shuttleworth brings a wealth of knowledge to his role in teaching the Year 2/3 class, contributing to the educational excellence that defines Cairns Adventist College. Additionally, Mr. Jonathan Macgillivray, a fresh graduate from Avondale College, is set to make his mark as he takes charge of the 4/5 class, infused with the enthusiasm characteristic of a burgeoning career in education.

Anticipation abounds as 2024 unfolds, with a calendar brimming with exciting events and activities. The promise of a dynamic and engaging academic year awaits students, teachers, and families alike. As the school year gains momentum, it is evident that Cairns Adventist College is poised for a year of growth, discovery, and collective achievement. With added staff, enthusiastic students and a supportive community, the stage is set for an extraordinary year of academic and personal development at CAC.



Mr Peter Shuttleworth



Mr Jonathan Macgillivray

Preps of Cairns Adventist College for 2024



EMPOWERING ENTREPRENEURS & INNOVATORS IN BUSINESS & MINISTRY

WORKSHOPS · KEYNOTES · TESTIMONIES
COACHING · NETWORKING · PITCHES



5-7 APRIL, 2024
AVONDALE UNIVERSITY

SAVE
THE DATE



Seventh-day
Adventist Church

South Pacific



australia.hyve.site

TEEN EX 2024

NORTHERN AUSTRALIAN CONFERENCE

PALUMA \$160 7-11 APRIL 2024
GUEST SPEAKER: PR SIMON GIGLIOTTI



**Ages 13-16
years**

For more information or to register, please visit: <https://na.bluevineyardevents.com/teen-ex-2024-trail-blazers-2/>

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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

March 18 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

NAC CONFERENCE

CALENDAR 2024

January

- 10-15 AUC ATSIM Camp
- 14 Summer Camp – Staff
- 15-19 Summer Camp
- 22 QLD Adventist Schools – Term One Commences

February

- 3 Townsville Regional
- 9-11 NASBOD Leadership Vision Weekend
- 9-12 AUC Converge
- 15-18 Ministers Meetings
- 23-25 Leadership Vision Weekend (Face to face Church Board)
- 24 Youth Leadership Training

March

- 9 Cairns Regional
- 16 Global Youth Day/ Global Children's Day
- 16-23 Youth Week of Prayer
- 23 Darwin Regional
- 28 QLD Adventist Schools – Term One Finishes

April

- 7-11 Teen Ex (Hiking)
- 13 Alice Springs Regional
- 15 Schools – Term Two Commences
- 20 Mackay Regional
- 26–12 May PNG for Christ

May

- 18 World Adventurer Day (Local Church)
- 11-18 Health Week
- 18 Building Better Health Regional

June

- 11-13 Ministers Meetings
- 16-21 Big Camp Set Up
- 19 QLD Adventist Schools – Term Two Finishes
- 21-29 Big Camp
- 22 Youth Touch Football Comp

July

- 15 QLD Adventist Schools – Term Three Commences
- 19-21 Women's Ministry Retreat
- 26-28 Institute of Leadership Weekend

August

- 5-11 USA International Camporee
- 9-11 Fellowship of Men Camp (Magnetic Island)

September

- 13 QLD Adventist Schools – Term Three Finishes
- 14 World Pathfinder Day (Local Church)
- 14-15 NAC Constituency Meeting
- 16-29 Youth Rush
- 17-21 STORMCo Carlisle Adventist College
- 22-29 STORMCo NT
- 22-29 STORMCo Mareeba
- 30 QLD Adventist Schools – Term Four Commences

October

- 12 Youth Rally & Volleyball Competition (Townsville)
- 19-2 Nov Personal Ministries Roadshow
- 28-3 Nov AUC Institute of Youth Ministry

November

- 2 Alice Springs Investiture
- 8 Katherine Investiture
- 9 Darwin Investiture
- 9-15 eWeek of Prayer for Youth & Young Adults
- 16 Mount Isa Investiture
- 23 Townsville & Ayr Investiture
- 30 Mossman Investiture, North Mackay Investiture & Mackay Central Investiture

December

- 6 QLD Adventist Schools – Term Four Finishes
- 7 Mareeba Investiture, FNQ Investiture
- 11 Last Day for Teachers
- 14 Edmonton Investiture, Cairns Central Investiture

