

northpoint

NORTH NSW CONFERENCE NEWS



DEC
2016



Women United in worship

On Sabbath, 29 October, women from around the North New South Wales (NNSW) Conference took the chance to enjoy a day of worship, uplifting presentations, inspiring workshops and fellowship at the first United Women's Ministries Conference. Held at the Mercure resort in the Hunter Valley, United ran from 10.00am to 6.30pm with three different programs making up the whole day.

There were three two-hour programs — with a lunch break and afternoon tea in between — with guest speaker Kimberly Mann, the Chaplain of Oakwood University, leading out in two of them. There were also testimonies shared by a number of women who attended during these sessions, plus a workshop session.

"Kimberly was awesome," says Pastor Bethany Chapman, Women's Ministries Director for the NNSW Conference. "She brought her 11-month-old baby with her all the way from Alabama, and was 15 weeks pregnant at the time too! She's some sort of super woman."

The theme for the day was "Something Small," focusing on how God can use something small in your life for His greatness. Kimberly's first sermon focused on three small things that God used in exceptional ways — the seed, the stone and the sewing machine (faith like a mustard seed, the stone that killed Goliath and touching the hem of Jesus' garment).

"She connected them very well," says Pastor Chapman. "Kimberly's a very powerful preacher and her message is Gospel-focused. She did an altar call at the end of the day, and we had a number of women come forward to say they wanted Jesus to be more active in their lives."

The workshop was run by Linda Ross, who spoke about the need to be aware of God's love in order to be able to serve Him best. Linda encouraged the women to go away from United with a plan of what they can do to make a difference in the world. Michelle Willis ran a workshop for younger attendees in this time too — some of the youngest to register were aged 11, and there were a few babies as well.

There were a number of testimonies shared on the day, which Pastor Chapman says were both uplifting and challenging. "For example, Jess Rae shared her story about the UR Church small group she's involved in and how being a mum of four small children had made it hard to put God first," says Pastor Chapman. "It was very challenging to me as a mother when Jess said we can't use those excuses because God needs to be number one in our lives!"

Women also prayed together, shared ideas and enjoyed socialising. The worship band was led by Dani Marsters. "I felt like she really put her heart into it, and considered it and prayed about the worship," says Pastor Chapman. "It really showed in the way the music went on the day."

— Adele Nash

Photos courtesy of Annalise Lindsay. More at www.facebook.com/NNSWconference.



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OUR CONFERENCE

From the President: The battle is raging



Revelation 12:7 makes the amazing statement that says, “War broke out in heaven.” The most unlikely place that you would expect war and carnage to occur in is heaven. The battle between good and evil, which started there, has continued to rage on the earth. As we come to the end of yet another year, it seems that the battle is intensifying.

The level of anxiety over the outcome of last month’s US election, the state of the environment, the precarious economic situation and the breakdown of so many relationships that families are built around are just some of the areas where we see this battle raging. There is a genuine level of

concern about the future amongst ordinary people in our society — even Primary School-aged children are finding it hard to just be kids and are suffering from mental health problems that you’d expect only adults to have to deal with.

Like never before, the world needs to hear about Jesus and His plans. Like never before, people need to know the certainty and confidence they can have in the future when they look at what God has done in the past. Like never before, people need the surety and comfort that we find in the Scriptures (Romans 15:4 — “For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope”).

As we close off 2016, my heart is filled with hope. Let me give you some reasons why. A revival through prayer is breaking out in our conference, where church after church holds daily prayer meetings at 5.30 in the morning. I have never seen this in my lifetime, and it seems that every month, this is growing and expanding. The churches involved are receiving such blessings.

Everything we’ve preached in prophecy — particularly regarding the United States of America and the beast power of Revelation 13 — is being fulfilled in front of our eyes. In a strange way, it gives me great confidence that what we’ve been saying for more than 100 years looks like it was written yesterday. It’s truly amazing.

There’s also a growing understanding in the church that all of us have a role to play, and we’re not to sit back and expect some professionals to do everything. For the first time in my life, I’m seeing local church members put up their hands and say they want to free up their pastor to do mission. They’re saying, “We’ll take care of ourselves!” This is returning to our heritage and roots, and I believe it’s following what God has told us to do.

Finally, we’re seeing growth in the church through baptisms and conversions, which is the ultimate fruit of the Holy Spirit in our midst.

Enjoy Christmas and the year end, and thank you for everything you do for God and His work.

— *Pastor Justin Lawman*

Seafarers: Avondale outdoor recreation students guide teens across Top End

They call this study!

Outdoor recreation students from Avondale have guided a group of teenagers on a four-day sea kayaking expedition in the Whitsundays.

The challenge of guiding the teenagers safely across one of the largest open-water crossings attempted by the students built camaraderie and confidence. The experience “brought the group together more than any one before it,” writes Zelman Wilkinson, a Diploma of Outdoor Recreation student from Newcastle. “We were willing to put our best foot forward to achieve the best outcome for Avondale and for the kids.”

The students and their teenage kayakers would paddle between islands in the Molle group in the mornings, then explore beaches and coral reefs in the afternoons. The more relaxed pace came as a pleasant surprise to Wilkinson’s Gosford-based classmate Bridgette Winsor. “I usually power on, but I stayed back with my group to enjoy the scenery.” The result? “I got to know my kids.”

Leaders too often over-program, says David Low, Course Convenor for VET Outdoor Recreation at Avondale, “which doesn’t allow for the spontaneity of the natural world to reveal itself.”

With David, the students also helped the teenagers earn their Pathfinder snorkelling and sea kayaking honours. Pathfinders is a worldwide Seventh-day Adventist Church activity-based ministry for 10 to 15-year-olds.

The invitation to guide TeenX 2016 came from the Youth Department of the Northern Australian Conference.

— *Brenton Stacey*

Find out more about Avondale College of Higher Education’s Outdoor Recreation program at <www.avondale.edu.au/academics/vocational-education-training/outdoor-recreation>



NorthPoint is published by the Communications Department of the Seventh-day Adventist Church (North New South Wales Conference) Ltd.

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"Quit Now" smoking school program success



Let's play a guessing game with a twist. Can you guess the name of this country?

It is the world's largest archipelago; it has an active 3800-metre volcano on Lombok that towers above rice fields and beaches; it is home to the world's largest flower and the komodo dragon; it has the

largest "young" population in the world; and it has the third-largest smoking population (67 million people) in the world . . . Still guessing? It is also Australia's second-closest neighbour and the closest country to Australia where Asian Aid works.

That's right, it's Indonesia!

The Health, Education and Lifestyle Project (HELP) on Lombok in Indonesia was established in 2011. Founded by Paul Bennetts, a North New South Wales (NNSW) Conference church member, the volunteer-based ministry aimed to bring health education, English language classes and lifestyle programs to students and teachers in some of the most under-resourced schools in Lombok. With Asian Aid's support, and help from trained local and international staff and volunteers — many from the NNSW Conference — the HELP project began impacting many lives in the beautiful, yet socially and economically disadvantaged, islands of Indonesia.

Along with school programs that teach English and reach students with messages of health, moral and life skill themes, the school program also helps high school graduates gain job placements at restaurants, hotels and other service industries where English is required. With the growing tourism industry on Lombok, these jobs provide valuable support to poor agricultural families who are reliant on seasonal rice harvests for their main source of income.

Another key part of the project is the focus on health. Smoking is a serious problem in Indonesia. About 67 million people out of a population of 250 million are active smokers. Among this large number of smokers, about 13.5 per cent are children and teenagers. "Ten years ago, the average age when teenagers began smoking in Indonesia was 19 years old," says Oswin Budi Darmawan, a staff member of HELP. "Today, that figure has dropped to as young as seven years old."

To help address this problem, the "Quit Now" School Program was started in 2015 in rural Indonesian village schools. This year, the program extended to 22 elementary, junior high and high schools, and in one private school, with a total of 1337 children participating. "We had 224 students commit to stop smoking," says Owsin.

In one "Quit Now" School Program, about 70 students from the third to sixth grades watched a presentation about the dangers of smoking. "Almost all of them had a smoking father and almost all of them had been asked to buy cigarettes for their parents," says Oswin. "To help the students take action, we handed them a piece of paper to write down a love letter to their smoking parents. To close the program, students were led in a prayer for protection from the temptation to smoke, and for help for their parents to quit smoking."

The HELP project has proven effective even at the local government level, and a number of Adventist and Muslim hospitals, with staff being invited to educate and train Provincial Health workers on smoking cessation techniques and programs. Today, thousands of people, including army units, have been through the "Quit Now" programs with an above 80 per cent success rate after initial follow ups.

— Sonja Larsen

Donate to Asian Aid's Christmas Health Appeal by visiting asianaid.org.au/ChristmasAppeal or calling (02) 6586 4250.



OUR CONFERENCE

At home, with care



Adventist Senior Living Home Care Coordinator Nicole Wiseman assists client Mae Prescott with laundry.

Major change is afoot in the Home Care industry and Adventist Senior Living (ASL) is gearing up to ensure consumers benefit.

A new round of reform in February 2017 will see the Home Care industry move to a system of Consumer Directed Care, allowing the consumer direct control over who they choose to have provide the care in their home. With greater choice and control in the hands of the consumer comes better quality and delivery of service by the providers at the same time.

Already making a name for itself as a service to be trusted, ASL Home Care is working hard to expand its delivery so that more seniors have the opportunity to choose and experience the ASL mission of person-centred care and support based on Christian principles.

First introduced in early 2015 to residents already living in the ASL stable of villages, the ASL Home Care services have been quietly growing ever since. "We strive to always meet our strict quality review and national accreditation standards," says ASL Home Care Manager Kate Gilmour. "We work constantly to carefully select, train and oversee the right carers for our client. Our service has very quickly expanded from Coorabong to Wyee Point, Bonnells Bay, Toronto and beyond," she adds, indicating that the quality of care speaks for itself, with consumers often recommending the service to others.

"Every day we enter the homes of our most frail and elderly community members," says Kate. "And every day we feel privileged with the trust given to us to provide quality support and care. It is gratifying to know that our customers truly do know they can trust the care delivered by us in their homes."

— Felicity Pittaway

Big Camp 2016 photos

Due to popular demand, we made the photos taken by Ann Stafford at this year's Big Camp available to purchase.



But as we're approaching the end of 2016 and are starting to plan for next year's Big Camp (14 to 22 April), we'll be shutting our Fotomerchant gallery at the end of the year. Buy the shots you want before we do so at <http://northpoint.fotomerchant.com>.

OUR SCHOOLS

STORM Co service trips a tradition for Macquarie College



Macquarie College students are building life-long bonds with local villagers in Vanuatu, giving back to the community through their annual service program.

Forty students departed Newcastle on 9 November 2016, the next generation of Year 12 school-leavers swapping traditional year-end celebrations for enrichment initiatives in Olwi Village, Vanuatu.

STORM Co (Service To Others Really Matters Company) is a program deeply embedded in the culture of the Macquarie College Senior School after just eight years in place. It is a life-changing experience for students, resulting in new Year 7 students looking forward to their own international travel adventure, supporting a remote community, and experiencing a lifestyle as their brothers and sisters have done before them.

Students will immerse themselves in the local village, for some it will be their first time overseas. With only basic amenities, this first-hand experience of a humble village existence awaits them. As too does hard work!

The purpose of this year's trip is to support the Olwi Village with building projects including tiling, painting, fixing ceilings and constructing drainage to collect water at the local Primary School. These works will improve the teaching and learning environment for students who are constantly faced with extreme weather conditions in the region. Many villages are still recovering from the catastrophic impact of Tropical Cyclone Pam, which battered Vanuatu in March, 2015.

Among the physical tasks, there is also time for reflection. Students will embrace the culture and learn from their hosts; and they will spend time reading, playing and performing with local students, during which time bonds will be formed as they realise the value of service to others and living in the moment.

The Year 12 Class of 2016 departed after almost 12 months committed to fundraising activities, aimed at purchasing building supplies and education resources for their time in Olwi Village. While paying for their own flights and their accommodation in Vanuatu at the end of the service trip, students turned their minds to a comprehensive fundraising campaign throughout 2016, which featured hosting stalls and guessing competitions at the recent Spring Fair, an auction and everyone's favourite — chocolate boxes.

There is also an active GoFundMe page for this trip, with donations sought direct from the community, which will help students to reach their online fundraising target of \$5000.

STORM Co trip coordinator Aaron Williams is proud of the Year 12 cohort, which has committed to the trip, to fundraising and to the opportunity of experiencing global citizenship. During 2016, students have been challenged in their thinking about the value of sharing small acts of support and kindness. This trip will see many small, individual acts accumulate to make a significant difference to this remote island community.

"In 2009, we inspired 19 brave students to go beyond their comfort zones and make a commitment to helping others with tangible resources and also compassion. We are now in the final stages of preparations for 40 students and seven staff to continue the tradition in 2016," Aaron said.

"So far, fundraising efforts have generated \$12,000.00, but our final online fundraising target of \$5000 via GoFundMe is yet to be achieved. We would certainly appreciate support from individuals across the Hunter who may like to make a small donation. This act of kindness will go a long way. We are cannot wait to get started on the building works promised to the Olwi villagers.

"Local businesses Honeysuckle Dental and KH Account Solutions have both donated \$1000 each to our campaign and we are truly grateful for this level of support, which will purchase valuable building supplies for the project," says Aaron.

"While this service trip is focused on village life and making a lasting contribution, we will also take time to celebrate the end of Year 12 in a safe and positive environment while staying in Vanuatu. On return to Newcastle on 16 November, the next phase of our students' lives will begin as they seek out employment, study or community-oriented roles and make their own way in society."

— Michelle Slack-Smith

Photos from the 2015 STORM Co trip to Vanuatu



OUR CHURCHES

Creation Sabbath celebrated at Port Macquarie and Kempsey

Port Macquarie Church's seventh annual International Creation Sabbath service was so successful last year that Margaret McKay, who organises the program for the church, had to split the class and travel to Kempsey Church this year to run the same program for them as well.

The topic this year was "The Genius of Ancient Civilisations." Margaret says, "The young people just loved it, and kept asking for more and more material to learn! This was music to my ears. There was a lot of work involved, but the final result was well worth it. We had large numbers in each group, and the beauty of this program is that the whole family is involved and they all learn together — a true blessing."

As the word has spread about the creation program and what the children are learning, more young ones come on board to learn as well.

Margaret says of the program, which was run for the first time at Kempsey Church this year for the first time, "We ran the exact same program there and I am thrilled to report both services went brilliantly. They were so well-received by the large congregation in attendance. So many visitors came, and it really challenged them and opened up so many questions. They'll have to come back next year to find out many of those answers!

"You could have heard a pin drop during the entire service. It flowed so smoothly and kept the attention of everyone."

The services featured short video clips and interesting talks, which were interspersed with lovely songs. "The children sang like angels," says Margaret. "It was absolutely beautiful. I was so proud of all the young ones taking part — it is such great training for them."

The "older folk" in attendance told Margaret that they learned a lot from the service, which was one that was designed to be accessible to anyone — friends, relatives, neighbours. Many visitors at the Port Macquarie service came from other denominations, with children from those denominations involved in the program.

Margaret gave a package to every family who attended, which included a *Creation Magazine* and two creation booklets (including one on ancient civilisations). There was also a 26-minute DVD from *Creation Ministries* included in the pack, and Margaret also handed out copies of *Tell The World* to friends she had made over the years through her creation ministry work.

"This is the First Angel's Message," says Margaret. "We're instructed to take it to a dying world. It's so pleasing when people support our young ones, who are the disciples and evangelists of the future. Without them, we would not have the church."

"Churches are losing up to 80 per cent of our young ones when they leave home, so we must all teach them to not only know and love the Bible, but also how to defend it and show them it's 100 per cent true from beginning to end."

The creation series the church runs focuses strongly on teaching the authority of the Bible. "These folk consider our church 'the Light on the Hill,'" says Margaret. "This is because we are the only church teaching creation and the absolute authority of the Bible."

Next year's topic is Noah's flood.

"We'll also touch on the Ice Age and the Great Missoula Flood, which followed the flood," says Margaret. "In May, we will have Dr Ron Neller, a world expert on geo-morphology from *Creation Ministries*, come for two days to talk on these topics. He saw the evidence for a worldwide flood in his research years before becoming a Christian."

— Margaret McKay/NorthPoint



OUR CHURCHES

Cooking demonstrations build community connections in Murwillumbah



It was a busy, yet fun time for Murwillumbah Church recently. In October, a team of 17 dedicated people from the church took on a three-week evangelistic program of vegetarian and plant-based cooking demonstrations for the community.

The demonstrations were held in the local community centre and the team consisted of a variety of church members — children, youth, mums, dads, a naturopath, nutritionist and our own church pastor even demonstrated a recipe!

The program also included nightly health talks on the eight principles of health (NEW START) by our naturopath and each evening finished with a beautiful, healthy banquet. This allowed us to connect with guests from the community whilst also enjoying the taste-testing.

Our focus was on encouraging the consumption of wholegrains, fruits, vegetables, legumes and nuts, which the community people heartily embraced. The program then finished with biblical talks on stress, forgiveness and success.

God was our Leader and He never let us down. We saw many miracles. Over the course of the program, we went from an audience of 15 to more than 50! By the time we finished, there was a great demand for more. Due to the success of this program, we are now planning to offer monthly demonstrations at our church in 2017.

— Ashley Smith



Dora Creek Craft Group provides baby wraps for Solomons



The Dora Creek Craft Group has been working industriously to make baby wraps to send to the Solomon Islands. The group of women (and girls) has been established for some years. They meet every Tuesday evening to carry out their individual preferred craft of choice or to work together on a joint

project such as this, whilst having a good chat and enjoying each other's company and making a wonderful contribution to society.

The purpose of this current effort is to supply more than 50 baby wraps to needy mothers in the outlying Solomon Islands. The shawls will be delivered by the "Sonship" — the Seventh Day Adventist Missionary Medical Support vessel, which carries out a continuous effort of medical aid throughout the Solomon Islands. This will be the second consignment of baby wraps this year after 55 shawls were dispatched in June this year.

The baby wraps are made from only pure cotton and are finished with two layers of patchwork cloth of exquisite design. They're designed to be thick enough to protect from mosquitoes, but light enough to dry quickly if they get wet. The majority of the materials have been donated and the women bring their own sewing machines.

There have been 20 women and girls involved in the current production effort. They range from eight years old to more than 80 years old, and all are having fun sharing their experiences and humour. This does include some very experienced seamstresses and beginners all working and learning together.

Other work this Craft Group does supports the South Lakes Women's Refuge, although the girls say they are open to any suggestions to help others. The group have an open door policy — you don't have to be a church member to come along and all are welcome to bring their preferred craft to Dora Creek Church in Coorumbung Road at 6:00pm every Tuesday!

— Steve Boughton



OUR CHURCHES

Young hearts for mission at Ocean Shores



The tables were turned at Ocean Shores Church on 10 September when the children of the church invited the surprised adults down the front for an "Adult's Story."

Assisted by Carlene Gosling, the younger members of the Ocean Shores congregation planned the program and capably conducted the worship service.

Thank you to Jolina, Noondi, Dani and Ethan for reminding us who we

are and that age is no barrier to the gifts that God has given each of us to share — whether we're young or older.

— Lyn Scarr

Spanish Church celebrates

It is with great joy that the Spanish Church Company shares the news that on Sabbath, 24 September, following an evangelistic campaign by Pastor Juan Quiroga, the group travelled to Sydney to participate in a Regional Reunion of four Spanish churches.



This took place at the Spanish Adventist Campbelltown Church, and the company was so glad to see Spanish Company attendee Margaret and her mother received as official members of the company at the regional meeting.

Not long ago, Justina was baptised and, thanks to her testimony, now she could see her dream come true when she saw her daughter Liliana and granddaughter Margaret descended into the baptismal waters, giving their hearts to Jesus.

— Lilian Rodriguez

41 years of service to CCAS



Not everyone would have the dedication required to serve on a board for more than 10 years, but Sebastiano Caminiti (pictured with Dean Bennetts and Pastor Paul Geelan) has it in spades, having recently "retired" after serving for 41 years on the board of Central Coast Adventist School.

Sebastiano was appointed to the board by The Entrance Church's nominating committee. He says, "I go back to when Dr John Hammond was the first teacher there, and I served with a lot of principals, chairpeople and so on. I was appointed to the board in 1974, and was given a citation for 30 years of service in 2004."

He enjoyed seeing the school grow from two classrooms to what it is today.

— Adele Nash



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SHARK TANK

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The producers of Adventist Shark Tank are looking for teams representing their church with a heart and passion to serve in their local community and who can pitch their breakthrough community service concept to the sharks in hope of landing investment funds.
If selected, the sharks could be willing to invest up to \$45,000 to jumpstart your community service project.

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<p>Russell Halliday Chief Financial Officer NSW Conference</p>	<p>Cristian Copacceanu Director of Personal Ministries Australian Union Conference</p>
<p>Nic Coustot Project Manager NSW Conference</p>	<p>Priscilla Mariassouze Youth Pastor / Radio Presenter Gateway Church / Faith FM</p>
<p>Daniel Derrick GM Marketing Manager Sataran</p>	<p>Mark Webster Chief Executive Officer ADRA</p>

Want to present your idea to the sharks? Apply online at:

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When & Where

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NORTH NSW CONFERENCE

grey nomads

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