

# THE WAY

JOHN 14:6

OCTOBER EDITION 2024 NNSW SDA SCHOOLS

## NEVER IN VAIN

Dr Cristian Copaceanu

NNSW Conference President

A key challenge we face in any leadership or teaching role is a sense of failure, or at the very least, feeling discouraged by the lack of progress, change, or success. And while some metrics are easier to measure, others not so much.

Noah gave it a good go for 120 years and only managed to sign up his immediate family as crew for the HMS Ark.

Moses circled the desert for 40 years and only made two disciples who entered the Promised Land—Joshua and Caleb.

And Jesus, God Himself in human form, had few (i.e., none) followers left believing in Him come Friday night vespers at Calvary.

Looking at the past and present results may often leave us feeling underwhelmed at best, ready to throw in the towel at worst. And we are in good company. Elijah ran away to a cave, Jeremiah lamented in a cesspool, and Jesus cried in agony, forlorn and forsaken.

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“What then is the measure of our success? What inspires and motivates us to keep going when our best efforts produce no tangible results?”

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The first letter to the believers in Corinth reads like a funeral dirge, highlighting the myriad issues plaguing the nascent church. From arguments over favourite speakers to fights over food, incestuous affairs to internal lawsuits, and finally, topping it off with a denial of the resurrection, the Corinthians had it all.

Nevertheless, Paul writes to the faithful few:

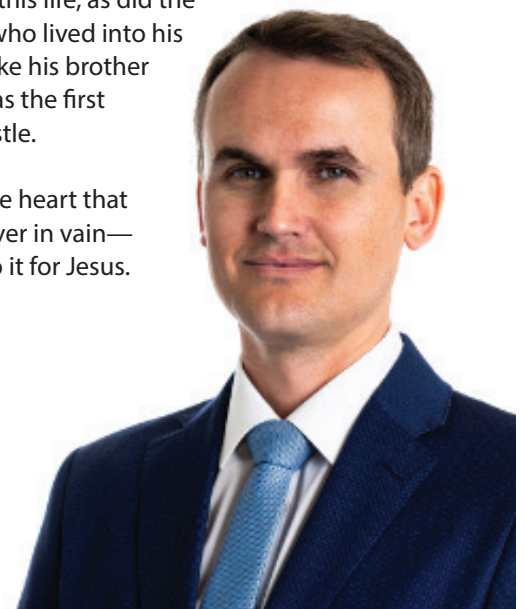
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“Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labour in the Lord is not in vain.” (1 Cor. 15:58)

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How do we measure our success? By knowing and appreciating that we work for the Lord—who loves us, died for us, lives for us. And when we work for Him, success is primarily measured by how faithfully we serve, not the outcome. Build a boat, circle the wilderness, die on Calvary—faithfulness in duty is success in duty. The results are God’s problem. We may have the privilege of seeing the results of our work in this life, as did the disciple John who lived into his 90s, or none, like his brother James, who was the first martyred Apostle.

But we can take heart that our work is never in vain—because we do it for Jesus.



# NEWS

## Lemke Medallion Recognition

by Ashley Smith

Three of our chaplains were presented with the Lemke Medallion at the ASA Chaplaincy Convention in October. The Lemke Medallion recognises chaplains who have served in chaplaincy ministry for over ten years. It is a public affirmation of the selfless ministry and dedication required of a chaplain and is named after the life and legacy of one of the pioneers of chaplaincy ministry in Australia, Mel Lemke. This year, James Greensill, Courtney Brown, and Elia Ceaver were the honoured recipients of this award. We want to publicly affirm them for their valuable contribution to the spiritual culture of our school community over the years. Thank you for all that you have done and continue to do. Keep the flame burning!



## World Teachers Day

by Paul Fua

World Teachers' Day has been established to honour the contribution teachers make to our society. Each of us has purpose, fulfilment, and the ability to apply and express our intelligence because our teachers invested so deeply in our future. We can all think of one (or more) teachers who made a significant impact on our lives and helped shape the people we've become. Now, you have chosen to be a teacher, shaping the lives of future generations. Today, you are honoured alongside more than 170,000 primary, secondary, and early childhood teachers working in NSW.

As Christian teachers, we adhere to a higher calling. We are not only preparing our students for meaningful citizenship in this life; we are preparing them for eternity. What a high and sacred responsibility! Only in eternity will you fully realise the impact of your ministry.

There are many careers and vocations you could have chosen, and having experienced a few, I can say there is nothing more rewarding than the work of building lives. May God bless you today on World Teachers' Day, and may you continue to feel the joy of this calling.

## SOCIAL MEDIA PAGES

The NNSW Education Company has created both a Facebook and Instagram account to capture the stories happening around our wonderful schools. We see the exciting things taking place and would love to have a central location where these stories are shared.



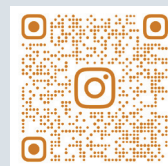
Facebook page:



*Adventist Education North New South Wales*



Instagram page:



*@adventisteducationnsw*

## EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

# BRONWYN NILON

MANNING ADVENTIST BUSH SCHOOL

Each recipient will receive a \$50 gift card in recognition of their outstanding performance. Congratulations to Bronwyn – keep the flame burning!

Established in 1983 following a generous land donation from Warren Buttsworth, Manning Adventist Bush School has long been a nurturing ground for students, supported by dedicated Adventist teachers. Bronwyn Nilon embodies the spirit of the school, serving as a teacher's aide and playing a vital role in the learning support team. Her commitment to fostering an inclusive and supportive environment makes her an invaluable asset to both students and staff.

In addition to her classroom role, Bronwyn manages the school canteen, where she consistently provides delicious, healthy meals that energise our community.

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*Her gentle nature and unwavering dedication shines brightly, reflecting the values of compassion and service central to our mission. Bronwyn's contributions make a significant impact on those around her, truly exemplifying the love and light of Jesus at Manning Adventist Bush School.*

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## MISSIONAL NEWS

### Growing Spiritual Leaders in Adventist Schools

by Jack Ryder, Michael Schwarze and Kieren Jackson

Kempsey Adventist School benefits from having a team of three School Chaplains, but even this wasn't enough. Despite a better ratio than some schools, as a Chaplaincy team, we felt limited in our ability to connect effectively across a campus ranging from Pre-Kindy to Year 12. In response to this, we decided to enhance our student chaplaincy initiative by organising our first-ever student chaplaincy camp. Our aim for this camp was to help students grow spiritually and bond as a group. Jesus often did this with His disciples, taking them aside to teach valuable lessons.

As a team of Chaplains, we didn't have the capacity to run the camp on our own, so we called upon additional staff to volunteer their weekend to invest in the future of our school and community. Fortunately, we had an amazing team, including teachers, teacher aides, our canteen manager, and the Principal, who all willingly gave their time to bless these students for an entire weekend. Between



lots of fun team games, we gathered to worship through song, listen to engaging messages, and share. Over the weekend, we explored themes like community, calling, commitment, capacity, and challenges—important themes for leaders of any age to understand.

As a result of this camp, students have become more involved in various ministry initiatives. Some of these include inviting and supporting other students in getting to know Jesus through Bible reading, preparing and delivering Chapel talks, leading Chapel, acting in Bible-based dramas during our Week of Worship, participating in the school choir, and actively engaging in weekly discussions and prayer. (continued...)

We should never underestimate the power of one student to positively impact the lives of others within their sphere of influence. We believe it's our role as School Chaplains to empower, encourage, and equip the students in our care to be leaders of today so they can live out their faith in the small moments of each day, influencing those around them to create a Christ-centred culture in our school.



## Avondale School Visits Avondale University Church

On 19 October, the talented students from Avondale School came together for a vibrant worship service at Avondale Uni Church, showcasing their musical gifts. The event featured uplifting performances by the Primary and Secondary Choirs, the Chapel Choir, the Concert Band, the String Ensemble (forming the Orchestra), and the Secondary Worship Band. The Primary Captains and Mr Stuart Clark spoke eloquently, adding to the spirit of unity and celebration. We are always grateful for the opportunity to worship together at our local churches, fostering a strong sense of community and connection.

*"But You are holy,  
Enthroned in the praises of Israel."  
Psalms 22:3*

## Chaplains Empowered at Chaplaincy Convention

by Ashley Smith

From 20–23 October, over one hundred chaplains from across Australia, along with some from New Zealand, Tahiti, and Fiji, gathered at the biennial ASA Chaplaincy Conference held at Murwillumbah Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The program, organised by Murray Hunter and the Chaplaincy Coordinators across ASA, aimed to build capacity within the team by providing meaningful presentations to enhance their ministries in local schools. The presentations awarded chaplains with 'micro-credentials' from Korus Connect and provided access to a large database of leadership materials from The Global Leadership Summit.

Evenings were dedicated to worship, with Pastor Mau Tuaoi, Lead Pastor at Gilson College Community Church, inspiring the team through Scripture. Towards the end of the program, the chaplains

gathered at the front of the church in a circle to claim the promise from Numbers 6:24–26:

*"The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace."*

It was a meaningful way to conclude the program, leaving a lasting impression as the team returned to their homes and schools.

I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank every chaplain in our NNSW team. Their experience, gifts, and dedication make so much of the ministry that takes place on our campuses possible. We have a wonderful team, and God is using them to do amazing things! I encourage you to reach out to the chaplains on your team, affirm them for what they do, and pray for them and their ministry.



## The Hopeful Screening Macquarie College

by Macquarie College

On 22 October 2024, Macquarie College (MC) and Wallsend SDA Church collaborated to present the screening of *The Hopeful* at Event Cinemas, coinciding with the 180th anniversary of the key events depicted in the film. The event attracted more than 300 attendees, including MC staff, families, members of Wallsend SDA Church, and others from the broader community.

A highlight of the evening was a special conversation with Kyle Portbury, the film's producer and director, held just before the screening. Portbury, an MC parent and member of Wallsend SDA Church, shared insights into the making of the film and its historical significance. The screening provided a unique opportunity to commemorate an important event in Adventist history, offering



both entertainment and a deeper understanding of the faith's roots. The event demonstrated the strong partnership between Macquarie College and Wallsend SDA Church, bringing their communities together for a meaningful and reflective experience.

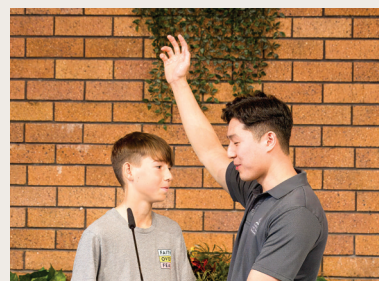
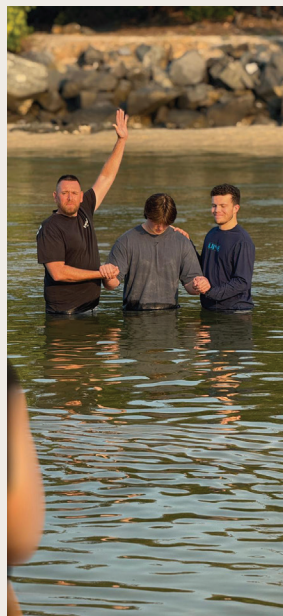
## Baptisms at Tweed Valley Adventist College

by Michael Paun

Nate's family moved to Murwillumbah in 2021 so that he and his siblings could attend Tweed Valley Adventist College. Nate described TVAC as having a positive spiritual impact on his faith journey because the teachers care about the students and want them to know the love that God has for them. In the Week of Spiritual Emphasis (WOSE) of 2022, Nate put his name down for baptismal studies and began studying the Bible with Jared, a former chaplain at TVAC. At the end of Term 2 this year, Nate was baptised into Murwillumbah Seventh-day Adventist Church. When asked why he wanted to be baptised, Nate said: "I want to see everyone in Heaven and help others see that God loves them too." You can find Nate's testimony on the @murwillumbahadventistchurch YouTube channel.

Andrew came to TVAC in 2020 when he was in Year 7. During his enrolment interview, Michele Wilson, the deputy principal at the time and now the principal of TVAC, sensed that his mother, Sandie, was very open to the gospel. Responding to conviction, she asked if Sandie would be interested in studying the Bible with her. Sandie was baptised into Murwillumbah Seventh-day Adventist Church in 2022. Since then, Andrew has wrestled with his personal beliefs about God's existence, and for some time had appeared resistant by all external optics. Pastor Steve Teale, the former pastor of Bray Park Church and now a pastor in Kempsey, Clare Tanner, a Bible teacher at TVAC, and Andrew Butcher, a teacher aide at TVAC, along with many others, supported Andrew in his faith journey and answered the many deep questions he had. At the end of Term 3, Andrew made a public stand for Jesus and was baptised by Pr. Steve Teale and TVAC alumnus Tom McMaster into the Bray Park Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Alex Kovac, a teacher at Tweed Valley Adventist College, grew up in Mount Druitt in the western suburbs of Sydney and for a time was apathetic about baptism. After studying education through Avondale University, Alex landed a job at Mountain View Adventist College, and as of 2024 has been working at TVAC teaching maths, science, and PDHPE. After a conversation with Boris Jovinov, a pastor at Murwillumbah SDA Church, and after listening to a chapel talk from Ashley Smith, the General Manager of Mission in the NNSW Conference, Alex felt the conviction grow to give his life to God through baptism. Over the Term 3 break, Alex acted on this conviction and was baptised into the Murwillumbah Seventh-day Adventist Church, dedicating his children to God on the same Sabbath.



NICE TO MEET YOU

# KARLIE FRASER [TEACHER]

To foster a sense of community across our Conference, we will spotlight one employee each month.



**What is your name and where did you grow up?**

Hi, my name is Karlie Fraser, and I grew up in Papua New Guinea. When I was in Year One, we moved to Cooranbong, Australia, where I have lived ever since.

**What school are you working at?**

Avondale School.

**How long have you been there?**

I have been at Avondale School for seven years.

**What is your role?**

I teach Bible and Ancient History and am the Stage 5 Coordinator. I also help out with our Basketball Academy.

**What made you want to join us?**

I love being part of an education system where I can openly teach about the reality of God's love for every individual.

**How does your faith affect your work?**

It is the reason I teach. We are called to share our faith in God with others, and teaching gives us a unique opportunity to speak into the lives of young people who are in the process of deciding what they believe.

**What do you do for fun outside of work?**

I love walking my dog, playing basketball, and camping with friends.

**Any hidden talents or hobbies?**

I play the saxophone.

**What Bible character are you most excited to meet and why?**

I would love to meet Ruth. I think she was a woman of courage with strong convictions.

## Dates to Diarise

**8 DEC** Twilight Christmas Festival Avondale

**16-18 DEC** Road to Bethlehem Central Coast



Do you have news for the monthly newsletter? We'd love to hear from you! Submit by the last Wednesday of each month.

## CONTACT US

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