Cyclone Marcia: ADRA on the Ground

by ADRA Australia

As clean-up and recovery operations ramp up, communities devastated by Cyclone Marcia are banding together for strength and looking to the outside for help.

The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Australia is one agency who have rushed assistance to hard-hit Yeppoon and Rockhampton.

As of end of February, 55,000 properties were reported damaged, while 100 families have been left homeless, insurance companies already receiving in excess of 4000 claims for damage. At its worst, as many as 100,000 properties were without power.

“The immediate threat has passed, but with that comes the realisation that clean-up and recovery may not be quick, nor easy,” said Kevin Munro, ADRA’s National Emergency Services Manager.

Kevin and a small team of experienced ADRA volunteers flew to Yeppoon to provide guidance and support as community groups began providing assistance.

“The local church are in a great position to help,” he said. “They are already part of the community, have connections with other service providers and probably personally know many of those affected.

“Our aim is to show ADRA’s support for the community and ensure the church can respond in a coordinated and effective manner. We hope that combining our expertise with their man-power will help the people of Yeppoon and Rockhampton recover quickly from this disaster.”
On February 7, Sone Mariner, working with the Toowoomba’s Glenvale Church, established a first-ever for our Division: a local church-organised “literature evangelism ministry.” This involves having this specialised ministry to be working side by side with the local church Personal Ministry team and other departments to spread our literature and tracts “like leaves of autumn” to prepare people for the Second Coming of Jesus.

This is all about witnessing; using literature to spread the gospel through our personal activities and work during the week. We are simply asked to “sow beside all waters” for we do not know how the spirit of God will work on these “seeds.”

After an afternoon training program, more than 20 people contracted to follow the conviction of the Spirit, by spreading the gospel through tracts and literature. They all committed to an agreed number of tracts and literatures to give out per week, the minimum will be one a day. Imagine how many will be handed out personally within a year by which the Holy Spirit may work! Under the leadership of Tim Fitkau (supported by Sone Mariner and Wendy Kent), they will meet regularly for encouragement and sharing of experiences, which will be reported to the church and the Publishing Department.

There will be one other church that will be part of this pilot initiative this month. I hope that, in the near future, many more of our Conference churches will move this way. The Spirit of Prophecy states, “When church members realise the importance of the circulation of our literature, they will devote more time to this work. Papers, tracts and books will be placed in the homes of the people, to preach the gospel in their several lines. . . The church must give her attention to the canvassing work” (Colporteur Ministry, page 7). Thank you to Pastor Casey and the church board for supporting this new venture. I know it will be successful for the local leader and those who joined and are committed, as God has promised it.
You’re here again!” I asked with surprise, as a girl from our local church approached the ticketing booth for the third night in a row. Occasionally we see people come back for a second night, but this was different, so I had to comment. “You see, every night I’ve invited different people to come and I’m taking them here to see it again,” she replied.

What really stood out to us this past year was not how many people came through or how far they were willing to travel to come to see the event, but how many of local church members kept coming back night after night with a different group of visitors. They were using Road to Bethlehem to reach out to colleagues at work, friends, family and neighbours.

Road to Bethlehem is easy to invite someone else to come along to; it does not come with specific requirements on how you have to dress or act to come along. Whether you go to church or not, have a Christian background or not, you are welcome to come along just as you are. The program connected to the Christmas holiday season, but then again it is something completely different to what Christmas is all about in a secular world.

From the comments and conversations we had with people, they had an experience at Road to Bethlehem that made them think about the real meaning of Christmas and Jesus coming to this earth. Everyone who came was invited to visit the prayer tent and given a gift bag with an invitation to visit a local Adventist church and a Signs magazine.

Road to Bethlehem is not an evangelical outreach or mission like what we’re used to. It doesn’t have a curriculum we expect people to go through and understand to complete it. Our mission is to show the real meaning behind Christmas, connect with people and sow a seed.

Only God knows how many of these people will make a commitment to follow Jesus or how many of them we will see in heaven one day. If one of those people who came to Road to Bethlehem is your neighbour or crossed your path, what would you do to follow up the seed that was planted?

Who will you invite to Road to Bethlehem this year?
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/RoadToBethlehemBrisbane
Website: http://brisbane.roadtobethlehem.org
CONFERENCE NEWS

A wonderful setting

What a blessing it was to attend the CHIP Summit and Depression Recovery Program on the beautiful Avondale College campus, surrounded by the rolling hills, cows grazing in the fields and the sound of the bellbirds floating from the bush into the dormitories. The program commenced on February 13 and came to a conclusion on February 16.

Delicious plant-based meals

Being an update program for the Complete Health Improvement Program (CHIP) and a facilitator training program for Dr Neil Nedley’s, Depression Recovery Program (DRP), the meals provided by the college cafeteria epitomised the dietary principles outlined in these health programs. The meals were a highlight with participants eating like kings for breakfast and like princes for the midday and evening meals.

Breakfasts consisted of such delicious plant-based foods as tofu scrambled eggs, grilled tomatoes and mushrooms, granola with dried fruit and nuts plus a range of other healthy cereals. There was an array of wholemeal breads; cashew, almond, humus and guacamole spreads, along with a variety of milk substitutes such as soy, rice or oat milk, and fresh fruit and more to top it all off.

The midday and evening meals were composed of steamed and baked vegetables and healthy patties, pastas and salads; while deserts included such treats as cashew ice cream, carob mousse, fresh fruit and more. A whole-foods, plant-based diet, as outlined by CHIP for physical wellbeing and as also recommended by Dr Nedley for mental health was certainly on display and enjoyed by all.

Fantastic Presentations

The presentations were excellent, beginning with Dr Hans Deihl telling the story of his life and how the doors that God had opened along the way from his humble beginnings in Germany led ultimately to the development of the CHIP program. Dr Darren Morton spoke of lifestyle medicine as the new frontier in health and healing and posed the challenging question of whether Adventists would lead the way?

Pastor Don MacKintosh shared from the Gospels how health and healing were intimately associated with the kingdom of God. Dr John Skryzpaszek then followed up with how God repositioned the early Adventist church through the message of wholistic health as forming the basis of both spirituality and of establishing the best possible conditions for the highest service to God (see the Ministry of Healing, page 319).

Dr Nedley spoke of the central importance of self-control as the foundation of good mental health. He shared how this could only be achieved through the love of God in the heart and people being willing to sacrifice or give of themselves and their lives to God. He also spoke of the latest definition of depression in the DSM 5, the numerous negative effects of depression on people’s life and health and the 10 strategies needed to deal effectively with this condition.

Dr Brenda Davis, a leading non-Adventist nutritionist, gave gripping presentations on, “Why I am a Plant-based Eater” and, “The Paleo (diet) Myth”. Other speakers included Paul Rankin, Stephan Herzog and Cathy MacDonald sharing some of the exciting developments with the CHIP in Australia and New Zealand as well as in the U.S. and the rest of the world.

South Queensland Health Ministry Goals 2015

Two hundred and forty-nine people registered for the weekend with 33 coming from South Queensland. With nearly 60 CHIP facilitators trained in this conference over the past two years and a whole new batch of DRP facilitators, our 2015 goal is to conduct more than 30 CHIP programs and 10 to 20 Depression Recovery Programs. These two health programs fit perfectly with our new Live More emphasis as CHIP is all about living more healthy and the DRP is all about living more happy.

As Health Director, I urge our people and our churches to embrace these two life-changing, life-enhancing programs and live out the principles in our own lives, families and churches so we can then more effectively share them with those who need them in our own local communities.

by Neil Marks BA, MPH, Health Director

LIVE MORE HEALTHY—LIVE MORE HAPPY

4 | MARCH 2015 | FOCUS
From Perth to Sydney, Adelaide to Brisbane, students from all around Australia came to be a part of the first ever Adventist Students Association Summer Institute (ASASI) and learn what it means to follow Jesus faithfully during their university and TAFE years. The ASASI is an interactive four-day training experience held from February 19-22. This was the ideal time to train and resource students in the basics of faith sharing just before the tertiary schooling year begins.

In 2014, it was reported that 88 per cent of South Queensland grade 12 graduates from Adventist schools, planning to attend a university, indicated they plan to attend a secular campus compared to Avondale. Reasons include the variety of courses that are offered and the convenience of living close to family. Studying on a secular campus presents challenges such as relativism and the debate between evolution and creation. Adventist students seek to have a reason for their faith that is both defendable and practical to their lives, which is what ASASI seeks to offer students.

The Salisbury Seventh-day Adventist Church was the host location for ASASI. The church was a model location because of its close proximity to Griffith University’s Nathan campus and the vision of Pastor Popovic to provide campus ministry opportunities to tertiary students and young adults in his church. It is planned that future ASASI training weekends will be held in churches that seek reach tertiary campuses in their community for the kingdom of God throughout the South Queensland Conference.

The speaker for the weekend was Ron Pickell, Adventist Christian Fellowship (ACF) coordinator from the North American Division. Ron shared practical ways students can share their faith on campus and included resources, such as the “Journey and Greater Things” Bible-study series, which can be download from the <sqyouth.org.au> website.

If your church is interested in hosting a future ASASI training weekend, please contact the Tertiary Student and Young Adults Ministries Department.

**A Legacy of Dedication**

by Agniezka Pearce, Manager, Add-Care Op Shop

Eunice Turner retired at age 95 from volunteering at our Add-Care Op Shop. Last year our Add-Care Op Shop in Southport had to say goodbye to two wonderful volunteers who are members of Gold Coast Central Church. Eunice Turner caught a taxi each Tuesday at her own expense to spend four hours ironing. Eunice expresses, “I like to do what I can for as long as I can.”

Leila Smyth’s volunteering has extended beyond the hours spent in the shop, creating beautiful needlework for the shop, as well as mending at home.

The Management Committee and staff would like to thank them for their dedicated service of more than 20 years between them. We wish them God’s blessings.
When I scheduled the Ministers Meetings into my calendar for 2015, I did so without much thought — just another series of commitments in what looked to be a busy month. But I was absolutely blown away by the reality of them and the indelible mark they left in my walk with God. There was a sense of spiritual intentionality and attention to detail from the very beginning. We all arrived in bits and pieces, some of our colleagues having travelled a great distance, everyone glad to see each other.

Upon registration, we were handed a pack and told that there was “treasure to be found” if we “dug.” I was certain it was chocolate! But instead it was the first of many letters that were given to me throughout the meetings, from some of the closest people in my life, affirming my calling in ministry and their love for me. Their words spoke to my soul, reaffirming my commitment in the journey that I have been called to walk, but I was also incredibly moved that my conference administration would take the time arrange it. All those personal phone calls and chasing up, in an already pressure, filled job—it really told me how much they cared about us as people. I came away feeling like I was one of the most fortunate people in the world to work in this conference.

There was a very balanced and intentional mix of both teaching and team building during the three days we had together. Dr Trafford Fischer took two seminars on practical ways of building healthy marriages in ministry, while Dr Branimir Schubert and Brendon Pratt inspired us to be the “best team of pastor's in the world”! Their seminars were both practical and inspiring in nature, introducing new web tools that have been created to support us in our ministry. Prayer was also a prioritised element during our time together, with Pastor Jorge Munoz reminding us of God’s heart for each of His children individually.

I came away so incredibly blessed, thankful to be a part of such an awesome team of God-centred men and women, and committed to whatever the Lord has in store for me.

Below are a few quotes from some of the pastors who attended the event. Here is what they had to say about the 2015 Ministers Meetings:

“I was blessed by the time spent in small groups praying for each other’s families and continual ministry.”—Pastor André Hamilton, Pine Rivers Church, Senior Pastor

“I appreciated the time I had with other ministers who are like minded and themselves genuine about saving people for the kingdom. Being able to share together the wins we see God giving, to be able to support and pray for others in their challenges, and to have these people pray passionately for my ministry was truly inspiring.”—Pastor Neil Redman, Northpine Christian College Senior Chaplain, Refresh Group

“The gathering was the most Godly, Spirit-led, Christ-centred series of days I’ve experienced among ministry colleagues.”—Pastor David Riley, Reedy Creek Church

“For me, the Minister’s Meetings were more than ‘meetings.’ They embodied professional development, collaboration,
team building, fellowship, a spiritual revival and a chill fun time with colleagues and team mates who are ‘of the same feather.’ I particularly was blessed by the thoughtfulness and TLC crafted into each activity and event. Letters from the people that matter the most to me that affirmed my calling to ministry was both inspiring and enriching. Praise God!”—Pastor Gideon Okesene, Kingaroy, Murgon, Nanango Churches

“Two statements that were made that truly jumped out at me were, Dr Branimir Schubert’s ‘Jesus’ mission statement was simple and to the point— ‘Seek and Save.’ The second was Pastor Jorge Munoz’s worship from Numbers 1:2 that ‘God counts each one of us—individually—as we are special to Him.’”—Pastor Ted White, Gympie Church

“South Queensland Conference’s Camp Somerset Ministers Meetings: so good! Well planned, informative and the fellowship was the best one could wish for! A ministry to the ministers event.”—Pastor Gary Roberts, Harvey Bay, Bay City, Maryborough Churches

“Inspiring, thought-provoking, immensely encouraging. A huge thank you to our conference team for pulling it all together.”—Pastor Casey Wolverton, Glenvale Church, Senior Pastor
Want to bring some freshness and health to your family relationships this year? Over the next eight months, April to November, you can be part of a new monthly challenge to enrich your family in eight relationship-focused areas.

It doesn’t matter what your “family” is, there will be relationships you can enrich and strengthen. Your family may or may not have children at home. You may even be single, and your circle of friends forms your “family.” Or perhaps your family is complex, such as a blending family or extended family.

Like to participate in the challenge to grow healthier and enriched? Families that would like to get involved should register now with Adventist Relationship Ministries at the conference, so that new FLC-2015 challenge kits can be sent out each month with ideas, resources and options for that month’s focus. The Challenge is free, there are no strings attached and the resources and ideas can be used to nurture your family in your home step-by-step as you learn and apply tried-and-true principles.

Kick-start the registration process by sending an email to <famlifechallenge@gmail.com> or by phoning Susan at South Queensland Conference on 07 3218 7777. The first installment will be ready to send to you by the first week of April.
In the mid-1960s, the Holy Spirit inspired missionary pilot, Pastor Len Barnard, to start the Adventist Aviation Association (AAA) with the purpose of taking the Gospel of Revelation 14:6–12 to remote areas of outback Australia. Since then, as we look back over 50 years, we can only say, “What God has wrought.”

They say we should be careful what we pray for, and in November, 1981, I prayed, “Lord, don’t come until I have a chance to help!” Back then I believed He would return when the work was finished and I figured about 10 years should do it. However, as I looked at the spread of the work in Australia, I could see the latter was a huge task. I saw the cities were well catered for via local churches, but the outback areas of this vast continent were not being served as effectively. I saw AAA as a ministry I liked and could do, so I joined.

Currently, AAA has four independent Chapters—North New South Wales, Western Australia, Northern Australia and South Queensland. All operate under similar constitutions and I wish I could say that all chapters were fully operational; but they are not, and we are working on that. However, to continue Pastor Barnard’s dream, and to coordinate future mission work, we are looking at forming a national body [probably called Adventist Aviation (Australia)]. Each Chapter will still be independent, but for mission purposes each has expertise and resources it can share with smaller conferences to help spread the message. Coordination will be the job of this national body.

Here, in the South Queensland Conference, 2014 saw the work extend north into Longreach. It’s embryonic, but it has started. Please pray for our AAA teams and the Longreach pastor, Peter Karrara, as he leads the work there. The plan is to consolidate the inroads already made and establish a “house church” this year. By any stretch of the imagination, Longreach is a long, long way away. It is costly to get there and back, so we need continuing financial support. We have three planes and all are in for repairs—that’s costly too!

In the south, the “House Church” in Dirranbandi is well established and, out west, the work in Charleville is picking up again. Tambo, up the road a country mile, has one faithful AAA supporter we are very grateful for. Roma and Chinchilla churches are regularly visited and we maintain a close relationship with the wonderful members there. What a joy it is to visit them. Living in the outback isn’t easy in this “sunburnt country,” but in meeting with country folk, you would never know this.

At AAA (South Queensland), we have a contract with God—we do the work and He supplies the ideas and the resources. To do the work we need people who are not afraid to labour—sometimes it’s hot, arduous, but it’s always joyous. Please ring me on 0432 211 692 if you want to take part in God’s end-time work—you need to be fit and able to fly. If you cannot physically participate in this ministry, you can also join God’s resource pool: His Prayer team, or His Financial Resource Team, preferably both. It costs tens of thousands of dollars each year to reach the lost in the Outback, so thank you for your continuing financial support and practical stewardship as we head back into enemy territory. Our website is: <http://aviationsq.adventist.org.au>. Please go there to donate. You can also give via your local church marked: “For Adventist Aviation Association.” Maranatha!

by Pastor David Edgar, AAA President
FOCUS
10 | MARCH 2015

CAPALABA CHURCH

THE HEALTH CHIP

In mid-February 2015, I had the opportunity to attend the Complete Health Improvement Program (CHIP) Summit, as well as the Neil Nedley Depression & Anxiety Recovery Program Facilitator training at Avondale College. It was well attended, with more than 250 people there! One could feel the excitement in the air, as we listened to Dr Hans Diehl sharing about his journey and many other speakers sharing about how God is blessing the delivery of the CHIP program and its participants around the world. For those of you who don’t know what CHIP is about—it is a comprehensive community-based lifestyle education program, which can assist to prevent, arrest and even reverse the chronic diseases that plague our community. It teaches you why we have the health problems we see in society, and what you and I can do about it!

As a doctor, I am well aware of the people’s needs and health is one of the biggest! CHIP is an awesome tool that our local churches can utilise in reaching out to our local communities. It isn’t “just” a fad diet, or a mandate on what you “can or can’t eat,” or how much you have to walk. CHIP empowers people, as it has empowered me, to make good daily choices in how I can best look after the body God has given me. It is a program that changes lives, and helps us minister to the needs of others!

My local church in Capalaba will be running a CHIP program starting on May 24 at 7pm. To find out more about it, come and attend one of our Free Information Sessions—Sunday, May 3, from 5-6 pm, or Tuesday, May 5, from 7-8 pm. Location: Lifestyle Community Centre, 450 Mount Cotton Road, Capalaba 4157. Further details: <capalabaCHIP@gmail.com>, Julie on 0413 251 865, website: <chiphealth.com> (search for a program near you).

—Article and picture by Jennifer Ludwig Palangeanu

GLENVALE

A JOYFUL BAPTISM

On February 7, Sherrie [Sam] McBay entered into the waters of baptism, followed by having her three young children dedicated to God at Glenvale Adventist Church. A week after her baptism, Sam learned that she too was dedicated as a child in an Adventist. Sam grew up on her grandparents’ farm near Rockhampton with her sister, brother and young cousins. Like most kids, Sam enjoyed having a variety of animals around such as angora sheep, goats, chickens and cows.

School was hard; at age 12 Sam could not read. However, she eventually taught herself how to read using a Bible, but had no understanding of what it meant. As young adults living in Hervey Bay, Sam and her sister Maree briefly attended a church and studied visual arts followed by childcare.

Devastated and very angry when her Christian sister died in 2008 after three years of cancer, Sam needed peace for her children and sought a church for them (but not for herself). Her aunt recommended she attend an Adventist church, so she began to attend one in Casino, NSW, followed by Glenvale Church in Toowoomba. As Sam read Bible stories to her children to help them (but not herself), she found that peace reduced her own anger. She enjoys homeschooling her children as she wants to give them the very best opportunities in life that she missed during her own childhood.

Our local literature evangelist, Wendy Kent, supplied Sam with the Adventist “My Bible Friends” books for children and studies the Bible with her. Sam is keen to study, learn more and see where God leads her as she learns to make new good choices with God and rely on Him each day.

—Article and pictures by Geof Frauenfelder

KINGAROY

GODHEAD REVEALED—
IN UNITY

Glyn Parfitt gave three powerful and insightful lectures on “The Unity of God.” This was part of the special “Godhead” emphasis Sabbath that was held at the Kingaroy Church. There were many revealing facts compiled by Glyn Parfitt in his messages that challenged quite a few attendees. All of his material has been extracted from his book called The Trinity—What has God Revealed? which can be purchased from the ABC. It is a comprehensive and relevant resource which answers many objections that other believers may have to the Trinity.

—Article and picture by Gideon Okesene

PINE RIVERS

DIABETIC HEALTH CLINIC

LIFESTYLE PROGRAM

As part of an outreach activity into the local community, Peter Pratt (Pine Rivers Church) recently commenced a 12-week seminar for people with Type II diabetics. The program is well researched and looks at the disease as a lifestyle condition. It shows participants ways to normalise their blood sugar levels as well as achieve a healthy weight and optimal health using a variety of lifestyle changes. While initially for people with diabetes, others also commenced the program who were overweight or wanted to live a more healthy lifestyle. About 60 people are attending the series.

—Article and picture by Charles Russell
MEN CHEW OVER THEIR FINANCES

The Men’s Ministries team at Pine Rivers Church recently invited men from the church and the community to a Sunday breakfast in the church hall. This was a time for the men to come together for fun, food and fellowship together. After enjoying a healthy continental breakfast, the participants listened to a guest speaker talk about various aspects of superannuation and financial planning. At the end of the talk, a 1.5-hour session with the financial planner was auctioned off. All proceeds from the event went to the Pine Rivers Fly and Build Project to Vanuatu in July.
—Article and picture by Charles Russell

SOUTH BRISBANE REACH OUT TO ONE

South Brisbane Church has seen some dramatic events of late. In November 2014 the western front of the church was severely damaged by a storm that smashed all the windows, damaged roof tiles and destroyed carpet. Nevertheless our church family has continued to worship in the church hall, praising God and learning to adapt to different surroundings. Yet, this has given our church family an opportunity to go out of our way to make church more inviting, and we are starting to make some positive changes.

It is changes such as these that give opportunity for reflection on why it is that church exists and what is “church” anyhow? For me church is not the building, and we have proven that by worshipping in our hall rather than in the main sanctuary. Rather, church is the people that faithfully fellowship together, that are mission-minded, and that have a heart for service. Luke records the following of the apostolic church in Acts 2: 6-47: “So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.”

To this end, the Personal Ministries team as South Brisbane Church have come up with an initiative we call “+1”. This concept encourages each one of our church family to reach out to one person in their sphere of influence with whom they already have a connection. Then they are to use this connection in an intentional way to share Christ with them. Often with outreach initiatives, some people can get overwhelmed with the responsibility to reach out to other people. But this initiative is designed to be simple and, with the power of the Holy Spirit working in and through us, achievable. Ellen White writes in Evangelism, (page 63) “God will have men who will venture anything and everything to save souls. . .There must be workers now who will push ahead in the dark as well as in the light. . . trusting the Lord to bring the increase.” We can have the best of programs but if we are not doing our part in reaching out to others, then we are doing little more than preaching to the choir.

To help South Brisbane Church reach this goal, the Personal Ministries team have organised monthly vespers called the “Upper Room Project” that focus on the theme of unity. We are encouraging the other church departments to have a greater mission-ary focus in their activities. Most recently, we have given out business cards where people can write the name of the person they are praying for. These can be kept in their Bible or in their wallet—two places we go into often. May God empower us to do His work as a family, and I look forward to seeing how He will use us in the year ahead to increase the population of heaven!
—Article by Irena Larking

SOUTH BURNETT RECOVERY ROAD... OPENED!

Graham and Michelle Hood challenged the South Burnett churches to let go of the baggage that we carry around in the form of hurts, habits and hangups through Recovery Road. A small group studying Recovery Road was launched as a result of the special “Paradigm Shift” Sabbath. There were many moved to tears as they heard Michelle courageously give her testimony. Many came to the realisation that they need to let go of unforgiveness and let God empower them to be healed and live abundant lives. “I believe this is present truth,” one attendee said.
—Article and picture by Gideon Okesene

SUNSHINE COAST ADVENTIST FELLOWSHIP

Over the years, Sunshine Coast Adventist Fellowship, located near the Sunshine Coast University in Buderim, has been privileged to enjoy the fellowship of a number of university students who attend our church. At the end of 2014, four of the students who have been actively involved in our church graduated from their respective courses. The students are pictured above: Pr Steven Moses—Master in Public Health, Israel Anjo—Master in Education, below: Pr Betty Francis—Master in Public Health, and Edna Worri—Bachelor in Counselling. We continue to pray for these lovely people now that they have returned to their home country, Papua New Guinea.
—Article by Kristina Somerville and picture by Warren Somerville
Friday, February 20, will be a date that few forget at the Capricorn Adventist Retirement Village. It was a terrifying experience for residents of our village in Yeppoon to be in their units while the wind and rain was lashing them. Huge gum trees were crashing down and branches flying everywhere while the wind gusted to 295 kilometres per hour. Tropical Cyclone Marcia devastated Yeppoon and with it the Adventist Retirement Village—but has now blown itself out and left us with the cleanup. It is hard for us who have not been through it to understand the ferocity of the wind.

Miraculously there was no loss of life or injury and the property damage was relatively small in the village. A huge number of trees were uprooted or broken off and branches covered the ground or landed on some roofs, but apart from some damage to gable ends, gutters, fences and TV aerials, the units in the village stood up to all of the wind and residents were safe inside. They emerged with an unbelievable mess to clean up, many saw their gardens demolished but at least they were safe. The main problem afterward was loss of power in unbelievable heat.

The village operations manager, Angela Colless, and care manager, Debbie Brown, and their team did an outstanding job of keeping the residential facility operating during the cyclone despite their being no power and limited staff available. It is a credit to their endurance and capability, and their ability to work around the clock that residents were cared for safely, even though they were exhausted. Angela managed to access a generator to provide power and providentially electricity was restored to the whole village on the Monday morning, much to the relief of the residents who could now enjoy their fans and air-conditioning. There are whole new vistas around the village with many enjoying views of Keppel Bay that had been previously obscured by foliage.

We are thankful to God for His protection as there were so many large trees that missed buildings by only a few metres and the damage could have been much worse.
Women’s Ministries Conference
May 29–31 2015
Watson Park Convention Centre
Special Speaker: Ginny Allen

We would love to see you there. Bring your sister, daughter, friend or your mum.

Bookings open on March 30.
You can book online from the March 30.

See your Women’s Ministries Leader for an application form.

Or send your application form to:
Women’s Ministries
19 Eagle Tce,
Brisbane 4000
Would your church be interested in starting a Local Community Project?

ADRA has a number of smaller projects specially designed for churches who would like to help in some way in their community. These include:

- Emergency Relief
- Community Garden
- Settle Assist
- Seniors Connect
- Teen Resilience

If you are interested in finding out more, please email <kellyrichards@adventist.org.au>.

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**Great Places Tour September 2015**

On this tour, you will see:

- Rome — Capri — Sorrento — Turkey
- Ephesus — Gallipoli — Pameukale
- Laodice — Greece — Parthenon — Philippi
- Corinth — and many more great places of historical and biblical significance!

Enjoy a fun-packed Great Places Tour for four weeks in September 2015. Have a fascinating week in Rome and the Isle of Capri. Then explore the best of Turkey — everyone wants to revisit if they’ve been there before! — and follow in the steps of Paul in Greece.

See six of the seven Churches of the Book of Revelation and spend a special Sabbath on the Isle of Patmos.

If you are interested in joining this tour, please contact Pastor Harold Harker by email at harold.harker@gmail.com or phone (02) 4385 8282.

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**ROAD to BETHLEHEM**

Would you like to be involved with Road to Bethlehem in 2015?

**Sign up online today:**

http://brisbane.roadtobethlehem.org/beinvolved
2015 Prayer Conference

May 1 – 3 Watson Park Convention Centre

With Special Guest - Troy Fitzgerald

Troy is the Youth and Young Adult Pastor at Walla Walla University Church. He has authored numerous books, study guides and articles and is a sought after speaker around the world.

This is one conference you don’t want to miss!!

Cost $100 Per Person for weekend or $60 day pass

Bookings Essential

Register online at: sq.adventist.org.au

Registrations close April 17
by Deanna Pitchford, President, Association of Adventist Counsellors

Mark these three important training events in your calendars, if you are a people-helping relationships professional—or just like understanding how human relationships work.

On Sabbath, August 29: Dr Arlene Taylor will be in Brisbane to present another of her fascinating seminars on the functioning of the brain. The venue for this seminar is still to be confirmed. A visit to Dr Taylor’s website will show you the potential value of attending her August 29 seminar (www.arlenetaylor.org).

Friday evening and Sabbath, May 1-2: Dr Tim Jennings (author of The God-shaped Brain) will be speaking at Springwood Adventist Church. At 7:30 pm on Friday, his topic will be “The God-shaped Brain” and then on Sabbath afternoon at 2:30 his two topics will be “The Developing Brain” and “Fix for Failing Families.” Dr Jennings will also be preaching for the Sabbath morning service. Attendees at Dr Jennings’ previous AAC seminar in August 2013 will remember him as a speaker rich in content and fast of pace with many worthwhile points to share. This is a free Springwood Church event and a great opportunity to invite friends and neighbours.

Sabbath October, 31: Dr Trafford Fischer from Family Ministries at the South Pacific Division will be the key presenter for our final AAC seminar for 2015. More details closer to the date.

If you would like to be added to our AAC email updates, or would like to become a AAC member or “Friend of AAC”, please contact by email <aac.qld@gmail.com> or Pastor Chris Foote on 0416 146 468.

PRAYING IN MY COMMUNITY
South Queensland Prayer Conference
May 1-4, 2015
Watson Park Convention Centre
Register at: sq.adventist.org.au

Full Weekend Seminars including Accommodation and Meals. Day Visitor Passes available. Bookings are essential!
Accommodation at Watson Park
Please bring your own linen, sleeping material, towels, toiletries, etc (these are not provided).

Attention FOCUS Contributors

FOCUS is produced by the South Queensland Conference Communication Department, 19 Eagle Terrace, Brisbane, QLD 4000.
Phone: (07) 3218 7777;
Fax: (07) 3236 1305;
Email: sqfocus@adventist.org.au
President—Pastor Jorge Munoz
Editors—Murray Hunter and Christina Khazzaz
Secretary—Joanne Donaldson
Design—Luke Farrugia
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