

northpoint

North New South Wales Conference News



Church Pantry Efforts Boosted by Local Government Support

By Maddy Voinea

Photo Left: Teresa Clark
Right: Cr Carol Duncan

The Hamilton Seventh-day Adventist Church Pantry recently received funding from the City of Newcastle through the “Boost our City Community Sector Grant”. The local food relief charity supplies low-cost pantry staples and groceries to families in need. Over 50 families benefit each week from the volunteer-run service.

“We were very blessed to receive funding to go towards transportation and refrigeration needs,” said Teresa Clark, the Pantry coordinator. “At this time food relief is really needed to help with those who are financially stressed and without the resources they may have had prior to the pandemic and to continue to help those who are vulnerable,” said Ms Clark.

“As COVID-19 has impacted the world, our church doors have been closed, but all our ministries have become essential services,” said Pr David Haupt, Adventist Community Services Director.

Due to COVID-19 related restrictions, the pantry has changed their service from a weekly meal and self-service to pre-packed hampers given out in a courtyard, a drive-through service and a home delivery option.

“We are so grateful to be able to provide for the needs of the community here and for a city council that is willing to help us in doing so, especially during this time of COVID,” said Pr Justin Torossian, Hamilton Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Pantry guest Mark has a young family and lost his job due to the pandemic. “All of a sudden you needed to make a small amount of money go a long way,” said Mark. Another pantry guest said, “I’m eternally grateful for what the Seventh-day Adventist Church is doing and I think it’s a great service.”

“The Boost Our City Grants were one of the city’s responses to try and help people through the pandemic,” explains local Councillor Carol Duncan. “There are a lot of people who are finding getting through this awful time even more difficult than it was previously, so this pantry is essential, it’s the lifeblood that sustains a lot of people that come through here each week,” said Cr Duncan.



Funding for transportation was urgently needed as the Pantry's private transport funding donor lost income due to the COVID-19 outbreak in Australia. This funding will allow the Pantry to gain access to a good quantity of produce. The funding also provided for a bigger fridge to store more fresh food during the week to give out on service days.

"It has been a little more difficult to get adequate amounts of fresh produce during COVID, so being able to take what is offered during the week and storing it until service days is really helpful," said Ms Clark.

The Hamilton Seventh-day Adventist Church Pantry have been functioning for over three years with over 100 volunteers supporting the charity over that period. "We want to thank the City of Newcastle for the funding and we also need to thank Foodbank and Second Bite for their constant ongoing support," said Ms Clark.

'Treasure Trove' Grand Opening In Bourke

Shaun Hepworth

After 12 months of renovation and shop fit out, the second hand shop in Bourke celebrated it's opening in grand style. The Treasure Trove (or orange shop as it is fast becoming known) opened it's doors on Monday 27th July in grand fashion. Mayor Barry Hollman was there to cut the ribbon and endorse the venture. He said 'He fully supported any new business opening it's doors in the Main Street and hopes we will be there for many years to come.' He also encouraged those present to brush the cobwebs away from their wallets and spend up big! Representatives from the NNSW



Conference, Russell Halliday, Cranville Tooley and Sven Ostring were there to support the venture along with Coonamble church members who travelled out for the event. Shaun Hepworth and Albert Peter renovated and refitted the former café over a period of 12 months with the support of their wives Amanda and Laine. Being mainly an in-house project for Bourke Church, costs were kept to a minimum, making it a viable business option. Since the doors have been opened four Bible studies have been generated with opening day sales of \$2,500 and around 150 people passing through the doors.

An informal café section at the back of the store will be the second phase of the project, completing it as a place of influence in the heart of Bourke.

Happy Hearts

Produced by a mum and son, Happy Hearts is an online program which is widely reaching young families. Being prayerfully visioned as an evangelism tool to share openly with others who may not have heard any bible stories before, these weekly episodes are created in a way that uses a beautiful visual sensory story and easy crafts to encourage the key messages in a fun way. It really engages young children visually also understanding their short attention spans! Families are continuing to join in on the closed group Happy Hearts facebook page and are sharing artworks each week, it has been a beautiful blessing to grow this creative community in times like these to support each other. With now 16 episodes produced with more to come, there are lots of bible stories and parables to choose



from so if you have any young families that you would like to reach in some way through their children, we encourage you to share the youtube link and ultimately share the love of the amazing CREATOR we serve! www.youtube.com/c/happyheartsshow

Testimonial:

We invited one of our child's friends over for tea tonight and watched the 'The Brave Queen' - really enjoyed it! Her friend hasn't heard that story before or said prayer before, so it was a bit new, but she sang and got involved in it all!

Looking For The Loop Hole

Jodie Bird
WHS Coordinator

Here we are in September, 9 months into the 2020 saga that is COVID craziness. We've watched the restrictions change and change again. We've experienced lock down and isolation, lost our conference calendar events and are asking the ever present question of "What is this going to look like next week, next month, next year..."

Thank you to all of you for the efforts you have made in creating a COVIDSafe plan and working within the ever changing landscape. It is so important that now more than ever we dig deep and continue to follow these plans and rules so ultimately we can move forward into a future of no restrictions and open churches.

Some of the rules and restrictions can be a little hard to interpret regarding what you can and can't do. It's frustrating and so hard to deal with when all we want to do is worship. The conference team want to encourage you all to hold fast and continue to err on the side of caution - there is no loop hole! Please continue to socially distance, wear facemasks where distancing is difficult, enjoy the worship team and allow them to sing for you. Remember that there are no luncheons and potlucks - if you want to fellowship, bring a packed lunch. The community are seeing more and more fines and arrests due to non-compliance. We have a chance to set an example as Adventists of respect and confidence in our leaders as we continue to navigate through this tricky time.

The team are always here for you here at the conference office and you are encouraged to reach out with any of your enquiries. We pray for your safety and hope to see you all back in your churches soon.

Who's Missing?

Pr Abel Iorgulescu
General Secretary

I read once about a man who left his wife behind at the petrol station only to realise her absence 96 km later. When he eventually returned to pick her up, she was less than impressed with his oversight.

Are we any better? I sure hope so; however, what about our church family - have you noticed who's missing, who stopped coming to church, or who stopped joining the Zoom meetings?

Over the last 100 years of existence, God has blessed the North NSW Conference, and currently, as of the end of June 2020, we have a membership of 12,271. Unfortunately, according to the statistics collected from 2019, only approximately 50% of our members attend church on any given Sabbath. This means that almost 6,000 precious souls have stopped going to church for various reasons like sickness, hurt, apostasy, discouragement, etc.

We often want to see baptisms, and that's great because God desires the same. However, God also desires that we take the time to observe who's missing from our church family and intentionally search for them.

One of the questions that God asked Cain was - 'Where is your brother?', and Cain replied- "I do not know, am I my brother's keeper?" (Gen 4:9). It appears that we are our brother's and sister's keeper, and we are supposed to know if they are missing. In the first 2 quarters of 2020, God has added through baptism and profession of faith 50 precious souls to His church, and we can rejoice together with heaven over this victory. Unfortunately, during the same period, some people went 'missing'. Have you noticed their absence from your church family?

In Genesis 37:14, we are told that Jacob sent his son Joseph to see if it was well with his brothers. And I believe that God has given us the same mandate, to go and see if it is well with our brothers and sisters that are missing. My appeal to you is that you will prayerfully take the time to notice who's missing in your church family and then consider some of the following steps:

- Pray for them
- Give them a call/send them a message
- Drop off some food
- Inform the pastor/elders of their absence
- Love them back into a relationship with God

Join me as we continue to pray and search for our missing and hurting members.

Serving you - Pr Abel Iorgulescu

NCD Pathway

Empowering Leadership - Part 2
Gillian Knight
NNSW NCD Coordinator

In part 1 of Empowering leadership we looked at the first two themes of leaders enjoying their ministry and how that has an impact all those around them. We also looked at the perceived "overworked" leaders and becoming more intimate with our Spiritual gifting. In part 2 we will look at the last 3 themes that relate to Empowering Leadership.

The questions in the survey related to Empowering Leadership are defined as "the degree to which the organisational structure of the church actively contributes to the healthy growth of the church". The higher the question's result, the greater its contribution to the effectiveness of the structures.

As we look at the questions related to Empowering Leadership in the survey, the questions can be grouped into 5 main themes and we will look at the first two this month.

1. Leaders empower more by enjoying their job
2. Leaders empower by not holding ministry to themselves . . . for any reason
3. Proactively "equipping the saints for the works of service"
4. "Tell 'em what you're going to tell 'em; tell 'em; and tell 'em what you told 'em"
5. Taking the church into the future

3. Proactively "equipping the saints for the works of service"

Q 17 – I know that someone in our church will hold me accountable for meeting the commitments I make
Q20 – Our leaders actively seek to remove barriers that limit my ministry
Q38 – Many people in our church are given the opportunity to actively participate in our worship services.

The Body grows if the parts of the body are growing. To grow the church you have to grow the people. This is a step beyond the previous point: proactively equipping people for the work of ministry is at the heart of empowering leadership.

Interestingly, we often encounter leaders who confuse delegation (which is important) with equipping. Delegation is often task-oriented not people-oriented and focused on the leader. Equipping is focused on everyone contributing to church life in such a way that they are continuing to grow to spiritual maturity. The questions above have strong links to a multitude of questions in Gift-based Ministry and Effective Structures, reflecting the importance of this growth principle from Ephesians 4:11-13.

4. "Tell 'em what you're going to tell 'em; tell 'em; and tell 'em what you told 'em"
Q 31 – Our leaders are good at explaining things

Ralph Neighbour, of cell church fame said, that if you want your people to "get it" you have to communicate the same message six times. That's presuming you are an effective communicator in the first place. It is vital for leaders to develop and hone communication skills to avoid activity in the church based on ignorance, confusion, misunderstanding and incorrect assumptions.

Communication is not about what is said but what is heard. How good is communication in your church? It plays a vital role in empowering.

5. Taking the church into the future

Q 45 – Our leaders clearly believe that God wants our church to grow
Q22 – Our leaders are clearly concerned for people who do not know Jesus Christ

When it comes to these questions there is not much to say. If you have leaders who do not intrinsically understand why these questions are important for empowering people in a Christian church or see it as part of achieving a sustainable healthy growth – you may need new leaders! Loving Him starts with surrendering to His plan for your life. That's what it means to make Him Lord. The nature of God is so vast and complex that no human being can fully know everything there is to know about Him, but life should be about continually seeking Him, learning more about Him and enjoying His fellowship.

And He said, "That you love the Lord you God with all your passion and prayer and muscle and intelligence – and that you love your neighbour as well as you do yourself." Luke 10:27 (The Message)

Wanted: NNSW Conference Historical Material

We are looking for photos and interest stories to do with the early days of the NNSW Conference that people would be willing to share with us and allow us to take copies of.

Please contact: Lyn Price
Email: lynprice@adventist.org.au
Phone: 02 4944 3217

Evangelism Updates

In 2021 all Conference Evangelism will be moved online. Dates for the series and information on how local church members and churches can get involved will be coming your way soon. Please keep the production and the evangelists in your prayers as we develop these online resources.

Arise 2021 is still scheduled to happen. Applications for the program will open in Sep 2020 (confirm with Lynden). For more information please go to www.ariseaustralia.org

Bible Worker Report

Matt Parra
Evangelism Director

There are 7 Evangelism/ Personal Ministries Departmental Bible Workers presently working in NNSW Conference. They are serving in, Gosford, Raymond Terrace, Bourke, Murwillumbah, Gateway, the Newcastle University Church Plant, and Grafton. Below are a few stats of how the year is going so far. They've had to persevere through a lot due to the COVID-19 crisis we're in the midst of but praise God they're still moving forward in faith and doing all they can for Christ.

Month | Weekly Bible Studies (avg) | Number of people in studies | Baptisms

JAN	35	62	0
FEB	38	80	0
MAR	42	72	0
APR	40	71	0
MAY	45	83	2
JUN	50	96	0

Please remember the team in your prayers. Also please keep the many other Bible Workers who are serving locally or as volunteers around the traps in prayer as well. We don't wrestle against flesh and blood and the weapons of our warfare are not physical. Although we can praise God,

He's given us a good number of Bible studies. We need His Spirit's power to see our friends/ contacts experience true repentance in Jesus's name.

Children's Ministries Update

Discounted Hire at NNSW Children's Ministries Resource Centre (Creative Spaces)

The Covid Pandemic continues to change the world as we know it. However ministry continues in one form or another.

Pr Daron Pratt, Children's Ministries Director says that "We know that families are more likely to go to churches where great children's spaces and programming exists. One of the key findings of recent Barna research was that nearly six in 10 engaged parents say children's programming is the primary reason they chose their current church proving that even though children may be small, they carry big weight when it comes to family decisions about going to and where to worship. This suggests that, for churches to attract and retain families, children's spaces and programs must be a key part of our ministry plans."

In light of this the fact that some smaller churches and our schools are open again, the NNSW Children's Ministries Resource Centre is offering 50% off its current hire prices for all our Backdrops, props and VBS kits. So when you are open again don't forget to talk to us about how we can make your space great. Contact Daron or his assistants at the Conference office. They are here to help.

Contact: Ph 4951 8088 (Office Hours)
Email nnsw.conf@adventist.org.au

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Contributions

We would love to share local news with the conference in print or online. Please send through relevant contributions to the above contact address.

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