

# SU News

*"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."*  
Psalm 119:105



## AEF Convention



**The AEF is an Aboriginal Christian organisation formed in the seventies to give Aboriginal Christians opportunities in leadership and fellowship.**

**The AEF Convention is held every two years in Port Augusta with Aboriginal Christians coming from across Australia to worship.**

Our team of 24 SU volunteers came from a variety of Adelaide churches. Our program in Port August incorporated a leadership development program for emerging leaders, with opportunities to challenge themselves and engage in an element of ministry new to them. These included, leading morning devotions, sharing their testimony, leading small group discussions, games and other activities.

Feedback from the leaders was extremely positive. Emerging Aboriginal leaders were excited to have the opportunity to lead in their own community and develop their skills. It was obvious that all the Aboriginal children and youth looked up to

our Aboriginal leaders and these leaders spoke into their lives of God's love.

Our non-Aboriginal emerging leaders were excited to form relationships with Aboriginal people and learn about Aboriginal culture and faith. There was a very close bond which developed between the team over the week and we feel this has set a culture for future programs where Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal leaders work together and learn from each other.

The program theme was 'The Promise Keeper,' the morning program for primary aged children included fun activities, interviews with Aboriginal elders, a message by Ema Bovoro on God's covenant with Abraham, David and Jesus, plus Lost Sheep stories from Andrew McDonough. Children explored their place in God's story and their identity in it through discussions of 'Who is your mob?' and 'Where are you from?' which broadened out to include the family of God and Jesus as the ultimate promise keeper.

In the evenings we were inundated with children and youth for our sport themed activities. These evening sessions gave an opportunity for all our leaders to engage

with Aboriginal youth, build their leadership skills and share their faith. This was a highly successful endeavour which has not been attempted at previous conventions.

One highlight for our team was our mission trip to the Aboriginal community of Davenport where we ran a children's program. This was a great opportunity for children not connected to the AEF convention to hear about God's special love for them. The following day our bus transported some Davenport children to our morning program at the convention and we were blessed to see one of these boys give his life to Jesus. We are very thankful to God for opening the doors to the Davenport Community.

Scripture Union's partnership with AEF was made possible through the enormous amount of prayer support in the lead up to and during the event. Working with the Aboriginal Christian community is an incredible privilege and honour and we hope to have the opportunity to walk alongside young Aboriginal leaders in the future.

**Cherith Harvey**  
At-Risk Ministry, First Nations Ministry Coordinator

*Life, Love & Hope for a Young Generation*



## From the Director

So many people have an SU story. As I travel the state, speak in churches and connect with volunteers, I get to hear many stories about how the ministry of SU made a difference in people's lives, and my own life is no different.

As a teenager growing up in country NSW attending a traditional Church of England (Anglican) church, God to me was distant, not relevant and basically someone I could ignore. I was busy living my own life the way I wanted to live it. The hymns sung to an organ, the auto prayers that I knew off by heart from the prayer book and the adult focused sermons and services did nothing to show me who Jesus really was. That was until a young, new assistant priest began a Sunday afternoon youth club in 1985. So, as my parents expected it, and there was was nothing better to do, I went along each Sunday. Mostly for the games, food and girls that were there.

...where did the spark of faith begin for me? ... I didn't know it at the time but this was where my SU journey began.

I didn't know it at the time but this was where my SU journey began. Each Sunday we would do one short Bible study from a little book called 'This Man Was Different' all about introducing you to Jesus through the gospel of Mark. Only a few months later I committed my life to Christ at a youth camp. I began attending an ISCF ( Inter School Christian Fellowship ) lunch group at my high school run by SU and in 1986 at 17, I became the ISCF student leader also attending an SU student conference and Beach Mission that year. From this point the SU story continues in various forms.

But where did the spark of faith begin for me? Where did that seed begin to grow? In a little unassuming booklet that takes you on a step by step journey through Mark's gospel to discover who Jesus really is. Produced and published by SU Australia.

If not for SU I may not be walking in God's grace today. Thank you SU for all you have done and continue to do for my life.

Chris Battistuzzi

Chris Battistuzzi  
Executive Director



## From the Chair



HOPE! That's an interesting word. What does it actually mean for today's people? From a biblical perspective it offers much. However, where there is no understanding of the biblical context, hope, if relevant at all, becomes a word that will resonate with all sorts of people differently, and its weight will be directly proportionate to the intensity of the desire for improved outcomes.

And again, if relevant, where or from whom does that hope actually come from? Who delivers on it? Well these days, there is a whole lot of self-sufficiency being taught at all levels. What is the need for hope anyway? We are responsible for our future outcomes and that's it.

I asked three non-Christian young people (19yo; 28yo and 36yo) to discuss the concept of hope.

Generally, they thought hope was important because it gives perspective when setting future goals. Hope is a conduit to bring one to their destination, but it didn't have much practicality about it. All felt they didn't use the word as part of general life discussion. It was really related to more personal moments or events, and interestingly, felt the word belongs more to the optimist, than to the pessimist. There was a naivety and fogginess about it.

The SUSA slogan, alongside its logo says, SUSA - Life, Love and Hope for a young generation. How do we actually deliver that hope, and why?

The message for the younger generation is that if they put their hope in Jesus then their future is assured, and they can have full confidence that He will deliver. He will care for them into their future, He will guide them through, He will take out anxiety and provide peace, He will give them strength, He will hear them and speak with them, He will give them true identity. The list is long. That is far different from putting hope in nothing, or in oneself, or in someone else, or in something undefined, something vague, where a "maybe" is the best expected outcome.

With Jesus, hope is suddenly a new discovery and becomes very very relevant as a word to be included in a persons' life view. In fact, it's key!

As a young person I was sent to Sydney to live with another family... not by choice, but out of necessity. I lost my friendship group and my immediate family. My hopes and dreams lost context, and I was despairing and inwardly weakened. I wasn't a Christian. The family I was sent to were Christians. In fact, the father was a minister of religion. Not happy.

But you know what? They accepted me unconditionally and demanded nothing of me. No judgement. I had the luxury of witnessing a Christian family conduct life. I could see faith, love and hope- in everyday action. That eventually took me out of worrying about creating my own destiny, about finding someone or something in whom or in which to entrust my hope, and into handing the job across to Jesus. Thankyou.

Isaiah 40:30-31 was for me, (and for all).

"Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who HOPE in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not be faint."

David Jenkinson

SUSAC Council Chairperson

# SUSA agm

Date: Saturday 27th August

Online through the Zoom digital platform. Open to all SU volunteers and members. TIME: 7pm to 8:30pm.

To RSVP and receive meeting details please contact the SUSA office: 8235 9500 / [info@susa.org.au](mailto:info@susa.org.au)



## Andrew's Story



**B**oth sides of my family are from the seaside town of Wallaroo. The place has a certain historical tie to my family. So, each year we would travel to Wallaroo and stay in the caravan park at North Beach.

We would meet up with the same group of friends and play lots of cricket, swim at the pool near the jetty or North Beach, and as we got older, drive cars and get to know some of the girls our age. It was the same every year.

During the 1985/86 Christmas holidays something very different happened. A Scripture Union Beach Mission set up camp in the caravan park. We all thought that was fine as they had a number of activities for the younger members of the caravan park, but weren't really going to affect us - until the members of the Beach Mission challenged us to a game of cricket.

As the Beach Mission team invited us back to their kitchen tent for lunch, our friendship group got decidedly bigger and a three game cricket series began between the Wallaroo Wombats and the Crusaders. The Wombats always won!!!!

We all parted ways mid-January 1986. So, lots of best wishes, hope it goes well and plenty of see you next year. Except something different happened during the year. Members from the Beach Mission team kept in touch. They sent cards and letters offering support, prayers and encouragement. Something was different about these people.

During the summer of 1986/87 my family and I set off for our Wallaroo trip and the Beach Mission people were there again. The cricket series started up along with other activities we liked. I need to make mention of one incredible person in Wendy Rayner who actually befriended the whole Marks family. Wendy would talk to us and challenge us. We thought we were doing ok, we were good people who did the right thing. But Wendy and others kept talking about heaven, eternal life, forgiveness.

My brother and I drove back to Adelaide to play cricket and I remember saying; 'Ok God if you are really there help me get this bloke out.' I remember the thought of bowling a leg spinner so I did and yes, it got him out.

I travelled back to Wallaroo and the next conversation with Wendy concluded with me giving my life to the Lord and becoming a Christian. A few days later my brother followed suit.

Wendy and some others showed amazing discipleship. They introduced us to a local church and stayed with us until we were settled and disciplined further.

Christmas 1987/88 was different, I still played for the Wombats and we still beat the Crusaders. Wendy spent more time with my parents.

On our return to Adelaide mum became a Christian. On the day of my baptism in January 1988 my dad gave his life to the Lord.

I went to university and studied to become a teacher. I taught in Christian schools for 21 years in Adelaide and Melbourne. Later I worked for the West Adelaide Football Club as the Football Manager. I believed that was a calling from God. Now I am back doing relief teaching and hoping God can put me where my skills and abilities can be utilised.

Life certainly hasn't been easy since becoming a Christian. It was a struggle to have a family but in November 1997 my amazing Amy was born. Amy is now studying at the Bible College of South Australia and is a youth worker at City Reach Baptist. Amy has also been a team member on a few beach missions.

**Andrew Marks Story continues on back page.**

## SUPA Stories



**Y**ear in year out dozens of SU volunteers lead outreach into schools and their local communities as part of Scripture Union Primary Aged ministry. They share the gospel in many ways through topical lessons, friendship, fun and presentations at Easter and Christmas time. The following feedback represents some of the stories we have heard.

Even during coronavirus restrictions the doors were open to hear the gospel in schools.

"Who would have thought after all that has happened with COVID 19 and schools, that we would be able to have a COP ( Christian Option Program ) in term 2!?! Ringing to check early this term if there was any possibility of us being able to present the Heroes COP booked earlier in the year, we were thrilled to have the teachers say they wanted us to come, and the Principal confirmed we had permission to go into the school. We were the first 'outsiders' allowed into the school during COVID19 restrictions and our first session was a joy as **the teachers and students happily welcomed us and the message of Jesus being the best hero anyone could follow!**

A teacher came to tell us-' That was great, very creative way to get across your message. Don't stop doing this. The kids need to know this!'

One Malaysian girl said that she was from a different culture but wanted to know what Christians believed.

**the teachers and students happily welcomed us and the message of Jesus being the best hero anyone could follow!**

There's always a lot of interesting conversations when kids ask their questions. Here's just some of the questions they ask;

*Where did God come from?*

*How do we know Jesus is real?*

*If Jesus can walk on water, can he swim on land?*

*How did the world begin?*

*How could Jesus be God and the son of God at the same time?*

*Can we see the spirit of people who die?*

*How do I go to heaven?*

After an Easter presentation a teacher spoke to one of the SU team and said; 'I had heard about Jesus dying but I never knew that He rose from the dead.' They also asked for a Bible, which SU of course was only too willing to provide.

After a recent COP a Yr 7 boy stood up ( unprompted by the teacher ) and thanked the team for coming and sharing, saying that now he understood about Jesus. This boy came from a Hindu family.

A family lost their father tragically to suicide and through the SUPA Club ministry the local churches reached out providing support for the children, meals and a listening ear. It's all part of how SU ministry can show and share Jesus.

**Would you or your church like to hear more about reaching into your community through schools? Just contact the SUSA office.**



# Margie's Story



As a child my family would go to Beachport every Christmas for a whole month. This was my absolute favourite time of the year. I can't recall what age I started attending the SU Family Mission in the Caravan Park, but I must have been very young.

I come from a non-Christian family, so this time of the year was special for me. As far back as I can remember I have always believed that Jesus died on the cross for me. There was never a time that I ever questioned it - Jesus' love was instilled in my heart.

*To me, going on Beach Mission isn't a numbers game, it's a heart game.*

Going to Beach Mission was a huge highlight of my life. It was not only about being taught from the Bible, but the love that was shown to me from the SUFM team. For many years several people faithfully wrote letters to me, which was so special because life was not easy for me. I was bullied at school, so having those people who genuinely loved and cared for me was such an amazing witness to me.

As an adult I moved to Adelaide and through my connections with them I was able to instantly connect with a church. I have been on countless Beach Mission teams and the older I get, the more I realise how significant Beach Mission can be in the life of a child.

To me, going on Beach Mission isn't a numbers game, it's a heart game. If in all the countless hours I have spent on many SUFM teams one child comes to Christ, it is so worth it.

*'Margie Wintulich and her family have been a key part of Family Missions for many years and continue to serve God faithfully in this way*

### Andrew Marks Story, continued from page 3

Unfortunately, I have been through a couple of marriage separations that have had a big impact on my mental health. Severe depression and anxiety have at times taken their toll. There were times that were really dark and I wondered whether God was there. God is always there. He never gives up on us but we sometimes give up on ourselves.

# SU Family Mission Dates



Now is the time to put your hand up and join a SU Family Mission Team. The 2021 season needs volunteers to share Jesus with kids, teens and families.

With a selection of beautiful locations to choose from what better way to spend a week in January than sharing God's good news with a broken world.

Victor Harbor	27th Dec 2020-5th Jan 2021
Port Vincent	2nd -9th Jan 2021
Tumby Bay	2nd -9th Jan 2021
Moonta	2nd-9th Jan 2021
Mannum	2nd -9th Jan 2021
Kangaroo Island	10th -18th April 2021

Julie Calvert | Missions Coordinator



Through the amazing care and nurture of my Church I am certainly back walking in the light. I have also married an amazing lady Karen who is a Pastoral Care Worker with the School's Ministry Group.

Yes, I still keep in touch with Wendy Rayner, she is part of the family. May I finish with this verse from Proverbs which Wendy sent to me during 1986 - *Proverbs 16:3 "Commit to the Lord in all that you do and all of your plans shall succeed"*.

# Father & Son's Camp



# Freedom & Glory!



Gents Camp 2020  
October 3rd-6th

Mylor Adventure  
Campsite

[www.wired-youth.com](http://www.wired-youth.com)

For further information contact Hamilton McNicol, SUSA State Youth Coordinator



SU News is published by Scripture Union of South Australia Inc.

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Winter | 2020

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