

Connections

The latest from Young Life Australia

Winter 2022



Celebrating
50 yrs

‘I know the plans I have for you’ Jeremiah 29:11

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 **YoungLife**
Australia

Message from Mark Stretton

A personal invitation to our 50th Anniversary

Welcome to the winter edition of our Connections Newsletter.

I am so grateful for your support to our end of financial year appeal, along with your multiple messages of encouragement!

I am assured that God is always at work, even through the changes that may feel unsettling, I know He has good plans for us.

As I look all over the world, I am reminded of the incredible impact Young Life is making in over 100 countries. And while here Australia we celebrate 50 years of ministry, we continue to pray that the next 50 will make an even bigger impact on our young people.

Please consider this as my personal invitation to you: I would love to shake your hand at the Anniversary Dinner on 26 August, so we can laugh, remember and celebrate the goodness of God over Young Life through the years.

Please email me if you have any photos or exciting stories to share at the anniversary and can I humbly ask you to please continue to cover us in prayer.

Warmly, **Mark Stretton**
Field Operations Manager
markstretton@younglife.org.au

Words by Daryl Redford

The Final Departure of a Legacy Maker

It was a sad day on 6 July, to hear that the great mentor and friend Reg Pearce passed away.

Reg and Val were instrumental in the establishment of Young Life mission in Australia. There are so many great stories and blessings to countless young leaders, staff, and kids both in Australia and into Asia.

Reg met with Cliff Johnson when Cliff and Liz settled in Australia in the early 70's. He was instrumental in bringing Charles (Chuck) Lehman and Anne to live in Australia with their kids Doug and Kathy. These couples helped grow the mission locally. His enthusiasm for the Young Life mission to grow in Australia was boosted by his visits to the US taking Aussie adults on visits to summer camps. On one of those trips he secured the 'Point Person' idea and the fantastic 'pastoral' visits organised with John Miller and his wife Beverley, and Bob Reeverts and his wife Anne.

He was a coordinator of High School Sport in Victoria. Reg took tours to the USA, in a sort of 'exchange', where the Americans brought Basketball teams here, and he took a whole AFL footy team of high school kids to a USA experience!

He was friend and co-organiser of some great Basketball games with Lindsay Gaze, father of Aussie player Andrew Gaze, and the then Melbourne Tigers. The 'Allstar' American kids were beaten by the Tigers despite them winning every High School, and suburban comp team they played.

But above all, was Reg's dedication to the growth of Young Life where he was chairman of the 'southern chapter' in Victoria, along with Stuart McPhail (and his wife Joan) who was the 'northern chapter' chairman of Young Life in NSW. Together they championed the cause with the growth of a board for the establishment of Young Life Australia, and the exciting and growing mission in the late 70's.

Reg established solid connections with the local schools, and he was a constant mentor and friend.

There will be many former leaders in YL welcoming Reg into the presence of Jesus, and many more here, remembering and celebrating the one who took them to faith in Jesus Christ as kids.

Part of a global movement

Catching the African Fire



It's Saturday Afternoon, Day 3 of Conference. Our mini bus pulls off the main road, and down a steep road, descending into a sunken neighbourhood of Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania. As the bus crawls along this rough, narrow track the faces of many women and children stare back at us, the foreign visitors. We park seemingly in the middle of the road, and get out to walk a windy, up and down path, until we begin to hear the familiar sound of clapping and "Jambo" being sang with joy across the neighbourhood. We arrive at our destination, the patio and home of Young Life leader, David and his father.

This is their campaigner (small group) meeting place, and we are invited to join in the singing and dance, first an energetic song of welcome, and then a heart felt song of praise. All sung in Swahili, but we have learnt quickly that the Holy Spirit transcends language barriers, we don't need to hear English to understand the heart.

We engage in a Discovery Bible Study session (known locally as DBS), as our guide Lavina switches translating between English and Swahili.

David then gets a chance to tell his story, how a Young Life Leader found him, encouraged him to join the soccer team, and shared Jesus with him. Now David gets the chance to do the same with other younger boys in his neighbourhood.

I am struck again by the difference knowing Jesus can make in the life of a young person. Whether in the neighbourhoods of Tanzania, the slums of India or the schools in Barossa Valley, Young Life leaders bring hope, invitations to participate in community and adventure, and opportunities to say yes to Jesus. Every young person has the right to know about Jesus — that's what Jim Rayburn Young Life founder says. 80 years on, it's still 100% true, and Young Life is a vehicle for making that happen.



We were both privileged to be invited to attend the Young Life Africa and Middle East edition of the Global Leadership Conference, in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania in June.

We were part of a cohort from the Asia Pacific division of Young Life globally.

We were blown away by the hospitality and generosity of our African hosts, as well as the humility of the American service and support staff who made the trip to Tanzania. We were inspired through teaching and learning on what it means to be a volunteer movement, strategic planning, discipleship and reaching Gen Z. We have come back more convinced than ever that the best is yet to come for Young Life in Australia, and we look forward to deepening our global and local Young Life partnerships, as we think about reaching the next kid, the next school and the next city.

By Sophie Wilksch and Ben Hura

University ministry

I lift up my eyes to the hills...



In April, Young Life Australia held their first ever Young Life university camp in Perisher Valley, New South Wales.

Thirty university students from across several Australian universities gathered together for an incredible weekend of adventure, community and Jesus.

From Friday night until Monday morning, the days were packed with activities and talks that challenged our students to take a deeper look at the significance in life that we find when we take that step in following Jesus. With guest speaker Travis Davis from Young Life Singapore, he talked about Jesus' love, grace, and His heart for us.



One of the highlights of the trip was hiking to the top of a mountain; our young people were able to bond with one another and spend time at the top of the mountain in prayer and reflection.

The sense of peace and stillness while watching the sunset was incredibly powerful and moving.

There's a deep reminder that we are part of something far bigger than

ourselves, and it gives testimony to God's glory and the freedom we have in Christ when we find ourselves looking upon the vastness and beauty of God's creation.

We are so excited for how God is working and moving in Macquarie University and we have been praying continuously for the young people in our communities, that they would know His

incredible love and the hope we have in Him. If you would like to hear more about our plans in the university space and how you can be involved, please email jessmartin@younglife.org.au

I would love to share more about what God is doing in this space and how you can be a part of it.

Blessings, Jess Martin

Chaplaincy

A life-line in the bush



Young Life Australia has been a National Chaplaincy Program provider since 2007. For one of our chaplains in far Central West NSW, the need for ongoing support for young people in schools is dire.

Last year Amy* sought help with issues she was experiencing. She was very distressed, couldn't focus in class, had difficulty maintaining friendships and was in constant conflict with their carer (an unrelated adult). Amy had a pattern of transient behaviour, was often moving between family members, and on one occasion participated in illicit drug use, exhibiting paranoid behaviour. Being located in an isolated rural community, there are no mental health support services available close by. As a chaplain, and with permission from the school and other parties

involved, our chaplain was able to accompany Amy to a GP and advocated for her to receive a mental health care plan which included urgent mental health intervention.

As a result of the advocacy and support given to her through the chaplaincy role, Amy was able to have immediate assessment, treatment, and ongoing counselling, and as a result this has completely turned her life around.

She is currently high functioning in school, has improved peer relationships and has now settled living with her biological mother. That is good news!

*Name changed for privacy purposes.

Summer Camp

The YL way to speeding up relationships

A week-long trip is the perfect opportunity to share adventure and deepen relationships. In Young Life, we have a camping culture, where we have the opportunity to spend time with our friends in incredible places doing crazy things. The question is why? Why do we do camping with our friends?

Firstly, to take kids out of their element so that distractions are limited, focus is increased and THE GOSPEL is shared. Giving away the Good News is the reason we take young people away. The second "why" is to fast forward relationships.

A few days away with young people will bring everyone together in a way that can't happen at a weekly Young Life club. Kids come back with inside jokes, fun stories, road trip memories, and – hopefully – having built meaningful relationships.

In a week, friendships can get to the point of real honesty and get to process the gospel in a way that would be hard to do otherwise. Our Summer Camp is only a few months away! Register a young person to have the best week of their lives from **January 15–21, 2023** younglife.org.au/summercamp



Yes!

I will help young people find hope and purpose across Australia.

Please accept my gift of:

\$50 \$75 \$100

\$560 I'd like to sponsor a kid to camp

Your gift will help train and raise youth mentors and will support the running of weekly outreach activities and clubs for young people in Australia.

I want to become a monthly supporter:

I would like to show my support to young people by becoming a **YoungLife Friend** with a **monthly gift** from my credit card

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OR

Or sign up online younglife.org.au/give

My contact details: If your contact details have changed please update them here:

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Please find enclosed: Cheque (payable to Young Life Australia inc)

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Send back your donation form in the envelope provided



You can call us 1300 557 647



Donate online younglife.org.au/give

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SUMMER CAMP

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SUMMER CAMP IS BETTER TOGETHER!

REGISTER ONLINE: YOUNGLIFE.ORG.AU/SUMMERCAMP

Date: 15-21 January 2023

Venue: The Station, Jindabyne, NSW

Cost: \$640 excluding transport

Early bird rate: \$560 ends Nov 30

Let's be praying for all of our camping staff and for every young person that will encounter Jesus at Young Life camp this summer!



Send back your donation form
in the envelope provided



You can call us
1300 557 647



Donate online
younglife.org.au/give