



*Photos: young people enjoying SU activities throughout the Summer*



**It is with thankfulness to God that Tasmania welcomes our new SU Regional Manager, Stephanie Sebastian. Here Stephanie shares about our exciting national vision and what this has looked like in Tasmania over Summer.**

**What a blessing and privilege it is to be part of the SU fellowship in Tasmania!**

As part of a national SU movement, we share the vision "that every child, young person and family in Australia has opportunities of transforming experiences with Jesus and a life-long journey of discipleship and service."

In Tasmania, this has recently looked like this: The SU summer started with the bushwalking adventure, 'Taking on Goliath', which was followed up with Stanley Beach Mission, East Devonport Holiday Happening, and the St Helens Beach Mission before COVID concerns meant our family camps in the north and south were postponed. We're excited that we now have 45 campers and 12 leaders looking forward to these camps in the autumn and winter months.

Just before school went back, we celebrated the start of a new SU ministry, the Lego Club in George Town, enjoyed an Element Camp reunion at the Gorge in Launceston, and the SU Northern Suburbs Kids Games started up again in Invermay. We also held our first state-wide Chaplaincy PL Day which was a wonderful opportunity to connect, share and equip our chaplains as they prepared for another year at school.

Halfway through Term 1 and with the theme, "Let's all walk together!", a group of determined teenagers and young adults set

out to walk up to the Scout Hut at Cradle Mountain for the Bush N' Biscuits Camp and got to experience God's love for them.

Finally, we rounded off an exciting summer of mission through launching the national vision of SU in Tasmania at the three events: a breakfast celebration in Hobart, a dessert night in Ulverstone, and a commissioning service in Launceston. We were inspired to hear of future plans for SU and had the privilege of hearing from Peter James, CEO of SU Australia.

This edition of *SU News* will be our final "SU Tasmania" branded newsletter and our next edition will see a nationally developed 'SU Australia' newsletter with a Tasmanian focus. While this will have a new look, our mission hasn't changed. We still continue to meet children, young people, and their families where they are at, champion Bible engagement and prayer, partner with churches and communities, equip and release volunteer leaders, and explore innovative ways for connection and mission.

Thank you for your invaluable partnership and helping us to multiply our ministries in Tasmania through your prayers, ideas, time, passion, dedication, and generosity! Thank you also for the warm welcome and encouragement that I received as I your new Regional Manager in Tasmania. Let me also extend a very special 'thank you' to Jenny Cowley who has humbly, wisely, and faithfully navigated us through a period of rapid changes.



We look forward to embarking on a journey of discovery with you, exploring innovative ideas, and embracing new audiences in our mission to help more children, young people, and families discover life in God's big story. Yours in SU fellowship,

Stephanie Sebastian



## Vision Roadshow

The SU Australia Vision Launch tour in Tasmania inspired supporters to continue outworking SU's mission as they heard from Peter James, Group CEO of SU Australia, and Stephanie Sebastian, our newly appointed SU Regional Manager for Tasmania.

Stephanie and Peter started their island tour on Saturday 19 March with a breakfast at Hope Christian Church in North Hobart. The event was coordinated by Ruth Pinkerton, former SU Tas State Director, and was emceed by Richard Humphrey, son of the late Dennis Humphrey, who was the original chair of SU Tas and who, with his wife Delyth, was a significant contributor to SU in the state. Ruth says, "There was a real sense of the good things of the past going on to flourish in the future (and now) stronger together in the new national structure".

After a pit-stop lunch at long-term SU supporters David and Jennifer Meadows' home in Launceston, it was then on to a dessert evening on the Saturday night at the Anglican Church in Ulverstone. The gathering was coordinated by former SU Tas staff and council member, Sally Tibbits, and emceed by Barb Totterdell from the Anglican Church. 30 locals gathered together to hear from Peter and Stephanie and were encouraged by locals involved in NW ministries in the past and today.

The culmination of the weekend was the commissioning service of Stephanie as Regional Manager at Punchbowl Christian Church in Launceston on the Sunday. Approximately 130 people attended and it was wonderful to see so many familiar faces – current and past participants of SU ministries – and members of the SU family. Peter James inspired us to see ourselves as part of the bigger picture, while continuing to engage in the work of God through SU in our local area. Stephanie was interviewed by former council member Tania Strong, and shared highlights of the past 10 years, including encouraging stories of God at work through SU. The commissioning concluded with David Meadows praying a powerful prayer for God's wisdom, guidance and anointing.

Thank you to all those who helped put together these events and made it a wonderful blessing for all who attended.

## EAST DEVONPORT HOLIDAY HAPPENING

**At East Devonport Holiday Happening, a small gathering of children had lots of fun with as the talked about the love of God, along with some great teaching from the gospels.**

Even though there were some late changes to the team, Matt from the Anglican church agreed to take over as director, and with the help of long-term volunteers Stephanie and Sandra helped deliver a successful program.

Each of the participants enjoyed a mix of fun activities, including making crafts, outside ball games, delicious snacks and opportunities to explore the Bible.

Team leader Matt said, "It's been really exciting not knowing what to expect. The numbers varied day-to-day, but we're here for the kids that come. There's been

lots of pockets of joy. We have a rule here that we care for each other, and watching them do that has been just incredible. Being very loving and inclusive of each other, and really wanting to teach each other how God loves each other as well – has been fantastic to be part of."

We're looking forward to this event being even bigger and better next year. Pray too for a good connection with the local East Devonport community and that families will feel confident about their children attending.



## ST HELENS BEACH MISSION

**The theme of this year's St Helens Beach Mission was "Ready, Set, Go!" with a fun, sports theme. We learned about finishing the race - our faith walk with God - by focusing on Jesus and working together.**

A highlight this year was seeing two new families coming along including one young mum with three kids who had been living rough. She found restful space for the first time in a long while as we cared for her children.

Each year it's a joy to see participants joining in the drama on stage and this year was no exception. With an evil council worker trying to bring down a sports centre, the team had to come together and prove to the Mayor that it was a great service to the community.

We have some families coming year after year and it is great to see them flourish and grow. Keep the first full week in January free for the next St Helens Beach Mission!



## KIDS GAMES CONTINUES IN LAUNCESTON



**We are excited to see the SU Northern Suburbs Kids Games in Launceston start up again for a second year.** As some of our readers would know, the concept arose from an identified need to have a Christian children's program in an area of the community where there are no churches with activities for young people. With the help of local SU chaplains, this small group has now grown to a core group of 25 children, plus mums, dads, nans and pops.

It has been particularly heart-warming to see a struggling mum now become a regular, along with her two young children. After a lifestyle that has been plagued by drugs and having her older children taken away by social services, these afternoons provide for her balance, positive connections and joy for her children while she is trying to get her life back on track. May the Lord continue to help us be His hand and feet in this community.



Photos: Activities at Stanley Beach Mission.

**Stanley Beach Mission 2022 was once again a wonderful relationship-building opportunity for the Stanley community.** Despite some wind and rain, everyone had great fun as the team was able to make new friends and re-connect with participants from previous years. Within the first few days over 100 people had participated, and caravan park attendees were grateful to have friendly and assuring faces engage with them amidst some sense of fear in the community through the COVID situation.

The theme this year was "Survivor" where we learnt about teamwork, and never giving up as we fix our eyes on God. Lasertag was again a highlight at the local primary school. The team introduced a two-minute "God talk" where a team member shared their testimony and shared about the love of God. Other activities included super duper, roller coaster, sandcastle an obstacle race and water fight, making pancakes, campfire and special speakers and music.

Team director Kristen said, "We love the people and the whole team are vessels for God. Whatever he wants to do we prayerfully ask and he blesses us all the way. We're doing it all for him and we're here to love people, giving the time and open ears."

A huge thanks to the team, local and Burnie churches and our generous sponsors. We're looking forward to Stanley Beach Mission in 2023!

## WELCOME TO NEW STAFF

**SU Australia welcomes Suzette and Kate to the Tasmanian SU team!**

Suzette is our Field Support Administrator in Tasmania, taking care of reception and assisting SU workers and volunteers with clerical needs. Kate looks after Finance and Administration of SU in Tasmania.

Both Suzette and Kate are based in the Hobart office. We're thankful to have them on board as they help support our field workers in Tasmania and beyond.



## LEGO CLUB IN GEORGE TOWN

**Jesus and His disciples often taught people in the open air. This summer SU, the Good News Club Ministry of Northern Tasmania, and All Saints Anglican Network George Town had a first go at ministering to the community of George Town at Windmill Point Park with a Lego Club.**

Children enjoyed a lego challenge to build each day followed by the story of Nehemiah and a gospel-focused memory verse.

While we had a limited number of children each day, one story stands out. As we were finishing up by teaching the memory verse on Wednesday, a couple came to use the BBQs for a tour group. They listened quietly while we finished teaching the children. In the process, they heard the memory verse 1 Corinthians 15:3, 4 which is the gospel in a nutshell. Who knows what God will do in lives who hear his word?

We hope that this is the beginning of opportunities to connect with the community. We're already looking at ways to have a Lego Club again next year.



## FOR YOUR PRAYERS

- Pray for the ongoing chaplaincy vacancies positions across the state, and that they will be filled soon by qualified and capable personnel.
- Pray for our upcoming Family Camps that are now to be held on 22-26 April (North) and 15-18 July (South).
- Pray for churches and Easter events and opportunities across the state. Pray for the Launceston Alive Easter Festival.
- Give thanks for the volunteers and supporters across each of our districts North, South and North West across Tasmania and the vital part they play in with us to further ministry.



# Small Treasures

As I have recently changed role from the Regional Manager position of SU in Tasmania, I took the opportunity to sort out my office desk, and discovered some old cards and messages:

From an SU ministry volunteer ... "Thank you for believing in me and giving me the opportunity." From a church ... "Thank you so much for blessing us this weekend. We are so grateful for people like you who share about so many things that matter." From a visionary supporter ... "You have taken our amateur ideas and created a beautiful, professional and user-friendly package." From a young camper ... "Thank you for giving me a great time at camp."

These small treasures are a blessing to me as I give thanks to God for the relationships I have formed over 30 years with many of you through roles at SU as school and camp volunteer, team leader, program writer, trainer in ministry with children and families, ChildSafe developer, chaplaincy supporter and most recently, acting State Director and Regional Manager. I now look forward to a different role where I can use my gifts to resource others in ministry.

May I commend to you Stephanie Sebastian as I pass on the baton of leadership in Tasmania. Stephanie has been working with SU in Tasmania for 10 years and brings plenty of creativity and passion to her new role. It has been a privilege to work with her as a colleague and now as leader of SU in our state. She will be a great blessing to SU and I wish her well in the position.

As we work under a new national SU Australia brand (see below) and with new leadership, there will be greater opportunities to make God's Good News known to children, young people and families and to encourage people of all ages to meet God daily through the Bible and prayer. This is why we continue to value your prayers and your generous support.

May God bless you as you work with us to make a difference in the lives of young people and families across Tasmania.

**Jenny Cowley**  
SU Australia



## GOOD BYE & THANK YOU JAMES!

**It is with sadness but thankfulness to God that we say farewell to James Todd, our NW Regional Coordinator, who finished with SU in December.**



**James has been a wonderful asset to the SU team, both as a chaplain and staff member. Below James shares some reflections from his time with us:**

"At the end of 2021 and after 12 years with Scripture Union Tasmania, I made the difficult decision to move on to a new chapter of work. I'll be now working in my birth/school town of Devonport, supporting families through the challenging time of life that comes with funerals.

I certainly left SU with many fond memories and experiences. Being a full-time school chaplain for six years was an incredible and unexpected career change in 2010. I have lifelong friends from Penguin District School and relationships with community groups and churches that I wouldn't have had otherwise.

Transitioning then into the Regional Coordinator /Field Development Manager role was also rewarding. It was a great joy for me to go back into schools and see what chaplains are doing in their communities. I especially enjoyed meeting up with church communities from across the state (but especially in the NW), working with pastors and church members, and helping quite a few navigate child safety requirements.

I will avoid naming people, but some of the highlights include: the many camps and school excursions, including trips to the Gold Coast, Vietnam, Cambodia; learning to surf (sort of!); re-engaging with bush walking; attending computer camps; and SU conferences inter-state.

Lastly, SU Tas has been a real blessing to my family (and lately the wider SU Australia family) and I cannot speak more favourably about the entire team, their passion, faith and work. I wish you all well and pray daily that God will continue to bless this state, country and globe through the work of staff, volunteers and supporters of Scripture Union."



James in 2013 at Deypher Camp (NW)

## OUR NEW SU AUSTRALIA BRAND

**When we merged to become SU Australia in June last year, we did so to reach more children, young people, and their families in more communities in Tasmania and across Australia.**

But more than simply 'reach' more, it's about giving more people, especially young people, opportunities to discover life in God's big and unfolding story.

*"I have come that they may have life and have it to the full." John 10:10b.*

Over the past nine months our team structures have changed as we've worked across human-made borders to enhance our existing local ministries and birth new ones too.

And while a lot has been happening internally, and on the frontlines, much remains unchanged – same websites, same state logos, same newsletters.

**This will change over the next month, with the launch of our new SU Australia brand. What's exciting about launching this brand is that you – our SU family of supporters – have helped shape it.**

Thank you to everyone who gave feedback through our brand research work in the latter half of last year. It's why we're so excited to share the brand with you.

But first let's clarify what we mean by brand. While we might immediately think 'logo' – which is part of the brand of course – it's much more than that.

As Christians we have a 'brand' – whether we care to call it that or not. When Jesus says in John 13:35: *"By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another"*, he was explaining this concept of brand to his followers. It's more than a look, or a label. It's how people experience you.

As SU Australia our brand (or a person's experience of the movement) must align with God's values and the mission He is calling us to. It's why you are so important.

**In Tasmania you have kept this movement effective and accountable. As a national movement, we need you. Please continue to pray with us, as we continue the work of reaching more children and young people.**

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**ABOUT US:**

Scripture Union Tasmania is an interdenominational Christian organisation that works with local churches and communities to bring hope and God's love to children, young people and their families.