



# SU News

AUTUMN EDITION 2026



**SUFM**  
SU Family Missions

## CONTENTS

- 03 Welcome
- 04 Missions Committee
- 05 25-26 Mission Season Statistics
- 06 Train & Plan 1 - 2026
- 07 In Memory Of:  
John Tigwell &  
Keith Watson



Thomas!

FOR GOD SO  
LOVED THE WORLD  
THAT HE GAVE HIS 1 AND  
ONLY SON THAT WHOEVER BELIEVES  
IN HIM SHALL NOT PERISH BUT  
HAVE ETERNAL LIFE



# Welcome

**As we look back on the summer just gone, I am filled with deep gratitude and admiration for the Scripture Union NSW community.**

Over the 2025/26 holiday season, 24 missions took place across our state—from the golden sands of Byron Bay in the north to the welcoming shores of Kioloa Beach in the south. Each mission represented a unique expression of God’s love in action, and together they formed a vibrant tapestry of service, fellowship, and gospel impact.

This year, an incredible **988 volunteers** stepped forward to serve. Your willingness to give up precious time, energy, and comfort to share the hope of Jesus is nothing short of inspiring. Whether you were running programs on the beach, engaging families in caravan parks, preparing meals, leading worship, or quietly supporting in the background, every role mattered.

*Each act of service—large or small—helped create spaces where people could encounter the good news of Jesus in meaningful and life-changing ways.*

**And what a harvest God has brought through your efforts. We give thanks and celebrate the 73 people who made first-time commitments to Jesus or chose to recommit their lives to Him.**

These stories of faith and renewal are why we do what we do. They remind us that even in a busy, distracted, and sometimes hurting world, God is still at work—softening hearts, drawing people to Himself through the Holy Spirit, and using ordinary people to achieve extraordinary things.

As we step forward into the year ahead, our mission remains clear: to share Jesus with children, young people, and families across NSW in creative, relational, and gospel-centred ways. Part of this involves exploring how we can **re-start additional beach missions** in places where communities are eager to welcome them back.

We are also excited to continue developing **innovative inland mission models**, building on the encouraging success over the years of initiatives like **Tamworth’s Jubilee Café**, **Narromine Inland Mission** and the **Albion Park Inland Mission**. These expressions of ministry are opening doors to new audiences and demonstrating that the mission spirit also thrives far beyond our coastlines.

Finally, I want to express my personal and heartfelt thanks to all our Mission Directors and

Regional Directors. Your leadership, sacrifice, and commitment have been exemplary. You have given countless hours to planning, training, coordinating, and shepherding your teams—often behind the scenes and at great personal cost.

The way you have led your missions throughout the 25/26 season has been a testimony to servant-hearted leadership, grounded in prayer and driven by love for the gospel.

*As we look ahead, may we continue to trust God for the harvest and serve with joyful obedience.*

**“Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labour in the Lord is not in vain.” — 1 Corinthians 15:58**



**Jim Wackett**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Scripture Union NSW

# Our Three Big Goals for 2026-29

FROM OUR NEW MISSIONS COMMITTEE CHAIR



Robyn Gillespie

## 1 GROW THE NUMBER OF MISSIONS

We believe missions are transformative and want to see more across the coast and inland, in Summer and other seasons. Missions provide hands-on training for emerging church leaders, build diverse temporary communities that deepen faith, and create welcoming spaces where many can explore who Jesus is.

We are heartened that the number of Missions has been steady for 3 years, and we believe that with God's help we can build well from here. We've identified locations that might be suitable for planting or re-planting missions, or where existing missions might support a new section nearby - 'putting a toe in the water'.

Please pray that God guides our minds and calls the right people to direct new ministries.

## 2 SUSTAIN EXISTING MISSIONS

We are committed to strengthening the teams we already have. By proactively checking in, offering support, and addressing challenges early, we aim to prevent issues that could undermine long-term sustainability and team health.

Over summer some small teams continued including Shoalhaven Heads, Brooms Head and Kempsey, holding that space for future growth, while showing the Gospel impact even small teams can have when God is with them.

Pray that our movement becomes even better organised to help all teams be sustainable and healthy.

## 3 LIGHTEN ADMIN BURDENS

Safe and effective mission requires strong administration and compliance, yet the workload continues to grow.

Pray we will develop creative, practical solutions to help teams manage these responsibilities sustainably.

## HOW WILL WE DO THIS? COLLABORATE

Progress depends on working together and valuing each other - staff, directors, team members, prayer supporters, donors, and churches. Above all, we will collaborate with God, seeking his guidance and provision in all we plan and do.



### Interested in collaborating, contributing or joining on a Mission?

Scripture Union NSW have various opportunities available for you to serve and help share the Good News of Jesus on Mission. Find out more about these opportunities: [sunsw.org.au/get-involved/volunteer-opportunities/](https://sunsw.org.au/get-involved/volunteer-opportunities/)

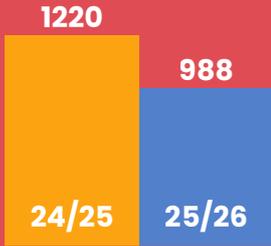
*VOLUNTEER TODAY!*

Contact us:

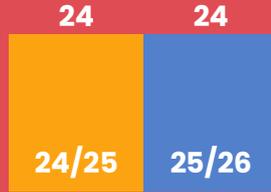
missions@sunsw.org.au  
(02) 9638 9000



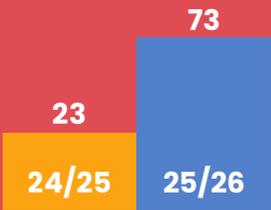
# 25/26 Missions Statistics



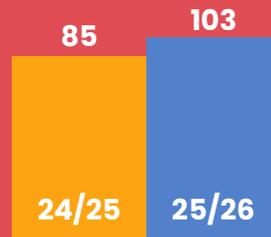
Total No. of Volunteers



Total No. of Teams



Total no. of Conversions/Recommitments to Faith



Total no. of People being followed up/connected to a church



“

WE SAW GOD ANSWER PRAYERS POWERFULLY, UNITING OUR TEAM, PROVIDING EVERYTHING WE NEEDED, PROVIDE GREAT WEATHER, PLENTY OF GOSPEL OPPORTUNITIES AND BRINGING LOTS OF PEOPLE TO OUR PROGRAM.

– Missions Director

Read more about our recent Summer Missions in the Southern Cross Magazine (p.10-11)



## Upcoming Events

14 MAR / Global Children's Day of Prayer

20 APR / Train & Plan 2



# TRAIN & PLAN KICKS OFF 2026 WITH A DAY OF PURPOSE, CONNECTION & VISION



On January 29, student leaders from Christian lunchtime groups gathered at the SU NSW Ministry Centre in Rydalmere for the first Train & Plan event of 2026.

Designed to equip and encourage Year 10–12 students who lead or are exploring leadership of school-based Christian groups, Train & Plan provides a focused space at the start of each term for spiritual growth, practical training, and collaborative planning.

The Schools Team was joined by Stuart Brownscombe from Power to Change Australia, who led participants through a series of interactive sessions designed to build confidence, sharpen leadership skills, and strengthen gospel motivation for ministry in their schools.

## A Day Built Around HEART, HEAD & HANDS



The day opened with creative “get to know you” activities that helped students explore their leadership journey, values, and strengths. These sessions fostered an environment of openness and community—many students commented that simply hearing each other’s stories left them encouraged for the year ahead.

The **HEART** session invited students to reflect on their motivations for leadership and the importance of a gospel-centred life. Through Scripture, prayer, and personal reflection tools, they were reminded that ministry flows from a deepening relationship with Jesus, not from performance or pressure.



14 different schools – 35 students gathered for Train & Plan 1

The **HEAD** session shifted into practical leadership skills. Students learned how to facilitate discussions, disciple peers, handle difficult questions, run engaging lunchtime programs, and navigate common challenges faced in school ministry. Stu’s input combined biblical wisdom with accessible, real-world examples that resonated strongly with the group.

Finally, in the **HANDS** session, students moved into planning mode. Using templates and guided activities, they mapped out their term programs, identified team roles, explored outreach possibilities, and set prayer goals. Groups that needed support received step-by-step facilitation, while more experienced teams used the time to strengthen their existing structures.

## Looking Ahead

Train & Plan will continue throughout 2026 with events in April, July, and October, each offering fresh opportunities for leadership growth, community, and practical preparation.

*We’re excited to see how God will use these young leaders to bring hope, faith, and community to their schools this year.*

If your school group hasn’t yet joined the Train & Plan community, we’d love to welcome you next term! Keep an eye out on SU NSW’s social media channels for more information about upcoming events.

Follow on Instagram or Facebook to stay updated for the next Train & Plan



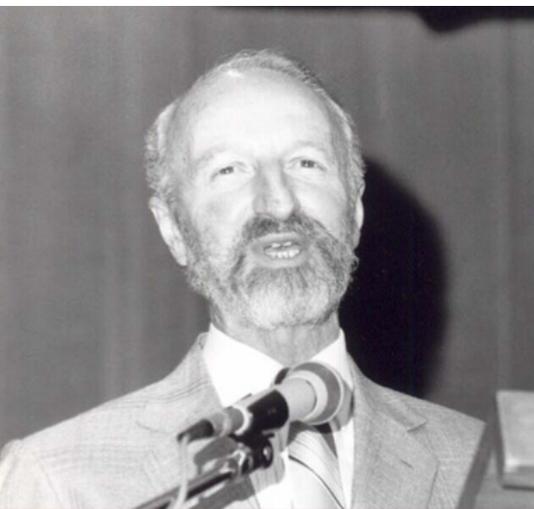
SU\_NSW

# In Memory of:

## JOHN TIGWELL & KEITH WATSON

**John Tigwell entered into rest in January 2026. John served faithfully as State Director of Scripture Union NSW throughout the 1980s and into the mid-1990s—a season of remarkable growth and development for our movement.**

Under his leadership, ministries in schools deepened, beach missions expanded their reach, and camps flourished. He held firm to the conviction that young people needed spaces to encounter Jesus that were safe, relational, and anchored in God's Word. Programs and pathways established during his years continue to bear fruit in SU NSW today.



**Keith Watson**

John's influence extended into the wider movement as well, serving Scripture Union more broadly and investing in resources for churches. His editorial contribution to Merry Go Round the Bible (1996) demonstrated his passion for making Scripture accessible and engaging for children.

For those who served with him, John is remembered not only for his strategic leadership but for his humility, steadiness, and genuine care for people. His legacy lives on in the thousands of young people who encountered Jesus through Scripture Union NSW ministries during those years—and in the leaders who were shaped under his guidance.



**John Tigwell**

Our thoughts are with his family, friends, and the wider Scripture Union NSW movement as they grieve his loss and celebrate a life faithfully lived.



**Professor Keith Watson entered into glory on 24 January 2026 at the age of 97. Keith was both a stalwart and a legend across decades of service in and through Scripture Union NSW.**

From being a team member of Warilla CSSM (SUFM) in 1957 to being Chair of the Scripture Union Council 1971-1978 Keith demonstrated love, enthusiasm and wisdom wherever God placed him. He was a member of Council from 1960 to 1984. All whilst he developed his academic career in engineering.

Keith also served as Chair of Scripture Union Australia in the mid 1980's and contributed to the development of the initiative to foster cooperation between

Scripture Union movements in Australia, New Zealand and East Asia (SU ANZEA).

All that sounds very dry and administrative. Not so! At the heart of Keith's long service through Scripture Union was his love of Jesus, the Bible and young people. SU gave Keith a space to bring those three passions together and to focus energy across denominational and geographic boundaries. He was also very encouraging of the women who stepped into governance roles within SU from the 1970's onwards.

We thank God for bringing Keith and Bonny (dec) into the Scripture Union family and for their faithful contribution to our fellowship.

*WE GIVE THANKS TO GOD FOR BOTH  
JOHN AND KEITH - FAITHFUL  
SERVANTS WHOSE LOVE FOR YOUNG  
PEOPLE AND PASSION FOR SHARING  
THE GOSPEL HAVE SHAPED COUNTLESS  
LIVES ACROSS NSW.*



JOIN US FOR OUR  
**AUTUMN CAMPS!**

Scripture Union NSW have a number of camps available for children, young people and families to attend and learn more about the Good News of Jesus!

This autumn, young people across NSW can dive into adventure-filled camps where faith meets fun! From casting lines at fishing camp to getting hands dirty at ag camp, from crafting and baking to outdoor challenges—our camps create space to explore who Jesus is while making memories that last.

**Want to make a difference?**

We're looking for enthusiastic volunteers to help make these camps unforgettable! If you love young people and want to serve Jesus while having fun, we'd love to have you on the team.

**Find out more:**

<https://sunsw.org.au/camps/>



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