

### AYA Young Adults Conference

During the October long weekend, the young adults of the Alliance churches from all around Australia gathered together to enjoy each other's fellowship and learn what it's like to be created "In His Image". We gathered together at CMS Conference Centre, in Katoomba, where we spent 4 days and 3 nights eating instant noodles, playing bananagram, angels and assassins, and monopoly deal, having deep and meaningful talks and of course, learning what it means and how it looks like to be created in God's image, theoretically and practically.

The first night was spent getting to know each other and setting the theme for the conference. We started off with a game, which quickly helped us realize who can or cannot drive, or who liked Rum 'n' Raisin ice cream. Which then followed with free time to allow everyone to talk and get know each other naturally.

The second day kicked off bright and early with a very simple and healthy breakfast (which made our bowel movements more active). We had the privilege of having Steve Dixon from Morling College to share to us about how we can reflect and represent God as his image bearers in our daily lives; how the people that surround us may affect us, what it means to be broken and what happens when we try to fix things and fail and where our priorities in our lives are. Steve provided us with a biblical foundation and challenged us on how we are representing God.



Saturday night may have been the most eventful night, with the long awaited trivia night! Where 6 teams competed against each other in silly and interesting trivia to physical challenges including some manly hammering of nails into a plank of wood. At the end of the competitive night, only one team could have one and who else but the team yours truly belonged to; Team Abby! Named after one of our members cute little daughter. Followed by JAKAS, CNTCN, Two and Half Glasses, All Pho God, and last but not least, PJJ's. It was a fun and eventful night that consisted of many laughs and tears.



Sunday was our most practical and motivational day; we started off the day with workshop sessions about how we can be image bearers of God within:

- Social Justice and poverty
- Family and Marriage
- Work and Studies
- Finances
- Cross-cultural relationships



I personally attended the seminars on Finances and Family and Marriage, which I found very insightful (Thanks to Peter and Steven Laughlin), things that I may have learnt before but now in different and more memorable ways. There were great reviews of other seminars and young adults excited to apply what they have learnt into their daily lives.

After lunch we split into groups to actually go out into the community of Katoomba and serve the community as a church. The three activities included:

- Prayer Walking – a bunch of us went out into the main street in Katoomba and prayed at various locations, for the community and the people who lived in Katoomba
- Painting – We visited the local youth centre, The Glue Factory, and helped the owner paint the rooms of the centre which need new and bright colours as it was place for troubled youth in the community to find refuge and relationships.
- Gardening – The rest of the group went to an elderly woman's house to tend to her garden and landscaping. The woman has been suffering from cancer and hence too weak to tend to her house. It was also very encouraging to see the local church pastor (who is about 60 years of age) helping and even lasting longer in the sun then most of us.





Oh what a long weekend it has been! Monday was the last day and we all saw the sad faces when people had to leave but also the happy faces that looked forward to sleeping in our own sweet, sweet beds again. We saw determined faces and heard encouraging voices of young adults who couldn't wait to get back to their own church, their community and their own lives and apply what they have learnt throughout the weekend.





“Where to start, over the weekend at the AYA camp (In his Image) there was plenty of time to relax and enjoy the amazing views that were on offer.

I was worried that I would not be able to relate to the others who were there due to the fact I only knew one person... But it was amazing how everyone welcomed me in and allowed me to be myself.



The worship was something that I particularly enjoyed, and being able to spend time with other people my age focused on God was so big for me! The talks and seminars were brilliant and I learnt a lot, but the activities were where the rubber hit the road, and allowed for some hands on use of the teaching.

The prayer walk was something new that I have never done, and found hard to start with but enjoyed being out in the town and enjoying the local life. “

- Luke Behrendorff from Canberra

“So, I was the only one that came to the AYA camp from Adelaide, although I was nervous, God sent me to that camp for a purpose. That purpose was to learn about what is to be in His image, to build friendships with my fellow brothers and sisters, and to bring this back to Adelaide. I have to admit, I didn't know what my purpose was until the camp was over but I could definitely see why God sent me there.

The people were incredibly kind and the camp was well organized. The food was delicious and the timetable fitted so well for the weekend as well as the people in it. Steve Dixon spoke God's Word that really spoke to my heart and the workshops challenged me to be what God wants me to be. Praise God for such a magnificent camp with a daily reminder of how amazing God is just by looking out the window and seeing the view of the Blue Mountains!”



- Katherine Tran from Adelaide