



Bottle Tree Remote Area Ministry

Please pray for...

- All the activities and plans for 2024 in this region.
- Pray that God will open doors for people to hear the good news.
- Safety on the roads
- Local community leaders as they work together

Report

Bottle Tree RAM involves Bush chaplaincy, Connect 100 and congregational ministry.

The Months of November and December were eventful ones for Bottle Tree RAM. Many new contacts were made by attending community events, and celebrating a 'bush Christmas' with the community of the Maranoa for the first time.

Congregational and Worship

- **Church services were held at** Wandoan (Wandoan Cultural Centre) 20th November; Roma Uniting Church (2nd and 4th Sundays of each month, and Christmas Day); Wallumbilla (first Sunday); Arcadia Valley was cancelled in December due to us falling victim to Covid.
- **The Funeral of Eunice Campbell** on 17th November in Mitchell.
- **Creative rendition of The Bottle Tree** outside of the Uniting church in Bungil Street - the tree was decorated with squares of coloured knitting, standing beside the beautiful nativity scene which is erected annually in the grounds of the church.

Community Connections

- **Blue Care Welcome to 2024 "meditative service"** was held on 17th January for the staff of **Blue Care, and followed by morning tea.** It was a really special time.
- **RAFS/FADS gathering** was held at the manse with Taylor and Libby (Charleville RAFS) along with Dan, who has been newly appointed to FADS in Roma. It was a great time of discussing ways we can further support the wonderful work of RAFS in this area.
- **Zonta Group Caloundra donated 25 shoe boxes of toiletries** in November. We have been able to distribute these to farmers, families and elderly singles, fostering some great conversations and creating connections.
- **Representatives of QAGOMA** (Gallery of Modern Art) came to Roma and led a workshop on cultural learning – exploring ways to foster cross-cultural understandings, sensitivity and acceptance. This led to creating some contacts with the local indigenous arts community, along with other people with creative interests. As a result, relationships were formed with the elder

of the local indigenous arts community, and plans have been made to have a group art exhibition with accompanying workshops in Mitchell in 2025.

- **A visit to Tara** enabled pastoral support for some of the evacuees who were living in government supplied caravans, at the caravan park or in motels in Chinchilla. We have kept in contact by phone. There will be a great need for practical help when people start moving back into their properties in about one years time. At the moment, pastoral support is needed.
- **The Wallumbilla Community Carols event** was well attended by the whole Wallumbilla community, and it was great to be asked to give the Christmas Message to such a large and varied group of people, and ages.
- **The Wallumbilla QCWA celebrated 150 years** – the QCWA hall was packed with women of all ages. It was great to see the community connections between all. As a result, I aim to attend the QCWA in Roma on the first Saturday of each month, and help out where needed, but I won't be too good at baking scones.
- **Zonta** – is a very active group in Roma, and I have approached them and hope N to be involved if needed.
- **Crescendo Choir** is an active choir which supports local events and carols. I became a member and have enjoyed being a part of this ecumenical group.
- **Injune Churches Together:** The annual Injune ecumenical **Melbourne cup** function was very successful, raising thousands of dollars for Injune Churches Together. I was asked to judge the fashion parade which was a lot of fun and took some scary discernment.
- **Pastoral Visits to Pinnaroo** (Aged Care Facility) and outlying farmers.
- I was glad to forge connections with other agencies, by attending the excellent **Lifeline course: "The Accidental Counsellor"** in Roma, organized by Headspace, which focused on supporting and understanding mental health struggles- a complex and common issue out west.
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Some of the EXCITING PLANS FOR 2024

- working with community at Wallumbilla State School during March/April in the development of a mural, and the designing of an early childhood sensory garden.
- Outback Link Volunteers to visit the area some of our farmers offering practical support.
- plans to be made to offer art activities to the residents of Pinnaroo during 2024.
- Continued chaplaincy support for Blue Care Roma; FADS (Injune) and RAFS when visiting Roma District
- Continued Quarterly church services to Arcadia Valley and Wandoan; Monthly services at Roma, Injune and Wallumbilla.

Recommendations

1. That this report be received.

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