

Noodling for Ministry Gems

in Coober Pedy with Dave & Margie Wood • May 2026



Praise the Lord, Praise the Lord...I guess these are the only words that I have to describe how God worked through the mission team that we had here at Catacomb Church from Saturday 21 to Sunday 29 March 2026.

Our mission team was from SMBC in Croydon NSW. This was our Bible college when we studied there from 2021 to 2023. We remember how mission would happen each year and you could choose a place that you were interested in and put your hand up for. So fast forward and after two years of ministry here we thought we would try our luck and see if we could entice a group of students to come to remote desert ministry. Well, we had a full complement, and the plans were put into place.

Maybe if we go day by day and describe how it came together you will get an idea of the way mission can work in such a diverse location...

Day 1/Saturday – Team arrive unpack and get their bearings; we walk up to the top of hospital hill and watch the sun go down.

Day 2/Sunday – The team join us for Church, Dave interviews the team and then after church the team splits into two groups, one group joins in with junior soccer at the school gym, and the second group joined us visiting the Brethren Aboriginal church around the corner.

Willie Lennon gave a message and came back to share lunch with the team after church. We asked Willie many questions about the Gospel approach to Aboriginal communities and the struggles that he sees. The day finished with Dave taking the team noodling after dark.

Day 3/Monday – The team was broken up into two groups, with the first group writing/talking and producing their own radio show for *Good News for Coober Pedy*. The show was completed and put in the can to be broadcast on the following Sunday. We all then headed down to Umoona Aboriginal community to clean up the new café after the official opening a week prior. Umoona were understandably blown away by this act of kindness and love from the team. We dropped into the adjacent art centre which is an initiative amongst Aboriginal communities to train up artists and so enable them to sell artworks. The day finished with a Q&A from us to the team of what remote bush ministry looks/feels like.

Day 4/Tuesday – Margie's Ladies Bible study was joined by the women from the team. The fellowship was fantastic and it



Banner Image: Kanku-Breakaways Conservation Park

Circle Image: Dave & Margie

Middle Image: The mission team's first Sunday in church

Bottom Image: 'David' showing at the Drive-in



SMBC Mission team photo

Continued from previous page...

was a great opportunity for the younger women to experience probably something that they had not joined in with before (older trad ladies Bible study) and the locals were noticeably joyful to share their time with the team. At the same time, the blokes went to the town Basketball courts and cleaned up for the arvo mega B'Ball carnival. Adult/kids sport is a big thing in this town as there is basically none played, so Catacomb Church advertised that there would be two B'ball arvo's (Tues/Thurs). The number of students and parents who turned up blew me away, how Faithful is our God, possibly almost all of the senior students from the school and elsewhere turned up, we had an impactful two hours hanging/talking/competing with the school students.

Day 5/Wednesday – The second Dusty radio show kicked off the day with the other half of the mission team following me to the studio to put down their show. The arvo was spent prepping for the nights activities and picking up John Warner from the airport. The team had some down time and time to check out the tourist spots around town (Old timers mine tour). The evening kicked off with a BBQ and the free movie "David" put on by Catacomb Church

at the Drive In. Coober Pedy has the last Drive In for South Australia, so as we are part of the committee, we pitched the idea of hiring out the drive in to play the Christian animated movie David. The turn out was bigger than expected and we

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even had a visiting Christian school group (from Melbourne) in town who joined in. SA/NT Regional Officer John Warner gave a God talk for the crowd gathered for the BBQ before the movie was played. To have the story of God played on the big screen in the public space just had us so thankful for the God of making things happen.

Day 6/Thursday – The morning was set aside for John Warner to show the students how far and wide the work of BCA goes; a big prayer point is that this talk will play its part in forming

these students into the harvest workers for God in all manner of locations and situations. Then the second basketball arvo kicked off and it was bigger than Ben Hur, more kids/adults turned up, AFSS (Aboriginal Family Support Services) put on a BBQ and we even had a God talk (by Dave) at the end with the town kids as we thanked all those involved. A big part of Thursday night was praying and sending out prayer requests that the dirt road to Oodnadatta (Oods) would be open the next day for our trip there (it had been closed for several weeks due to rain!)

Day 7/Friday – the next morning was busy calling the local policeman in Oods to confirm the road was passable, it will take too long to explain how God worked in a number of people to make this happen (think grader driver/local



First basketball afternoon

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Aboriginal Christian policeman/ etc). John made his own way to the airport, and we gave thanks for his time with us. We headed off in convoy to Oodnadatta and the drive was incredible, the desert which is normally "a desert" had been transformed into a carpet of green! We stopped at Oods for lunch at the Pink Roadhouse, then visited the Aboriginal school where the SMBC team performed a puppet show and the teachers explained how the school operates. The connections made were invaluable and we hope to visit again and perhaps be part of the school in the future. The team then met Maxine who is the second pastor at the Uniting church in Oods, and the story of how they met outdoors for 20 years before the new building was built humbled us incredibly. We left Oods with a sense of God working in his way even in the remote settlement (80 people) two hours from CP.

Day 8/Saturday – this was a day off and a day to do Park Run, practice for Church, go to the Breakaways (the local national park) and have a campfire debrief at night.

Day 9/Sunday – the team led and ran the church service, the singing was all live! The sermon was spot on, and the fellowship was a blessing. We had seven new locals come to church!, and the Holy spirit was moving within our fellowship in a powerful way.

We waved of the team as they began their drive back to Alice Springs, our hearts are full and heavy also, the work that the team for the Kingdom of God was beyond what we could do, but we know God has His

plans for what will come out this. Please pray for the SMBC students (one and all) as they spend this season of their lives being formed and filled with Gods Word.

Thank you so much for your prayers that the road to Oodnadatta would be opened, and for prayers in general – we really felt God answering them in a mighty way.

And we give thanks also for the partnership between the Diocese of Willochra and BCA.



SMBC Team at the Pink Roadhouse Oodnadatta

Much love,
Dave & Margie

Pray for

our work in
Cooper Pedy

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