

The Connelllys in Cowra

with Ben & Alissa Connelly • September 2026



Hello Supporters, we are so thankful for your encouragement and support and have much to report since our last newsletter in June. We had a new record for our Musical Playgroup, we formalised an evening Bible Study Group, celebrated 100 years of St Peter's Morongla and were blessed by the biennial BCA Field Staff Conference...

Musical Playgroup

Our Musical Playgroup has now been running for over a year, and what a great year and a bit it has been. Each term we pick one Christian song to be our theme song for the term, and we also pick storybooks, including a Christian Bible story (or picture book where applicable), that goes with the theme. Term three's song has been 'God's in charge of the weather'. We have enjoyed using our new tapping sticks, made lovingly by Ben's parents, to tap along to the rhythm in this song. It is such a delight to see the joy that music brings, and such a privilege to be able to share with these kids (and their carers) about how God made them, how He loves them because He made them, and sent His own Son so that they could be friends with Him.

The beginning of 2026 saw quite a few of our 2025 regulars leave due to kids going to school, moving away from Cowra or starting at preschool on a Thursday. However, in God's grace, we managed to

attract some new families, who have in turn become our new 2026 regulars. As per usual in Cowra over wintertime, our numbers dip a little. However, in God's kindness, we have still managed to have at least one new family attend playgroup each time we have run in Terms Two and Terms Three, which is so encouraging. On 3 September thirteen families attended Musical Playgroup, with a total of sixteen kids under the age of six – a new record for us! It is very exciting that ten of these families do not regularly attend a church. **Please pray that new families continue to visit our Musical Playgroup, and that they stay, and find warm community and a place to belong.**

This year we have looked at the themes of numbers, colours and weather. It has been a great opportunity to slow down and look at Creation in more detail with the kids, which has been useful repetition for them when the age of the kids is much younger this year (average age of 18 months – two years). Looking at Creation through the theme of colours

Banner Image: Cowra

Circle Image: The Connelllys

Middle Image: Musical Playgroup- circle time

Bottom Image: Musical Playgroup – parachute time



Morongla 100th anniversary celebration service

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in Term two was also a fun exercise, and that has fed well into our Term Three theme of Weather, where we have also looked at the changing seasons. The parachute once again has been a big hit, and it has been a great opportunity to introduce lots of different songs to the mix, including Christian songs. **Please praise God with us for this ministry and the contact with non-churched families we have through it. Please pray for our preparations for Christmas, and that there is good soil for the seed to land on in these little ones' hearts; that they may receive the good news of salvation through Jesus this Christmas. Please also thank God with us for the dedicated playgroup helpers and their commitment to this ministry.**

First evening Bible study group

During Lent at the beginning of 2026, we started a new evening Bible study group, meeting in our home on a Thursday night. The participants were keen to continue after Lent finished, and in Term Two we studied a series unpacking the whole story of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. This term we are studying the book of Matthew on a Sunday in church, so we have paired that with studies from the book of John for Bible study, looking at 'encounters

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with Jesus.' We are so thankful to God that this evening bible study is continuing, the first evening Bible study for St John's (at least for a long while). Having this Bible study provides a way for workers to be part of a Bible study, and it is a great encouragement for us, as we can attend it together.

Please praise God with us for one of our Bible study attendees who chose to be baptised in July. It was such a privilege to witness her public confession to walk in the faith. Please pray that this sister, and the other attendees of our Bible study, continue to grow in their love and knowledge of God. Please pray that under God we can start more Bible studies, so more congregation members can have

the opportunity to grow in their knowledge and understanding of the Bible.

100 years of St Peter's Morongla

On Saturday 12 September a special service to mark 100 years of worship and witness at St Peter's Anglican Church, Morongla was held. This was led by The Right Reverend Mark Calder, now former Bishop of the Diocese of Bathurst, and attended by over 70 people. It was a great opportunity to praise and thank God for His faithfulness over this time. It was also very special to have Bishop Mark lead this service just one week out from his retirement.

Family News – BCA Field Staff Conference and Holidays

At the beginning of July, as a family we attended the BCA Field Staff Conference on the Sunshine Coast. We drove, taking the longer scenic route up the Coast on the way to camp. We were able to show the kids Port Macquarie, Ballina and Brisbane, as well as stopping at the famous Big Banana on our way through Coffs Harbour. After stopping at the Big Pineapple and visiting the Ginger Factory (home Of Budgerim Ginger), and Nutworks on the Sunshine Coast, we headed to our camp at

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Alexandra Headland.

The Field Staff Conference was such a blessing. The kids were able to each enjoy their program, with plenty of outside activities such as archery and rock climbing to keep Josiah entertained! In their program they also learnt, (as the adults did), about some of the parables that Jesus taught, most notably the parable of the sower. It was so great to see the way that they learnt so much during their program, and we were also most encouraged by the teaching, music and discussion during the sessions. In the evenings the BCA staff did a great job of organising entertainment for us all, and we had a blast at the Trivia Night and Bush Dance in particular. What an encouragement to spend five days with other people who are also in ministry and be encouraged in the Word! **Please join us in praising God for the opportunity to attend this year's Field Staff Conference, and for the rich fellowship. Please also praise God with us for the opportunity to visit one of our partner churches, Narrabri Anglican Church, on our way home from camp. It was a great blessing and privilege to share**

about the ministry with them in person and catch up with people that we had not seen in over three years.

In the last three months, we have had a lot of sickness again. It is the season of life, with young kids, but please pray for energy and perseverance in ministry when sickness makes things more difficult. **Please pray that we would stay well as we head into school holidays so that we can be refreshed from a slower pace during the holidays. Also please pray for our planning for Christmas and the 2027 Cowra Summer Breakout, which will begin soon.**

We deeply value your prayers.



Ezekiel having a blast at the Field Staff Conference



Josiah and Vivi with their group at the Field Staff Conference

Blessings,

Ben, Alissa, Josiah, Vivienne & Ezekiel

Pray for

**our work in
Cowra**

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Going the distance to share Jesus in the bush