

# Program

## CEN Executives Conference 2026 What Does it Mean to Flourish?

### Thursday 27 August 2026

|          |                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                               |
|----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 8:00 am  | <b>Registration Opens</b>                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                               |
| 8:30 am  | <b>Conference Commences</b><br>Welcome & Opening remarks, Acknowledgement of Country, Singing                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                               |
| 9:00 am  | <b>Biblical Reflection</b><br>Bethany Armstrong - Principal Northern Christian School                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                               |
| 9:20 am  | <b>Keynote: AI &amp; Human Flourishing: Fully Human, Fully Alive</b><br>Stephen Driscoll - Australian Fellowship of Evangelical students                                    |                                                                                                                                                               |
| 10:15 am | <b>Morning tea</b>                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                               |
| 11:00am  | <b>Workshops:</b><br><br><b>1. Culture Shapers (Learning) Forming Fully Human Learners</b><br>Teaching, Thinking and AI in schools<br>(Facilitator: Kyle Fifield)           | <b>2. Culture Shapers(Operations) Stewarding Technology Well</b><br>Aligning AI with Purpose, People and Practice<br>(Facilitator: Andrew Lowry)              |
| 12:30pm  | <b>Lunch</b>                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                               |
| 1:15 pm  | <b>CEN Updates</b><br>Leadership Development                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                               |
| 1:30 pm  | <b>Keynote 2: What Does It Mean to Flourish as a Leader?</b><br>Dr. David Benson - Executive Director, Associated Christian Schools                                         |                                                                                                                                                               |
| 2:30 pm  | <b>Afternoon Tea</b>                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                               |
| 3:00 pm  | <b>Workshops:</b><br><br><b>3. Culture Shapers (Learning) Developing Leaders Who Can Carry Weight</b><br>Practical Pathways in School Contexts<br>(Facilitator: Pete Wells) | <b>4. Culture Shapers (Operations) Developing Leaders Who Can Carry Weight</b><br>Practical Pathways in Operations and Governance<br>(Facilitator: Jon Price) |
| 4:15 pm  | <b>Free Time</b>                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                               |
| 6:30 pm  | <b>Offsite Dinner</b>                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                               |

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## Friday 28 August 2026

|          |                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                      |
|----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 8:30 am  | <b>Welcome &amp; Worship</b>                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 9:00 am  | <b>Biblical Reflection</b><br>Christine Hibma - Principal, Marrara Christian College                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 9:15 am  | <b>Keynote: A Theology of Wellness: what does the New Testament actually say about wellbeing and what does it mean for us?</b><br>Sam Burrows - Christian Education National, Manager of Biblical Foundations |                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 10:15 am | <b>Morning tea</b>                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 11:00am  | <b>Workshops:</b><br><br><b>5. Culture Shapers (Learning)</b><br><b>Cultures that Form</b><br>Leading Staff and Students Beyond Comfort to Growth<br>(Facilitator: Michelle Dempsey)                          | <b>6. Culture Shapers(Operations)</b><br><b>Workshop 2 - Cultures That Endure</b><br>Building Operational Frameworks That Carry Weight<br>(Facilitator: Phil Newman) |
| 12:30pm  | <b>Conference Close</b>                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 1:00     | <b>Lunch</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                      |

# Keynote Speakers

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## Stephen Driscoll

Stephen Driscoll works in university ministry in Canberra for the Australian Fellowship of Evangelical students, where he lives with his young family. He wrote *Made in Our Image: God, Artificial Intelligence and You* which provides a Biblical way of thinking about AI. This book won 2025 Australian Christian Book of the Year.

## Dr Dave Benson

Dave is the Executive Director of Associated Christian Schools (ACS), where he leads network-wide culture, formation, and strategic initiatives that support 40 Queensland schools. A former high school teacher and theological lecturer, Dave holds a Ph.D. in Practical Theology on the place of sacred texts in Australia's secular educational curriculum. He serves as the Culture and Discipleship Associate with the London Institute for Contemporary Christianity, where he was a director from 2020–2025. Dave is passionate about equipping Christians to live out their vocation with wisdom and love in today's complex world, focusing on cultural engagement, whole-life discipleship, and forming communities that meaningfully integrate faith and practice for the flourishing of all.



# Keynote Speakers

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## Sam Burrows



Sam Burrows serves as Manager of Biblical Foundations for CEN, working alongside Christian educators across Australia to strengthen the theological and pedagogical life of our schools. His work is increasingly focused on how Christ shapes not only what we teach, but also how we understand knowledge, formation, and the world we live in. Sam previously worked as a lecturer at Laidlaw College in New Zealand, teaching theology and education papers. He completed his Masters thesis in 2022, focusing on current spiritual trends in New Zealand and the wider West. Through this network, he hopes to see schools formed by a shared theological imagination - faithful to Scripture, attentive to history, and confident in Christ's claim over all things.

