

ISSUE 2



PARTNERSHIP NEWSLETTER

GBC



A MESSAGE FROM THE SENIOR PASTOR

Over the last six weeks we have been exploring what it means to be a fruitful church. In other words, what should "success" look like for us? It's been a challenging question to grapple with because it gets at the very heart of who we are becoming as a community of faith. Are we becoming a church that produces more disciples? That fosters generosity? That welcomes people wherever they are on their journey? That releases everyone to use their gifts, abilities, time and resources in meaningful ways? That finds ways to talk about what God is doing? I'd like to think that the answer to these questions is "Yes."

Our quarterly Partnership Newsletter is one way that we can reflect on who we are becoming as a church as we seek to participate with the Father through the Spirit in his plan to restore all things in Jesus.

In these pages you'll read five reports from the five areas of ministry and mission here at GBC: Services,

Youth & Families, Care & Growing, Local Mission and Global Mission. There is also a financial update on the back page.

In each we have tried to capture some of what is happening in each area, some of what we are aiming to achieve in the months to come, and a story of someone in that ministry. This is more than just a report, but an encouragement of what God is continuing to call us to become; a church that invites everyone, everywhere we go and in everything we do, to follow Jesus and be changed by him.

If you have a story of a changed life we'd love to hear it. You can contact me at:

Marc.Rader@gymeabaptist.org.au

Be encouraged; God is at work.

Marc

SERVICES

After nearly two years of work the first episode of New Horizons TV went to air on the Australian Christian Channel on the week beginning 26th March. This was the culmination of months of discernment as a church followed by months of preparation. Mike Jeffs, CEO of the ACC, emailed us the week after it had gone to air to express his excitement and pleasure with the final product, but also to encourage us.

"I do trust and pray that the Gynea Church family are just as excited with the program and the potential you now have as a Church to reach thousands of Aussies with the life changing message of the Gospel and commend you on the step of 'faith' you have as a church undertaken." Mike Jeffs CEO The Australian Christian Channel

Beginning near the end of June we will begin filming our second series, entitled "Faith lived out loud: Discipleship lessons from the letter of James." After this we will review our involvement as a church in

accordance with the decision made at the end of 2015. To get a feel for what it might be like to film all the time, we will be completing the series all in one go – thirteen weeks straight. This is a much longer series than we would normally do, but is part of our strategy to consider this as an ongoing ministry to the wider church.

We are also delighted to have appointed Shandri Brown as our Services Coordinator and you can read a bit of her story below. This is a new role that will oversee our services seeking to develop a more streamlined approach to how we use our gathered time together. She will work alongside our Senior Pastor Marc Rader and her team of Drew Harding (Music Team Section Leader), Pete Gillies (Creative Team Section Leader) and the Tech Team Section Leader (to be named) to develop our services.

Our Easter services impacted nearly 1500 people.



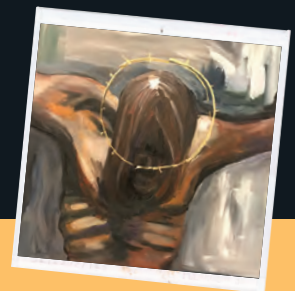
Shandri's story

As the most recent addition to the GBC team I am very excited to be here. My family and I have recently joined this church congregation after many years in the Salvation Army.

I have been involved in church ministry for the past 20 years,

studied theology at Booth College and recently completed the Arrow Emerging Leaders Program. I have been engaged in many aspects of church life - worship teams, youth ministry, children's ministry, life groups, preaching, fundraising, SRE and overseas missions. Now I'm enthusiastic

about being here to support the teams who bring our Sunday services together. Gathering together for worship is such an important part of being God's people. I'm looking forward to seeing all God has in store for us as we come together to pray, give and serve.





YOUTH & FAMILIES

As a church, we seek to walk alongside the young people in our community as they explore and experience a living relationship with Jesus. As our kids and youth ministries reach the end of term two, it is clear that they have witnessed growth, not only in the attendance of programs but in the depth of faith demonstrated by children and young people.

In KidZone, the older groups have started to increase their focus on prayer. It is our hope and prayer to be encouraging our children to have a personal connection and authentic communication with the God we worship. It has been a delight to see children express their own ideas and love of God in this way.

We are also getting excited for the second annual

holiday club, Winterfest, which is taking place later in July. This is a new adventure for us as a ministry and church. We're looking forward to connecting with families from our local area, serving them and engaging them in God's community here at GBC.

Finally, our youth ministry is a great source of encouragement as we see the next generation of leaders rising up. There's a growing maturity and 'real life' faith in these young people as they learn to live out their call to follow Jesus. As a church we have celebrated together as we watched six of our youth make public declarations of faith in baptism over the past six months. We continue to be humbled and thankful for the work that God is doing in the lives of our children and young people, and we're expectant for how He will continue that.



Marijy's Story

After being challenged on "dating the church" I decided to commit fully to GBC, so volunteer in my gifting areas of organisation and teaching. I roster Kidzone 0-5 ensuring it is well resourced. It makes me happy to know that volunteers are going to be there and kids are going to be looked after and loved on. I passionately believe in the ministry we have and I want kids to know and

experience God's love, which happens through our incredible volunteer teams. God has never let us down and always provides the right number of leaders for each week and I'm learning to trust Him even more in this.

I'm also temporary Team Leader of Early Childhood Kidzone, an incredible team that serves families, helping kids Explore God's Truth and Experience

God's Love.

I enjoy discovering what God is saying in his word and teaching that to others. God shows us how to get back into a perfect relationship with Him, and my favourite thing to do is to share that with kids.

I'm really glad I've gone from 'dating the church' to being fully committed!

CARE & GROWING

If a fruitful church is one that releases people to use their gifts, abilities, time and resources, then one of the easiest places for us to move to greater fruitfulness is in Care & Growing. The areas that we are currently seeking to develop include our welcoming ministry but this also includes our LifeGroups and wider care ministry. The good news is that we can all be involved in this. As Sheena Hind, our GBC Cares Coordinator is fond of saying, everyone in the church should be in her team. And she's right! Everyone is called to show love and care to those around them, so don't wait to be asked; get involved.

There are, however, also some formal processes, structures and systems that we're working on in the background to welcome and integrate people well. Much of what is happening is taking place behind the scenes and we're delighted to have appointed Neil Evans to the GBC Connect team as the Stewarding Section Leader. You can read a bit about Neil below.

We're also beginning a significant revision of our welcome information that will hopefully be ready to go to print before the end of year to help people figure out what GBC is all about and how they can begin to get involved.

We continue to add people to our LifeGroup ministry and plans are afoot to make this an even more significant part of our life together in the future. Our LifeGroup ministry has been fairly informal up to now, but the time is coming as we continue to consolidate who we are and what we feel God is calling us to, for us to be more strategic in this area. If you have a heart for LifeGroup ministry Mark Coleman would love to chat to you.

Our care for one another and our growth together is such an important part of what it means to be the church and we're excited about what we can achieve as we move forward.



Neil's story

My wife Di and I joined GBC in 2005 and attend the 8.30am service. Up until this year I have struggled to be involved in Church life as my work has taken me across Australia and into developing nations around the world designing and constructing large infrastructure.

Over the 46 years of my career I have met thousands of wonderful people living in extreme poverty or under violent government regimes. What it has taught me is that the common people around the world are the same, wanting enough food, a home, health care and education. They also need Christ but without the basics of life, it is hard to reach them. Now retired, I have time to help those people in a more personal way, but I also have time to fully enjoy Church life and have taken on the Stewarding Section Leader

role and joined a life group. The role of Stewarding suits me as I like to help people in a practical way and I can use my management training. I hope through stewarding we help people find a caring home in our Church.



LOCAL MISSION

Local mission is everything that we do as a church to share the good news in word and deed in our community. This includes everything from the casual conversation you have about faith with a colleague or neighbour all the way to services and courses where people are invited to begin to follow Jesus.

There are a number of exciting things that are beginning to take shape in this area for the second half of the year such as a sermon series on sharing our faith and a short course exploring faith to follow. We are also beginning to think through how we might be more engaged in some local issues such as domestic violence. Southern Community Welfare has been increasingly involved in this and as a church there may be some opportunity to bring the good news to bear in this very dark underside of life in the Shire where DV is a huge issue.

Plans are also well underway for Carols in the Park. We have booked a couple of key guests including Colin Buchanan, and have welcomed a new chair – Rob Sherry. This event is a service in our community but one where we want to share the gospel.

One of our most important local mission ministries is Playtime. We have a group running each day of the week at Hotham Cottage and 85% of the nearly two hundred adults and children come from the community and don't have any other regular contact with the church. This ministry, overseen by Meddwyn Hinton and her dedicated teams, is a consistent outreach into our community and they are working hard to make the most of this opportunity.

There's lots to look forward to as we seek to be a light on the highway and invite everyone to follow Jesus.

Rosalie's story



I was attending Playtime as a mum when Meddwyn asked if I could be a parent leader. I discovered that it's so enjoyable due to the prayer and behind-the-scenes commitment from the leaders.

Jesus says, "Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." We put this into practice at Playtime. I can practice my gift of evangelism to welcome new parents, and bring along families I meet at local parks and school and invite them to playtime. It's about fun for their kids but it does grow into them being loved and part of our community. A servant heart is contagious and I can't help introducing people to Jesus who welcomes everyone with love. It starts with playdoh and ends in lifelong friendships you can share God deeply in.

If you are looking for a simple way to be like Jesus...Come and join in with playtime!



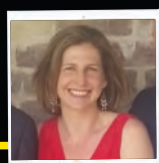
GLOBAL MISSION

As this newsletter is going to print our latest count places our May Mission Month total at a little over \$274,000. This exceeds our target by 35% which is really exciting. The number of those who participated is also up on 2016 with 302 people contributing to one or more of the projects. A huge thank you to the Mission Action Group who prayerfully selected and presented these projects to us. We'll hear updates from each of these projects in November so continue to be in prayer for those that have particularly touched your heart.

In April we commissioned three section leaders in our "Mission Department": Richard Dwyer (Cambodia), Barb Higgins (Catalyst), and Sarah Foxe (Mission

Action Group). You can read Sarah's story below. These three section leaders, along with Jodene Watling, are charged with shaping a unified mission strategy for GBC: to develop our heart for mission, to facilitate sending people into these ministries, and to foster deep and meaningful partnerships. Be in prayer for them and for us as we seek to engage more deeply with what God is doing across the globe.

Applications for our 2018 trip to Cambodia also closed earlier this month and we're very excited about who God has raised up to participate and what God will do in their lives and the lives of those whom they meet.



Sarah's story

I've been connected to GBC since 2002 and worked in the corporate world, plus the international development sector with organisations such as Opportunity International & Baptist World Aid Australia. I've had the opportunity to live and work overseas through these roles and through this I've recognised that poverty is complex and injustice is often as

a result of power imbalance and inequality. Western churches have such great capacity and resource to make a difference, but good intentions not directed wisely can also be quite harmful.

I have taken on the role as Section Leader for the Mission Action Group and am excited to work together with the wider Mission Department to

create effective and integrated approaches. I'm passionate for GBC to be intentional and wise in what we do so that we have the best impact long term for the communities and organisations we support. The great thing is that as we continue to cultivate mission advocacy and social justice, above all, it's an outworking of our love to the world as we follow God.

FINANCES

I hope you are as excited about what God is doing here as we are and that your commitment to our vision and mission – reflected in prayer, service and giving – is continuing to grow. As of June 11 we've received 36% of our overall budget (Note: Our budget is weighted to the second of the year.) and our expenses are below budget.

As we reach the end of financial year I'd like to invite you to do two things. First, to consider a one off donation to our annual budget to keep us in good financial shape as we move into the second half of the year. We are not able to offer a tax deduction unless you wish to contribute to either the broadcasting fees for the Australian Christian Channel or our Carols in the Park in December. You can donate to these through the Grays Point Christian Music Promotion Trust.

Second, to consider increasing your regular giving to the vision of GBC. Our annual budget is met entirely through our offerings. These contributions are an act of worship, an act of discipleship, and an act of faith. As worship we are acknowledging God as the source of all that we have. As an act of discipleship we are acknowledging that Jesus is Lord over every aspect

of our lives. As an act of faith we are acknowledging our belief that God is at work in our community of faith in and in our world. Our financial commitment to what God is doing here is as critical as our prayer and service. As a church we are entering some really exciting times when I believe we will see God move in extraordinary ways and a faith-filled response – in prayer, in service and in giving – will set us up for that future. An increase of even a few dollars a week across the whole church would make a huge difference.

If you'd like to give a one-off donation, make changes to your regular giving, or begin to give electronically, our bank details are below:

Bank: Baptist Financial Services

Account: Gymea Baptist Church

BSB No: 704 922

Account No: 100 006 024

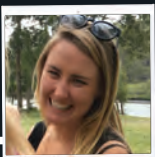
For tax deductible giving:

Bank: Baptist Financial Services

Account: Grays Point Christian Music Promotion Trust

BSB No: 704 922

Account No: 100 014 833



Cassi's story

For many years, as part of my discipleship, I had been committed to financially supporting the work of God around the world. I have always been passionate about mission and there were several ministries that I was giving to, but I had never really given much thought to giving to GBC. Looking back, I'm not sure why this was, as I was very committed to GBC. I

think it was because I thought the ministry of the church was adequately funded by others and I could have a greater impact if I gave to other organisations.

A couple of years ago I listened to a sermon that challenged these assumptions and that resulted in a reorganising of my giving. At that time, I realised I love this church and there was no reason why I

shouldn't be investing in the place I consider home.

I still give to the charities I had been supporting before, but I have also begun to express my commitment to the mission of GBC through regular giving here. God is doing great things through this church, both here in our own community and across the globe. It's a real privilege to be part of it.