

ISSUE 1

# THAT **ALL** *may* KNOW

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PARTNERSHIP NEWSLETTER



GBC



## A MESSAGE FROM THE SENIOR PASTOR

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Welcome to the first issue of our quarterly partnership newsletter. The idea of a partnership newsletter is taken from Philippians 1:5 where Paul describes the Philippian believers as “partners in the gospel”. The apostle then goes on to share with them those things that have happened that have “served to advance the gospel”.

This newsletter seeks to do the same. We are large enough as a church that it is easy for the good things God is doing in our midst to be missed. I hope and pray that as we share some of what God is doing it will encourage all of us to continue to commit ourselves to pray, serve and give to the mission and vision that God has laid on our hearts; to see lives transformed as they are invited to begin to follow Jesus!

Each issue will bring a brief update about ministry and mission here at GBC under five headings: Services, Youth & Families, Care & Growing, Local Mission, and Global Mission (which are also our budget headings), as well as several stories of people who have got involved in ministry, or those whose lives have been changed by encountering Jesus.

In this issue you'll hear from Dave Burton and his journey into a leadership role in GBC Cares, how God has been at work in Jess' life and why she's started leading in our youth ministry, Annette's involvement in planting seeds for the gospel in SRE, and similar exciting stories.

Along the way you'll also pick up things to pray about in the life of our church as we seek to see people changed as they take up the invitation to begin to follow Jesus.

If you have a story of transformation that you'd like to share with our community of faith contact me at **[Marc.Rader@gymeabaptist.org.au](mailto:Marc.Rader@gymeabaptist.org.au)**  
I'd love to hear from you!

Be encouraged! God is at work.

Enjoy reading!

Marc

# SERVICES

Gathering together in worship is the central way that we focus our hearts on the mission that God has invited us to participate in. As we worship in song, as we join together in prayer, as we listen to God's Word, as we celebrate what God is doing, and share opportunities to be involved, we remind ourselves about who we are in Christ and what we are on about as his people. What happens on Sundays is so much more than just a service!

This year, our theme is "That All May Know". In Scripture when this phrase is used it is usually a request for God to do something amazing in order that everyone might know that he is amazing! We hope that God will do something amazing this year! However, we are not passive observers but active participants and we explored our involvement in three areas: prayer, service and giving. It's going to be exciting to see what God does!

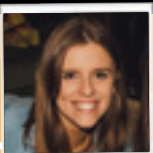
We have also returned to our series in Joshua – "Not One Failed Promise" – that is due to go to air on the Australian Christian Channel in late March. We are planning to have a bit of a pre-launch celebration on Sunday March 26th and the team is getting excited about providing this resource to the wider church.

There are also a few exciting things happening behind the scenes. Drew Harding, our Music Team Section Leader has introduced a trial period of mid-week rehearsals for the morning worship teams and Pete Gillies, our Creative Team Section Leader is already working away at our Easter services. Both of these initiatives are aimed at helping us to be better prepared and to make the most of our time together as a community of faith.

On a sad note, we are also working through the implications of Ryan Day's resignation as Worship Coordinator. Please be praying that the Lord would be leading us as we think about the sort of role that will be most helpful for us as a church, and that he will lead the right person with the right skills to us.

Also, if you'd like to be involved in the music team, either in singing, playing and instrument, or as part of the tech team (lights, vision and sound) this is a great time to go to GBC Links and the volunteer pathway!

We are looking forward to Easter, our next series tentatively entitled "Fruitful Church" and the next ACC series in James that kicks off in July, and are hoping to include more stories of encouragement in our services too!



## *Ellie's story*

I have recently joined the worship ministry at GBC. Getting re-involved with music outside church highlighted to me the amazing gift that singing to our Heavenly Father is. Engaging in worship through music can challenge us, move us, and excite us, and leading worship for previous Cambodia trips reignited

my love and desire to see people experience and engage with God through worship. So I waited until I felt God prompt me to sign up. I am no musician, or an amazing singer, but I know that God delights in hearing our voices praise Him, and I know that that is what worship ministry is all about – leading the congregation

to a point where they can truly experience God and hear His voice through the words they are singing. God has really been demonstrating that to me, and has conveyed to me the power worship can have over our lives and relationship with Him, and that's what I am most excited about for worship ministry.





## YOUTH & FAMILIES

One of the most exciting aspects of our ministry are the growing number of families who are joining GBC. As a church we want to do the best we can to foster the spiritual development of parents, children and young people.

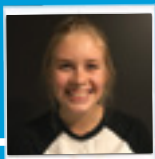
At the moment our primary focus is on our regular children and youth ministries which have both seen an increase in attendance and involvement over the first term. In the not too distant future we hope to take significant steps to strengthen our ministry to families. We'd really value your prayers as we think this through and, when things begin to happen, your involvement in this most critical ministry.

In the meantime, there is plenty to celebrate in our ministries to youth and families. Our six Playtime groups (five at Hotham Cottage and one at our Grays Point campus) are all full and, more exciting

still, are overwhelmingly serving families that are not connected to GBC. In fact, there are a number of neighbourhood families attending. What a privilege to find such a simple way to serve our neighbours!

In Kidzone the K-5 kids have been loving going through the stories of the Jungle Doctor (Australian missionary Dr. Paul White). These simple, timeless stories clearly present the truths of the gospel. Our pre-schoolers are enjoying learning about Jesus and his love for them. We look forward to how these seeds will bear fruit for the kingdom of God!

Finally, our youth ministry has got off to a great start too. The highlight so far has been the forty-six youth who went on camp to Collaroy on the first weekend of March. God was certainly at work in the lives of the youth and their leaders! You can read about one of the newest youth leaders below.



### *Jess' story*

I have been coming to GBC for 3 years now and have only been a youth leader for a year. Serving is something that we know we should do; not only is it a command from God but we get told by our church leaders, all the time, that it is an important part of being in a church family.

I originally came to GBC spiritually dry - my main goal was to soak up as much as I could without giving much back. I went to the PM service, had my mind blown each week with what Marc

had to say and then left. I had no roots, I didn't feel like I fit, I had no purpose at GBC. It wasn't until I started serving the Lord that I truly felt at home. To be honest, my main reason for serving was to meet people, to integrate into the GBC family and to tick a box.

Why youth? Again, if I am being honest, it was because that was what was comfortable. I had been a youth leader at my previous church so I thought I would stick to what I knew. Not a very extraordinary call to service,

is it? What is extraordinary is what God did with a girl just wanting to fit in, because, over just a few weeks, God had radically changed my perspective on service. He gave me a passion and a fire for our youth. Since being a youth leader I have seen some incredible things! I am blessed to have witnessed the lives of our kids changed as they take baby steps towards Jesus.

My story is not exceptional, but God's is. His call to serve others is one that benefits all.

# CARE & GROWING

This area of our life together includes welcoming and integration, Life Groups, and our care ministry (among others). We desire everyone who is invited to follow Jesus at GBC, to be free to do so in an environment of love and support. This is one of the chief characteristics of Jesus' disciples!

Care and growing ministries are also a key place for "every member ministry". Every one of us needs to see ourselves as part of the welcoming and integration team whether we have a formal role or not. Every one of us needs to see ourselves as part of our care ministry even if we aren't a member of the GBC Cares team. Every one of us needs to be learning what it means to love and follow Jesus so that we can invite others to do the same!

In early March we rolled out the next stage in GBC Cares – our lay ministry of pastoral, practical and food needs. As a ministry we seek to provide short term care to those who need it. The teams are now up and running and we have already had the opportunity to

provide care to a number of individuals. We hope that once we find our feet, GBC Cares will be able to extend care outside of our community of faith too, which would be an exciting complement to SCW and would increase the opportunities we have to show the love of Christ in our community.

GBC Connect, our welcoming and integration ministry, continues to evolve. Ruth Malone, our Welcoming Team Section Leader is working together with Mark Coleman to implement more effective systems to enable people to feel welcome and part of our church, they are always on the look out for those who would love to join their teams. You can get involved in this vital work by checking out the Serve page on GBC Links!

We currently have 41 Life Groups with 371 people involved which is fantastic. Mark Coleman is always on the look out for more Life Group leaders to facilitate new groups and for Life Groups who can extend a welcome to new members of our church. Get in touch with Mark if you'd like to know more.



## *Dave's story*

My involvement in GBC Cares is built on the foundation of Eph 4:10. God has given us all gifts for the building up of the body of believers and for His glory. I also believe that God allows us to use both the good and difficult times we go through, for us to grow more like Him and to empathise with others as they endure similar experiences. Over my Christian life God has always brought people into my life to encourage and love me through those times as they pointed me to God and I believe that he can use me to do

the same for others.

I strongly believe that as a member of the body of Christ we are each responsible to carry one another's burdens. Our individual journeys in life are all different and there is no universal response to each individual crisis or event. Whatever happens it is important that we are supported with love, prayer and companionship, someone to walk alongside us. It is my vision that we have a team of Christ-like, compassionate, supportive and prayerful

Christians here at GBC who love, serve and build one another up and point each other to Christ; as salt and light, first of all to our church community and then to the wider community; for us all to seek to live out Christ's love for others with non-judgemental love and acceptance.

As each one of us exercises our gifts from God, that frees others up to exercise theirs and enables us all to fulfil the ministry model outlined by Paul; that all may know.

# LOCAL MISSION

Our mission to invite everyone to follow Jesus everywhere we go and in everything we do begins in our own neighbourhoods, and as a church we are seeking to find more and more ways to engage with our local community.

One of our most community-engaging ministries is Playtime. We have five full Playtime groups that meet in Hotham Cottage each day of the week and another at our Grays Point campus. We are especially thankful that some of the mums who attend are from our local neighbourhood!

As a church we continue to be involved in SRE in a number of local schools. No one knows how long this opportunity will remain open for us, but we are

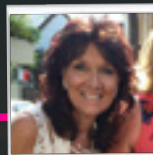
committed to be involved for as long as it is! This year we have welcomed a new SRE teacher – Annette Clarke – and you can read her story below.

Kids Hope under Leanne Langford is about to launch again. We have the privilege to be in two local schools: Kareela and Grays Point and want to continue to offer mentors for children who are doing it a bit tough.

We also had sixteen people register to go through the COACH training to become mentors in our wider community. Wendy Winton is our COACH coordinator and we're excited to see the program really get underway. In the next quarter we have to complete the training of our mentors and to begin finding people for them to mentor.



## Annette's story



After a lengthy career as a teacher and Head of Junior School, I wondered what I would do in retirement. I felt I had a responsibility to give some of my time to God's work. I always had a desire to reach out into the community, and wanted to ensure I spent time with unchurched people and felt my teaching skills, honed over 40 wonderful years could contribute to SRE. I now teach a Scripture class at Kareela Public School. I'm praying for the teachers who sit in and listen to my lessons and my 20 enthusiastic children, that God will use me to clearly explain the gospel message, and they will both understand and retain the significance of what I say each week. This is my opportunity to serve the community, to share my faith and to ensure that in my retirement I have a place in the world outside 'church life'. Although it's early days, I'm loving it already.



# GLOBAL MISSION

Global mission is our opportunity to show love and care to those who we may never meet personally. In early February we sent another team to Cambodia to begin to learn about this country that we believe God has led us to and to continue to build the relationship with our partners there. Marc was part of the team and had some excellent conversations with a couple of partners about future relationships that will begin to form through the work of a new committee at GBC that will deal with Cambodia. This Cambodian Committee will be chaired by Richard Dwyer and will be launching soon! It is our desire to continue to deepen our heart for this country, to facilitate the sending of teams and people to Cambodia and to

long-term sustainable partnerships.

There will also be an opportunity in the next little while to express your interest in joining the team to Cambodia in 2018. You can read Graeme's story about his involvement below.

And speaking of opportunities, May is coming! The Mission Action Group has prayerfully and carefully selected our projects for 2017. Our target is \$203,000 and I am excited about what God will do through our generosity in May. There will be a MAG event on Saturday May 6 so keep your eyes open for more information in the weeks to come!



## *Graeme's story*

You have seen the wonderful photos and videos of our Cambodia trip however, they fall short in portraying the depth and gravity of this experience. At Heart of Hope School, we visited the confined riverside living conditions of the children and watched as they played in a clearing amongst rubble and old tyres. It gave me a deep appreciation of how little they have and the great significance of the school. We prayed with the staff in their

ministry of love, providing education that would otherwise be denied for these children. Hearing the stories and prayer requests shared by Daughters of Cambodia were heart wrenching.

I felt overwhelmed, but God enabled us to pray into these lives with His love and compassion. They face crushing circumstances in the field every day, but for a brief time we were THERE, to share the light of His Presence. Through HOME (House of

Mission and Encouragement), God enabled us to engage with nearly one thousand children in four regional schools, presenting a gospel message and leaving a care pack with each child which included a New Testament in their own language. I see God continuing His work as I pray for the power of His Spirit to bless His Word to the hearts of these children and their families. The whole Trip was a rewarding and unforgettable experience, one which we will always cherish.

# YOUR STORY AT GBC

We believe that the good things you've read about in this newsletter are just the beginning of all that God will do in our midst. The really exciting part is that each of us have been invited to participate in God's plan to change lives. Our involvement takes many forms, but this year as a community of faith we are focusing on three: prayer, service and giving.

Let us pray, without giving up, for many more stories of changed lives as people follow Jesus and that Jesus would continue to change our lives! We hope that this newsletter has provided you with insight to pray more effectively and specifically.

Let us use our gifts and abilities to serve; participating in God's grand plan to restore and renew everything in Jesus. Each of us have been given gifts and abilities that, in the power of the Holy Spirit, can be used to further the kingdom of God. What a privilege!

As a church, we want to release as many people into fulfilling kingdom ministry as we can.

Let our stewardship of the resources we have been given be driven by a vision of what God can do with them. When we give of our finances we are not giving to the church or to a budget, but to a vision. We believe that we are called to invite everyone to follow Jesus, everywhere we go and in everything we do, so that people might be changed by him! This is ultimately what we are about at GBC.

The stories in this issue serve to remind us of all that God is doing and to invite us to participate more fully. Perhaps, as you read these brief reports and stories, the Holy Spirit moved your heart in a particular way. If that is the case, commit that ministry to prayer. Ask the Lord to show you whether you should explore serving in that area and to fill your heart with a vision for what he might do.

**If you'd like to explore how you might use your gifts and abilities to serve the Lord and his kingdom purposes, login to GBC Links and click on the Serve tab. You'll find all the information you need to start the process.**

**If you wish to contribute financially to the work of God at GBC you can find our account details under the Give tab in GBC Links.**

