

ISSUE 5

# LIVES CHANGED BY JESUS

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PARTNERSHIP NEWSLETTER

FOCUS

GBC





## SERVICES

Our Sunday services are such an important gathering as they're the fullest expression of our church community worshipping together. As a church we want to make the most of these gatherings by being intentional in all we do. It's important that we are purposeful, prepared and positive so that people find it easy to connect in and encounter God. We aim to bring our very best to our services, to create a distraction-free space for the Holy Spirit to move and for people to be released to fix their attention on Jesus.

In 2018 our services team is committing to focus on helping people to encounter Jesus. We look forward to hearing stories of how Jesus is at work in your life

throughout the week, so we can celebrate together on Sundays. Everyone has a part to play in our services, and our hope is that you would find your best way to engage. You don't need to be on the platform to help lead an expression of worship. Share your story, sing from your heart, be present in prayer and welcome a new face. You could change someone's day without even leaving your seat!

Finally, we want to express our gratitude for Drew Harding's service as Music Section Leader over this past year. As our team undergoes a little restructuring, Drew will remain a worship leader, but finish up his role as Section Leader. We look forward to what God has in store for this next season.



## A MESSAGE FROM THE SENIOR PASTOR

Our theme for 2018 is FOCUS. This was born from a conviction that, in order for us to become all that God has called us to become, we need to discern what is best, from what is good, and then focus our energy and resources on those things. This will play out in lots of ways across the life of the church, and you'll be hearing a lot more about it as the year unfolds, but the first commitment is encapsulated in our vision statement: Lives changed by Jesus.

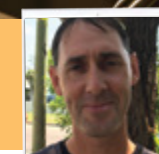
This vision is the natural outworking of our mission statement, "Everywhere we go and in everything we do, we will invite everyone to follow Jesus." One important implication of this mission is that we – those who are doing the inviting – are following Jesus ourselves. However, when people begin to follow Jesus, we believe that they will be

transformed by that encounter and this is what we want to see: Lives changed by Jesus.

The invitation to follow Jesus and be changed by that encounter is strengthened by transformation in our own lives, and so the first commitment is to being changed ourselves; my life changed by Jesus. This was the central challenge I gave on Vision Sunday (4th February) and I'd encourage you to listen to that podcast to hear my heart for our church in 2018.

If, as a community of faith, we are continually being changed by Jesus, this will flow into every aspect of our life together and spill out into our community and world that so desperately needs to meet Jesus.

**God bless,  
Marc**



### *Darren's story*

I've always believed that if a job is worth doing then it is worth doing 100%. This has been my approach to serving in ministry.

My involvement in sound production began with the needs of my mate's church band. As it grew they needed someone to mix the sound and I offered. Since then I have had many opportunities

to be involved in production for events, bands and ministry organisations.

For me, church production is about helping to create an environment where God can move. All of our service elements need to work together - music, the spoken word, audio levels, lighting, vision

and staging. As I serve I try to take all the audio available and create a unified sound that enables people to draw closer to God.

Lately I have enjoyed introducing my son to operating the lighting, it has been great to teach and serve alongside him. I look forward to the day the roles are reversed and he is teaching me something new!





## CARE, CONNECT AND GROWING

The start of the new year has brought with it a renewed vision to see lives changed by Jesus, and the areas of our church where we seek to care, connect and grow, continue to have an important part to play in that vision.

GBC Cares under the coordination of Sheena Hind, alongside Dave Burton (Pastoral Care) and Taryn Grice (Food Care), have continued to grow the team of volunteers committed to seeing lives changed by Jesus in caring for others. Members of the wider GBC community have been visited in hospital and at home, received meals during difficult times, and have even received help with a specific IT issue!

Our GBC Connect team keep faithfully welcoming

and serving our community on a Sunday. It has been wonderful to hear the stories of first time visitors receiving a warm welcome from a volunteer and getting connected into life at GBC. We have seen many new members join the team for our 8:30 service, but there are still a number of opportunities at our 10:30 and 6:00 services to welcome people, help them find a seat, and generally serve the needs of others in our services. Find out why Kat got involved in her story below.

Finally, we have also seen the formation of a number of new LifeGroups at the start of this year. It is great to hear people committing to see their lives changed by Jesus together, and inviting newcomers to join them on that journey.

## YOUTH & FAMILIES

Christmas is a time for families, and for us at GBC, that is no different. Our family Christmas services and Carols in the Park were great opportunities to serve and connect with the families of our wider community. Families who would otherwise not connect with a church community, celebrated and sang together with us. As we seek to prioritise serving families more, we are excited by what God has for us as we grow in this area.

With the beginning of the new year, our children and youth ministries have launched programs seeking to engage young people and their families with the message and transformation that comes from Jesus. Our Sunday children's ministry has started a new year long theme, journeying with the kids through the

timeline of the bible. This is a fantastic opportunity to show the devotion and love that God has for His people. It has also been a great encouragement to see so many young people step into leadership roles and serve.

Over the past few years, God has been doing some amazing work in the hearts and lives of our young people. As a result, we have had to develop new ways to disciple this growing group. This year sees the launch of Youth LifeGroups, where the youth meet with young adults from our community, exploring the Bible together and taking time to experience all that God has for them. It is no surprise perhaps, that we are truly seeing young lives changed by Jesus.



### *Kat's story*

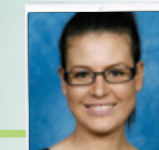
I have been involved in youth ministry at GBC for nearly 10 years. Serving God and getting to know our young people has been one of my favourite things.

I've learnt from those who attend, and those I lead alongside, and it's such a joy to see young people come to Jesus and explore what

life looks like following Him. Over the past year God has been challenging and growing me, and by the end of 2017 I felt called into a new season of serving. After conversations with Marc and Matt I am so thankful to take on the Youth Intern role. 1 Peter 5:2 says "Not because

you must, but because you are willing." Serving is not something we are forced to do, but is an opportunity to give back to God and our community.

I am thankful and excited to step into this new season and cannot wait to see where God leads both me and our youth ministry.



### *Kat's story*

Hi, I'm Kat and I've been attending the 6pm service at Gynea for about 18 months. I've been involved in a number of ministry areas at a couple of different churches over my years as a Christian and I'm excited to take on the role of Team Leader for Welcoming/Stewarding at the evening service. Whenever I've visited a church or have been new to a congregation, I have reflected on the positive impact that a smile or greeting at the door can have, and how encouraging a chat after the service can also be. Demonstrating genuine care for others through welcoming and serving reflects Christ's love. I'm looking forward to partnering with the welcoming and stewarding team at 6pm as they seek to encourage members of our church to engage with newcomers, inviting everyone to follow Jesus.







## FOCUS

As we seek to FOCUS, discerning what is best, from what is good, it has become clear that this process has become the essential leadership task for us in 2018.

As a larger church, with approximately 700 adults who regularly attend a service, being more focused on what God has called us to is important because it helps build unity. The greater clarity we have about who we are and what we're called to, the easier it is to communicate that and for people to commit to it. This unity of purpose will strengthen our sense of community together. We may not be able to know everyone who is part of GBC, but if we know what we're on about, we know that those who make up our community of faith share the same vision and values.

This process of focusing our attention has been ongoing for a couple of years now, but has become more critical as we have gained some clarity. For example, last year we identified five strategic priorities and two social justice issues that we felt were important for us to focus on: discipleship, evangelism, kids & youth, leadership development, and cultural diversity. These stand alongside the social justice issues, identified under the guidance of our Catalyst Group, of domestic violence and ethical consumerism. Now that these have been identified we begin the much more difficult task of determining how best to really prioritise these.

The clarification of our vision statement – Lives changed by Jesus – and our mission statement – Everywhere we go and in everything we do, we will invite everyone to follow Jesus – must become a significant part of the fabric of all we do as a church, so they don't simply remain statements. Now is the time to really lean into them; to pray that the Lord would change lives, beginning with us, and to consider how all we do helps create space for an encounter with Jesus.

As a leadership we are also working to identify the values that accompany these goals and which will drive our behaviours and activity as a church. As with our vision and mission, if these don't show up in our day-to-day activity as a church there will be more work to do.

If you are committed to the vision that God has called us to, please pray for the work of focusing this year. The desire is not to just have systems, processes, and vision statements, but that we might indeed be all that God has called us to be. This is an important stage for our growth and development as a community of faith and one that is critical to define the way forward.



## LOCAL MISSION

Scripture in schools is one of the ways we get to serve our local community, beyond the walls of GBC. We are thankful to still have this opportunity to reach a generation with the gospel, so that they might be invited to follow Jesus. There's always room for new Scripture teachers. Only 2% of Aussie kids go to church on Sundays, but you could introduce children to Jesus in their school, so their lives can be changed by Him.

People from GBC teach at Kareela (Wednesdays), Gynea North (Tuesdays) and Bates Drive school for those with special needs (Tuesdays), and many other schools as well, sometimes working in pairs making it easier to coordinate, especially if one is away. If you are keen to get involved, you can speak with Roxane Lawler, our Children's Ministry Coordinator, or see the role descriptions on GBC Links. You might help change the course of a young person's life.

Six GBC Playtime groups have also resumed for 2018. We share God's love with 50-60 parents and grandparents who come along each week with their children. Families at Playtime, many of whom are new to the Shire, are so thankful to connect with others who understand the challenges of life with young children. A listening ear and a loving heart are key skills in the Playtime team.

If you have a morning free, even only occasionally, and can be friendly, help clean up, hold a baby or do craft with a pre-schooler, there is a place for you in Playtime. Chat to Meddwyn Hinton, our Playtime Coordinator or have a look at the role descriptions on GBC Links for more information.



### Kaye's story

I began teaching Scripture when my own children were in school. I loved the opportunity to be involved in sharing something of what it means to know God with them and their classmates. Now, almost 40 years later, I've taught my grandchildren and many others as well. This opportunity

to speak about God with those who may never have heard about Him, is the single, most valued activity I have been involved with in ministry. "It is more blessed to give than to receive," and my experience has been to receive far more than I could have ever asked or imagined.

Children can only come to know Jesus if they are given the opportunity to hear about Him. Scripture teaching has provided me and many others that opportunity, and I'm so thankful for that. Could God be inviting you into that opportunity too?



### Sharyn's story

After returning from our recent GBC team trip to Cambodia, I felt prayer must be the first thing we do for this country. For the organisations we partner with that are reaching out, and for those who are leading the country. It is a very complex political and cultural situation.

I had the privilege of praying with a number of the clients from Daughters of Cambodia, our mission partner seeking to change the lives of victims of human trafficking. While there was a language barrier, we had a translator and I know God knows the need these women have, He knows their hearts and He speaks their language.

I believe God has a place for me to serve in Cambodia. Whether that is with Daughters or elsewhere, I consider it a privilege to work for Him beside these beautiful people and I can't wait to see how God opens this door and develops that call.

## GLOBAL MISSION

Global mission reflects God's heart for all people and as we walk with other nations, it stretches faith and helps shape our discipleship journey.

Our four Cambodian partner organisations: Heart of Hope, Gospel Commission Fellowship, Daughters of Cambodia, and HOME, provided our 2018 Cambodia team with an illuminating glimpse into mission. While we often pray for the GBC team while they are away, it is really our partners in Cambodia who require our ongoing prayer. They follow Jesus at such an immense cost and with unimaginable challenges, it leaves us evaluating whether we would be willing to do the same. We're thankful to God for the example they set.

The Mission Action Group are gearing up for May Mission Month with four world changing

projects that will be presented to the church to support, alongside our missionaries. As culture shifts and changes, we are unpacking the challenges of international development so we can thoughtfully partner with God towards the holistic transformation of people's lives.

Baptist World Aid launched their 2018 Catalyst campaign at GBC in Feb, with 45 people from different churches and social advocacy groups attending. BWA inspired us to take our next faithful step to tackle significant issues such as poverty, slavery and environmental sustainability. They also helped equip us as we FOCUS on two social justice issues as a church: Domestic Violence and Ethical Consumerism. During May we'll be starting the conversation about these issues through a social justice sermon series, exploring how we can 'be the change.'







## SOUTHERN COMMUNITY WELFARE

Southern Community Welfare has been able to offer counselling support addressing social, relational and mental health issues, for over two decades, into the local community. Over this time, it has established a reputation for innovative programs and for having a practical approach to responding to community need. More recently SCW has been able to significantly grow, meet best practice standards, expand its ability to offer tax deductibility, revise its constitution and successfully pilot a social enterprise op-shop.

One of the constants throughout this time has been the faithful support of its Chairman and member of GBC, Russell Foxe. Russell has been a part of the governing board of SCW since 2000 and has faithfully served throughout this time. Whilst there are always many contributors that make an organisation successful, we'd love to take this opportunity to thank Russell for his commitment and his Godly leading, enabling Southern to continue to support people like Alan\*.

### *Alan's story*

Imagine it's your birthday party, everyone is inside and you are pacing the block because you are too anxious to go in, or coming off the football field because you feel like you are having a heart attack. Those memories are still just as strong today as they were 25 years ago for Alan\*.

Life with severe anxiety is debilitating, frustrating and demoralising. The loneliness feeds feelings of worthlessness, incompetence and despair. Alan has faced this for a lifetime.

Hobbies and passions were a foreign concept, until Alan started seeing a psychologist at Southern Community Welfare. Starting first with the rituals that filled his life with burdens, Alan gradually learned to find freedom from the patterns that held him captive. More than this easing of daily burdens, Alan began learning French and even started surfing again. He was able to see himself as someone of worth, and believe he had a future to look forward to. To help build social connections, Alan was connected with a church

in his local area. He was able to process some of the thoughts and feelings that he carried for years, and actually experience joy! Alan also celebrated his 50th birthday this year, and as well as receiving a card from his sister, he received one from the team at SCW. SCW staff regularly pray for him, and he is amazed by the support he's received. Things are still challenging for Allan, but he now believes that change is possible and better things are on the way. (\* Alan's name has been changed to respect his privacy.)

## FINANCES

We value generosity, and one of the ways we can express that is in our financial commitment to the vision and mission of the church. We give, not to keep the lights on, but so that people might begin to follow Jesus and be changed by him. This is a cause that invites generosity, as its impact lasts into eternity.

We encourage those who are committed to this vision to pray, to serve, and to give; and to do so generously. In particular we encourage people to give in three areas. First, the general offerings that support the varied ministries of the church. This is the foundational commitment, but not the only way to give.

Second, to give to our May Mission Month appeal, where we ask people to give over and above their regular offering. Don't wait until May to begin to prayerfully consider what you might give to one or more of the projects we seek to support.

Third, to give to the work of Southern Community Welfare. Supporting this vital ministry of the church is important to us and we urge people to consider giving regularly, or to commit to contribute to a specific project in our September appeal.

More information on giving at GBC, including tax deductible options, can be found on GBC Links under the Give tab.

If, like many in our community of faith, you give electronically, the beginning of the year is a good time to revisit your financial commitment and to ensure that any schedule hasn't lapsed without your knowledge.

**Bank:** Baptist Financial Services  
**Account:** Gynea Baptist Church  
**BSB No:** 704 922  
**Account No:** 100 006 024.







FOCUS.

Lives changed by Jesus

GBC

[gymeabaptist.org.au](http://gymeabaptist.org.au)