



**Refresh**



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PARTNERSHIP NEWSLETTER

**GBC**

ISSUE 10



# A Call to Prayer

## A MESSAGE FROM THE SENIOR PASTOR

At our mid-year meeting this year I invited you to join me in praying for a new season of the work of God in our midst. This is not a denial of God's activity in our community of faith but a prayer for more; for more lives changed by Jesus. I've been greatly encouraged by the number of people who have told me that they have taken up this call to prayer. This is the kind of prayer that aligns us with the plans and purposes of God as we are invited to consider what we can do to more closely participate in the restoring work of God in Jesus through the empowerment of the Spirit.

Refreshing our alignment to the plans and purposes of God's will, inevitably, brings the challenge of change. A fresh work of God will require fresh ways of participating; new wine in new wineskins. This

will not necessarily be easy or comfortable for us and there will be times when all we can do is step out in obedience to where we believe God is calling us without knowing precisely what the step after will be. I pray that we will have the faith to step out and embrace the uncertainty knowing that the final destination will be amazing.

In this issue of the Partnership Newsletter you will hear from various ministries and what they hope the fresh work of God involves. I trust that you will be inspired by what you read and that your prayers will be energised as we wait for the leading and direction of God and face the future with faith and courage.

**God bless,  
Marc**

## SERVICES

What happens on a Sunday is a refreshing time of meeting with God through worship, the Word, praying together and celebrating what God is doing in our lives and the lives of those around us. What a joy it is to hear from others what God has been up to, and exciting to think of all that a new season in God will look like.

The Services Team continues to serve faithfully each week as we meet together. The team has grown over the last few months, with Craig Morrison (am) and James Sherry (pm) stepping into the team as musicians. Matt Tomlin has stepped into the role of Worship Leader (am) and Tim Colwell (pm) has joined our Vision operators team. Martin Johnson has taken

up the role of Section Leader for Production and Technology, bringing with him a wealth of experience, a desire for excellence and a heart to serve where he can.

As we look towards a new season, I pray that God will bring a greater joy, a fresh desire to declare our praises to our great God and a renewed freedom to our services where people can express their hearts freely toward God.

Be encouraged by the words of Paul from Hebrews 10: 24 - 25 " let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another..."



### *Steph's story*

When Marc Rader put out a call to prayer around a new season earlier this year, I thought of the song New Wine by Brooke Ligertwood. I felt convinced that this song would be an important part of our worship as we asked God to bring something new.

What I didn't expect was the way He would use this song to convict

me of things that needed to be dealt with so I could be ready for this new season. The song was written out of one of Jesus' parables - "no one puts new wine into old wineskins otherwise the wine will burst the skins and the wine is lost and the skins as well". In biblical times a wineskin could be renewed if it was soaked in oil and the tough spots massaged

out. The Holy Spirit gently showed me the areas of my life that needed attention and needed to be dealt with.

May we have wineskins that have been soaked in the Holy Spirit and may we be doing the hard work of bringing ourselves before God and asking to be transformed.





## YOUTH & FAMILIES

Being a young person today means navigating an ever changing social, emotional, relational and cultural terrain. The burdens and expectations being placed on the younger generation are far more than those before them. It is within this context that the Church needs to step up and meet our young people within their overwhelming reality. In doing so, we can learn from their experiences of the world and journey with them accordingly.

It's with this in mind that 2020 brings some exciting changes to our children's ministries. Our Sunday morning programs will be changing for those young people in later primary and early high school. This will help our ministries and empower our leaders to be more intentional in meeting the needs of our young people.

For our youth ministry, next year will have a significant focus on leadership development. This is not only for those who serve our young people, but for our high school students as well. We believe that all are invited to participate in God's mission and are eager to release our young people to serve and lead where God is calling them. Two new areas where this will be available is a leadership program for high school students on Sunday mornings and the GBC Internship Program.

We believe that our young people are not just the future of the Church but are called to participate in its present as well and so it is with excited anticipation that we wait to see how God will use them for His kingdom.

## CARE, CONNECT AND GROWING

Refreshing our commitment to the vision and purpose God has given us, has to find its outworking in the way we care, connect, and grow as followers of Jesus. God has invited us to join in with His plans and purposes, and those plans are perhaps no more clearly made real, than when we commit to ongoing transformation which, in turn, invites others to connect with God and become more like Jesus.

At the heart of transformed lives, is the resulting outward expression of care for others. We are committed to seeing our whole community take up God's invitation to be those who care, in LifeGroups, through GBC Cares, and the more informal ways we look out for others in our Sunday Services. Our desire is to see a community having experienced the change that God's care through others can bring, commit to loving others in the same way. Check out our GBC Cares

Coordinator, Sheena's hope for what God would do in this area in the story below.

We can also be involved in God's renewal of the world, by becoming a people of invitation. When people see transformation in someone's life, it's attractive, it inspires curiosity and often the desire for "some of what they're having!" We have an opportunity to practically reveal this through our welcoming and stewarding teams, but also as we welcome others into our lives through LifeGroups and ConnectGroups, which you will hear more about in 2020.

If you want to be a part of teams that are refreshing their commitment to transformed lives, we'd love you to join in. Check out opportunities to serve on the care connect and growing page in GBC Links.



### Tahlia's story

I became a Christian when I was in high school. Only a few years later I found myself stepping into the role of Youth Leader for the first time, and since then God has drawn me towards serving young people. No matter what plans I have had for my life He kept pushing me back there, so when Matt asked me to step into the role of Team Leader for JAM

I already knew God and I were on the same page so I said yes. Teenage me would be devastated by this knowledge, but now both my working life and church life revolve around teaching and serving youth. I wouldn't have it any other way.

When I think about all the things I hope for the future of JAM, I hope

it can be a place where they can really dig into faith and ask any and every question, where they can grow to confidently own their faith in an environment where they are loved and supported, no matter what their life may look like because all are welcome in God's family. And when they're ready, hopefully "big church" won't be as intimidating anymore.



### Sheena's story

When I imagine a new season for our church, I imagine a community that loves and cares for one another. I imagine a place where those committed to care, outnumber and 'out-care' the demand. I imagine young and old working together to help those in need.

My hope is that we would all become so shaped by our desire to care, so committed to it, that we are able to extend that care beyond our walls and into our community. I want to hear people ask us why we care for them like we do, and our reply to be because Jesus loves us and following Him

has changed who we are.

Our God is a big, big God, with a big plan for us to be involved in. Imagine what our lives would look like if we got involved in showing His love and care every day. That's my hope and prayer for the new season.





# God's Story Our Story



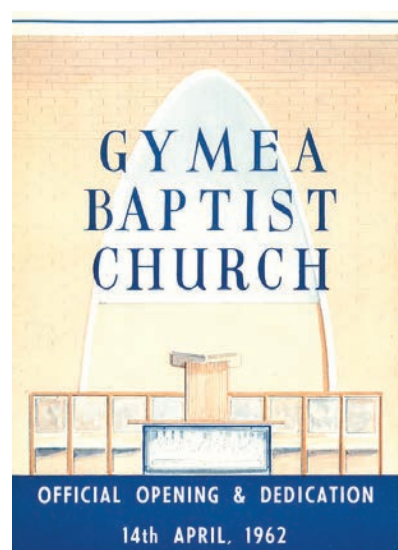
On Sunday November 17 we celebrated 70 years of God's faithfulness at Gymea Baptist Church. From the humble beginnings of a Sunday School held in the home of John and Babs Turner with seven local children in 1940 there grew a small community of believers who formed Hotham Road Baptist Church nine years later, meeting in a re-purposed radar hut.

The story of GBC (whose name was changed in 1956 to reflect its geographical location) since those humble beginnings is pretty remarkable. GBC became a flagship church of the Baptist Association with a long heritage of resourcing the wider church. Locally, it was a community of faith with a thriving Sunday School; great facilities; sending and supporting missionaries around the globe; participating in the launch of national and international movements such as Bike for Bibles, Christian Surfers, or Olive Tree Media; vibrant ministry to youth; serving our community professionally through the founding of Hopefield; Carols in the Park; and on and on it goes.

Our story, however, is so much more than a list of accomplishments. Our story is ultimately part of God's story; a small part of God's global work of restoring and renewing the world in Jesus. The lives changed through the various ministries of GBC were changed by Jesus as people faithfully took up the invitation to join in with what God was doing.

This perspective draws our attention away from the institution of GBC to the kingdom of God, away from the amazing things that have happened here to the amazing God whose plans we participate with, away from the past to the future.

We have plenty to celebrate in our past and our history with God should fill us with confidence, hope, and anticipation of what the next chapters will look like as we follow in the footsteps of those who have gone before.





# LOCAL MISSION

Supporting relationships, while loving and serving people without condition, are common aims of our local mission groups.

Our Kids Hope team celebrated 10 years of building community in local public schools. They see God at work in matching the life experience of mentors with the needs of the children they connect with for an hour each week. See how Glen got involved in his story below.

Playtime fostered intergenerational relationships by enjoying animal-themed activities every day of Term 3, jumping castle fun and a soft-toy scavenger hunt in the church. They also made it simple for new families to join us on a Sunday for preschool KidZone "Lost Sheep" Day with real farm animals.

The Fathering Project goal of developing more effective father-figures has progressed with interactive events such as rock climbing, bike riding and gingerbread house making, and a well-attended, and thoroughly enjoyed, weekend camp - helping men take their next positive step towards happier, healthier futures for their kids.

COACH has also been Creating Opportunities And Casting Hope. One mentor, walking alongside an adult going through difficult times, appreciated their "fantastic attitude and willingness to implement change in your life". From the other perspective, mentees value "a loving and supportive person in nature who has been a very important constant in my life".

Look out for refreshed opportunities to participate next year in what God is doing in the lives of those in our local community on GBC Links under the serve tab.



## Glen's story

Twelve years ago, I prayer-partnered with my friend, John, who was a Kid's Hope mentor. The boy's family acknowledged the benefits and requested that John maintain contact through high school. Recently John was at this young man's 21st! This wonderful experience motivated me to participate in Kid's Hope. This year, I finally had opportunity

to mentor a child at Grays Point Public School. I now take a 9-year-old boy out of class for one hour each Tuesday. Once we finish the English classwork set by his teacher, we can do what we want (boys' stuff). We discuss what we enjoy doing, I reminisce about being a young boy and we play handball which is his favourite game.

I know the boy's teacher from previously being his youth leader and soccer coach. Discussing how we can overcome some of the boy's issues and hearing how happy and positive he is after our time together is rewarding. I have experienced what a blessing Kid's Hope is, years ago as a prayer partner and now as a mentor.

# GLOBAL MISSION

The world around us is changing in extraordinary and unimaginable ways. It can feel overwhelming, disorienting and easy to jump to fear to fill in the blanks of uncertainty - but Jesus invites us to view the shifting world around us through the lens of courageous faith.

We live in a global village that is multi-cultural, intergenerational and the new village square is online and digital. As we celebrate GBC's 70th birthday, the church of yesterday will look radically different to the church of the future - but Jesus's good news to restore and renew all things remains constant. Same message, different packaging.

In the Mission Department (Catalyst, Cambodia and Mission Action Group) we have been seeking where God is at work in the world around us and how it translates back to us. As we do that, we reflect and celebrate all that God has done through these teams.

For 8 years, the Fair Trade Market event has supported communities in over 20 nations receive fair work conditions and a living wage. For the past 10 years, over 90 people have been engaged with Cambodia teams, to experience where God is at work in a culture outside their own. In 18 years, May Mission Month has raised over \$3million for more than 30 different organisations and missionaries. These are incredible

outcomes these teams have led, with our GBC faith community rallying behind them to make it a reality!

However as culture shifts and bends, conditions that made these endeavours successful no longer exist. We face new legislative requirements, diverse modes of generational engagement, the fragmented busyness of people's lives and layers of cultural complexity. Mission historically was 'west to the rest' (Western nations going to other nations), but now it is 'everyone

to everywhere'. Add to that, within GBC, we have been recalibrating a new empowering leadership model, vision and strategy, language and culture.

As we move to the future, our teams' purpose is to see people take up their unique invitation to participate with God's mission, whatever season, age or stage of faith they are at. Our core activities are around sending, advocacy, mission exploration and partnership. We are creating accessible pathways that connect our diverse, inter-generational congregation with mission in meaningful ways, that are flexible, sustainable and innovative - with the vision to see lives changed by Jesus. It's going to be a wild ride, that relies on the Holy Spirit's leading and everyone getting involved... so what's your next faithful step?!







# FINANCES

We have been praying for a new season of God’s transforming work in Jesus and, as part of that, praying that God would show us where we are being invited into that work and that we would be prepared spiritually, organisationally, and financially for whatever is next.

One of the ways we are invited to participate is through our financial investment in the work of God. Your giving to the vision and mission of GBC allows us to say Yes to the invitation of God and enables us to serve the wider community. Thank you for your commitment to God’s plans and purposes through faithful stewardship of your financial resources.

As we near the end of the year let me encourage you to take some time to ask the Lord how He might be inviting you to invest in the kingdom through GBC in 2020 as we continue to seek to follow His leading.

More details on how to begin giving are available on GBC Links. We encourage electronic giving.

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

# HOPEFIELD - HOUSING FIRST

At Hopefield, we have always believed we need to bring both practical and therapeutic supports to genuinely impact people’s lives. That’s why we have a clinical team of psychologists, counsellors and speech therapists who work with individuals addressing a specific concern. Alongside this, we also have the Support Services team of social workers and case workers who meet practical needs such as connecting individuals and/or providing food, shelter, health, income and other basic necessities of life.

Homelessness in the Sutherland Shire looks very different to homelessness in inner city areas. Most homeless people in the shire are relatively hidden. While we do have those in the Sutherland Shire who spend their time hopping from friend’s couch to couch, we have chosen to focus our support on those that are rough sleeping. Rough sleeping means having no fixed place of residence, often sleeping in cars, bushland or bus shelters.

One of the biggest challenges we have in working with homeless people is that they often have multiple needs. Housing is just the tip of the iceberg. Most homeless clients are also experiencing physical and mental health issues, financial distress, along with many basic needs not being met. Placing these

clients into appropriate housing is often the hardest part of the case manager’s role and evidence shows that a “housing first” approach is the best long term first step.

An amazing new opportunity has recently presented itself in the form of a collaborative partnership. In a way never seen previously, government agencies (Housing, Health, Local Government and Police) are drawing on local services to identify and provide targeted support to homeless people in the Shire. Hopefield is first among these agencies. Still in its infancy the broad scope is to find, assess, and rapidly mobilise resources to provide housing, health and social supports to this vulnerable group of people.

As we focus on these new opportunities, we see God’s fingerprints at work. Opportunities are arising and new doors are opening. Decisions that were made about Hopefield’s services, long before this collaborative partnership was ever within our reach, indicate God was working back then and therefore we can trust that He is at work now. Whilst we do not yet know every step, we do know that God is faithful and so we boldly go forward as He leads, partnering with Him in the restoration and renewal of all things.





**GBC**  
gymeabaptist.org.au