

the advocate

"The distance between ordinary and extraordinary is shorter than you think."
JOHN MAXWELL PAGE 13>>

In Conversation Matt Redman speaks about teamwork, changes in worship music and accusations that praise choruses are shallow **PAGE 12>>**



Photo: Dean Morris

Mark Desebrock, Director Anthony Howes, Tyler Jacob Jones and Erin Hutchinson taking a break from rehearsals for *The Passion of Christ 2014*.



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 After 33 years *Nightline* host, Graham Mabury, will retire >>



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The Passion of Christ

The Passion of Christ 2014 – A Contemporary Easter Story will be staged in the gardens of Government House with the kind permission of His Excellency the Governor, Malcolm McCusker on 12 and 13 April.

The event is presented by the Anglican Diocese of Perth, supported by the Heads of Churches (WA) and City of Perth.

Written by Australian playwright and former Senior Lecturer in Performance Studies at Curtin University, Tony Nicholls, and directed by Anthony Howes, *The Passion of Christ 2014* is a modern exploration of the traditional Easter story.

The script is based on the ancient poem *The Dream of the Rood* in which the story of the passion and resurrection of Christ is seen from the point of view of the cross. This version is set in 21st century Perth, through the eyes of a young man-on-the-run named Gary, who unexpectedly meets a mysterious ensemble of performers. To this scenario he brings all the doubts and questions of modern man. It is a story of ancient and modern; questioning and profound faith.

"This is an amazing opportunity for Christians in our

city to unite and focus on Jesus, our Saviour and Lord," Heads of Churches (WA) Chair and Baptist Churches Western Australia Director of Ministries, Mark Wilson said.

The production builds on the memorable success of *The Passion of Christ 2012* performed in mediaeval style at the Government House Gardens.

The event is free, with tickets

available on a first come, first served basis. There will be two performances at Government House Gardens on the Palm Sunday weekend Saturday 12 and Sunday 13 April at 7.30pm.

"*The Passion of Christ 2014* establishes another vital event in the calendar of our city, Assistant Bishop of Perth, The Right Reverend Tom Wilmot said.

"The greatest story ever told continues to be told with transformative power."

Bringing together the Perth Christian community, *The Passion of Christ 2014* features Channel Seven personality Rick Ardon as MC, well known Perth actor James Hagan with Tim Bowles, Mark

Desebrock, Mackenzie Dunn, Justin Freind, Rick Hearder, Erin Hutchinson, Dean Irvin, Tyler Jones, Ben Thomas and members of the Red Foot Theatre Company with a community chorus. All Christian denominations are represented in the cast.

St George's Cathedral will be open for quiet reflection for people attending the performance on Sunday 13 April. At 5pm there is a Service of Passiontide Music and Readings. Clergy will be available to speak with people about the play and its meaning.

For more information and to book tickets, visit www.trybooking.com/DMMR

Mighty Men in Cuballing

The first Mighty Men's Conference in Western Australia for 2014 will be held from Friday 4 to Sunday 6 April in the farming community of Cuballing.

More than 70 men are registered for the event. This year's theme is 'God is able'.

Organiser Pastor Craig Lydon said the aim of the event was to gather men in a simple setting for fellowship, worship and spiritual encouragement.

"We're not wanting to build a movement, or an organisation,"

Craig said.

"We're building a network of relationships to encourage men to minister where they are, with what they have, out of who they are."

For more information and to register, visit www.mightymensconference.org.au

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BAPTIST CHURCHES
 WESTERN AUSTRALIA





Steve Ingram

Steve Ingram is a Leadership Development Consultant.

Self-awareness

Have you ever wondered how people can enter singing, dancing or talent competitions on television when they can't even sing, dance or have a real talent? In an effort to build self-esteem many parents have neglected the concept of honest feedback.

Parents are not the only guilty party on this count. While working with leaders the concept of emotional intelligence comes up regularly. Most people only have a vague idea of what emotional Intelligence (EQ) actually is, but are quite sure that they rate highly regardless of how it is defined. In fact they will often quote the positive feedback they get from others in this regard. The term was first written about by Daniel Goleman who built

his work on Howard Gardiner's concept that when it came to intelligence there are multiple areas to measure not just IQ.

One of the key concepts that Emotional Intelligence rates is the self-awareness of an individual. How well do you know yourself and how clearly do you see yourself as others would see you? This can be particularly difficult as the feedback we get from others often does not reflect their real perception of us. Think about

it from your perspective; how often have you congratulated or thanked someone for something they have done in public but in reality have assessed their effort as average or not very good.

Self-awareness can be improved if we have people around us who will give us honest feedback. This works best when it comes from people we trust or people we know are 'for us'. In the communities where we work and serve we can actively build a

culture that gives appropriate and honest feedback that strengthens an individual for the future. Although we can often learn from backhanded comments and critical comments that are intended to damage us, we should look for trusted people who care about us and want to see us grow in the future. I suggest the Christian community should be built on honesty and wanting the best for others; the perfect place for honest, safe feedback.



Dr Brian Harris

Dr Brian Harris is the Principal of Vose Seminary and pastor at large for the Carey Movement.

On graduating ...

I am writing this a few hours before the Vose graduation. We've a record number of graduates this year, 64 in total. I have got to know many of them really well, others a little less so. A fair number will stay on to complete a second or third qualification, but for most this is farewell. I always stop and ponder at this point ... Where will they be in ten, twenty or thirty years' time? Only God knows – and at the graduation we entrust them to God's provision and care.

So why did I get to know some of tonight's graduates really well, and others a little less so? It's not as though I sat down and thought, "Yes, you look interesting, I will make some time for you. Hmmm, not so sure about you – I'll give you a miss". Often it happens accidentally. It could be that the only vacant chair at the

community lunch dictates who I talk to that day. For others, that never happens. You can be in the same place as someone, and barely get to know them. That's probably true of many people who have been at the same church as you for years, like ... what's his name? Seriously – what is his name?

Whilst farewelling one cohort, we're also busy welcoming another. Sixty-seven new students started this semester. Some have already made their mark. Confident and outgoing, they have been quick to ask their questions and offer their opinions. Others are more timid and it might take them a little longer to feel fully at home.

Farewell and welcome. It is the rhythm of all educational institutions ... actually, not just educational institutions, but life itself. I saw three pregnant women at a funeral service I recently attended. As we said farewell to the one who had lived his life so well, it brought great hope to know that this family circle would soon say "hello" to three new lives.

Graduation. It reminds us to seize the day, so that we can farewell without regrets, and then warmly welcome the new.



Marc Chan

Dr Marc Chan is Cross Cultural and Indigenous Ministries worker with Baptist Churches Western Australia.

Things we do not hear about ...

At the moment we are hearing quite a lot about the missing Malaysia Airlines Flight 370. There are all sorts of stories going around, some more confusing than others about what actually happened.

We are hungry to hear the latest, to know what exactly happened when the plane disappeared from the radar and just vanished. We are desperate to have information about the plane with 239 people on board.

Yet, on a daily basis, there are thousands, if not millions, of people who are going through desperate situations and we do not want to hear about them. These people do not sell newspapers or magazines. These people do not create the sensationalism that we are so

accustomed to. These people do not have a voice and thus, we do not want to hear about them.

We hear about the conflict happening in South Sudan. We hear about the peace treaty between South Sudan and Sudan and yet we do not want to hear about the people in the Nuba Mountains being bombed on a daily basis. No one is interested in them and we ignore their cry for help, we ignore the fact that due to their location they are starving to death since no one can send food from outside to the region.

We hear a lot about the change happening in certain countries, the new freedom that the population is enjoying as a result of this. Yet, we do not want to hear that for some this means that they have to sell their children in order to buy food for themselves to survive. The newly found freedom has allowed the government to deliberately 'ignore' certain regions of the country and the people there do not have any means of getting jobs or an income to buy food.

We concentrate our attention on the plight of the few asylum seekers arriving to our shores by boat. Yet, we do not want to hear about the thousands of them who hold refugee status from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) but are stuck in refugee camps for years.

Please wake up and genuinely want to hear about what really is happening to so many people around the world.

letters to the editor

send us your letters

The Advocate welcomes your letters to the editor on topics of concern to you and the community. Send your letters of no more than 100 words to editor@theadvocate.tv by the 10th of each month.

6PR Nightline host to retire

After 33 years hosting radio 6PR's *Nightline* program, Graham Mabury will soon retire.

Graham told listeners on 10 March that he would conclude as host of *Nightline* when radio 6PR finds another host for the evening time slot.

General Manager for 6PR, Martin Boylen, said the radio station had been in discussions with Graham regarding his retirement for about a year.

"It's time for me to start thinking about life on the other side of the radio," Graham said.

"This is a good time to pass the baton to somebody new."

The *Nightline* listeners have become like a family for Graham over the years. He hopes whoever takes the role on after him will continue to nurture the *Nightline* family.

Volunteer of the Year and Advance Australia Award.

Graham will continue as Pastor at Mount Pleasant Baptist Community Church and as a member of the preaching team.

"A 33 year investment of your life is not easy to conclude, even when the time is right and the process is agreed," Graham said.

"I just mentioned to Merle [my wife] recently that in some ways, having embraced the disciplines of night radio for so long is a little like being institutionalised – the hours and the body clock is so out of whack with the way of life of most people that I'm sure I'll feel a bit at sea for some time while readjusting."

"Merle has been my rock, the wind beneath my wings, and my most insightful critic – in every way *Nightline*, and indeed the wonderful adventure with Jesus at Mt Pleasant is something we have done together, but often we've been in a different place. I look forward to actually doing much more with her – both within the Mt Pleasant church program and in the wider community."

One of the things the Maburys plan to do together is spend more time with their family who are based in the USA.

"We really look forward to being able to spend longer periods of time with our children and grandchildren," Graham said.

"They, above all, are the ones with whom we want to experience the Kingdom of God ... and there's a serious amount of Nanna and Poppie spoiling to catch up on."



Photo: Brad Entwistle

Graham Mabury is about to have a changed life after 33 years behind the microphone for 6PR.

“A 33 year investment of your life is not easy to conclude ...”

Graham is proud of the *Nightline* initiatives that he has been instrumental in starting, including the Living Stone Foundation which was formed to oversee the off-air counselling service, *Nightline* Christmas Appeal and *Nightline* Blanket Appeal. He also founded Lifeline WA.

The Australian community has recognised his work with awards, including an Order of Australia Medal, Citizen of the Year for Community Service,

EasterPassion iPhone App

Outreach and Church Ministries (OAC) announced the release of their EasterPassion iPhone App update in mid-March. The app is free from the iTunes App Store.

The app simply and effectively brings the events of Easter to

life, by texting virtual 'messages' to users as if from eyewitnesses in real time.

Created by OAC's Geoff Westlake as a dynamic way for Christians to experience the Passion, the app alerts users with time and scripture-referenced texts, transporting them to the events from Palm Sunday to Resurrection Sunday.

The 2014 update builds on the popular 2013 edition, with added text leading up to Easter week, and follows the Resurrection

appearances through to Ascension, drawing the imagination of users into an even deeper encounter with the Easter story.

The app also presents historical maps and religious artwork to transport users to the dusty streets of Jerusalem to engage with Jesus and the disciples' journey.



HCJB Australia is now



Our name has changed but we remain unwavering in our commitment to reach the unreached and those with limited access to the gospel.

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Reach Beyond is broadcasting from North Western Australia to the Asia Pacific:

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West Australian of the Year

Professor Bruce Robinson AM is the Western Australian of the Year 2014. As well as his renowned cancer research through The University of Western Australia (UWA), he is an advocate for fathers by leading The Fathering Project.

He has lectured on fathering for nearly 20 years to thousands of people in five different countries.

Professor Robinson believes the importance of fathers is paramount to society.

"In the last hundred years or so the risks for children and teenagers have increased dramatically," Bruce said.

"For example, substance abuse – drugs, binge drinking; loss of values like kindness, respect and integrity, which can lead to crime; school problems, including bullying and cyberbullying; and self-esteem issues, like depression and suicide, are all very real risks."

"I believe a strong father figure can dramatically reduce these risks," he said.

Through death, divorce and separation many women are heading up a household without a strong father figure. Professor Robinson acknowledged this issue and highlighted how any man who is a grandfather, stepfather, uncle, older brother, father-in-law, school teacher, youth leader, sports coach, pastor or family friend can powerfully influence kids.

"Children with an active father figure are at less risk of psychological and behaviour problems," Bruce said.

"There is something definably different that father figures bring to a child's life."

Communication is a vital skill committed fathers need to develop. The Fathering Project has isolated three critical areas of communication where teenagers need to hear from their dads.

"Firstly, let your kids know you're always going to be there for them," Bruce said.

"Kids don't always realise that you're on their side, and you don't always agree with what they do, but let them know that you'll always be there for them."

Unconditional love is the second area.

"This means loving them regardless of what they say or do. I hope that if any of my children were involved in any criminal activities, had a teenage pregnancy, became drug addicts, became prostitutes, or something similar, they would know that my love for them would continue unconditionally."

Kids need to know they are special.

"What I mean by this is that they have special character, a special body, special gifts, a special place in life and importantly, a special and unique future ahead of them. When I am asked 'Which children's need is most often neglected by dads?', this is the one I most often discuss," Bruce said.

The Fathering Project makes presentations in churches, schools, councils and businesses. More than 2,000 men have registered for weekly fathering tips through www.thefatheringproject.org.

Bruce has written extensively about fathering. His books include *Daughters and their Dads*, *Fathering from the Fast Lane* and *The Blue Book of Tips for Fathers and Father-figures*. He has also produced a DVD, *What kids really need from their dads*.



Photo: The Fathering Project

Bruce Robinson who leads The Fathering Project at UWA believes children need strong father figures in their lives.

Resurrection celebration in the city

The City of Perth recently approved Fusion's plan for the Awakening WA Easter Sunday Celebrations in the city on 20 April.

With the City of Perth's fresh produce markets, Home Grown, in Forrest Place every Sunday afternoon, including Easter Sunday, the City has given permission for the Awakening WA Easter Sunday Celebrations to use the stage area in Forrest Place for the afternoon.

"We'll add some stalls and activities to those already taking place but will have a full stage

“
... a celebration program is planned with dancers, speakers and worship.”

program that will be a little more orientated to being there as part of the markets," Fusion WA State Director Andrew Braun said.

"We're encouraging everyone who can to travel into the city by train."

"Then at 4pm we will be sending people out from the Wellington Street station to the four corners of Perth to take the celebrations to the suburbs."

Plans for the event are currently being finalised.

To date the events include artists and activities in Forrest Place as part of the City of Perth's local fresh produce markets, commencing at 11am.

From 1pm there will be performers on the stage providing entertainment with an Easter theme to people in Forrest Place and at 3pm a celebration program is planned with dancers, speakers and worship.

"At 4pm the Celebration followers will move to the Wellington Street railway station forecourt to pray for the City and then move to all the suburbs of Perth taking the good news of the Resurrection," Andrew said.

Confirmed details of the Celebrations program will be available by early April on the Fusion website: www.fusion.org.au

digital church

10/03/2014
Dave Bruskas
theresurgence.com

"A pastor's first flock is his home, and his favourite first flock member is his wife. He has a greater responsibility to shepherd her than anyone else. Every pastor knows there is no tougher role than being a pastor's wife."

10/03/2014
Tim Challies
challies.com

"There are spiritual dimensions to busyness. There are spiritual consequences."

10/03/2014
JD Greear
jdgrear.com

"Busyness isn't just uncomfortable; it's dangerous. There are few things as damaging and potentially soul-destroying, as busyness."

10/03/2014
David Santistevan
davidstevan.com

"But then I discovered that it's entirely possible to worship God but not love Him – to respect Him from a distance, but not allow your heart to be overcome with blazing affections. I can gaze in

wide-eyed wonder but not obey His commandments."

11/03/2014
Chuck Lawless
thomrainer.com

"The Bible is the Word of God. Church leaders know this fact, but we don't always treat the Word with this level of respect."

11/03/2014
Erik Raymond
ordinarypastor.com

"The church is not ours to customise. We are not ecclesiastical entrepreneurs. The church is God's. And, we are His. In fact, we have no more right

to alter, redefine, or change the church's identity than we do our own gender. The church is the household of God."

14/03/2014
Jordan
jordansblablablah.com

"I seriously doubt that God, the definition of holy, is ever really that impressed with our shows of holiness."

16/03/2014
Phil Cooke
philcooke.com

"Sometimes it seems those trying to fight for doctrinal purity are the most angry and bitter people of all."

17/03/2014
Brian Croft
practicalshepherding.com

"Well, Paul doesn't tell Titus how to revitalise a church. Instead, Paul instructs Titus about how to establish healthy, biblical churches in Crete [Titus 1:5] that reflect God's design for the local church."

Record number graduate

Sixty-four students graduated from courses at Vose Seminary during the Commencement and Conferral Service on 17 March – a record number.

Principal Dr Brian Harris welcomed more than 300 people to the service shaped around the theme 'thankful', at Riverton Baptist Community Church.

Dr Harris described some of the milestones the Seminary is thankful it reached during 2013, its 50th year: a record number of publications, including four books and numerous journal articles by staff members, giving the college a voice in society and contributing to thoughtful Christian debate; the Building Fund stands at almost \$900,000 following some very generous contributions; planning for extensions continue and the college is negotiating with the local government.

Student Ben O'Reilly led the music team and the audience to sing a short bracket of faith-affirming songs of praise before the presentation of awards began.

Sixty-five students graduated this year – 27 at the ceremony with 21 absent for various reasons. The other 17 students will graduate at Morling College in Sydney after completing Vocational Education and Training (VET) as part of Vose's gap year training options.

The Baptist Union of Western Australia Chairman of the Board, Bruce Watkins conferred the VET awards while Director of Ministries for Baptist Churches Western Australia, Pastor Mark Wilson conferred the Australian College of Theology awards.

Andrew Foote, Head of Voice at The University of Western Australia School of Music, sang the Rolf Lovland and Brendan Graham song 'You Raise Me Up' with power and passion.

Pastor Steve Ingram gave the keynote address drawing deeply on his 25 years experience as a Baptist pastor both in local churches and the Baptist Churches Western Australia Ministry Centre as a Leadership Development Consultant.

"Thankfulness needs to go a little deeper than words alone; not just a momentary celebration but something that takes hold of our lives and changes the way we live," Steve said.

"An observation as I've travelled around our churches: knowledge gained has the effect of making us louder – in the way we deal with others in



Vose Seminary Principal, Dr Brian Harris, welcomes over 300 students and guests at the Vose Seminary Commencement and Conferral Service.

Photo: Sarah Wickham

members' meetings, disputes and disagreements. God's giving of knowledge to us is not to make us loud, puffed up – but it's a calling to pour out our lives for others."

"It's our privilege to live out. Our calling is to be conformed to the likeness of Jesus Christ."

"We're called to lead gently and to steward faithfully. There is no place for those who push and bully, for those who intimidate."

"We're called to the upside down Kingdom where the first will be last and the last will be first."

"As many of you start out in ministry remember this: It's going to be about what God does in me not what God does through me that counts."

The congregation sang '10,000 Reasons' affirming individual and corporate response to Jesus' Lordship to close the memorable service.

Vose welcome Koreans

Ten Korean nationals joined the students at Vose Seminary as the first group of students to study a full-time two year Vose Diploma of Ministry delivered in the Korean language. The Korean students were part of the new group of students who commenced in late March.

Dr James Lee and three Perth Korean pastors approached Vose Seminary in 2013 highlighting the need for the innovative program. They wanted to train their people through Vose, and to make this available to those with an insufficient level of English for English delivered awards.

The training will prepare Koreans for ministry and to nurture their own spiritual growth. It is expected that graduates could work in the local Korean community, work in their homeland or engage with the Korean diaspora in other countries.

"This is a wonderful opportunity for us to embrace another sector of the church

and help prepare them for ministry," Vose Principal Dr Brian Harris said.

Dr James Lee, a pastor and retired civil engineer, has lived in Australia for 37 years. He has also lived in China as a missionary as well as working in Korea.

"I see the potential of this opportunity to train people," James said.

"Koreans are very religious people and to be able to come to study in Australia is very good."

"We are very excited about having another culture being blended into our Vose Seminary life," Director of Vose Leadership Monica O'Neil said.

- AGE 5
MUM PRAYS A PRAYER WITH ME AND I SAY 'YES' TO JESUS
- AGE 14
I SAY 'YES' ALL OVER AGAIN AT YOUTH CAMP AT SERPENTINE.
- AGE 16
START LEADING AT CAMPS, START LEADING WORSHIP AT CHURCH.
- AGE 26
ONE OF THE PASTORS AT CHURCH SAYS, ALMOST INCIDENTALLY, 'I THINK GOD COULD BE CALLING YOU TO PLANT A CHURCH'.
- AGE 28
I'M WORKING HARD BUT DOWN DEEP, SOMETHING STIRRING. GOD'S WORKING ON MY HEART...
- AGE 31
I ENROL AT VOSE SEMINARY AND BEGIN A NEW JOURNEY OF LEARNING, GROWTH, EQUIPPING AND DISCOVERING JESUS IN COMMUNITY. PRETTY EXCITED...
- AGE 34
OUR FIRST SUNDAY!

At Vose Seminary, no two stories are the same.

People join us to learn more about Jesus and The Word for all kinds of reasons.

Some are young, some older. Each one seeking to follow Jesus in a deeply biblical, highly practical learning environment.

Some come to fuel and equip a ministry journey they're already on, or are exploring. Others because they're wanting to add knowledge to cultivate a robust faith. Others come because they know that this is simply the next step on a long journey.

Whatever your story, come, grow at Vose Seminary. Continue your journey at www.vose.edu.au



come, grow

Catalyst groups tackle tax

Baptist World Aid Australia's Advocacy Manager, Gershon Nimbalker, briefed Catalyst groups from several Western Australian churches on 16 March about projects for the 2014 Catalyst Campaigns.

People from East Fremantle, Lakeside, Manjimup, Mount Pleasant, North Beach and South Perth Baptist Churches attended the workshop.

Catalyst groups are part of Baptist World Aid Australia's work to resource and empower churches to speak up for the poor and oppressed of the world. Groups meet monthly in their local community to pray, learn and plan ways to take action to bring justice to the poor, marginalised and oppressed.

"This year we'll continue to focus on Australian aid," Gershon said.

"With cutbacks to the aid budget, Australia is currently giving 0.33 percent to international aid. This breaks the promise the government made to increase aid to 0.70 percent by 2015."

Catalyst groups will ask the Federal Government to increase the aid budget to 0.7 percent by 2020 and ensure that aid's fundamental purpose is to help people overcome poverty.

Catalyst groups are also looking at a number of other advocacy projects.

Shine the Light, a joint project with Micah Challenge, aims to highlight how many multinational corporations are evading paying tax. This practice denies developing nations a legitimate sustainable source of income which could significantly influence their economy.

"A very conservative estimate is \$160 billion that is being lost to the economies of developing nations because multinational corporations are not paying the tax they should be," Gershon said.

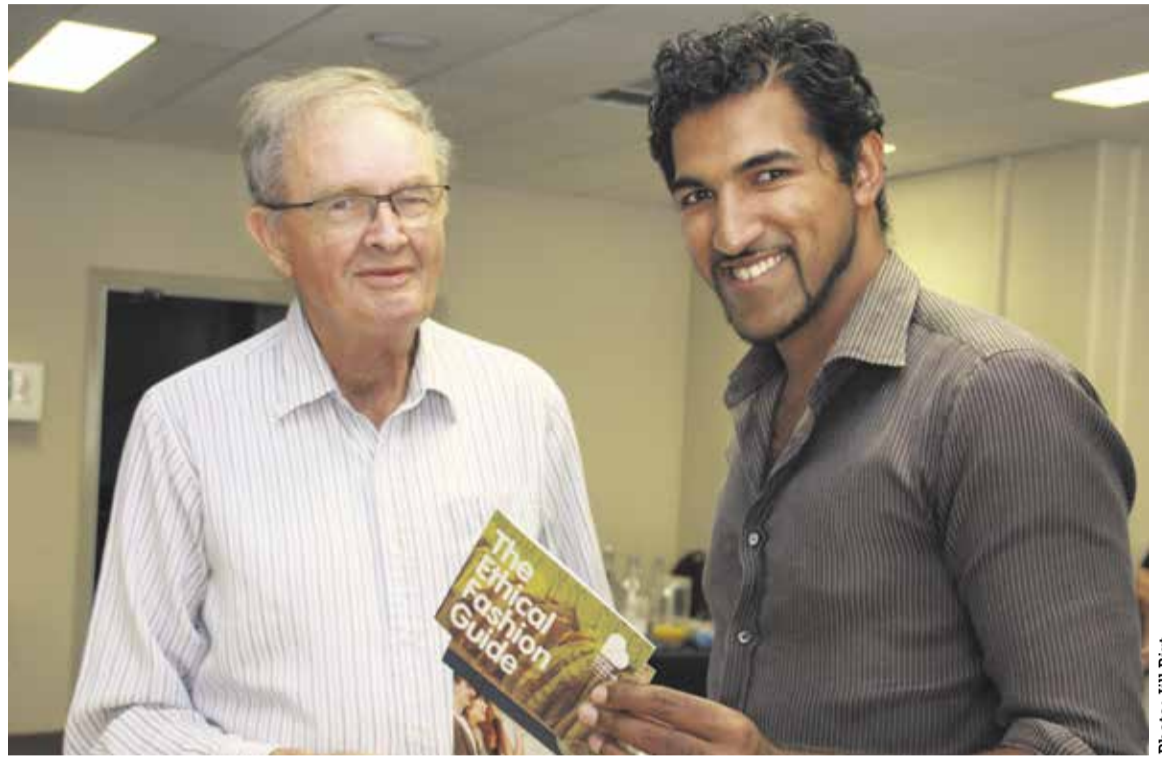
The campaign asks government to change legislation to accommodate three things: Automatic information exchange so that bank accounts held in Swiss banks will automatically be reported to Australian authorities; a registry of beneficial ownership of bank accounts to reveal the real identity of the owner rather than an untraceable fictitious name; and country by country reporting of income rather than a global report for companies.

Corruption in developing countries is estimated to cost between \$700 billion and \$1.5 trillion each year. Researchers estimate 65 percent of that amount is due to multinationals avoiding taxation.

Catalyst groups will be mailing postcards to politicians asking for tax justice in the months leading up to the G20 meetings to be held in Brisbane in November 2014.

Stop the Traffik campaign involves Catalyst groups asking Australian companies to ensure their supply chains are free from slavery, mostly by using Fairtrade certified products where available.

Gershon also reported to the meeting that in 2013 Catalyst groups put pressure on the Rivers company about the source of the cotton they used in their garments. Proven links showed they sourced raw materials from Uzbekistan where the dictatorial President, Islam Karimov, uses forced child labour to harvest cotton. With Rivers agreeing to examine where their cotton supplies were sourced, during the Uzbekistan cotton harvest observers reported a massive decrease in the number of young children being forced to leave school to join the harvest.



Gershon Nimbalker shows Catalyst Launch workshop attendee Bill Hearn from North Beach Baptist Church the postcards Baptist World Aid Australia uses in campaigns to draw attention to global poverty.

Photo: Jill Birt

The science of gratitude

The National Day of Thanksgiving will be held on Saturday 31 May.

This is a unique opportunity for all Australians to celebrate and give thanks for our God-given heritage as a nation, and to demonstrate the values of honour, respect, thankfulness and gratitude towards each other.

According to research an attitude of gratitude can be life changing.

Life events, family history, medical issues and drug and alcohol abuse can all be contributing factors to mental illness. But according to researchers, part of the solution could be as simple as saying 'thank you'.

Research demonstrates a direct link between gratitude and happiness.

In a controlled experiment, researchers asked one group to write down five things they were grateful for each day, while another group was asked to write down the things that annoyed them each day.

The 'grateful group' showed, amongst other positive outcomes, increased alertness, better sleep, improved social interactions, improved health and even reduced blood pressure.

In 2013, over 1,600 communities and an estimated quarter of a million people participated in National Day of Thanksgiving events across Australia.

This year the focus is on thanking those working in the

transport and travel industries; such as bus, train, tram, taxi and truck drivers, pilots, couriers and travel agents.

The other group to thank is neighbours, from those living next door to anyone who, through their thoughtfulness and kindness, contributes to making life more pleasant for another.

Individuals and churches can play an important role in nurturing health and wellbeing in their communities and amongst their own congregations.

For more information, visit www.thanksgiving.org.au



briefs

Baptisms

Ebony Sugg was baptised at Albany Baptist Church on 2 March 2014.

Birthday

Congratulations to Mrs Ruby Ridden of Gracewood, Salters Point, who celebrated her 105th birthday in March.

Engagements

Mark Preston, son of David and Lorraine Preston of Cranbrook is engaged to Michelle Smith daughter of Noel and Debbie Smith of Mt Barker.

Julie Baxter, daughter of Harvey and Ann Baxter of Cranbrook is

engaged to Antony Lorenzo, son of Anthony and Trish Lorenzo of Mandurah.

Vose book sale

The 2014 Vose Seminary Booksale will be held on Saturday 12 April from 9am to 3pm on the Seminary campus at 20 Hayman Road, Bentley. All kinds of second-hand books, Devonshire tea, sausage sizzle and plants are for sale. Books remain on sale Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 4.30pm until 2 May, except public holidays.

Support seminar

Mt Pleasant Baptist Church is hosting a seminar to help people who are supporting people who are dying. 'Dying: A Spiritual Journey' is planned for Saturday 5 April from 1.00pm to 4.30pm at Mount Pleasant Baptist College, 497 Marmion Street, Booragoon. Presenters Doug Bridge and Fred Stone have many years of experience in being with people facing death. The workshop will explore ways to better care for and journey with those who are suffering/dying, better care for relatives and friends of those who are suffering/dying and be better prepared for our own death. To RSVP, phone 9329 1777.

Camping programs

Baptist Camps Coordinator Kevin Black is developing some new camp initiatives for Baptist Churches Western Australia. An Easter Camp for young adults is planned for Busselton in 2015. A new leadership team is currently being developed for the camp with a combination of young leaders and some older mentors. Summer camping at Serpentine will also have some changes with a camp for senior school students as well as the Juniors and Inters camps. To join the team or for more information, contact Kevin at ksblackdog@gmail.com

Pastoral retreat

The 2014 All Together Baptist Pastoral Retreat for pastoral team members of Baptist ministries across Western Australia is planned for 28 to 30 April in Mandurah. Dr Derek and Rev Dianne Tidball from the UK are keynote speakers at the event. Baptist Churches Western Australia Director of Ministries Mark Wilson encourages churches to send their pastoral teams for this time of refreshment and learning. For more information, phone Matt Chapman on 6313 6300.

Jammers learn together

Leaders from Toddler Jam groups around Western Australia met at Inglewood Community Church for the annual Toddler Jam Conference in early March.

Toddler Jam is a music and movement program for zero to four year olds and their mums and dads which began at Inglewood Community Church more than a decade ago. Now 25 churches across WA run groups.

Around 30 delegates attended the conference, representing some of the 25 churches across the state that conduct Toddler Jam groups.

"Toddler Jam is about churches serving their community in relevant and needed ways. It is more than an outreach program. It is about Christians serving and loving people," Inglewood Community Church Pastor, Mark Edwards said.

"We have seen Toddler Jam become a place of real community where people make lifelong friends. We journey together, pray with each other and see lives change."

Jess Louwen, one of the musicians from Inglewood Community Church, started the conference with some high energy and fun songs which had delegates up and dancing.

Karen Siggins, Lesmurdie Baptist Church Pastor, presented an inspiring keynote address on Reaching Aussies for Jesus.

Karen made the point that loving people into knowing Jesus was the key.

"Acts of service, as Toddler Jam people do, is the main way for people to discover God's love," Karen said.

"Helping a mum struggling with a child, a grandmother with a crying baby, a family going through a crisis, these are the unique opportunities Toddler Jam people have."

A panel of leaders from some of WA's Toddler Jam groups talked about their Toddler Jam experience.

Karen Entwistle, Toddler Jam team leader from Parkerville Baptist Church shared how their Toddler Jam had dealt with grief in 2012. Two men, both musicians from their team, died within six weeks of each other, leaving a huge gap. Many people from their community ministered to the team as they dealt with pain and the team discovered new joy to serve in 2013.

Robert Douglas, Maida Vale Baptist Church Team Leader, shared how his church integrated Toddler Jam with all the other community programs they have, including their church fair and 'Messy Church', a relaxed church event for multi-generational family groups.

"People are engaging at a deeper level since being a part of Toddler Jam," Rob said.

Lynette Carnaby from Warnbro Community Church said they are dealing with significant growth. The Toddler Jam group has had to cap numbers, but recently the church has stepped out in faith and started a third weekly session of Toddler Jam. Lynette said God has been blessing them greatly.

The Conference concluded with Inglewood Community Church Pastor Mark Edwards leading a vibrant discussion time on the issues and joys facing Toddler Jam groups. He then prayed for the leaders and their teams as they influence communities from the Pilbara to the South West this year.

For more information about Toddler Jam, visit www.jamcentral.org



Jess Louwen leads the Toddler Jam Conference participants with some great songs.

Photo: Mark Edwards

Dreams bring life

A Christian spoke passionately about Jesus at the Christmas service in a detention centre on Christmas Island in 2013. A young Muslim man, we'll call him Sam, watched and listened.

Sometime later Sam attended a church service in the centre. He wanted to talk about his reaction to the Christmas service. He said he'd started crying and feeling deep emotions. His sin was weighing heavily on his mind. Jesus had appeared to Sam in a dream one night. He didn't know what it all meant.

When Sam spoke with the help of an interpreter to the church leader after the service he described another dream he'd had. In this dream he saw a shepherd with some sheep around him. The shepherd was separated from Sam by a doorway. The church leader explained that Jesus is the Good Shepherd and He wants Sam to become part of His flock. Jesus is the Door through which people must enter to know God. After a long conversation about sin and shame and Jesus' work through His death and resurrection, Sam became a child of God that day.

The leader met Sam in the centre compound several days later. Wiping tears from his eyes, Sam told him he had not been able to sleep because of horrible dreams for the past six or seven

months. Medical workers were not able to help him but since he had accepted Jesus Christ on the previous Sunday, he had slept soundly.

Sam is full of gratitude and his love for Jesus is continuing to grow. He reports that he continues to sleep well.



Gospel message for surfers

Fifteen local churches from Sydney's northern beaches came together for two massive outreach nights at iconic Manly Beach during the Australian Open of Surfing in February.

Pro surfer and shark attack survivor Bethany Hamilton and skateboard legend Eddie

Elguera, aka El Gato shared the gospel and their inspirational stories.

Bethany said that just a few days earlier she had been in Washington DC at their National Prayer Breakfast, hosted by President Obama, and she spoke about Jesus being her strength and inspiration to keep going in life.

Eddie Elguera spoke about winning the title of World Champion of Skateboarding, yet still his life felt empty. Jesus reached in to his heart and delivered him from sin and gave him purpose and meaning in life.

More than 100 people responded to the gospel over the two nights, with seeds planted in hundreds more.

One of the greatest testimonies of the event was the local churches who came together for a common cause, to tell people about the love of Jesus.

Jesus said, "The world will know you're my disciples by your love for one another." [John 13:35]

Praying and planning for opportunities at next year's event have already begun.

Depression and anxiety are on the rise. Here's what we need to remember.

5 THINGS CHRISTIANS DEPRESSION

By Brandon W Peach

Depression and anxiety tend to be some of those touchy subjects that are tough to tackle from a Christian perspective.

It's not complicated just because the illnesses themselves are so complex, manifesting themselves in myriad ways, but also because perspectives about mental disorders vary greatly throughout the Church.

This isn't to paint the Church with broad strokes. Incorrect beliefs about mental illness are pervasive throughout our culture. However, some of the 'church-y' misconceptions about clinical depression and anxiety spring from a genuine desire to understand them scripturally. It's necessary to generalise a bit to understand these attitudes: there are things well-meaning Christians tend to get wrong.

Of course, there is way more information about anxiety and depression than what can be summed up in one article, so it's certainly worth doing more research on the subject. But if we as the Church are going to start talking about these issues, here are a few things we should know:

1. Depression isn't what the Church sometimes makes it out to be.

It's not a character defect, a spiritual disorder or an emotional dysfunction. And chief of all, it's not a choice. Asking someone to 'try' not being depressed is tantamount to asking someone who's been shot to try and stop bleeding. Such an attitude can dangerously appear in the Church as, 'if only you had enough faith'.

[Depression] is not a character defect, a spiritual disorder or an emotional

dysfunction. And chief of all, it's not a choice.

Cue the record scratch for any Christian regarding matters of healing. Having faith in God's ability to heal is hugely important, and personal faith can help ease depression. But to deny medical or psychiatric treatment to someone suffering from mental illness is really no different than denying them to someone with a physical illness. The difference between the two is that the former is invisible.

Speaking of the invisible, some faith traditions are quick to suggest demonic attack as the cause for depression. While I'm convinced that there's definitely a spiritual element – the enemy will exploit any weakness – medical science holds that major depressive disorder is real and the causes are manifold.

2. Mental illness is not a sin.

Yes, sins in the past like physical abuse, substance abuse and neglect may contribute to depression, and these sins often continue as coping mechanisms to those suffering from mental illnesses. Yet this doesn't make the sufferer of depression and anxiety a sinner simply for experiencing the crushing effects of their condition.

What happens when mental illness is treated as an unconfessed, unaddressed sin is alienation. Viewing depression as a sin in and of itself prevents individuals from seeking treatment. It also ignores the fact that many Christians may respond to depression in unhealthy ways if the root cause is ignored or misunderstood.

3. The Bible doesn't provide 'easy answers'.

The Word is full of wisdom and encouragement for those suffering from depression and anxiety disorders, but it doesn't come in one-verse doses. 'Be anxious for nothing' and 'do not worry about your life' can easily be taken out of context, which is problematic. First (and importantly), doing so fails to appropriately handle scripture, carelessly misconstruing the larger intent of the passages.

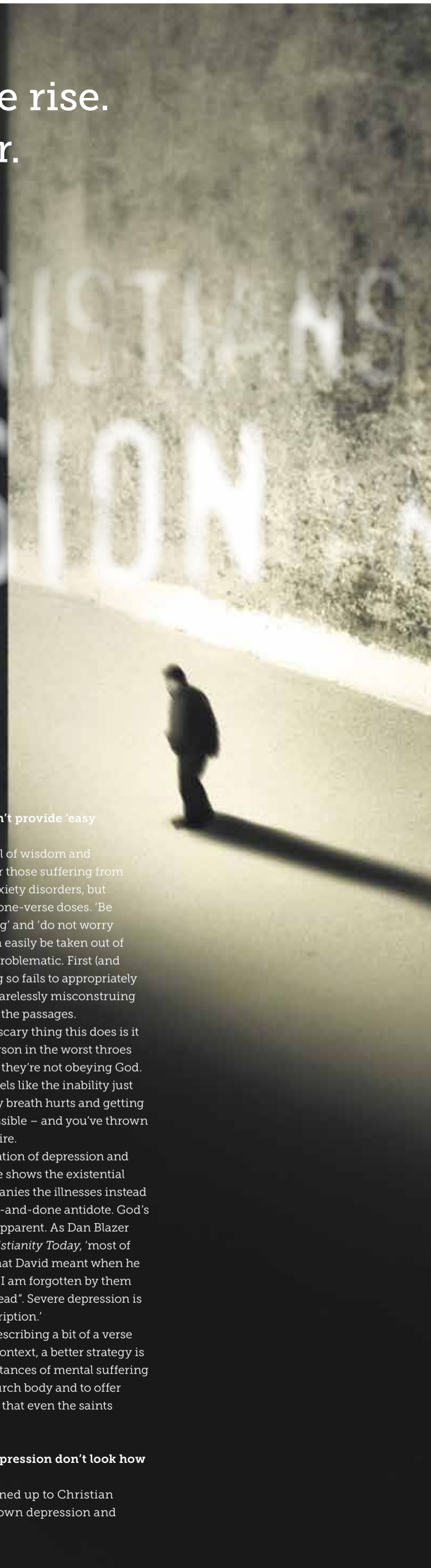
Another really scary thing this does is it can convince a person in the worst throes of their illness that they're not obeying God. Add that to what feels like the inability just to be – every shaky breath hurts and getting out of bed is impossible – and you've thrown gasoline onto the fire.

A true examination of depression and anxiety in the Bible shows the existential dread that accompanies the illnesses instead of an easy out, one-and-done antidote. God's hand isn't always apparent. As Dan Blazer pointed out in *Christianity Today*, 'most of us have no idea what David meant when he further lamented, "I am forgotten by them as though I were dead". Severe depression is often beyond description.'

Rather than prescribing a bit of a verse divorced from its context, a better strategy is to look at those instances of mental suffering along with the Church body and to offer comfort in the fact that even the saints struggled.

4. Anxiety and depression don't look how we often think.

When I've opened up to Christian friends about my own depression and



YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT ANXIETY

anxiety disorders, they're often surprised. "You seem so happy all the time!" Depressed people become really good at hiding their symptoms, even from doctors, because of the stigma attached to the illness. Churches often don't address mental illness, which gives the worship team guitarist or the elder even more incentive to keep it hidden away. Furthermore, the symptoms of depression often tend to contradict each other, which makes it really difficult for a person suffering from depression to recognise it for what it is – let alone for the Church to recognise it.

'Learning to recognise the signs' then is often a failing strategy. If churches begin responding to mental disorders as a community willing to offer encouragement and support, people suffering from those illnesses may just be able to accept the help. It may just be people you never expected.

5. Strong churches don't 'fix' depression.

Christ, the Great Physician, came to heal the sick. As His body, it's time the church leads society in helping to do the same.

Given all of the above, it's easy to understand how the stigma related to depression, even in the Church, will prevent people from seeking Christian guidance and support. The most Christ-loving and helpful community might not have the appropriate framework for dealing with such clinical disorders, and many churches don't have licensed psychologists on the staff. Pastoral staff can be ill-equipped to deal with depression

and err toward a spiritual solution rather than psychological or medical treatment.

Even churches that seek to provide a safe haven for those suffering in their midst might not have a judgment-free place to discuss their struggles. Programs like Celebrate Recovery can provide an invaluable forum for people to interact with others who experience 'hurts, habits, and hang-ups', and can help deal with some of the self-medication many people with depression and anxiety use to numb themselves. Without a carefully planned strategy to deal with mental illness, 'all are welcome' might not be enough. Healing comes from a prayerful, loving community that seeks to truly understand major depressive disorder and related conditions, and one that develops a positive response.

Most churches probably have the very best intentions when dealing with issues of mental illness. Like the rest of society, however, the Church may misinterpret these clinical conditions and respond to them in ways that exacerbate them – and as a result, demoralise those suffering. Christ, the Great Physician, came to heal the sick. As His body, it's time the Church leads society in helping to do the same.

Brandon Peach is a freelance writer and likes writing about lots of things including religion, pop culture, literature, marketing, politics, human rights, and animal welfare. You can follow him on Twitter @BrandonPeach

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New youth worker for Fusion

Fusion recently welcomed Jessie Braun as their new Youth Work Coordinator. After two years studying youth leadership in Melbourne, 22 year old Jessie Braun returned to Perth to commence the role.

Fusion has youth works across Australia engaging with young people and communities helping young people find their place in the community.

Jessie's focus will be building relationships with young people in the inner eastern suburbs, including Victoria Park and Bentley.

"I could have gone somewhere else but my heart is well connected to Perth," Jessie said.

"I was hearing stories about my generation stepping up and wanting to make a difference. So I came back to join the party."

"We believe it takes a whole community to raise a young person," Jessie said.

"We continue to find ways that the whole community can be involved and contribute to the lives of young people, 'Bringing Young People and Their Communities Together with Hope', that's our mission."

"I've only been back in Perth, my home town, a few weeks, so it's early days, but already I've been working on a couple of one day events on Saturdays where our team spends a full day with high school age kids for a full on action packed day."

The young people who attend are invited from other groups Fusion is working with.

"I'm part of Bentley Baptist Church and work with Youth Pastor Brad Lewis quite a bit," Jessie said.

"There's no way that Fusion is in competition with the local church, we're committed to

strengthening relationships with churches and community groups. It's written into my job description to network with local churches."

"As my work finds a rhythm I'll be contacting other local churches to explore how we, Fusion, can assist and complement their work."

As well as working with local churches, the Fusion Youth Team works with the community of Kent Street Senior High School.

"We serve breakfast to about 100 students at the school one day each week," Jessie said.

"It's a great opportunity to get to know the kids. I'm hoping that I'll be able to start mentoring some of the Kent Street senior students soon, working together on building leadership and life skills."

Jessie will be part of the Perth leadership team that takes a bus load of young people from Perth for the national Pilgrimage to Uluru from 23 to 30 April.

"This is the 14th year we've done this ten day trip," Jessie said.

"As we travel, Indigenous and non-Indigenous travellers get the opportunity to connect and learn from each other. It's a very powerful learning time as we make stops at Warburton, Mount Margaret and Docker River on the way."

Mentoring allows leaders to explore issues of meaning and values through conversation and the chance to grow in confidence and develop leadership skills.



Jessie Braun has a strong passion to build hope and resilience into the lives of young people in WA.

Photo: Fusion



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briefs

Nuns released

Thirteen Greek Orthodox nuns and their three helpers, who had been held by Syrian rebel forces since December 2013, have been released in exchange for female prisoners held by the Syrian regime. Lebanese state media reported that the women had been taken overnight on a nine hour journey to the town of Judayat Yabus on the Syrian-Lebanon border, where they were released. Lebanon's security chief, General Abbas Ibrahim, who was responsible for the prisoner exchange, stated that approximately 150 female prisoners were to be released in exchange for the nuns' freedom.

Mother Superior Pelagia Sayyaf, head of Maaloula convent, told a press conference: "God did not leave us. The (Nusra) Front was good to us."

African delegation

The three top religious leaders of the Central African Republic travelled again to the United Nations (UN) in New York to urge the Security Council to act quickly on its recommendations for a UN peacekeeping operation, as violence in their country continues. Despite a change of president and the arrival of a few thousand peacekeepers the slaughter has not abated. The Catholic Archbishop of Bangui,

the leader of the Protestant churches, and the Imam of Bangui also met UN Secretary-General Ban-Ki-moon, who said "We want to pass on an essential message: that the conflict in the Central African Republic is not about religion."

Nigeria trouble

Attacks against Christians in Nigeria are spreading further south, as villagers come under armed assault from Fulani militants. Christians, who have been attacked in northern and central Nigeria, are now also facing onslaughts in Benué State, representing an escalation of the conflict. Suspected Fulani

militants killed more than 110 people in raids on three mainly Christian villages in Kaduna, central Nigeria, on 14 March. In addition, Islamist terror group Boko Haram killed two Christians in a village in Borno State, in the north, on 16 March. A fact finding team from Release International has just returned from visiting attack victims in Nigeria. Villagers in Plateau State told them that security forces who had been drafted in to protect them, instead collaborated with the attackers.

Uzbekistan raids

Forum 18 News Service reports Anti-Terrorism Police

and other officials seized religious literature from private homes in two separate raids in early March. In one raid in Uzbekistan's central city of Samarkand, Anti-Terrorism Officer Makhmud Nodyrov tore posters with scripture texts from the walls, and kept threatening home owner Veniamin Nemirov that his home could be taken away from him, and that his children could be expelled from school. Personal details were taken of the 25 adults and the families' 12 children present after the Baptist congregation's Sunday service. Four church members face administrative punishments.

Worship through music

Matt Redman's life has been devoted to helping others express their love to God. He's behind well-loved worship songs such as 'Blessed Be Your Name' and 'The Heart of Worship', and he has also helped pioneer a breed of worship music that has less to do with a single leader than it does with a team committed to leading others into an environment of praise. He talked to *Relevant* magazine about teamwork, changes in worship music and accusations that praise choruses are shallow.

As you've travelled, you've seen a lot of different ways people worship around the world. How have you seen people around the world respond in different ways to worship songs?

You get to realise what strength a particular country has. In South Korea, they're just amazing intercessors. If you start getting them to pray for the nation, you'll hear a wall of noise. Some places, particularly in South Africa places, there's a joy and a freedom of movement and dance. It's the same, but you get to realise strength.

What makes your new album, *Your Grace Finds Me*, different?

This one, from day one, was a team effort. There's been a real recognition in me over the last five years that together, we're better. Some of the song writing partners are pulling the best out of me. Hopefully I'm doing the same for them.

It's interesting. In a way, why wouldn't you work like that? The Kingdom of God seems designed to work like that. Jesus didn't send the disciples out on their own. On this album, there's a time where we have four nations in the room at once. It's really powerful.

Does it ever become difficult to work in a team?

The people I'm working with are all friends. That counts for so much. Sometimes, you just have to make a decision to prefer someone else. Wisdom tells you that forcing your idea through is not the best idea. If you shoot down people's best ideas, they won't bring their best stuff. There has to be trust and vulnerability.

From your vantage point, how is worship music changing?

There's a responsibility when you start putting words into people's mouths for how they're going to talk to God.

The thing that encourages me most is there's definitely a lot of intentionality towards going deeper. When people are throwing stones at the sort of things we do, the criticism is always the same: there's not enough depth. They're not tackling enough theological themes.

On the one sense, you can't take all of that on your shoulders. On the other sense, if you have to take it seriously. There's a responsibility when you start putting words into people's mouths for how they're going to talk to God. I see so much intention to go deeper.

In the song writing sessions, we want to write great melodies. We're putting everything into that. There's always this question of, "Can we dig deeper? Are we painting the best view of God that we can?" As thrilling as it might be musically, at the end of the day, the thing that's going to permeate people's hearts is truth about God.

Is that accusation of worship choruses being shallow valid?

Firstly, in the worst case scenario, people take the very cream of the crop that's survived for centuries and compare it to the last 12 months of songs. That's not a very fair comparison. But then there are some more acute criticisms. For example, a professor, Lester Ruth from Asbury Seminary, did a study about a decade ago on Trinitarian content in modern Christian worship songs. I think he looked at the 77 most sung songs over the last 25 years and found there was very, very minimal mention of the fact that the God we worship is Trinitarian in nature.

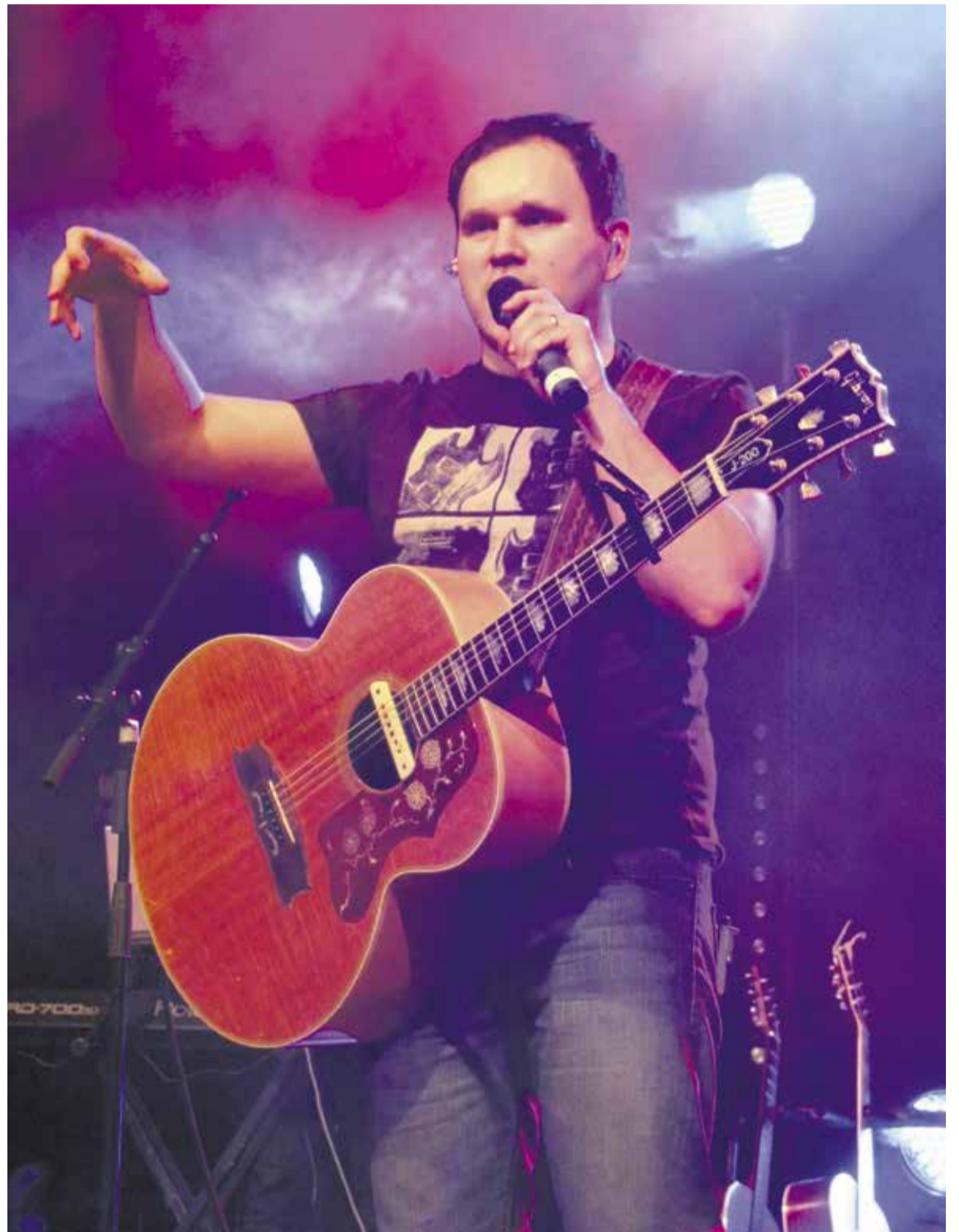
So, that stuff, you have to listen to that. That's an essential thing. Then you ask yourself, why are we not including that theme? It might be the kind of thing where people get intimidated. You look at the old hymns – a lot of them were ordained, trained ministers writing these lyrics to these already existing tunes. A lot these days have come into writing worship through the music door instead of through the trained theology door.

Firstly, you've got to pay attention. Secondly, you've got to have a bit of confidence. I heard the Bishop of Coventry say sometimes we think Trinitarian theology is like higher up mathematics. You can only comment on it if you're super brainy. Actually, when you become a Christian, you're immediately a Trinitarian theologian. The Holy Spirit illuminated you to who He is. And you went with Jesus to the Father. So, we mustn't get intimidated. We've got to come to grips with these themes.

So, I do listen when people have comments about the theology. That's important to me.

How do you deal with the tension between performing and leading worship?

It's difficult. If you led in a home group the way you led on a Passion stage, you'd be unbelievably terrible. And then, if you led like you do at a home



group at Passion, with 60,000 students, that'd be just as bad. Some of it is drawing everyone together, getting everyone on the same page, there's something amazing in that big crowd moment. You can't do that in a 'mousey' way. That's going to take some muscle, some exhortation. You've got to lead strongly. It's a thin line.

What do you say to people who are still going to church, but can't quite feel the joy of worship the way they used to?

One of the things I'd say is "breathe in". It's impossible to breathe out before you've breathed in.

In this new album, the title track says 'I'm breathing in your grace, I'm breathing out your praise'. That's the rhythm of worship. You can't breathe out till

you've breathed in. People in that situation may need to breathe in again. Set your eyes on the glory of God. Call to mind the amazing glimpses of his faithfulness. Journey back to the cross. Read about the cross in the gospels.

For me, sometimes, it's the breathing in again. The breathing out is a natural reaction. It's a reflex. So many times in worship, we focus on the breathing outside. I'm learning more and more as a worship leader, one of the important things you can do is focus on the breathing in element. Then you can't stop people from breathing out.

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The distance between ordinary and extraordinary is shorter than you think



By John Maxwell

What do you think of when I say the word 'ordinary'? These are the words that come to my mind: Common. Usual. Normal. Boring. Average. Something you see every day.

What about 'extraordinary'? I think of: Amazing. Incredible. Uncommon. Unusual. Special. Above average. New.

In the English language, only five little letters separate 'ordinary' from 'extraordinary': extra. And while 'extra' can be defined as 'outside', in English it also means 'just a little bit more'.

The word we use is not as important as the idea: the distance between ordinary

and extraordinary is shorter than you think. For too long, people have thought there was a huge gap between normal and special. They've assumed that 'above average' was far above 'average'. Unfortunately, once you believe that, it's easy to conclude that since you're 'average', you'll never be anything else; that there's no way to claw your way up to 'above average'.

I'm here to tell you that you've made the gap too wide. In life, an extraordinary performance is often separated from an ordinary one by the slightest of margins. What if your ordinary life could become extraordinary with only the smallest of changes? Would it be worth trying?

Here are some 'extras' that can help you close the gap between ordinary and extraordinary:

A little extra effort.

There is a price to be paid for achievement. Sometimes it's a large price. But sometimes just a little extra effort can yield significant results. What price are you willing to pay for success?

A little extra time.

To give something time, we need something other than perseverance. We need patience with the process of growth. I believe that many of us overestimate events and underestimate the process. But we've got it all wrong. As I wrote in the Law of Process in The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership, leaders develop daily, not in a day.

A little extra help.

I love this saying: 'If you see a turtle on top of a fence post, you know he had help getting there!' Why do I love it? Because I'm a turtle on a fence post. I know that I didn't get to where I am in life on my own. I'm just not that smart, gifted, or fast. The truth is that those who reached 'extraordinary'

had help getting there. And many types of success can only be achieved with help. If you refuse to ask for – or accept – it, you limit yourself and your work to a lower level of achievement.

Remember that ordinary and extraordinary are not far apart. If you accomplish just one of the above 'extras', your work will begin to be above average in that area.

If ordinary people ...

Gave a little extra effort,
Spent a little extra time,
Sought a little extra help ...

They would become extraordinary!

Used with permission from The John Maxwell Company, www.johnmaxwell.com

What's your refuge?

By Michael Bullard

King David was an amazing man. He was a great soldier. He was a great singer. He conceived huge building projects. He led worship and organised musicians. He ruled over a nation. By anyone's standards, he had a big responsibility in life. We all carry responsibility. Some of us have jobs with big responsibilities. Others of us carry the responsibility of raising children, caring for others, or making good decisions.

In many of his Psalms, we get an insight into David's inner life. David says; "Hear my cry, O God, listen to my prayer; from the end of the earth I call to you when my heart is faint." [Psalm 61:1-2]

Now, I don't think David was literally at the 'ends of the earth'. But he felt it – he felt a long way from God. And he felt his heart was faint.

With all his responsibility and his great honour as King,

David reveals he has moments of personal struggle and weakness. That's not the sort of thing you expect someone with a 'big responsibility' would say. Often we do our best to present as if we have it all together. We make big decisions. We might think of ourselves as 'movers and shakers'. Clearly, David was willing to admit, at least to God and to himself (and through his Psalms to others) that he had internal struggles.

David goes on; "Lead me to the rock that is higher than I, for you have been my refuge ..."

In his moments of personal vulnerability, David asks God to lead him to a rock that is higher than himself. Seeking his security from his relationship with God.

He goes on further; "Let me dwell in your tent forever! Let me take refuge under the shelter of your wings."

David the great king, in his inner life, wants to be like a baby

chick under its mother's wings. He knows that this is his real security. This is his real refuge. This, I believe, is actually the foundation for his courage and confidence in his responsibilities in the world.

And, I think it is also like this for us all. No matter how great our responsibility in the world, without having this refuge within, we are extremely vulnerable. We may be experiencing success in life in many ways. But that can turn around quickly. Praise can become criticism overnight. It is in the times when we feel our role is challenged, our ideas rejected, our decisions questioned – that's when we find out what our refuge really is. Are we depending on God? Do we have a solid inner life? Is God present and real to us?

What's your refuge?



Michael Bullard is Senior Pastor at Riverton Baptist Community Church.

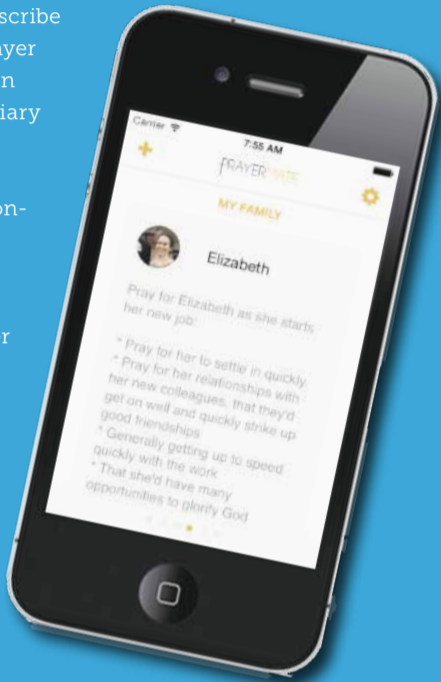
Photo: Jill Birt

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PrayerMate

www.geero.net/prayermate

PrayerMate is a free iOS and Android app to organise your prayer life in a straightforward way. Developed in the United Kingdom and sponsored by London City Mission, the app presents a series of cards from main categories you have entered and you can swipe through them as you pray. Additionally you can subscribe to a number of online prayer diaries or your church can create their own prayer diary using the PrayerMate.net service for an annual fee. With a familiar, distraction-free interface and widely customisable content, as well as the ability to subscribe to online prayer diaries, PrayerMate makes an excellent prayer app. Available in iOS App Store or the Google Play store.



win

The Sixty Minute Family

Rob Parsons

This latest book in Rob Parsons' best-selling Sixty Minute series offers ten life lessons for a strong family life, drawn from Rob's own experience and from his encounters with people around the world. Combining practical wisdom and accessible advice with a wide range of case studies, this book addresses ten key areas, including making time for each other, encouragement, parenting styles, handling conflict, appreciating the extended family and seizing the moment.

The Advocate in conjunction with Word Bookstore is giving you an opportunity to win *The Sixty Minute Family*. To be in the draw, simply answer the following question:

Question:

How many life lessons are offered in *The Sixty Minute Family*?

Question: Entries close on Thursday 17 April and all winners will be announced in the May edition of *The Advocate*.

Winners from *What a Son Needs From His Dad* competition: S D'Souza, P Hollett and S Rowcliffe.

competition

Answer: _____

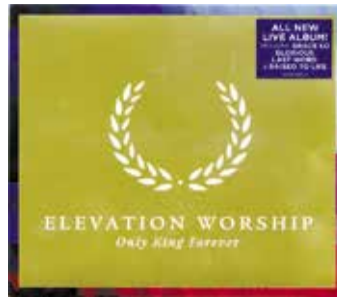
Name: _____

Phone number: _____

Please complete this form with your details and post it to:

The Sixty Minute Family Competition
11 East Parade East Perth WA 6004

listen



Elevation Worship: Only King Forever

Elevation Church

Elevation Worship returns with their third release of Essential Worship/Provident entitled *Only King Forever*. Elevation Church, based in Charlotte, North Carolina, is one of the fastest growing churches in America with over 12,000 in weekly attendance. Their songs are quickly rising on the Christian Copyright Licensing International (CCLI) chart and are being sung in churches worldwide. The theme of *Only King Forever* is who our God is as King and who we are as children of the King.



Hillsong UNITED: the white album [the remix project]

UNITED

Hillsong UNITED: the white album [the remix project] is a collection of well-known songs previously released from UNITED but remixed by various mix engineers and musicians. Completely remixed, these innovative expressions bring to light a new creative approach to songs that are already well loved. Continuing to create, experiment with and expand on those musical expressions is at the heart of the *white album [remix project]*.

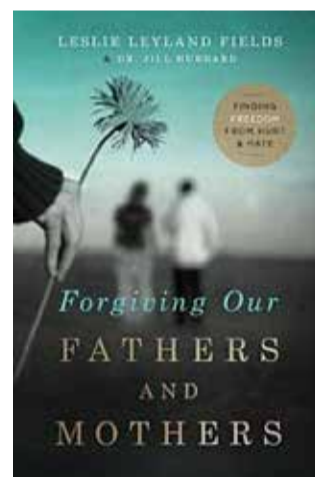
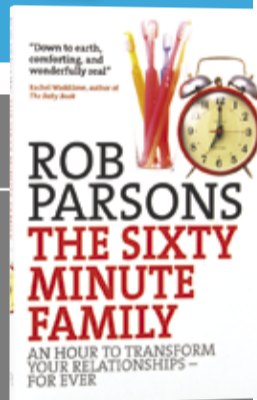


The Worship Album: 100 Best Loved Worship Songs

Kingsway Music

At 100 songs long, this compilation is one of the largest ever released. The album features everyone, from the fathers to the sons and daughters: Vicky Beeching, Dave Bilbrough, Chris Bowater, Andy Bromley, Brian Houston, Tim Hughes, Martyn Layzell, Robin Mark, Noel Richards and Stuart Townend. There are complete albums and extended plays included, and it includes great songs like 'How Deep the Father's Love For Us', 'Jesus You Alone', 'Here I Am To Worship' and 'Yesterday Today and Forever'.

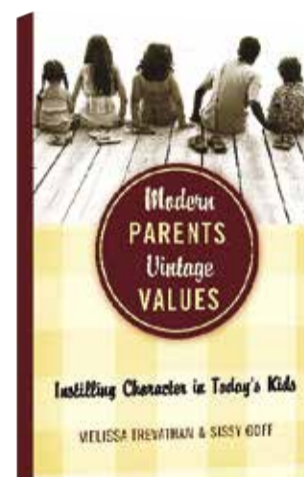
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Forgiving Our Fathers and Mothers

Leslie Leyland Fields

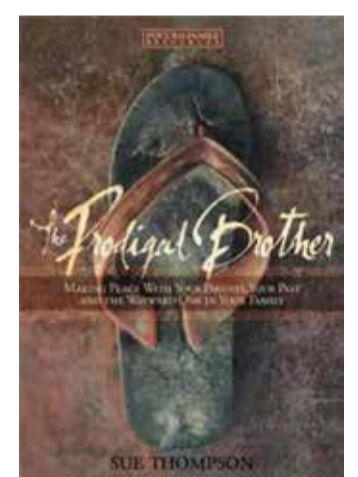
Struggling with the deep pain of a broken relationship with a parent or finding it an intense difficulty to honour those who act dishonourably toward you? Can we ever break free from the 'sins of our fathers'? Through personal stories, combined with a fresh look at the scriptures, *Forgiving Our Fathers and Mothers* illustrates the practice of authentic forgiveness, leading you away from hate and hurt toward healing, hope, and freedom.



Modern Parents, Vintage Values

Melissa Trevathan and Sissy Goff

Today, we live in a culture that is at war against moral parenting. Between the internet and the media, it is almost too much. Melissa and Sissy believe we can still raise children who value good values. They provide a clear and possible path back to cultivating children who have a sense of character and good grounding. They believe it is possible to instill vintage values in modern kids.



The Prodigal Brother

Sue Thompson

Having a prodigal affects families profoundly – especially the sibling who has remained obedient. Author Sue Thompson shares her story of struggle, shame and hope in *The Prodigal Brother*. Thompson shares ways to heal the pain of feeling second place in a parent's affection. Anyone who's ever been 'the good kid' in the family will find answers, understanding and the knowledge needed to unload the emotional baggage of growing up with a prodigal in the house.

Reviews and competition kindly supplied by Word Bookstore.

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Each month a school highlights news from their campus through the writing and photography of students on the School Scoop page.



Goldfields Baptist College – Kalgoorlie
Kindergarten to Year 10 www.gbc.wa.edu.au

Goldfields Baptist College is a ministry of Kalgoorlie Baptist Church. The vision of the College is an excellent education in a Christian context.

Growing, Building, Caring

New year, new things



Photo: Lucinda Thomas

Some of the Secondary College students at Ignition Day ready for another round of fun activities after a delicious barbecue dinner.

By Rutendo Bepete (Year 6)

Doing exactly the same things in exactly the same way can really become tiresome. That is why when school started in February, the Upper Primary students were thrilled to learn that this year they would get the chance to try something new, different and really, really exciting.

Thanks to GBC's new elective subjects, students from Years 4, 5 and 6 received the opportunity to develop a brand new set of skills and talents. Each of the four subjects, Journalism, Needle Craft, Construction and Cooking, are studied for the entire term before students will rotate to a new activity.

I'm one of the students having my cooking skills 'beefed' up.

Our first lesson was all about kitchen safety and how not to put the house on fire. Then the real action started. I created a great banana smoothie and French toast which was just wonderful.

My aim is to become so good that I can surprise my Mum with breakfast in bed.

To make the whole experience even better, we get to interact with students from different classes and year groups. This encourages us to learn how to get along and make friends with other kids who you may have not known previously.

We are so blessed to be in a school where we don't always have to do what's usual or typical, but what's special.

Community, students and staff welcome 2014

By Simbarashe Makotsa (Year 9)

Yet again, the annual welcome barbecue was a fun night out for the Goldfields Baptist College (GBC) community, students and staff.

A new year with new challenges, lots of people to meet and fun was had at this long-awaited event. Forging partnerships and keeping in touch with our parents and friends in the community is always a great way to start the new school year – enjoyable, friendly fun leaves Goldfields Baptist College known as a place with caring staff and a safe environment where all can be accepted, come together, and be treated as God would have us treat each other.

Participants came out in support of the College. It was



Photo: Heather Grosser

Monique Koekemoer, Stephen Vlatko and Khumbo Masuku welcome families with friendly smiles and colourful balloons.

good to see the positive attitudes and contributions, like bringing a plate to share. The atmosphere was awesome and everyone's generosity showed the true importance of community spirit. The multicultural unity between people was evident and is a good sign, not only for our College, but also evidence that our world is heading in the right direction.

A lot of planning went into this successful evening. The students had heaps of fun on the inflatables and the parents got involved with supporting the young entrepreneurs in Year 6 and 10 who were fundraising for their respective annual school excursions to Canberra and Queensland.

The rest of the year looks good if we go by this event.

What a blast! Ignition Day takes off!

By Morgan Beresford (Year 10)

Ignition Day 2014 was an afternoon of fun in a sociable and safe environment. With a turnout of more than 180 secondary students, there was plenty of games, open questions and Bible study. It ran from just after lunch time on 20 February until 8pm that evening.

Ignition Day was run by the youth leaders of the Kalgoorlie Baptist Church with Pastor John West 'Westie' supervising the event.

Fifteen youth leaders and the Ignition Band organised the entertainment. Hours of games and music, as well as a barbecue dinner was supplied for free.

"All of the students who went had a ball," School

Chaplain Heather Payne said.

"The children especially loved the chair game, which left them all exhausted by the time the game ended."

The Kalgoorlie Baptist Church also runs 'Ignition' on Friday nights which has a great turnout with many GBC students attending the weekly events.

The students all agreed that Ignition Day was a great day.



Photo: Dorette Hartley

Kyle Tamke (Year 4) and Zoe Lynch-Bloss (Year 6) keep a keen eye on Chantelle Rihari (Year 5) as she stirs the macaroni. The end product was absolutely delicious!

New Lightning director

After ten years as a high school Physical Education and Outdoor Education teacher, Steve Bezant is the newly appointed Director of Lakeside Lightning, the basketball program at Lakeside Baptist Church in South Lake.

"I've played basketball at Lakeside since it opened in 1992," Steve said.

"Practically my new role means that I am responsible for anything involving our teams from Under 12 boys and girls right up to Men's and Women's State Basketball League (SBL) teams."

The basketball ministry of the church aims to provide an excellent basketball development program with a pathway from domestic basketball right through to the SBL. This broad ministry runs with a finely honed perspective that values relationships and people in order to have a positive impact on the community and to sensitively communicate faith in Jesus Christ.

The SBL team is affiliated with Basketball WA and is funded by sponsors and donations.

"We currently have a fantastic group of sponsors partnering with us," Steve said.

"However, meeting budget is certainly challenging and we are always looking for businesses that might be interested in partnering with us."

Each year the Lakeside Lightning SBL team and the Women's SBL team are allowed two 'import' players who are not Australian citizens. For 2014, Americans Kari Pickens and Krystal Stoneking are playing for the women's team. Caleb Palkert and Brad Tinsley are playing on the men's team. All of the

'imports' are funded through sponsorship and donations.

"Our group of imports are fantastic," Steve said.

"They are looking really strong on the court, and off the court they're excited to be part of the ministry we are doing."

As well as the SBL teams, Lakeside has teams in the WA Basketball League (WABL), the junior version of the SBL. Junior players from 11 years old can play in WABL teams.

"Our basketball programs are of the highest quality and we are giving people who play, coach, score and umpire at the Centre every opportunity to develop their skills and reach their potential," Steve said.

"It's exciting to see our players grow and develop. We get to be a positive, stabilising influence on young people during what can often be a challenging time of life."

Lakeside Recreation Centre Manager Roy Robinson says Lakeside is a unique place and the ministry opportunities are incredible.

Each week, as well as hundreds of basketball teams using the Centre, people and schools from the local community use the facilities for netball and badminton. A seniors' walking group also meets each week. The Centre's crèche provides care for babies and toddlers while their mums play in community basketball or netball teams.



Steve Bezant is excited to be part of the ministry opportunities at Lakeside Recreation Centre.

Photo: Sarah Wickham

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For further details please contact the CEO, Rev'd Dr Lucy Morris in the first instance on 08 9282 8600. Expressions of interest are sought from Baptists with an application letter together with a current resume and details of two referees.

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Editor:	Terry Hicks	EDITORIAL AND ADVERTISING:
Managing Editor:	Andrew Sculthorpe	Email: editor@theadvocate.tv
Subeditor:	Jill Birt	advertising@theadvocate.tv
Production:	Vanessa Klomp	Mail: Baptist Churches
Graphic Design:	Peter Ion	Western Australia
Advertising:	Liesl Larmour	PO Box 57, Burswood WA 6100
Distribution:	Liesl Larmour	(08) 6313 6300
Editorial deadline:	5th of each month	Fax: (08) 9470 1713

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