

the advocate



"Is your environment holding you back?"
JOHN MAXWELL PAGE 13>>

In Conversation Church Health Consultant Philip Bryant talks about his passion for building the church through planting new churches. **PAGE 12>>**

21 martyrs remembered

The 21 martyred Egyptian Coptic Christians were remembered at a city wide prayer gathering at Wesley Church on 21 February.

One by one, 21 young men carrying lighted candles solemnly processed down the aisle of the church as the names of the martyrs were announced by Parish Priest and Head of the Coptic Orthodox Church of Western Australia, Rev. Father Abram Abdelmalek.

Jared Yapp's improvised viola solo, a haunting lament embracing the pain of loss, soared to the high wooden rafters of the 19th century church as the men walked to the front of the church while the congregation of about 150 people prayed quietly.

The young Coptic Christians were martyred in Libya by Daesh fighters a week earlier.

Father Abram spoke of the plight of between 60,000 and 80,000 Egyptian Coptic Christians now trapped in Libya. There is a bounty of 500 denari on each one's head if they are discovered in the community and reported to Daesh fighters, or if they try to cross the border to return to Egypt.

There are approximately 850,000 Egyptians currently working in Libya.

Father Abram asked people to pray for the situation and reminded the congregation that Coptic Christians have known suffering for 2,000 years as a minority group in Egypt.

"There is a saying that martyrdom is our daily bread for 2,000 years," Father Abram said.

"We all need to pray. The families of those martyred ask that we pray not for comfort but for those who did this to meet Jesus."

Praying for the Middle East was the first part of the city-

wide prayer gathering, Blow the Trumpet, organised by Wendy Yapp.

The congregation was guided through four blocks of concentrated prayer throughout the evening.

As the Nigerian national elections approach, Nigerian followers of Jesus now living in Perth described the situation there; explaining how the separatist group Boko Haram continues to wreak havoc, kidnapping and murdering people and destroying communities.

People prayed earnestly for Europe to return to God and for God's Spirit to be poured out on the region.

Australia was the last location for focused prayer. Baptist Pastor Jules Birt prayed for Australia's government, particularly focusing on those advising the Prime Minister and his ministers, before the audience gathered in small groups throughout the church to pray for our nation.

Wendy said she was delighted with the number of people who attended and the fervour of people's prayers and worship.

The next Blow the Trumpet prayer gathering is planned for 11 April at Wesley Church, 97 William Street, Perth.

Visit the Blow the Trumpet Facebook page for more details.



3 Support for dads
 More than 120 men learn how to be better dads >>



8 Binge drinking
 Promoting safe and respectful relationships to high school students >>



15 School Scoop
 Quinns Baptist College's open ocean challenges >>

“Committed to being honest, transparent and above reproach.”

BAPTIST CHURCHES
 WESTERN AUSTRALIA



Paradox Church Pastor Jules Birt prays for Australia at the Blow the Trumpet prayer gathering in Perth.

Photo: Jill Birt



Victor Owuor

Victor Owuor is the Cross-Cultural and Indigenous Churches Worker with Baptist Churches Western Australia.

Relational discipleship

Comparing the role of a minister to that of a professional career can cause members of a congregation to relate to an image of a minister but not to the minister their self as a disciple maker.

Therefore, everyone who wants to complete Christ's commission of disciple making [Matthew 28:19-20] must intentionally seek to achieve it through a solid relationship.

There is an assumption that weekly church programs provide an adequate environment for achieving discipleship and relationship building. However, such programs even when run successfully, will not give individual attention to the most immediate areas that those we

intend to disciple need to grow in. This means that more time needs to be devoted to individuals we intend to disciple, in order for them to be mentored into disciple makers. Every believer should therefore aim to undertake a discipleship that serves as a platform for perfecting gospel centred relationships.

There are significant biblical reasons for doing relational discipleship. Firstly, relational discipleship gives a sense of worth to those we disciple. Sacrificing

our precious time in order to spend quality time with those we disciple makes them feel honoured that we see spiritual value in them, and that they are an important part of God's Kingdom. In Romans 12:10 Paul encourages believers to honour one another above ourselves. A disciple who has seen honour modelled will usually learn to replicate it to others.

Secondly, relational discipleship helps those under our care to develop trust in us so that they can openly express their joys,

sorrows, problems and concerns. The apostle Paul seemed to have mastered the art of relational discipleship. His farewell speech to the Ephesian elders revealed that he had a close relationship with them as they expressed their grief and fear over the fact that they would not see him again. [Ephesians 20:36-38]

Thirdly, relational discipleship exposes our weaknesses and failures. When those we are disciplining see that we can sin and repent our failures, they learn about repentance from our experience.

There is no substitute for knowing and being known in the arena of transforming lives.



Dr Brian Harris

Dr Brian Harris is the Principal of Vose Seminary and Pastor at Large for the Carey Group.

Good or bad Friday?

I still remember his puzzled question. An immigrant from China, he was learning English in a class run by the church where I was the pastor at the time.

Easter was approaching, and the group's leader had told the story of the crucifixion, noting that we would remember it that Friday on the day known as Good Friday. He came afterwards and asked me, "How can you call it good? It was not good Friday, it was bad Friday. A very bad Friday."

He had a point. How bizarre that we should describe crucifixion day as good. True, we know why we do. We no longer view the cross from the

perspective of that bad Friday. We see it in the light of resurrection Sunday ... and resurrection changes everything.

The journey to the cross had been filled with pessimism. The disciples had gloomily predicted that if Jesus persisted in His desire to return to Judea, great harm would befall Him. Unable to dissuade Him, Thomas summed up the resigned fatalism of the group in His words, 'Let us also go, that we may die with him'.

[John 11:16b] He would have drawn no pleasure in being able to say, on that terrible Friday, "I told you so ..."

But Easter Sunday was to dawn. That resurrection Sunday Jesus defeated sin, death and the devil – the terrible trio that had held humanity in bondage ever since their fall from grace.

Simply put, the resurrection is the death of pessimism. It is the permanent birth of hope. It is the reminder that God always has

the last word – and God's word is resurrection. Thus bad Friday morphs to Good Friday, for even the worst of news is transformed at the cross of Jesus.

Does this mean that Christians are always deliriously happy? No – we are not spared the struggles of everyday life – but at the deepest of levels, Christians harbour hope in their heart. No matter how bleak the present moment, God will have the last word. Thank God for Easter!



Gershon Nimbalker

Gershon Nimbalker is the Advocacy Manager with Baptist World Aid Australia.

Is Christianity apolitical?

In the last few months I have helped organise a number of poverty focused campaigns that has led to us critiquing government policy. In response, several fellow believers have come to me saying that we should stay out of politics and our only truly Christian focus should be evangelism.

Are they right? Is Christianity apolitical?

The earliest Christian creed is 'Jesus is Lord'. This was more than a personal and private truth; it was a dramatic and radical political statement. To say Jesus is Lord was to say Caesar was not. It says the way of Jesus should govern not just our private lives, but also the affairs of communities, enterprise, the state and all of creation.

The confession and practice of this truth brought Christians into conflict with the state. While Christianity was young, and still seen by many as a minor sect, the most profound conflicts arose as Christians refused to worship the emperor and the gods of Rome. Christians were persecuted and martyred. As Christian influence grew, the belief that Jesus was Lord had Christians openly condemning some social policies

of Rome, including gladiatorial death matches.

Atheist historian William Lecky states that 'there is scarcely any single reform so important in the moral history of mankind as the suppression of gladiatorial shows, a feat that must almost exclusively be ascribed to the Christian church' – a grand statement. For Lecky the end of the gladiators marked a new era in the West, where all human life was recognised as

having intrinsic value; an echo of the Christian belief that we are all created in the image of God.

More recently, we have seen Christian political engagement through Wilberforce and Newton lead to the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade. Just 50 years ago the Baptist pastor Martin Luther King Jr catalysed a wave of change to improve civil rights for Black Americans.

Our belief that Jesus is Lord, just like that of our Christian predecessors, calls us to engage in the pursuit of justice. When our politics leads us to becoming a less just nation, or a less just world – Christians should speak up.

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.

Pastors gather at BCWA

Recently appointed Baptist Churches Western Australia Cross-Cultural and Indigenous Church Worker, Victor Owour, organised the first meeting for 2015 for pastors of cross-cultural and Indigenous churches in mid-March.

The aim of the meetings are to provide a forum for ideas, networking and planning for the specific needs of these churches.

A special guest at the gathering was Rev. Dr Marc Chan who established the network during his 13 years as the Cross Cultural and Indigenous Worker with Baptist Churches Western Australia (BCWA). Marc was visiting from Melbourne where he now works with Baptist Union of Victoria, in a department that focuses on the needs of LOTE (Languages Other Than English) congregations. The Baptist Union of Victoria acknowledges all their churches are culturally and linguistically diverse.

Pastors from several Myanmar churches attended the meeting, including Pastor Htun Maung, Emmanuel Karen Baptist Church of Western Australia; Pastor Zol Win and Samuel Poh, Myanmar Baptist Church; Pastor Eh Thee Kaw Khin and Paul Kyaw, Perth Karen Baptist Church;

Pastor Van Biak Thang, Western Australia Chin Christian Church; No Ling Thang, Administrator of Western Australia Chin Emmanuel Church; and Pastor James Tin Kung (Perth Chin Baptist Church).

Some of BCWA's Myanmar churches are the fastest growing and largest among Baptist churches in Western Australia. Many of the members of these churches came as refugees to Australia and their churches are now well-established, building their own church buildings and reaching out.

Other attendees included the leader of the Arabic speaking congregation at Yokine Baptist Church, Elezireg Koko, and Samuel Tanui, the leader of the Kenyan Fellowship that meets at Riverton Baptist Church. Samuel attended the gathering of cross-cultural and Indigenous churches for the first time.

Baptist Financial Services (BFS) Relationship Manager for



Cross-cultural church leaders recently gathered at the Baptist Ministry Centre with Pastor Victor Owour, the newly appointed Cross-Cultural and Indigenous Churches Worker with BCWA.

Photo: Jill Birt

Western Australia Anina Findling spoke to the group about the services BFS offers churches, particularly in regard to loans for purchasing property.

BCWA Director of Ministries Mark Wilson described the role of the BCWA team among the churches and responded to questions which ignited a productive time of listening and learning.

News of combined youth and young adult activities particularly interested Samuel Poh from Emmanuel Karen Baptist Church of WA, especially hearing about Sportsfest, the annual three day combined churches sporting event for young adults.

"Our churches need opportunities to connect with Australian culture and young

adults, and this could be very good for us," Samuel said.

Sportsfest will be held 26 to 28 September and there are regular updates on the Sportsfest WA Facebook page.

The group of pastors started planning a combined worship service for Pentecost Sunday, 24 May. More information will be published in the May edition of *The Advocate*.

Support for dads at Carey



Photo: Jules Birt

More than 120 enthusiastic dads heard Professor Bruce Robinson speak at the first gathering of The Fathering Project at the Carey Group campus.

More than 120 men met to learn how to be better dads from Professor Bruce Robinson, founder of The Fathering Project, in Harrisdale late March.

The Carey Group, which comprises a church, college and Early Learning Centre, launched The Fathering Project at the Carey campus.

The event was inspiring and challenging with many of the men signing up for future events. The group will continue to meet to support

and encourage the role of fathers in children's lives through activities and training.

Senior Pastor David Kilpatrick said families are a key focus at Carey and supporting fathers was a great way to connect with the local community.

At the event, Professor Robinson said that dads are not simply a busy person in the background of a family. They are pivotal in the raising of children. They have a vital role in making their children feel worthwhile by telling and showing them how special and unique they are.

Carey Baptist College Business Manager Mark Wagenaar attended the event and said it was a great night with lots of dads turning up.

"Bruce has an amazing ability to see problems and turn them into practical solutions," Mark said.

"It certainly was not some 'airy fairy' advice, but real practical issues and suggestions that are proven to have profound impacts on children."

The Fathering Project is recommended for young adults who one day may become fathers, new dads, dads of primary and/or secondary children as well as dads with adult children.

"You can never stop being a good dad and you can never stop learning about being a father," Mark said.

For more information, visit www.thefatheringproject.org

Cyclone appeal launched

Baptist World Aid Australia launched the Cyclone Pam Appeal following the Category 5 cyclone that smashed into the small Pacific nation of Vanuatu on 14 March.

The cyclone devastated entire communities, leaving much of the nation without access to essential services. With winds of up to 270 kilometres per hour, Cyclone Pam wreaked destruction across the island. More than 20 people are confirmed dead with grave fears held for communities in outlying regions.

On the main island of Efate, in excess of 90 percent of structures were either damaged or destroyed, with over 17,000 children at risk of illness. Much of the capital, Port Vila, has been affected, but the extent of damage in rural areas and outlying islands it is still unknown.

Vanuatu President Baldwin Lonsdale said the storm had destroyed schools and clinics in the capital Port Vila and left 'most' of the 234,000 people in his nation homeless.

Baptist World Aid Australia (BWAA) is continuing to monitor the situation and is currently

investigating areas of greatest need in Vanuatu. Through their partnership, they are providing urgent food, water, medical support and shelter for children and families affected by the cyclone.

“... in excess of 90 percent of structures were either damaged or destroyed ...”

A state of emergency has been declared and the country is calling for urgent assistance to help reach communities hit by this disaster.

Tax deductible contributions can be made through the BWAA's Disaster Action Fund at www.baptistworldaid.org.au

Gift a message for new pastors

Retired Baptist Pastor Alastair Bain created a wooden masterpiece over the summer.

Working regularly at the Canning Men's Shed which meets in the workshop at the rear of Riverton Baptist Church, Alastair fashioned a shepherd's crook from a piece of recycled jarrah timber.

The shepherd's crook will be used during the accreditation ceremonies for newly accredited Baptist pastors, along with a bowl and towel, symbolising Jesus' servant hearted leadership and His example for all pastoral leaders.

The Canning Men's Shed has 55 members. Many of them were intrigued by Alastair's project. It involved shaping three pieces of timber from the original length, making two dowel joints for strength in the hook and finishing the crook with a suitably durable finish.

The project piqued the interest of numerous Shed

workers and many of the men offered advice to Alastair about the method of construction and finish.

"I must have been asked 20 times, 'What's this you're making?', and to say a shepherd's crook was never sufficient," Alastair said.

The explanation became a detailed and non-threatening account of what happens when theological students are accredited as pastors with the Baptist Churches Western Australia.

"I explained about the basin and towel symbolising Jesus washing the disciples' feet," he said.

"Quite a few of the men knew about that, but hadn't picked up the significance of Jesus coming as a servant."

Living out the servant nature of a follower of Jesus has seen Alastair clean up other people's mess in the

Shed, loan out his trailer, help with working bees and visit some of the men in hospital.

"In this context, the crook becomes a very positive message about God caring for us. The conversations continue," Alastair said.

Men from many backgrounds enjoy the camaraderie and productivity of the Men's Shed. Builders, farmers, electricians, plumbers, accountants, architects, small business owners, public servants, engineers, lab technicians and carpenters are all represented at the Canning Men's Shed.

"The unspoken rule in our Shed is 'One for yourself and one for the Shed'."

"Toys made at the Shed go to the Rotary Fair, we adapt equipment for the Multiple Sclerosis Society, make shelving for the church and contribute to community projects with items such as park seating."

As well as building projects, a couple of gardeners have a productive vegetable garden at the Riverton church.



Photo: Jill Birt

Alastair Bain created a shepherd's crook at his local Men's Shed.

Men's Sheds provide a unique opportunity for churches to serve an often hidden and forgotten section of the community – retired men.

The Canning Men's Shed is held 9am to noon four days a week and the yearly membership costs \$50.

Carey student shines

Former Carey Baptist College student Simon Christie completed his secondary education with excellent results.

He was awarded a General Exhibition, being ranked the 20th overall student in the state, and the Course Exhibition for Philosophy and Ethics, as the top-achieving student in that subject in the state. A young man with a passion for helping

others, Simon has accepted the John Curtin Undergraduate Scholarship and is now studying Medical Imaging Science at Curtin University.

At his 2014 graduation, Simon received an array of awards from Carey Baptist College, including College Colours for Service to the Community, six course awards and a Medal of Excellence. He also received a Certificate of Commendation for receiving 20 or more A grades during Years 11 and 12, and a Certificate of Distinction from the School Curriculum and Standards Authority.

Simon said he didn't think about achieving a specific mark.

"I kept focused on working to the best of my ability. I was very pleased and excited with the results," Simon said.

The support of family and teachers were two important influences in achieving his results, and a lot of hard work and study.

Simon thanked God for strengthening and guiding him.

"He's given me the support of other people and the ability to work hard and use my knowledge," he said.

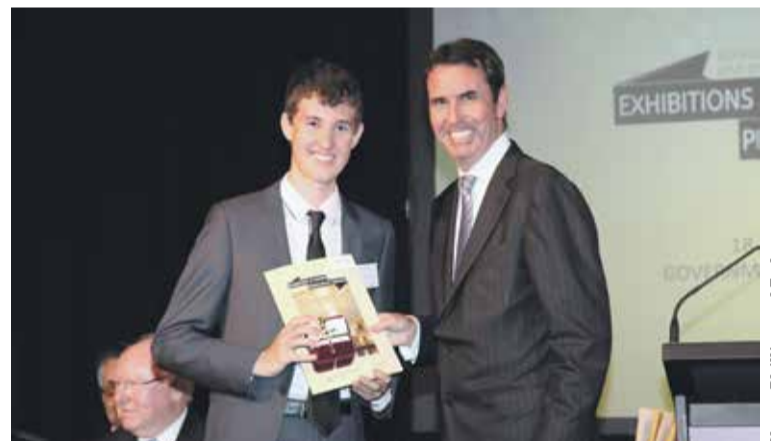


Photo: Phillips and Father

Carey Baptist College student Simon Christie receives his award from the Minister for Education Hon Peter Collier.

Carey's Secondary School Principal, Rowan Clark said that it is a great result for a dedicated student.

"I am so pleased for all of our students and their accomplishments and I am sure we will see great things from them."

digital church

11/03/2015

Nils Smith

twitter.com/NilsSmith

"And let us consider how we may spur one another on towards love and good deeds." [Hebrews 10:24]"

11/03/2015

Rick Warren

rickwarren.org/devotional

"If you want to recognise God's voice and figure out whether you have an impression from Him or not, first you need to ask if the idea agrees with the Bible."

12/03/2015

Amy Sherman

thegospelcoalition.org

"Jesus's work is not exclusively about our individual salvation, but about the cosmic redemption and renewal of all things. It is not just about our reconciliation to a holy God – though that is the beautiful centre of it. It is also about our reconciliation with one another and with the creation itself."

13/03/2015

Todd Adkins

twitter.com/ToddAdkins

"Being a Christian is less about cautiously avoiding sin than

about courageously doing God's will. – Bonhoeffer"

13/03/2105

Jon Bloom

desiringgod.org

"Jesus really does desire your comfort. He desires it more than you do. He so desires your ultimate comfort that He will make you very uncomfortable in order to give it to you."

13/03/2105

Betsy Childs

thegospelcoalition.org

"...if we truly believe 'all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God' [Romans 3:23],

we should expect to be sinned against. Rather than moving on to the next church or merely growing a thicker hide, the right response to wounds from other church members or church leaders is forgiveness, not cynicism."

13/03/2105

Donald Miller

twitter.com/donaldmiller

"Grace only sticks to imperfections. Those who can't accept their imperfections can't accept grace either."

15/03/2015

Kyle Idleman

twitter.com/KyleIdleman

"Grace is freely given, not earned, and freely received, not achieved."

16/06/2015

Larry Osborne

desiringgod.org

"I love the idea of servant leadership. But when people start treating me like a servant, that's another matter. Yet Jesus wasn't kidding. Genuine servant leadership means being treated like a servant."

Compiled by Breege McKiernan

Ugandan visit deepens faith

Como Baptist Church's Joshua du Heume recently returned from a month working in Kisiizi Hospital in south-west Uganda.

Joshua's time at the 235 bed Church of Uganda Kisiizi Hospital was an elective unit of study for his final year of a Bachelor of Medicine/Bachelor of Surgery at the University of Western Australia (UWA).

"I decided to do my elective in Africa in order to see a part of the world I had never seen, and to be exposed to a completely different area of medicine," Joshua said.

"I saw things that I'll probably never see in the West."

"I wanted to see how a church hospital operates and how the faith of the staff influences their work – how they use their medical training to further the gospel and make Christ known – and to do some of that myself."

Twenty-six year old Joshua travelled with three other medical students from UWA. They were met by two English medical students who were also at the hospital to continue their training.

"We worked with many of the hospital staff, particularly Dr Ian Spillman [medical

superintendent] and Hanna Spillman [head midwife]."

"This missionary couple from the UK was an enormous encouragement to us, both professionally and spiritually," Joshua said.

Most of the staff including physicians, surgeons, pediatricians, obstetricians, midwives, nurses, physiotherapists, pharmacists, clinical officers and chaplains are local Ugandans with a living faith in God.

The aim of the hospital is to provide life in all its fullness to the staff, patients and visitors through a living faith in Jesus Christ. It is situated deep in the mountains of North Kigezi in the Rukungiri district of south-west Uganda and serves an area that stretches for hundreds of kilometres. Patients travel from beyond Mbarara, the regional town, 128 kilometres away.

"It was a refreshing change to be praying with staff in theatres before operations, and listening to songs of praise and worship



Joshua du Heume making friends with a young patient at Kisiizi Hospital in Uganda.

Photo: Adeline Yap

while removing a spleen or fixing bones together."

The extreme poverty of rural Uganda challenged Joshua.

"So much of what we saw in the hospital could be put down to poverty and lack of health education."

"Half of the children in the children's ward were malnourished because parents cannot afford to give their children the food they need," Joshua said.

"Never before have I felt so much as if I was slapping

Band-Aids on problems that run much deeper – problems that are political and economic at their root."

Joshua has dreams of returning to Africa to work there again.

Volunteer honoured



Photo: Meran Byleveld

Parkerville Baptist Church member Pixie Byers is looking forward to the possibility of receiving more community awards.

Parkerville Baptist Church member Pixie Byers has been selected as a finalist in the Community Champion Awards and People's Choice Award 2015.

For more than 15 years Pixie has been the Volunteer Coordinator of Uniting Community House, Middle Swan, which is part of Community Connections within the Inclusion Directorate of UnitingCare

West. Pixie is one of UnitingCare West's longest serving volunteers.

Uniting Community House supports people with mental illness and/or a disability who find it difficult to make connections in the community,

especially those who are socially isolated.

The aim of the program is to form genuine friendships and confidence so that participants can eventually continue community participation without support.

Uniting Community House meets every Friday night where participants enjoy a meal cooked by Pixie and her volunteers, as well as enjoying activities together, including playing games and doing crafts.

Pixie is a champion for justice, hope and opportunities for people in need.

The Community Champions Award was developed by Seasons Funerals in conjunction with Community Newspaper Group in 2013 as a way to say thank you to the people who make outstanding contributions to the community.

The winners of the both the awards will be announced at a gala dinner on 30 March.

Equipping more mums

There are now 20 Mothers of Pre-schoolers groups in Western Australia that offer mums an opportunity to have a short, though much-needed break from the challenges of raising babies, toddlers and pre-schoolers.

The groups, commonly known as MOPS, provide mums of children aged 0-5 years a meeting place to listen to a talk, connect with other mums while discussing the day's topic, and find support from women facing the same joys and challenges they are.

To spread the MOPS message that 'Better mums make a better world', MOPS WA is once again holding its Better Mums Conference to encourage, inspire and equip mothers to be the best mums they can be.

Last year's event was a huge success, with around 170 mums attending the one-day conference. Many delegates went on to join a MOPS group at a local church, where they have the opportunity to hear from Christian mums about how they manage this often challenging and isolating life-stage.

Delegates will have the opportunity to hear how one mum's life has been transformed by her relationship with Jesus,

and how the support she found at MOPS was instrumental in turning her life around and finding the support she needed.

The conference will also have all that a regular MOPS morning offers: inspiring speakers, time to connect with other mums, and delicious food.

Better Mums Conference 2015 will be held at Mount Pleasant Baptist Church, 497 Marmion Street, Booragoon on Saturday 16 May. The cost is only \$50, and includes morning tea and lunch.

To register, visit mops.goregister.com.au



Woodvale celebrates 30 years

Woodvale Baptist Church spent the weekend of 7 to 8 March 'Looking back with thanksgiving ... Looking forward with confidence' as it celebrated its 30th anniversary.

Celebrations started with a family variety concert on the Saturday evening with more than 20 acts creatively prepared by people from the church. Performances were made by people ranging in age, from early primary school age girls who are part of the church's Girls' Brigade group to a collection of tutu wearing male ballerinas who almost brought the roof down!

Special guests on the night included local Member of Parliament Hon Albert Jacobs and the church's first pastor Milton Gabrielson and his wife Robyn.

For many of the more than 300 people in the audience Senior Pastor Colin Lituri dressed as Tevye from the musical *Fiddler on the Roof* was the stand out act of

the night when he performed a medley of songs from the musical.

Woodvale Baptist Church began as Kingsley Baptist Church in 1985 when North Beach Baptist Church sent a group of people who lived in the area to plant a new church. Services started in Creaney Primary School then moved to Woodvale High School before moving in 1989 to the hall on Woodvale Drive.

The church initially had land in Kingsley where the Kingsley Shopping Centre now stands. Appreciation of the value of the land allowed the church to purchase the block where the church now stands.

The auditorium was filled to capacity on Sunday 8 March for



A group of tutu wearing male ballerinas from Woodvale Baptist Church entertained the 30 Anniversary celebration concert audience in early March.

Photo: Sonya Jeyabalan

the Thanksgiving Service. Local Member of Parliament Andrea Mitchell attended along with Director of Ministries for Baptist Churches Western Australia Mark Wilson.

Pastor Colin Lituri spoke about the firm foundation the church has through its history and commitment to God's Word and the church's youth worship team led worship on the day.

Foundation church member Irene Daniels came to Woodvale with the initial group from North Beach. During the service, she and her daughter Rose reflected on the impact the church has had on their lives.

Blake Rogers brought another view of the church's influence. He has only been part of the Woodvale Baptist Church community for about three years.

Lorene Vigus made a celebration cake shaped like an open Bible for the Sunday morning service. Foundation members, Brian and Barbara Pragnell, and Kevin and Irene Daniels, cut the cake at the close of the service before the 600 people in the congregation.

Messy Church takes off



Messy Church at Maida Vale Baptist Church celebrating creativity with paper planes.

Photo: Rob Douglas

Paper planes had people of all ages competing against each other at Maida Vale Baptist Church recently.

The recent success of the movie, *Paper Planes*, prompted the church to run a paper plane competition as part of its monthly Messy Church.

About 60 people from toddlers to grandparents,

made paper planes and competed against each other to discover the best paper plane maker and flier.

Maida Vale Baptist Church Children and Families' Worker Robyn Douglas said Messy Church is about being Christ-centred and is based on creativity, hospitality and celebration.

Following an activity for all ages, there is a time of worship and a meal is shared together.

Robyn said this year was the fourth year that Maida Vale has held Messy Church and it has grown each year, attracting people who may not have

connected with the church in other formats.

Messy Church is not a club for children, nor is it a club for church families, but an opportunity for all ages to be together, particularly people outside church life.

Messy Church values Jesus, creativity, hospitality, celebration and all ages, and has sprung up in over 17 countries around the world. Currently there are eight groups attached to a variety of denominations in Western Australia.

briefs

Baptism

Josh and Kellie Patterson were baptised in a dam on their family farm in Tambellup on 22 February. Cranbrook-Frankland Baptist Church members, friends and neighbours attended.

Youth event

A combined youth event will be held on 5 June 2015 at Riverton Baptist Church. For more details, visit www.baptistwa.asn.au

Sport celebration

Celebration of Sport will be held at St Mary's Cathedral, Perth, on Sunday 17 May from 2.45pm. Warriors Coach Justin Langer is the keynote speaker. You will be able to meet West Coast Eagle Nic Naitanui and Shawn Redhage from the Perth Wildcats. The How Ridiculous team will be also be in attendance. For more information, phone 0417 904 839.

Harmony centenary

Harmony Baptist Church, Mosman Park, celebrates the centenary of Christian work in the area on 2 May from 2pm to 5pm. All those with a connection with the former Mosman Park Baptist Church are welcome to come and reflect on the area's history through a historical pictorial display; remembering some of God's great works in and through His people.

David Thomas

David Thomas, former pastor at Albany Baptist Church, Collier Baptist Church, Kelmscott Baptist Church and a Christian fellowship in Seville Grove died on 5 March following a long battle with cancer. David and his wife Barbara served

with Australian Baptist Missionary Society (now known as Global Interaction) in Papua New Guinea during the 1980s. David's funeral was held on 11 March.

Gift rejected

An offer from Common Grace to install a solar system, free of charge, at the Australian Prime Minister's residence has been rejected by the Federal Government. The gift of 12 solar panels with free installation at Kirribilli House was offered to the Hon. Tony Abbott MP last Christmas by Common Grace – a rapidly growing movement of thousands of socially-minded Christians from various denominations. The offer rejected in late March via a letter giving reasons, including Kirribilli's heritage listing, ongoing costs and security concerns.

ACL support

The Australian Christian Lobby (ACL) has backed the use of medicinal marijuana subject to the same testing requirements as any other drug used for medical purposes. The ACL lodged its submission to the Senate Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs on medicinal cannabis trials in mid-March. "While the harms of recreational cannabis use are well documented, there appears to be anecdotal evidence that cannabis has positive medicinal qualities. If cannabis has a genuine palliative effect that other drugs cannot provide, it should be available to patients in the same way other medications are," ACL Managing Director Lyle Shelton said.

30 years later Dushan is home

Baptist World Aid Australia's Dushan Jeyabalan returned to his homeland for the first time in 30 years in January 2015. He fled Sri Lanka, escaping race riots against the Tamil people in 1984.

When the riots broke out in 1983, Dushan's father found himself in a refugee camp, separated from his family who were in Jaffna, in the north of the country. For ten days the family waited for news. Later Dushan and his Dad came close to death on a city street simply because they are Tamils.

Shortly after that experience the family immigrated to Canada.

"It was hard to leave Colombo where I grew up and to move to a totally new country. I felt betrayed by my own country Sri Lanka," Dushan said.

As a 19 year old, Dushan started a new life with his family in Perth, Ontario. He completed a science degree at University of Guelph and became a Canadian citizen.

In 1996 he moved to Sydney, Australia and married Jeyanthi, a Malaysian born Sri Lankan he had met in Toronto, Canada.

"I am blessed to be married to Jeyanthi and have four beautiful children. My wife and I have

been living in Perth for 14 years," Dushan said.

In January 2015, Dushan took his family to Sri Lanka to show them his homeland. He wanted them to understand what shaped him as a person and to learn about the Sri Lankan culture. He also wanted to give his wife and children some understanding of the atrocities that took place in Sri Lanka and caused his family to leave.

"I found that the people felt fearful and the poverty levels had increased from when I lived there," Dushan said.

"The people in the north of the country were displaced and many women are now widows due to the civil war that ripped the country apart in 2009."

China continues to invest heavily in Sri Lanka, rebuilding roads and railways. In the north of the country the Indian government is contributing to restoring railway tracks. Schools



Photo: Sonya Jeyabalan

Dushan Jeyabalan visited his homeland, Sri Lanka, 30 years after fleeing race riots.

and the library in Jaffna have been restored.

"I was happy to go back, although a little apprehensive," Dushan said.

"Feelings of fear were there when we were travelling north. It brought back memories of how

we escaped with our lives and little else."

"I still felt comfortable in the culture and community and being able to speak Tamil and Sinhalese was helpful," he said.

The Jeyabalan children enjoyed the experience of

exploring their father's roots and meeting family members.

"God has been faithful and He has never deserted me. He has taught me character building lessons and developed resilience in me. He has given me hope," Dushan said.

Art hobby takes off



Photo: Sarah Vardy

Paul Vardy creates art works in his back shed studio.

Busselton man Paul Vardy has converted his backyard shed into a studio for his art hobby.

Paul works as a drafter with a local company during the day, but several nights each week you will find him in his new studio working on art projects.

He started painting after he left school and later his sister-in-law introduced him to stencil art.

"A lot of my ideas come from the joy of being saved and

knowing that Jesus has given us everything we need in life and that we are forgiven daily," Paul said.

Friends asked him to create artworks for them, igniting his passion for art.

"I've never had any training. I've learnt over time just by doing it."

"I love working with lots of bright colours and I suppose the most joy I get out of painting is that you never know how it's going to look until you have finished."

"A lot of my ideas come from the joy of being saved ..."

"Sometimes you get something you never expected and you wonder how on earth did it turn out so good and other times it doesn't, but that is the beauty of art it is always something unexpected and new every time."

Married to Sarah and with two young children, Paul's time for pursuing his art has limits but he was able to exhibit three works in the Fremantle c3Church's Christmas exhibition in 2014.

Paul is planning to be part of the Fremantle Street Arts Festival over the Easter long weekend.

Retreat in Swan Valley

All women are invited to attend a one-day Sacred Space Women's Spiritual Retreat on Saturday 2 May at Swanleigh in the beautiful Swan Valley.

Organiser Kathleen Bryant sees the event as an opportunity for women to be with God for a focused and extended period.

"This spiritual retreat is intentionally carving out some time so we can more richly and fully walk with the Lord who is always with us," Kathleen said.

Sacred Space is a spiritual retreat focused on learning how to open our hearts to the Lord and be with Him.

The retreat will be held from 9.45am to 3pm and only costs \$50 with lunch provided.

Women can register before 24 April at www.baptistwa.asn.au/view/events

For more information, phone Kathleen on 0439 081 607.

Better than binge

Dan McGrechan from Frame Initiatives speaks to thousands of high school students each year promoting safe and respectful relationships.

"Who believes Australia has a drinking problem?"

I scan the room of teenagers and see a few raised hands and a few shaking heads. Many are not sure how to respond.

Perhaps it is an unfair question. After all, it is nearly impossible to evaluate objectively the culture in which they are immersed; a culture that celebrates binge drinking and risk-taking behaviour as their rite of passage.

Shifting away from 'problem' language, I move to talking about Australia's fondness for alcohol. At this level there is more agreement. The group resonates with author Jill Stark's reflection that 'Booze is the nation's social lifeblood ... [used] to celebrate, commiserate and commemorate. We live in a culture saturated with alcohol.

Take sport as an example. We know the sponsorship marriages well: AFL and Carlton Draught, Cricket Australia and Victoria Bitter, the Australian Open and Heineken. At the local club level, matches are almost always followed by drinks at the sports club bar. It is true, as Stark observes, that 'Drinking is an intrinsic part of our sporting culture', despite the fact that drinking negatively affects sporting performance.

As we discuss our nation's love of alcohol, I know what the group is thinking. It is written all over their faces.

So what we get drunk ... we're just having fun, we don't care who sees. So what we go out, this is how it's s'posed to be, living young and wild and free. ['Young, Wild & Free', *Mac & Devin Go To High School!*]

These lyrics to Wiz Khalifa's popular anthem capture the feelings of many teens, who exuberantly strap themselves in for the roller-coaster ride of 'living young and wild and free'.

The peak of this ride might be Leavers celebrations, where many teenagers channel their newfound independence into a wild week of parties and binge drinking.

A recent study, reported in *The West Australian*, revealed the degree to which annual Leavers celebrations are saturated with excessive drinking. As part of the study, teenagers were encouraged to anonymously share their Leavers' experiences.

"Alcohol was the joy maker, the medicine, the object of trade, the breakfast, lunch and tea, the dessert", one teenager said. "Basically, alcohol was all schoolies was."

Another teenager spoke of the 'intense' preparations for Leavers. "Three weeks before, a small group drove to the house and took a car full of alcohol."

But the roller-coaster ride of 'living young and wild and free' has a dark side, a warning in the fine print that many teenagers overlook.

In an average week, four Australians under 25 die due to alcohol related injuries and 70 are

hospitalised due to alcohol related assault. Alcohol is often cited as a major factor in cases of forced or unwanted sexual encounters. [www.drinkingnightmare.gov.au]

The medium and long term physical and mental health damage caused by alcohol – brain damage, cirrhosis of the liver, cancer, depression – are increasingly being seen in younger patients.

Trends show that these numbers have worsened significantly in the past decade for both males and females. And with binge drinking still celebrated among teenagers there appears little hope of improving these figures.

Yet we hold on to the hope we have.

Beyond the statistics, it is the real stories that drive me to communicate the vital message of a healthy relationship with alcohol to teenagers; like the 15 year old girl who began attending our church youth group having recently returned from a long stint of rehabilitation for alcohol abuse, or my 30 year old friend who struggles daily with the

effects of having spent half his life dependent on drink, and the car crash on my street that killed its teenage driver.

While most teenagers never end up in this place, binge drinking from an early age is the gateway to dependency for far too many. For others, just one night can change their life forever. Every life steered away from this course makes my role as a communicator worthwhile.

The responsibility to raise responsible teenagers is shared by many groups; parents, siblings, schools and youth groups to name a few.

How can we positively influence teenagers to reduce the harm of binge drinking? What approaches will help us to tackle this complex issue?

Education is vital. Teaching teenagers of the risks associated with binge drinking and guidelines for safe drinking is a good benchmark, but teaching moderation also comes with its challenges.

Cate Vose worked with at risk youth for a decade. She points to



drinking

research that suggests 'kids who are exposed to alcohol early in life by parents or other caregivers in an effort to model moderation and respect for alcohol, actually do their kids a disservice, as they are more likely to develop binge drinking or addiction to alcohol than kids who abstain until the age of 18.'

The issue, she explains, is that it is "exceedingly difficult for teenagers to develop a healthy 'moderation' attitude to alcohol. The way the teenage brain operates means that it is virtually impossible for young people to make good decisions about their own limits, safety plans and intimacy boundaries when intoxicated, or even before they are intoxicated."

Added to this is the issue of peer pressure. When Jill Stark gave up alcohol for a year in her mid-30s, she described peer pressure as one of the hardest aspects of her decision. At times she feigned pregnancy to get others to stop harassing her.

If this is the situation for many adults who choose to say 'no' to a drink, the peer pressure felt by a teenager in the same situation

must be overwhelming. It is a struggle to find their voice among the cries of 'go hard or go home'.

In light of this, I wonder if one strategy a parent might use to teach responsible drinking to their teenagers is to model how to say 'no' and stand by that decision. On one hand, if a teenager never sees her parents say 'no' to a drink that is offered to them, it is hard to imagine her saying 'no' to her friends when she is on the receiving end.

Alternatively, if a teenager grows up seeing their parents say 'no' for all the right reasons – moderation, responsible driving, etiquette – they may build the confidence required to take a similar stand when he is offered a drink.

Beyond education, I believe the most effective way to challenge the binge drinking culture among teenagers and promote a better relationship with alcohol is to pitch a vision of a better life.

In an initiative to counter this culture of excessive alcohol consumption is the Hello Sunday Morning movement. Participants

choose to give up alcohol for a set period of time in order to re-evaluate their relationship with alcohol and achieve some worthwhile goals. Instead of spending each Sunday morning hung-over, thousands of Australians have signed up to say 'hello' to Sunday morning and a better way of life.

Cate Vose connects this vision for a better life with the need for teenagers to channel their risk-taking behaviour in safe environments.

"We need to be teaching our kids how to take risks by getting them into nature and testing their physical limits; not by letting them go to parties and other contrived social settings where they are likely to take risks that may end up having long-term consequences."

Alan McGrechan changed his relationship with alcohol when he caught the vision of sharing the gospel among the Yawo people in Mozambique.

"Drinking alcohol is a big taboo for Muslims. Giving it up was something I could change to connect better in that context.

It was worth it, even on the days where I longed for a refreshing gin and tonic."

Since returning to Australia, Alan says "I realise now that just as alcohol can be a barrier to connection with Muslims, it can also hold people back from being the best version of themselves. These days I drink only on rare occasions and enjoy making every day count."

A vision of a better life beyond binge drinking can motivate teenagers to make better choices. As Christians, I believe we have the greatest vision to place before teenagers; the vision of a life with Jesus Christ participating in the work of His Kingdom.

When no news is the best news

Recently a reporter watched a presentation given by Baptist World Aid's Programs Manager for Africa, Steve Hamlin. Steve was showing pictures from his recent trip where he had met with Mount Kenya Anglican Development Services (ADS), a Christian partner working with communities susceptible to seasonal flood and drought events.

At first his slides seemed fairly uninteresting. They were pictures of Kenyan farmers pointing out strange dirt-terracing in their fields and admiring large holes that had recently filled with water. It was nothing much to look at. Steve talked about how ADS was 'really focusing' on their local disaster risk reduction programs. It was a little boring. There was not much in this sort of aid and development work to capture media attention any time soon.

Then, slowly, the point came clear for the reporter.

In other communities in Kenya, which have not been a part of Baptist World Aid funded ADS programs, there are lots of stories making front page news. Stories of hunger, drought, entire villages of men leaving in search of cash labouring jobs and children being taken out of school to work.

However, in communities undertaking ADS disaster risk reduction programs, there is little to report. As word spreads about the effect dirt-terracing has in stopping fertile topsoil erosion, local farmers are quietly transforming their land and increasing food yields. Families are coming together to help dig 'water pans' in locations where experts have shown them stormwater gathers.

It is not terribly newsworthy material, yet these changes are transforming lives in Kenya just as dramatically as plane loads of

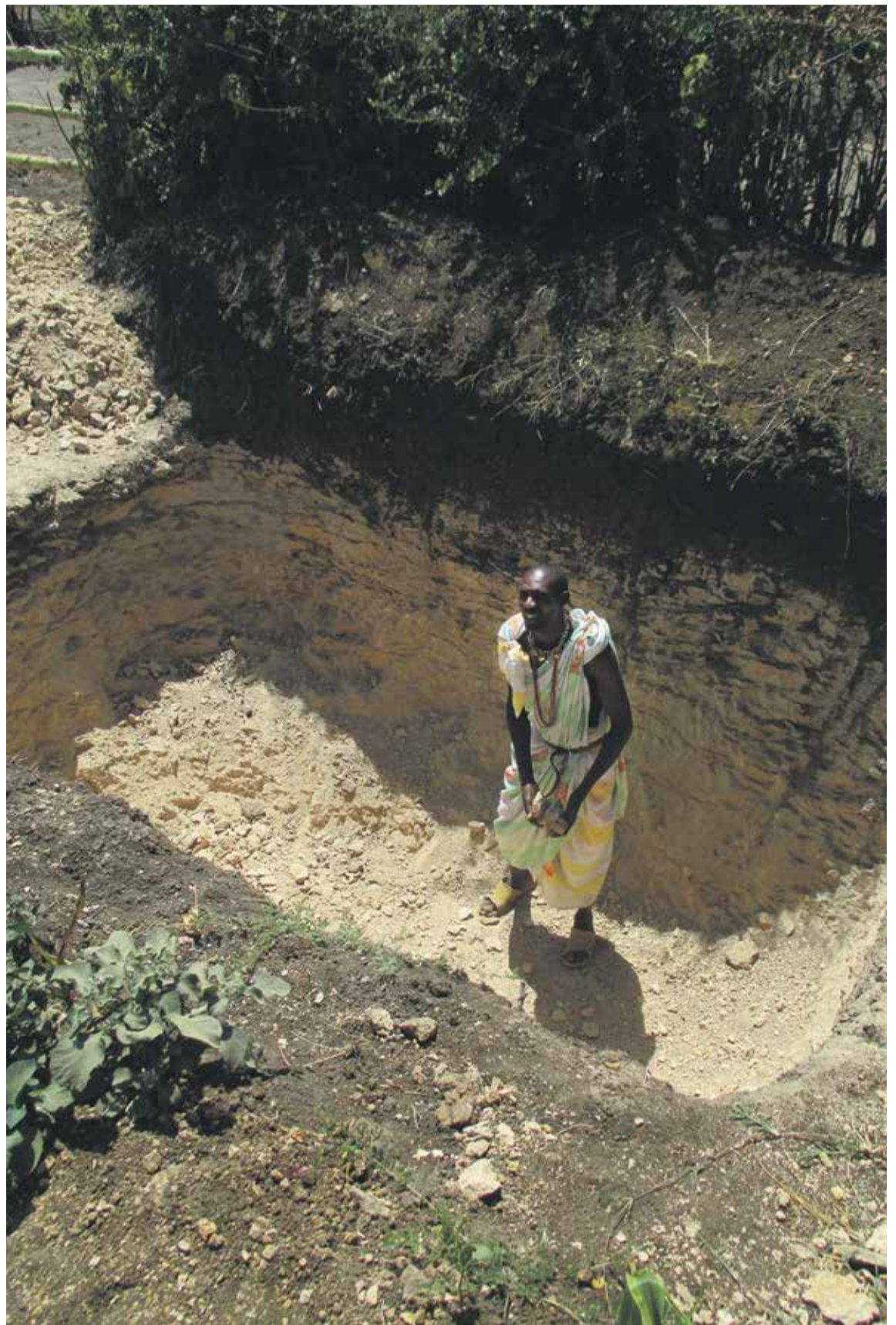
emergency supplies do in the wake of major disaster.

This is a problem with disaster risk reduction. It is so undramatic. It involves lots of talking with experts and community education. It is hard to photograph well and there are few heart-wrenching stories of 'survival'.

Disaster risk reduction programs are simply calm, well thought out plans which empower families living in poverty to build resilience so that in the event of an emergency, major intervention is not required. They are, in effect, a newsroom's worst nightmare as they build a world where poverty has ended and all people enjoy the fullness of life that God intends. Sadly, they are also very hard to raise funds for.

Baptist World Aid has a number of disaster risk reduction programs waiting to be rolled out in some of the most vulnerable communities around the world. The plans and experts are ready – all that is needed is people to commit to support this life-transforming work.

To help make every day a quiet news day without reports of mass casualties due to flood, mudslides or unseasonable weather, phone Baptist World Aid Australia on 1300 789 991.



A Kenyan farmer standing in a newly dug water catchment hole, a vital part of the disaster risk reduction program in his village.

Photo: Baptist World Aid Australia

international briefs

Lahore bombings

At least 17 people were killed and 80 others injured, as two churches in the main Christian district of Lahore, Pakistan, were attacked on 15 March. An Islamist group, Jamaat-ul-Ahrar, linked to the Pakistan Taliban, claimed responsibility. At least two of the young attackers blew themselves up – one at each church – when volunteer security guards, working with local police, confronted them at the entrances to the churches. The attacks were timed to cause maximum damage; more than 2,000 worshippers were present in the two churches for Sunday service. Prompt action by the Christian volunteers prevented

the attackers from entering the buildings.

Turkish TV

In a historic and unprecedented move, satellite television station SAT-7 TÜRK has begun broadcasting as the first Christian channel on the Turkish government-regulated satellite Türksat 4A, reaching more than 50 million viewers in Turkey, Europe and Central Asia. Until now, SAT-7 TÜRK has only shared satellite time on other SAT-7 channels and streamed 24/7 on the internet, reaching a limited audience. The government-regulated Türksat 4A is the most popular satellite with the largest audience in

Turkey. SAT-7 TÜRK can now reach millions of viewers in Turkey and Turkish-speaking viewers outside the country.

Assyrian Christians released

Media outlets report four Assyrian Christians, including a six year old girl, who were among a group of at least 220 Christians abducted by Daesh [Islamic State] from their villages in north-east Syria on 24 February, were released on 3 March. Their release follows that of 19 other Christians mid-March following a ruling by a sharia court. Over 200 Christians are still in captivity. According to the Syrian

Observatory for Human Rights, a Daesh religious court ruled on 28 February for the release of the 19 hostages in exchange for a sum of money paid for each family as tax for non-Muslims.

Attacks in India

Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW) reports attacks on Christian communities in India are increasing. During March a church under construction was demolished, a 72 year old nun was gang-raped by eight men, a group of 20 Christian missionaries from Hyderabad were detained by the Jaipur police and beaten while in custody, and churches have been vandalised. Prime

Minister Modi recently stated, "My government will not allow any religious group, belonging to the majority or the minority, to incite hatred against others, overtly or covertly. Mine will be a government that gives equal respect to all religions." CSW called on the PM to fulfill his promised to combat religious hatred and violence.

Plea for traffick free Easter

Consumers are being urged to investigate where their chocolate originates from this Easter and boycott brands who source cocoa using trafficked labour.

Chocolate industry workers on cocoa farms in Côte D'Ivoire (formerly known as Ivory Coast) reportedly include trafficked children and young people from Burkina Faso and other surrounding countries.

Stop the Traffik Australian Coalition claim it is not acceptable at Easter to eat chocolate Easter eggs that may be the direct cause of the human suffering that Jesus came to earth to overcome.

Côte D'Ivoire is the biggest producer of cocoa in the world. It was one of the first countries to have its debt forgiven but then the consequential demand lead to the removal of tariffs and operation in the open world market. To meet this demand the industry resorted to taking young trafficked boys to help plant and harvest the cocoa.

Until 2011 officials in Côte D'Ivoire denied any human trafficking. In early 2012 Madame Dominique Ouattara, the First Lady of Côte d'Ivoire, personally took on

the issue and is working to bring an end to human trafficking in the nation. Stop the Traffik Australian Coalition says she needs the support and prayers of Australians.

The chocolate industry has taken a long time to admit and then respond to human trafficking claims. Most chocolate manufactures have 'Cocoa Plans' and are starting to develop models that include education water and sanitation, with the aim of helping prevent trafficking.

Stop the Traffik Australian Coalition Director Carolyn Kitto said that these are steps in the right direction but there is a long way to go.

"Big chocolate companies and supermarkets still need our encouragement and to know that we will exercise our consumer power to support them in bringing change," Carolyn said.

Consumers can support activists like Madame Ouattara and farmers by being informed

about choices they make. Fairtrade, Rainforest Alliance or UTZ Certification advises shoppers that an audit has been done to check labour conditions. This is part of making chocolate traffick free.

"Although geographically far from West Africa, Australia is closely linked through the stomachs of the Australian people because of the amount of chocolate Australians consume – Australians have buying power," Carolyn said.

Stop the Traffik reports that Australians consume double the world average of chocolate per person.

"We can choose to buy chocolate that is certified," Carolyn said.

"In the Easter story Jesus has become the victor and Lord, even over our buying choices."

"We invite people to respond to human trafficking as followers of this God of generous love and grace who brings to the world a reality of freedom, love and life lived to the full."

For resources to help make Easter traffick free, visit www.stopthetraffik.org/au/traffikfree_easter



Photo: Stop the Traffik

Some of the children who now attend school with the help of Madame Dominique Ouattara, the First Lady of Côte D'Ivoire.

Malawi to ban child marriage



Photo: Jill Birt

Malawi girls will have a different future if President Peter Mutharika passes a new law.

Malawi is set to ban child marriage through new legislation that will increase the legal age of marriage from 15 to 18. This represents a major victory for girls in a country that has one of the highest rates of child marriage in the world.

According to the Girls Empowerment Network, Malawi, more than half of girls are married off as children, sometimes as early as the age of nine.

Child marriage is both the cause and consequence of grinding poverty, gender-based violence and the inescapable inequality that girls experience every day.

An orphan, Florence Mwase was sent by her aunt to a sexual initiation camp when she was 13 years old. She was forced to participate in the traditional practice of cleansing 'childhood dust' through forced sexual relations with an older man.

“... more than half of girls are married off as children ...”

When Florence returned from the camp, her aunt arranged her marriage to a 27 year old man. Two years later Florence was able to leave her marriage through the support of the Girls Empowerment Network, which is leading Malawi's fight for girls.

President Peter Mutharika is expected to sign the legislation into law and advocates are now developing strategies to ensure effective implementation of the new law.

This change to the national law will support the work of Global Interaction where their team is working among the Yawo people.

Bahamas focus for women

With domestic violence on the rise in the West Indies the focus of World Day of Prayer in March was on the plight of those in the Bahamas.

The idyllic Bahamas, a nation of 700 islands in the Caribbean with a laid-back culture of African, European, Hispanic and Asian influences may be a dream destination for well-heeled tourists but it can be a living nightmare for many of its families.

Bahamas government statistics show that domestic violence is on the increase in the Bahamas. In a culture that condones a man abusing his wife, women are often too embarrassed or frightened to report the violence, often seeking help from local churches.

The Bible Society in the West Indies conducts a successful program to recognise the signs and symptoms of domestic violence and help stop the abuse in Jamaica.

A similar project to provide support to victims of domestic violence in conjunction with local churches and the Bahaman Ministry of Justice was

supported by offerings at this year's World Day of Prayer.

“In a culture that condones a man abusing his wife, women are often too embarrassed or frightened to report the violence ...”

The World Day of Prayer started as an interdenominational call to prayerful action by American and Canadian women in 1926. Today it embraces more than 170 countries. In Australia women met in more than 1,000 locations to worship and pray together.

Planting churches

Philip Bryant is Church Health Consultant with Baptist Churches Western Australia. He is passionate about building the church through planting new churches.

You've recently returned from a church planting conference. Tell us about that.

Crossover is our national Baptist group comprised of representatives from each state. Each person in a Baptist church in Australia is encouraged to give through the annual Easter appeal so that Crossover can 'Help Australian Baptists share Jesus'. In order to do this, Crossover has three strategies – evangelism, church revitalisation and church planting.

Each year Crossover sponsors a National Church Planting Consultation bringing together practitioners and pastors of established churches from each state based on the state's size and giving to the appeal. Together we share what is happening and work through how to best tackle the many issues that are involved in church planting.

What did you hear at the conference that excited you?

This year it was exciting to hear about the range of models of church planting that are happening across the country. To meet church planters from the front line and work with them on the issues that they are facing. To see the common threads within the models. It is exciting to be with people who understand that the church is first and foremost centred on Jesus. To see their compassion for those who do not know Jesus. To see the enormous sacrifices that they are prepared to make in order to share Jesus with the community that God has called them to.

Andrew Turner from South Australia was very thought provoking and challenging as he shared from his book *Fruitful Church*. Andrew's words are not new, but he speaks in a fresh and engaging way from the Bible about how just as the purpose of fruit is to multiply – that's why they have seeds – so the purpose of any church and individual Christians is to multiply.

You've had some personal experience in planting churches and you coach church planters in WA. Why do you think church planting is important?

Wow. A number of reasons. Primarily it fulfils the Great Commission. No matter from what angle you examine church planting, if the purpose is to reach those outside the Kingdom of God, then it is the most effective

and fruitful way of achieving that. We live in a country that is growing rapidly and has moved away from the Christian faith. We need churches to reach the dozens and dozens of people groups whom God is bringing to our shores. But we also need new churches to reach the millions who are born in this country. We need new expressions of church to reach the myriads of cultures that exist in Australia.

What value is church planting to the church at large?

Sadly, many of our established churches have moved away from their original primary focus of sharing Jesus and are now focused on serving and fulfilling their own needs. These churches come in all shapes and sizes – small, medium and large. Some are sleeping giants – they may even be growing, involved in overseas mission, but they have forgotten the mission field around them and have become more like a club, providing great service for their members and attracting other believers to join and enjoy their services to children, youth etc.

Church planting can wake the giant and shake out its 'serve us' mentality. Research has shown that when an established church has intentionally planted a new church the trend is that both grow. I have seen this happen time and time again across the country and around the world during my 30 years involvement in church planting.

There are many ways to plant a church. Tell us about a couple of innovative ideas you heard about from other states of Australia.

In Balmoral, Queensland, Julie Williams was set aside by her church to plant a church in the building of a church that had died. She examined her community, redecorated the church building and opened a 'Coffee and Kids' shop. Many from outside the church have become Christians and they are in the process of working out what God wants worship to be like for that group.

There is a movement in Queensland from the large churches. Queensland have the largest number of churches with over 1,000 attendees compared to other states. Encouraged by the senior pastor of the Bridgeman Baptist Community Church, the large church senior

pastors have committed to planting churches. Most use the multi-campus model. It is a significant step that is setting the example for other churches to follow using a variety of models.

What's happening in Western Australia?

We have a variety of church plants and models. Right now a group of churches are looking at the areas in Banksia Grove, Alkimos and the Yanchep-Two Rocks area. Jules Birt has commenced a work in Armadale and is also looking at starting a group in Boddington. Jill Birt is planting a church for the 457 visa workers on the café strip in Victoria Park. There are many cross-cultural churches who are aggressively church planting. My belief is that every established church should be inviting or planting a cross-cultural church to meet in their premises, or be another congregation of the church.

Later this year WA will be running its first 'Inspire Conference', bringing together church planters from across the state to learn together and be encouraged in their church planting situations. These conferences are currently held in every state.

There are some new books on church planting written by Aussies. What would you suggest someone interested in church planting might benefit from reading?

Andrew Turner's *Fruitful Church* is an excellent book

that brings the focus on church planting. I am about to publish a book – I'm still working with editors and publishers on a title. There is not much written by Australians but Martin Robinson and Stuart Christine from the UK and Ed Stetzer from the US have written helpful books. Ed Stetzer through LifeWay publications in cooperation with a group of Australians, including myself, has put together a very helpful tool to assist Australians in assessing a person's potential as a church planter. Anyone interested can talk to me about this tool.

How do you see prayer fitting into the whole concept of church planting?

Prayer should be all through the process, from prior to committing to a church plant, throughout all the stages and the whole life span of the church. Sponsor churches should commence praying before planting, continue praying and praying. This can be in a variety of ways. My hunch is that if we spent more time praying then more of our churches would be healthy and more church planting would occur. I am not saying planning should not be done – but I am saying that a lot more praying should be done.

What is a pitfall you've seen church planting teams fall into and how can it be avoided?

The main pitfalls are: Doing and not praying. Not realising the gradual drift of the church to focusing on programs rather than the people in the programs. Not realising the drift to becoming a 'serve us' church rather than

service church – consumer mentality. Not having a clear God given mission and purpose, and focusing on it to the exclusion of the many good ideas that are out there. Not being a church who make disciples who make disciples – reproducing and multiplying.

Who can people talk with in the Baptist Ministry Centre about church planting?

That's me. I would love to come and talk with pastors and leaders about the possibilities and 'how to' of church planting. Give me a call on 08 6313 6300.



Photo: Matt Chapman

Woodvale Baptist Church

requires a
**Children's Ministry
Director**

**2 days / week (initially)
with proven teaching
ability, love for children
and ability to lead /
support others in
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Info: colin@wbcinc.org.au or
(08) 9309 4044

Applications:
"Children's Ministry"
Woodvale Baptist Church,
67 Woodvale Drive,
WOODVALE 6026.

Closing 30th April 2015

Is your environment holding you back? – Part 1

By John Maxwell

When I was much younger, I found myself in a job situation where the environment wasn't conducive to growth.

This frustrated and discouraged me. I had always been focused on growth and improvement. From basketball as a kid to speaking professionally, I was always looking for ways to get better at what I was doing. I might not have always had an official plan for growth, but I was continually pursuing growth. Now I found myself in a place where growth was not just ignored; the environment discouraged it.

Maybe you've found yourself in a similar situation. Back then, I could see clearly all around me what a growth environment didn't look like. But one day, I realised that I had never really thought about what a growth environment did look like. What were the characteristics of that environment? I was eager to figure it out, so I could go in search of one. So I created a list of characteristics to look for in any environment, so that I could be sure it was a place where I could grow. This is what I wrote:

In a growth environment,

1. Others are ahead of you.

Is it possible to grow in isolation? Sure, but not as fast as you can grow with others, and growth happens even more when at least some of the people are ahead of you on the journey. In a growth environment, the accomplishments of those ahead of you encourage and challenge you to do more than you thought you could.

2. You are continually challenged.

It's one thing to be challenged by the growth of others. That will certainly help you grow, but it's even better when the job or task itself is challenging. When is the last time a boring job made you want to grow?

3. Your focus is forward.

'Yesterday ended last night.' This is what leaders of growth environments believe. They are more interested in conquering the next challenge than worrying about the past.



4. The atmosphere is affirming.

My parents used to say, "You catch more flies with honey than you do with vinegar." In other words, in a growth environment, the leader understands that being positive yields better results than negativity. Being affirmed feels good, and it gives you the courage to stretch and grow more.

5. You are often out of your comfort zone.

I've often said that you should stay in your strength zone, but get out of your comfort zone. The skills that you focus on growing should be areas where you have some natural ability, as opposed to trying to shore up weaknesses. But that doesn't mean you should be comfortable. Getting out of your comfort zone happens when

you've taken on a challenge that's bigger than you; and that bigger challenge yields bigger rewards.

Next month John Maxwell will discuss the remaining five characteristics he has identified.

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Be full of resolve

By Monica O'Neil

The wheelbarrow tyre is pumped and the load is piled in. The hill ahead is a good size and promises a struggle, but the reason for pushing this barrow up the hill is a good one, maybe even a great one.

The brow of the hill is visible, at least in our mind's eye and yet that wonderful point of 'Yahoo!' is still an undetermined distance away and the gradient keeps shifting. Sometimes the push is uphill and sometimes it is just a push. At times the weight increases and at other times a reprieve comes our way as some load disappears. Either way, pushing is still required. The weight is real and the gradient is felt.

The sun may beat down or shine gently. The rain may patter refreshingly on our

glistening muscles or turn to sleet and drive ice into our face. Interesting and apparently wonderful side paths call out, beckoning a short diversion, a shift to a different path, a different barrow, a little nap in the grass perhaps.

The journey to a better place is what leadership is all about. Influencing, arranging, provoking and calling out the resourcefulness of those on the journey is leadership at work. That work can be hard, really hard. To the onlooker it can seem powerful or even

glamorous, but the reality is that it is hard work to lead. And it takes a steely resolve to see through anything of value.

Resolve is what we need in bucket loads – or barrowfuls—to make our great journey towards a better home, neighbourhood, workplace, church or club. Peter Kaldor and John McLean in their fine book *Lead with your Strengths: Making a Difference Wherever You Are* describe resolve as the determination to stay on course when things get difficult, or in the face of competing demands.

Others call it grit; it requires staring down uncertainty and fear, and pushing past fatigue to achieve a personal or group best.

Can we develop this marvellous stare-it-down resolve? Of course we can. Some people seem born with good doses of it, but we all have capacity for it. Anyone can build resolve.

Embrace the challenge.

Love where you are going and the discipline it will take to get there. Develop a demeanour of hopefulness that does not mind hard work.

Break it up. Getting a loaded barrow up a hill is a series of steps. There will be markers along the way that you can create and strive towards.

Resist the distractions. When you are tired, achy and covered in blisters, you will be tempted to start a different venture or simply to run away. Don't.

Stay resourceful. It was always going to take more than you have but God has placed resources around you. So find the knowledge, the coaching, the extra team and the partners and keep moving towards your preferred future.

Resolve. Be full of it.



Monica O'Neil is the Director of Vose Leadership.

A minute with ...



Photo: Jill Birt

Ellenbrook Baptist Church Senior Pastor
Aashish Parmar

What led you to this role?

My wife and I were blessed to have had our first years of ministry in the Goldfields. We then felt God leading us to the community in Ellenbrook. The area resonated with our hearts – a relatively new suburb with the opportunity to join a passionate community of believers living to point our neighbourhood to Jesus.

Where is the church located?

In the gym at Ellenbrook Christian College at 5 Santona Boulevard, Ellenbrook.

What time are services held?

Sundays at 9.30am.

How and when did the church start?

Ellenbrook Baptist Church (EBC) was planted by a passionate group of people in 1998. Beechboro Baptist Church was the sending church and the small group began to grow. It officially launched as EBC in 1999.

Who makes up the ministry team?

This year we moved from a sole pastor church and the ministry team now consists of Glenn and Leanne Whitfield (Associate Pastors), Nadine Whitehead (Children's Ministry Director), Geoff and Anne Atkinson (Administration and Pastoral Care respectively) and I.

What is a feature of your church or ministry you'd like to share?

This year we have embarked on an exciting journey as we begin planning for a physical church home. A building team has been assembled with the task of identifying options for EBC to have a building for ministry, mission, worship and administration.

A final thought ...

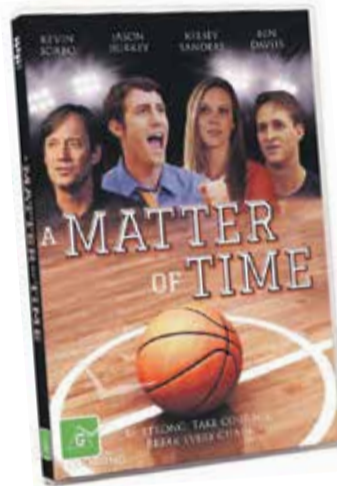
With prayerful hearts, we are stepping into the future with a great vision, a new set of strategic values and a greater desire to reach our community for Christ.

listen

Lead Us Back: Songs of Worship
Third Day

After seeing them live in concert in February I was really excited to hear Third Day's new album. What an inspiring collection of songs that point the way back to God, reigniting our passion for Him and His purpose in our lives. The Deluxe edition's second disc has live renditions of a number of songs from the *Soul On Fire* album and others, for example, 'Your Love is Like a River'. Lift your spirit to a new level through the inspiring songs on *Lead Us Back*.

watch



A Matter of Time

How do we cope with a broken heart? For the main character in *A Matter of Time* you run away and try to bury it. But anyone who has been around for a little while knows that it is only a matter of time before it surfaces and begins to create problems for you. Nathan follows in the footsteps of his father only to find that there is no peace or satisfaction. He really must go back and confront the pain he was hiding from to enable him to move on with his life and grow into the man and writer he aspires to be. A moving story of something we all face as we journey through life. This movie points the way to the benefits of forgiveness and facing the pain we would so love to avoid, to allow us to move on with our lives.

read



New Spirit-Filled Life Bible

Looking for a Bible to help you understand the Word and bring depth to your study? The *New Spirit-Filled Life Bible* is available in the New King James Version, New International Version and New Living Translation. It has a detailed introduction to each book of the Bible, giving contextual background and how to see Christ revealed in the book, as well as some other great information. Throughout the Bible not only will you receive commentary, you will also have the Word opened and revealed through 'Word Wealth' – notes to reveal original words and their meanings – and 'Kingdom Dynamics' and 'Truth in Action' – to explain Kingdom values on how to practically live your life. An all-round, brilliant study Bible to help seekers gain a greater understanding of God's Word.

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KOORONG

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



Quinns Baptist College – Quinns Rocks
Kindergarten to Year 12 www.qbcol.com.au

Students from Quinns Baptist College in Perth's northern suburbs are learning some life changing lessons through the opportunities they have to engage with their community.

Their stories reflect a strong desire to serve people and grow as people as they do that.

Open ocean challenges



Photo: Tracey Quick

Quinns Baptist College students ready to face the experience of swimming competitively in the ocean.

By Lee Dennis (Year 11)

The participation of Quinns Baptist College in the open ocean swimming challenges over the past three years has generated enormous excitement throughout the College.

This year 33 students, teachers and staff members participated in the Busselton Jetty Swim and nine students in the Rottneet Channel Swim – double the participants of 2014. The increase in numbers is due largely to the encouragement from swimming coach, Mr Bower, and the addition of new students who wish to represent the school and step out of their comfort zone.

Swimming training every Friday morning at Quinns Beach was an experience in itself as we prepared for the

unknown conditions of open water swimming. We had to overcome enormous mental and physical challenges.

As the events drew nearer our levels of anticipation intensified, as did our concerns about weather and ocean conditions.

As swimmers we appreciated the huge support from staff, parents and students. Our boat skippers, crews and paddlers all did an amazing job on the day, making it possible for us to overcome the rough weather, seasickness, stingers, cold, big swells and fatigue. Many of the reports on the 2015 swim indicated that it was one of the 'worst years'. We are especially proud of Sam Smoothy for completing the first solo crossing for the College.

I encourage students to enrol and represent the College in this once in a lifetime opportunity.

Community and compassion



Photo: Quinns Baptist College

One of the Quinns Baptist College teams that had the experience of volunteering at an orphanage in Bali.

By Sam Randall (Year 12)

Over the past three years, more than \$10,000 has been raised to fund general maintenance and provide food to orphans and leaders at an orphanage in Bali.

This is due to a dramatic cultural change at Quinns Baptist College, a commitment to a more Christ-like approach when it comes to how we think of others in our community.

Through a number of activities and events during

the year, we are encouraged to consider those less fortunate than ourselves and to make a real difference in our wider community.

One of the major initiatives has been the partnership between Quinns Baptist Church and the College to raise funds to support the orphanage in Bali. Events such as bake sales, sausage sizzles, basketball shootouts, selling hot chocolate, movie nights and 'Bali Week' were well supported by the College community and contributed to the funds raised.

Two Quinns Baptist College teams travelled to Bali to live with the orphans for a week, where they played various games and assisted the orphans with their schoolwork. It was amazing and an experience each person will carry with them for life.

Other aspects of the College community and compassion culture include our sponsor child in Uganda, donating blood for the Red Cross, supporting World Vision and other charitable organisations. The College is making a real difference in our world.

Energy, drama – Hairspray

By Zane Balodis (Year 11)

Ecstatic at the announcement of *Hairspray* as the 2015 Quinns Baptist College musical production, the students could not contain their excitement.

Many of the students have a real passion for drama, music and dance, which was evident at the auditions where over a quarter of the school attempted to score a role. Incredible talent was showcased throughout the auditions and students waited in expectation until the final cast members for the show were selected.

This was only the prelude to months and months of hard work as the dedicated cast and crew prepared for the fast approaching presentation nights early

in Term 2. There has been tremendous energy and enthusiasm throughout the school as the rehearsals have kicked into full swing with cast members going through their parts virtually every afternoon.

The diverse culture of the school has really helped breathe life and energy into the show which has a focus on equality. Excitement has built as the sets take shape, and the lighting and sound technicians display more and more of what promises to be an amazing sensory spectacle. The drama, dance and music teachers have all been directing and bringing the whole show together.

The staff and students are thrilled and excited to be presenting this musical and think it will be a memorable experience for all.

Fishtail coming to Perth



Photo: Jesus Racing

People can see the Jesus Racing V8 Ute at Barbagallo Raceway in May.

Andrew 'Fishtail' Fisher is once again bringing the Jesus Racing V8 Ute to Perth for the 2015 Perth SuperSprint at Barbagallo Raceway in early May.

Andrew has raced for nearly 15 years in a variety of motorsport categories but it was the decision to place 'Jesus' on his car instead of seeking corporate sponsorship that has seen the major paradigm shift in his racing.

"Being a Christian I am obviously always questioning how 'real' my faith is and how I live it out in my life every day," Andrew said.

"I was thinking of putting a fish [Christian symbol] on the back of the ute or having a 'Christian' nickname and my wife, Annie challenged me to advertise the 'Jesus. All about Life' Bible Society campaign on the ute."

Jesus Racing also races a Ford Falcon XYGT HO in the Touring Car Masters series, but Andrew will not be bringing the Falcon to Perth on this trip.

The Touring Car Masters series has a much stronger grass roots following in Australia with many racing legends of the industry competing. Being part of the series has already provided great value in terms of credibility of the Jesus Racing team and another opportunity to challenge paradigms by bringing the name of Jesus to more people.

As well as having a strong passion for motor racing, Andrew is a dedicated follower of Jesus. Jesus Racing brings together these two passions.

"Little did I realise that Jesus Racing would become what it

is today. It's so much more than what happens on the track," Andrew said.

While the Jesus Racing team is in Perth, Andrew will speak at several public high schools as part of Andrew's Life Choices program.

As part of the program Andrew shares a powerful story about his daughter who was born with half a heart – Hypoplastic Left Heart Syndrome. His openness to discuss the tough decisions he and his wife Annie have had to make creates an amazing connection with students. He ties his story and the hard

decisions that they had to make into the 'courageous decisions' that students will need to make in regards to some of life's most important decisions.

“
Being a
Christian I
am obviously
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”

Facts, statistics and multimedia around the topics of smoking, drinking, drugs, social media, teenage sex and speeding as well as faith are present by Andrew to the students. The program challenges students to have the courage to stop and think through the consequences of their choices before they make them.

Andrew will also be speaking at men's outreach events, including a men's breakfast at Maida Vale Baptist Church on Saturday 9 May.

Jesus Racing is sponsored by the Bible Society and various corporate partners who advertise on the vehicle as well as people who contribute what they can to see the ministry continue.

"I want to bring the name of Jesus to people who wouldn't normally get to hear about Him, be that at a racetrack, via television or at school," Andrew said.

"My focus is to challenge the stereotype of a Christian as a 'fun-sucker' – after all, Jesus came that we may have life and life to the full."

Individuals can join the Jesus Racing Impact Club at www.jesusracing.com.au



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