

The Real Australian



*Building God's Kingdom
across Australia*

Serving the Lord on Kangaroo Island 4

An exciting time of growth 5

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Cover Photo:

Easter Sunday at the 'claypits' on the lake in Jindabyne

“YES! That is exactly what I think too.”

It doesn't always happen, but sometimes I find myself almost cheering as I progress from one paragraph to the next when reading an article. The steady exclamations of agreement get louder and more pronounced until reaching the final full stop when I sit back in my chair and declare, “YES! That is exactly what I think too”.

That was my experience when I read the article reprinted with permission in this edition of *The Real Australian* (see page 12). Again, in my humble opinion, Gary O'Brien nails it when he speaks about “Builders” and “Inheritors.”

I suspect there are a few reasons why this article grabbed me. It could be that I have lead churches that could fall into either category. It could be that I have had numerous conversations similar to the ones that Gary retells. It could also be that it was the Spirit of the Living God challenging my own selfish desires.

What I do know is that in my role with BCA, this is a live issue, with many of the churches we support needing builders. If you have already read the article I refer to, you know it doesn't speak of carpenters and plumbers. Rather it speaks of those who take seriously the challenge of Jesus to be servants (Mark 10:42–45).

I am looking for those who are willing to lay aside ‘all the ministry bells and whistles’ and go, go to build up the saints in rural, regional, and remote parts of Australia. It is a rare occurrence in such places to find a church or ministry where you will inherit a full-time specialist team. But what you will find in many places are opportunities to equip all the saints to be part of a team in the biblical sense (Ephesians 4).

As you read the article in this edition, I wonder if it will challenge your choices and motives like it did mine? I wonder if it will even challenge our support of BCA and drive us to prayer? Will you find yourself getting to the end and saying “YES! That is exactly what I think too”.

Greg Harris
National Director



I am looking for those who are willing to lay aside ‘all the ministry bells and whistles’ and go, go to build up the saints in rural, regional, and remote parts of Australia

Serving the Lord on Kangaroo Island



It was just over nine years ago that God opened the door and put the need for consistent, longer-term ministry on Kangaroo Island on our hearts and we've been here ever since. It has been such a privilege to serve God on the Island. We love it when we can spend time enjoying the beauty of creation on the Island and are also really thankful for the people we've become close to and share our lives with.

My primary role on Kangaroo Island has been as a shepherd of God's people, caring for, and encouraging them in the gospel. I am also that public face of ministry which means people who don't yet know Jesus know where to go when they have questions about Jesus, life, the universe, and everything. Joh's primary role has been ministering through her psychology practice.

We have two church buildings at Penneshaw and Kingscote. Our traditional Sunday services alternate between the centres in the mornings and our Family Church contemporary gathering is run each week in the afternoons in Kingscote.

I also am that public face of ministry which means people who don't yet know Jesus know where to go when they have questions about Jesus, life, the universe, and everything

This 4pm Family Church service began with a few people in 2015 with attendees from right across the age range but has more appeal to the under 50s, and those with children still at home. While the service is for all ages and stages, we have deliberately included fun kids' songs and a more interactive sermon. We have a discussion time following the sermon which gives the opportunity for people to raise questions and hear what God is saying to one another. I think the relaxed feel of the service (including a level of noisiness that isn't always accepted at a traditional service) has meant people feel welcome. And after the service we share dinner together – somehow God always provides enough through His people which is essential. It means that those who could have driven for up to an hour to attend, can get home with the kids more or less

ready for bed.

The 2019/2020 bushfires caused so much devastation on Kangaroo Island and while there has been much progress, there is still a long way to go. Mental health and well-being issues still touch many lives and



there is a sense of fatigue across some of the Island. Our parish has been a conduit to bring funds from various donors to increase well-being initiatives in Parndana and through the school community there. We have also been praying for and delivering marriage enrichment materials and gifts to bushfire-affected families.

There are so many encouraging things about serving with BCA on Kangaroo Island. People on the Island have been engaging with God and the Bible through personal contact with us, in groups, and in courses. Recent encouragements have been a very successful Grace Conference (women's event) and a combined Pentecost Service with other denominations on the Island. Many people from across the churches, and people not yet committed to any church, joined in for both events – Praise God. We also continue to be so encouraged thanks to BCA supporters from right around the country who make contact with us and pray for us.

We would appreciate your continued prayers for our family. May God grant us a good balance between stability at home, ministry work and extra-curricular activities as we conclude our ministry on the Island. Please pray for us as we bid farewell to our church and wider community after so many

years here. Please also pray for the people of Kangaroo Island still working through bushfire recovery, and for opportunities for us to love, support, and minister the good news in the time we have left.

Brad Henley

The Henleys are moving to Queensland's Sunshine Coast where Brad has accepted the role of Associate Minister at the Anglican Church of Noosa.

Above L-R: Evangeline enjoying Christmas celebrations; Jemima joined Brad up the front for the first time leading worship at Family Church; at the nursing home running *mainly music* for 1 to 101-year-olds; kids getting involved in church; playing games on the lawn at the Light Party hosted on Halloween celebrating the Light of the world

Below: The Henley Girls – Evangeline, Gabriella and Jemima with Angus



An exciting time of growth



The McGrath family

Trent & Alice McGrath, together with their children Henry, Siena and Maisie have been serving the people of Jindabyne for more than a year and a half. It has been an exciting time of growth since they planted a new church in the alpine village.

We love living in the snowy mountains; there is so much that's good about living in a beautiful rural area. The simplicity of knowing that 'this is all we have' helps us appreciate everything that God has placed around us more, including feeling more connected to the community. We love skiing and the snow season but also appreciate everything the region has to offer all year round.

My primary role as a pastor/teacher has been to establish new Anglican gatherings and serve the people wanting to connect into them. By God's grace, we established The Village Church (TVC) in October last year and have been joyfully growing together in faith, love, and service.

Currently we have one gathering at 5pm each Sunday and a variety of different prayer meetings and informal dinners throughout the week. Our Sunday gatherings try to embody a grace-filled, family-friendly vibe, which is overtly gospel-centred. We've recently had to shift into a mix of live-in-person and connections through Zoom, and we're seeing between 30–50 people on any given week, which includes a great bunch of children and youth.

Easter this year was special, I mean it always is, but for us it was TVC's first Easter together and it was full – full of joy, full of people, full of thankfulness for the



Easter Sunday 2021

death of Christ for sin on our behalf! We had an incredible meal together on Good Friday and then gathered with the broader community at what's called the 'Claypits', down by the lake on a glorious Sunday morning. I had the privilege of preaching the credibility of the resurrection of Jesus to some 230 people. I guess it put us on the map as a new church.

A major encouragement for us has been the visits we've had from our Regional Officer Ted Brush. It's important to feel connected and supported and his visits help.

"One of the popular perceptions of rural and remote Australia is that, by and large, the population is in decline as more and more people, particularly younger generations, are moving to regional towns and large cities," says Ted Brush. "While that is happening, in some towns the opposite is true – Jindabyne is one of these. A major gateway to the snow, at least in NSW, Jindabyne has long had a seasonal influx of those either heading for a snow holiday, or those working in the various service industries around snow sports and tourism. In more recent years, mountain biking in the warmer months has added its

I had the privilege of preaching the credibility of the resurrection of Jesus to some 230 people. I guess it put us on the map as a new church

influence to the tourist and service industry population. As a consequence, Trent & Alice's ministry in Jindabyne is incredibly strategically placed, bringing more sound gospel ministry into the town of Jindabyne at a critical time in the community's history. Working alongside other churches, and with Christians already living there, The Village Church has unique gospel opportunities."

"For me, as Trent & Alice's Regional Officer, this is a very exciting ministry that, God willing, will make a huge difference for the gospel. It's a great privilege to serve alongside them and serve them by praying, encouraging and spending time with them, and helping others support and encourage them as I visit

churches Sunday by Sunday and share about their work."

We are so thankful for all the prayers we are receiving and ask that you would continue to pray for our church to keep fixing our eyes on Jesus, love one another, and grow in missional intentionality.

**Trent McGrath
& Ted Brush**



Trent preaching



Kids spot in church

An Indigenous Christian View of Reconciliation



We have just celebrated two important events in the life of our country: that of Reconciliation and NAIDOC week.

Most people I know celebrate because it is the thing to do. Many are influenced by the wider community, and while there is nothing wrong with celebrating reconciliation, the church's focus should be on promoting a biblical understanding of reconciliation. This reconciliation says we can be one because of the work of grace done in the life of a person (or individual) by God.

Biblical reconciliation levels the playing field. In Christ, all people are viewed as sinners in need of saving. In Romans 3:23, Paul writes to the church in Rome, *For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.* Every person that has ever lived has a sinful nature, without exception. Sin affects the whole human race. Not even the Jews, God's chosen people, are without sin.

Sin separates us from God. A picture of this is depicted in Genesis 3 when Adam and Eve were removed from the garden and the presence of God because of their disobedience.

Prior to that removal, mankind experienced a sense of oneness with God –

meaning that there was no division. Once sin entered, a separation took place.

The rest of the Bible is a story of how God was going to reverse this sin problem.

In Genesis 4 we see sins increasing upon the earth and this resulted in a flood in chapter 7. Only Noah, his wife, three sons and their wives were saved. After the flood waters subsided and they came out of the ark, they were instructed to multiply and replenish the earth. They were disobedient and stayed in the one place. They built the tower we know to be called Babel. It was here that God came down and confused the languages of the people which caused them to disperse across the world.

When we turn to Genesis 12, we see the call of Abraham. God was going to address the problem of sin through Abraham's offspring. It would be through his line that the nations of the world would be blessed. It is possible to trace this lineage from Abraham through to the arrival of the Messiah. Matthew's gospel has a genealogy that outlines the lineage.

It is through Christ that we can be made right with God. It is through Christ that barriers are broken down.

Reconciliation from a biblical perspective says, it's not what I do for you or what

you do for me that makes us one, it is what Christ has done for both of us. It is the removal of human influence that makes us one. It was God in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. (2 Corinthians 5:19).

Paul, in writing to the believers at Colossae says, *Here there is no Gentile or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.* (Colossians 3:11 NIV11-GK).

A relationship with God is possible by believing in God's son. God by His grace places within us faith – faith in the finished work of the cross of Christ resulting in us being right with Him.

There is no division in the body of Christ when it comes to God's people.

Just one other point, reconciliation does not necessarily mean unity. The disciples were one because of their relationship with Jesus but they were not always unified.

We are to be ambassadors for Christ. Telling people about Jesus. It is believing in the work of the cross of Christ that we can have a relationship and a right standing before Him and with others.

Reconciliation is a positional truth. Reconciliation places us in the body of Christ and our standing before Him is the same as everyone else.

Neville Naden

Facing page: The missions committee at Camden Haven Anglican Church who support BCA and are linked with the Harradines – a picture of the body of Christ at work.

Below: Training done in Gilgandra where Aboriginal & non-Aboriginal people did some Bible learning together, supported by BCA.

While there is nothing wrong with celebrating reconciliation, the church's focus, should be on promoting a biblical understanding of reconciliation. This reconciliation says we can be one because of a work of grace done in the life of person by God



Norfolk Island – a great place to enjoy creation



Enjoying the Norfolk Island lifestyle

It was Australia Day 2015 when David & Crystal Fell arrived on Norfolk Island with three small children in tow. They depart nearly seven years later with a huge amount of sadness but also joy for the blessings they have experienced.

We were happily serving at St Matt's Manly when we read an article about Norfolk Island in the Sydney Anglican publication *Southern Cross*. It was essentially a 'Macedonian Call' from the church here. We had a growing conviction that our next location should be somewhere less reached and resourced. It was mid-2014 and we thought 2018 sounded like a good time to make a move. That would give us a few years to enjoy life and ministry in Manly and grow towards what seemed like such a big change. But I was told that if we didn't go very soon, the future of the church couldn't be guaranteed. If a church closes in the suburbs, you can always go to the one down the road. If a church closes on an island, that may affect Christian witness for generations. As we came to understand this, we couldn't in good conscience do anything else!

When we arrived, there were no children at all, in any church on the Island. Now there is a Sunday School, a Kids Club and a Youth Group, as well as a Combined Churches Children's and Youth Minister...

Norfolk Island is a great place to enjoy creation, it has breathtaking scenery and a unique culture (with an intriguing past). We enjoy living in a small community where everyone knows (and relies) on everyone else. It has also afforded us many opportunities for friendship and recreation – as an Anglican minister where else would I get to play drums in a cover band!?

As well as caring for the church, an

important part of my role is to preach evangelistically to the 30+ tourists who visit our services each week! Like any ministry we lead Bible Studies, help to run the Kids Club and Youth Group, and teach SRE. I also have a 10-minute weekly radio spot on Sunday mornings, a regular column in the local newspaper, am the Chaplain to Anglicare and run a stripped back morning prayer service with hymn singing at Dar Randah (the aged care wing of our hospital).

We have two ministry centres: the Bishop Patterson

Memorial Chapel (St Barnabas Chapel) and All Saints Kingston in the convict precinct. At St Barnabas we have a parish hall and play area, and it's here we hold playgroups, youth groups and morning tea after church.

At the moment we hold a service of Morning Prayer at the Chapel as well as a service of 1662 Evening Prayer, together with a sing-along of Norfolk Island and Pitcairn hymns. Since the beginning of the pandemic, we have also held a mid-week Holy Communion service.

Crystal and I have been involved in a number of community groups (in Crystal's case the Banyan Park Pre School and in my case the P&C at Norfolk Island Central School).

I also connect at touch football, act in the local amateur theatre group and as I already mentioned, play drums in a cover band! Another of the special ways that we have connected with the community is playing the role of Mr & Mrs Stewart on Bounty Day. Mr Stewart was the Commissariat storeman who stayed on to welcome the Pitcairners in 1856. This role involves judging the 'family of the year' and also the winner of the beard contest!

During our time here we have been most encouraged by the growth in our children's and youth ministry. When we arrived, there were no children at all, in any church on the Island. Now there is a Sunday School, a Kids Club and a Youth Group, as well as a Combined Churches Children's and Youth Minister supported by the Ministers Fraternal.

Pray for Greg Harris and Bishop Michael Stead as they appoint the next Chaplain and family to serve the Church of England on Norfolk Island. Please also pray for us as we grieve leaving a community who have loved us and whom we have loved. God willing, we will take long service in Term 4 2021.

David Fell

Top to bottom:

David performing in Norfolk Island's amateur theatre group; David & Crystal as Mr & Mrs Stewart on Bounty Day with Marigold & Rector's Warden David Buffett as Captain Denham; David outside All Saints Kingston; Crystal and the kids leading the kids' song at All Saints Kingston



Consider being a builder not an inheritor



Over the years, there is a conversation I've had in a few different forms. It happened when I was a parish minister and now it comes in a slightly different manner as I work with people considering full-time ministry.

The parish ministry version goes something like this:

Person: "We are looking for a new church to join."

Me: "Well, there are a lot of good churches around here, what exactly are you looking for?"

Person: "We are looking for a larger church with a really good kids' and youth ministry and small group network with lots of ministry happening."

If I know this is a mature, ministry-minded person and push back a little to ask about joining a smaller church and investing in building their ministry, the response is often, "Yes, but we also have kids, and we want them to have a really good church experience".

The "considering full-time ministry version" goes something like this:

Person: "I am looking to be involved in full-time ministry."

Me: "Wow, that's great. Is there any particular type of ministry that you have in mind?"

Person: "Yes, I'd like to be involved in a church that has a decent-sized ministry team."

Again, if I push back a little and ask why not serve in a smaller, under-resourced church that has potential to grow, with willing people, the response is, "Yes, but I'm not so well suited to work on my own – I need a ministry team around me".

Now, I don't want to be too judgemental. Some people may really need to be in a bigger church with a good ministry heritage to be able to serve most effectively, and some kids might really need to have a large cohort of peers to help them develop and grow in their own faith. But...can we not at least seriously consider being a builder not an inheritor?

What I mean is, it's a wonderful thing to inherit the work of others with all its fruit but how much difference will we really make? Could we not make a bigger difference by going somewhere that does not have "all the ministry bells and whistles" and partner with the saints there to help build the ministry?

We might come from a church with a great music ministry, or men's and women's ministry, and so look for a new church with the same thriving ministries. But, with our past experience, wouldn't it be great to go somewhere without these and seek to help develop

them? What an encouragement that might be in our new church.

When it comes to our children and their faith development it is scary when we select a new church, trying to work out what will help them most. But not all kids thrive in a large, stratified church youth ministry. They can get lost in the crowd or be corralled into an age and gender-based small group that is not a good fit.

By contrast, kids in a smaller church youth ministry have the opportunity to really get to know all the others across the age group and gender divide, and possibly more easily become involved in some sort of ministry as they grow older.

As for joining a church with a “decent-sized ministry team”, I fear that is confusing paid ministers with volunteer church members/ministers. Surely, all the saints share in the work of the ministry (Ephesians 4:12)? Yes, volunteers all have other jobs to keep them busy but they, too, bring their gifts and energy to building God’s church. Together, paid and volunteer, we are the ministry team.

Finally, by inheriting the ministry of a good/larger church we may miss the blessing of seeing the Lord build His church as He uses us (and our children) in doing a fine work in a less-resourced context!

I love those words of Paul in 1 Corinthians, where he talks about his “building”, along with the work of Apollos who followed him, but then the joy of seeing the Lord make it grow:

I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth (1 Corinthians 3:6–7).

I also love Paul’s joy at seeing what the Lord did through his ministry with the Thessalonians when he writes: *We always thank God for all of you and continually mention you in our prayers. We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labour prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ* (1 Thessalonians 1:2–3).

I know, I know: making choices about church membership and ministry are complex, and “builder” and “inheritor” are not mutually exclusive categories. Yet, as we think about our choices and motives, can we at least consider being a builder, not an inheritor?

Gary O'Brien

First published by Anglican Media Sydney



By inheriting the ministry of a good/larger church we may miss the blessing of seeing the Lord build his church as he uses us (and our children) in doing a fine work in a less-resourced context!

Jesus Matters More!



Jessica & Philip ready for
The Catch Kids



A great group of kids and leaders enjoyed the CQ Alive camp

Philip & Jessica van't Spyker have been serving in the Anglican Parish of Keppel in Yeppoon, Central Queensland for close to a year now. As Families Minister, one of Philip's key roles has been to establish and run kids' programs in the local church, but in the April school holidays the whole van't Spyker family joined in the annual CQ Alive camp for high school students run by the Presbyterian Church.

This year's CQ Alive camp had the theme of *What Matters* which saw around 30 campers spend four days at the Pelican Point campsite in Biloela. There were a mix of Presbyterians, Anglicans as well as kids not associated with a church, but invited by friends.

Not only did Philip & Jessica have roles as leaders during the camp, Philip also acted in a mentoring role to the camp organiser, providing insight and assistance in the organisation and running of the event.

"The camp was a great time of teaching, small group studies, activities and free time," says Jessica. "Matt Stewart from the Presbyterian Church led the group in studies from the book of Philippians on *What Matters* – living. It was a great opportunity for the kids to grow in their

faith with other followers of Jesus, and also for those non-Christians to get to know Jesus. The campsite also provided the chance for the kids to enjoy activities like laser skirmish and canoeing.

"It was great working with the Presbyterian Church and the kids got a lot out of the teaching, but it is our hope to run our own Diocesan camp for teens in the long run."

There is a distinct possibility of an Anglican camp in 2022 with about 20 teenagers from across the Diocese. Philip & Jessica would value your prayers while they

assess whether they should hold a camp themselves or again join together with CQ Alive.

For their ongoing weekly ministry, *The Catch Kids* and *The Catch*, the van't Spyners would also value your prayers. *The Catch Kids* (Prep – Year 4) meets each Wednesday afternoon to learn about Jesus, build friendships, play a game or two and help one another. *The Catch* (Years 5 – 8) meets on Wednesday nights where

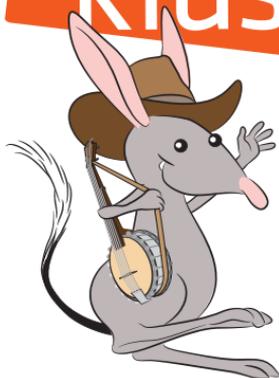
they delve deep into God's word to grow in their faith and maturity in Christ, and pray for the 'big stuff'. With 14 kids attending each week, this ministry is an amazing opportunity to build up young followers of Jesus Christ.

It was a great opportunity for the kids grow in their faith with other followers of Jesus, and also for those non-Christians to get to know Jesus

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Happy Birthday to everyone born in September, October and November! All of us at BCA for Kids wish you God's richest blessings on your special day.

bca
for
kids



September

Matthew H
Sarah C
Wesley H
Levi B
Thomas B
Ethan J

October

Josh D
Caitlin B
Annika W
Luke P
Lottie N
Annabelle N
Annika C
Edward C
Mikalee B

November

Samuel M
Alexander L
Ellie R
Zoe L
Cameron A
Lami N

Walking by the ocean

I'm writing here from Sydney's lockdown, but thankfully I can still go and walk by the ocean, which as it happens is right near where I live. The locals would say that I don't live right near the beach given it's an eight-minute drive, but having moved from Sydney where it could take me at least 40 minutes to get to my closest beach, I will take a two song trip any day.

All along the beautiful North 'Gong Coastline there is a pathway called the Blue Mile. I start at one end near the café where I meet a friend, socially distanced of course, and we walk or run (on my good days) the length of the 'mile', with my ever-faithful Chocolate Labrador, Darby.

I love the sights as I walk along, often thinking to myself this is Australia's version of *Sesame Street*, different people doing different things all the way along. Some learning to skate, some walking with their families, some riding bikes, some running up and down the stairs (have mercy), some skydiving (actually, this is a thing in Wollongong) and the occasional Elvis impersonator! On the weekends there are artists selling their art, surfers and swimmers. In the right season we see whales and dolphins swimming along and one time I saw a whale playing near the rocks!

The backdrop of these walks is the sound of the waves coming in and going out, ever splashing to shore.

There's something about the ocean; the sound, the size and even all the life that surrounds it always reminds me of these verses in Psalm 139. The sea seems so enormous when you are up close to it, like it will never end. When I feel so small next to the sea I remember that God's love for



Darby

You have searched me, Lord,
and you know me.

You know when I sit and when I rise;
you perceive my thoughts from afar.

You discern my going out and
my lying down;

you are familiar with all my ways.

Before a word is on my tongue
you, Lord, know it completely.

You hem me in behind and before,
and you lay your hand upon me.

Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,
too lofty for me to attain.

Where can I go from your Spirit?

Where can I flee from your presence?

If I go up to the heavens, you are there;
if I make my bed in the depths,
you are there.

If I rise on the wings of the dawn,

if I settle on the far side of the sea,
even there your hand will guide me,
your right hand will hold me fast.

Psalm 139:1–10

me stretches far further than even I can see, I could never escape His love even if I were able to find the other end of the sea that I was looking at. His love would follow me there too. All the images in this Psalm describes a love that knows no limits, a care that knows no bounds.

I wonder what you live near that reminds you of God's great love for you? Do you consider the same things when you are next to the sea or perhaps the mountains? God's love is so enormous for you, it cannot run out, it is a forever, never stopping type of love.

Write in and tell us what you live near that reminds you of God's unending love, all of us at BCA would love to hear from you.

Rachel Dirks

A psalm of David

Even in darkness I cannot hide from you. Psalm 139:12

Based on Psalm 139:1-12, 23-24 (NIV)

T N J R G T U F D U C D A Y D
 W K K N I W S Z O D E D Z L O
 O S I S I N U M W O N F O F J
 J O K Y E N N P N A O H F Z T
 G U Q V J W E T H R E B W X T
 S E A R C H S O K N O W W T H
 U E R C F A A L I I N Y O O O
 H G Q I F T T Y L N U A R N U
 G W O Y S H D D F S M G D G G
 W U H L G E M S T Y Y L W U H
 H K I I A V F P L W N U O E T
 I F L D G H E I D G C I N R S
 D E H V E V U R F B K M G V D
 E L A T Y L Y I G Y H I I H D
 S G O Z R D X T A P R U G K T

SIT	LORD	LIGHT	THOUGHTS	WORD
FAST	KNOW	GOING	DOWN	DAY
HOLD	SEARCH	HEAVENS	GUIDE	SPIRIT
HAND	NIGHT	RISE	HIDE	TONGUE

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I WANT TO BE A MEMBER OF BCA FOR KIDS

If you are between the ages of 8 & 12, simply fill out the slip below and return to:
BCA FOR KIDS GPO Box 5389 Sydney NSW 2001 OR
Email your info to: BCA4Kids@bushchurchaid.com.au
Every member receives a welcome letter, a welcome certificate and a cap.

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Phone Number: _____ Boy or Girl: _____

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Which church do you go to? _____

BCA MONEY BOXES

Kids give great support to BCA, and every dollar you put in the box is a dollar across Australia telling people about Jesus! Thanks to you wonderful young supporters!



Celebrating the goodness of our gracious God

What a joy it was to celebrate together in person the goodness of our gracious God at this year's BCA Victoria AGM and Dinner. It was a sell out with 130 attendees, the maximum capacity allowed.

There was a collective recognition of the sovereignty and provision of our Almighty God over the past year. An acknowledgement that God is unchanging and faithful despite uncertain and difficult times. This is a theme for all of those working with and supporting BCA over the past 102 years. We heard about exciting innovations and new ministries in response to COVID-19.

Victorian Regional Officer, Adrian Lane reported that despite the pandemic, six Field Staff were commissioned in Victoria last year. There was thanksgiving for a generous anonymous donation of \$1million from a single supporter. Adrian thanked all BCA supporters for their prayers and financial assistance over the past year and encouraged ongoing regular giving. We also heard from new Victorian Field Staff Rob Edwards, and Trevor & Cindy Bell.

Bishop Richard Condie spoke on Reaching Tasmania for Christ and the encouraging ministry adaptations in the face of the pandemic. These included a weekly Christian radio program on King Island, a BCA-partnered church plant as well as young people coming to faith and being baptised in the very cold Tasman Sea. Bishop Condie also updated the meeting on the progress of acknowledgement and repentance across churches in Tasmania regarding the redress, and relationships with Indigenous communities.

Bush Church Aid National Director Greg Harris encouraged us to pray for ongoing challenges, and praise God for increasing opportunities.

It was a great evening – we enjoyed meeting new people, catching up with old friends, and sharing stories over a delicious meal. And it was a great encouragement to hear about God's faithfulness and many blessings through BCA. We pray for His continued providence and guidance in this great ministry.

Rebecca Lamont



Bishop Richard Condie addresses the AGM



130 supporters attended the AGM and dinner

There was a collective recognition of the sovereignty and provision of our Almighty God over the past year. An acknowledgement that God is unchanging and faithful despite uncertain and difficult times

Lightning Ridge Treasures



In April 2021, 36 intrepid passengers left Sydney, (many of whom have been lifelong BCA supporters) boarded a CFT (Christian Fellowship Tours) coach, heading for Lightning Ridge.

Our first stop was Mudgee where we met BCA evangelists James & Brittany Daymond. James shared some of his amazing ministry in evangelism and training-up local Anglicans as evangelists. James is very passionate about sharing the gospel of Jesus with those who are lost.

A few days later we ambled into Walgett and met BCA Field Staff George & Carmel Ferguson. Over lunch at the local bowling club, George told of his conversion to Christ and how he came to be ministering in Walgett. We were greatly blessed by this humble Indigenous Pastor and his passion to see souls saved in this part of western NSW.

During the ANZAC weekend we were inspired by Kurt's witness to the community, leading prayers at the ANZAC Dawn Service, getting alongside the RSL veterans and families

On tour each day Julie and I led daily devotions on the coach. These devotions focused on the theme *Seeking Kingdom Treasure* and the parallel of man seeking for treasures in opal and God seeking for man. The opal miner seeks to bring opal from its dark tomb to the light, to reveal its beauty. So too has God reached into the darkness of this world to bring mankind into the wonderful light of His Kingdom.

Upon arrival in Lightning Ridge we were thrilled to meet BCA Field Staff Kurt & Rebecca Langmead and their four children (plus one on the way). During the ANZAC weekend we were inspired by Kurt's witness to the community, leading prayers at the ANZAC Dawn Service, getting alongside the RSL veterans and their families. The Sunday service at the Anglican Community Church was inspiring. One of the highlights was when Kurt asked a 90-year-old opal miner to pray. His prayer blew us all



away – “God saved me below the ground & God saved me above the ground!” He later told us that he had suffered a heart attack underground and his dog was instrumental in saving him. Then he gave his life to Christ in thankfulness to God for rescuing him.

On ANZAC Day there were only three local ex-servicemen marching. Two of our group Noel and Roy (with past military experience) offered to join the march. The locals were thrilled as the five men marched together down the street.

For Julie and I, we saw so many similarities in the ministry of Kurt & Rebecca that reminded us of our early days ministering in Coober Pedy with our own young family.

We drove on through Moree, Narrabri, Gunnedah and the Hunter Valley. On the tour we had four recent widows with us – each bravely stepping out soon after their beloved husbands had been ‘promoted to glory’. All found great comfort and support in travelling with fellow Christians.

Nearly everyone ended the tour having been inspired by what they saw of the work

of Bush Church Aid in western New South Wales. The travellers were inspired to be more supportive of the work of BCA and pray with more insight.

Anyone interested in travelling on future CFT tours should visit their website christianfellowshiptours.com or phone 1300 635 358.

Kerry Medway
Former BCA Field Staff (1976–1982)

Above L-R:
 Some of the tour group at Gulgong
 The tour group visited George & Carmel Ferguson in Walgett

The group were in Lightning Ridge for ANZAC Day where Kurt led prayers at the Dawn Service

Look out for the BCA monthly prayer videos



For the past year or so, National Director Greg Harris and the BCA communications team have been working together to produce a monthly prayer video to highlight the prayer needs of Field Staff across our six regions.

The original plan for the prayer videos was for Greg to film them while he was travelling across the country visiting Field Staff. With COVID-19, this has not always been possible, with Greg filming a few at his Sydney home as well as in the BCA National Office. He has had the opportunity to film in Coober Pedy in South Australia (top and bottom left), Longreach in Queensland (middle left) and Deloraine in Tasmania to name a few.

The purpose of these prayer videos is to give you, our supporters, the chance to get prayer updates which are current, in a short three-minute video format. The videos are shared on the BCA Facebook page, via Instagram, Twitter, YouTube and are also emailed out to those supporters who have signed up to receive regular emails from us.

While our printed Prayer Notes are effective in informing your prayers, as you would realise they are written by our Field Staff well in advance so that they can be with you in time for the start of each season. So, we encourage you to sign up for regular emails from BCA or like us on Facebook so that you can view these videos and get up-to-date prayer points. Your prayers are so vital – not only do they encourage our Field Staff but most importantly God answers your prayers and the gospel message rings out across our nation.

The purpose of these prayer videos is to give you, our supporters, the chance to get prayer updates which are current, in a short three-minute video format

Janine van den Tillaart

Post & Rails

WELCOME



Former Anglican Archbishop of Sydney, **The Rt Revd Dr Glenn Davies** has accepted the role of BCA President.

He will lead the National Council following the departure of former president Bishop John Harrower.



The Most Revd Kanishka Raffel, Archbishop of Sydney, has accepted an invitation to become one of

the Patrons of the Society. He will serve alongside The Most Revd Dr Philip Freier and The Most Revd Geoffrey Smith.

FAREWELL



To outgoing BCA President **Bishop John Harrower** who served on the National Council for seven years from May 2014 to May 2021.



After nearly seven years serving on Norfolk Island, **David, Crystal, Wendell, Marigold & Ernest Fell**

are returning to the mainland. The family will take some long service leave from October 2021 and commence ministry at Gymea Anglican Church, Sydney in January 2022.

CONGRATULATIONS



Topher & Chica Hallyburton were commissioned to serve in the Church of the Ascension in Alice Springs on Sunday 20 June.

Topher is working there as a ministry trainee alongside former BCA Field Staff Kristan Slack.

Naomi Ireland, Rachael Bell, David & Lauren Horne were commissioned to serve during an online service held on Thursday 15 July. This service brought together people from across the country to praise God for the work he is doing through BCA.

VALE



Gwen Bennett – nee Brunt (16 June 1931 – 12 June 2021) served as a nurse with BCA at Ceduna, Cook and

Tarcoola for two years. In her application she said, "I have continually felt called to offer my services to BCA as soon as I was in a position to do so!" According to the minister at the last parish she attended, Gwen was an adventurous spirit and spoke of her time with BCA as the best years of her life. Gwen is survived by her daughters and their husbands, Jane and Stephen, Kathryn and Stewart, grandchildren Matthew and Elizabeth, Georgina and Peter, Claire and James, Teaghan and Mitchell and great grandchild Blake.

From the Archives — Cleaning up the Church



Errol & Anne Sorensen

Forty years ago Errol & Anne Sorensen visited an outlying church of their patch in Mt Magnet, Western Australia. What they found was not what they expected but what they did was a wonderful answer to years of faithful prayer.

Soon after we first arrived at Mt Magnet in Western Australia earlier this year we paid our first visit to one of our outlying churches — at a place called Sandstone.

The church was in an indescribable mess — the door was broken and as the church had not been used for some months the dust and cobwebs, leaves and general debris that had come in the door made it look like our Western Mining pile of rubbish.

We felt a bit disheartened at all this and the whole Sandstone situation looked hopeless.

We used to think that if a local congregation didn't care about the church it was not up to us to clean it up but somehow this was different and we both felt that we had to do it.

Something about Christ washing the disciples' feet and serving etc., seemed real so we set to and it took us both a day to get it organised enough to have a service.

We did not tell anyone what we had done though and just came home not really seeing how services would go there. Well, the first service was beaut, the second was better and there were 50 people at the third! The town only has a population of about 25 families and there were people from miles around.

Prayer

After this service, a woman from a station a fair way out told me the following. They had come from South Australia about three years previously with their grown-up son and daughter and families. They had felt very strongly that they were meant to go to the Sandstone area and not long after they had moved, this woman felt that the Lord was wanting her to pray for the people in this area.

She made a prayer cycle of all the families and prayed daily for them. She said that as she began to get to know them so her praying became more relevant to their individual situation but for two and a half years nothing appeared to happen.

They were the only ones at church on the rare occasions there was a service so it was decided that when the Uniting bloke came to their station on his runs they would hold a service there instead of at the church. Round about this time she had a dream that God was locked up in a big black box and she was keeping Him there. She was greatly upset by this (understandably) and she and her husband prayed about what it could mean. After much searching they decided that they weren't meant to just have occasional services at home but were meant to use the church whenever there was the possibility of a service even if they were the only ones — it was to be a witness. In the second half of 1980 there were some Uniting services but not many, and they were held in the church at Sandstone.

Began to happen

About this time there seemed to be a general 'softening' of attitude in Sandstone and although nobody came to church apparently a number of people noticed some changes. The last service last year was held in October and there had not been another one until after we had cleaned the church, and then things began to happen!

I am so grateful that she told me all this, we don't often see what has gone before as clearly as this showed us – it impressed us as to her faithfulness and obedience and



The shire of Sandstone today
(photo from sandstone.wa.gov.au)

also that the Lord uses people to "prepare the way" – I think especially by prayer.

I am sure you will be heartened by this account, and encouraged to keep praying and believing as we are. Naturally this woman is delighted with what is happening now in the area.

Errol & Anne Sorensen
Served in the Dioceses of North West Australia & Gippsland as Field Staff and locums from 1981 – 1991

This article was first published in the September 1981 edition of *The Real Australian*. You can find every edition from 1920 – 2021 at:

bushchurchoaid.com.au/archive

Thank you!

A big thank you to everyone who donated to the BCA Mid-Year Appeal. Your generosity has helped us to exceed our goal of \$220,000. This will allow us to support our new Field Staff in the NT and those right across the country, so they can continue to go the distance to reach Australia for Christ.



I developed a deep love for Jesus and conviction that he was my Saviour at a young age. Some of my earliest memories of reading the Bible was the feeling of loving reading it so much that I genuinely worried what would happen when I finished it! I clearly loved reading it a lot! Little did I know what I know today, that the Word of God *always* teaches you something new, refreshes, challenges and comforts with each new season. You can read the same passage time and time again – the Word of God is certainly living and active!

I am a Sri Lankan Australian lawyer and journalist. Both sides of my family migrated to Australia from Sri Lanka in the 1970s. My family came from a part of Sri Lanka that many missionaries have visited throughout its history. As a result, I have learnt much about the benefits as well as the complexities of mission work in these circumstances.

I currently attend St Matthew's Manly in Sydney where I serve as a small group leader. I am passionate about small groups as I see them as the engine room of churches. Small groups are where people come in the middle of their week and get to do life together, the simple and the ordinary, edifying one another with Scripture and seeing head knowledge become lived experience. That's the coolest thing for me – I love it!

When my friend Naomi Ireland (now BCA Field Staff) suggested that I might like to serve in some capacity with BCA, I met with National Director Greg Harris and NSW/ACT Regional Officer Ted Brush. I now serve on the NSW/ACT Committee and on the National Council. I look forward to using the skills and abilities that God has given me to further His mission across this beautiful country. I am eager learn from and grow alongside people in remote, rural and regional Australia, and to see many come to understand in their hearts the saving grace of Jesus.

Shemira Jeevaratnam

**Newly appointed BCA NSW/ACT &
National Council Member**

Order for Christmas

ORDERS MUST BE RECEIVED BY FRIDAY 3 DECEMBER 2021

Christmas Puddings

Newcastle Pudding Lady Traditional Christmas Pudding

Suitable for microwave

BCA 312 500g Pudding \$30 **BCA 313** 1kg Pudding \$45



Newcastle Pudding Lady Plum Pudding Log

Wrapped in calico and suitable for diabetics/coeliacs in controlled portions; gluten free

BCA 314 500g \$32



Newcastle Pudding Lady Christmas Cake

BCA 315

700g Cake \$40



Christmas Cards

BCA 016 New Designs for 2021

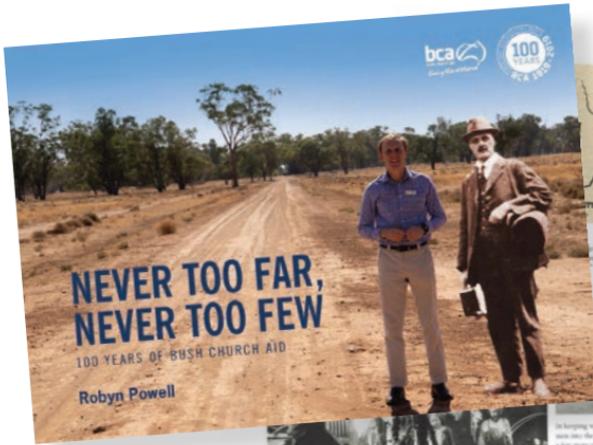
Pack of 6 – 2 each of 3 designs \$5/pack



BCA 017 Discounted 2020 Designs

Pack of 6 – 2 each of 3 designs \$4/pack

Never Too Far, Never Too Few: 100 Years of Bush Church Aid



This hard cover coffee table book, written by Christian writer Robyn Powell looks back at the various ministries of BCA over its first 100 years.

BCA 138

Discounted price \$20

Postage and handling \$8.50

BCA 018

Banjo Billy \$15



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BCA Field Staff make Christ known across the length and breadth of our country, but they can't do it alone. Bush Church Aid's Distance Giving Program is your opportunity to walk alongside them.

The Distance Giving Program gives you the opportunity to support our Field Staff on a regular basis. You will share their journey through monthly giving & prayer, and receive special updates on how your support is making a difference.

Yes, I would like to partner with our Field Staff through BCA's Distance Giving Program with a **monthly donation.**

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I would like to donate to General Ministry **OR**

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(A tax-deductible gift can only be directed to a narrow range of ministry areas)

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A money box for my donations

Information about how I can support BCA through my Will

The Bush Church Aid Society

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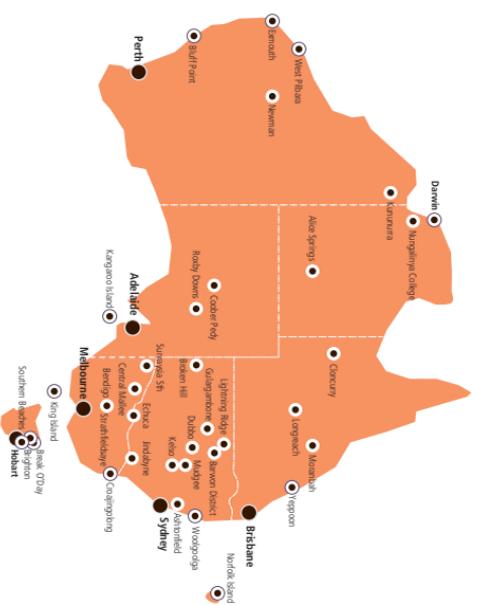
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