

APRIL - MAY 2022

TOGETHER IN MISSION



In this edition

WELCOME TO OUR NEW
PASTORS

BAPTISTS OFFER HOPE IN
EASTERN EUROPE

Unexpected leaders take the stage

When we think of leaders, we are often triggered to envision loud, room-commanding types who thrive in the limelight.

Dr Brian Harris, a widely respected

author, speaker, theologian, and our keynote speaker at 4D Leadership Conference in 2022, suggests these are the people who are '...born to lead...


Baptist Churches
of South Australia

CONTINUED FROM COVER

without consciously thinking about it, they decide which game will be played, who will be included, and the role each will fulfill. Their lives often reflect a comparable trajectory, as time and again they find themselves surrounded by enthusiastic followers, happily traveling in the same direction.'

While he readily encourages naturally confident leaders, Brian believes that there is a forgotten tribe of leaders who are reluctant, quiet, or unexpected.

"...I have noticed a breed of leaders who make a significant difference to their organization, yet they do it quietly. Their success is linked more to their persistence, tenacity, and flexibility, than to their charisma."

"These are the leaders you don't necessarily notice at dinner parties, and you certainly wouldn't pick them out in a supermarket line, yet day after day they go about making a difference."

This year's theme for 4D Leadership Conference, Unexpected, will particularly resonate with the quiet leaders among us, and will highlight a number of

unexpected leaders from within our Baptist movement

Rev Elliot Keane is quick to elaborate on the theme, expanding the idea to 'unexpected leaders for unexpected times'. The last few years have proved challenging for so many leaders across our movement, and have called us to lead in unexpected ways in response.

On May 14, Dr Brian Harris will join us at Kings Baptist Church to share his Biblical reflections on unexpected leadership. Our popular GODx short talks will also return, and a fresh line-up of electives are in the pipeline.

Join us on the 14th May as we gather to grow as leaders in our movement at 4D Leadership Conference. For more information and to register, visit sabaptist.asn.au/4D.



Ruth Grace
Editor
Together in Mission



UNEXPECTED
4D LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

GET TICKETS & INFO
SABAPTIST.ASN.AU/4D

ISSUED BY
Baptist Churches of
South Australia
35 King William Rd,
Unley SA 5061

(08) 8357 1755
tim.sabaptist.asn.au
info@sabaptist.asn.au

Mailing Address
Baptist Churches of SA
PO Box 432
UNLEY SA 5061

EDITOR
Ruth Grace
rgrace@sabaptist.asn.au

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our churches!

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Baptisms at Grange Baptist

One of the delightful aspects of being a beachside church is surely the opportunity for a beach baptism.

This March, despite the chilly effects of La Niña, Raeda and Peter from Grange Baptist ceased their chance to further cement their faith through Baptism.

Throughout the service, Raeda shared that she had known God her whole life, but only chose to truly submit to him in 2021, and doing so drastically changed her life.

Peter, whose mother's health had been declining, started helping her to attend the Bible studies held at her nursing home. Through these

studies and conversations with the pastor, Peter came to understand who Jesus is. After responding to Jesus, Peter chose to visit the church his neighbour Brian had told him about.

Conveniently, it was right next door, and Brian made it a point to never miss a Sunday from then on. Life has changed radically for Peter since then, getting married to his partner and finding a home in the church. To him, the obvious next step was to get baptised.

The gratitude Raeda and Peter expressed to God was palpable. Praise God for his constant work transforming lives.



Peter and Raeda with Rev Mark Foley at Grange Jetty



*Some of our new pastors sharing lunch with members of the BCSA Ministry Team
(L-R): Dion, Dan, Scott, Nathan, Mark, Mark, Mike, Nick, Melinda*

Welcome to our new pastors

The last couple of months have seen a number of pastors join our movement from outside our state. Nick Tuohy (Mt Barker) and Nathan Oliver (Kings) have joined us from Victoria; Dion Sternberg (Lighthouse) and Will Samson (Barossa) have moved down from Queensland; Simon Chen (Knightsbridge) has come over from New

South Wales; and Dan Fennell (Norton Summit) has returned to South Australia from Indonesia. We're looking forward to seeing how God is at work in and through each of them in their local churches, as well as their participation in our wider movement.



MORE OF A HEART THAN SCIENCE

My first death threat came in Year 8 at school. I remember the exact words: “Oh I could kill you, Andrew.” Now, many an inconsequential thing gets said in schoolyards, but this came from Alex. Alex was in Year 12. Alex was living with our family as an exchange student. And most frightening of all... she was Swiss.

What was it that put me in the assassin’s crosshairs? How did a young teen get so deeply entangled in international intrigue? I’ve never told a soul in the decades since, but between you and me, it’s time to tell my story – even if it saves just one other from that kind of alpine stare-down.

I had walked into the school building in front of her and just let it close behind me.

It was a harsh way to learn the social rule that if someone’s within 5.3m (I’ve since worked it out) then you need to wait and hold the door open for them. Alex, if you’re out there, your trip Down Under was worth it.

Sometimes holding the door open for others is smooth and easy. Sometimes it’s gangly and becomes a weird awkward squeeze. But people don’t mind the technique, they just appreciate the effort.

Which of course gets me wondering about how we enter God’s kingdom. In the wonder of it all, it can be easy to forget the door behind us, and anyone else, Swiss or otherwise, who might be near.

There’s a lot of methodology you can learn, lots of training that churches can offer, for helping others to enter God’s kingdom. Thank God for such great resources. At Crossover we’re always looking out for them. But here’s the thing: If we don’t have it in our hearts to care about others and their need for Jesus, if we don’t have it in our minds just how badly he wants them, then all the best training and fine resources in the world will somehow ‘not work’. Because sharing Jesus is more of a heart than a science.

I’m not saying to throw out training and resources, God forbid. But if you want your church, your gang or yourself to get real about sharing Jesus, it may be best to hold off conversations about how and first talk about the whether. People only need tools and technique for something they’re actually prepared to do.

For most of us – let’s start by crawling - are we even seeing those within 5.3m of the door? From there we can learn to look further down the road and prepare to run.

Crossover exists to Help Australian Baptists Share Jesus. We rely entirely on the grassroots support of Australian Baptists – particularly the annual Easter Offering. Please help us make a world of difference!



Rev Andrew Turner
Director
Crossover Australia

Make a World of Difference

Crossover Easter Appeal 2022

Crossover is a national ministry focused on Helping Australian Baptists Share Jesus.

Crossover supports outreach and evangelism by providing:

Encouragement – Because sharing the great news of God’s kingdom should be as important to the church as it is to Jesus

Training – To reach out with Christlikeness – love, gentleness and respect, not manipulation or argumentation

Resources – Not all of us have creative and innovative ways and words for reaching out, but some do! Crossover puts their tools in our hands.

Crossover has a small and dynamic team led by Director Rev Andrew Turner. To check out PRAC magazine, the Sacred Agents blog and a heap of useful resources – and to donate – visit crossover.org.au

SCAN TO DONATE



BAPTISTS OFFER HOPE AND HELP ACROSS EASTERN EUROPE



As of 28 February, more than half a million Ukrainians have fled since their homeland fell under attack, crossing the border to neighbouring countries such as Poland, Hungary, Romania and Moldova.

For years now, Baptist leaders across Ukraine have been preparing because of military threats from Russia. Pastors have even been encouraging churches to stockpile resources—food, fuel and other essentials—in case people are displaced as a result of a military assault.

That time has come. With Russia's recent invasion into Ukraine, a humanitarian crisis is escalating as people leave their homes in search of safety. As of 28 February, more than half a million Ukrainians have fled since their homeland fell under attack, crossing the border to neighbouring countries such as Poland, Hungary, Romania and Moldova. Many are women, children and elderly people leaving loved ones behind, as men of military age join thousands of citizens—men and women—who have stayed to take up arms in defending their country.

As the situation continues, the UNHCR expects up to four million Ukrainians will be displaced, exacerbating the already urgent need for food, emergency services, medical care and refuge.

Governments, organisations and churches around the world are responding to the crisis. Countries like Poland and Romania have opened their borders. European Union members are accepting Ukrainian refugees for up

to three years without asking them to apply for asylum, while Australia has committed to fast-tracking Ukrainian visa applications.

Across Ukraine, there are 25 Baptist regions. Twenty-four of these have suffered direct attacks in recent days. Missile attacks were reported perilously close to a Baptist orphanage where 60 children are housed.

While Baptist churches throughout the region are well placed and prepared to shelter displaced people, leaders expect their resources could run out quickly. Acting as 'centres of hope', churches are offering fleeing families food, shelter, medical care, and providing a place people can shower and wash their clothes, as well as spiritual encouragement in this frightening time.

'No matter what news you may hear,' said one leader from a Baptist women's ministry in Ukraine. 'No matter what [may come], we will stay and serve our Lord Jesus Christ.'

Baptist churches in Hungary and Poland have also set up centres for humanitarian aid. They are distributing what food and hygiene items they have and are providing basic medical care, even as reports suggest individual Baptists welcome refugees into their homes and churches. The burden on both will continue to escalate without help from abroad.

Primary in their request to the global church is to pray for peace, and numerous Baptist agencies around the world are setting up online prayer meetings.

'A refugee crisis is an inevitable outcome of war, and our response must be both prayer and action,' said Melissa Lipsett, CEO. 'Baptist World Aid Australia is responding to this crisis both within and around Ukraine, supporting Christian Partners throughout the region as they care for an influx of people seeking safety.'

The Lord watches over the strangers; he upholds the orphan and the widow, but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin.

Psalm 146:9

We are also positioned with other Christian Partners at home to advocate for a stronger Australian government response to support refugees displaced from their homeland.'

Baptist World Aid's 'Standing with Ukraine' appeal will provide support for food, hygiene items, medicine, generators, blankets, pillows and necessary items for displaced people as well as shelters set up for them.



Sophia Russell
Baptist World Aid



**Baptist
Mission
Australia**



Crossing the street

**PREPARING FOR
MAY MISSION MONTH**

A few years ago I travelled to Rome with my family. One of the first things we noticed was the crazy, never-ending traffic. There didn't seem to be any definite rules to how people drove or where people parked. We were nervous and cautious about crossing the roads until we observed the locals. When they wanted to cross they boldly stepped out into traffic. Miraculously cars would slow down, stop or make way for the pedestrians. We quickly joined them, crossing the street with the experts. Eventually, we grew brave enough to cross unassisted.

Baptist Mission Australia's theme for May Mission Month is, "Crossing the Street." For some, it may seem daunting. How do we step into an unfamiliar place or speak to people we don't know? How do we move from the place we are to the place we need to be to share the gospel? How do we cross that street?

We do it by watching an expert then walking with them. Jesus crossed many streets. He spoke with sinners, healed lepers, taught women and men equally. He drew enemies, yes, but beyond that he drew those he encountered into the opportunity for an everlasting

relationship with God. He helped the lost cross the street to salvation.

As you move about your community I encourage you to think about those around you, pray for them, look for opportunities to engage in simple ways, following Jesus across the street.

Prayer: Continue to pray for the Hutchinson family who have recently returned to Cambodia for their second term. Pray that God continues to meet their needs and directs their path as they serve Him and the Khmer people.

Please feel free to contact me or check out baptistmissionaustralia.org for excellent May Mission Month resources.



Lisa Cornish
State Director SA/NT
Baptist Mission Australia

The Loneliness Epidemic

How a simple solution is having lifegiving results

Social isolation and loneliness are one of the greatest health challenges of our time. Research has shown that they are connected to increased risk for dementia, depression, premature death, heart disease and stroke. Yet, even before the onset of the pandemic, the Loneliness Epidemic had taken hold in Australia, with 15% of Australians experiencing high degrees of loneliness. The events of the past two years have driven this number far higher.

But there is hope.

Jamila* was lonely, vulnerable, and sick. She needed healthcare and was keen to get job, begin study and make local friends. She had no idea where to get help. Jamila is one of 79 adults referred to Baptist Care SA, a Community Partner of the Community Connections program,

since July 2021. By increasing people's connections to their local communities, the program has found that participants are enjoying greater health and quality of life.

Many people seeking assistance are experiencing complex challenges relating to mental health, domestic violence, trauma, financial disadvantage and/or disability. Each participant receives support for up to 12 weeks to improve their independent living skills and reduce isolation. This can involve connecting to local sports, cooking or social clubs, church, or youth groups to assist participants pursue their unique goals and interests.

Jamila was connected to a GP who helped her develop a mental health care plan, a dental clinic for much-needed treatment and to various employment support services.

To help her get a job, Jamila was linked to a program to assist her with getting her license. She was supported to apply for a course and for a no interest loan to buy a laptop for her study. She was linked to several youth programs and



multicultural women's groups where she has made several friends.

Today she is healthy and happy. Jamila has a good relationship with family and friends and is exploring further volunteering and study options.

If you or someone you know would like to learn more about Community Connections, please visit baptistcaresa.org.au/community-connections. Applicants must be at least 18 and ineligible for NDIS support.

This program is funded by the Department of Human Services.

*Name changed to protect privacy

COACH – Community Mentoring with a Difference

Baptist Care SA is proud to announce that we are now a South Australian licence holder for the COACH mentoring program.

COACH is a community-strengthening program that aims to empower individuals and families through one-to-one mentoring.

Through this program Baptist Care SA can work with Churches across South Australia to:

- support families/young people in need of help
- empower those families/young people to make positive life choices
- help improve resilience & self esteem
- successfully complete the programme.

Tabitha's Story

"I was at the lowest point in my life when I was connected with the COACH program. I was truly lucky to have found wonderful mentors who helped me see the light. Without the COACH program and support from Baptist Care SA mentors I would have been in a lot of trouble."

Tabitha* was struggling with depression and anxiety when the COVID lockdown further exacerbated the situation leaving her feeling alone and isolated.

Tabitha was introduced to the Hope Pack through Baptist Care SA to help improve her mental health and wellbeing.

With support from her COACH mentors and Baptist Care SA, Tabitha slowly developed life enhancing habits

and a positive outlook towards life leading her on the path to recovery.

Today, Tabitha has a supportive social network and continues to engage with the Church and COACH Community.

Get in touch

As a licence holder, Baptist Care SA is able to waive the licence fees and work with interested Churches to provide training and support in exploring this well researched model for working with vulnerable people.

For more information, please speak to our newly appointed COACH Coordinator Rebecca Drury who comes to us with many years of experience co-ordinating this program at Rostrevor Baptist Church.

E: rdrury@baptistcaresa.org.au
T: 8273 7100



Mission is a puzzle Where you fit

A few years ago, the extended family had an afternoon group activity, the completion of a large jigsaw puzzle: a map of Australia. It was not 1000 pieces, but there was still a great satisfaction when the last piece was placed, and the picture was made complete, each piece in its correct position.

Mission (together) is also like a jigsaw puzzle. We are like pieces of the puzzle. Each piece has its part, and the complete picture depends on being placed in the puzzle.

Growing up I would hear about, or from, people who were from the mission field. It was usually a remote, exotic, unknown location that people went in response to God's call, to spread the good news. What was lost on me for many years was that mission happens where you are. Whether near or far, like a jigsaw piece, I was to be placed in the puzzle.

Baptist Care SA, and all mission expressions of the Baptist Churches of SA are mission opportunities. We are individually and corporately called to mission. Beyond that where we find ourselves, in all circumstances, we are in mission, irrespective of our awareness of it.

Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

1 Peter 4:10-11



Shane Austin
CEO
Baptist Care SA

Growing Together in Marriage

The pause that refreshes... marriages

A Growing Together in Marriage retreat weekend is a unique, precious opportunity for any couple to spend quality time together, free from demands and distractions. The couple can reflect on and celebrate the good things, and express how much they value having someone close to share the ups and downs of life with. In the candid, empathetic atmosphere set by the personal presentations of the leader couples, they can also begin to talk through, in a non-threatening way, any issue

that causes them disappointment or frustration. Their communication is all in the privacy of their own room, -the couple is never asked to share publicly and there is no group discussion.

In this accepting environment, the Holy Spirit can work to nurture, deepen, enrich and heal, reminding the couple why they married, whether that was one year ago or fifty, and no matter what they have experienced together.



Your marriage matters!

UPCOMING RETREATS

Take time out for a retreat weekend that allows God to work in your marriage, helping it become the best it can be.

- May 20-22 at Weintal, Tanunda
- June 24-26 at Regal Park Inn, Nth Adelaide
- August 12-14 at Weintal, Tanunda
- October 21-23 at Regal Park Inn, Nth Adelaide

For more details, contact:

Rob & Lee Allen, P: 0438 892 980
Fred & Lesley Vince, P: 0423 762 458
Steve & Val D'Arcy, P: 0402 983 154

Or visit gtmsa.org

Baptist History Group meeting in May

Our May meeting will be on Saturday 28th May at 9.30am to 12 noon at Mead Hall, Flinders Street Baptist.

There will be a light morning tea, and a donation would be appreciated.

The topic for the May History Festival meeting is 'The Changing Baptist Sunday' There will be several contributors.

If there are any queries please contact Marie Lines. Phone 8332 4887 or email linesmb@internode.on.net

Morialta Charitable Trust Fund

Morialta Charitable Trust Fund has been supporting disadvantaged Children, Young People and their families in South Australia through its annual program of Distributions for 40 years.

To enable the Fund to continue this support through Community Organisations in South Australia Morialta Charitable Trust Fund seeks donations from the public.

Donations of \$2- and above are Tax Deductible and can be forwarded to the Morialta Charitable Trust Fund at PO Box 92 Crafers SA 5152.